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# Tactical Journal

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

First Quarter 2013  
Volume 17 - Issue 1

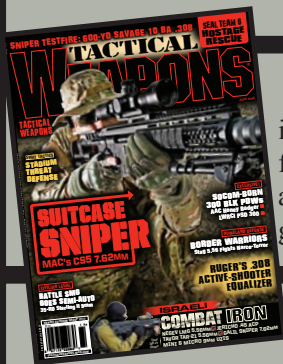
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# Shooter Ready

Letters to the *Tactical Journal*

The Tactical Journal welcomes letters to the editor for "Shooter Ready". Send your letters to "Shooter Ready" IDPA 2232 CR 719 Berryville, AR 72616 Email: editor@idpa.com

## Strike a Balance

While first reading "Easier Does It" by Thomas Pinney, I found myself rolling my eyes wondering if he really thought shuffling around the same four targets in an open field was the essence of the perfect COF for a match. I know that, even as a mediocre shooter, I often travel up to five hours on a given Sunday in order to compete at more challenging matches and pass by the nearer club which actually sets up six stages in two bays by shuffling around the same number of targets in each bay.

But there is merit to his idea and I submit the 'Citrus Challenge' at CFRPC in Orlando as an example. This annually sanctioned, fall match, incorporated 10 COF's with more than 120 shooters and finished the day by 3 p.m. No bay had more than 2 movers; there were no marathon sprints and no belly flopping, although there were a couple of low cover situations required. The trade off was that half the stages required three shots each but, at least, it succeeded in getting away from the '6 shot-move' groupings which seem to haunt every match. A half minute in total time separated the first from the 10th shooter and more than 2 minutes stood between the first and the middle contestant, plenty of time difference between the best and the rest.

There wasn't as much 'buzz' about the stages as say, the Georgia State Match with a myriad of elaborate pneumatic movers, but even Georgia needed a quarter of its stages to be three shots each. In the real world there are lots of things in the way, everything continuously moves and you usually have immediate feedback if you hit an opponent. But this is a competitive game, not defensive training. Remembering that shooters are seeking both as we compete creates the best matches.

Randall Milan-Williams A37273

*I believe that the key is striking a balance. Quick shoot'em ups, long field courses, complicated props, open field of targets, long movement and stand and fight. You need all of these to make a good IDPA match. So sometimes a single club match may get unbalanced one way or the other but the next match should go back the other way. This leads to fresh ideas and ways of looking at things and thus better stages and continued exciting matches. The key is not getting pulled too far one way or the other and especially not mistaking gimmicks as shortcut to keeping a match challenging and entertaining.*  
Editor

## New Trick

The Central Carolinas Shooting Club recently held a classifier using the system described in Volume 16-2 of the Tactical Journal and it was a great success. Not only did it shorten the overall time to shoot the classifier but there were additional benefits. The workload on the Safety Officers was reduced, each shooter had a chance to look at their targets before pasting and the faster pace kept everyone involved. Kudos to the Ontelaunee Rod & Gun Club for this great idea.

Ben Lochary A37490

*I am always looking for a way to speed things up without sacrificing quality. I'll be using this at our next classifier as well and lend my voice to Ontelaunee for passing the idea around.*  
Editor

## Everyone Wins

Two years ago I had no desire to pick up a gun but when my dear husband purchased a home defense firearm he insisted that I learn to use it. So with much fear and trepidation I allowed

him to drag me onto the shooting range. Even with his training, I was very uncomfortable handling a gun, so he went with me to the NRA Basic Pistol course which I highly recommend to anyone wanting to understand all the aspects of safely handling a firearm. (I was the only woman in the class and my husband was the envy of all the other husbands there!) While at the class they took us to the range and helped us learn to shoot. One of the instructors was a woman, older than I am, and a bulls-eye shooter. I was inspired!

I was a 2-sport college athlete, but after having four children and dealing with a couple of life's curve balls, at age 50-something I doubted that there would ever be any chance for me to participate in a fast paced competitive sport again. I had accepted that I would have to be satisfied with my glory days from college and my more recent accomplishment-Candyland champion. As I began shooting I discovered that in many ways it was similar to basketball-putting a round object through a small hole-and that many of the breathing and sight acquisition skills I needed were already innate from my college sports training. Something started to awaken in me. For Christmas I asked for a .22 pistol and Santa (my dear husband) left me one under the tree. I spent all winter and spring at the range plinking away. I also got used to shooting the home defense firearm and my fear of the "big bang" and the recoil began to dissipate as I worked on grip, trigger pull and shooting stance.

Shortly after this my husband obtained a license to carry and we soon realized that our home defense system (my dear hubby and his gun) was not always home when I was, so he bought me a compact pistol to have at my disposal. The .22 soon started gathering dust because I discovered that 9mm was much more fun! (And again, my dear husband encouraged me with plenty of

(Continued on page 28)

**Letters should be typewritten but legible handwriting is acceptable. Letters must be less than 350 words. We reserve the right to edit all published letters for clarity and length.**

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# IDPA

## Tactical Journal

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DEFENSIVE PISTOL ASSOCIATION

February 2013

Volume 17 Issue 1

### FEATURED ARTICLES

16

#### 2012 European Cup

Dru Nichols



22

#### More Tips for Working with IDPA Members...

Al J. Noll

25

#### IDPA - Shooting with Style

Elizabeth (Libby) Messler



25

### COLUMNS

3

#### Shooter Ready

6

#### Run a Better Match

Ted Murphy

8

#### From a Woman's Perspective

Kitty Richards

12

#### Random Shots

Thomas Pinney

14

#### Through the Eyes of a Junior Shooter

Austin Proulx

15

#### IDPA Pro Tips

Robert Vogel



8

### FROM HQ

11

#### Let our New Year's resolution be this...

Joyce Wilson

30

#### Upcoming Major Matches



11

#### PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING:

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# Run a Better Match Build a Better Club

by Ted Murphy A02127



This year has certainly started off with high drama and stress. We have a renewed political attack on our rights, as well as panic buying and shortages of shooting gear. I hope you have enough ammunition and components for your match and practice routines. If not, now is the time to learn the value of good dry fire practice. I hope that in a few months things will be less hysterical and we can get back to business.

We will soon face an assault on our rights, our sport and our way of life. Now is the time for all of us to band together and stand tall. Be sure your memberships to pro-Second Amendment organizations are current. Now is not the time to sit on the sidelines. If you do not belong, join. It is that simple. Be sure to write your elected officials. Stand up for your rights. You must stand up with our fellow shooters of all disciplines and never agree to compromise. IDPA may be a ten round sport, but the right to own a twenty-eight shot open gun is just as precious and worth fighting for. Make sure we do not let the Antis divide and conquer. Stand Tall!

As some of you know, my wife Melissa has been rather ill. She has gone through several procedures but now is on the road to recovery. She still cannot shoot, but she is getting better every day. I want to thank those of you who have been so gracious with your cards, letters, gifts, and words of support. They meant a lot to both of us. We hope Melissa can return to matches by late spring.

## Shooting

I had a moment of foolishness earlier this year. I decided to chronograph before a match at my home club, so I got up early at 5:00 AM to load some test ammunition on my Dillon 550B. A 9mm non-toxic case worked its way into my brass supply, and when I put it in the first station, it jammed up the priming system. In my haste to remove the case I forgot to manually index the machine, which caused me to double charge the case sitting in the second station.

I discovered this double charge at the

chronograph. The next to last round went off like a freight train! When the dust settled, I looked over things as I massaged a sore cheek. I was using my wife's Springfield 1911 in 9mm with a fully ramped barrel. The double charge totaled 9.8 grains of Autocomp powder. When that powder was ignited, the extremely high pressure caused the case to blow out. The gas went down the magazine well and sheared the welds of the Metalform brand magazine's base plate. The base plate bounced off the table, hit my cheek, and flew 60 feet behind me. The gas that blew out of the magazine well flattened a ballpoint pen on the table. One end of the base plate had a rubber pad and the other had two sheet metal screws protruding. I am most grateful to have been hit in the face by the rubber pad instead of the pointy screws. There was one round left in the magazine and the bullet was damaged and pressed deep into the case.

## A view of the blown case and my destroyed magazine



There was nothing wrong with the pistol, a tribute to John Browning's design and Springfield's craftsmanship. It was black and filthy, but nothing had been broken. I had a gunsmith check it out, and he said the gun was fine. All I lost was a magazine, and I gained some more grey hairs. I suppose one could say this is proof the manual index style of reloading press is no good, but I made the mistake. I have loaded many hundred thousands of rounds, this was the first (and I hope, last) time carelessness bit me in the ear. I do not think I will try to reload anything at 0500 anymore.

**Officiating**

When you are working as a Safety Officer, part of your job is to make sure the stages you work are legal and safe. If you come across stages that are not legal, or that may be unsafe, you must act upon it. It is easy for you to shrug and work the stage, but it is not the right thing to do. You really need to step up and tell the Match Director your concerns. The MD may have missed that detail and appreciate the heads up.

What kind of things should you look for? Keep an eye out for any kind of "trap" against the Safety Officer. Make sure there is not a choke point where you will get jammed, a low hanging object, or trip hazard. Look for anything protruding that may cut or otherwise injure someone. Go through the stage with an imaginary shooter and make sure that you can get around the stage without any kind of problem. Check the footing, and make sure no one will slip. Make sure there are muzzle safe points set out. Look for any places where the muzzle safe points are too tight and

will cause unnecessary disqualifications. This "Reality Check" will stop problems before they happen. Being proactive is better than having to say, "I should have done something about that."

Several months ago, I was at a match that had the shooter begin in a room. There were walls downrange, uprange and to the right. On the right hand wall there was a doorway. The shooter had to engage targets to the left and then back out of the door to the right. When the first shooter came up, the SO went in the room and stood on the shooter's strong hand (right) side. The shooter drew, shot to the left and then retreated out the door. The SO realized too late that he was pinned in the corner and could not back out. All of a sudden, he was in front of the shooter's muzzle. This is an example of an SO trap and not a great stage. You need to make sure that you can always navigate the course of fire without being in danger of falling or getting muzzled by the shooter.

Know the Course of Fire Rules and be sure the stage you work is legal. Check out the number of non threat targets and the amount of steel. Make sure they comply with their respective ratios. Check the target distances and the amount of movement in a stage. One of the most overlooked CoF rules is the maximum distance of 15 yards of movement in a stage. Walk it off if you are not sure.

Another problem for the Safety Officer is he will occasionally run into the stage that is, to be blunt, just plain stupid. I am talking about the types of stages the rulebook warns us about, such as the "revenge of

(Continued on page 34)

**Be sure to weigh the pros and cons of a shoot house**





*"A Dynamic Female Duo Starts an*

### **...in the Shadow of The Big Apple”**

As I walked down the streets of Hudson, NY, I was getting pretty worried. Billed as “Upstate’s Downtown”, the lively burg was filled with visitors from the Big Apple, who use the Columbia County location as their playground. On each block filled with art galleries and upscale boutiques, I saw small, ecologically correct electric cars with stickers touting politically correct sentiments - not one SUV or NRA sticker to be found! The next day, I was scheduled to teach an IDPA Safety Officer class less than 5 miles away. What kind of people would I meet there, and how could a brand new IDPA club survive in such an urban, firearm intolerant area so close to New York City? The club was being started by two women from the area – what kind of folks would be attending this class? Visions of protestors from the city clouded my thoughts as I drove to the club the next day.

My relief may have been evident when I met Trish Cutler and Debbie Singer, Co-Match Directors of

the Columbia Pistol Action League (CPAL). These ladies were down-to-earth, excited and committed to the sport. Trish’s calm demeanor and organizational skills put me at ease immediately, especially when she introduced herself as a “shooting Grandma”, who lives to shoot but also loves to hike, plan parties, bake and decorate. She is the pistol permit clerk in Columbia County, which she says gives her an opportunity to meet many people. “I started shooting under the guidance of Dave Lydon, a retired police officer and military police Major in the US Air Force, and Ray Dalrymple, an ex-military firearms instructor. Another young man by the name of Keith Gibson offered to instruct me in a more tactical approach to shooting. Keith introduced me to IDPA.” (Most of us remember Keith from Season 3 of The History Channel’s Top Shot).

Debbie Singer, a vivacious brunette with an irrepressible spirit, came to shooting via a different route. “I was dating a retired state trooper and he let





# From a Woman's Perspective

...IDPA Club..."

by Kitty Richards A18564

me shoot his Glock. I had my pistol permit since 1998 but never did anything with it. As soon as I shot his Glock - I was hooked and the next week bought my Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm. That is when I meet Trish as she is in charge of the pistol permits, we hit it off instantly!"

Starting an IDPA Club was a great idea, and Trish explains how they began. "My friend, Keith, convinced me to shoot an IDPA match in Dutchess County after we had completed our first shooting lesson. We attended IDPA several times, which is where we met the match director, Russ Leibler and professional shooter, Mark Redl, who shoots for Colt. I enjoyed the competition so much that I wanted to go every chance I could. However, it was tough to make it to the club matches on time after work because it was over an hour away. I began looking for similar shooting sports in our area and found none, so I approached Keith about helping me start up something in Hudson. I was already a member of a club, it had

a good range, and I knew that I could recruit a ton of people who I would meet through work. All I needed was the experienced shooter to be a safety officer and Keith was more than willing. Russ and Mark came to our initial meetings to present IDPA to the Board of Directors. In less than two months we were up and running and held our first match with 23 shooters in attendance."

Trish was motivated by what she saw at work: "From my position as Pistol Permit Clerk, I have seen a huge increase in hand gun owners and daily requests for information on where people could go to learn how to shoot. The fact that large numbers of people who carry did not have a clue how to properly draw, shoot and move with their gun in a safe manner was a concern to me. The recent surge in permit holders, (a large percentage being women), gave me the idea to address the issue in such a way that it was seen as a need to be safe and a fun sport."

(Continued on page 32)



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# A Message from Joyce Wilson, IDPA Executive Director



**“Let our New Year’s resolution be this:  
we will be there for one another  
as fellow members of humanity,  
in the finest sense of the word.”**

I feel like these words from former Swedish Prime Minister Göran Persson speak directly to me as I take stock of IDPA in 2012 and plan for our future. The last quarter of the year presented us with some challenges as individuals and as an organization. Political winds change quickly, and the recent heartbreaking spate of shootings, perpetrated by madmen, have made towns like Newtown, CT and Webster, NY, part of our daily lexicon. Every firearm owner in our country faces a challenge from proposed legislation that threatens our rights and our sport. We must gird up for the battle, and remember who is behind these proposals. Now is **not** the time to argue or cast aspersions on the character of other members or other shooting sports; we must stand together, as I fear we underestimate the lengths to which our foes will go to separate us from our firearms.

As IDPA members, how can we fight back? I encourage you to renew your membership and participation in our sport, and other shooting sports that feed your passion. Remember that the NRA has a legal entity whose sole purpose is to represent us, and other organizations, like the GOA, IDPA Tactical Journal First Quarter 2013

also perform that service. Most importantly, on a grass roots level, take a new shooter to the range and introduce them to the joys of shooting. *“Let us be there for one another...in the finest sense of the word.”*

A supporting goal in this effort is one that is close to my heart, and that is to increase the participation of women in our sport. Toward that end, I will be



speaking at the inaugural National Conference of A Girl & A Gun Women’s Shooting League: *Breaking Barriers*. I encourage all of our female shooters to consider attending this March 22-24 event in Waco, TX, which will include live-fire classes and classroom sessions from speakers on relevant topics such as self defense and competition. For more information, see the sign up page at <http://>

[www.agirlandagunclub.com/conference-2013](http://www.agirlandagunclub.com/conference-2013).

An exciting announcement, made shortly before Christmas, was the location and dates for our 2013 and 2014 IDPA Nationals. We are happy to be returning to the USSA range in Tulsa, OK, for the next two years. I hope to see many of you there in September of this year!

Our Tiger Teams continue their work and are seeing light at the end of the tunnel. Many thanks to those members and teams who continued to meet through the holidays to get us closer to our goal of a new rulebook. Our **Match Administration Team** completed their work Christmas week. The **SO Education (SOE) Team** continues to meet; they are creating the curriculum that will be used for previous

Safety Officer recertification and new SO certification; they have also selected and will be deploying an on-line testing software that will be used for SO testing purposes. Their work will continue through the better part of Q1.

The HQ Team, Robert Ray, Terry Burba, Kitty Richards and I look forward to seeing many of our members in February for the Smith &

(Continued on page 28)

# Random Shots

## "Practice, Practice"

by Thomas Pinney A24541



There are many IDPA shooters to whom the letters IDPA stand for 'I Don't Practice Any'. These shooters are not likely to significantly improve no matter how many years they have been competing. Some of us have so much fun in competition that we sometimes lose sight of the fact that the name of the organization is 'defensive pistol' not 'pistol competition.' Of course, some IDPA members are uninterested in competing in competitions; their motivation is to improve their shooting for potential self defense scenarios. Pistol competition is

our hobby, but is also one that may allow us to better defend ourselves. Our matches are a useful way to practice operating our firearms more safely and efficiently. However you view it, practice is crucial to successful performance.

Most of us practice in order to perform better in competitions. Competitive matches are crucial to the success of our organization. There are currently four types of IDPA matches: Classifier, Sanctioned, Club, and Practice matches. Classifiers are not really competitive; they are designed to provide a reliable benchmark for our performance. Sanctioned or major matches are the big events that allow us to compete against large numbers of our peers on challenging courses of fire. These are the events that shooters train for and brag about – and properly so. Sanctioned matches are where awards are handed out and shooters get 'bumped' to higher classifications. Club matches, sometimes called monthly matches, are local events that are usually smaller, more local, and with fewer stages. Although they can be enormous fun, the winners of these events just get 'bragging rights' in their club; until the next match. Practice matches are, strictly speaking not real IDPA matches at all. These small local matches are not so much designed to allow competitors to sharpen their skills but are social events and can also allow new and infrequent shooters

to have the opportunity to practice with their firearms in a safe and enjoyable setting. Clubs may run practice matches two to four times a month. Although all IDPA rules and safety requirements are still in force, practice matches tend to be much less formal.

If you want to improve your shooting skills, it is not just enough to go out and shoot at your club's monthly and practice matches. That will only help you to a point. In order to really get better you will have to engage in focused and meaningful practice to improve your skills. This means not just practicing but practicing correctly. As the saying goes, "practice makes permanent but only perfect practice makes perfect." It is worse than useless to systematically repeat the same mistakes. Before practicing, make sure what you are doing is going to help improve your shooting. Fortunately, it is relatively easy to get that sort of assistance. IDPA shooters are usually most gracious about offering hints and tips on how to best practice. There are also many instructional video clips on the internet as well as books and videos you can purchase to help improve. By far the best way to become a better competitive shooter is to work with a professional instructor. It is the equivalent of a golfer engaging a club pro or paying a fitness instructor to show you the right way to exercise. The cost in hiring a professional for a given level of improvement in your shooting will probably be less than the cost of ammunition if you spend the same time trying to learn the best ways to shoot on your own.

There are three different types of

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practice covering two disciplines; basic shooting competencies and competition skills. Basic skills are the bedrock of successful shooting of any kind. The fundamentals of grip, drawing, sight picture, and trigger control are crucial to shooting at any level no matter what the context. Practicing for competition skills is focused on more specific skills that are typically involved in IDPA-type matches.

Practice can be either dry or live firing. Dry firing is done without using any ammunition. This is by far the easiest type of practice since you can do it at home; it is also the cheapest and safest. It is not completely safe, however. An inadvertent discharge is always embarrassing; it can also be costly and even tragic. One of the skills you should be practicing is that of gun safety. Check and double check that your gun is unloaded before beginning dry firing and always treat the gun as though it were not. There is a persistent urban legend about a man who would practice dry firing his firearm at his big screen TV – with predictable (and expensive) results. Most modern pistols can be repeatedly dry fired without damage to the pistol; for those exceptions, plastic ‘snap caps’ can provide protection. Practicing without ammunition is the very best way to develop reliable muscle memory for fundamental movements such as drawing, establishing a sight picture, transitions from one spot to another, and reloading. When you consider the actions taken in a normal scenario, reducing the time for each of these actions by just a fraction of a second can make a big difference in your total time

for a match. Further, by building good habits in these basic, often repeated actions you no longer have to use your conscious mind to think about them. If you practice them correctly at home, they will happen automatically on the range. Because it is safe, convenient, and inexpensive dry firing should be the major portion of your practice.

Dry firing will improve your shooting but it is not enough in and of itself. Until recently the only way to move beyond dry firing

was to put rounds down range. Now, however, some sporting goods stores are offering electronic simulators which are the next best thing to live firing. Although not an exact duplicate for real shooting the experience is close enough to help you advance your skills. In addition to electronic images of familiar targets such as silhouettes, plates, and poppers, electronic simulators can also have representations of targets not readily available in the real

(Continued on page 38)



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# Through the Eyes of a Junior Shooter

by Austin Proulx  
A39722

## Priorities of the junior shooter

Prioritizing, the act of deciding what comes first in your life, deciding what one thing is more important than another. If you're like me, shooting is right near the top of the list. For a younger person, prioritizing is a huge part of learning responsibility. Setting priorities is a way of organizing your life. Usually, people will tell you that school comes first. Sure, that's great, education is extremely important. But where is the young person, the junior shooter in particular, to go from there?

Aside from school, what is most

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important to you? Buying a video game, or ammo? Going to see a movie, or doing dry fire practice? Obviously, there is usually time for both; however occasionally you will have to choose. What it really comes down to is budgeting your time, money, and focus. Some of your focus and time will be taken up by school; some money will be taken up by other pursuits, and so on and so forth. There are only so many hours in the day, and time spent on one thing is time lost potentially doing another.

So, what do you spend your time doing? What else should you be doing? And how will you change your schedule to fit the more important of the two, if you can't do both? These three questions are critical to accomplishing what you have to do, while still having time for the other things you want to do. If you want to shoot (and your parents are like mine), you have to have good grades. If you want to have good grades, you have to spend time studying. Here lies the dilemma of how to budget your "want to do" priorities around your "have to do" priorities. So let's say you study for one hour, and have an hour left to do whatever you want. Do you go see a movie, or do you do dry fire practice in your room? Do you hang out with friends and spend twenty bucks on a dance and gas, or do you save those twenty dollars and put it toward your next major purchase, a new pistol for example. The combinations of

possible situations here are endless. Once again, it all comes down to budgeting your time.

I often have to choose between shooting and spending time with my friends. Ninety percent of the time I'll choose to shoot. When I had to choose between shooting and baseball, I chose shooting. Shooting was the easy choice for me for many reasons. I had been playing baseball since I was five years old, and had advanced to the point of being the lead pitcher on my team. That was when I fell in love with IDPA, and I couldn't make time for both. I chose to pursue shooting over baseball. That's probably the single biggest sacrifice I've made, and I haven't second guessed the choice since.

There will always be some situations in which all the "want to" priorities have to be shoved aside to make room for the "have to" priorities; that's just a fact of life. So, what will your priorities be? As I said before, for me, shooting is right near the top. The IDPA is a unique sport in which I can compete with and against my dad, I get to travel to matches and meet new people, and it opens up other doors for me. This choice is not without sacrifices, but the ones I do make are minor by comparison, and well worth it.

Consider this for yourself, think about your priorities. What will you do to budget your time this year? What order will your priorities be in and how will these decisions affect you? Also, if asked how important shooting is to you, will your answer correspond with the amount of time you dedicate to it over other things?

"If I could only have one gun...I would." AP



I was asked recently to write a "Pro Tip" article here for the Tactical Journal and I of course felt honored and agreed to contribute. I am limited to one specific topic here so I decided to touch on the subject of preparing our pistol and ammunition for a match. It seems a simple enough subject but I believe there is more involved here than what many people realize. It should go without being said, but it is absolutely imperative that our pistol works 100%. This is beyond a doubt one particular item that we must know inside and out. Now it is one thing to see a shooter having multiple problems/malfunions in a match, but what really amazes me is that so often when you talk to that shooter afterwards they don't seem to be concerned with figuring out or fixing the problem. Bottom line is if you have a malfunction you need to do everything in your power to figure out why it happened; that way you can fix it and prevent it from happening again. Remember this is a match, there are no alibis, re-starts or do-over's, you and your pistol get one chance to perform and the result of that is what you're stuck with...good or bad.

Now guns are mechanical objects and anything mechanical is prone to occasional failure. I don't care who you are or what you shoot; if you shoot enough you will eventually have some sort of malfunction. What I have found though, and this is my opinion, is that 90% of the malfunctions people have are preventable. The most important advice I can give is to NEVER change anything concerning your pistol just before a match. If you're going to try something different, anything different (recoil spring, sights, magazines, ammo, etc) make sure you have at least a couple practice sessions with it before the match. Ammunition is often a big problem...if not the biggest. If at all possible try to practice, at least some, with the actual ammunition you will be using in a match. If you reload your own, which most people do these days, be very diligent about it! Do not be concerned about how fast you can crank out rounds, but rather go slow and strive for perfection. For match ammo visually inspecting everything, seeing the powder in every case, and case gauging every round is not out of the question.

## IDPA Pro Tips

### Preparing our Pistol for a Match

by Robert Vogel A14080

We also have the issue of making power factor. In my opinion a chronograph is a must have for even a semi-serious shooter, and an inexpensive one can be had without breaking the bank. It's pretty simple, all you have to do is chrono the exact loads you will be shooting to make sure they make power factor. As a general rule I always aim for 5 over the power floor. As an example if the power floor is 125,000 (we say 125) I will make sure mine average no lower than 130,000. It is not an exact science and with differences in chronographs, humidity and temperature results can vary.

Just as our cars need to have the tires replaced and the oil changed, so do our pistols need to have parts replaced on them. The key here is knowing which parts need to be replaced and then doing so BEFORE that part breaks or fails. This is why it is very important to know your pistol inside and out. Every pistol has at least a few parts that WILL fail if the pistol is used enough. What I like to do is keep track of how many rounds I fire in all my pistols and when a match is 2-3 weeks away I will look at that information. All pistols are different, but slide stop springs and trigger springs for example are parts that will often fail first. Knowing this, if I have more than 4-5 thousand rounds on them I will usually change them before a match just to be

(Continued on page 38)

**We're excited to bring you our new Pro Tips column. Each issue we will bring you tips from different professional shooters. We hope you will be able to use these tips to improve your performance and enhance your enjoyment of your next IDPA match. If you have specific topics you would like our pros to address, please send a short message on that topic to [ProTips@idpa.com](mailto:ProTips@idpa.com)**

# 2012 European Cup

Standing at the top of the world gives you a whole new perspective. I found that out while standing on top of a mountain in Livigno, Italy. That's in the Alps, if you've never heard of it. I hadn't until I made a trip to Italy for the 2012 European Cup. While standing on that mountain top, taking in the beauty and grandeur of my surroundings, I had to ponder the circumstances that led to my current situation.

The whirlwind trip from Brescia the night before seemed a little unworldly. I was given 5 minutes to pack for an overnight trip. Since my computer bag was the smallest bag I had with me, everything in it got dumped all over my hotel room so I could cram a few essentials back into it. When we left Brescia, we were wearing short sleeve shirts and some of us were wearing shorts. We drove through, what seemed to this flat lander, a blizzard and passed road signs warning of avalanches. Now, I was confronted with clear blue skies and snow as far as I could see. It felt like I could see forever from that vantage point. For the first time in my life, I was seeing skiers in person, not on television. Unbelievable, awe-inspiring and humbling are a few of the adjectives that come to mind when thinking of the scenery.

Shortly after the 2011 Inaugural IDPA World Championship, I received a call from Assistant MD Toni "Honey Bunny" Dandreamatteo. It was decided that he was to extend an invitation to me to attend the

2012 European Cup as the head of the stats shack. I made sure I could take the time off and then started making plans to attend.

This isn't like most match reports. I didn't shoot the match. I found several years ago that I'm not quite talented enough to be able to shoot and work the match like most of our dedicated safety officers and staff. Since I like to do the best possible job I can, this means I don't shoot matches; I work them. This story is about the people I met and the experiences I had. I never imagined going to another country. I don't know why. The people I met were truly gracious and welcoming. They made this trip one of the best experiences of my life. After visiting Italy, I want to go back. If that doesn't say something about the people, I don't know what does.

by Dru Nichols CL139

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PHOTO BY Yamil Sued



Match Director Frank Glover, Honey Bunny, CSO Tammy Lyne and I met at the Atlanta Airport before our final flight to Malpensa Airport in Milan, Italy. Arriving at Malpensa Airport, we were met by Marco Pedrana and Elena Cochio. They kindly loaded us up and set off to give us a tour on the way to the hotel. Having been too excited during the trip to sleep, I was fading fast. There's no way I could tell you where we went, but I enjoyed the trip. We stopped to visit a shooting range in an abandoned mine and eat gelato along the way, though not at the same location. When we finally made it to the hotel, we found it was lunch time. After being fed a huge meal, we were sent off to take a nap. Upon waking, I decided it was time to keep my promise of contact to the folks back home. I went in search of internet access and was found by Venezuelan



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shooter, Jorge Sleiman. He saw me and figured I was there for the match and directed me to the dining room. As I walked in, I noticed several shooters congregated there. We had another huge, wonderful meal before I finally managed to get emails sent back home.

We stayed at the Trattoria Gardesana in Brescia, which is owned by Luciano Donnelly and his wife,



Friends Of "Squada Italiana" located in Bergamo, Italy

## 2012 European Cup

Barbara. If you ever get a chance to stay with them, do. They treated us like family and I mean that in the best possible way. If that's how the Donnelly family treats everyone, they should always have a full house. I know I'd like to go back. Should I ever find myself in that part of Italy again, I will go back.

Early the next morning, we headed to the range to prepare for the match. Everyone else started setting up stages and building props while I set up the stats shack. I made sure the computers were networked and all shooters were registered in the scoring software.

When I prepare the stats shack for the National or World Championship, I write a list of everything I think I'll need. I ask for advice from the folks in the stats shack, make sure we order everything and take it with

me. This time, I had to rely on someone I didn't know to make sure that everything except the main computer was there. This was a new experience for me. I found that Paolo

Plotegher was my supply man in Calvisano and he did a wonderful job. He was also supposed to be working in the stats shack, but his translating skills were needed elsewhere, so I lost him. However, Tiziana Carrarra took his place as my other data entry person (me being the first one) and she did a wonderful job. She spoke slightly more English than I spoke Italian, which is to say, not much. Sometimes, we had to wait until Paolo or Honey Bunny were available to figure out what the other needed, but for the most part, we managed to make ourselves understood so we could do our jobs.

Getting the stats shack ready doesn't take as long as getting the match ready. I found I had time on my hands and went looking for something to do. There wasn't much I could help with on the range as those preparations were well in hand. Frank Glover and his assistant Honey Bunny, aka 'Toni' were working with Mattia Sgro - native of Livigno, Italy, Carlos Henao and Jorge Sleiman - both of Venezuela, and they were making



good progress.

Wednesday evening, Marco Pedrana was making a stop in his native Livigno on his way to Zurich. Marco was gracious enough to allow two of us to go along to take in the sights. We made a pit stop at Amadini Custom and Ghost International. It was a real pleasure meeting Roberto Amadini and his father. They let us poke around all over the place and seemed pleased to give us a tour. I got to see beautiful guns that were works of art and an inside the waistband holster that was really comfortable. For me to find that type of holster comfortable is a major accomplishment as I have an expanding waistline. The holster is "the Civilian Inside" and can be found on their website at [www.ghostinternational.com](http://www.ghostinternational.com). It fits every pistol I own and me, too!

After leaving the Amadini's, we continued on to Livigno. I



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believe I may have perfected the art of taking pictures from a moving vehicle. Marco was on a schedule and the scenery was just too beautiful. I had to try and quite a few of them came out great. Leaving Tammy Lyne and me in the care of his wife, Emmanuella, Marco proceeded to Zurich to pick up several shooters, including Gordon Carroll, Randi Rogers, Mike Alexander and Tori Nonaka. Tammy and I definitely had the best of that deal. The shooters were just coming off a plane from the US while we were taking in the sites. Emmanuella was a gracious hostess. After showing us around a little, she set us up with a room and gave us the freedom to do what we wanted; which led to me standing at the top of the world the next morning. After driving through a near blizzard the night before, I fully expected to freeze the next day while waiting for our ride back to Brescia and site seeing. Nothing could have been further from the truth. Though I don't know for sure, I suspect the temperature rose at least to 65° that day. After scrambling around to borrow a jacket the day before, I was looking for a place to get rid of it by the time I left Livigno. It was a beautiful day and perfect weather for site seeing. Though this side trip to Livigno lasted less than 24 hours, it made a lasting impression on me.

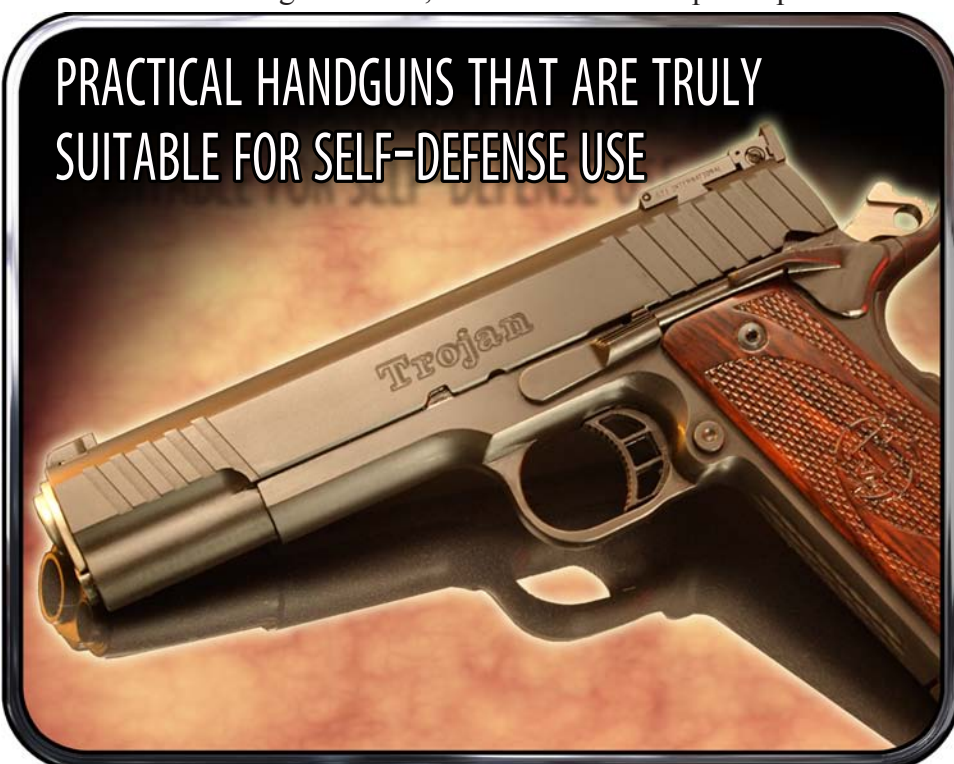
That side trip was also a perfect example of how well we were treated throughout the trip. What I didn't realize before that side trip

was that, if I went, Marco had to arrange extra transportation back to Brescia. Had I realized that he would have to do that, I would never have asked to come along. Marco never batted an eye. He just told me that he would be glad to have me come along. He never once mentioned the problems I was creating for him. Was that side trip a high point for me? You betcha! Was I creating a problem for Marco? I believe I was. He never let on and I didn't know it until later

Compared to what I'm used to, the landscape of Livigno is out of this world. While I've done a fair amount of driving in the US,

this was totally outside my realm of experience. The only thing better than the landscape was the people. Everywhere we went, people went out of their way to be kind to Americans that could speak no Italian except to ask if they spoke English. The folks at the coffee shop were too polite to tell us they weren't open yet. When we asked if coffee was available, they just said "Sure" and set us up. We walked all over the place and people made us feel welcome.

Around noon, Marco arrived with the shooters he'd gone to Zurich to pick up. After lunch, the shooters headed off for an interview and I went back to pack up the few



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belongings with me. Then we were headed back to Brescia. There were 3 vehicles in our little convoy. Andrea Sgro (Mattia's brother) was drafted to drive the trailing vehicle with those of us who were playing tourist on board. Again, I perfected the art of taking pictures from a moving vehicle.

Upon arrival back at Trattoria Gardesana, I found I had a new roommate, Elena Cochio. I speak nothing but redneck English, and while Elena speaks several languages, apparently my brand of English isn't one of them. We managed to communicate after a fashion, but I think she understood much more than I did. We had a good time trying to teach me very broken Italian. She was very patient with me in that regard.



Finally, we came to the 1st day of the match. Friday, safety officers and staff shot the match. I don't recall there being any problems, but that could be because I was still paying more attention to the trip I'd made the day before than the match.

I do remember that I liked the score sheets so well I resolved to make some changes to the score sheets we use at the IDPA National Championship.

Saturday, the 1st batch of regular competitors shot the match. The actual club hosting this match is Shooting Team Livigno. They imported 2 people to make traditional Livigno cuisine for our lunches. While I can't tell you what the food was, the taste was outstanding. The young man drafted into bringing me back from Livigno was one of the cooks and he did a great job. Andrea also tried his best to teach me some Italian. I'm afraid he wasn't successful, but, again, we had a good time in the attempt.

When we arrived back at Trattoria Gardesana for the evening, we found that Luciano and his wife Barbara had been hard at work preparing a feast for us. We all assembled in a semi private dining room and proceeded to drink too much vino and eat too much

food. Of course, after that, we had to get up way too early the next morning to go back for the last day of shooting. Tiziana and I were typing furiously to keep up with shooters and make sure we had no mistakes, but I believe we managed to get scores posted within minutes of last shot fired.

After it was decided there would be no challenges on the scores, I started breaking down equipment in the stats shack. Match Director Frank Glover informed me I was to attend the awards ceremony. What's that old saying... when in Rome? I went to the awards ceremony.

They made the most beautiful laser engraved wooden trophies for the main match with glass trophies for the division champions and sub categories. I had been admiring them for several days. The workmanship was exquisite and the design quite unique. I didn't realize I would be receiving one. I've never received a trophy for scoring a match before. It was a uniquely kind gesture to let me know they appreciate my time and effort. That trophy sits in a place of honor in my home this very minute.

I made an amazing discovery in Italy. As I sat down to enjoy the wonderful meals, I was intrigued to find myself surrounded by at least five different nationalities of people who had all come together because we loved to shoot; specifically IDPA style. One night, I looked around and discovered Italians, Americans, Venezuelans, Russians and Costa Ricans at my table. At the next table over, there were also Romanians. We were all having a great time. I hope to do the same thing next year at the 2013 IDPA European Cup.



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# More Tips for Working with IDPA Members Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing

by **Al J. Noll A19001**

## Communication Methods

The most important thing to know is that deaf individuals are absolutely no different from you. Being deaf in no way undermines their abilities. In fact, deaf people have driver's licenses and pilot's licenses, and they have owned guns for as long as the rest of America. Sure, communicating with a deaf person may be a bit different from what you're used to, but it should not pose an insurmountable obstacle. First, ask the deaf person what the preferred mode of communication is. Within the deaf community, communication methods vary greatly. Some prefer to speak and lipread, some prefer to write back and forth, and others use both methods. Gestures and signs may also be used. The bottom line is to ask the deaf person which communication mode to use.

## Course of Fire

Do not assume that the printed Course of Fire (COF) is comprehensive. I typically receive a hard copy of the COF from the Range Officer, which is very helpful. Sometimes an extra copy of the COF will be posted at each stage, which is a great convenience for both deaf and hearing shooters.

Occasionally I might miss out on important details that

*Refer to the First Quarter (2005) issue of this Journal (Volume 9, Issue 1) for Al Noll's original article outlining recommended accommodations for Deaf and Hard of Hearing IDPA members. This article is a follow up to that article.*

In my 2005 article, I discussed my experiences as an IDPA member who is deaf. With an estimated 33 million deaf and hard of hearing Americans, IDPA has quite a few members who are deaf (*Note: In this article, deaf refers to people who are deaf, hard of hearing, or late-deafened.*)

I continue to have positive experiences participating in IDPA matches, and have attended the Smith & Wesson IDPA Winter Championship in Springfield, Mass., several times. Even so, there's always room for improvement. Below are just a few tips for continued inclusion of IDPA members who are deaf or hard of hearing.

are not mentioned in the COF. For example, I once received a three-second procedural error (PE) because I shot from the top of the barrel. I did not know that shooters could only shoot on either side of the barrel because it was set up as a USPS corner mailbox. I was not told about this requirement, and it was not in the COF. I also had not noticed that the previous three shooters were aiming only at the sides.

In addition, details sometimes change after the COF has been published. The Range Officer should ensure that the deaf shooter is aware of any and all changes.

## Timer Notification

In the original article, I suggested that the Range Officer start tapping the deaf person's shoulder



**Figure 1 - The Range Officer starts moving his hand approximately .25 to .50 seconds before the timer goes off so as to tap the deaf shooter's shoulder at the same time that the timer beeps.**



**Figure 2 - The Range Officer taps the deaf shooter on the shoulder when the timer is very close to going off.**

immediately after the timer goes off. This would cause only a brief delay at each stage. However, if the course includes more than five stages, the delays add up and can affect the results. IDPA Range Officers John Purdy and Russ Liebler at Dutchess County Pistol Association, which I am a member of, devised a better, fairer way: they watch the timer countdown (see Figure 1). When the timer is very close to going off, they tap the deaf person's shoulder (see Figure 2). The deaf person then reacts at the same time as the hearing shooters.

**Other Recommendations (modified from the originally article)**

» Provide a hard copy of the COF (Course of Fire) that the Range Officer/Safety Officer reads aloud to shooters. The deaf shooter needs to know whether it is a Vickers Count or Limited Vickers Count. Make sure that the deaf shooter knows how many shots must be hit on each target. If three rounds are used, the deaf shooter must know the location for the hits; for example, one round must be hit on the head and two rounds must be hit on the target.



**Figure 3 - The Range Officer uses a thumbs-up signal and the shooter then gives a thumbs-up to indicate readiness.**

» Do not ask the deaf shooter to be first or second in line to shoot. Allow him to observe the first two or three people before calling his name. That way,



**Figure 4 - Range Officer signs finger trigger in front of the deaf shooter's face.**



**Figure 5 - The Range Officer uses hand on the deaf shooter's hip to indicate the cover alert.**



**Figure 6 - The Range Officer puts his hand on the deaf shooter's hand for muzzle alert.**



**Figure 7 - The Range Officer taps the deaf shooter's head so he will stop shooting.**

he can observe what the expectations are for each COF.

» When the deaf shooter is at the firing line, use a thumbs-up signal to indicate the go-ahead for loading. The shooter will then give a thumbs-up to indicate readiness. See Figure 3.

### **Alerts and Safety**

It may be a good idea to stay within arm's reach of the deaf shooter for quick communication in case of a finger on trigger alert (see Figure 4), a cover alert (see Figure 5), a muzzle alert (see Figure 6) or a cease-fire (see Figure 7). If there is anything else the deaf shooter should be aware of, let him know immediately. Be sure to agree on how to handle the alerts *prior* to the course.

### **About Al Noll**

*Al Noll is an IDPA member who is deaf. Having completed several classes in addition to advanced firearms training, Noll has participated in a number of IDPA, GSSF and USPSA matches. He is also an NRA-certified pistol instructor, teaching deaf and hard of hearing people about gun safety and the foundations of shooting. He enjoys meeting IDPA members, and welcomes feedback on the above recommendations.*





# IDPA

## Shooting with *Style*

By Elizabeth (Libby) Messler, MA Ed., A42239

Experienced IDPA shooters always look cool. They have the right vest, the right pants, the right shirt, the right hat ... The question is, how do they know exactly what to wear? Let me tell you what I've picked up from shooting with Thunder Tactical Shooters in Conroe, Texas (north of Houston).

While fashion rules change all the time, IDPA is not about fashion. It is about keeping you safe while you're playing the game. Let's get you geared up from the ground up.

### Feet First

Shoes or boots should be appropriate for the range. If you shoot indoors on cement, traction is vital. You don't want to slip while you're running with a loaded gun. At the indoor range where I shoot from time to time, we shoot in one of the two bays; the floor there is slick concrete. Through trial and error, I have found that running or cross-training shoes work well there. A Risky Business slide across the floor with a loaded

gun is scary for everybody. Get the right shoes.

If you shoot outdoors, consider the surface first. Our outdoor bays are dirt and gravel. Heavy-soled hiking boots or cross-trainers seem to work best out there. Moisture-wicking socks are great for hot weather, and socks with arch support knitted in help with your comfort level when you're standing for a long time. If you shoot a match that starts early in the morning, you might be in dewy or wet grass. Shooting an all-day major match with wet feet is no fun, and an invitation for blisters or worse. If the ground's damp, waterproof (not water-resistant) boots are a must for me. Sturdy boots that provide ankle support are perfect. Ask yourself this: can I run, jump, kneel, and kick in a door in these shoes—without breaking a toe? It happened: one of our guys broke his running-shoe clad foot when he kicked open a door at a major match, out of town. Don't be that guy.

### Pants and Shirts

When it is 99 degrees in the shade, with 99% humidity, it's incredibly tempting to throw

The author, at a TTS monthly match. In the summer, we go without our concealment garments because it's 99 degrees with 99% humidity.



on shorts and a tank top when you head to the range. Don't do it! Kneeling on gravel or a stray piece of brass in shorts is not fun.

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## IDPA - Shooting with Style

Another practical consideration is protection from the props at the range. Over time, sticks and barrels will get hit by stray bullets. Those exit holes have a sharp edge like an old-fashioned can opener. One of our shooters caught a shorts-clad leg on a barrel's exit hole at an out-of-town match. Drama and a trip



Sharp edges on a barrel.

to the ER ensued, and he needed almost 20 stitches to close up his leg. Long pants are much safer. The 5.11 company makes great tactical pants for men and women; they have reinforced pockets for knee pads built in. Magellan offers light-weight summer cargo pants with SPF 30; they're cooler and you'll get sun protection, too. Personally, I love cargo pants with multiple pockets, so I can stow ammo, keys, extra magazines, a couple of Lifesavers, and SPF 30 lip gloss. In cold, wet weather, I layer waterproof hunting pants over my cargo pants, and I stay warm and dry. The Golden Retrievers I am lucky enough to hunt over taught me all about waterproof hunting pants. When you're browsing through sporting goods stores, keep in mind that you sometimes

The author wearing waterproof hunting pants that fit over jeans; essential when hunting with a soaking wet Golden Retriever, like Harry, pictured here completing a hunting title.



have to repurpose hunting, fishing, or sailing gear for our sport.

The right belt can take a second off your draw or reload. The wrong belt will cost you time if it lets your gear move around. Tactical belts abound in catalogs and sporting goods shops. The rule of thumb is the stiffer the better, to hold your holster and mag pouches in place. A belt that's too flexible might let your gear migrate as you move



# THE BATTLE OF THE BLACK SEA MSG PAUL HOWE'S UNTOLD STORY OF BLACK HAWK DOWN





On October 3, 1993 a group of US Rangers and Special Operations soldiers set out on a mission into the heart of the Bakara market in Mogadishu. What started as a mission that should have lasted 30 minutes turned into a battle for their lives. Known by these men as the Battle of the Black Sea and later portrayed in the motion picture Black Hawk Down, here is the untold story of that battle as told by Delta Force member MSG Paul R. Howe, retired.



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through different stages. Once your muscles learn where your gun and magazines are, you don't want them to drift away, even by a quarter inch, and cost you time. A special note for ladies; some tactical belts are too wide to fit through "our" belt loops. This is not a discovery you want to make when you're in a hurry to get out to the range, or after you've mail-ordered an expensive "tactical belt." Check everything for fit, especially if you order a tactical belt online.

Sailors and fishermen have the best shirts for hot weather. They're long-sleeved, open-backed, ventilated with mesh panels everywhere, and wick moisture away from the body. Some even offer SPF protection up to 30. You can roll the sleeves up or down as the weather dictates, and keep safe from sunburn, windburn, and flying bits of rock or metal. Have you seen a shooter do the "hot brass dance" when an ejected shell goes down his shirt? This is not something you want to experience with a loaded gun in your hand. Shooters and Safety Officers alike need to protect themselves from ejected rounds. Some large clubs have club shirts; those become the preferred uniform for weekly matches. In summer, you want something that wicks away moisture; in winter, you want warmth without bulk. Cotton breathes; it is my preference. Under Armor offers a wide selection of moisture-wicking shirts that will keep you comfortable on a hot or cold day if you like that fabric better. Choose a few shirts dedicated to shooting. Inevitably, they'll get grease stains on your gun side—which is why black is a

very popular color.

**The Vest**

Most IDPA vests are made specifically for shooting sports. IDPA requires each shooter to wear a "concealment garment" long enough to cover your weapon. It should also be stiff enough to sweep out of the way efficiently on the draw. It may have a vented or mesh back that help you keep your cool. Most IDPA vests are made specifically for our sport, and adorned with pins, patches, and the American flag. Of course, where I shoot, Texas flags appear quite frequently as well. If you're starting out in this sport and balk at paying almost a hundred dollars for a concealment garment, you can find "shooter's vests" in sporting goods stores or on line for much less. I got my favorite vest online for about twenty bucks

from Sportsman's Guide, an online sporting goods merchant specializing in closeouts.

**Caps and Hats**

Since I shoot in Texas, there are "gimme caps" everywhere. I try to make sure there are one or two caps in my gun bag, or at the very least, in my truck, at all times. A cap or hat serves several purposes: first and foremost, it helps to keep brass out of your face. I had a hot piece of brass shimmy behind my glasses—once—while I was shooting. I haven't forgotten a hat since! Even with eye protection, a hat adds an extra layer of insurance for your eyes. Of course, it also keeps the sun, wind, rain, and hair out of your face. There's also the "cool factor." If you rock a Glock or want to support your favorite team, that's the hat to wear. I also have

(Continued on page 29)

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ammo and trips to the range.) One day, I discovered the Sportsman's Channel was featuring a sport called IDPA. My husband was immediately interested so he and I traveled to a match one Saturday, just to watch. He was sold on it instantly! I was a little fearful. It just looked terribly complicated and I envisioned myself tripping over my shoe strings, falling into a wall and shooting wildly into the crowd. All the talk of tactical priority, sequence, procedural errors, and non-threats made my head spin. Then there was that whole issue of actually hitting the target. (Honestly the only thing that made sense to me was slicing the pie until I found out that there wasn't real food involved!) But because I love my dear husband and I love spending time with him I agreed to give it a try. So he purchased me a holster, mag holder, belt, concealment vest, eye protection, ear protection and a shooting bag. I sincerely hoped that he wasn't wasting his money!

My first official shooting event was, of all things, a classifier. I shot it with my compact. The RO's (at the Hollidaysburg Sportsmens Club in Hollidaysburg, PA-I love those guys and just had to give them a shout-out) were so helpful, encouraging, and calm as they walked me through (literally "walked" me through) the different stages explaining all the terminology and rules as we went. Only someone needing a seeing eye dog and an interpreter could have gone any slower. I was officially and by every understanding of the definition a "novice". I was also beginning to enjoy shooting more and more and developing the confidence to think that I could actually do it.

After shooting another match, a sleeping giant was starting to awake and my competitive juices were starting to flow! I realized that I should have a longer gun for competition because the compact really put me at a disadvantage on the distance shots. After expressing my concerns to my dear husband, he gave me his gun and when it became apparent that it just wasn't going to work, he bought me a Glock 17. He even painted my grip tape purple because it's my favorite color.

I realized that he was making a lot

of the investment into my hobby so I purchased a re-loader for his...um...ours! LOL!

All spring and summer our Saturdays consisted of early morning romantic breakfasts pulled from the warming rack at the local convenience store which we ate on our way to the range. There's just nothing like bad food and the smell of gun powder first thing in the morning with someone that you love! My dear husband kept ammo, targets, training DVD's and lots and lots of encouragement coming. He even bragged on me to his friends. He patiently coached me, giving me pointers and helping me to correct problem areas. (I have quite a few we're still working on!) He is my sponsor, my coach, and my favorite range buddy which is why I've mentioned him so much!

This month I finished my first complete season as an IDPA shooter ( a marksman) by shooting the PA State IDPA match in Hollidaysburg, PA. My dear husband has truly created a monster! I am thrilled to be competing again! I am even more thrilled that he and I can spend time together doing something we BOTH enjoy. (To be honest, after 34 years, I'm totally burnt out on watching softball and he's developed a rare type of allergy to craft stores!) He's a sharpshooter so we can compete with and against each other at the same time. Can it get any better than that? Who would've ever thought that something I was petrified of nearly all my life would become one of my favorite pastimes? My dear husband and I are looking forward to competing together for many years to come. Who knows how far we'll be able to get in IDPA but one thing is for sure. We're going to have a lot of fun together along the way!  
Cyndi Egolf A48009

*Wow Cyndi, that is a great story and we are happy to have you and your husband shooting with us. I hope you continue to enjoy IDPA and that we see you both on the range in the near future.*

Editor

Wesson Indoor Nationals. Those of you who are working this match will get a sneak peek at an addition to the imminent rulebook. A new Safety Officer Code of Conduct has been created, and we expect it will be enthusiastically approved by the Board of Directors. It will be the basis for the SO Code of Conduct you will see in Springfield.

Back office work relating to the upcoming changes continues. Beginning in the middle of January, Headquarters will be meeting with all of our Area Coordinators (ACs) to discuss new processes and goals that will help them in the important job they do. Please consider reaching out to your AC if you have questions, challenges, or would like to start a new IDPA club. They are there to help you and your club.

The new **IDPA website** is in the final testing stages, and we are excited to roll-out a new design, an updated database and a new IDPA club area for news and information in the coming weeks. In phase one, IDPA Clubs can manage individual club pages, including club news, information and contact details. IDPA members can expect faster match results, as well as access to IDPA rules and a match calendar. Watch the current website, [www.idpa.com](http://www.idpa.com), for more information about future enhancements as it becomes available.

As we begin this new year, let us look forward with anticipation for the continuing growth of our sport, and a renewed resolve to be there for one another.

Joyce






**Eric Cooper. Eyes and ears, and a hat for extra insurance.**

a button on top, because the button is uncomfortable with their ear muffs on. Noise cancelling electronic “ears” are preferred by some shooters; others like the old-fashioned ones that don’t need batteries. Again, it is your preference.

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a hat with an onboard light; it’s great for scorekeeping during evening matches. They’re available at sporting goods and home improvement stores.

### Eyes and Ears

Safety glasses are a must. Clear safety glasses provide eye protection, but aren’t much help in bright sunshine. They may or may not fit over prescription glasses, if you need to wear glasses to see. For low light, some shooters swear by yellow-tinted glasses. For others (like me), the color distortion is so dramatic that it’s a distraction. If you need glasses to find your glasses, like I do, you’ll be trying on a lot of safety glasses until you find something that is comfortable and safe. If you have a dedicated pair of shooting glasses, and your eye doctor is understanding about shooting sports, you can get your shooting glasses “set” to your dominant eye’s focus on your front sight. My eye doctor let me bring my gun in for my last exam, and my shooting glasses are great. The same goes for Lasik; if you have eye surgery to correct your vision, you can get your “near” eye set to your front sight.

Hearing protection. Don’t leave home without it. Make sure it works with your hat, not against it. Some shooters prefer hats without

Most sporting goods stores that carry hunting supplies have a selection of ear muffs. Often, at large matches, you can get custom ear plugs made to fit your ears right there at the match. I keep a handful of earplugs in my shooting bag, just in case someone forgot their ears.



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Prospect Hill, NC  
Dean Brevit  
919-805-0370 h  
caswellranch@embarqmail.com  
www.caswellranch.com

**February 9, 2013**

## **11th Annual West TX IDPA Regional**

Lubbock, TX  
Michael Murphy  
806-893-2944 h  
806-796-2858 w  
806-796-2859 fax  
mike\_m624@hotmail.com  
Rick Mosley  
806-796-2858 h  
806-796-2859 fax  
rick.h.mosley@gmail.com  
www.patriotfirearms.com

**February 21 - 23, 2013**

## **2013 Smith and Wesson IDPA Indoor Nationals**

S & W Shooting Sports Center  
Springfield, MA  
Lou Denys  
413-250-7442 h  
loudenys@hotmail.com  
Mike Critser  
203-339-0082 h  
mtcritser@sbcglobal.net  
www.matchreg.com/SW

**March 8 - 10, 2013**

## **2013 FL State IDPA Championship**

Pinellas Park, FL  
Dan Bernard  
813-340-7707 w  
bernardd@baytobay.org  
Charles Kibert  
813-545-2932 w  
ckibert@yahoo.com  
www.wyomingantelopeclub.org/index.php/action-pistol/49-2013-florida-state-idpa-match

**March 16, 2013**

## **Puerto Rico National Championship**

Caguas, PR  
Max Rivera  
787-447-4445 w  
mrivera@idpapr.com  
Tom Yost  
860-573-0415 w  
tom356tsw@yahoo.com  
www.idpapr.com

**March 16, 2013**

## **Rackensack Classic**

Little Rock, AR  
Goose Changose  
501-690-6656 w  
wchangose@aol.com  
Jeff Melton  
501-804-8927 w  
jqmelton@att.net  
casarange.com

**April 13, 2013**

## **Single Stack Championship**

Berryville, AR  
John May  
870-480-8030 w  
johnmay1911@yahoo.com  
Carroll Lawrence  
870-480-6310 w  
cap1911@cox.net  
www.acpl.net

**April 20, 2013**

## **AL 2013 IDPA State Championship**

Montgomery, AL  
David Rawlinson  
334-324-3257 w  
866-724-9829 fax  
deadidave43@gmail.com  
Kevin Collins  
mkc7908@gmail.com  
www.centralalabamagunclub.com

**May 11, 2013**

## **The Masters 2013 IDPA Championship**

Birmingham, AL  
Michael Lunsford

2055043315 h  
alabamaidpa@charter.net  
Jimmy Duke  
205-281-3603 h  
www.broksgapidpa.com

**May 17 - 19, 2013**

## **Great Lakes Regional**

Munger, MI  
Gary Cuttitta  
989-928-2796 h  
cheetahs1963@gmail.com  
David Alexander  
989-329-0257 h  
acwelding1@gmail.com  
linwoodbaysportsmansclub.com

**May 18, 2013**

## **AR State Championship**

Hot Springs, AR  
Ted Smethers  
501-620-0601 h  
501-262-5620 fax  
tsmethe@entergy.com  
Steve Freeman  
501-620-4374 h  
501-545-9939 w  
danafreeman@cablelynx.com  
www.mvsaidpa.com

**May 19, 2013**

## **Coastal Bend Challenge**

Corpus Christi, TX  
Phil Day  
361-652-3993 h  
webmaster@cbshooters.com  
Don Critari  
361-668-0768 h  
critari@intcomm.net

**May 25, 2013**

## **2013 Comp-Tac Republic of Texas Championship**

Hempstead, TX  
Darrell Sells  
832-660-4442 h  
dsells61@gmail.com  
Al Liczwek  
281-288-7522 h  
281-355-7467 w  
281-288-1366 fax  
liczwek@sbcglobal.net  
www.tts-idpa.com

**June 13 - 15, 2013**

## **Carolina Cup**

Oxford, NC  
Frank Glover  
919-639-6313 h  
919-691-7686 w

therange@gloryroad.net  
the-range.com

**August 10, 2013  
NC State IDPA  
Championship**

Boone, NC  
Gary Hoyle  
828-963-6307 h  
828-963-3995 w  
828-262-2796 fax  
garyh@wgc-idpa.org  
Robert Niemi, Jr.  
828-446-8778 h  
celticmith@yahoo.com  
www.wgc-idpa.org

**August 16 - 18, 2013  
MI State Match**

Mkunger, MI  
David Alexander  
989-329-0257 h  
acwelding1@gmail.com  
Gary Cuttitta  
989-928-2796 h  
cheetahs1963@gmail.com  
linwoodbaysportsmansclub.com

**September 7, 2013**

**2013 WI State IDPA  
Championship**

Muskego, WI  
Craig Dilley  
414-975-4696 h  
dilleymon@gmail.com  
www.schultzgunclub.com

**September 19 – 21, 2013  
IDPA National  
Championship**

Tulsa, OK  
870-545-3886  
870-545-3894 fax  
info@idpa.com  
www.idpa.com

**October 12, 2013  
Lone Star IDPA  
Championship**

Cresson, TX  
Brian Ehrler  
817-704-0155 h  
817-975-0315 w  
brian@txdft.com  
James Lenaburg  
817-431-2407 h  
817-521-7934 w

extremist@verizon.net  
www.lonestarchampionship.com

**October 12, 2013  
MS State IDPA  
Championship**

Blue Springs, MS  
Nicky Carter  
662-871-3346 h  
ndcarter61@gmail.com  
DeDe Carter  
662-871-1723 h  
deliacarter95@gmail.com  
www.ridgecrossingshootingclub.com

**October 19, 2013  
Kentuckiana Kolonel**

Sellersburg, IN  
Leigh Ann Jeter  
502-523-4370 h  
502-805-0858 fax  
jeterbugky@yahoo.com  
Brian Jueckstock  
502-553-5722 h  
502-418-8082 w  
bcjuecks@earthlink.net  
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Some friends may have been surprised that Debbie was helping to start a club. Although she shoots Trap and teaches Hunter Safety, “I didn’t grow up in a family who enjoyed shooting. I didn’t get my first hand gun until I turned 50, but have become passionate about guns. I think people should know that it doesn’t matter how old you are – you’re never too old to start learning and shooting a firearm with the

proper training.” She was also inspired by the Safety Officers as she attended her first IDPA Match. “The SO took us aside and made sure we could handle our guns safely and could fire them. They stressed safety always! That impressed me and has stuck with me ever since.”

Singer says that her work as a dental hygienist gave her some background skills to help build an IDPA club. “I always make sure I treat every patient as an individual and do the best job possible, with the respect they deserve. The same feeling applies to every firearm and shooter, treat them as an individual and with the respect they deserve.” The animated shooter says of IDPA, “Everyone has been so helpful and friendly, and it is a constant challenge to improve my shooting skills. I never refuse the chance to shoot a different gun.” That enthusiasm to experience many guns lead to her transition to a revolver shooter. She may also have a secret weapon that lures new shooters to CPAL. Affectionately known as “The Cookie Fairy”, her cookies and other treats almost always make an appearance at matches.

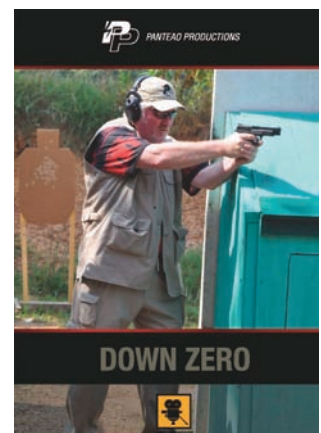
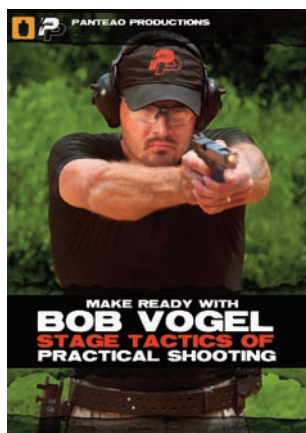
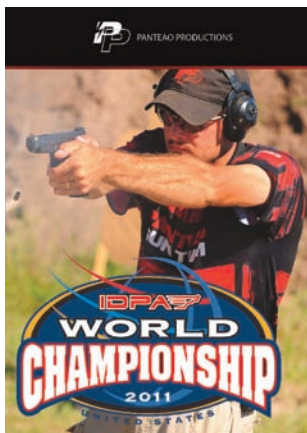
Do Cutler and Singer use their IDPA skills in their daily life? Cutler says of daily carry, “I carry because

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I can, and it is my right and choice to carry. I am confident enough that if a situation arose in which I felt threatened, I would not have to succumb to the perpetrator without attempting to protect myself." Singer adds, "I live alone and feel much safer knowing I have the knowledge and skill to carry and use my guns. I also enjoy educating people who don't shoot or carry about the importance of the Second Amendment."

The Dynamic Duo of Hudson is not intimidated by the fact that most IDPA Match Directors are male. When asked, they offer some advice for other women who may be looking to start a new club. "If we were starting a club again the things I would do the same are to bring people like Mark Redl from Colt to the club Board of Directors to introduce the sport. I think the thing that really got them was his passion for the sport. He said "Spread the sport" and they listened. A little PR in the right place at the right time can go a long way," Trish says. "We would definitely bring a real live IDPA shooting match to the potential club to have them see firsthand what it is all about. People are amazed and excited when they see it in action. I've had more police officers and experienced military tell me that they love the sport because it really challenges them. I would also formally advertise IDPA."

Debbie thinks that more women might start clubs if they did as she and Trish did, using the buddy system. "Definitely starting it with Trish made a difference; we work well together and feed off of each other. I think the reason more women don't just start their own IDPA club is they have a misconception that it's a male sport, and are afraid to shoot against men. I know for a fact Trish can out shoot most men!" she laughs. Trish chimes in, "I really



don't know why women don't start IDPA clubs. It was merely a strong desire followed by a will to do it. One of my favorite life sayings is, "A need seen is an assignment given." I saw a need, did my homework and completed the assignment."

Have these two MDs rested on their laurels? Apparently not, as they planned and hosted the inaugural Concealed Carry Holster Fashion Show last summer. A sold-out 250-seat venue was packed as speakers and models wearing

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different types and brands of holsters helped female firearm

owners see what is available to them. What is next for the Dynamic Duo? Both feel that with their existing experience, helping other clubs will be on their agenda. "Being confident and knowing what we are doing opens so many doors. There are quite a few clubs in our county and we have begun to reach out to show them

how they can easily begin an IDPA shooting league." 



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the green men from mars”. I am talking about stages that do nothing to test shooting, gun handling, or marksmanship, but instead is more of a test of gaming, a sense of timing, athleticism, or dumb luck. In other words, I am describing the IDPA equivalent of a windmill on a miniature golf stage.

Please do not misunderstand what I am saying about props. Props are important to making the sport fun and unique. Sometimes a neat prop is a special spice that adds to the quality of the match. What I am talking about is stages that are more about using the prop than it is about shooting something. In a stage such as this, the targets are more of an afterthought than a core component of the stage. An example would be a requirement to throw a ball through a hoop, enter codes on a computer, or being tied to furniture. Does this relate to the purpose or principles of the sport, or is it a way for a Stage Designer to try to “one up” a previous endeavor?

As a Safety Officer, you can try to advise the MD and offer alternatives to a stupid stage. This

is where you must draw from your experience as a shooter and SO. If the MD is married to a particular prop that you think will wreak havoc with shooters (or a subset of shooters), try to do what you can to limit the damage. Most MD’s will listen to the staff. You just have to be ready to speak up.

### **Match Directing**

It can be tough to design stages month in and month out. I know I have laid out matches that left me feeling the stage design was too close to a previous month’s match. You need to get a little variety in your stages, and it does pay to experiment a little.

I believe that some MD’s attempts to make something different or new has caused problems. On the official IDPA forum, I read about a low light match where the start position was with the slide removed from the frame. The premise was the shooter was cleaning his gun when the power went out. The shooter had to reassemble his gun after the beep, load up, and engage targets. I do not know what revolver shooters had to do.

I suppose this could be considered “Clever”, “Challenging” or “different”. I do consider it silly. It was rationalized that since the MD was a 1911 shooter himself, it was okay. It is not okay. It is stupid and a bit dangerous. It is pretty difficult to put a 1911 together without getting in front of the muzzle to turn the bushing. This is all well and good to do on a well-lit workbench, but do this on the clock and in the dark, and there is a lot of potential for problems. If the shooter is lucky, he will just be out a recoil spring plug. If he is not lucky, much worse will happen. It does not seem to be a smart play from a stage design or safety standpoint.

I think stages like this happen because the MD is being driven by a desire to create something unique or signature. It does not have to be like this. IDPA stages must be about the shooting foremost, and not about whatever shtick or head game the stage designer wants to employ. When you come up with something novel and cool, take the time to make sure that it really is a good idea before you do it.

While I am discussing what can be bad at a match, there is another somewhat touchy subject I want to shine a light on. It is popular at many clubs to have a “shoot house”, or “kill house” as part of a stage. These can be fun stages, but they can also be a problem. If you set aside the concerns regarding the terms used to describe a “shoot house” and the potential for a public relations problem, there are other difficulties with these shoot houses. Problems with Safety and fairness will pop up on these stages.

Shoot houses can be trying on

the Safety Officer. There is a lot to do and much to look out for. The shooter is moving more, and there is a more complicated array of windows and door openings. This raises the potential for the shooter to get turned around and point his gun in the wrong direction. The Safety Officer must be instructed to keep up on the shooter. The MD needs to make sure the SO chosen for such a stage has the experience and ability to control the shooter.

When the shooter is out of control, bad things can happen. A friend caught a .40 caliber bullet in his hip after he lost control of a shooter at a non-IDPA shoot house event. He was off his feet for nearly a year. In 1999, as a new shooter, I got turned around in a shoot house. The SO was not following me and was instead off to the side, leaning in a door way watching. He noticed I did not engage a target that was behind me. He yelled, "LOOK OUT!" to me as a warning. I was already stressed out, and then after hearing the yell, went flat against a wall; sweeping the SO in the process. If he was behind me where he should have been he

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never would have been muzzled. It was not good that I was turned around, bad that the SO was not in control of the shooter, and worse that he yelled something silly like that. That is the kind of comedy of errors that causes injuries or fatalities. Fortunately that day nothing happened, except some lessons learned. The SO needs to control the shooter and the MD must select the right staff member for the shoot house. This is not a place for rookies or the timid.

There may be a temptation to have SO's or spectators in catwalks above the shooter. This may seem cool but it presents safety problems. Many shooters elevate

their muzzles when moving or during a reload. You then will have people downrange of the gun, and this is not acceptable. People have been hurt in the catwalks of shoot houses. Resist the temptation and put in a fixed video camera if you want to have a peek at the action.

The safety issues are important but there are also competitive issues. The first is the nature of Vickers Count. Vickers Count works great on the average IDPA stage. When a stage has a lot of movement or complexity, Vickers count does not work as well. In these larger, more time consuming stages, the movement through the stage becomes more important than

**A prop can add fun and variety, but don't overdo it**



## Run a Better Match

the hits, and the scores will skew in favor of speed over accuracy.


Another problem with the shoot houses is that they often “are” the match. The shoot house is often an 18 round stage that takes most shooters 20-plus seconds to navigate. As a percentage of the match scores, this stage dominates all others. Often times, the competitors overall finish in the shoot house mirrors the overall results. In other words, the match is won or lost at the shoot house, and the rest of the match becomes filler.

My biggest issue with the “shoot house” concept is the trouble with officiating. I have seen shoot houses that had a serious advantage for the younger and faster shooters. If you set up a shoot house that has some distance between positions and you staff it with a middle aged

Safety Officer carting around an extra 30 or so pounds, that young fit shooter has an “in”. At the start signal, the young shooter puts some distance between himself and the SO, then he can shoot the stage with no regard to the use of cover. The SO never can get in a position to make the cover call and the fast shooter gets a pass on the rules. This may be denied by many SO’s, but I have witnessed it enough to know this to be true.

In real life, a person going into a house has the “rest of his life” to go through that building. Searches are slow and deliberate. In competition, the goal is to run through it as if your hair was on fire. Shoot houses demonstrate the differences between defensive minded shooters and the competitors. It can be fun to shoot,

or frustrating. It can be fair to the shooters, or it can hand the trophy over to someone. It can be a neat addition to the match, or it can dominate your match scores. I am not saying that you should never do a shoot house, but please consider the impact such a stage has on the match overall scores, and make sure you are not diminishing the relative value of the other stages in your match as well as making it easier and more fair to officiate.

Put serious thought into the kind of stages you design. Make sure they are solid, safe and follow the rules. Be sure you are not being unfair, or are doing something too silly for words. Have fun designing your stages, and remember to take care of your SO’s and staff. 



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safe. I also have a spare parts kit in my range bag that has virtually every spare part for my pistol... except for the frame, slide and barrel.

Magazines are often the cause of malfunctions as well. They need to be cleaned and maintained just as our pistols do. I will always take apart all my magazines and clean them before a match, as well as each time one touches the ground during a match. If you become proficient at it you can take the magazine apart, clean it and put it back together in less than 30 seconds. Magazine springs are also something to pay attention to and need to be replaced occasionally. A trick here is to quickly empty a loaded magazine with just your fingers. You can easily see and feel how quickly and smoothly the rounds feed out of the magazine. When they start to feed up slowly this is probably a sign the spring is wearing out and needs to be replaced.

The last thing I will address here is knowing what we can and cannot do to our pistol per the IDPA rule book. There is a very simple answer to this...read the rule book. Occasionally there will be a question that is not addressed specifically in the rule book. If this is the case I highly encourage you to ask BEFORE you begin to shoot the match. Many times you can get an answer beforehand from an authority at IDPA headquarters. If this is the case it may be a good idea to get something in writing in case you are questioned by another SO or match director.

Well that's it for now. Remember you want to get all this squared away B-E-F-O-R-E the match, that way when it begins you can concentrate on what you're supposed to be concentrating on...your shooting!

*For more information on Pro Shooter Robert Vogel or to schedule training classes, please check out his website at [www.Vogeldynamics.com](http://www.Vogeldynamics.com).*



## Random Shots

(Continued from page 13)

world such as randomly bouncing balls. Although time rented in these simulator ranges is not cheap, when you compare those rates with range fees and ammunition costs they can actually be a bargain. Without the need to reload, a shooter can fire many more virtual rounds in a half hour training session than is possible on a range. Of course, it is a simulation and thus can only take you so far; for example you cannot replicate some actions such as reloading. Even so, if such a simulation facility is in your locality it may well be worth using it to improve your shooting.

Live firing at a range is the traditional cornerstone of shooting practice. Not all of us have access to a good place to practice our IDPA shooting skills. Drawing from a holster and rapid firing can get you asked to leave at some ranges. Talk to the range master before you practice and ensure you are meeting the range rules. It might be possible to

make compromises to permit you conduct meaningful competitive practices. If you are not allowed rapid fire but can draw from a holster, work on drawing and getting off a single shot or load only one round and then reload, firing a second shot. If drawing from a holster is forbidden, see if you can practice skills such as shooting with one hand, set up two targets and practice transitions, and reloading, all starting from the low ready position. One of the most valuable and least utilized drills is long range slow firing drills; nothing else is as good at confirming solid, effective accuracy.

There is not necessarily a correlation between the number of rounds fired and a good practice; that is, your practice must be focused. Time on the range should be used to maximum advantage. You should have a plan for each drill you will run and each drill should have a specific objective

in improving an aspect of your shooting.

The biggest advantage of practice versus a practice match is that you can repeat and improve specific aspects of your skills; that means measuring your runs. If you do not have a shot timer, 'there is an app for that' on smart phones. Free shot timer apps for your smart phone may not be adequate for scoring a match but they certainly give you what you need to compare your times between various runs.

It is preferable to practice with another person whenever possible. Not only is it more enjoyable, it also allows another person to observe and provide feedback. It is also safer; if there is an accident, there should be a person right there to provide immediate support and summon help.

Each of us wants to be able to shoot better, either for competition or for potential self defense. The best way to do that is to practice and practice effectively.



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