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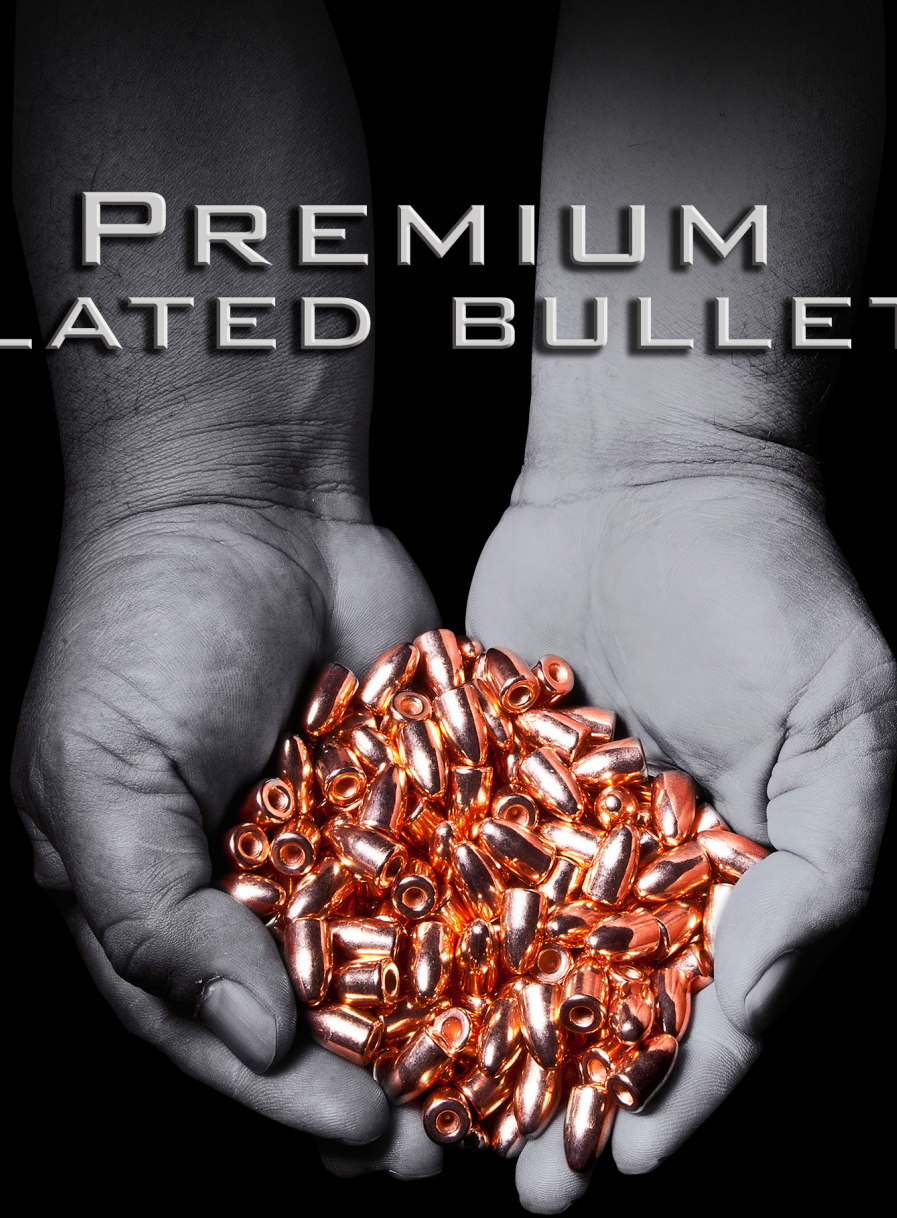
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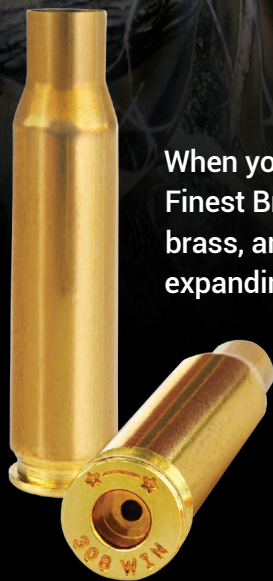
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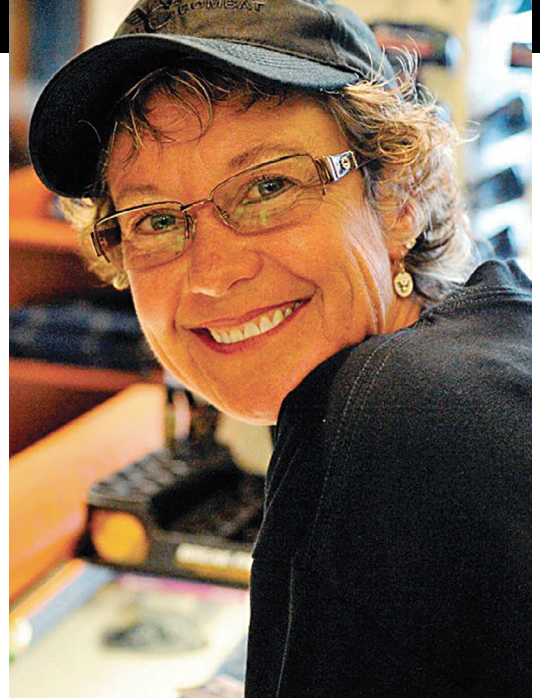
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MAKE A STAND, GET OUT AND VOTE.

A Message from Joyce Wilson,
IDPA Executive Director



A As all of you read this, we will be on the cusp of fall, even though we may be sweltering in the dog days of summer still. Fall brings two important events for us as a country and as an organization: the 2016 Presidential elections and the IDPA National Championship.

In June, you read in the weekly Tactical Brief that, *for the first time ever*, IDPA endorsed a presidential candidate. Some

of you may be elated and some distressed over the Board's decision to endorse Donald Trump, but this election, more than any other in history, is so important we felt we had to lend our support to the candidate who most represents our beliefs in the right to own and bear arms.

I had the chance to visit with Donald Trump, Jr., at the NRA show and I was impressed by him and by his father's

commitment to us as legal gun owners. He discussed his personal love of firearms and hunting and how he and his brother had had a very candid conversation about the importance of the Second Amendment with his father. They impressed on him the need for individuals to be able to protect themselves and to enjoy the rights given to us by our Constitution. Donald Jr. told me that his father completely understands the need to

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protect our rights.

Those rights, as firearms owners, are being eroded daily. Every time a shooting occurs we are bombarded with threats and attempts of limiting or eliminating the Second Amendment. We must do something to stop these constant threats and we must do it now. As my staff and I travel to different matches around the country, it is disheartening to hear someone say that they will not vote in November because they do not like either candidate. I gently remind them that not only are they voting for a president, they are also voting for Senators, Congressmen, Supreme Court Justices and other representatives who will make and vote upon any proposed limits to the constitutional rights earned by the blood of American patriots. Any vote not cast for the Second Amendment is a vote against it. I implore you, please vote that we may never squander the sacrifices made by our forefathers and the rights that we enjoy today.

The dog days of summer will be decidedly evident in Cresson, Texas, as more than 300 of us gather in September to shoot the 2016 IDPA National Championship. The Wild West theme for this year's Nationals will be echoed in stage designs and apparel. We expect to see boots, cowboy hats and other western wear on the range and at the

awards ceremony. We will also see a great opportunity to give back to our Heroes who keep us safe. Aiming for Zero (AFZ) is a flagship program bringing together Active Heroes, IDPA, and competitors across the nation committed to ending the epidemic of veteran suicide. Competitors can participate by making a donation per point down for the match and sign up will be available at the registration tables during sign in. One of our stages will be committed to Aiming for Zero - the stage winner for each division and the Military stage winner will receive a special memento, and a donation of \$100 in their honor will be donated to AFZ. Look for more information about these initiatives in the Tactical Brief and on the 2016 IDPA Nationals Facebook page.

The 2017 Rulebook Team has been meeting weekly to streamline and simplify the current rulebook. Once we have a solid draft of the rulebook, vetted by the IDPA Board of Directors, it will be published with ample time for folks to study it and prepare for its implementation. When it goes into effect next year, we will also be updating to the 1 second per point down rule. Our hope is that this rulebook will not need to be updated for 3 - 5 years.

RANGELOG, our Technology partner, has delivered some very helpful functionality this quarter. Our Area Coordinators and

International Points of Contact (IPOCS) now have the ability to search the member database to get a current list of members, SOs and SOIs in their area of responsibility to help them track and trend. This capability will help them make data-based decisions on member attraction and retention, sanctioned matches, and SO classes.

RANGELOG also worked diligently with the Video Tiger Team and you will find behind the Members Only area of www.idpa.com several videos relating to rules and best practices. We anticipate more topics to be added and we hope some of our members will sign on to create videos for us to post on subjects that you think are important to our sport.

I hope you all have a great fall with plenty of opportunities to shoot and to introduce a friend to IDPA.

Happy fall,

Joyce Wilson, #CL087

Joyce Wilson is the Executive Director of IDPA. Members can contact her at joyce@idpa.com



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FROM A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE

THE WELL ARMED WOMAN

Growing women's awareness
of firearms and self-defense.

WORDS KITTY RICHARDS

The first time you meet Carrie Lightfoot, founder of The Well Armed Woman (TAWW), you are blinded by her sweet smile and soft-spoken voice. When you find out that she is carrying her Sig P238 in a waistband holster, or a Glock 43 in a waistband holster, you look at the slight woman and think, "How can I NOT see that firearm?"

Lightfoot is full of surprises, including her late start into the shooting world. "I didn't start shooting until late into my forties. I was a single mother and my youngest child was getting ready to go to college and I began working with the homeless in a tough part of town. These things made me think, "How would I protect myself? Some friends from work took me out shooting. I was fortunate that they had a full array of guns in numerous calibers. I loved it from the first shot!"

This beginning led the petite blonde to look around for resources to assist her. "When I started my journey into gun

well. It quickly also became about the fun.

Being prepared is important to me. It gives me the confidence to move through my life as I choose and not be burdened or limited by fear. I believe all women should have the skills, knowledge and tools to protect themselves. All three must be attained and for many women, entering into the role of self-protector can be an intimidating journey. The chapter program offers a comfortable environment, with like minded women to find the support and camaraderie that allows them to flourish."

Serving others and helping them overcome their fears is not new for this self-proclaimed "can't-sit-still" woman. Lightfoot says she finds her joy in working and trying to make a difference. When her children were young, she led a team that designed the first charter school in the state of Arizona and was its first president. "Life changed for me after Hurricane Katrina. I felt so helpless being so far away from the agony so many were experiencing that I

"I knew it was a good idea but had no idea it would grow so large so quickly. I also didn't realize how it would impact lives."

ownership, there were no resources that spoke to me respectfully as a woman. I felt there was a need for a very comprehensive resource and products just for women. We are two entities, The Well Armed Woman and The Well Armed Woman Shooting Chapters (non-profit)." The shooting chapter program now has 290 chapters in 49 states (South Dakota, the last state, is in the early stages of starting a chapter.) TAWW has almost 700 chapter leaders and 8900 members nationally. The fast growth of TAWW surprised even the founder. "I knew it was a good idea but had no idea it would grow so large so quickly. I also didn't realize how it would impact lives. The change I am blessed to see in the lives of women who become empowered to be their own self-protectors is incredibly inspiring."

The same principle that makes Lightfoot carry a gun is also what motivates her to expand TAWW. She says, "Originally it was the ability to equalize the battlefield. I find the ability to control something so powerful, very satisfying and confidence building as

started an organization with my church to adopt a small town that fell outside of the attention and support some of the larger communities were receiving. Its mission was to send construction teams, equipment and dollars to help them recover. These years changed me, and shifted my career path toward serving others. I worked for a non-profit that served the needs of the homeless and those struggling in poverty. We began a social entrepreneurship with the purpose of starting, owning and managing a variety of businesses with the purpose of creating jobs as I believe a job is the true path out of poverty. I think my ability to get things done and to dig in and press through a big task along with my passion to inspire others to do big things has helped me to grow as a shooter and empower other women through The Well Armed Woman."

As Lightfoot worked in her organization, she began to hear about IDPA. "I heard about the IDPA from some of our chapter leaders in the early days of TAWW. They were on fire about it and it couldn't help but

Carrie is passionate about empowering women to protect themselves



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spread.” That makes sense, she says, as “Shooting IDPA is the perfect fit for our members. As our focus is on gaining the tools, skills and knowledge to protect themselves, the defensive skills that are honed and trained in IDPA help them to achieve this.” She points to three basic reasons a partnership between IDPA and TWAW helps her members. “IDPA is an outstanding organization with people and volunteers that are

“The change I am blessed to see in the lives of women who become empowered to be their own self-protectors is incredibly inspiring.”

not only the most welcoming they can be, but committed to their growth as shooters. Secondly, a monthly chapter meeting is not the equivalent of training, shooting and training must become part of our lives on a regular basis. IDPA offers the continued training necessary for us all to maintain and grow our skills. Thirdly, IDPA knows how to have fun and make all shooters feel welcome. Yes, shooting is serious business but it is also OK to have fun and make great friends at the same time.”

This leader’s mentors include a couple of other well-known names in our industry. “Sandy Froman, former president of the NRA, from day one has been an inspiration to me. Having been a woman who led one of the largest male driven organizations in the country is incredibly impressive. Julie Golob is another woman I admire greatly. Her wonderful way of just being herself and maintaining the balance in her life is inspiring. She is a fierce competitor and pushes herself to be the best shooter she can be while maintaining her humility is so admirable.”

In order to see the role of women in shooting grow, she advocates creating an environment where women are honored, respected and encouraged. To do this, she



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Carrie accepting the Glock Safety Ambassador Award

KARL RAMSEY

advises every shooter, regardless of gender, "Start the conversation! I find that women everywhere are curious and I can't tell you how, by just creating the opportunity to ask questions, it opens the door. Understand that it is somewhat foreign territory for her, so sharing your story and why shooting or the carrying of a gun is important to you is a powerful way to break down any barriers that may exist. Respect women for where they are on their journey and simply answer their questions." And what advice would she give to women who want to begin their journey in shooting? "Don't let fear get in your way! Fear of guns, fear of not knowing enough, fear of not being good enough, fear of what others think - all of these can keep a woman from the incredible joy of shooting and the knowledge she can and will protect herself from harm."

Finally, what does TWAW's champion list as her number one goal for the future? "My goal is to empower as many women as I can! To see the transformation in women and to see their confidence rise brings me such great joy and I will work as hard as I can to change lives one at a time. I want to support and lift up as many women as I can for them to be the greatest leaders and life changers they can be."

For more information on The Well Armed Woman, visit <http://thewellarmedwoman.com>. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Kitty Richards, LM18564

Kitty Richards is and SOI in New York, has been shooting IDPA since 2002 and works more than 12 sanctioned matches each year.

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BRAD TONKIN

A traveling man with a bag full of gear.

WORDS & PHOTOS ALLISON LAUNIUS



In this issue, we are going to be peeking into Brad “Outback” Tonkin’s Range Bag. Brad is a shooter at my local IDPA club, Arkansas Combat Pistol League, in Berryville, Arkansas. Brad, who grew up in Australia, says he has been shooting since he could walk. After serving in the Army and working as a private contractor, he claims to be fairly new to pistols and IDPA. Brad says, “IDPA stood out to me as a very practical way of practicing and testing skill sets in a manner which was most likely to be applied in a real situation. The diversity of stages and technicalities that are written in the rules give you a lot to think about and compose yourself with before shooting. It is very different from gun fighting but about as sensible as the disciplines get at the moment...I have won a few events in my classes and divisions (Badlands CCP MM, Hot Springs High International and runner up Most Accurate, High Military at Berryville, etc.) but I have hardly started getting to know the game properly and I am still working out my equipment. I am shooting as regularly as possible and getting substantially better. There is a good chance that I am going to get bumped at my next sanctioned match.”

So when he was a shooter on my squad I couldn’t help but notice some tools sticking out of his range bag, literally. When we were done shooting, I asked if he mind-

ed me poking through his range bag and snapping some pictures for this upcoming issue even though I wanted to run for the hills and climb into my car for some much needed AC. Brad agreed, but I don’t think he fully understood how invasive my search into his background and bag I would get.

As he started pulling items from his bag, it reminded me of a magician who keeps pulling tricks out of his hat.

As he was laying everything out, his friend joked around about how much stuff he carries around. Brad said this was actually his “lightened” range bag.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Masonic ring | 9. Bore Snake |
| 2. Monarch Ammunition | 10. Spray Bottle of Water |
| 3. Eye Protection | 11. Tire Gauge for Squibs |
| 4. Magazine Pouch | 12. Q-Tips for Cleaning |
| 5. Ear Protection | 13. Diamond Files |
| 6. Tool Set | 14. Sock for Gun Cleaning |
| 7. Hoppes 9 Cleaner and Lube | 15. Snap Caps |
| 8. Fire Clean Lube | 16. USB Cable |



Brad is shooting
a Sig P229R

There were a few items in his range bag that really caught my interest which is why I am sharing them with you. Some of you may be aware of what "snap caps" are however I was not. So when I picked up the little red plastic bullets I asked, "What are these?" Brad replied, "Snap caps" which didn't really clarify in my head what they were. I asked, "What are they used for?" and he told me "They're used for dry fire." I left it at that, pretending that oh yes, those, I've heard of those, but really hadn't, and as soon as I got to a computer I did a little research. On Midway, they describe snap caps as:

Allows the shooter to safely practice trigger pull techniques

Can be used to test the functioning of extractors and ejectors in short rifle only

Allows tension to be released from hammer springs when storing guns

I like that these help protect the firing pin and let you practice until your heart is content. These are definitely going on my list of things to buy, which may I say is ever growing since I have started doing this column.

Another item, or should I say trick, from the magician's hat that caught my attention was a pair of socks. I thought it was smart to have an extra pair of socks in case yours get wet but he said he uses them as a gun cleaning cloth, another clever thing! That is something I can put on my list that won't be hard to add to my bag. I may not use it as a gun rag since I have one attached to my bag. However, after asking a friend of mine to bring me a pair of socks to the range after getting off work, I had to be at the range to work on SO day before a sanctioned match, It may be a good idea for me. Again, I am not always the most prepared person. Let's not discuss how many times I have forgotten my belt.

Another interesting thing that I saw in his hat, ehem, bag, that is pretty common

to see in the glove boxes of cars but not range bags is a tire pressure gauge. He said that it doubles as a squib rod and that it works pretty well. I guess if I am ever in a pinch and need a squib rod on the fly I can use my tire gauge. Also, the blue spray bottle of water was another first for things I've seen in a range bag. The day I pruned myself into his range bag was very hot so I naturally thought the water was to help keep cool but he surprised me again and said "Actually no, this one isn't directly gun related, I travel a lot and I use it to get the creases out of my clothes."

Brad the "Outback" did leave me with

some tips he would like to share

1) Pick a pistol, stick with it and get good. You have plenty of time to tinker with equipment when you are a master grade shooter.

2) Dry firing and practicing reloads in front of the TV IS YOUR FRIEND. Shoot as much as possible, surround yourself with people much better than you, never stop getting better than the person that you were yesterday.

3) Don't confuse things, just shoot it through the way you originally planned the stage in your head. The rest will come with confidence. Confidence takes time and practice.

4) repeat steps 1 through 4.

Most importantly

****NEVER sacrifice safety****

Not for your sake, for the sake of the people that have to deal with the mess afterwards!

I would like to thank Brad "Outback" Tonkin for letting a stranger pry into his bag and asking a bunch of questions about him. A little prep and thinking outside the box can help turn a bad day on the range into a good one with the right tools. Thank you Brad for making me start looking outside the typical items shooters carry and sharing them with our readers. **TJ**



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MATCH TIPS & TRICKS

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that can lead to big results in your final score.

WORDS MORGAN ALLEN PHOTOS DAVE GOLDMAN

Before getting into the meat of this issue's article, I'd like to take a minute to say thank you. Over the past year I've been

approached by a surprising number of people to offer gratitude for these articles. Sometimes the thanks come with an example of how the info has been personally useful. More often, the feedback has been to say that it's been a pleasure to read what I thought to just be some ideas that might be helpful to my friends - all of you, the shooting community. It underscores the need to give back, each in our own way to help continue the "pay it forward" mantra that embodies what this game is about. So as you read through this installment, think about how you can do the same. Every little bit counts. To have been able to do this from my end has been an honor and a privilege.

At every match I attend (monthly local or sanctioned events), I routinely see competitors do things that could be done

when you run dry, either maintain body position and execute the reload, or advance within cover allowances while reloading if the next target after the reload is not the one you shot last before running dry. In dry fire or live fire practice, make sure to incorporate a lean to one side or another as part of your routine as that's more realistic to how your body will be positioned during a stage when reloading from behind a barricade.

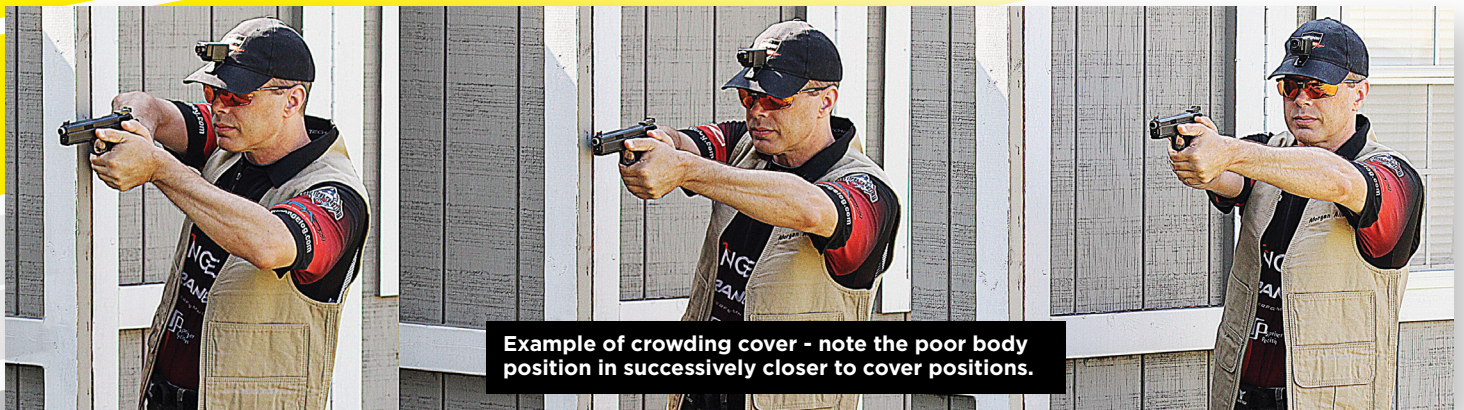
▶ Your right leg should be forward of your left when shooting around the right side of barricade and the opposite for the left side of a barricade.

▶ Except in unusual circumstances, avoid getting too close to cover (aka crowding cover) as your transition to follow-up targets will tend to make your body alignment less than desirable and your transitions more time consuming.

▶ Avoid tilting your body/shoulders when shooting around a barricade. Doing

▶ For stage starts involving a gun and ammo carrier pick up on start such as from a table, pick up your gun and mag(s) at the same time and move if the first position requires it, allowing you to do two things at once. For table starts like these, don't put up all mags but rather only the ones you absolutely need. I see many SSP and ESP shooters take their loaded gun and both spare mags with them on stages that will not exceed 18 rounds. The gun and one mag totals 21 rounds. How often does a magazine fail, necessitating that third mag, versus guaranteeing the time spent to stand still and place that third mag on your belt before gathering your gun and the other spare mag?

▶ Spread your feet on seated table pickups or starts that require shooting while seated to provide for a more stable platform. You'll want to make sure you do not sweep yourself for holster starts from a seated position. So for those, reposition



Example of crowding cover - note the poor body position in successively closer to cover positions.

differently and likely lead to better stage scores. While a good number of these amount to things related to mental match execution or stage planning, there are a great deal that translate to things shooters could do work on in practice alongside their technical shooting skills. Applying to both sets, here's a loosely gathered collection in no certain order:

▶ Know where the targets are at each shooting position. This is not hunting; this is a shooting game. Spend the appropriate amount of time before the match and from the start of the walk through until you are in the hole embedding their locations in your mind.

▶ Know when you are going to run dry (after what shot on which target) so that you can immediately start reloading after firing your last shot, and which target to go to after reloading.

▶ Don't dip back behind barricades for reloads. If you are appropriately using cover

so causes the gun recoil characteristics to change and exacerbates the issue when transitioning to follow-up targets. Rolling your shoulders over from parallel to the ground is often a side effect of crowding cover.

▶ When shooting from low cover and to the extent possible, remain upright from knees on up versus hunching over. You should most closely emulate how your body is when shooting from a standing position. It also allows for faster transitions and more effective reloading.

▶ When moving to a new position that requires that you cover some distance, always start your movement by looking to where you want your lead foot to land at the next position of cover. Upon approach, shift your eyes up to look for the target, dip your body's center of gravity to help arrest forward momentum, and present your gun toward the target, doing all of this 2 steps out from your final resting position.

your strong side leg as soon as you've cleared it. This also helps for exiting the position faster if the stage has additional shooting positions after the shots taken while seated.

▶ When starting from behind a barricade with targets you cannot otherwise see, just before standing upright in your final start position, lean out and get a good fix on the first target and leave your eyes on it while you continue to stare through a barricade at that first target as you lean back. That way, on start, you already know exactly where it is and can effectively draw straight to it.

▶ Move like it matters between shooting positions rather than proceeding with a mild jog. I like to move as if someone was chasing me with a knife ;-)

▶ Avoid the spray and pray method of shooting at moving targets. Two well placed shots usually take as much time as three or four hurried ones and generally yield much



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Hunting for targets ;-)



“I routinely see competitors do things that could be done differently and likely lead to better stage scores.”

better results. Use an index point on the area behind a moving target to aim at and essentially ambush where the moving target will be before it gets there, such as the momentary rest position for a swinger.

▶ Steel that is used to activate moving targets are important ones. Nothing happens until you hit that steel. So before getting into a rush to hit the steel because you are concerned about hitting the mover(s), take whatever time is needed to competently hit the steel with a well called shot, and immediately transition to the index point of where the mover will be, something you identify in the walk through.

▶ Stand in exactly the positions you will shoot from during the course of fire when performing your walk through. The perspective is very different depending on where you are standing. Many shooters never do this and sometimes find out the hard way when they shoot the stage that not all is as they thought it would look when they get to those positions.

▶ If going through a walk through that includes targets shot on the move, move as you would during the course of fire to estimate where you will be when you are shooting at which target while moving so that if there's a nonthreat present in the array, you will learn when and in front of what target(s) it presents a visual obstruction that you need to address. Many times this changes the order in which you engage a target array on the move if the option exists (i.e. if all shot on the move are considered equidistant).

▶ Points down equate to time. Time spent in any fashion adds to your score.

Don't get lazy on easy targets because many matches are won or lost by just a few points/seconds.

▶ Pay attention to what your sights tell you and ignore what your mind tells you. Under stress, we tend to perceive expiration of time incorrectly and therefore can get caught up in thinking that we are going slower than we actually are. Only listen to what your eyes tell you as the proper sight picture and alignment and not what your mind is telling you.

▶ A well-executed mediocre plan is almost always better than a poorly executed perfect plan. Don't over engineer a stage. Don't change your plan at the last minute. Often time, a slightly better plan differs by only a fraction of a second, but the time save gets negated and then some when it's not executed well.

All of these tips are ones I've picked up over time by watching other shooters in my progression to getting better. If you see someone do something unique that appears to add value, inquire as to why and how it was done so you can decide if it makes sense for you to replicate it. If you see an opportunity for improvement in another shooter, perhaps it's something you can share and pay it forward. **TD**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR **Morgan Allen, A24050**

Morgan Allen is the winner of 50+ IDPA Division Championships and 10 top-five division finishes at Nationals events, including 2nd at the Inaugural IDPA World Championship. He can be reached at: morgan_allen@yahoo.com.

ARE YOU BUILDING BAD HABITS?

Use your IDPA club match to reinforce good CCW training.

WORDS & PHOTOS MICHAEL SEEKLANDER

How often have you heard this from those that profess themselves to be a “tactical” or defensive shooter: “Shooting competitively will do nothing but build bad habits!” Personally I think the statement is often times an excuse for someone that is not confident in their skills to avoid shooting a match against motivated competitive shooters, for fear of getting beat and embarrassed. But a warrior always challenges themselves to look at their training and make sure it is going to give them the skills they need to survive if things ever go bad. Are you a warrior? Sure you are, I can almost guarantee with certainty that if you are reading this article, you are both an IDPA competitive shooter, as well as someone that carries a firearm for self-protection.

In this article, I would like to lay out some potential bad habit building mistakes you might be making, and give you a solution if you find yourself guilty of any of them. This key is to reflect on your own personal habits and make changes if necessary. Some of them relate to gear, and others to the things we do repetitively in matches, but all could potentially be your downfall if developed into a habit that does not translate directly over to your defensive (warrior) skillset. Here we go!

BAD HABIT The automated “unload and show clear” habit of no follow through. This is one that pains me sometimes in my defensive classes, and I have observed it in competitive shooters more than anyone

Shooting matches can be an important part of your CHL training regimen.



“This key is to reflect on your own personal habits and make changes if necessary.”



The skills learned at a defensive shooting class can be practiced at a match without adversely affecting your game.

else. Let me give you an example: In my defensive classes, I often times set up a person versus person shoot off with some key rules, one of which is after the shoot off each shooter is supposed to perform an after action scan process and then work their way to the holster just like they would after a real fight. The keys are following through on the threat, then observing their surroundings, and checking weapon status (reloading or topping off) before reholstering, and they should never unload the gun (wouldn't make much sense in a gunfight to unload right!?). The process should occur right after they finish shooting the drill, win or lose. The scan process is so important that I actually make my students verbally repeat after me: "I will perform a full scan process before I re-holster." Take a wild guess how many shooters get under the stress of the competition and either unload the gun (competitive shooters) or fail to follow through and scan? A significant number, like more than 75% of my students, even though they have been training to shoot, then scan for a whole day prior to the drill! The worst case is those that get amped up and just "unload and show clear" the second the drill is over, and when queried, they are almost always competitive shooters.

SOLUTION The best time to ingrain a good

habit is under stress of some sort, so the best time to train yourself to follow through and scan is probably during a match. Now I know what you are thinking...Mike we can't just sit there and do a 3 minute scan process during a stage at a match, because the SO is waiting on me. And I am not saying that you should, but I am saying that several seconds of follow through on your target area and then a quick glance around will build the habit of going from "fight" mode to administrative mode and unloading for the SO less a bad habit building action. The truth is that a visual follow through has many times saved me from getting a miss on either a piece or steel still standing (that did not fall) or even a bad hit that I took a half second to make up. So my recommendation is to do a deliberate quick scan of your target area, and even glance around you (in the scan process I teach, we do a visual look in all directions) and take a couple of seconds to ingrain that follow through, and then shift to admin mode where you unload and show clear. This process will take 15 seconds at the most, and then you can unload for the SO. The next step is to take this same habit to your practice sessions, but take it a step farther and do a full scan process and top off (for your next drill).

BAD HABIT Practicing and competing with conflicting guns and gear. So I get it, the reality is that you are probably competing with guns and gear that give you maximum advantage. So do I. But this is an area where you can at least try to train with and compete with similar gear. An example would be an individual that competes in IDPA with a Smith and Wesson M&P Pro with a sweet trigger job, yet carries a double action handgun as a carry or duty weapon. The truth is that the individual will likely spend much more time shooting the gun they compete with, and neglecting the gun they carry to save their life.

SOLUTION So what is the solution? I recommend that all competitors attempt to keep their competition gun and carry gun as close to the same as realistic. Now, I know it is completely possible to compete with your actual carry gun, especially with the new CCP and BUG divisions, but for those of you that are not, keep them as close as possible. At least try to stick to the same "family" of gun. For example, if you are required to carry a Glock pistol on duty, then compete with a Glock pistol variant. At least then the grip angles, and manipulation devices are all going to be the same. Recently I have been shooting for Wilson Combat, and compete with a Wilson Combat CQB 9mm

One for carry and the other to play the game



in ESP. Given that choice of competition gun, I am now carrying a compact aluminum framed version of that same gun. Therefore, when grabbing my carry or competition guns, they feel and operate identical. Also, keep in mind that the closer you keep your carry holster and competitive holster, the more efficient your draw will be under stress in either environment.

BAD HABIT Two shot syndrome. This one is simple, and if you look at the majority of stages in both IDPA and USPSA you will find a predominance to courses that require two shots to each target. Luckily, in IDPA we are seeing much more 3 and 4 shot sequences required on stages. This helps, but the solution must occur in our training.

SOLUTION Practice with a varying number of shots. In my defensive courses I have students practice drills with what I call a “progression of four,” which basically means that they will go through their repetitions shooting a different number of rounds each time (1 shot, 2 shots, 3 shots, 4 shots, 3 shots, 2 shots, etc.). After their last shot is fired, they begin their follow through and scan process (scan the threat, scan the area, and check weapon status). This process helps prevent the two shot habit of firing two shots and

then stopping, when more shots might be required to stop the threat.

In closing, the reality is that IDPA is a pretty solid “skill enhancing” arena if you have been taught good defensive habits in the first place. The key is to tweak your match actions and training so that your defensive skill sets are improved, and you avoid the possible bad habits mentioned above. IDPA requires the use of cover, makes you shoot from a variety of positions, and gives short simulations that are realistic in most cases in the real world. Use your

training and the tips above to solve those problems and dominate in the match while still maintaining good defensive habits along the way! **TJ**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Seeklander, A31187

Currently Mike Seeklander is owner of Shooting-Performance LLC (www.shooting-performance.com), a full service training company and the American Warrior Society (www.americanwarriorsociety.com). Mike is also the co-host of The Best Defense and Rapid Fire featured on the Outdoor Channel.

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WORDS ROBERT RAY PHOTO STEVE WOODS

LIKE EVERYONE READING THIS, I ENJOY SHOOTING. HOWEVER, I DO NOT ENJOY PAYING FOR WHAT IT takes to keep me in ammo. Factor in the wife and two kids, well...that makes it tough to sit down and reload. So yeah, I keep my eyes open for a good deal on BB's for the blaster. So imagine my happiness when I came across American Steel from Freedom Munitions.

Now, as the name implies, American Steel is steel cased ammo, but if that conjures up visions of nasty Russian import stuff, then think again. Number one, American Steel is made right here


I needed a quality, economical round that
I could shoot and forget about.
The American Steel ammo does this with ease.

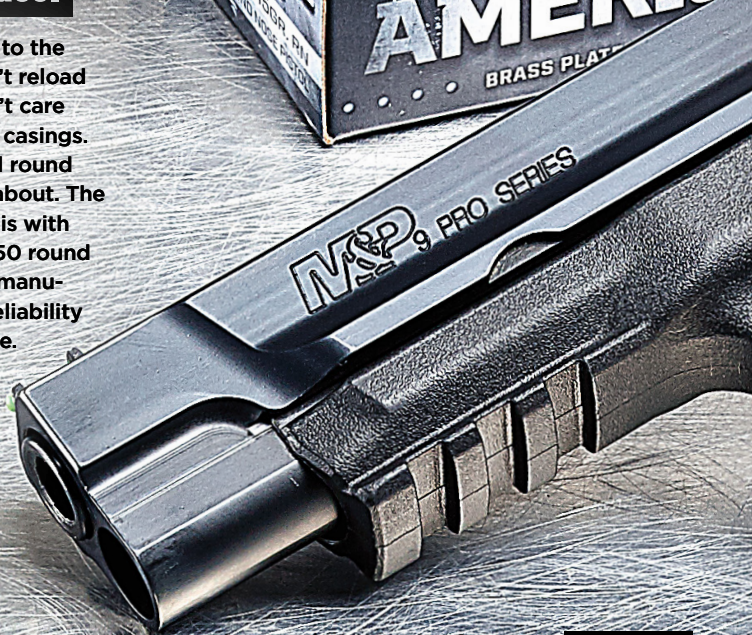
in the USA. So plus one for buying American. Murica, heck yeah! Two, it looks just like your traditional brass ammo. This is because the steel case is plated in brass making the finished round feed better and thus more reliable. It is topped with Freedom Munitions X-Treme 115 grain 9mm jacketed round nosed bullet.

OK, I admit, I was a little hesitant at first. I have used the import stuff in the past with mediocre to poor results but upon opening the American Steel box, I was impressed. The ammo felt good in the hand. If you have run some of the import stuff you know what I mean. It feels "sticky." The American Steel felt right with the smooth, slightly slick feel. So I loaded up the gun bags and head-

ed to the range.

I ran the American Steel through a number of different guns, Glock 19, M&P Pro, Springfield Armory EMP4 and a Khar Arm K9. It ran flawlessly through everything. I even stuffed it in a couple of friends 9mm 1911's that are sometimes "finicky", no issues. It grouped well and feed well in everything. The only thing that I could put on the down side of the scoreboard is the powder is a little "sparky". I would not recommend it if you were shooting a night match but for daylight use it is of no consequence.

This leads me back around to the start of the article...cost. I don't reload and, being overly round, I don't care much for picking up my spent casings. I needed a quality, economical round that I could shoot and forget about. The American Steel ammo does this with ease coming in at \$9.25 for a 50 round box. This is a bargain for new manufactured ammo. Quality and reliability at a price the wallet can handle. Check out their website www.freedommunitions.com to see all their products. If you reload, they also carry remanufactured ammo and bullets at great prices. Be safe and we will see you on the range. 



AMERICAN STEEL
FREEDOM MUNITIONS
BRASS PLATED STEEL-CASED AMMO
9MM 115 GR. RN

AMERICAN STEEL
FREEDOM MUNITIONS
AMERICAN STEEL
BRASS PLATED STEEL-CASED AMMO
9MM 115 GR. RN



NORTH WEST CUP IN CALVISANO, BRESCIA ITALY



Touring Italy and shooting IDPA combine for a “Trip of a life time”

WORDS MIKE CRITSER **PHOTOS** KITTY RICHARDS

At the Smith & Wesson BUG Nationals, Federico Iannelli (POC for Italy) asked me to be the Match Director for the Northwest Cup in Italy and to bring several of the top IDPA shooters along to do a clinic. Little did I know that this simple question would lead to the trip of a lifetime.

I have been very lucky to have been able to travel internationally the majority of my career, but this was the first time with a firearm. It's not easy! It required two trips to the Italian Consulate in New York to get the permit, which consists of proof that you

own the firearm, your carry permit, travel itinerary, passport etc. Then there is the law in Italy of no “war” rounds. That meant my 9mm parabellum (9x19) was out. However, after a bit of research, I find out the 9x21 is legal there. The bullet in a 9x21 is actually seated deeper in the longer case resulting in both the 9x19 and 9x21 being almost the same overall length. I thought our guns laws made no sense! So a replacement barrel in my M&P 9 Pro and I am good to go. Arrange to get ammo locally and I am all set. Although I find out the hard way that

it's shooting about 4" low. First stage was standards with 6 head shots. Six nice shots in the neck, down 30. Ouch!

Firearms have to travel separately from your luggage (with a separate \$100 charge). I had decided to fly to Rome and spend a couple of days with Federico before we drive to Milan for the match. Upon landing in Rome, I find that it is VERY good to have a well-connected friend when I am outside of customs and my gun is inside. Federico and his Police Chief friend sort that out and we are good to go.



Immediately upon arrival, competitors from all over the world were made to feel welcome.



No one likes to paste but even less so in the rain



Seeing the sites in Rome (Colosseum, St Peters) was absolutely unbelievable. THE FOOD!!! Really good and a lot of it. I don't think I have ever been to a restaurant where I prayed for the food to stop, but then I have never been to Rome before. We went to a restaurant that was owned by a friend of Federico's, no menu. The food just kept coming and coming and coming. Each time the waitress would put a plate in front of me, I would comment "not another course???" Then it was off to Milan with stops in Anzio for the US Cemetery and

Museum. Again unbelievable. The match was truly an International event with 22 International shooters from the USA, Romania, Finland, Israel, Austria, Germany Slovenia, Serbia, Hungary and France. 247 shooters overall. IDPA USA was well represented by Robert Ray, Kitty Richards, Tom Yost, Randi Rogers, Gordon Carrell, Denice Hamm and myself. The stages were a pretty straight forward sanctioned match. They looked relatively simple until you stepped up to the

shooting position. Then you realized that there were some very tight shots and a lot of movers that would draw you into one static target too far. The match consisted of ten stages that varied from Taking out the Trash, on a scaffold painting, making pasta, at home in bed etc. Very challenging, but nothing completely out of the ordinary. In fact, other than the language, you would swear that you were at any sanctioned match in the states. The IDPA Family Effect was in full force. Flavio Zanni (the real Match Director)

MATCH REVIEW



The rain dampened the targets but not our spirits!



Great dinners and great stages made for a fantastic match



welcomed me like a long lost brother. He speaks very little English and I speak no Italian, but thankfully there is Google Translate. It's almost comical talking into a single cell phone back and forth, but it works. The laughing, joking and teasing were also in full force. One of the Stats guys is in my class and division. We were on opposite ends of the scoresheet. He was #1 and I was doing my best to stay off the bottom (I did). I kept trying to convince him that since my score was higher than his, I was winning. He didn't buy it, but hey, it

was worth a try.

Lunches during setup were a group affair at a local restaurant. Italian meals consist of a first plate (pasta) and a second plate (main course, usually meat or fish) and lots of it. All freshly made and delicious. And then there is the vino! Why Italians are all skinny is beyond my understanding. Match lunches were the standard Italian fare of prosciutto, capicola and bread. A bit different, but very nice change from burgers and hot dogs. I now know why all the pictures I see on Facebook of the Italian matches are

of the group in a restaurant and very little of the match. Eating is a priority and I am glad to say that I am a Master in that division. Did mention the FOOD!!

We made another side trip to Verona with Manuel Di Paola, one of the CSO's and an E9 in the Italian Army. Seeing the balcony where Romeo and Juliet were, Manuel taking us to the "best gelato shop in Italy" (it was) and sipping drinks at a café on the town square was an amazing experience and typical of Italian hospitality.


As much as things were different,

they were the same. Spending time with Federico, Flavio and crew impressed me with their professionalism and dedication to our sport. I was aware of some rules related issues at past matches. After working with them it was hard to imagine them intentionally violating any rules. It dawned on me that it is difficult for us to understand or find all the rules. Imagine not being able to even read the rule book. It is written in English, a

As much as things were different, they were the same. Spending time with Federico, Flavio and crew impressed me with their professionalism and dedication to our sport.

language that most do not speak, yet they do an outstanding job of interpreting them. I was impressed with the professionalism of the entire crew. Although it is a bit weird hearing the range commands in heavily accented English.

I met new friends from several countries. The thing that impressed me most, is that IDPA people are the same everywhere. I felt very much at home with family. The banter over lunch was the usual stories and teasing (Ask Tom Yost about ordering a Cappuccino at lunch. Apparently it's only for breakfast). This was truly the trip of a lifetime with old friends and meeting new friends.

Bottom line. This was a fantastic match and Italian hospitality is beyond imagination. If you get an opportunity to attend a match, RUN, don't walk to your nearest travel agent. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Critser, A20835

Mike Critser is an Air Force Viet Nam Veteran and a former Chicago Suburb Police Officer. He is retired from a Multi-National Trade Show Producer (SHOT Show). He joined IDPA in 2004 and quickly got involved in scoring and organizing local, regional, national and international matches. He lives in Trumbull, CT.



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WORDS & PHOTOS WILLIAM DAUGHERTY

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Walls play a critical role in creating positions of cover for IDPA stages. The ideal wall section is easy to build, lightweight, and deploys quickly and securely. After seeing various designs at matches I decided to make one that was best suited for our needs. The result is based on a design I saw at Pioneer Sportsmen, Inc. in 2015 with slight modifications. The described wall has self-contained leg braces and is 83" tall.

MATERIALS

For a roughly 7' x7' wall the following items are required. All are currently available at Home Depot.

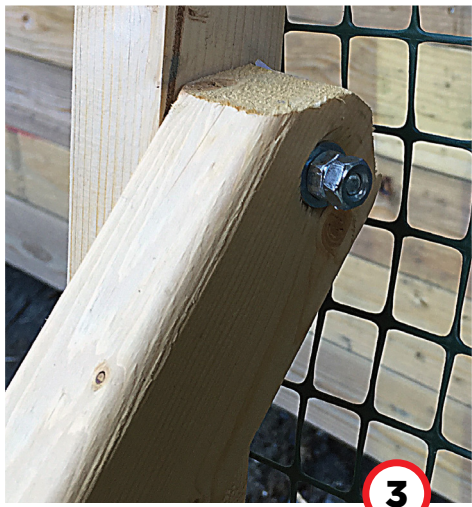
- ▶ 3 - 8'x2"x4" (or 6 - 8'x2"x2" boards if you don't want to rip the 2x4s)
- ▶ 1'x2' piece of 1/4" plywood
- ▶ 14.5 linear feet of 40" plastic fence. (Rolls are 25' so each can do 1.5 walls)
- ▶ 100 1/2" staples

- ▶ 40 - 1 1/4" sheetrock screws
- ▶ 2 - 1/4" carriage bolts 4" in length
- ▶ 2 - 1/4" washers
- ▶ 4 - 1/4" nuts

CONSTRUCTION

Wood Cuts

- ▶ Rip all 2x4 boards exactly in half, resulting in 6 - 96" 2x2 boards.
- ▶ Cut 5 - 2x2 boards to 80"



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- ▶ Cut remaining 2x2 exactly in half (2 boards approx.. 48"). Cut one end at 45 degrees and make two small 45 degree cuts to "round off" the other end.
- ▶ Cut plywood into 4 triangles

Frame Assembly

- ▶ Lay out 80" boards on a flat surface, top and bottom with three verticals in between. This results in a frame 80" wide and 83" tall.
- ▶ Attach plywood gussets at each corner with sheet rock screws, insuring frame is square. 3 sheetrock screws per side is sufficient.
- ▶ Attach center vertical board with two screws on each end driven at opposite angles to insure it won't twist.

NOTE Screw construction allows easy replacement of bullet damaged parts.

Drop Legs

- ▶ Drill a 1/4" hole through the side of the rounded end of each of the 48" boards. This will be the rotation point for the legs.
- ▶ Hold each board inside the frame in the

stowed position such that there's a 1" gap between the top of the frame and the end of the leg, then using the existing hole in the leg, drill a matching hole through the frame. Insure the 45 angle cut is facing out.

- ▶ Insert the carriage bolt through the outside of the frame and through the leg. Tap to seat the bolt head. Place a washer then two 1/4" nuts on the bolt, locking the nuts together by tightening. Star or nylon lock washers would also work.

Screen Mesh Fencing

- ▶ Unroll fence onto one side of front of wall. This will cover the gussets also.
- ▶ 40.7" width allows fencing to go from outside edge to opposite edge of the center vertical board.
- ▶ Staple fencing starting at the top by folding over 1" then work down both sides, stretching everything tightly.
- ▶ Staple across the bottom then cut off the roll.
- ▶ Repeat on the remaining side which results in a perfect overlap in the middle.

Spike Holes

- ▶ Drill a 1/2" hole in the bottom of each leg and through the bottom of the frame. This will allow four points of attachment when the wall is deployed.
- OPTION** Drill additional holes through the frame and leg to hold legs in stowed position with a 3/8" spike.

SUMMARY

The finished product can easily be carried by anyone, stores flat in 2", and can be repaired without much work. Put two or more of various sizes together and build any floorplan you can imagine. **TJ**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR
William Daugherty, A179498
 William Daugherty is a member of the Upper Valley Practical Shooters, an informal group dedicated to the pursuit of the shooting sports and related activities in the Upper Connecticut River Valley region of New Hampshire and Vermont.

2016 COMP-TAC REPUBLIC OF TEXAS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP

Everything is bigger and better in Texas.

WORDS MICHELLE LONERGAN **PHOTOS** MATCH STAFF



Everyone was happy to help out the Aiming for Zero charity

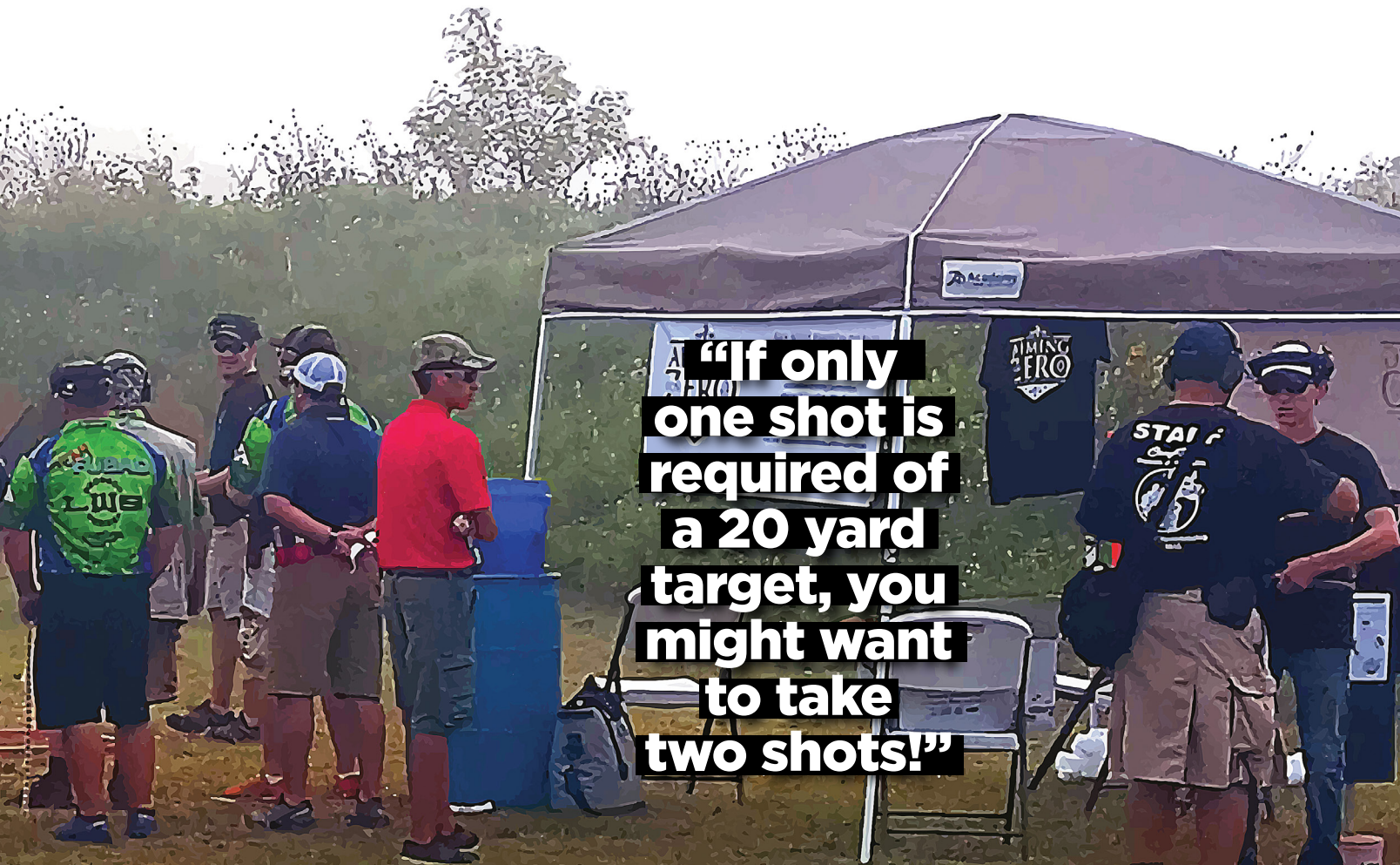
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May is a busy month on many levels of our lives. Graduations, season finales of our favorite TV programs, NRA Convention, and Shooting Matches!

The 2016 Comp-Tac Republic of Texas State Championship is in the history books with many “firsts”: (1) the match was held at Pacleb Ranch in Bellville, Texas on May 13-14, 2016; (2) three clubs came together to host it; (3) Michelle Lonergan was the first female Match Director; (4) there was a “named” match charity; and (5) UberScoreMaster was used. Randi Rogers wrote “Three great Texas IDPA clubs came together to put together a VERY deceptively tricky match. Huge congrats to Michelle Lonergan, MD and all the staff



Randi Rogers putting her Cowboy Action roots to work.



“If only one shot is required of a 20 yard target, you might want to take two shots!”

MATCH REVIEW



There is not much better than a day at the range with friends.



Behind the scenes of getting a major match ready

who put on the match! I was stoked to finish 2nd SSP.

Team Trainwreck IDPA, West Houston IDPA and Thunder Tactical Shooters worked together to develop 12 challenging stages: Fort McKavett; Come and Take It; Battleship Texas; Randy's Rodeo Standards; Battle of Goliad; Open Carry; The Alamo; NASA; Bucees; State Fair; Gruene Hall; and The Battle of San Jacinto.

While competitors may have thought they could breeze through the stages, there were a few lessons to learn: (1) double drop turners are much better than single drop turners; (2) If only one shot is required of a 20 yard target, you might want to take two shots; (3) make sure all of the targets are taped after the last shooter, especially the non threat targets; (4) just pull the rope as required without any fancy extras; (5) a

tactical reload before going prone might be a good idea; (6) set up for the shot before you step on the bear trap; and (7) you just can't beat Texas BBQ for lunch!

I chose Aiming for Zero as the match charity. AFZ is an organization with a mission to help veterans and military families cope with PTSD, suicide and the many other challenges they face on a daily basis. AMD, Colonel Phil Torres, engaged the competi-

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tors by challenging them to drop and give him 22 push-ups during the opening ceremony. During the opening ceremony Greg Garrett with Comp-Tac thanked the competitors for their participation and members of Troop 604 of the Boy Scouts who came out to help each squad tape targets. Everyone gave reverence to the American Flag as the National Anthem was played and then it was time to “make some noise.”

Gordon Carrell with Comp-Tac wrote “Congratulations to all the winners and a HUGE thank you to all of the match staff and volunteers! Comp-Tac is so happy and proud to have had the opportunity to be the Title Sponsor. We love getting “face time” with our customers and thank you for all of your support!”

We welcomed competitors from Switzerland, Georgia, Texas, East Texas, North Texas, South Texas, Louisiana, Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Mississippi, New York, and Oklahoma. Next year, the Texas State Match will be hosted by Collin County IDPA. So in the meantime while we wait for our turn again, this South Texas Group will host The Best Lil’ Regional Texas State Match in 2017. Watch for details coming soon!

A **HUGE Thank You** to our Title Sponsor *Comp-Tac*; holster options for every body. Our **Diamond Sponsors:** *Saddle River Ranch Firearms & Archery, Magnolia Hunting Supply, On Your 6 Designs, Bayou Bullets, Ruger, Glock, Laserlyte, Sticky Holsters, USCCA, Wilson Combat, Shooters Connection, Bond Arms, Highland Target Systems, Rudy Project, and Brian Enos.* Our **Gold Sponsors:** *AG&G Women’s Shooting League, Big Kountry Shooting & Archery, Uniquetek, Big Guy’s Shooting Supplies, The Brass Exchange, The Impact Zone Range, Thunder Gun Range, Crossbreed Holsters, and UberScoreMaster.com.* And our **Silver Sponsors:** *Poor Henry Designs, Brilliant Backstraps, Gun Goddess, Team Fubad, ID Life Nutrition and Mary Kay Cosmetics.*

Competitor Comments:

Mark Kuykendall “My son and I shot Friday. This was a great match that was well planned, great stages and great communication before and during the match. Thanks to all who worked so hard to put it on and work the match. The only thing that should have been better was my shooting.”

Jean Fuentes “I would just like to say Thank You for allowing me to be part of such a great match. 12 stages completed by 1500 hrs. Got to see old friends and meet new ones. Michelle Lonergan & Phil

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Torres did a great job as well as the rest of the staff.”

David Rowe “Thank you everyone for letting me work the match. I had a wonderful time. Even though it was hotter than Beelzebub’s furnace, it was a great match. Great match, friendly shooters, staff, and volunteers.” Thank you all from Del Rio, TX.

Wolf Laughlin “Had a great time working this match. Michelle Lonergan and Phil Torres did a great job directing the match.”

Charles Sexton “Fun match! The weather Gods were on our side.”

Andreas Pfenninger “Thanks very much for the great match! We enjoyed meeting so

many friendly Texans and had a really great time! Yours, The Swiss Team”!

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR
Michelle Lonergan, A50440**

Michelle Lonergan considers herself a Native Houstonian and absolutely a Texas Lady. She acquired her CHL in September 2012 as a result of events with her profession. She joined IDPA in January 2013. She assisted in the creation of Team Trainwreck IDPA Club then acquired credentials as a Safety Officer, a Chief Safety Officer, Safety Officer Instructor and then Match Director. She is a strong advocate of the 2nd Amendment and promotes it in all she does.

Justin Cooper

**Zero to Master
in 36 Months**

**WORDS &
PHOTOS
WALT
KLOEPPEL**

Justin Cooper, known as “Coop” to his friends, is fast becoming a recognized name among the inner circles of IDPA shooters in the Southern region of the country. He does, after all, have all six divisions covered quite nicely. Of course, if you rank below a Master in any of them, you don't have a thing to worry about. Just sit back, enjoy the show and let him show you how it's done. For the other top shooters, however, Cooper is a challenge to be reckoned with if he happens to show up in your area on match day.

Sure, there are always a few Masters in any given area. Each one gets a tip of the hat for such an accomplishment. Masters are the top of the food chain among our ranks. A six-gun Master ... well, he or she pretty much trumps it all.

But I think what will be of interest to our readers is not only the fact that Justin is a six-gun top dog, but also that he went from Marksman to six-gun Master in 36 months, give or take a week. That in itself marks a competitor's dedication to accomplish the goals he has set.

Cooper, a 35-year-old refrigeration mechanic in Murfreesboro, TN., hasn't always been around guns. In fact, he didn't buy his first handgun until his mid-20s. It was a

Beretta 92FS, which he still has today.

“I had a good friend that lost his wife to cancer. He was going stir crazy after she passed and I knew I had to get his mind into something other than grief,” said Cooper. “So we each bought a pistol and some ammo - lots of ammo - and started shooting at a local indoor range.”

After many sessions of indoor shooting, they found a piece of property where they could shoot outdoors. Cooper, an eyeglasses wearer, realized a big difference from the transition to daylight shooting.

“I started outside shooting. This is it, I can see my sight. This is unbelievable.”

Soon his friend came to him and told him of a gun club in Gallatin that started hosting a monthly outdoor match in which “... they run around barrels and stuff, shooting at cardboard targets.”

“Why in the world would they want to do that for?” asked Cooper.

Cooper's only competition experience was his other hobby: dirt bikes. He did some local riding, mostly with his friends who also shared that compassion. He never had a clue that he might want to try his hand at competing in the shooting sports.

But after a bit of coaxing, Cooper's buddy convinced him to try it and the rest

is history. The range known as the Gallatin Gun Club is where Cooper met Robert Stanley, who was the match director for the club's IDPA matches. Stanley, a veteran Expert shooter, took Cooper under his wing and showed him the ropes. Cooper, in appreciation, helped Stanley out in any way he could ... setting targets, cleaning up after matches and eventually becoming a safety officer.

Along the way, Cooper realized the competition bug had bitten and he then knew what he wanted to do - full speed ahead and damn the torpedoes.

“Once I set my mind on something, I'm going to go all out and do it right, or not do it at all. I got that trait from my mother. She was always like that.”

Up the chain he went, and it went fast. Cooper joined IDPA in February of 2013. By July, he was an ESP Expert, following up with CDP Sharpshooter by fall. In early 2014 he made SSP Expert and match bumped to SSP Master by taking 1st place at the Gallatin Steam Plant Shootout match.

In March of 2015, Cooper classified as BUG Master. In May, he knocked out both CDP and ESP Master. In November he made Revolver Master.

In March of 2016, he fulfilled his final classification quest by making his sixth gun Master in CCP during a classifier.

How much prestige does that title hold? According to IDPA headquarters, there are only 11 active members in IDPA who are either six-gun Master or Distinguished Master - the title is an honor. That it was accomplished in just a tad over three years after joining IDPA is in a category all by itself.

Yet the man known as "Coop" is as humble a competitor as you'll ever meet.

"I never forget where I came from," he said.

In fact, when asked what he enjoyed about competing - other than winning matches - his answer reflected on his character and his attitude toward his fellow IDPA members.

"Another thing that's been more of a blessing than anything is all the people I've met and are still meeting," said Cooper. "I've met a lot of people riding dirt bikes but I've met even more shooting guns. The gun community is real. There is nothing any better than being around like minded people. And when you share something that everyone has in common with, you already have something that's an icebreaker right of the bat. You get to meet a lot of interesting people. I enjoy meeting new people and making new friends and seeing old friends."

So how much practice does a six-gun Master put in?

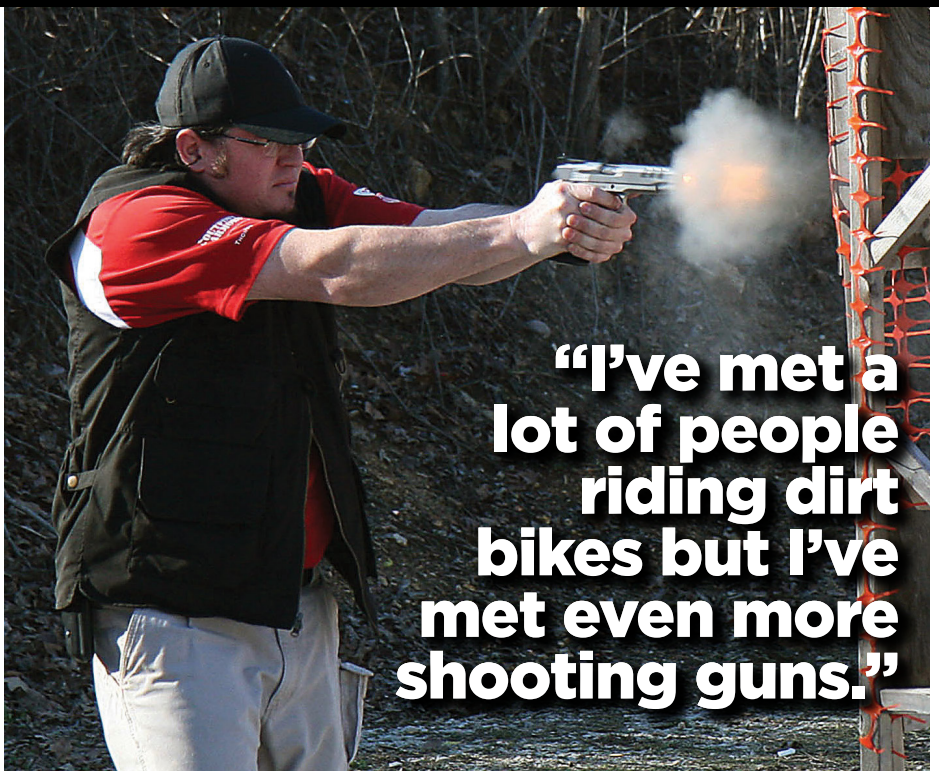
"Not as much as I need to because of life," said Cooper. "I usually try to do a 15- to 20-minute regimen every night of dry fire from every position that I can possibly think of. I probably do more "pick up" gun stuff then I do drawing because we draw so much during the match already. I like practicing awkward starts."

Cooper likes to apply "awkward" to the stages he sets for some of the local club shoots.

"I like to set stages with awkward starts because I don't think we do enough of it. IDPA is supposed to be centered around every day carry and scenario situations ... well, you don't always have your gun on your hip in a holster. It gives the people a way to shoot in a way they've never shot before."

Mental Game

If you watch Cooper at the line, his friendly smile is gone, his demeanor is solemn. When the buzzer sounds, he is suddenly transformed into a shooting machine. Those watching from behind the line are non-existent to him, he's alone on the range, knocking out cardboard at a



"I've met a lot of people riding dirt bikes but I've met even more shooting guns."

precise rate.

"I simply drown out anything else around me when the buzzer goes. I think that ability goes hand in hand with my occupation. I've always been around electricity in my profession. When you're dealing with electricity, you can't be jumpy. I learned that at a very early age in life - how to zone out and 100 percent focus on the task at hand," said Cooper.

Cooper is more than happy to pass that advice to new shooters as well.


"That's what I try to tell new people, you take as long as you want to. It doesn't matter what's going on behind you, all that matters is what's going on in front of you. Get relaxed - breath! You know what you can do, and only you know what you can do, so don't try to do like anyone else. You know your abilities, don't try to live outside of them. You'll eventually get to the level you want to, because I have. I started at the bottom. It was not an overnight success by no stretch of the imagination. I've got a lot of man hours in this sculpture (laughs). I've got a lot of bullets down range."

Equipment

"I'm just a Smith & Wesson fanatic, especially their old revolvers. Their guns just fit me better. I've tried a little of everything. I've tried the Glocks, I've tried XDs, but in the polymer world of guns, the M&P just fits my hand best. As far as revolvers, Smith and Wesson wrote the book as far as I'm concerned," said Cooper. "I've also managed to get support from Outpost

Armory (a local gun shop) and Black Bullets International. They do make it a lot easier. Just knowing they're in my corner sure makes it less stressful; it's a huge help."

I finished this interview with "Master Cooper" by asking if all his goals have been met. His response: "Not by a long shot" - pun intended.

"The six-gun Master is an accomplishment in itself and it's an accomplishment in which I wanted to prove to myself that I could do. But there is still, and always will be, room for improvement. Just because I have the whole master stigma/classification, that's just a status," said Cooper. "I may not be a Master on the day I show up. There's always room for improvement and I look at my mistakes and what I may have done to do better. Sometimes I may put too much pressure on myself, but I work around that the best I can. It's what you make it." 

Do you know an IDPA member with an interesting story? Let us know by writing us at tacticaljournal@idpa.com. We would love to share their stories.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Walt Kloeppe, A56663

Walt Kloeppe is an Army Veteran and retired as a writer/editor from the U.S. Army Recruiting Command in 2010 after 36 years combined Army/Civil Service time. A former metallic silhouette/bullseye shooter, he joined the IDPA ranks in 2013. He resides with his wife in Nashville, TN.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE UNIFORMS TO SHOOTING SKILL?

(FROM A GUY WHO USED TO WEAR ONE)

What it takes to be a good shooter.

WORDS & PHOTOS DUANE THOMAS



Duane Thomas
at age 22.

I SPENT TEN YEARS ON ACTIVE DUTY IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY. HOWEVER I DON'T BS ANYONE, NO "DURING MY FIFTH 'NAM TOUR..."

stories here, I was a clerk in the Army. For my first three years in, I was also an Airborne paratrooper. However I was also a clerk in the Airborne. I did my fair share of forced marches and combat equipment jumps, but the vast majority of my time in the Airborne was spent sitting in front of a word processor. I never saw combat. Just dumb luck, I was part of the only Airborne unit on Fort Bragg that did not go to Grenada. By the time Desert Storm rolled around, I was part of a unit on Fort Lewis that also didn't get sent to combat.

I have never been a police officer. Briefly I was an armed security guard, but I've never been a cop. I'm glad we have them, but my attitude was, "Who wants a job where you have to spend significant amounts of time dealing with the scum of the Earth?"

Having said all that, I will also say that, while I have a lot of respect for those who wear various uniforms, and the difficult, sometimes dangerous jobs they do, I do get a bit tired of the people, in and out of uniform, who think that wearing a particular outfit automatically makes a person a gun expert. "Well, you KNOW they're a great shooter because they're a cop/soldier/SWAT team member/Navy SEAL/fill in the blank."

But do we really know that?

Recently I had a conversation with someone within the gun industry, who mentioned they'd just gotten back from attending a regional SWAT competition - an event where every police department within a multi-state area sent their SWAT team to compete, to find out who had the best team. He described one of the stages to me.

(Industry Representative) "You start behind a Bianchi barricade, you have six targets, they're all the steel plates shaped

like USPSA or IDPA targets, and you know the ones."

(Duane Thomas) "Yeahhh..."

(IR) "They're set up, three on each side, in this sort of V formation, on either side you've got a target at seven yards, another target at ten yards, and another at twelve yards."

(DT) "Okay..."

(IR) "The drill was to draw from the holster and hit each target once. How fast do you think you could do that drill?"

(DT) "That's it? Just a draw and six shots?"

(IR) "Yes."

(DT) "Well, let me ask a few questions first. Can I wear my everyday carry gear?"

(IR) "Yes."

(DT) "And I don't have to go from concealment, I can just have the gear out in the open."

(IR) "Yes."

(DT) "And I don't have to hit an A-zone, or a down-zero circle, there are no scoring areas on the targets, all I have to do is hit these huge steel plates somewhere."

(IR) "Right."

(DT) "Can I start leaning out around cover so I can visually acquire the first target before I draw?"

(IR) "Yes."

(DT) "I assume I don't have to pie inward from the outside like at an IDPA match, there's nothing to stop me from shooting the closest target first, then working my way outward, on each side."

(IR) "Right."

(DT) "Will they let me shoot all the targets from around the right side, or do I have to shoot the right side targets from the right side and the left side targets from the left side?"

(IR) "You have to shoot the right targets from the right, and the left targets from the left."

(DT) "Okay. And I don't have to do a Reload With Retention or a Tactical Reload or even

a speedload while I'm moving the gun from one side of the barricade to the other, it's just 'Shoot the three targets on one side, move the gun to the other side, shoot those three targets, no reload in-between.'"

(IR) "Right."

(DT) "Also, I'm going to assume the targets are set up so there's not a big transition between targets. Essentially, from the shooter's view, the targets are right next to each other, so it's a short transition between targets, it's just that each succeeding target gets, de facto, a little smaller because it's further away."

(IR) "Right. So how fast do you think you could do that drill?"

(DT) "Well, okay, I'm going to be really conservative here. I'm NOT going to give you the times I think I could do if I pushed it. This is what I know I can do, on demand, if I'm just kind of loping along."

(IR) "Okay."

(DT) "To start with, I'm going to draw to the target on the right at seven yards. I'm right handed and I wear my holster on the right side of my body, so it's going to work best for me to lean to the right on the draw, it's a shorter, more directional draw. I'm going to lean out to visually acquire the target beforehand if they'll let me. And I'm going to engage the close target first because I can do a slightly faster draw that way than if I drew to the far target first."

(IR) "Okay."

(DT) "I would say I could fire my first shot in about 1.5 seconds. Then, since my transitions between targets are really short, even if the targets are further away for each shot, those are still short transitions, and in the overall scheme of things, easy shots, I'd say I could hit the second and third targets with .5 second transitions for both targets. So that takes me up to 2.5 seconds, I've dealt with everything on the right side."

(IR) "Okay."

(DT) "Now I have to transition the gun over

to the left target array. I know that when I'm shooting the IDPA classifier, on Stage 3, String 1, I can get the gun from the right side of the barricade to the left side in around 2.5 seconds. But I'm shooting on targets 20 yards away, and I have to do a Reload With Retention in-between. Okay, I'm going to be REALLY conservative here, I'm going to say my transition here will go two seconds. In reality it would be a lot faster, but again I'm being really conservative. So we add two seconds to my 2.5 seconds, I'm up to 4.5 seconds to get to the point I'm engaging the first target around the left side. Then a couple more .5 second transitions to deal with the last two targets.

"So," I finished up, "I'd say, very conservatively, I can do that drill in 5.5 seconds. In reality, it's probably going to be somewhere in the 4s. If I wanted to push it, I could probably get it down into the 3s, but I'm going to say 5.5 seconds."

(IR) "Okay. Would you care to take a guess how fast the SWAT cop shot this drill who had the single best score on the stage? And not only did he have the single best score on this stage, not only was he part of the team that won the overall competition, he had the single best final overall score for the entire match. This is the best guy they've got, in a multi-state area. How fast do you think he did this drill?"

(DT) "Ummm...ten seconds."

(IR) "Slower."

(DT) "...Twelve seconds."

(IR) "Slower."

(DT) "Fifteen seconds."

(IR) "Slower."

(DT) "Twenty seconds?"

(IR) "Slower."

(DT) Alright, by this time I was amazed, so I said, "I give up, I can't imagine anyone taking more than twenty seconds to complete this drill."

(IR) "Thirty seconds."

(DT) "...Wow."

So, I was always curious how well I could actually run this drill, and how close to reality were my time estimates. So I went out to the range and set it up, using IDPA targets. And an electronic timer, of course. I used my everyday carry holster and gun, a Blade-Tech Standard Belt Holster and Glock 17. I kept track of my times on my first run-through, because that's the only one that really counts. Performance on demand.

I had estimated 1.5 seconds for the draw to my first shot. It actually took 1.54 seconds. So I was a little slower there than I'd estimated. I'd predicted .5 second transitions each to Targets 2 and 3. They were actually both .39 second. So I picked up a bit

of time there. To get the gun over to the left side and hit Target 4, I'd said 2.0 seconds. It actually took 1.48, so I picked up a lot of time there. Then my transition to Target 5 was .39 (I was all about the .39 second transitions on this drill, apparently), then my final transition, to Target 6, actually went .42. My total time to complete the drill was 4.61 seconds. So my estimate of "probably somewhere in the 4s" was correct.

Shooting on IDPA targets, I only dropped one point off possible. My final shot, on Target 6 at 12 yards around the left side barricade, was just slightly outside the down-zero circle. The other five shots were all good, solid down-zeroes.

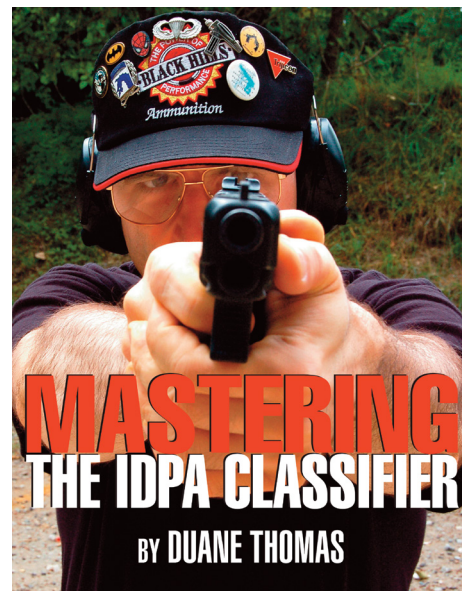
So that means, as a normal citizen shooter, who has been out of the Army since 1992 (not that being in the Army to start with had anything to do with being a good shooter), my performance was a bit over six and a half times better than the best SWAT team shooter in a multi-state area. After that, I did a bit of further practice, seeing how low I could get my time. My best performance, with all rounds on-target, was 4.11 seconds. I found that if I pushed it, I could indeed get it down into the high 3s, but at that speed I started consistently dropping one or two shots off-target.

All this is not meant to denigrate SWAT team members. Nor is it meant to ignore the fact there are some SWAT team members who are, in fact, awesome shooters. For instance, here in Washington state, the Seattle SWAT team has Darrion Holiwell who is a Master class USPSA shooter. But Darrion's not a good shooter because he's a SWAT team member. He's a good shooter because he's an enthusiast who's worked his butt off to be that good.

So let's get away from thinking you need to be a cop or soldier to have great skill at arms. Let's also get away from thinking that wearing a particular uniform, or having a particular job, automatically makes a person a good shooter. Time, discipline, and hard work will make you a good shooter. **TJ**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Duane Thomas, A0127

Duane Thomas spent 10 years on active duty in the Army, the first three as an Airborne paratrooper. While in the military he was ranked an Expert (the Army's highest classification) with the M16A1 and Colt 1911A1 .45 auto. He sold his first nationally published gun magazine article in 1989, and has been making his living at it since 1992 when he exited the Army. He is a Stock Service Pistol Master with a Glock 9mm, and a former Washington State IDPA Custom Defensive Pistol Champion with a 1911 .45. His website is Self-Defense-Handguns.com.



"If you're shooting IDPA or even thinking about it, I'd DEFINITELY recommend Duane Thomas' book. The price is less than 50 rounds of 9mm factory ammo, and you'll save a HELLUVA lot more than that by knowing and following Duane's advice."

— Massad Ayoob

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Mastering the IDPA Classifier, lavishly illustrated with 71 full-color photos, is available as a downloadable e-book for \$9.95 through www.Self-Defense-Handguns.com.

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VIRGINIA INDOOR REGIONALS (VIR)

IDPA shooting fun... in the light and in the dark!

WORDS JEFF KOKE PHOTOS JEFF ROBERTS

Norfolk County Rifle Range (NCRR) held the VIR on April 2-3, 2016. This match is unique in two ways: First, it is a 10 stage match held entirely indoors and secondly, half of the stages are shot in the dark! The VIR hallmark is that it is the equivalent of a day/night match. A hand-held flashlight is required. This year we changed it up and shot the light stages first. The VIR is

an IDPA sanctioned tier two match and all IDPA rules were observed. Because it is a sanctioned match, all of the stages were approved by the Area Coordinator (AC).

Our match director this year was Jim Jones. He along with a huge cadre of staff supported the VIR. We ran alternating shifts of paired up Safety Officers and Scorekeepers on all five stages. Well over

25 SOs worked three hour shifts with a three hour break. The courses of fire were provided by four different sources and consolidated together with the Match Director and Chief Safety Officers determining which to employ. Jeff Koke and Jim VandenAkker provided the match administration which involved taking care of match applications, fielding questions,

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MATCH REVIEW



and scoring. Within an hour of the match scores becoming final, they were posted to the IDPA website.

Considering the limited space available on our 40 foot wide by 75 foot deep indoor pistol range, it is a tremendous accomplish-

ment to be able to layout five stages to be shot in the light and then quickly reconfigure them for the dark portion! Further, it is a true feat to coordinate a squad of ten people, rotating them through all these stages in a choreographed method and in a timely fashion! Special thanks to Jim and Laura Darsch and John and Sandra Card for accomplishing this! Next year, we will reduce the members per squad to better facilitate getting the shooters through the stages.

A highlight for NCRR this year was having two shooters from the United States Army Marksmanship Unit come up from Fort Benning, Georgia. Both master class shooters in IDPA. It was especially nice to have SFC Daniel Horner participate. He got his start in the shooting sports at NCRR and it had been 10 years since he had last been on our range. Daniel took his division in Enhanced Service Pistol, Most Accurate (down 19), and High Military! Shooting with Daniel was PFC Jacob Heatherington who took his division in Stock Service Pistol! It was a treat to have these two great Americans shoot the match. Thank you for your service to our country!

We had over 85 registered shooters with 77 actually pulling the trigger. I received many compliments testifying to the fact that we are a friendly group with understanding SOs who are truly in-



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terested in the welfare of the competitor. Some of the compliments we received: "Your safety officers were the best -- professional and firm without being over-the-top."

"It's the most challenging yet fun match I've shot and I'll be back next year!"

"Please pass on my gratitude to the VIR staff and volunteers. You all ran a fabulous match—always safe while still fostering an atmosphere of encouragement and camaraderie. It is rare to have those latter qualities in a safe shooting environment. Thanks for the many volunteer hours you all put in. The bathroom stage was my favorite!"

"...please accept my thanks for all your help for the match on April 2nd. I must congratulate you and the club on such fun and testing stages and such a friendly atmosphere. ... I had a really great time and will look forward to a chance of returning and meeting you all again."

"This being my first VIR that I participated in, I can now appreciate the mass effort that went into it."

"I've shot one or two stages in the dark before, but never five in a row!"

Many thanks to the IDPA SOs and staff for a safe and successful match. Over 9,000 rounds were expended with half fired in the dark! 📺

.....
Editor's note: If you are interested in

attending a match hosted by the great people that put on the VIR, you don't have to wait until next year. They will be hosting

a Tier 2 CCP/BUG specialty match on October 14-15, 2016. Check out their event page on the IDPA website, www.idpa.com.

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WINNER'S CIRCLE

Congregations to everyone that competed at the VIR, Texas State and Northwest Cup!

ERRATUM:

We would like to correct a misidentification on page 40 of the Summer 2016 issue of the Tactical Journal. On the top row, leftmost photo is James Watson, CCP, MM 1st place. On the second row, leftmost photo is Mark Hergott, CCP, SS 1st place. Congratulations gentlemen and we apologize for the error.



Christopher Everett
CCP, SS - 1st



Gary Scholl
CDP Champion



Jeff Koke
CDP, MM - 1st



Jim Jones
BUG Champion



Peter Hoffman
High Dist. Senior



Stephanie Speece
High Lady



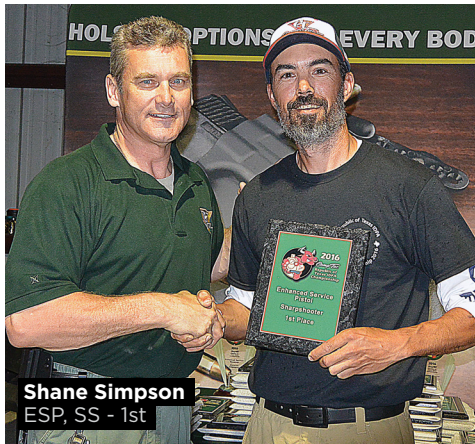
Steve Myers
High Senior



Terry Miltier
CCP Champion



Gordon Carrell
ESP Champion



Shane Simpson
ESP, SS - 1st



Jennifer Kroll
SSP, MM - 1st



Joel Broughton
SSP, SS - 1st



Daniel Thompson
SSP, EX - 1st



Jacob Hetherington
SSP Champion



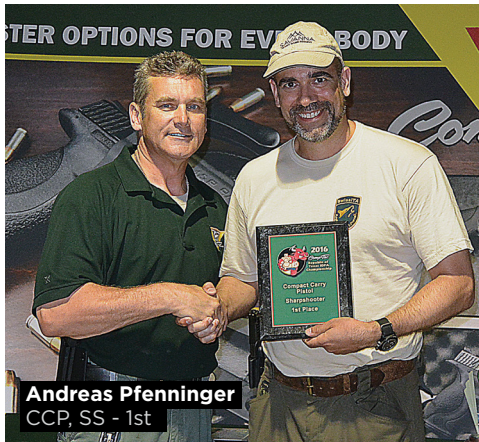
Jason Davis
Most Accurate



Randi Rogers
High Lady



James "Jim O" O'Flaherty
High LE



Andreas Pfenninger
CCP, SS - 1st



Robert Moore
CCP, EX - 1st



Jeff Holthus
CCP, MA - 1st

TROPHY ROOM



Antonio Cochi
ESP Champion



Roberto Sanna
ESP, SS - 2nd



Luigi Terenghi
ESP, MM - 9th



Domenico "Carlos" Carluccio
SSP Champion



Paolo Piazza
SSP EX - 1st



Daniele Cattoni
SSP, NV - 1st



Matteo Stefano Pistillo
REV, MM - 1st



Randi Rogers
SSP, MA - 1st & High Lady



Tom Yost
ESP, MA - 1st
& High International & High Senior



Antti Luukkonen
Most Accurate



Antonio Di Costanzo
REV Champion



Rudy Covre
CDP, EX - 1st

UPCOMING MATCHES

Visit IDPA.com/compete
to find a club match near you.

EVENT NAME	HOST CLUB	START DATE
2016 PA State Match - Presented by Sinterfire-Tier 2	Holidaysburg Consolidated Sportsmen's Association	Aug 5, 2016
Mountaineer Classic 2016 - Tier 2	Watauga Gun Club-IDPA	Aug 13, 2016
Michigan State IDPA Championships Tier 3 Aug 19-21 2016	Brooklyn Sportsmans Club	Aug 19, 2016
2016 New England Regional IDPA Championship Tier 4	Harvard Sportsmen's Club	Aug 20, 2016
2016 Blade-Tech Washington State IDPA Championship	Northwest Practical Pistol Association	Aug 20, 2016
Showdown in the Ozarks - Tier 2 Match	Razorback Dynamic Shooters	Aug 26, 2016
Battle-n-Benton III	Benton Gun Club	Sep 10, 2016
2016 IDPA US National Championship: Tier 5	Cross Timbers Action Shooting Association	Sep 13, 2016
Aztech Armory Presents the Algonquin Cup Regional IDPA Championship - Tier 2	Eagle Lake Gun Club	Sep 18, 2016
Comp-Tac 2016 MS State Championship (Miss'ippi Showdown) - Tier 3	Desoto Rifle And Pistol Club	Sep 30, 2016
Delaware State IDPA Championship 2016 - Tier 3	Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club	Sep 30, 2016
Comp-Tac 2016 New Mexico State IDPA Championship - Tier 3	Las Cruces IDPA (Affiliated with Picacho Gun Club)	Oct 1, 2016
The Western, 2016 Regional IDPA Championship - Tier 4	Sacramento Defensive Pistol Shooters	Oct 1, 2016
Prairie Dell Shootout	Brittany Shooting Park, Ltd	Oct 8, 2016
Space Coast Challenge - Tier 3	Port Malabar Rifle and Pistol Club	Oct 15, 2016
Fall Brawl 2016 Tier 4	Central AR Shooters Association (CASA)	Oct 15, 2016
Liberty Match at Valley Forge 2016 - Tier 3	Lower Providence Rod and Gun Club	Oct 21, 2016
2017 Missouri State Championship - Backstoppers Challenge	Arnold Rifle And Pistol Club	May 13, 2017

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READY TO CAPTION THIS?



HOW TO ENTER

Step #1:

Think of something funny to caption the photo above.

Step #2:

Email your (hopefully) funny caption to partingshot@idpa.com

Step #3:

Sit around waiting to find out if you won, all the while complaining about the whole process being unfair in not recognizing your obvious comedic genius.

Step #4:

Cross your fingers, hope we like your wry sense of humor best.

PARTING SHOT WINNERS FROM OUR LAST ISSUE

Winner

"The Right to Bear in Arms"

—Dave Hawbecker, A57280

Second Place

"I will name him George, and I will hug him and pet him and squeeze him." —John Weidley, A71181

Third Place

"Your breath is un bear able."

—Daniel Sandifer, A36056



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