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Tactical Journal

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

First Quarter 2009
Volume 13 - Issue 1

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Politics Aside, Support Gun

Rights

I know that IDPA and the Tactical Journal do not want to endorse (or criticize) ANY political party or candidate. However, as firearm enthusiasts, I believe we're all going to have to be pro-active with the incoming administration when it comes to preserving our Second Amendment rights.

I don't know about you – but I don't think shooting IDPA with airsoft pistols would be as much fun and unless Mr. Wilson is prepared to get into the plastic/toy gun business – it probably wouldn't be as profitable, either.

And while I understand that an organization like IDPA cannot afford to be viewed as either Democratic or Republican, liberal or conservative – I think IDPA certainly has a responsibility to be pro gun!

Therefore, can we please have some kind of a call to political action in the TJ? Just something encouraging shooters of all political parties to come together and contact their congressmen and women and plead with them not to sign or sponsor legislation that damages our Second Amendment rights?

Brian Morris, A14916

We at IDPA feel that it is important to take a neutral stance in regards to political affiliation but you are absolutely correct in that we support gun rights. It is vitally important for every member to make sure that their chosen representatives are aware of their pro-gun views.

This also comes with the responsibility to make sure that you are well spoken and rational and not to start any dialog with "if you want my guns you'll get them bullets first." Statements like that are counterproductive and make you sound like a loon. It also makes it easier for your local politician to dismiss your concerns.

There is a lot of worry about the direction our gun rights will go in the next couple of years so be proactive and keep up the calls and letters and don't just stop at one letter or phone call. We all know that no matter the party, politician's memories are extremely short.

Editor

It's All About Stage Design

Dear Editor:

Your response to Ronald "Ronbo" Desormeau -- "I hesitate to call it a disability as you have shown that you refuse to let it hold you back" -- ought to be carved in granite someplace that is highly visible. Mr. Desormeau clearly is not "disabled": He just walks funny. As do I after 35 years of martial arts, rugby, jumping out of perfectly good airplanes, and a bunch of equally stupid activities.

Seriously, though: It would be nice to have some stages that accommodate, more-or-less, "us old gimps." Otherwise, we may have to start lobby for a special event:

Wheelchair Equipped With Two Sponson-Mounted .303 Vickers Ks.

Just warning you...

Regards.

P.S. We need more events out here in the "People's Republic of Kalifornia."

Neil Gielegem, A27320

I think you are right, it should be chiseled in stone but unfortunately it is not. I am a very strong advocate of stages that do not disadvantage mobility challenged competitors. I think most match designers tend to keep stages accessible to all competitors but sometimes it does take a little reminding. Don't hesitate to talk to your local match director. While we can't always build stages that are perfect for everyone, I have found that most MD's are more than happy to work out any issues that come up.

I will be honest though, if you show up at my match with twin .303 Vickers, you can shoot but you have to go last so we don't have to tape the targets. We'll see what we can do to increase participation in Kalifornia.

Editor

New Shooters

New shooters are an important part of any club. It's the new people that eventually become the regulars, the Safety Officers and the people that keep the club running over time. At First Coast IDPA in Jacksonville, FL., we take great pride in the way we welcome new shooters to our club. After registering on match day, new shooters are given a "new shooter orientation" to read while stages are being set up. This gives them an idea of how the match operates and covers

safety in detail. Then a new shooters briefing is held with the same group. Finally, and what has been most successful, is our New Shooter Squad. Everyone new to IDPA is kept on the same squad. Our most experienced SO's are assigned to that squad. By keeping all the new shooters together, extra time is given to explain the principles of IDPA, go over course descriptions and answer questions they may have before, during and after the match. We then solicit them for their thoughts and comments on keeping the new shooters together on the same squad.

Here's what a few of them had to say.

"It was great having the new shooters together as we learned the ropes and got comfortable. It would be easy to get intimidated and not have as much fun if we were mixed in with the experienced guys".

"I like that the new shooters are all together. It was well managed and safe. Thanks for a super way for a Dad to spend quality time with his daughter."

"Thanks so much for showing me the ropes. I found it to be SAFE, and fun. I'm grateful for the attention that was paid to us".

"I think the new shooter squad is great! I like the pressure free environment and the fact you are not rushed".

"The new shooter squad made me feel like I wasn't out of place or pressured. The special attention we received provided a safe environment".

"My son and I had a blast. We will definitely be back".

Dan Fox, A13585

It sounds like you guys have a great program. It is very important to make sure that a club not only encourages new shooters but makes sure that the experience is both safe and fun. This is the way that all new shooters should feel after their first match. I wish you guys well and have a great new shooting season.

Editor

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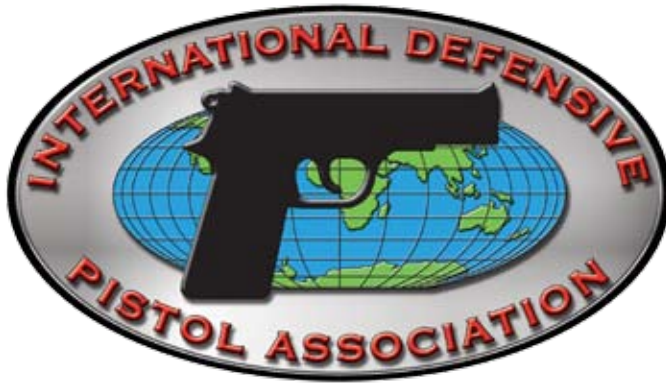


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Tactical Journal

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

February 2009

Volume 13 Issue 1

Shooter Ready	Members' Letters	3
Run a Better Match	John May	6
 Behind the Badge	Rob Haught	8
Stats Shack Review	Jane Fleming	11
What to expect at your first IDPA match	Dave Goldman	14
 A Major Match In Nine Weeks The 2008 IDPA IN State Championship	Jeff Brown	15
WV IDPA State Championship	Lew Soccorsi	18
Random Shots	Steve Vandermolten	20
 The Russians Are Coming!!! The Russians Are Coming!!!	Lance Biddle	22
 Tactical Advantage	Robert Ray	24
 Italian National Championship 2008	Robert Ioan	26
Upcoming Major Matches		36

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IN THIS ISSUE

IDPA has seen great growth over the last few years and we expect it to continue in 2009. To kick off 2009, I hope each of you takes the opportunity to try and name the newest Wilson Combat pistol (p. 25). Good luck to each of you and I hope to see you on the range soon.

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

Well, it is the time of year where my thoughts start to return to shooting in the warm sunshine. Well... not really, I have been fully involved in getting ready for Shot Show and shooting is just a small glimmer in the back of my mind. In years past, I spent this time getting ready for the "season", attending gun shows, gun shops and anything else I could find to get folks interested in shooting. Cold weather, and sometimes snow, keeps all but the most dedicated off the ranges. I find it a good time to go to a few gun shows to look for the new cool blaster, visit with the others there that are searching for their new blaster, and catch up on my reading about my favorite topics, guns and shooting.

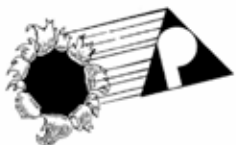
So how do I get more folks interested in shooting? For me it's simple, I love to shoot so I just spend my time talking to all who will listen about our sport. In most cases, we had good success from just sharing with others our experiences. A good video of your club matches will also help drive home the point of how fun

it really is to take part in range events. This is the perfect time to fit in some boy scouts and maybe a ladies group, give demonstrations if weather permits, talk about gun safety or self-defense if it is cold or snowy. Not too many years ago I spent some time with a church group talking about gun safety and finally teaching a concealed carry course. Being an NRA instructor helps, so if you are not, find one to work with and see everyone that you can.

Years ago, we started hosting NRA's Woman on Target events with great success in gaining both interest in our club and in shooting IDPA. I have to add that it was a great deal of fun. At the 2008 IDPA National Championship, I took part in a First Shots Program. It is a new program that I am a great believer in. Get one of these going and see what it will do for your club and it will make you smile as well. These sorts of events are great ways to not only get more involved in shooting but to protect our favorite past-time. Win their hearts and minds!!

This time of year is also a good time to work on courses of fire for upcoming matches. I can't tell you how many times I have been asked how to come up with good CoFs. No real secret, just watch TV and read the newspaper for all that you need to make the basis for good courses. When they are based on real life encounters, you just can't get more realistic than that. Over the years, I have seen some real good stuff come from "holdup" or "I can't believe I survived" stories that are available everywhere. After you do this for a while, you will see everyday experiences that give you ideas for future matches. Several years ago I owned and operated a boot and shoe store. I can't tell you how many times I based CoFs on what I had worked out for steps to defend myself and others in the store in the event of something bad happening. How many home invasion based scenarios have we used over the years?

This time of year is not a bad time to build new and more realistic props for this year's matches. Nothing makes a match more realistic and attracts more folks than to have cool props. I couldn't even begin to tell you how many cars and trucks that we have used up over the years to make the action even more realistic. Not sure what the statistics are, but I'll bet that more encounters involve an automobile than you would believe. Other than the home, I'll bet the average American spends more of their life in their car than any other



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Run a Better Match

place. Moving targets are also lots of fun. Over the years I have been involved in developing a few. From simple gravity driven, to complex electronic moving targets, they are all tons of fun and as realistic as it gets. My last project (at CASA) had the option to activate off most anything you could come up with. I would give Glen Fairbanks an idea and he would figure out how to make it work. Not sure which was more fun, challenging him or shooting the CoF after he worked it all out.

If you are not lucky enough to live in Arizona with such great weather year round, one could go the indoor route. I have attended some great indoor matches. Last year I journeyed through the snow to shoot the Smith & Wesson Indoor IDPA Nationals. It was a great match, and I am not sure of another way to shoot in Springfield, MA in the winter. It was pretty cool on the indoor ranges during that match but still bearable. There are new indoor ranges going up all over the country, go in and have a look around. I made a trip last year to a new indoor range in Texas, and the boys at Red River have it going on. They have a great IDPA program and a great place for novice and experienced alike to go and shoot. If you get the chance to stop in, tell Jason and Keith I said hello. Find a good indoor range in your area and talk to them. If they have not yet got an IDPA Program started, help them get it going. I have never met a business that would not let you help them grow; serious shooters should be just the customers they are looking for.

If you have nothing else you can find to do, how

about a little dry fire practice? I, like I imagine most of you, am not the most studious at my dry fire practice. You all know the rules; make sure the firearm is unloaded, no loaded ammo in the area, choose a safe area to place your target, and use it. In my experience, dry fire practice works, but only if done properly. Bad practice develops bad habits. Lots of ways to go about this, but here is one that I have used in the past. I like to use “dummy” rounds and “dummy” magazines, or magazines loaded with “dummy” rounds. If done properly, you can get a fair amount of practice during a dry fire session. Start from ready and work on sight acquisition, just raise the firearm while picking up the sights to help develop that skill. It’s not necessary to press the trigger every time, better if you don’t. Mix in full presentation drills keeping the draw smooth and deliberate sometimes pressing the trigger, sometime not. Whenever you feel yourself getting sloppy, start over and work back up to where you want to go. Make sure you follow all the correct steps in whatever you are working on. I like to work in reload drills and failure drills with mine. All sorts of ways you can add or subtract based on time and what your focus is on at the time. Make sure you work from a plan, practice with no goals will not help you achieve the full potential of the time you are investing. Some have said that to be great you should dry fire practice twice as much as you live fire practice. Not sure if that is a scientific fact, but I know that a good

planned regimen will make you a better shooter.

Now that all that fun stuff is out of the way, this time of year with the holidays that come along, remind us how important the ones around us truly are. I look forward to the day when my kids are ready to go shooting with old dad. Some of you have met my son Eoin at past Nationals; that little man has been to four nationals and he is only six. Dad keeps buying him guns, but he is just not quite old enough to really get into it. I see little Patty (not even two) watching brother playing with toy guns and she appears to like the idea of being interested in them as well. I really think that will be a load of fun when they both arrive at the age when they are ready to really go shooting with dad. I guess by now you can tell that I truly enjoy our sport, I hope that I have infected some of you to go out and get others involved, if not, I hope at least I got a smile or two out of you.

Till next time: Stay safe, shoot straight, and always watch six!



Behind the Badge

by Rob Haught CL068



AFRICA

The word conjures up images of wild country, wild animals and adventure. All my life I have wanted to go to Africa and see the country and hunt. Growing up in rural West



Virginia, hunting is a way of life. From the time I was a young lad of 12 or so I was going out to hunt with my father to hunt small game and Whitetail Deer. But always there was Africa in the background calling to me it seemed. I've read every book, every story I could find about hunting there since childhood. Growing up I met and made many friends who had made the "Trip". Listening to their stories only convinced me that without a doubt I had to go someday. That day occurred in 2005 when I was able to go to South Africa with my wife and friends for a Plains Game hunt. It was like a dream come true. It was everything I hoped for, but it came at a price. Anyone who has been there can tell you that its like the old potato chip commercial, "You can't eat just one". From the moment the plane took off to bring me home I have been working to get back there. This year I had the opportunity to go back with friends Bill and Joyce Wilson and hunt with Milkycreek Safaris on the lovely Khumba Game

Ranch located in the Limpopo Province of South Africa. Known locally as the Waterberg Region, it is a great area to hunt a variety of game species. What made this trip even more special was the opportunity to conduct a class for local IDPA shooters while I was there. IDPA in Africa?! Yep, you betcha!

South Africa has a long history of participation in the practical shooting sports. In the early days of IPSC, a World Championship was held there. This was grass roots practical shooting at its best. That feeling is still evident today with a large IDPA membership.

IDPA has grown in the United States to the point that you can shoot a major match almost any given weekend if you wish. There are several folks offering training in shooting skills throughout the country and we have some of the best shooters in the world here. This is something we tend to take for granted, so when it was suggested that I do a class while I was there, I jumped at the chance. One



thing I have found in my career is that shooters are pretty much the same the world over. Spending two days on a range with like minded people doing what you love to do is certainly no hardship.

So it was that on the last weekend of my hunting trip, folks started to arrive on Friday afternoon at the Kumba lodge for a weekend of fellowship and shooting. One South African tradition is called a "Braai." Closely resembling a southern BBQ, it consists of time spent at a campfire eating meat prepared on the open fire and enjoying adult

beverages and time socializing. Ten students from varied backgrounds and professions from the entire gamut were there with IDPA and a love of shooting being the common element. We got to know each other some and prepared for two days of shooting. Day One consisted of a condensed version of the Tactical Shotgun program that I do in the States and Day Two was a Handgun Skills class that focused on skill drills and shooting techniques that are popular in the USA.

In South Africa, the gun laws

Behind the Badge



are much more Draconian than here and a citizen has to provide the Govt. with “motivation” to issue a permit to possess a firearm. IDPA members have a recognized reason to own firearms for at least five divisions, and the prospect of Shotgun and Carbine coming on line is much anticipated there. Think about only being able to own only one 9mm or 45acp or any caliber for that matter. That’s the reality of South African gun laws. Forget about trading your worn out pistol in on another of the same caliber. If you get rid of your old one the Govt. figures you decided you didn’t need one in the first place so no new permit! Time to renew that NRA membership folks! Don’t let our freedoms erode away a little at a time. Several companies helped out with some giveaway merchandise for this class and I’d like to thank Safariland, Blue Force Gear, Eagle Industries and Raven Concealment for their support. Also, a big thanks to Bill Wilson and Deon



Storm for allowing the class to take place on Kumba and for the Braai. Milkycreek Safaris is a first class operation. Professional Hunter Martin Booysen and his lovely wife Amelda took care of the hunting and dining for the two weeks and the food was some of the best I’ve ever had. Everything you have ever read about the abilities of the African trackers is true. It’s almost supernatural how they can follow a single track through the bush and other tracks and it’s amazing to watch them work. But time and again they will find the way. The Kumba Game Ranch property is beautiful and has varied terrain. From grassland to rocky hillsides




to Bushveld, it’s something new everyday. You will see animals and plants and birds every few minutes that are new to your experiences and that’s part of the attraction. The lodge and its accommodations are brand new construction with clean comfortable rooms and dining area with just the right combination of comfort and Africana. Every effort has been made to keep the natural beauty of the landscape intact around the camp itself. Even the ladies would feel right at home and comfortable. Of course, if you wanted to rough it a bit more there is the original “Hunters Camp” that is a bit more primitive and should



be available to you. A rifle range and benchrest allow for checking zero on arrival and there is discussion on putting in a square range to accommodate pistol and shotgun shooting for future classes.

Be prepared to learn a whole new vocabulary. As stated above, a BBQ is a “Braai.” A pickup truck is a “Bakkie”, saying thank you very much sounds a whole lot like “Buy a Donkey” and a flashlight is a “Torch”. They drive on the wrong side of the road also which is a bit of an adventure especially at night. Traffic law seems to be merely a suggestion in the rural areas. Right of Way is taken not given and you haven’t lived until you’ve gone 140 k/hr down a dirt road on the wrong side at night.

Anyone who is like me and is dreaming about hunting in Africa should give this great Outfitter a look. What could be better than hunting with folks who love to do what you do? They will take care of everything once you land in Johannesburg including meeting you at the airport, transportation to and from the camp, handling of your trophies to a good taxidermist and making sure that you have a trip of a lifetime. I have made several new friends on this trip and am already planning my next one. It is after all, Africa. And like the Siren’s song, she keeps calling you back. 



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Stats Shack Review

by Jane Fleming A16849

Having helped score a number of major matches, I'd like to offer a few suggestions that you might want to consider if you're planning one.

Yes, I'm the Jane Fleming who sells IDPA scoring software. But this is not going to be a pitch for my fabulous product... LOL... I hope you'll also find these thoughts relevant whether you're using one of the free software packages available from various people (including from IDPA itself) or using your own Excel spreadsheet.

Throughout what follows, I'm going to make a number of references to fatigue. It is a factor that you need to keep in mind during your planning. What you (or your staff) might be able to get by with for a relatively small match may not be adequate for the marathon.

I've separated my comments into sections relating to procedures, score sheets, people, and equipment.

Procedures

Error checking

It was probably 2003 when I talked with Dru Nichols at IDPA headquarters to get information about running an ad in the Tactical Journal. I had written some software to use scoring the 2003 California state match, and a few people had expressed interest so I was thinking of selling it. One of her first questions to me was, "What are you doing for error checking?" Seems at Nationals, she had a computer system set up whereby each score sheet was entered on one system by one person and on another system by another person. A comparison between the two systems would then flag any entry errors – something vaguely analogous to double-entry accounting systems.

To be honest, this seemed to me to be a huge amount of extra work. So when I scored the 2004 California state match the next year, I did it all by my little self. 175 shooters times 9 stages. Say... 1575 score sheets. Per-

haps 15,000 keystrokes in all. But... I made one error that I know of. And three days after the match, a shooter called the match director and said I'd typed a 4 instead of a 1 on one of his times. I'd screwed the poor guy out of a medal. I felt bad about it, but there's a reason the rule book has a 1-hour protest period.

But aside from the error, by the end of that match I was talking to myself – coaching and cajoling myself: "Read the score sheet, Jane. Now look at the screen. Now check them again..." Having the full burden of accuracy on me definitely contributed to my growing fatigue... and my eyes were having trouble focusing.

Since that match, I've refused to participate in scoring any sanctioned match that doesn't use a double-entry system. Period. The concept can be a hard sell when people ask what configuration of my software I recommend. But I've not heard of a single match scorekeeper who afterwards expressed that it hadn't been worthwhile to do so. A friend who helped at one state match a few years ago told me they'd caught more than 100 errors on the first "compare".

If you're using your own software, see if you can find a way to implement something similar. If you're using Excel, I'd suggest setting up identical spreadsheets on two computers. Have different people entering all scores on each. Print out the results from each computer when there's a lull, at lunch time, at the end of the day (if it's more than a single-day match) and compare the two printouts to find and fix your errors.

Filing

You're going to need a way to pull the original score sheet efficiently when your comparison reveals an error or if a shooter raises a challenge. I've tried several systems, but prefer what they use at Nationals – a file folder for each shooter's

score sheets, organized by shooter number. This year, we had two boxes with hanging file folders (see Figure 2). Each hanging folder contained 5 or 6 manila folders, each for an individual shooter's sheets. As in 2006, there was an optional BUG match. Anybody registered for the match who shot the BUG stages had a separate BUG shooter number, 500 higher than his regular shooter number. So an ESP/SS whose shooter number was 126 would have a BUG shooter number of 626, and all his score sheets for both divisions would be filed in the 126 folder. (The relatively few BUG walk-ons went into a separate folder.)

Marking

If you're entering scores twice (and if you aren't going to do so after my rant, there's no hope for you!!... LOL...) you're going to need to be sure each sheet has been entered by each person or team. At Nationals, we set the score entry screens on two computers to be green and on the other two to be red. People entering on the "red" team used a red marker on the score sheet. People on the green side used a green marker. Mike Critser, who's done a number of East Coast matches, recently told me he has a different rubber stamp for each score entry person, which I think is a good idea. That, combined with red and green ink pads, could be a little faster than actually marking with a pen.

The competition

Well... maybe not exactly a competition. But this year, I wanted to know whether I was making an unacceptable number of entry errors and suggested that we start keeping track each time we ran a Compare. It wasn't absolute, of course... in that Jennifer Wilson does ten-key faster than any two of the rest of us put together (your other score entry folks this year having been Dru Nichols and Sandra Tumbleson from IDPA

(Continued on page 13)

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HQ). Sandra and Jennifer made dots with their markers and Dru and I made check marks, so we could assign contumely accordingly. But the rubber stamp idea would work well in this regard also.

Data backup

A friend who worked the Texas state match a few years ago told me of a scary moment. One of the main computers was an HP laptop. Its power connector was soldered to the motherboard, but not attached to the computer's case. Needless to say, the computer decided that the state match was when it would develop a hairline fracture near the power connector and die. My friend wrote that the scorekeeper was trying to keep holding the power connector "just so" long enough that he could get his data files copied off onto a flash drive.

If your software provides a means for automatically backing up your data while you're entering scores, USE IT! If not, take the time at least every half hour to copy your data onto a thumb drive or to burn it onto a CD.

Daily equipment setup/break-down

We used four laptops for this year's Nationals. One had XP Pro, two ran XP home, and one ran 64-bit Vista. Each morning we needed to turn off firewalls and reconfigure the fixed IP addresses we were using. Each evening, people took their respective computers back to use the Internet connection at the hotel, so each one needed to have its firewall turned back on and to be set to get an address from the hotel's system. Plan to allow time and a reasonably knowledgeable person to do this.

Score sheets

By bay or by stage?

Are you going to have one score sheet per stage or one per bay? This was a concept I hadn't encountered before I helped with the 2006 Nationals. That match had 18 stages, plus an optional 4-stage BUG match. We got by with 9 labels for each shooter – 8 for the regular division

stages plus one for the BUG stages. Likewise, 8 regular score sheets plus the one BUG score sheet. A few score sheets (such as the Standards) had just one stage. Other sheets had two or three stages, depending on how the bays were set up. When you have hundreds of shooters, that brings a certain economy to the costs of having NCR score sheets printed and of purchasing and printing labels (we got 3 shooters from each page of Avery labels). Also, if your software makes it easy to go from stage

shooters write the stage number on each. I think this significantly ups the chances that someone's info will get entered into the wrong stage. Sheets that show the stage number, number of strings and targets for that stage, etc., help keep everybody in line.

Distributing score sheets

Do you hand a packet of score sheets to your shooters at sign-in? Again, try what Nationals does. A plastic bucket on each bay contains the appropriate sheets for that bay. Each shooter takes a sheet from the bucket when his squad arrives at the bay. This cuts down on collating before the match (somebody has to make those packets that get handed to shooters at registration) and on shooter error.

Labels

Do you print generic labels for each shooter (name, shooter number, division/classification, etc.), or labels with individual stage or bay numbers? The latter is most useful if you're using barcodes.

Barcodes

OK, are you going to barcode your score sheet labels? When I'm "on", I can key in shooter number/stage number almost as fast as scanning the label with a barcode reader. But as fatigue sets in, the barcodes are one more way of cutting down on errors by making sure you're entering scores for the right guy and the right stage. Of course, this means shooters MUST use the correct label each time.

Sorting score sheets before data entry

Depending on how your software is set up, you may need to have somebody sort score sheets by stage before the computer people enter them. If you're using barcodes or a direct system by which you key in the shooter number and stage, this won't be necessary.

Rain

"It never rains in Southern California," of course. But for the rest of the world – what are your plans in case

Figure 1.
Score sheet for 3 stages on one bay.

to stage this can significantly speed score entry – for example, instead of having to look up a shooter's stage records three times for three stages you just look him up once and then PageDown to go to his next stages in sequence. Figure 1 shows a "per-bay" score sheet from the 2008 Nationals.

Customized score sheets or generic?

Some matches print one large batch of a generic score sheet and have

What to expect at your first IDPA match

by Dave Goldman NRA Certified Instructor and IDPA Competitor # A30007

What a new shooter should expect at their first IDPA match

The IDPA sport brings in shooters from all walks of life. I have seen doctors, police officers, commissioned and non-commissioned military personnel, housewives, children (under supervision), etc on the range. In my opinion, there is no better sport in the world when it comes to learning what you can do with a firearm in a controlled, safe environment.

If you have joined the IDPA organization and have not competed in your first match, this article should be a good read for you. For others who have shot they might be able to relate to this as I did when I first started shooting IDPA.

I often hear new shooters asking questions that I also asked the first time I stepped on the range and watched a match:

1. Can this be considered tactical training? No, it should not be looked at like that as it is not. What IDPA is as stated in the IDPA rule book is as follows: “*Defensive Pistol shooting as a sport is quite simply the use of practical equipment including full charge service ammunition to solve simulated “real world” self-defense scenarios.*”

2. What benefits can I receive from shooting at IDPA matches? The benefits you can gain from this are as follows: (these will vary on the shooter):

- A. IDPA matches will help you benchmark your abilities.
- B. Help build your accuracy and marksmanship skills while shooting static and moving targets.
- C. It will help you with your

gun handling skills (drawing your firearm and holstering, body positioning, presentation of the firearm to the target, sight adjustment, trigger control, follow through, etc).

D. A better understanding of carrying a firearm under some type of concealment.

With that being said, what is it like - really like - when you shoot at an IDPA match your first time? That is a great question! When new shooters ask me this question I tell them that it is fun doing things that you cannot do on a normal range, like drawing from concealment or rapid firing. I also tell them that once the buzzer goes off everything goes extremely fast and then it’s over. Let me explain that a bit more in greater detail:

1. Once it becomes your turn to shoot you will step up to the firing line. At this point you will have a ton of questions running through your mind (is everyone watching me, what if I make a mistake, what if I do something stupid or unsafe?)
2. You are then asked if you understand the COF (Course of Fire) by the (SO) Safety officer. This is where your emotions start to come over you. (You get nervous!)

As you nod your head in confirmation, you will then hear “Shooter Ready”, followed by “Stand by”. Shortly after that you will hear the sound of the buzzer and the rest becomes a flash and the stage is over, and you will ask yourself what did I just do?

That is when you become hooked. The last question I personally had was “What can I do to practice to become better?” In my

opinion I would say that there is a small list of things to keep in mind to help you prepare for your next match:

1. Safety is first and foremost any time a firearm is involved. Most new IDPA shooters forget this rather quickly. The reason is that most people are not used to being in a stressful situation controlled or uncontrolled, with a firearm. You need to learn the commands, and know them well to remain safe at all times. The commands that you will hear throughout the stage are as follows: Load and make ready, Shooter ready, Stand by, the sound of the buzzer (which is the starting signal), Unload and show clear, Slide forward (or close cylinder), Hammer down, Holster, Range is safe.
2. Control the muzzle of your firearm at all times. Always stay down range when you are shooting.
3. Take your time. Do not rush because others are shooting fast. Go at your pace and you will become faster over time. Remember this saying: “*Slow is smooth and smooth is fast!*”
4. How can I control the anxiety before I shoot? Keep in mind all the pressure you put on yourself was created by you. Everybody at the match is there to compete against themselves not you.
5. Practice, Practice, Practice! Practice dry firing, tactical reloading drills, drawing from concealment and holstering. When you think you are done practice some more.
6. And most of all have fun and shoot to the best of your ability!!



A Major Match In Nine Weeks

The 2008 IDPA IN State Championship

by Jeff Brown A19642

It was a cool and blustery fall day on October 25th in central Indiana when shooters from eight states assembled to compete in the first major match held in the state since 2004. Overall 114 entrants and staff competed in a match that did not appear possible until just nine weeks before the event took place. Not only were we able to host this event on short notice but we also tested a concept in major match design that some said was doomed to failure. This is our story.

The match was hosted by Atlanta Conservation Club (ACC) at Atlanta, Indiana which is centrally located approximately 20 miles north of Indianapolis. The range

consists of 8 large, well-constructed pistol bays and a small club house. IDPA local matches resumed this year at ACC after a three year absence. Other disciplines including USPSA and The Steel Challenge use the facility and it has a good supply of steel and reactive targets as well as wall sections and other props. Several club members expressed an interest in hosting a major IDPA event this year which appeared unlikely until a change in club leadership took place in late summer and the new board of directors lent their support for a match. Jeff



Brown, the Indiana IDPA Area Coordinator and Benny Dukes, the IDPA match director at ACC, agreed to serve as co-match directors for their first ever major IDPA effort.

The match was billed as a “Spirit of IDPA” match in that no course of fire (COF) would consist of more than twelve rounds and many would be six rounds or less. We chose not to include moving targets that do not in some way simulate human movement. There were no swingers, falling plate racks or Texas Stars used in the match as we know of no human beings that consistently move in these ways. We wanted to deviate from many major IDPA matches we have seen that tend to be one 18 round field course after another. The round count for this match was kept just under 150 in 20 COF’s to allow shooters plenty of trigger time but not break the bank with ammo costs. With high fuel costs and issues with the economy, we



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kept our match fee reasonable at \$50 and a \$5 option for lunch. We did not have T-shirts and we made no promises regarding a prize table. We wanted this to be a match that shooters would enjoy but also help us establish a reputation for hosting quality matches at a reasonable price in a shooter-friendly environment.

We were fortunate in that ACC could easily handle the event and had sufficient equipment and props. We did have to construct some additional target stands, wall sections and props in a series of work parties but overall this was not a major undertaking. The first priority was to insure we had enough help to staff and run the match. We contacted all of our IDPA clubs in the state and received a number of positive commitments to assist. We networked with match directors in neighboring states and received some additional offers to help. We knew each pistol bay would have two or three COF's and require a veteran CSO plus two additional SO's to run efficiently and safely. We had a very enthusiastic and dedicated statistician for our local matches who was one of the first to offer his support and even volunteered his spouse to assist him. Some ACC club members offered to assist with

parking, photography, collecting scores and the many other tasks required during a major match. Several of our non-shooting spouses graciously offered to assist prepare lunch.

The next order of business was to attract shooters. We were not able to get our application in to IDPA HQ in time to place an announcement in the Tactical Journal but the folks at HQ did post our announcement on the website very quickly. We sent the match announcement via email to every match director in a five state area. We also networked closely with IDPA Area Coordinators in neighboring states who were sup-



portive of our match concept and were instrumental in helping us spread the word of our match. We sent several reminders to our local match directors in Indiana asking them to promote our match at their events. All correspondence we received regarding the match was answered promptly and we tried to accommodate special requests. We held classifiers after every club match and two of our members classified shooters on evenings and weekends so they could get in the match. We initially established an October 1st cutoff

for applications but extended it an additional two weeks in an attempt to fill the match. We hoped for 96 shooters on match day and ended up with 88 signed up.

We selected 20 COF's with round counts ranging from one to twelve. All COF's were six round neutral to be friendly for our revolver shooters. They were defensive in nature in that they all required the use of cover if available, did not require movement more than ten yards and target distances were fifteen yards or less. We asked our ACC members and other IDPA clubs to submit tried and true COF's and to lend assistance in setting them up. We

selected 8 COF's submitted by Jim Barbour from ACC, and area match directors including Jason Williams from Hamilton County Fish and Game, Noblesville, Jeremy Van Giesen from Michigan City Rifle Club and Randy Bueche from Oxford, Ohio. The remaining COF's were taken primarily from our

match archives at ACC. The COF's were placed in a standardized format and exhaustively reviewed and revised by four match directors and three area coordinators. IDPA HQ was consulted for a ruling on two disputed issues identified when the COF's were reviewed. The COF's were carefully assigned to their



A Major Match In Nine Weeks

respective shooting bays so that the number of rounds fired per bay would be similar to avoid backups. All reactive targets used in the COF's were commercially manufactured and well-proven designs that were not prone to mechanical failure and did not require electricity to function. The cable systems for all poppers and reactive targets were designed for quick change out when damaged and multiple replacements were assembled for each of these COF's. We wanted



to avoid all possibilities of throwing out a COF over equipment failure or a rules challenge. We did not want any backups during the match due to misinterpretation of COF descriptions or equipment repairs.

Our statistician, Don Williams, is a veteran IDPA scorekeeper with several years of experience. Don equipped two laptop computers with bar-code readers to score the match. Each shooter received unique bar-coded stickers for their score sheets that were specifically designed for each shooting bay. Each and every score sheet was scanned and double entered by Don and his wife Colleen



on separate laptops to insure accurate data entry. We utilized Beach Bunny software that compared entries in the respective computers for discrepancies.

We were unsure what to do with regards to awards, staff shirts and printing. The Pro Tech Company in Kirksville, Missouri was recommended to us as a supplier of high-quality custom designed plaques. We contacted Emmanuel Bragg at Pro Tech and told him

(Continued on page 30)

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WV IDPA State Championship

by **Lew Soccorsi (A02748) & W.T. Jones (A11215)**

The 2008 WV State IDPA Championship was held on Saturday, August 2 at the MDRC range in Morgantown, WV. This was our second state match in consecutive years and both years gave us good weather regardless of the doom and gloom from the days prior to the match. As match director, I am pleased with the results of the overall match and from all the emails that I received from participants; it would appear they are all in agreement as well.

I would like to thank all the SO's and their assistants as well as all the folks that helped out with the lunch, ticket sales, shirts, hats and awards. Special thanks go to the stat house where those folks remained from early

morning until after the last shot was fired.

As Match Director, I would like to thank all those who participated in this match because without you, we have no reason to torture ourselves for months prior to holding a major match such as this. Further thanks is to be extended to all those who provided gracious emails and articles on how well the match was run, the stages and the overall environment that MDRC provided for the state championship. As with anything you do, you always learn better ways to do things throughout the course of events but more importantly, you have to establish a lesson learned list from each experience, be it positive or negative. We have implemented that methodology at MDRC and we try to improve every year from the new ideas that are generated after or during a match in addition to learning from our mistakes. Last year we had a complete melt down in our stat house that took almost a week to get squared away. The main issue was the home grown code we were using for scoring worked great for our monthly matches but fell way short for a major match. This year, we implemented a fix with software, computers and the right mix of personnel and the problem went away.

The match started promptly at 8:00 am, we broke for lunch at noon, started shooting again at 1:00 pm and the last shot was fired at 4:00 pm with some squads finishing at 3:00 pm. The scores were posted at 4:30 pm and the important thing to mention here is, the scores were posted and reviewed without contention.

I would like to convey my personal congratulations to James Myers, a New Jersey State Trooper, for not only posting the best score of 126.94 as a Master in SSP but he shot 10 CoF's without dropping a point. Yes, he shot

the match clean! Great job James and we look forward to seeing you next year.

Again, as MD, I would really like



to continue the summary of the State Championship but I am not sure that it would be viewed or accepted by the readers as an impartial assessment of the match. However, the following evaluation was graciously written by W.T. Jones and submitted to me for distribution to the MDRC staff that worked the match as well as other interested shooters. I promptly distributed the evaluation without delay and with W.T.'s permission; I have included his match analysis as an impartial evaluation for the readers. That gets me off the hook and provides the readers with a credible and impartial summary of the WV IDPA Championship. So here it is.

By W.T. Jones

The morning before the shoot and I am talking about 2:00 am, things really became interesting. When you are awakened by lightning flashes that can make your room look like noon on a sunny day it kind of makes you wonder if there is even going to be a match the next day. What a downpour. All I could think of was I missed the mud at the PA States and now retribution will be had by the rain gods. At 5:30 am I looked out again and it was still raining. Oh well, wake up the Lady of the Manor, take a shower, call Jerry, and head for breakfast. There joined by Kitty and Cindy we pondered our fate



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WV IDPA State Championship

for the day.

Well, WV likes shooters and all that rain did was cut the dust down and make it a great day to shoot. No beating sun, only a few sprinkles of rain, and other than that all the dread we had about the thunder and lightning went away.

We had registered the day before and we ended up parking at the far end of the parking area and with trips to the safety areas and portable toilet facilities we missed the match briefing. I stopped Ralph D. from CT and asked what we missed. "Don't shoot yourself and have fun" was the reply. I think Lew must be a disciple of Frank Glover. So off we went to Stage 5 in Bay 4 which is where Squad 4 would start their experience and it was a great experience.

The stages were true IDPA stages and that is the best compliment I can give to Lew and company.

Move and shoot. Stage 5 started off with the delivery of 6 rounds to two targets in tactical sequence 1,



3, 2 and move. However I did notice that many shooters forgot that the last number there was 2 and not 1. Your greatest shooting asset is your brain folks! Be sure that is engaged. Then shoot two pieces of steel on the move and then two more stationary targets. Nice way to start the day. Not as accurate as I would like to have been but then again I have more time typing IDPA stuff than shooting it lately.

Stage 6 was a real interesting standards stage. Start down on your hands and knees and right handed around the right side of the barrels, refresh and second string around the other side.



It's not as easy as it sounds. However those of us who are of the less than agile movement greatly appreciated the low start. Nothing hard but it tasked you to shoot accurately and quickly from a not so normal position. But I was still having FUN!

Stage 7 was a thinker. You had to do some planning because this stage had the only disappearing target on



it and if you didn't think it through then that little sliding target just disappeared behind the barrels and all the targets had lots of hard cover on them which means accuracy counts here. I really, really liked this stage. Ammo management and target engagement sequence was important. Oh, did I tell you that the slider started when you broke the beam of light in the hallway. Hmmm, forgot that part but if you decided to hurry on down the hallway you just might not have enough of the go-boom pills left in the gun to shoot the slider. Thank you Paul A. for making me think through the stage. However, I did get burned here but not by inaccurate shooting or by ammo management rather, by mud and no I didn't slip on it. On the right hand target in the dang hallway I noticed that brown spot in the black and thought "hey I must of put one in the black! Pick it up!" So one more went into that

target and then I had to do a mag exchange before I went after the mover. After all the booming' and banging' got done I walked up to that target and that darn brown spot was nothing more than a .40 S&W sized piece of mud. I flicked it off with my trigger finger and mumbled something about just when old eyes shouldn't be so darn sensitive they were. Well what is another two seconds for a reload and another .5 seconds for a third shot? Well, live and learn. I was still having FUN!

Stage 8 was another prone stage. Groan! Start with two targets that get two the body and then one to the head,



a 3rd target with 2 rounds, then prone and through the tunnel of barrels at a piece of steel, and then around the barrels at two more targets. Just a reminder folks, never poke the gun through a window or into a tunnel of barrels because you just have to pull it back to continue. Wastes time you know. Shot the stage fairly well and didn't scare the nice SO with too much screaming and thanks to my ever faithful friends coming to my aid to pick up this tired old body at the end of the stage. But I did have FUN with it.

Stage 9 was another prone stage but this one was really neat as you started out on your knees gathering firewood. The beep went off when you had the fire wood in your hands. Hey, if you picked up the wood then you told the SO you were ready, nothing wrong with that at all. You then pushed your wife (the popper didn't look a thing like my wife) and then went to work on 3 targets, flopped over on your side, and then engaged 3

(Continued on page 28)

Random Shots

"My Personal Safety Officer Guidelines"

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

by Steve Vandermolen 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 a 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 a 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

Random Shots - "My Personal Safety Officer Guidelines"

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?

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.

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IDPA Pride

This issue's entry is submitted by Larry (A26655) and Roxanne (A26609). These plates occupy a place of pride on the front and back of their Silverado Z71. Send us pictures of you with your IDPA or gun-related license plate and we may publish them in the Tactical Journal. Please send to editor@idpa.com



The Russians Are Coming!!! The Russians Are Coming!!!

by Lance Biddle A00045

On July 21st, my phone rang and the caller ID said it was IDPA Headquarters. I knew that it was Robert Ray, of course, and after asking myself, "What've I done now?" I picked up.

Robert had an unusual request; yes, even for Robert. A group of Russian police officers, members of the "Russian Practically Oriented Shooting Federation" had contacted him about becoming affiliated with IDPA. They were coming to Florida in August to compete in the International Police & Fire Games, and would like to arrange for a Safety Officer class while they were here. Could I contact their Vice-President, Col. Konstantin Ivanov, make the arrangements and conduct a S.O. class for them?

"Sure, Robert, no problem!"
(Now where did I put my Rosetta

Stone CD for the Russian language? All the Russian I know is: Nyet.) Robert assured me that at least one of the group spoke English and that he was sure that everything would go smoothly... Yeah, sure, Robert! Surprisingly, though, it did. Being an old, burned out, retired police sergeant myself, I've found that cops relate to other cops, regardless of which part of the planet they come from.

I traded e-mails with Col. Ivanov (Who acted like a shooter, not a high ranking command officer!), and we decided on Saturday, August 16. I also made the decision to have them shoot a classifier match in lieu of the usual range exercises, so that they could go back to Russia as IDPA Safety Officers and classified in SSP. They all used Glock 9mm pistols, 19's and a 34, as they'd not been able to bring their service pistols over and they were all familiar with Tactical Tupperware.

The class was held at The Gun Shop, Inc. & Range in Leesburg, home of The Gun Shop IDPA club (C0395). Gordon Schorer, the owner of The Gun Shop, and enthusiastic supporter of



IDPA, graciously waived his usual facility & range fees and closed down the rifle range all afternoon for the exclusive use of the class. He was also able, with assistance of a friend who is a Russian interpreter, to translate the entire IDPA rulebook into Russian and print out several copies as well as make them a CD to take home.

Tom Vester (A16077), the assistant M.D. at The Gun Shop, came in to help out. Although his Russian is as good as mine, Tom is an excellent S.O. and instructor and his help was invaluable, especially in demonstrating a variety of procedural errors that the students were able to catch. Despite the language barrier, the upraised first finger seems to be universal.



The Russians Are Coming!!!



Konstantin Ivanov and Andrey Chuyev (F00601) both spoke English, as did another officer who showed up later in the afternoon; between them, they were able to translate for those who spoke as much English as I do Russian. These two guys had also traveled to Italy and shot IDPA with the Italian contingent; they had a pretty good grasp of the principals of IDPA already. The initial group that arrived for the class was only four, but soon after the class began, several others showed up who'd been staying in another city. Konstantin advised that more may wander in throughout the day. So what to do?

Since only IDPA members can become Safety Officers or Classify, I made the determination that those who were current IDPA members, or who joined at the range, would be part of the class. Any others, not



immediately becoming IDPA members, and several small groups did show up during the course of the day, were welcome to sit in and observe.

We ended up with five class members; one current IDPA member, four new IDPA members, and numerous observers, who hopefully will become members when they return to Russia. Everyone shot at least MM, even though it was their first classifier with a borrowed gun. One student, Victor Filippov, shot a 124.75, missing SSP/Ex by less than five seconds, on his first attempt, with a borrowed gun. They may be new to IDPA, but all were already competent gun handlers when they began the class.

At the conclusion of the class, since everyone had a few rounds of ammo that they couldn't take through TSA, we got out The Gun Shop's Glock 18 and everyone shot a full magazine thru it on full auto. Always fun, but only takes a second, literally, with a 17 round magazine! As usual, when we finished, the thing was so hot, you couldn't touch the slide. I'm amazed that we don't melt the frame, sometimes!

So, IDPA continues to

grow as an international defensive shooting organization, and I got the opportunity to make some new friends, as well as receiving as a gift, a bottle of unpronounceable, but very, very good top shelf Russian Vodka. I also learned a basic grasp of the IDPA range commands in Russian, which should prove very useful at the Nationals (??). I was told that while it is difficult for a private citizen to legally obtain a handgun, it's not impossible, and they anticipate having some civilian shooters as they become organized. Very different from the U.S., where the majority of shooters are private citizens, and cops make up a relatively small minority. It made me appreciate our 2nd Amendment even more. America is a unique country with unique freedoms, and we should all work hard to keep it that way.



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The Tactical Advantage

By: Robert Ray



Otis Technology

My Dad introduced me to hunting and gun ownership. Those were good days and filled with a lot of pleasant memories for me. I remember that just being in the woods with dad was enough even if we didn't take any game, wandering through the woods with my .410 in hand was great. After the hunt it was always time to clean my gun whether I had fired a shot or not. This was always enjoyable time as well, cleaning and talking with dad about what we had seen. I still get a little nostalgic at the smell of gun oil.

What I don't miss anymore is the actual cleaning process. With the amount of shooting I do now (which is not as much as it was before I took this job!) I don't clean my guns nearly as often as in the days gone by. It's not unheard of for several thousand rounds to go through my 1911 before I clean it. To be honest, it is usually when I notice that the slide is slowing down because of the accumulated



crud. When do I notice this? Why, on the range of course, far away from my nice bench and

cleaning tools. The answer to my dilemma was to purchase one of the smallest portable cleaning kits on the market. It is built by Otis Technology and what a great addition it has made to my range bag.

I purchased the Tactical Cleaning System as it has the tools to clean pistols, rifles and shotguns. It has the tools you need to clean everything from a .17 caliber rifle to a 12 gauge shotgun and all this in a nice rounded package that is only 4 X 4 X 2 ½ inches and weighs in at 10 ounces. The Otis development team has managed to fit an amazing amount of material into an incredibly small space. The tools are stored in a heavy nylon pouch with a nice heavy zipper. The system includes three Memory-Flex® cleaning rods with over 750lb of tensile strength. These flexible cleaning rods are a big part of how Otis helps keep this kit so small. The rods are incredible tough yet safe for the bore of your gun. They are plastic covered steel cable with brass ends. It is more than tough enough for the job but easy to curl into loop for storage in the front pocket of the cleaning kit. It also has a T-handle for added comfort that also breaks into two pieces for smaller storage.

The kit also comes with three forged slotted brass tips, two obstruction removers to knock out obstructions such as mud, snow, or even a stuck bullet or case, a .5oz. tube of Otis O85® Ultra Bore®



cleaner, lubricant and preservative, a set of all-caliber cotton cleaning patches for .223 caliber and larger, small caliber patches for .17 to .223 caliber, a shotgun brush adapter and rubber patch savers® to get 360 degree coverage in your shotgun barrels, six high quality bore brushes to cover everything from .17 to .50, and a bore reflector/flag safety. The kit also comes with a mini CD that has instructions on cleaning your firearms as well as info on their other great products.

This is a great piece of equipment to have in your range bag or at home as well. This kit was the best fit for me but they also have pistol only, rifle only and a host of other different setups to meet your personal needs. Using it was a piece of cake and the ability to carry it with me to the range without taking up a bunch of space or weighing me down is priceless. The MSRP of \$54.06 is cheap for the utility of this product. To find out more about Otis Technologies other great products you can go to www.otisgun.com or call (315) 348-4300. I don't think you will be disappointed.

The Tactical Advantage



Shellsorter

If you are like me, you are looking at the increases in ammo prices and thinking about reloading more. It is becoming harder to find piles of brass left at the range but it is still out there. I like picking this up as it makes reloading a little cheaper on me but the thing I hate is sitting down and having to sort all that mixed brass out. Well, I have found a neat product to help shorten that dirty chore.

It's called the Shellsorter and it is pretty simple. It is three pans with different sized slots in the bottom. Each pan is color coded for caliber. Yellow for .45, blue for .40 and black for 9mm. Each of these pans will work for several other calibers as well but these are the



main three. They are designed to fit into the top of a 5gallon bucket. The pans nest inside of one another and allow you to sort for several different common calibers at one time. Just stack them with the yellow

on top then blue and then black. Pour the mixed brass into the top bucket and start shaking.

The shaking motion allows the brass to fall through the corresponding slots in the bottom of the pans. The yellow pan holds back the .45 brass allowing the .40 and 9mm to fall through. The next pan (blue .40) allows the 9mm to fall through and the last pan holds back the 9mm and allows the small gavel, trash and inevitable .22's to fall through. The pans can also be pulled apart and used separately if you wish.

This is a real time saver if you have to sort a big pile of brass. The pans are made of tough ABS plastic and should give a long life of service. This is a great little product and I think you will find it will help cut down on your overall reloading time. The three pan set is only \$38.95 and they also have an additional pan that will do .380 ammo. For more information on this product you can go to www.shell-sorter.com or call (816) 590-1277.



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Italian National Championship 2008

by Robert Ioan A15144

If you experience IDPA Italian style, it is not just about the match...

This was my second visit to Northern Italy to attend the 2008 Italian IDPA Nationals. Along with me, five other shooters and their companions made the Atlantic crossing to Milan, Italy for the match. Mike Alexander (PA), Michael DiNunzio (PA), Gary Burris (TX), John Rodgers (CA), and Dave Zimmerman of Target Barn (OH).

Prior to our arrival, Giorgio Acerboni (Area Coordinator Italy) paved the way for the arrival into his country. The documents required by the Italian Customs Police are provided via email, about one month prior the departure date. Upon arrival, Giorgio facilitates the securing of your firearm so that traveling and sightseeing are worry free with regard to Italian firearm laws. Permission is granted to enter Italy with your pistol for use only during the competition. No authorization is granted for "concealed carry" off the range. Italian Law is more much restrictive than ours is, so we have to abide by their regulations or jeopardize the future of IDPA in Italy.

Leave your 9x19mm pistol at home. Under Italian Law, that caliber belongs only in the hands of NATO military personnel, although relief on this restriction

may be forthcoming before next year's match. Every other IDPA legal caliber is permitted. You can import 11lbs of your favorite ammo for the match. That equates to about 220rds of the 45ACP. If you need more ammo, or do not want to transport your "pet" load, Giorgio can provide all that you will need to shoot the match. A separate locking hard case for your

daily itinerary. History, culture, superb dining, and fun are daily requirements. Leave it to him, and you and your companion will experience the "trip of a lifetime".

This year, Giorgio planned the days leading up to the match with a journey through the beauty and history of Northern Italy. Traveling as a group of new best friends, we began with a countryside train

ride, a tour, and an overnight stay in the magnificent city of Venice. The beautiful hotel was located on the adjacent island of Murano, where the world's most famous glass is blown. The artisans fired up the furnace for the arrival of Giorgio's friends from America. So too was waiting, Romeo's Juliet. The literary statue figure was waiting in her courtyard, during the guided tour and overnight stay in the nearby city of Verona.

By mid-week, we were drooling over the museum cars at the Ferrari factory in Maranello, and savoring a picnic lunch on the banks of Lake Garda. Eventually we made our way back to Bergamo for our final rest prior to the match. This is Giorgio's hometown. He is a dentist and his wife Miriam, is a jewelry boutique owner. We could not leave Italy without a tour of their beautiful hometown and the medieval Citta Alta of Bergamo. Throughout the week, our group ate like kings at magnificent local restaurants. Five course meals and



pistol and separate hard ammo box must travel apart from your clothing suitcases. If your airline has done its job properly, these cases should be waiting for you in the Milan Airport Police Office for you to retrieve. If your pistol case mistakenly shows up on the baggage carousel with your clothing suitcases, your airline receives a hefty 2000Euro fine. Mine did.

From this point on, Giorgio will see to your every need. He takes pleasure in supervising a great match, and thoroughly plans your

Italian National Championship 2008

all the wine and grappa you can drink... every night! If you are not accustomed to this Italian tradition of celebrating friendship and love at the dinner table, you can take the pictures!

Finally, the match days arrived. Beautiful weather shined over the field of 140+ competitors from Italy, USA, Malta, Slovenia, Germany, Austria and Russia. Several IDPA Masters and IPSC Grand Masters were spread out amongst the squads to raise the level of competition. In 2007, the field comprised of some former KGB too.

Although the IDPA discipline of shooting has its origins in America, you cannot underestimate the pistol shooting skills found in Europe. Already in production in the early 1500s, Beretta firearms were chosen by the highly discriminating Republic of Venice because of their excellence. 300 years before Samuel Colt was even born! Now the descendants of Venice were squaded amongst us.

The match had challenging



swing-ers, pop-pers, and bar-ricades. They were well bal-anced through-out the 12 stag-es. The match Safety Officers were very friendly and cordial with their quests from abroad. The second day of shoot-ing was filled with excitement too. A 3-gun match “For Fun”, with a shotgun and an Italian carbine/ma-



chine pistol took up the morning. The afternoon fun comprised of an entertaining shoot-off for the com-petitors and visitor gallery, alike. It consisted of a shoot-house style qualifier, then a progression through plate rack and bowling pin stages. The shoot-off con-cluded with a side-by-side shooter elimination using poppers, for the 1000Euro prize.

Sadly, we had to leave... but we all earned at least one plaque to hang on the wall, Mike Alexander and Michael DiNunzio



took home more than one. The exchange rate was also favorable to Alexander, converting his prize money winnings into Dollars. We also exchanged many hugs of friendship and gratitude for everyone’s hospitality.

Giorgio invites everyone to experience this trip of a lifetime. Do not worry if you cannot speak a word of Italian. You will be very comfortable with Giorgio, the locals, and the Safety Officers. You do

not need your last name to end in a vowel, to make the trip. However if you feel more comfortable, you can borrow a vowel from Giorgio’s previously satisfied guests like D’Anna, Iradi, Cuttita, Davoli, and Norvati. They all have a vowel to spare.

Throughout the ages, not many foreigners could descend upon the land of the Roman Empire and tell a story of treading on their soil, shooting guns, indulging in the Empire’s finest food and wine... and return home to tell about it!

I just did. I urge you to make it your story too!



more targets. The targets had copious amounts of hard cover. Just loved 'em! It was interesting to watch the various methods folks used on this stage. Flop over and then twist around, kick out the legs and then go prone, just so the gun was vertical when it was shot. Hey, the sights still work even if the gun is on its side. Flop over and shoot. At the distance required there was no issue about bullet drop or anything else. If somebody was shooting at you then it would be better to get the firearm in action rather than worry about getting the gun vertical. This was another FUN stage.

Stage 10 was in the MDRC indoor range. From the amount of talk about this stage you would have thought that Lew and company were going to blind fold you and make you shoot by feel alone. Everyone was worried about "the dark stage" but it wasn't a dark stage. Plenty of light there so hey go shoot it and have FUN! The CoF required the shooter to start lying on the bed, grab the gun from a night stand (looked more like a chair to me) and then while lying on your back engage two targets with 3 rounds each. Rise from your place of rest and then get to the hall way to engage more bad guys. It was a real hoot! More of that stuff I like to call FUN!

We then headed down for Stage 1 but lunch intervened. So I headed to the car to collect Lady Jan and she wasn't there. OK, who stole my wife? Jerry and I headed for the tents keeping a wary eye out for a lost knitter and there she was. She was into the fun with Kitty and Cindy already. Food was great, but Lew, lose the pasta salad next year! OK there was Kitty again putting on her lip liner and

her lipstick like she was going to the dance instead of back to stage 1. Of course, she had to try it out. I wonder if Ralph D. ever got that lip stick off his forehead before he went home and by the way Ralph, it was good to see you and Kyle again even though I didn't get a chance to see him except standing in the doorway of the IHOP.

Stage 1 was shoot and move again. Turn; shoot 3 targets on the move. Get to the door way and engage 3 more targets, two pieces of steel, and two flip up targets. Being subjected to more devious flip and disappear targets I was racking my brain figuring out the shooting order. Hey, wait a minute! These targets just flip up and stay there. Like I said before, this match was IDPA friendly to the max. Engage your targets as you see them and shoot them in the proper order and no problems. Of course, if you got a little adventurous, shooting the two pieces of steel just might leave you open to a cover call from the very observant SO's.

Stage 2 was the laugh riot of the day. Cindy B. provided the entertainment on this one. Picture a hallway running in both directions and you're



at the middle. There where targets at each end of the hallway and then hallways at each end with a door somewhat in the middle. The CoF required that you shoot the left target first, then the right, then head left to the first hallway for two targets, then to the doorway for two targets, then to the end of the hall for another target and a popper which activated a target back at the doorway. Cindy was psyched for this one. Go for broke! Sydney or the

bush (look it up)! She tore off to the left, whaled on those two targets and then charged down the hallway, past the door, with the SO yelling Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Is that an IDPA command? Suddenly there is a cloud of dust, flying gravel and Cindy is back peddling as fast as she can to get to the door. Four fast shots, then back to the end of the hallway, another cloud of dust as the screeching halt occurs, three shots, clang as the popper falls, another cloud of dust as she takes off for the door and two more fast shots on the flip target. The SO, with a somewhat bewildered look, says "if you are done running around unload and show clear." I think she still had FUN!

Stage 3 and 4 were our last stages and you are probably glad of that after reading this. I think we enjoyed the SO more on this stage than any other



stage because he was the kind of SO that enforces the rules with a smile and makes you at ease knowing that this guy not only knows his stuff but he wants you to have FUN! Stage 4 was a seated Langdon 9 with Tactical Sequence to the bodies and then 3 head shots. Key point here is, do not sit on your concealment garment as it really screws up your draw. After the Langdon 9, you refreshed the gun and head down to the DOOR. The DOOR was the fun part of this SO's spiel. This was his favorite DOOR. You should not abuse his DOOR by kicking or violently opening it. This DOOR was your friend. You should love this DOOR. This DOOR was going to keep you safe from the BG's on the other side. If you abuse his

WV IDPA State Championship

DOOR then he was more than willing to part with a procedural even though he did not want to issue procedurals because issuing procedurals just made him so unhappy. The whole idea was to use the DOOR for cover while you shot and open it only far enough to engage the targets. This SO was one of those rare ones that keep's you from committing procedural suicide and makes you have a smile on your face while he is doing it. Kitty made the SO's day when she uttered those famous words - "Does this holster make my butt look big?" He could only look, grin, and say "I don't think I am qualified to answer that."

So we were done. Our first WV State Match was in the books. These are just some accounts of the match with some comments for Lew Soccorsi and his staff and for you to mull over and to consider attending the WV Match for next year. Lew, thank you for a great match it could not have been better and it was a fun way to spend the first Saturday in August. The match was excellently run and organized as everything scheduled was on time and as far as I could tell, was in its place and working as required. A little more info to the attendees via email would have been nice prior to the match date but not necessary. Lew, your SO's were excellent. My hat's off to the SO on Stage 1 who was obviously hurting but kept the match flowing and he and his wife and son did a great job. The registration was quick and efficient with no hassles that I could see. All the staff was friendly and outgoing to the competitors and did everything for our squad that they could to make it a very pleasurable and enjoyable experience. And there was plenty of cold water for everyone. Lew, your intervention with the rain gods was appreciated and while I don't know how you arranged for that nice cloud cover during the morning, it was nice to have.


The stages were, from my point of view, excellent and exactly in the spirit of IDPA. I know some might

take issue with the security guard concept but I thought that as far as things went, the scenarios were plausible, the required engagements of targets was challenging enough for everyone from a novice to a master, and that if you didn't enjoy the match and have FUN then you were too focused on winning it and not enjoying the experience.

Also, did you know that ODIMS-NEP is also a prognosticator not to be confused with a procrastinator? After watching Cindy B. shoot on Stage 5 the Lady of the Manor said that "she is really good!" And I said, in my pontificating fashion, that she really is good and she is going to be a master class shooter shortly. Well I knew my prediction would come true sooner or later but I didn't think it would be as soon as it did. On the way home I got a cell call from an excited Cindy yelling in the phone "welcome me to the master class I did it." You know that was just as good as a win for me hearing that call. So when you see our

Cindy B. at the next match or before be sure to congratulate her on shooting her way into SSP MASTER! Congratulations Cindy! Now stop running by those doors.

Lew, please share my ramblings with your staff because I do have to say that from the young lady with the leg brace who manned the registration table, to the young fellow who found our shooters' bags, to the Scorekeeper who took our score sheets on Stage 5 and to that great SO on Stages 3 & 4 who protected his door; they were all wonderful! I had a good time at the CC but your match ranked right up there with it.

Well that's all for now. Remember, we are playing with dangerous toys so first and foremost, always be safe and remember the 4 rules of gun handling safety and then have FUN! We want you back at future IDPA matches with only the holes in you that your Maker gave you in the first place. 



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what we wanted. Manny is a master class USPSA shooter and his years of designing awards for shooters is clearly reflected in the quality product he delivers on a timely basis at a competitive price. Shirts were ordered from Corporate Shirts, an on-line Indiana based company and they delivered a first-class product for us. Score sheets were designed by us and printed locally. In order for us to keep our match fee low, we did not supply COF books. The COF's were emailed to all shooters in advance of the match in a PDF file. The layouts were kept non-specific to prevent shooters from setting them up and practicing in advance. COF descriptions were posted at each bay printed on targets by a local friend of the shooting sports who has a sign business.

We did not promise a prize table but we felt it would be a nice touch and could be a distraction for the shooters while we were waiting on scores to be completed at the end of the match. We sent letters to 100 vendors we felt would be supportive of IDPA major matches. It was decided whatever quality prizes we received would be handed out in a way that made sense rather than just at random. In our experience, too many times a shooter wins something they can't use or don't want. We decided each

shooter would receive 5 raffle tickets and the prizes would be laid out on tables with a cup labeled for each item alongside. The shooter had the option of dividing up his/her tickets and depositing them in the cups for the drawing for the items they hoped to win at the completion of the match.

Here is how the match went. Everything was in place on the Wednesday before the match. All we needed was for the weather to cooperate. We had sufficient staff



to set the entire match up on the Thursday before the match. It was a warm, sunny fall day in Indiana and everything went according to plan. Friday morning brought us cold rain and wind. We stapled up the targets anyway and covered them with plastic bags. One group of staff shot the entire match early, nearly all in pouring rain. The remainder of the staff started around noon and shot in rain for a couple hours and then the skies

cleared. Saturday morning arrived and the sun started to poke through for just a few moments. Overall it was cool and blustery but fortunately we stayed dry. We ended up with 85 shooting on Saturday. The day started with a shooters meeting. We had a semi-shotgun start in that shooters were initially assigned to a bay/squad for their first COF's. After completing these COF's, the shooter could move about at will and shoot any place, any time there was an opening. This may sound chaotic but in fact it was very orderly and it paid dividends at lunchtime. Lunch was made available for two hours and shooters could go to the club house to eat when they desired. This semi shotgun start clearly allowed us to keep the match running at lunchtime and it lightened the burden for our kitchen crew so they did not have to try to serve over 100 people lunch all at the same time. The first shooters to complete the match finished in 5 hours and it took 6 ½ hours overall for the match to be completed. Tear down was complete and we were off the range before dark. The match directors asked groups larger than 6 to split up at lunch time and made sure no large groups were creating a backup in the afternoon.

The COF's were challenging for all shooters but not so difficult as



A Major Match In Nine Weeks

to be impossible for new shooters. We had no equipment failures or major disputes over COF descriptions or rules. Each bay had two or three COF's and the shooter shot each in succession at the direction of the CSO and reloading between each scenario. Here is brief description of some of our more interesting COF's. "Thanks for the Gun Harry" was a scenario featuring a downed bank guard. The shooter was required to engage two threat targets while moving to retrieve the bank guards "J" frame revolver and use it to engage a remaining threat with at least three rounds from it. Most people had so much fun they shot all five rounds with the snubie. Next door the shooter found "Shootout At The OK Corral 2008" a challenging 12 round COF which required the shooter to engage a total of three drop-turners that were activated by poppers that were partially obstructed by flanking poppers locked in placed and painted black as dedicated hard cover. Center stage were three COF's centered around a theme of a night gone bad while picking up a significant other from work at "Sonny" notorious biker bar. The first COF in this bay, "Shoot Out At Sonny's. It's Going To Be A Bad Night", simulated a holdup outside the bar with the shooter being threatened by three perpetrators while attempting an ATM withdrawal outside of the bar. The shooter was required to take cover and engage targets from either side of a truck. This was fol-

lowed immediately by a twelve round "blind" COF, "Shoot Out At Sonny's. It's Cleanup Time", which required the shooter to enter a shoothouse without a prior walk through and engage a variety of well-concealed targets including two reactive steel PT droppers from Action Target. These were the first threat targets encountered and we stipulated they had to fall before the shooter could advance for safety reasons. We had originally intended for the targets in this scenario to be garbed in a variety of outfits to encourage target identification by the shooter. Due



to the inclement weather the day before, we settled on a mix of non-threats, threat targets and targets painted black as hard cover to make things interesting. The final scenario in this bay and the personal favorite of the author was "Shoot Out at Sonny's, Do or Die", which simulated a last moment rescue of the significant other held hostage. This challenging COF required



the shooter to neutralize a threat target with one shot to the head using an overturned table as cover with only one round in the firearm. Strategic placement of a non-threat target made this a challenging shot at three yards. This was a Vickers count course and a miss on the threat target or a hit on the non-threat necessitating a reload was a costly error. In the adjacent bay, the shooter found a devious and tight-quarters COF, "Shop Stickup" which required the shooter to open a door, load an empty forearm laying on a table, and shoot fast to engage two disappearing reactive targets in addition to utilizing cover to engage the remaining threat targets. On the backside of the range, "The Racing Crackhead" was a fast six round COF requiring the shooter to engage six staggered targets with one round each starting far to near. The closest target required a head shot. This COF was designed to simulate a charging, drug-crazed opponent. The finale of our 20 scenarios was "Spinal Tap" which was a quick two round COF requiring the shooter to precisely place one



A Major Match In Nine Weeks



round in each of two targets. The scoring zone was a two inch wide strip from mid target to the top of the head. These targets were placed at seven yards and were designed to simulate the marksmanship required for air marshal qualification and the need for a solid central nervous system hit to effectively and rapidly neutralize a target.

The lunch of chili and burgers prepared by our non-shooting spouses was a big hit and welcome on this cold day. Our small clubhouse was at times packed full of folks trying to eat and warm a bit before returning to the range for the afternoon of shooting.

After the match was finished we ran the prize table while waiting on scores. The prize table and format we used for the drawing went well. We were not inundated with prizes from vendors given we sent out letters on short notice and many manufacturers had already exhausted their budgets. What we lacked in quantity we made up in quality. We were able to give away a firearm, several certificates for reloading supplies, and some nice gift certificates to name a few. Major match sponsors were IndianaJim.

com, Ruger, Para-Ordinance, Starline Brass, Otis Products, STI and Hogue Grips. We also received nice prizes from Zero Ammunition, Target Barn, Midway USA, Escatech, Woolrich and Indyguncracers.com. We asked the shooters who won the prizes to sign thank you cards which we forwarded to the vendors. We had one scoring glitch we could not explain that we quickly fixed. We did make a mistake in not posting scores periodically throughout the day and allowing sufficient time for everyone to see the final scores before presenting awards. That would have helped us identify the error before final results were available. We also made errors with a father /son team with the similar first names who we signed up in the last few days before the match. We will be extra careful in the future with shooters with the same last names. The awards ceremony was the culmination of a great day for many shooters and the plaques were well received. Due to our lack of experience in providing awards for major matches, we neglected to order division champion plaques. In addition, we ordered plaques based upon the number of registrants at the original match cutoff date since the vendor required sufficient lead time to manufacturer them. With late registration, our shooter ranks increased and we did not have sufficient awards on hand for all shooters who earned them. Fortunately the shooters were understanding and additional awards were mailed out later. We would encourage any one planning on a major match to have a well thought out

plan for awards. The plan should be compliant with the IDPA rule book and spelled out for the shooters well in advance of match day. We felt this oversight tarnished what was otherwise a very good match. After the match, nearly all of the comments were favorable. We did receive some constructive feedback that we will be taking into account in future matches.

Based on our experience, a quality major match in nine weeks is daunting but not impossible. We are going to host another major match in 2009 which is already in the planning phase. We are hoping for one of those typical Indiana fall weekends where it is warm, sunny and complimented by beautiful fall colors. We have work to do. We need to train more SO's and we need to work on the skills of those who gave up vacation and family time to make this event happen. We have sufficient lead time where we can design some more elaborate props and COF's. We firmly believe our concept of a reasonably priced defensive pistol match conceived in the spirit of IDPA with realistic round count COF's is a sound one. We see no reason to emulate other shooting disciplines to attract shooters. Our success with our first major match demonstrates IDPA is unique in the shooting sports and stands on it own merits.



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of rain? A large clear plastic bag that can go around a clipboard can make it possible for an SO to write even if it's raining. Additional plastic bags at the bays can protect the sheets until the fetch-person picks them up.

Transport

Speaking of the score sheet fetch-person... this is a critical job. Some matches may have one person with a golf cart who does both the sheet fetching and cold drink distribution. Larger matches may prefer to separate those duties. It helps if the score fetcher glances at the sheets when s/he picks them up, to make sure all are complete. At SO meetings, the MD needs to encourage SOs not to hoard score sheets – there's usually no reason to wait until an entire squad has finished before giving the sheets to the fetch-person.

Shooter numbers

Nationals assigns shooter numbers based on squad. So if you're limiting your squad size to, say, 12 shooters each, squad 1 will have shooters 1 through 12, squad 2 will have 13 through 24, etc. This is a handy way that you can tell what squad a shooter is in without having to go to the computer or finding a list.

Tracking shooter infractions

At the Nationals matches I've worked, there has been an announced policy that shooters are expected to have compliant equipment. The second time an SO has to tell a shooter to adjust his equipment, the shooter earns a procedural. If the shooter uses more than a single capacity of magazine during the match, he earns a procedural. If you're planning something similar, keep that in mind when you're laying out your score sheets and provide a place to enter the information.

Mistakes

Yes, they happen. At this year's Nationals, we actually made one in the score shack (spoiling Dru's record of a number of years). An SO wrote one stage's scores in another stage's area, then drew arrows to indicate where they were supposed to go. Both our red team and green team got it wrong, and the shooter pointed out

the error after interim scores were posted one night. With the thousands of stage records we entered, I would have been much happier if the SO would have ripped up the incorrect sheet and rewritten the info correctly onto a new score sheet. I'd suggest this be discussed at the SO meeting before the match.

People

Safety Officers

You're surprised I mention them first as far as scoring? But really, it's essential that they write legibly. I know it can be difficult just getting enough SOs to put on a sanctioned match, but I would like to see the SO application have a section where the applicant needs to write maybe a dozen numbers – half as times, half as target points. Even if you're in a situation where you need to accept every certified SO who applies, this may help remind the guys and gals how critical this part of their job is to an efficient match. If you have the luxury to pick and choose, this can be another factor in your selection process.

The Score-Fetch Person

This needs to be somebody reliable. Friendly helps, of course, but the person needs to balance sociability with efficiency of getting the job done.

Filing person

As mentioned earlier, your system may require somebody to sort sheets prior to entry (which Nationals does not). And you're going to need to file sheets after they've been entered. We had four people entering scores at this year's Nationals and traded off filing duties quite comfortably without needing a separate person.

Stats entry people

A prime consideration is that somebody is actually willing to do the job. Having somebody tell you he hates 10-key two hours into a match isn't productive. You also need to be reasonably sure these folks aren't dyslexic.

When I started doing a significant amount of club match scoring (for both IDPA and USPSA), I bought

a teach-yourself-tenkey book from Amazon. A couple of hours practice with such a book can really help with entry speed. But people need to be mature enough to balance speed with accuracy – much as we need to strike that balance while shooting a match. Even with Compare, it takes less time to enter scores correctly the first time than to find and fix an error.

When I'm asked for advice as to how many people and/or computers to use, my first question is the size of the match. Take the number of shooters you expect, multiply by the number of stages, then figure how many score sheets each person is expected to enter each hour (or each minute). If that number seems unreasonable or you're not allowing for any meal or break or down-time, you're probably not planning well.

Network guru

If you're hooking computers together, you need somebody who knows what he's doing. I spent close to two hours at this year's Nationals trying to get an Me laptop to talk to two XP machines. Share and NTFS permissions were set appropriately. Both XP machines could PING the Me machine; it could PING one of the XP machines, but it couldn't PING the other XP machine either by name or by IP address, even after I'd added appropriate entries to HOSTS and LMHOSTS, turned off firewalls, and refreshed the NetBIOS name cache.

If the preceding paragraph is gibberish to you, you need somebody available to whom it won't be!

By far the support calls I've most dreaded have come from people on a cell phone in a score shack during a match who are realizing that they don't know how to hook their computers together and to make them talk. This is a make-or-break issue!

Shooters

Your shooters are part of this process, whether they have to write stage numbers on their score sheets, use the correct barcode label, or just check over their score sheets before initialing them. At the Texas state match I shot a couple of years ago,

the match director announced that anybody sticking the wrong barcode label on his score sheet would get a procedural. We had very few such errors. If a shooter does make such an error, he should be encouraged to mark through the incorrect barcode so the stats staff will notice and deal with it.

Equipment

Computers

Duh. Preferably not running Windows Me... LOL...

Score shacks can be harsh environments in which computers love to develop new problems. Having a spare computer available can be a comfort.

I create a user account for the match.

I use the same user name and password on each machine (some computers get cranky with blank passwords).

When you create any shares, be sure you set both Share and NTFS permissions to permit writing to the data.

Keyboards

Bring a “real” keyboard for each machine.

My 17-inch laptop has a separate number pad on its built-in keyboard. But I’d never DREAM of using it to score a match. I don’t like the separate USB number pads either, as they usually don’t have enough keys. My software lets you go from stage to stage by pressing PageUp or PageDown, so those keys need to be near the number pad the way they are on a “real” keyboard.

At one match that used CCD barcode scanners, one of the barcode scanners appeared to be interfering with an iR keyboard. Just to be safe, use wired keyboards.

Printer

Be sure you’ve figured beforehand what operating systems your computers are running and have the ap-

propriate printer driver(s) on hand. I had to drive back to my motel at the start of one match to download a printer driver. An extra ink or toner cartridge is a good safeguard. If you can possibly have a backup printer (with its drivers) sitting somewhere (or available without too long a drive), that can be of value also. And a second printer cable just in case.

Network stuff

If you’re able to set up a network you’ll need at least a switch and cables.

Barcode scanners (readers)

I’ve tried the cheaper CCD scanners, but highly recommend that you use laser scanners instead. You can often find some reasonably priced on eBay.

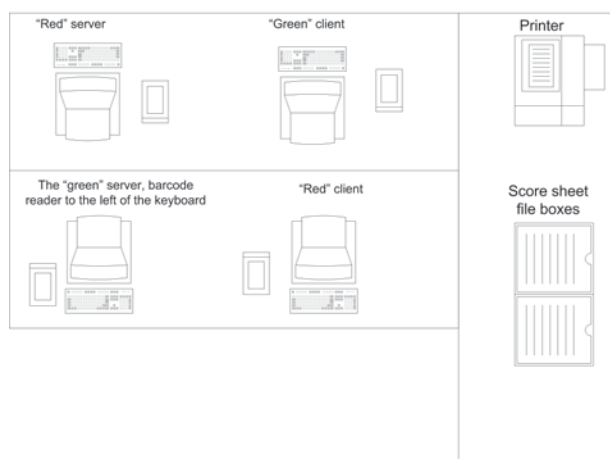


Figure 2.
2008 Nationals score shack layout.

Scanners that are always-on are more efficient than ones you need to pick up and point and trigger.

For the 2007 and 2008 Nationals, I brought some “presentation” scanners that use a pattern that will read a barcode pretty much regardless of its orientation (the scanners look a bit like R2-D2), and a couple of LS47-hundred series scanners that have a brighter single beam. The latter sit in a stand so they are always on and don’t need to be triggered. The computers located directly below the fluorescent light fixtures in the score shack seemed to do better with the brighter scanners. Issues with room lighting are something you might want to check for before

your match.

Miscellaneous

You may need a USB hub for some or all of your machines, depending on how many ports they have and what equipment you’re using. If you’re using a USB barcode scanner, it may need to be plugged directly into the computer or else used with a USB hub that has a power supply.

Bring something for backing up your data during score entry – a flash drive, writeable CDs, etc.

Bring enough AC power strips and extension cords. If the score shack has 2-prong outlets, you’ll probably need adapters.

Room layout

Obviously, you need to make the best of what you have.

Try to figure where glare will be worst and orient computer screens appropriately.

We were lucky- to have a spacious room in Allentown. As Figure 2 shows, we pushed three 10-foot tables together into an “L” shape. Power strips, the Ethernet hub, etc., went down the center of the table between the rows of computers. We were able to pass score sheets side-to-side or across the table, depending on who was available. Scanners to the left of the keyboard

allow you to use the left hand for score sheets and the right hand on the numeric keypad.

The stats system is like the tires or transmission on your car – not particularly exciting, but the car won’t run without them. Stats certainly isn’t the glamorous part of a match, and too often it’s the last thing that’s thought of and one on which people scrimp on resources. Men prefer to focus on the cool stages and shooting challenges... but by golly they want to know their scores!

I hope you can get a few pointers from this to help your next match be a success.

Jane Fleming, A16849, is a Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer who eats tofu in California.

UPCOMING MAJOR MATCHES

February 19 - 21, 2009
2009 S & W IDPA Indoor National Championship
Smith & Wesson Shooting Sports Center
Springfield, MA
Julie Goloski
jgoloski@smith-wesson.com
www.matchreg.com/sw/
Online registration and squadding will go active Dec. 20th at 12:00 EST

February 21, 2009
West TX Regional IDPA Championship
Lubbock, TX
Tony Mollhagen
806-787-0161 h
806-787-0161 w
806-796-2859 fax
shellbadger@sbcglobal.net
Rick Mosley
806-796-2858 w
806-796-2858 fax
patriotfirearms@door.net
www.patriotfirearms.com

February 27 - March 1, 2009
2009 FL State IDPA Championship
Clearwater, FL
Charles Kibert
813-545-2932 h
813-545-2932 w
ckibert@yahoo.com
Brian Boyer
813-949-5439 h
813-949-5439 w
brboyer@tampabay.rr.com
www.fwcdpc.com

March 7, 2009
LA State Championship
Princeton, LA
Brandon Edens
318-539-4115 h
318-539-9706 w

817-549-9706 fax
texbran@cmaaccess.com
Kyle O'Glee
318-680-4781 h
318-539-3622 w
kyleo_3865@yahoo.com
miculekidpa.com

March 19 - 22, 2009
VA Indoor Regional
Chesapeake, VA
John Card
757-477-8227 h
757-855-5807 w
vir2009ncrr@yahoo.com
www.ncrr.net

March 21 - 22, 2009
OK State Championship
United States Shooting Academy
Tulsa, OK
Curt Nichols
e.nichols@cox.net
Jerry Biggs
jbiggs47@cox.net

April 5, 2009
Coastal Bend Challenge
Corpus Christi, TX
Kent Bayer
361-937-7594 h
361-937-7594 w
md@coastalbendchallenge.com
Mark Woerner
361-992-4197 h
361-913-3902 w
cmdrmk8@aol.com
www.coastalbendchallenge.com

April 17 - 19, 2009
2009 NV State IDPA Championship
Las Vegas, NV
Dennis Hull
702-260-0543 w
lvidpa@mac.com
Bob Johnson

702-370-8989 w
bej13@juno.com
www.lasvegasidpa.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

April 25, 2009
2009 IDPA SC State Championship
Columbia, SC
Phil Folkers
803-414-1324 h
803-414-1324 w
idpa.2009.sc.match.director@earthlink.net
Richard Hart
803-230-6529 h
803-230-6529 w
rhdesign8@hotmail.com
idpa2009.midcarolinarifleclub.com/

April 25 - 26, 2009
Badlands Regional IDPA Championship
Tulsa, OK
Jack Ostenforf
918-438-2669 h
918-438-2669 w
948-438-2669 fax
jack38@att.net

May 1 - 2, 2009
2009 MD State Championship
Lexington Park, MD
James Jackson
301-274-0214 h

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May 1 - 3, 2009 2009 AZ State IDPA Championship

Tucson, AZ
Bob Lee
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925-786-6360 w
520-825-1094 fax
idpa_azstate@yahoo.com
Jo Anne Linneman
520-825-2406 h
www.pimapistol.org

May 9, 2009 AR State Championship

Berryville, AR
Carroll Lawrence
Marvelle Stines
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870-545-3400 w
870-545-3819 fax
marvelle1@windstream.net
www.acpl.net

May 16, 2009 Cherokee IDPA Wheelgun Championship

Gainesville, GA
Paul Tod Rieger 404-274-6106
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www.cherokeegunclub.org

June 14, 2009 IL State Championship

Plainfield, IL
Scott Baron
815-609-6537 w
scott@opscdp.com
John Serafin

john@opscdp.com
www.opscdp.com

June 18 - 20, 2009 The Carolina cup

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

June 19 - 21, 2009 PA State Championship

New Tripoli, PA
Kenneth J. Ortbach
908-310-2079 h & w
ppcexecofficer@aol.com
John Plum
908-419-7566 h & w
rkba@comcast.net
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Mike Fielden

423-715-0387 h & w

mfielden@doddtrainging.com

www.doddtraining.com

July 18, 2009

2009 BC IDPA Provincial Championship

Terrace, British Columbia

Bob Bonenfant

250-635-0654 h

250-635-0654 w

rbb@citywest.ca

Dave Bjorkman

250-635-6028 h

t6028@citywest.ca

rodandgun.net

August 15, 2009

2009 WA State IDPA Championship

Renton, WA

Richard Breneman

206-365-1674 h

206-428-0538 w

rick45x8@yahoo.com

Sandy Wylie

206-719-8593 h

206-719-8593 w

s_wylie@2alpha.com

northwestsection.org/

waidpac09

August 15, 2009

NC State IDPA Championship 2009

Boone, NC

Robert Niemi, Jr.

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 15 - 16, 2009

2009 New England Regional IDPA Championship

Harvard, MA

Gene Gelberger

617-901-0461 h

617-901-0461 w

508-796-5150 fax

hipobrow@gmail.com

Michael Joffe

617-803-1307 h

978-528-8057 w

253-322-6675 fax

anotherhooya@yahoo.com

www.metrowesttactical.com

August 29 - 30, 2009

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616-644-0369 w

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901-233-7557 w

ljhill3@comcast.net

Myrin Young

901-826-3300 h

901-826-3300 w

twoalpha@comcast.net

www.tri-state-regional.com

October 24, 2009

2009 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

October 24 - 25, 2009

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Moyock, NC

Jim Wilson

804-347-6790 h

turbomarine@yahoo.com

Ron Reiner

757-351-3478 w



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