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HOWARD LEIGHT

IMPACT SPORT

Can you hear me now?

WORDS + PHOTOS ROBERT RAY

"CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?" A PHRASE THAT WAS ONCE USED IN A CLEVER COMMERCIAL, THEN POPULAR IN MEMES AND finally over used in "dad" jokes by an older generation while a younger rolled their eyes at "the old fart." It has a personal impact on me because I don't always hear people like I used to, just ask my wife! Years of using high pitched machinery and of hunting without ear protection has caused hearing loss and a constant ringing (tinnitus) in my head. This is why I am very careful about the ear pro I use now. I can't afford to make my hearing any worse and that is why I, and many others, trust and use Howard Leight Impact Sport ear protection.

The Impact Sport is an electronic set of muff style hearing protection. In dynamic shooting sports being able to hear range commands as a shooter or Safety Officer is incredibly important. The Impact Sport uses directional microphones that pick up sound and monitor the decibel level. The system allows sounds up to 82dB to pass through for you to hear. Any loud impulsive sounds, like guns shots, over 82dB gets dampened so it does not damage your hearing. There is also an adjustment wheel that turns on the muffs and adjusts the volume of the incoming ambient sounds.


The Impact Sport also has a slim profile allowing for ease of use with rifles. Although slim, the ear cups are very comfortable. Comfort becomes very important on long practice sessions or all day wear at the match. Keeping with comfort, the spring steel head band is covered with a soft leather like material with a round-



You only get one set of eyes and ears, protect them well.

ed sewn edge. This is miles better than other brands I have seen that use a hard, sharp plastic covering. The headband is adjustable for a customized fit and folds up for compact storage. The Impact Sport includes an AUX input and 3.5mm cord for connecting to your music device or another audio source.

The Impact Sport uses 2 AAA batteries and, according to their website, provides 350 hours of continuous use. While I have not tested the actual time, I will say the battery life does seem very long and I would believe the 350 hour claim. I also really like the 4 hour auto shut off feature as I am prone to taking them off at the end of the match to talk and forgetting to actually shut my muffs off.

In all, I have been fairly hard on these muffs and they have not let me down. Rain, heat, sweat, dirt and dust, several accidental drops and being banged around on my range bag strap, they have held up and still operate like they did when they were new. Best of all, the Impact Sport comes with a MSRP of only \$54.00. While I am willing to spend a lot to protect my hearing, it is nice to have a quality product that does not force me too. For more information on this product head on over to www.howardleightshootingsports.com and check them out. Hope to see you on the range. 

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SPRING IS HERE AND THE BRASS IS GROWING

Time to get out on the range and plant those freedom seeds!

A Message from Joyce Wilson IDPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SPRING GREETINGS TO ALL OF OUR MEMBERS AROUND THE WORLD. HERE AT IDPA HEADQUARTERS, WE ARE DOING MUCH OF our yearly behind-the-scenes work to get ready for shooting season. Although many of our clubs shoot year-round if weather permits, there is no doubt that between April and September the lion's share of sanctioned and club matches occur. We hope that you are out on the range enjoying sunshine and freedom.

Part of our background work is preparing for the 2020 IDPA Nationals to be held Sept. 23-26th at the Cameo Shooting and Education Complex (CSEC) in Grand Junction, Colorado. MD Staff Seth Hayden, Ken Reed, Marty Johnson and Frank Strong have clever stages designed for your shooting enjoyment. We were excited to have more than twice as many Safety Officers apply to work this match as needed and that

is a great problem to have. Each year, we are proud of our ability to offer SO slots to folks who have not worked Nationals before – usually around 30% of our staff are first timers. This allows them the opportunity to see how Nationals is run, to be mentored by experienced National staff and take home to their local club this knowledge. Shooter sign up will begin in June and each shooter will be eligible, in order of points accrued, to sign up for one of the 8 IDPA divisions.

The new CSO exam and process was rolled out in January. This effort combines requirements of active officiating at sanctioned matches and rule book knowledge as proven by passing the CSO exam. If you have questions about the process or the application, please contact your Area Coordinator or International Point of Contact. Requirements for CSOs can be

found in the Match Administration Rules on the IDPA website.

Our Video Team has been prepping for their rollout, as well. Some of you may have noticed the initial test video on the Continuing Education tab of your IDPA website Dashboard. We are working with our video hosting provider to begin posting videos a few times each month based on commonly asked questions or information that will be helpful to shooter, SOs and Match Directors. Watch your Dashboard for upcoming information.

An update from March 1st indicates that the Postal Match is a bigger hit that we hoped for – on that date nearly 3000 match scores have been uploaded. Folks seems eager to measure themselves against shooters in the same class and division around the world. We are hoping to do a similar match in 2021.



Joyce Wilson,
IDPA Executive
Director

We hope that you are out on the range enjoying sunshine and freedom.

of conversation at IDPA Headquarters and the ability to be more nimble in our reporting has played into this decision. As you can see from the previous paragraph, we have to have articles to the printer months prior to the publication landing in your mailbox, so digital delivery can help us shorten that time frame and make content fresher for our members. We are hoping to get more input from our international members as well, and this will give us the chance to solicit it. In the past few years many advertisers have asked us to provide a digital showcase for their ads that so you may see more clickable ads and links to fresh content to better serve you. We will also have more room for member-written articles and pictures. The new, on-line issues will be available on our website.

IDPA Headquarters sends our best wishes to members all over the world, especially those in countries like China and Italy who have been beset by COVID-19. A few matches have been cancelled by organizers in those countries as a precaution and HQ is closely monitoring this virus to confirm that it will not impact the 2020 Nationals. IDPA is a family and we send our wishes for good health to every member. 🇺🇸

Joyce Wilson, #CL087
Joyce Wilson is the Executive Director of IDPA. Members can contact her at joyce@idpa.com

Effective with this issue, we will no longer be providing the Tactical Journal in printed form. After a break in Q3, we will be producing our Q4 and beyond issues on-line. While we realize that some members will be disappointed with this decision, we have been getting substantial numbers of requests from members who don't want a printed copy mailed to their home. The opportunity to go digital has long been a topic

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From Shooter to Shark

Making a big splash in the shooting sports.

WORDS CHRIS SCHMIED, A542573

PHOTOS COURTESY OF IDPA HQ

GETTING INTO THE FIREARMS INDUSTRY WAS NEVER EVEN ON MY RADAR. IT WAS ALMOST AN ACCIDENT. I PICKED UP MY FIRST firearm in 2012 and then things started to change. Slowly at first, but with each passing year my interest and participation seem to grow exponentially.

After becoming a concealed carry holder, and then an NRA instructor, my husband Will and I began looking for more ways to improve our skills and confidence as carriers. We looked for additional training and learned about matches. Locally we had the option to shoot steel challenge and IDPA. We were drawn to IDPA after our first club match.

Will started shooting and volunteering to work matches right away. I was a little slower to dive in. I became an SO in early 2014. We are very lucky to have a supportive area coordinator here in MS. I knew I had people I could lean on and trust as I was learning to be more confident working matches. I am lucky that our AC's wife, DeDe Carter has been there to help me anytime, from getting more confident as an SO, and now CSO, to running matches as an AMD.

Will and I founded the Miss'ippi Showdown match in Northwest Mississippi in 2014. We were complete newbies at running sanctioned matches, but we were eager

volunteers. We learned so much that first year, we decided to do it again in 2015. Each time we've run the match we've gotten more proficient at running a match top to bottom. We don't have a "club" per se, as our range is the club. 99% of our range members don't shoot or support IDPA. So, with a very small local volunteer group, we've learned how to manage everything from staff to stages to food to securing sponsors.

Meeting and cultivating relationships with sponsors is ultimately what lead to us opening Match Shark. Each year we ran our matches, we met new industry sponsors and shooters. We learned that team shooters are also important to retailers in the firearms industry. Everyone representing the company is invaluable in the current climate, with firearms being such a political hot potato.

Will and I both enjoy putting on fun matches, supporting the sport, and educating shooters. I am the chapter facilitator for our local A Girl & A Gun chapter. I do my best to get as many of my girls shooting sports like IDPA as possible. I have them practice at A Girl & A Gun events with IDPA targets and scenarios, especially stages that I find fun or particularly challenging and are drawn from real world scenarios. I want to encourage them to try all shooting sports before settling on anything, but I feel like

IDPA is the best place to start to get some quality trigger time with their carry pistols, which is what so many of them come to me with.

As a chapter facilitator I've also made some great contacts with other industry professionals, and have been lucky enough to learn a lot about the industry from the periphery. Many A Girl & A Gun chapter facilitators are range owners, or at least work at the gun range where they run their chapter. I didn't have that connection. I was learning about the industry from the sidelines.

In 2015 I joined The Blue Bullets shooting team. I was so excited to hear from team captain Gordon Snaden that I was worthy! But it wasn't because I was crushing it at matches, it was because he considered me a good ambassador of the sport. It was clear up front that companies in the firearms industry needed good shooters, but they needed those shooters to represent the product and the company well. It does no business owner any good to have DMs that don't represent them well. Thanks to The Blue Bullets and their faith in me, I had more incentive than ever to travel to matches.

Will joined the The Blue Bullets shooting team later and we worked hard to attend as many matches as we could make, and work them to support other clubs. We were



When you are swimming in deep water, it pays to be the shark.



singing praises about the Target Shields. The Target Shields were made by Dry Fire Tech, run by Bill Duda. We actually knew Bill from The Blue Bullets team. He had been a team member for years as well and is a funny guy.

In December of 2018, we got to really see the Target Shields in action at the 2018 Battle at the Boondocks in Jackson, MS. It was cold and pouring down rain all day Saturday and the Target Shields absolutely saved the match. The range owners knew that there was no need to keep shooters and staff in the rain any longer than necessary by pasting under bags when Target Shields are available. The shooters and staff were incredibly grateful for the Target Shields and the time they saved everyone in the very cold December rain.

By this time, we were already planning another Showdown, bigger than ever. We put on 3 different Tier 2 matches in one weekend in May 2019. We thought the Target Shields would be great for the match. In Mississippi, especially in the spring, the weather can turn on a dime and we wanted to be prepared

We reached out to Bill hoping he would

working stats or stages as often as we could, trying to represent The Blue Bullets and the clubs as well as we could. I particularly liked working stages and being out where other female shooters could see women supporting shooting sports.

In 2018 we attended the IDPA National Championship match and learned about

Target Shields. They were used at the match and we were very impressed. Though it was sunny and hot for us on Friday and Saturday, we could see how they would benefit a match in the rain, and how they prevented different views to shooters in varying sunlight. We know the Thursday shooters had a lot of rain and they were

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Rain can kill a match but Match Shark can come to the rescue be it a local or major match.

be interested in coming onboard as a sponsor for the match. He was happy to help. In the months leading up to the match we learned that Bill was working to get more involved in a lot of different shooting sport products, not just Target Shields. We actually talked to Bill in passing about signing on as investors.

We were happy to have dry weather for the 2019 Showdown, but felt confident we could have handled poor weather with the Target Shields up. We talked to Bill again after the match and learned he was interested in investing more of his time in other ventures, and would consider selling Dry Fire Tech. Will and I spent some time talking



Rain or sun, tablet shades will make scoring your match easier.

Owning Match Shark meant that now we had to look at matches in a different light. I was used to reaching out to industry contacts for match sponsorships, now I was the industry contact.

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a few days to do all the legal stuff, with contracts and money, and during that time we sat down and talked about other match products we might like to offer in the future. In the car, running errands, we settled on Match Shark. Will would be the operations guy and I would do the website and marketing. We both had unique match and industry contacts and were ready to make more. We knew it would be a lot of work, but we were excited to support more matches this way.


We were already looking to sell complimentary products and had heard through the shooting grapevine that WeHateGlare, the company that made Tablet Shades, was going out of business. We had used those at the 2019 Showdown also and understood their value. They are made out of the same coroplast that our Target Shields are made of, so it seemed a great fit. We reached out to the owner and he was ready to sell to us at our asking price. We were thrilled! Now we had products to help in the sun and the rain. Since then we've added IDPA targets, tape and pasters to our product lineup.

Owning Match Shark meant that now we had to look at matches in a different light. I was used to reaching out to industry contacts for match sponsorships, now I was the industry contact. It took a little time to think about how to approach matches from an advertising budget. Now I needed to attend matches that were previously outside my comfort zone to better promote

our products. We're sponsoring matches this year as far away as Georgia to the East, and the 2020 IDPA National Championship to the West. We hope that as more match directors and club contacts see the Target Shields and Tablet Shades in action, they will see how we can help make their matches better for shooters and staff.

And we're always looking ahead. I always seem to fall in to a very "squad mom" mentality with the business, looking to expand our industry relationships by seeing how we can support shooters that will help us talk to new friends about Match Shark and how it can help. I want to get us to as many matches as I can this year to talk about how valuable all our offerings are.

We're working hard to grow the business by adding other types of targets as well as pre-made hard cover and non-threats to our products. Will spends a lot of time talking to existing contacts and getting feedback on items we already sell, as well as match wish list items to see how we can help solve common problems folks have.

Through all this we still run IDPA matches in Como, MS, and I still run our local A Girl & A Gun chapter. It's been a blessing to have so many shooting friends support us while we grow Match Shark. We're able to keep all that going around Match Shark because being in the firearms industry means we have more opportunities, and excuses, than ever to enjoy ourselves at a match. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Chris Schmied, A542573

Chris has been a member of IDPA since 2013 and shoots IDPA in the Southern US. She and her husband Will own Match Shark.

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WORDS KITTY RICHARDS, LM18564

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YEARS AGO, WHEN FIRST SHOOTING A PISTOL, I LEARNED TO SHOOT WITH A GLOCK WITH NO EXTERNAL SAFETY. I TRANSITIONED to an M&P for IDPA competition, purchasing a model with no external safety. And my carry gun? Also no external safety. I did not feel comfortable that, under duress, I could draw, remember to flick off the safety, and shoot if needed.

Enter the SCCY CPX-2. I had the chance to take this gun for a stroll recently and was surprised at what I found.

This firearm, weighing only 15 ounces, was easily concealable. I could tuck it in a holster, in my purse, or use my belly band, and it was completely concealed. It also had a 10-round magazine, giving me 2 more rounds than my current carry gun, and like

any 9MM firearm, it had sufficient stopping power to make me feel safe.

Shooting it at the range for a few hours

with friends produced zero malfunctions using a variety of inexpensive, off the shelf ammo, including aluminum cased. It fit my

“This gun is less expensive and more effective than a Protection From Abuse Order.” >>>>>>



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smallish hand just fine, but my husband's larger hand needed the magazine with the finger extension to get a better grip. Although it would not be his first choice for himself as a primary carry gun, he felt he could use it for a BUG gun. He also loved the fact that it is made in America. The sights are big enough for aging eyes to pickup quickly, and the gun feels solid, not like a plastic toy.

My next-to-favorite aspect of the CP-2 was the ease of cleaning it. The single take-down pin can be popped out using a coin, a spent brass case, the tip of a cleaning rod, a multitool tip or even your thumbnail, unless you are cautious of your nails like I am. It was the easiest pistol in my house to tear down and reassemble and this fact alone saved me about a third of my cleaning time. Checkout a video on taking apart this gun: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sH1z2x-WV6mY>

Of course, my very favorite aspect of the SCCY is that it has no external safety. In its place, the CP-2 comes with a very long trigger pull, which took a few rounds down

range to become accustomed to. The gun is a hammer-fired, double action only gun. This long pull is designed to alleviate fears of an accidental discharge for those unaccustomed to a pistol with no safety.

We consistently hear that women are the number one growth segment of the handgun market, and this gun comes in at an MSRP of \$239 (street price usually between \$180-\$200), making it a great buy for a cash-strapped momma, a fixed-income woman who needs a carry/nightstand gun, or someone who wants several firearms staged in various locations. As one of my friends who was shooting said, "This gun is less expensive and more effective than a Protection From Abuse Order". **TD**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kitty Richards, LM18564

Kitty Richards is an SOI in New York and resides in northwestern Pennsylvania. She has been shooting IDPA since 2002 and works many sanctioned matches each year. Members can contact her at kitty@idpa.com.

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“We actually had people say they thought it would be a total failure and came just to see how bad it would fail. It didn’t.”



OPENING SPREAD: WIRESTOCK IMAGES

Classic

BAY WONDER

Setting up shop in the northern Pennsylvania hills.

WORDS KITTY RICHARDS, LM18564
PHOTOS KITTY RICHARDS



THE HILLS OF NORTHERN PENNSYLVANIA WERE SNOW COVERED THE FIRST MORNING OF THE IDPA WINTER CLASSIC AT THE Castle Pistol Club in New Castle, PA. Match Director Jerry Morgan, driving the ice-covered roads, still arrived at the facility before sunup, checking last minute details and making sure his staff and shooters had hot coffee and doughnuts to warm them up. This was an important day, the first day of the largest Tier 3 match in an indoor range... with only ONE bay.

According to Morgan, "This was our second-year. Last year we held the first annual Castle Pistol Club Winter Classic which was a Tier 2. It was a match that many people said couldn't be done in a single bay range. They were wrong! It went off without a hitch. The question following last year's match was what could we do to improve it

and the answer was make it a Tier 3 so each shooter would receive an additional point towards the nationals."

The venue for the match has an historic presence in the neighborhood. Established in 1954, the Castle Pistol Club has the one bay indoor range with 129 acres of land behind it. The club has always been mainly a Bullseye pistol shooting club, with IDPA a recent addition. "Coming from Massachusetts and living a life where guns were almost nonexistent as far as in the public eye, I just never came in contact or had a need to own a gun. It wasn't until November of 2016 that I held a gun in my hands for the first time. I moved to New Castle, PA from Cape Cod and begun managing lower income rental properties. After several incidents in which I should have had protection I decided to get my first gun. After a month or so I became a

little bored standing behind the line and just shooting straight ahead and that's when I found IDPA. The first summer I shot a couple of times a month but come winter there was nowhere to go. I found a place in Medina OH 1 ½ hours away that shot every Monday night. These guys were great and showed me a lot about how to run an indoor match, so I went back to the Castle Pistol Club and suggested holding a weekly indoor match and without a hesitation they said yes. They approved funds to purchase some targets and props and we were off to the races."

There were some challenges to overcome to get the match to fit in the venue. "When first talking about holding a sanctioned match, really the only concern I had was how to get enough shooters to attend during the winter months. It wasn't until later as more people got involved that we found that the



Everyone was in agreement, the match was almost as excellent as this beard.



attraction was how running this in a single bay could be accomplished. We actually had people say they thought it would be a total failure and came just to see how bad it would fail.”

“It didn’t”.

Morgan and crew ran more than 120 shooters through the match, accommodating two fifteen-shooter squads per day for 4 days, plus one day for staff. Each squad was assigned a morning or afternoon start time. “Both last year’s Tier 2 and this year’s Tier 3 went off with no problems. This is all due to the coordinated efforts of the people who volunteer to help. Unlike standard matches that are set up the day or week before the shoot and require the staff to only run the stage (not that their help is not needed and greatly appreciated in giving us these great matches to shoot) our staff must set up and take down each stage for each squad that shoots and then reset the stage in exactly the same spot 9 times in 5 days without having the shooter feel as though they are sitting around waiting for us in between every stage or that something was not as it was for another shooter. Every shooting position must be the same for every shooter. Providing these undeniably unique actions is without question what makes this shoot special!”

And unique it was, according to Area Coordinator John Reihner. “Each stage change was a well-choreographed ballet. Every staff member knew what walls, targets and items they were responsible for and

could move them in and out of place without questions. Timed by one of the shooters, the longest stage change took less than 4 minutes and was accomplished while shooters were having their stage briefing for the second stage on the bay. People were amazed at how quickly the turn around was and how well-organized the staff was.”

How did Morgan make this work? “Set up is the key. Imagine if you will, trying to



set and then re-set each stage on a blank floor or even a marked floor of all the same colors. It would be nothing but mass confusion and nothing could ever be duplicated time and time again. Every stage needs to be color coordinated with each wall edge, target and fault line clearly marked. Each stage must be marked using the exact same method so everyone understands exactly

what goes where with one person directing the changeover. The part you see happens because of the organizational set up. Taping and marking the floor with all the colors is what takes the time. This is where we look to see if there are any angle issues or safety concerns. The week before the match is the time to put it all together. If I had to deal with the shooter’s registrations and all the things that come with that part of the match it would never happen. Having a guy like Sonny Mehal, our registrar, to deal with all that is the only way this event could take place. He allows me to do what I need to do without having to worry about the front-end part of the shoot. Once the floor is laid out the dedicated volunteers who help us put the wheel in motion. They are great!”

Stage design, according to the MD, was not as challenging as one might think. “It’s really simple, especially for weekly matches, design them just like everyone else does, just keep in mind that you can’t shoot to the right, left or down. Many stages have targets to the right or left but indoors you can’t do that so when looking to get that effect I simply change the angle of the stage so that when shooting from those POC’s the angle actually points diagonally to the opposite corner of the range. Creating some of these angles and getting a few longer shots was evident in a few of the stages that were shot at this year’s Winter Classic It’s really just understanding what your trying to accomplish and adjusting it to the space you have to work with.”



Advantages vs disadvantages? “Other than the club’s range being closed to members for 2 weekends there was no disadvantage. The bonus was for the shooters. Staffing is always an issue for larger matches. Having 10 or 12 stages in 5, 6 or even more bays at one time can put a great strain on Match Directors. Finding a CSO and a couple of SO’s for every bay can be quite a task. As a single bay match, we only needed 1 CSO and 2 SO’s working the match at a time. This took a great deal of pressure off us and allowed us to focus on making the match something shooters would remember and want to come back to. It worked! In outdoor matches there are several components that differ with regards to Tier 2 and Tier 3 matches. With an indoor single bay match only the number of shooters required to shoot the match differs. Oh, and the fact that every shooter gets 2 national point rather than just 1.”

For other MDs who might want to try this – what advice will this MD give them? “Understand what you are trying to accomplish. Realize that staff day is going to be a nightmare and that is where last minute changes will need to be made. In both our Tier 2 & 3 matches staff day ran long and made it look like we could never meet our time lines. Yes, time is of the essence in a match like this. If a standard outdoor match runs behind it’s a bummer! Instead of finishing at 3 you finish at 5. Here, if each squad takes an additional hour and a half your second squad doesn’t finish till after 10pm and

Out Every Window Stage 3
Created By: [Name]

| | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| STAGE POSITION | STAGES: 3 Standard |
| STAGE WIDTH | STAGES: 20' |
| STAGE LENGTH | STAGES: 20' |
| STAGE DEPTH | STAGES: 20' |
| STAGE HEIGHT | STAGES: 20' |
| STAGE AREA | STAGES: 20' x 20' = 400 sq ft |
| STAGE VOLUME | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 cu ft |
| STAGE WEIGHT | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 lbs |
| STAGE COST | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 |
| STAGE MATERIAL | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 |
| STAGE COLOR | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 |
| STAGE FINISH | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 |
| STAGE NOTES | STAGES: 20' x 20' x 20' = 8000 |

Any shot fired on or outside of the red is an automatic 00 (10) loss in effect.

Stage design on an indoor range can be challenging but our stage designers met and exceeded all expectations.

that’s not good. 7:30 AM to 1:30 PM and 2:00 PM to 8:00 PM, give or take 30 minutes that’s it. It must fit in. Which stages get set when (at the beginning of the match, at the end or in the middle) all become vital to the success of your match. Little things like taping, shooters being ready when it’s their turn and even collecting the brass can add hours to a match. So, if Kenny isn’t there to collect brass and the confusion adds 30 seconds per shooter per stage, that adds 5400 seconds which is 1 ½ hours to each squad, a

total of 3 hours per day. It’s the little things that can get you.”

“I love the fact that we have not heard one complaint in 2 years about how the matches were run or with the stages”, the MD said.” Shooters have told us how surprised they were that the stages could challenge them as much as they do in such a confined area. But the most satisfying thing of all is to hear competitive shooters who are known around IDPA going out of their way to tell us how much they enjoyed the shoot and that in two short years it has become one of their favorite shoots and that without question will be back next year.”

Morgan had some exciting words for the shooters who loved the match the last few years. “A lot of people said we couldn’t do a Tier 2 match in a single bay the first year, but we did it. People then said we could never expand it and successfully run a Tier 3 match, especially with the number of shooter restrictions we have in the single bay, but we did it. Can you imagine trying to put on a Tier 4 single bay Sanctioned Match with all the logistics and the sheer number of shooters that will be there? I don’t know if it’s in the cards for 2021 or 2022 but I can tell you this: I can see it!” **TJ**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kitty Richards, LM18564

Kitty Richards is an SOI in New York and resides in northwestern Pennsylvania. She has been shooting IDPA since 2002 and works many sanctioned matches each year. Members can contact her at kitty@idpa.com.

Sheepdog!

This CCP only match helps highlight the true every day carry guns in IDPA.

WORDS + PHOTOS MASSAD AYOUB, A04115



IDPA CAN BE DEFINED AS “THE CONCEALED CARRY SPORT.” SOME PEOPLE DO INDEED CARRY FULL-SIZE DEFENSIVE HANDGUNS IN concealment daily, and have learned to do so comfortably and discreetly. However, many more find it easier to “EDC” something a bit smaller and lighter.

An IDPA survey at a major match a few years ago found out that among members who do practice everyday carry outside of the range, the single pistol most commonly chosen was the compact Glock 19.

From this was born CCP, the Concealed Carry Pistol division.

And that, in turn, began the now famous Sheepdog IDPA match.

Genesis

Rick Denny is the man who gets the credit for founding the all-CCP Sheepdog match. “It was my idea, but so many great people worked so hard to make it a reality,” he recalls modestly.

The first match, says Rick, was held in Bunnell, Florida. “CCP is my favorite

division,” he told *Tactical Journal*, “and I became frustrated when I started in IDPA in 2015 because no one ever seemed to shoot CCP in a sanctioned match. At one event, I won a plaque solely because I was the only Marksman there, out of three or four people total who were shooting CCP.”

The concept of CCP being the only division made Sheepdog a “Specialty” event in IDPA. In 2017 that first event was “a Tier 2 match with Tier 3 attendance,” says Rick. “It sold out in three weeks, with 130 participants. The 2018 match, also in Florida, sold out in 21 hours with 150 shooters, the maximum the range in Bunnell could accommodate.”

It was clear that interest in Sheepdog was growing, and it was necessary to search for a larger venue. The entity that won that honor was the Little River Sportsman’s Association in Valdosta, Georgia which has wholeheartedly adopted multiple action shooting disciplines, most notably IDPA.

Lee Turner, head of IDPA there, ramrodded the Sheepdog from the Valdosta end

of things. He assembled a staff of 25. In addition, Lee told *Tactical Journal*, “We had 30 Valdosta State University USAF Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) cadets that are part of the leadership development arm called the Arnold Air Society. They received community service credit for the hours they helped with The Sheepdog.”

Denny and Turner were strongly supported by Rick Lund, who had been very helpful to the early Sheepdog event when he was Florida State Coordinator for IDPA, later becoming Area Coordinator and IDPA’s East Coast Coordinator and Advisor. Both were present for the match, of course, along with new Area Coordinator Nicky Carter.

Behind the Scenes, 2019

252 shooters registered for the Tier 4 Sheepdog 2019 match. Setup began the weekend before the shoot, with the volunteer work crew setting up a dozen stages. Shooting began on Thursday with some of the workers. On Friday, five squads shot the match, some staff and some regular competitors. The weekend, of course, saw the heaviest days.

The event ran as smoothly as the proverbial clockwork. On both days, shooting began at 8 AM and was complete before 3 in the afternoon.

Sheepdog Guns

Surveys of the attendees at earlier Sheepdog matches showed that Glocks were overwhelmingly the most popular pistols brought to the match. This held true at the 2019 event: a poll of 151 shooters via surveymonkey.com found almost 48% Glock users, not quite 15% S&W, and single digit percent-



Ken Kelly from VA shoots what may have been the only .40 at the match, an HK USP Compact.



The match was replete with "corners and cover."



Some found the "car stage" particularly challenging.



All shooters' ammo was chrono'd. Yes, there were DQs.



The Prime Movers of Sheepdog Challenge 2019. L-R: Rick Denny, Nicky Carter, and Lee Turner.



Dominant hand on an obscured target, which Dave has cleaned with his Glock 19.



MATCH REVIEW

ages for Walther, SIG, CZ, Wilson Combat, etc. Almost all were 9mms; I know of only a single .40 in play, in the hands of Dr. Ken Kelly who came all the way from Northern Virginia, shooting an HK USP .40 Compact, his choice for daily CCW.

Shooting the Match

Brother Denny created some challenging stages at Sheepdog 2019. The stages were replete with obscured targets, their scoring areas partially blocked by black paint, replicated body armor, or actual steel. On one stage, a low hit knocked over a steel plate that triggered the complete disappearance of the target in question. Most stages comprised the maximum 18 hits or close to it. The 18 round Limited Vickers Standards stage had six non-dominant hand, reload from slidelock, six more dominant hand only, and six (including another reload) free style, the latter requiring head shots. Only the center strip of the IDPA target was not obscured. Needless to say, few competitors

shot it clean. To give you an idea how tough it was, the winner's score included some 37 points down from possible. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/ps-meta/71820/documents/1574985610FINAL%20Matchbook%2011-5-19.pdf?fbclid=IwAR2wxodliehu-KYccBsbfAXP850db7zYr6iSyI91-LJwqc-nE-zw5LtszeDFo>.


And that winner is someone you really want to hear from.

Meet the Man to Beat

Before the match, Rick Denny made a predictive statement to *Tactical Journal*. "Brandon Reynolds of Alabama won the first two Sheepdogs," he said. "The first year, Brandon won it as an Expert, with a .40 caliber Glock 23. Of course, he got a 'match bump' to master, and won it again a year later, this time with a 9mm."

Well, guess who won Sheepdog 2019? Brandon Reynolds later told *Tactical Journal*, "I've been hunting and shooting most of my life, but didn't get into competition until late

2014." Reynolds, 36, competes in both IDPA and USPSA -- Carry Optics and Production, respectively, usually with a CZ Shadow 2. "I used a Glock 23 with downloaded .40 ammo in the first Sheepdog, because it was the only pistol I had at the time that fit the CCP specifications. That G23 was my very first handgun. I've used a Glock 19 since with 9mm handloads: 124 grain Blue Bullets over Titegroup. Sheepdog is the only match where I shoot Glocks."

At this writing, the next Sheepdog is scheduled for the first weekend in December 2020 at the same Valdosta venue. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Massad Ayoob, A04115

Massad Ayoob is an American firearms and self-defense instructor. He has taught police techniques and civilian self-defense to both law enforcement officers and private citizens since 1974. He was the director of the Lethal Force Institute and has appeared as an expert witness in several trials.



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A Revolver Shooter's Delight

ICORE

Sixgun fun! What you need to know to get started.

WORDS ALEX BAKKEN, A52448 **PHOTOS** COURTESY OF ICORE

ODDS ARE I WILL NEVER FORGET MY FIRST IDPA MATCH WITH A REVOLVER. IT WAS A SMITH AND WESSON 625 WITH MINOR modifications and just enough gear to get me through a standard club match. Having dry fired extensively leading up to match day I thought I had a pretty good grasp on competing with a sixgun. That feeling waned just seconds into my first stage when a moonclip became airborne during my reload. What started as a day of confidence in revolver shooting had quickly become a free lesson, Jerry Miculek makes everything look easy. Although my first match had some fumbles, I was hooked and would continue shooting revolvers in IDPA from that point onward. Since then, I've tried nearly the entire range of what's possible in the Stock and Enhanced Revolver categories. My main IDPA gun has always been a Smith and Wesson 625, but I've tried many of my carry guns as well. Most were six shot .38s but a few woods carry guns made their way to a match as well. It wasn't long before a more seasoned revolver shooter asked, "Have you heard of ICORE"? At the time I had no idea what ICORE was but learned that it stands

for International Confederation of Revolver Enthusiasts. I also learned that ICORE had divisions suitable for both my IDPA Stock Revolver and Enhanced Revolver rigs. The various equipment divisions are broken down as follows:

Classic Division is for revolvers with six chambers, iron sights, no ports or compensator, factory or factory style replacement barrels, and one must reload using speedloaders. IDPA Stock Revolvers fit very nicely into ICORE Classic.

Limited 6 is for revolvers with six chamber but no ports, compensator, or optic. You will find primarily Smith and Wesson 625s and Ruger Redhawks in the .45 ACP chambering as well as a slew of Smith and Wesson and Ruger .38s that have been cut for moonclips. IDPA Enhanced Revolvers are perfect for Limited 6.

Limited is for revolvers which do not have an optic, ports, or a compensator. Therefore, Limited is populated primarily with 8 shot .38 and 9mm caliber revolv-



Classic Division



Limited 6 Division



Limited Division



Open Division

ers that reload using moonclips. Common models include the Smith and Wesson 627 (.38) and 929 (9mm) along with the newly released Ruger Super GP100 (.38 or 9mm) and Redhawk (.38).

Open Division is just that, anything goes. You will mostly find the same 8 shot models listed under Limited but sporting an optic and some type of ports or compensator. Occasionally you will even see custom revolvers which hold more than 8 rounds but they are much less common.

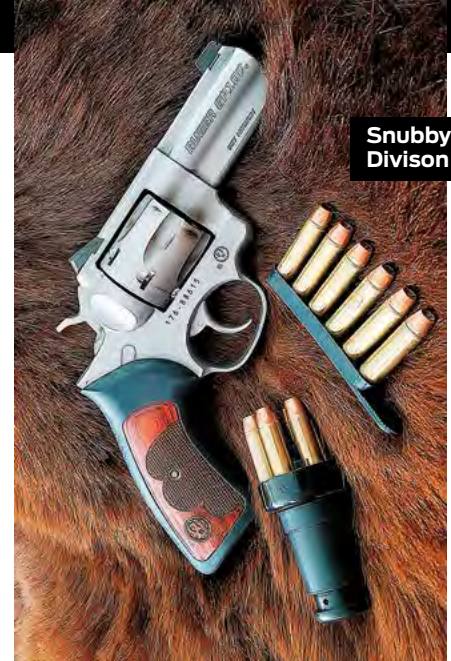


The official targets of the ICORE organization are the NRA D-1 and the NRA AP-1.


ICORE as a discipline combines elements of Bianchi Cup, IPSC, Steel Challenge, and even Pro Am shooting into one rulebook and the scoring is very accuracy focused.

For targets, ICORE uses the NRA D-1 or “tombstone” with a 4” x-ring, 8” A zone, 12” B zone, and remainder of target designated as the C zone. To score a stage you record the clock time from buzzer to last shot fired and then assign bonuses and penalties as earned. The x-ring can be assigned a bonus which improve your score, for example, it is common to use -1 seconds per hit for stages that opt to use a bonus. The A zone is essentially “down zero” and keeps your time neutral, the B zone adds 1 second per hit to your time, and the C zone adds two seconds per hit to your time. Therefore, one can see that two carefully aimed shots per target are the smartest way to achieve your best score. ICORE is also very flexible with regards to stage design. If one can convert clock time plus and minus penalties and bonuses, you are good to go. This means that a single match can incorporate multiple types of shooting challenges. I personally found this fun, challenging, and an excellent way to improve my marksmanship with different types of revolvers. ICORE also has the following Special Recognition Category (SRCs): Junior (under 18), Senior (55-64), Super Senior is (65-69), Grand Senior (70+), Lady, Military, Law Enforcement, International, and Snubby (maximum barrel of 3” barrel and 6 chambers). **Snubby** is perfect for shooters who enjoy competing with their defensive revolvers.

Every year there are approximately ten ICORE regional championships held across North America and Australia with the last major match of the year usually being the International Revolver Championship (IRC). The IRC is ICORE’s biggest event



with competitors traveling from multiple continents to compete. ICORE also hosts an International Postal Match which is a fun way to compare your scores against friends and fellow shooters from across the world.

For those who enjoyed reading about ICORE we hope you check out ICORE.org for additional information and come shoot a match near you! 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR Alex Bakken, A52448

Alex is a health physicist, nuclear engineer, and self-proclaimed revolver aficionado. He has been shooting competitively since 2012 and is currently a Grand Master in USPSA, ICORE, and Steel Challenge with a revolver. Additionally, Alex serves as the ICORE Central States Regional Representative and as a match director for ICORE and Steel Challenge in the greater Lansing, MI area. You can reach Alex at: central@icore.org

2020 CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH SERIES SCHEDULE

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Northwest Regional | May 30th – 31st | Richmond Hot Wheels, Richmond, CA |
| Midwest Regional | June 13th | Green Valley, Hallsville, MO |
| South Regional | June 27th | Shootout Range, Princeton, LA |
| Canada Regional | August 14th – 15th | Lower Trent Valley Fish & Game, Frankford, Ontario |
| New England Regional | August 29th | Harvard Sportsmen Club, Harvard, MA |
| Rocky Mountain Regional | September 12th – 13th | WCFW High Plains Shooting Range, Galeton, CO |
| East Coast Regional | September 20th | Lower Providence Rod & Gun Club, Audubo, PA |
| Central Regional | September 26th – 27th | Oak Hill Gun Club, Lyons, MI |
| Southwest Regional | October 17th | Rio Salado, Mesa, AZ |
| Australia Regional | October 23rd – 25th | Bendigo Pistol Club, Bendigo, AUS |
| Intl. Revolver Championship | November 5th – 8th | Universal Shooting Academy, Frostproof, FL |



Carry Optics

(Time to Find the Dot!)

**Set up and training with
your first carry optic handgun.**

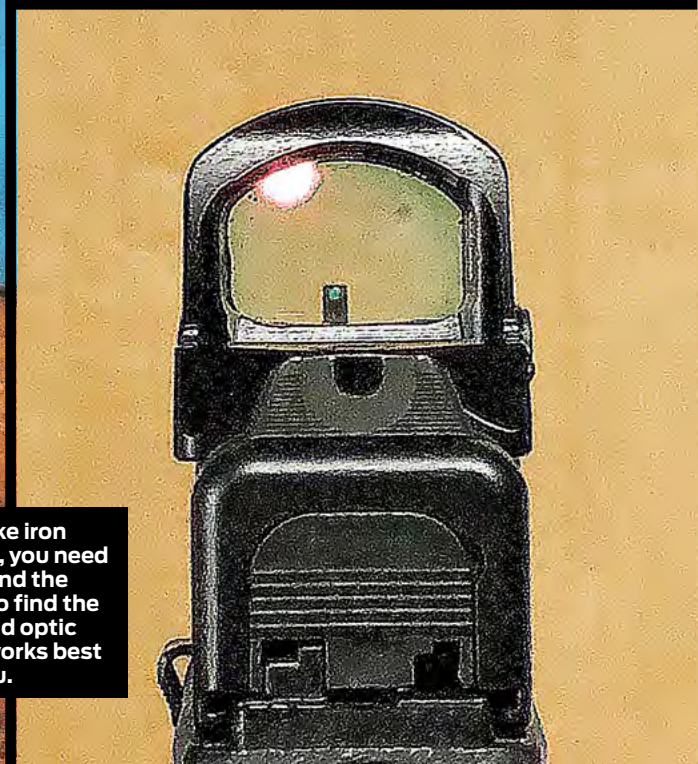
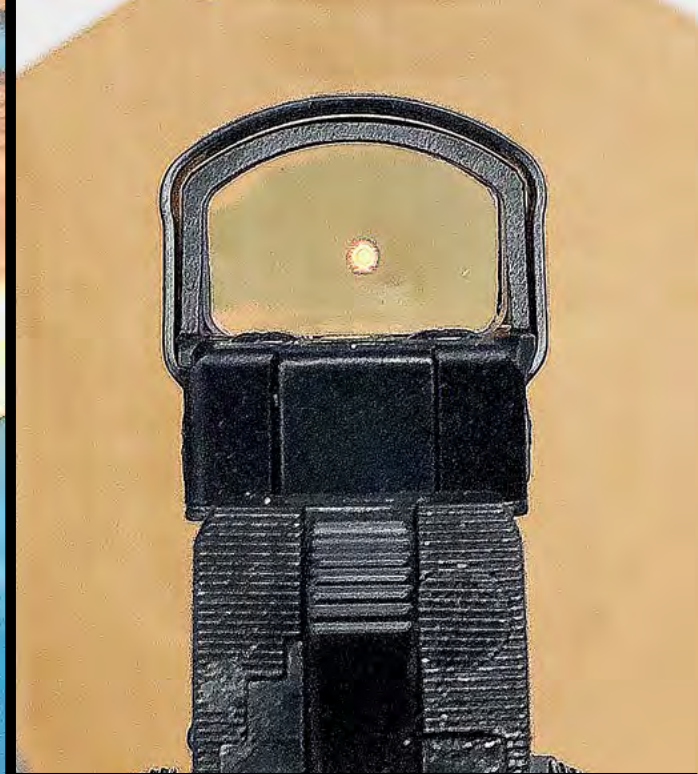


WORDS + PHOTOS
MICHAEL SEEKLANDER, A31187

SO YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PUT AN OPTIC ON THAT PISTOL AND TRY THE NEW CARRY OPTICS DIVISIONS IN IDPA AND USPSA. If you have never shot the division before, or played with an “open” gun in USPSA then I warn you, it is addictive! And for those of you seasoned shooters that might be pushing past forty years of age...well the dot makes your dreams come true because you can see it! Unlike those pesky iron sights that continue to get fuzzier each passing day. So this article will give you some guidance on making the decision, setting up, and training with your first carry optic.



Just like iron sights, you need to spend the time to find the dot and optic that works best for you.



Dot or not? That is the question! And for some of you the decision might be rooted in the fact that you carry a gun on a daily basis that does NOT have an optic on it. Should you consider competing with one? And will competing with one hurt your self-defense skills? In short, no. There are actually some great benefits from training with an optic sighted pistol, and I was once given a recommendation from a top shooter that if I really

wanted to take my game to the next level, I should consider shooting open division for a year. I followed his advice, and learned from the experience. Of course, if you do decide to compete with an optic then make sure you are spending adequate time training with your iron sighted carry gun as well.

Before we talk about how shooting a dot might improve your shooting, I'd like to give you a few tips on setting up your carry

optics gun. Here are some things you might consider:

1. Consider a milled out slide versus a dovetail or plate mounting solution. Keep in mind that the closer the dot in the optic is to where the top of your front sight would be, the easier it will be to find the dot quickly. Think about it for a second, you find your iron sights by driving them into your eye/

target line. An optic that sits higher in relation to your irons will force you to lower the gun slightly, which of course will cause you to have to learn a slightly different gun position. That is the main reason shooters have a hard time finding the dot when switching over. So, if possible, spend the money on a slide where the optic is mounted as low as possible.

2. Which dot to choose? That is a tricky question. I have no financial stake in the optic game, but would certainly recommend you focus on reliability first. I have recently used several optics such as the Leupold Delta Point Pro, and Holosun 507C and both worked great. One thing that I do like about the Holosun is that the reticles can be changed with a four second hold of a button. This makes the sight exceptional as a “training wheel” type optic where you can switch from a 2MOA dot to a 2MOA dot surrounded by a larger reticle which is much easier to find inside the scopes window.

So what will shooting an optic teach you? Well, to put it bluntly, the dot move-

ment will shock you if you have not trained with one before. It will show you when, and how much your gun is moving during recoil, as well as what it does when you move. Here are some things you might notice, which will help you fine tune your training and skills:

▶ The dot will definitely show you how your gun moves during recoil. You might find that the dot actually leaves the scope window when you fire a shot, and you will also be able to easier observe how the dot moves. My goal in recoil control (one or two

handed) is to A. minimize the upward movement of the muzzle, and B. attempt to get the gun to return to the same spot as quickly as possible. Watching your dot while you shoot and tweak your grip pressure/place-ment is a great way to fine tune your grip.

▶ The dot will show you any pre-ignition movement of the gun. The bottom line is that we ALL move the gun pretty much all the time as we are firing it. The best shooters simply move the gun less, thus increasing their accuracy. The dot will very clearly

Will competing with one hurt your self-defense skills? In short, no. There are actually some great benefits from training with an optic sighted pistol.



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Although it can help, going to a optic is not an immediate fix for those with failing eye sight. You will have to put in the work to get accustom to the new platform.

closed and try to get the gun in exactly the same place it was by feel. Open your eyes and see where the dot is. These exercises will help you find the dot by feel, which is important if you want to find it fast.

▶ Lastly, when you go to the range and begin to shoot live fire, repeat the same drills. When shooting, pay particular attention to how the dot tracks, and attempt to improve that tracking and recovery with single shot recoil control drills. One of my favorite drills is called the Extend, Prep, and Press Drill. It is very simple yet will teach you a bunch. Load up a magazine and begin the drill from where your support hand indexes under the trigger guard during the grip building process. Then extend the gun, prep and press the trigger and watch how the dot tracks. Not bring the gun back and repeat that over and over again, varying the pressure on the grip of the handgun in different manners in an attempt to improve the dot tracking and recovery.

So there you have it, some thoughts on setting up your carry optic gun, what you will learn from training with a dot, and some considerations on changing over from iron sights to a dot. I think if you take the leap, you will have tons of fun, and I promise will learn a thing or two that will improve your shooting! Take the leap! **TJ**

show you this movement so you can practice minimizing it. It simply magnifies the movement and makes it easier to see. Have a pre-ignition “flinch?” I guarantee your dot will show it to you.

▶ The dot will show you how your gun moves while you are moving. The key to shooting faster overall stage times is to have the gun in place and ready to shoot when you are entering positions. Training with a dot will help show you exactly how the gun moves as you enter positions and extend the handgun. Training with an open gun years ago helped me smooth out my movements a bunch, eliminating any wasted time.

Changing over from iron sights to an optic will not be especially hard if you put a tiny bit of effort into it. You will find that your one-handed shooting is probably going to be the most challenging in terms of finding the dot. Here are some tips:

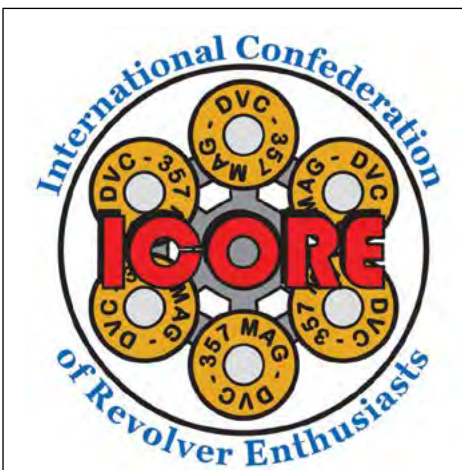
▶ Instead of extending the gun and trying to find the dot, try reversing that. Point the gun at the target with a firing grip, and reverse the gun in the opposite direction you extended it, paying attention to what area the dot disappears in the scope as you

“unbuild” your grip. That way you will know where the dot will be coming from as you extend the gun.

▶ Try it with your eyes closed! Do this: extend the gun for ten repetitions from about six inches from full extension to full extension. Pay attention to how the dot enters the widow and how the gun “feels” in your hand. Try to “feel” where it is pointed. Now compress the gun and practice extending the gun the same way with your eyes

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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Eric promotes the U.S. Border Patrol at the many matches he attends throughout the year.

ERIC FRANCE

Distinguished Master (Times Two)

WORDS
WALT KLOEPEL, A56663
PHOTOS COURTESY OF
ERIC FRANCE

CRADLING HIS M4, ERIC FRANCE WATCHED THE TRAILHEAD BELOW. LEANING AGAINST HIS BACKPACK, THE MOUNTAIN SUNSET GAVE a relaxing peace over the rugged Baboquivari Mountains near Arizona's border with Mexico. That peace would turn to anticipation as it would soon be time to search the dark canyons for those who illegally cross our borders every day and threaten the very sovereignty of our nation. But his mission is just, as Eric is a member of the U.S. Border Patrol.

Eric France is also one of our newest IDPA Distinguished Masters ... times two. Eric won Division Champ in the inaugural IDPA PCC Nationals last October in Talladega, AL and four days later won Division Champ in SSP in the IDPA World Championship. Impressive wins for a quiet man who kept walking up front at the awards banquet past whispers of "Who is that guy?!"

For almost 100 years, the U.S. Border Patrol has had the duty to secure our nation's borders. After the 911 terrorist attacks, the workforce almost doubled. With more than 19,000 agents, it is one of the largest law en-

forcement agencies in the U.S. According to a Border Patrol Chief's testimony at a United States senate hearing, it is also one of the most assaulted law enforcement agencies. Since 2006, more than 7,000 agents have been attacked - from rock throwing to gun shots. Bounties have been placed on Border Patrol Agents by drug cartels as well. It's a dangerous profession.

As a member of the Tucson Border Patrol Sector IBEX Mountain Team, Eric France knew weapons training was essential to his job ... and his survival. Long hours and hikes (upwards of 17 miles) into the rugged mountains, tracking both illegal aliens and drug smugglers, kept him in tip-top shape as well.

"I went to work out in the brush. Tucson is a great station to work. It's very diverse, with the mountain range," said Eric. "We normally go out in the morning to try to catch a certain group. We usually have about three days to work the group because they have so far to go. We try to intercept them, by finding tracks and determining where they're headed. Normally you're out on foot. We do have a horse patrol unit as well. That's on my

list of goals. In the Border Patrol's traditional list of what I value is shooting, tracking, and horsemanship. So far, I've done two out of the three, so before I leave the Patrol, I want to get on the horse patrol. The academy for that is pretty tough."

Eric followed his father's footsteps, John France, who was also a USBP agent for 32 years, as well as a competitive shooter.

Born in Steubenville, Ohio in 1984, but raised in Tucson, Arizona, Eric got his first rifle at age 8. It was a Marlin Papoose .22, in which his father taught him the fundamentals of marksmanship.

"I remember my Dad would come home from work in his uniform with his gun belt still on. I would go up and give him a hug and I started patting his holster, with his pistol in it, expressing interest. At that point he realized he needed to do something and teach me about this stuff, that way I wouldn't do something stupid. He made me promise that I would never touch a gun without him around. If I did that, he'd take me to the range anytime I wanted. He'd take me shooting. That's when he got me that Marlin

Papoose. It all started there,” said Eric.

By age 14, under the tutorship of his father, he started competing with a Glock 17 in practical shooting matches. He shot his first USPSA major match that same year.

The family moved to Michigan when he was 16. There he was introduced to NRA Small-bore Rifle where he achieved Expert level. He also tried his hand at NRA High Power Rifle and multi-gun shooting. By age 17, he competed in the IPSC World Shoot XIII in South Africa.

After high school graduation, Eric moved back to Arizona to attend college. While enrolled at the University of Arizona, he worked part time with the Border Patrol in the Student Aid Program. He was assigned to the Border Patrol Tactical Unit, Tucson Sector, assigned to administrative duties. When they saw how well young Eric could shoot, the Chief of the Border Patrol made Eric a member of the Tucson Border Patrol Sector Practical Shooting Team, a team that his father started in 1991. He was the only non-agent member. Eric represented the Border Patrol at more than 25 USPSA National Championships.

On September 27, 2007, Eric was sworn into the U.S. Border Patrol as a full-time Agent in the Tucson Sector. It will probably be of no surprise to our readers that he was the top shooter in his class.

In 2011 Eric began shooting IDPA at his local club, the Pima Pistol Club in Oro Valley. You could say he was a natural when he classified Master in his first classifier. In 2014 Eric shot his first tier 3 match, the AZ State Championship, where he took an impressive CDP Master win.

By 2017, Eric knew that IDPA was his sport. He welcomed the new rule changes and got heavily into it. He liked the more accuracy-based scoring system, less subjective by adding fault lines, and the new targets (0, -1 head box).

“Until the rule changes, the number one complaint I’d hear was that it was subjective on cover calls. When they put in the fault lines, I thought that was perfect. You were either within or over the line, no more gray area. I really liked the scoring change to a full second per point down. It made it more accuracy orientated,” said Eric. “In my opinion, in USPSA and IPSC, both the shooter and equipment has evolved at such a high level to where generally speaking, speed is a little more important, to where you can afford to



“Eric says he’d really like to see more law enforcement get involved in IDPA. “Most police officers only qualify once a year, at a static target in a pretty relaxed environment.”

get a little sloppier as long as you keep your times good. Whereas in IDPA, accuracy is a little more important. I really value that, especially being in law enforcement because I can’t afford to go around being as fast as I can. I am accountable for every shot fired. So, to me, it’s much more important to make sure you get that hit.”

In 2018 Eric shot majors in AZ, NM, CA, and Texas to accrue points for the 2019 World.

IDPA PCC Nationals/ IDPA World Championship

PREPARATION: “Pretty much of all the practice I did in 2019 to get ready for the World ... I did not dry fire,” said Eric. “I’m not condoning that. It’s just after all the hours I’d put in at work, I just wanted to come home and relax. But on my weekends, I’d be ready to shoot (live fire). I’d hit a local match every weekend, shooting both PCC and SSP in IDPA, and Production and Single Stack in USPSA. On my days off, I’d usually shoot 200 rounds through pistol and 200 rounds through carbine. Time permitting, I would shoot up to 700 rounds during my practice sessions, sometimes putting in as many as five hours at a time on the range. So much, that I was starting to have some hand issues.”

Sharp pain affected his grip strength. A specialist told him it was damage to tendons from repetitive recoil and that he needed to lay off for a while. He said he would – after the World.

“I would get one training day a month from the Border Patrol. I’d go shoot an IDPA match. I would break down what my strengths and weaknesses were. I really worked on transition and foot work, but mostly accuracy,” said Eric.

Showtime

Game day for the PCC Nationals came with 93 shooters ready to battle it out in IDPA’s first PCC National match. Eric was among the 14 Masters ready to rock. Using what he calls his Frankenstein gun, a 9mm AR made up of a hodgepodge of parts he put together himself. He conquered one stage after another, taking high score overall and coming in almost a full 20 seconds before the 2nd place Master.

While he relished his win, he knew he had to switch gears and get ready for the next round, SSP division at the IDPA World Championship. The first half of the World competitors who shot the match had two gorgeous days to shoot. Eric and the others scheduled to shoot the morning of the third day had no such luck. The rains came. The temperatures dropped, and the skies dumped water like pouring ... well, you know. Despite the weather, Eric with his CZ SP01 pistol, ran through all of the stages on his first day like a boss. Eric pushed on aggressively on his second day in less violent weather but yes, in more rain.

“It was funny, I’ve been competing for

a long time now, and that weather is the second worst weather I've ever shot in," said Eric. "The one thing I prided myself in was rain or shine, good or bad, I stayed consistent. Whereas a lot of people let it get in their heads and get a negative attitude. I looked at it as I spent a lot of time in practice and money to get here, I'm going to suck it up and move on."

"I honestly didn't know what to expect," said Eric. "I really wasn't sure how I was doing. I normally don't watch the scores in the course of an extended match. I don't recommend it. However, I did at the World and thought I could definitely win this. Then I had a screw up on one stage, and I knew I better bear down and have a strong finish."

His skills, and attitude, paid off. With a time of 251.09 seconds, 37 points down, and zero penalties for 16 stages, Eric became the SSP Division Champion and received his second Distinguished Master ranking for the week. He also took High Law Enforcement for both matches as well.

Shooter Tips

It's Eric's opinion, that too many shooters push it too fast and try to make up accuracy with extra shots per target. "I'd rather slow it down just enough to get two zeros on and move to the next," said Eric. "Once you get up to the Master level, we really all shoot about the same for the most part. The match is really won by stage planning and foot work, as well as trying to shoot as many zero's as possible, which is what I try to focus on. I'm big on transitioning from target to target."

"I tell people that you're only as good as you need to be. So, if you're the top dog at your local club all the time, then you don't really have anyone to push you to do any better. Then when you do go to a big match and you get humbled, you go "'Oh my God, I had no idea that there were people that good out there.'" But it helps you get better. I've done exactly that; I'm always trying to find someone better than me to help push me.

A Call to Law Enforcement

Eric says he'd really like to see more law enforcement get involved in IDPA. "Most police officers only qualify once a year, at a static target in a pretty relaxed environment. In an IDPA competition, you've got stages limited

U.S. Border Patrol Agent Eric France scans the mountainous terrain for illegal border crossers somewhere in southern Arizona.



to the imagination. There are all kinds of interesting things going on such as moving targets while you're moving. It brings a whole new dynamic to shooting. Just gun handling skills alone that you learn in sports like IDPA are worth their weight alone," said Eric.


"All shooting disciplines have something to offer. One thing about IDPA is that it is fairly easy to understand. It doesn't matter what shooting discipline you do, it's all a game ... it's all a sport. Nobody is shooting back at you. You just have to learn how to play the game to the best of your abilities."

Eric has sometimes found it hard getting new officers to shoot competitively. Some say they don't want to get beat by civilians, while others fight their own ego. Eric tells them to look at the picture differently.

"So many people have the illusion that they're a "badass" and they don't want that tarnished by going to a public match and then having someone say, "Yeah, I kicked his butt." Nobody wants that. But that's what you have to do to get better. You have to be humbled. Hopefully, that drives you to push yourself harder and get even better," said Eric.

"I guarantee them that they won't be last (place). You're going there for self-improvement. You're not competing against anyone

but yourself. So that way, you get better, then hopefully next time, you get better than the previous time. So, even if you don't get better than you hope to be, you'll at least get better than when you started. That's the most important thing."

Eric enjoys the travels he's made to compete and enjoys the people he's met along the way. You might say the shooting sports also took care of Eric in a matter of fate as well. During a local steel match in Oro Valley, Eric met a cute young lady named Stacey. Stacey also liked to shoot, with the goal of being a law enforcement officer. The two are now husband and wife, and Stacey is a veteran officer with the Tucson Police Department. It just goes to show ... you never know who you'll meet on a shooting range, but it's going to be good. That's just the way us gun folks roll. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Walt Kloeppel, A56663

Walt Kloeppel is an Army veteran and retired as a writer/editor from the U.S. Army Recruiting Command in 2010 after 36 years of combined Army/Civil Service time. He joined IDPA in 2013. He resides with his wife, Tammy, in the Nashville, TN area. You can reach him at saltwaterwalt@gmail.com

2020

UPCOMING MATCHES

(idpa.com/matches)



As the circumstances created by the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) continue to evolve worldwide, match changes are happening at a rapid pace. Please confirm match dates and times with the Match Director before making or rescheduling any travel plans.

| START DATE | EVENT NAME | HOST CLUB |
|--------------|--|--|
| May 23 | 2020 Texas State Championship - Tier 4 | Comal County IDPA |
| May 23 | 2020 Wilson Combat Rocky Mountain Regional - Tier 4 | Action Pistol Group |
| May 23 | 2020 Iowa State IDPA Championship - Tier 2 | Arkery Air Practical Shooters |
| June 5 | Delaware State 2020 IDPA Championship Match - Tier 3 | Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club |
| June 6 | 2020 Minnesota State IDPA Championship - Northern Challenge - Tier 3 | Team Cities Action Shooting |
| June 12 | Armed Texans Eight Round Defenders IDPA Championship - Tier 2 | Armed Texans Competitive Shooters |
| June 16 | The Carolina Cup at The Range @ True North - Tier 3 | The Range at True North |
| June 20 | 2020 Wisconsin IDPA Championship - Tier 4 (CONDUCTED BY IDPA LOCALS) | Ripon IDPA |
| June 26 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| June 27 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| June 27 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| July 5 | 2020 OK State IDPA Championship - Tier 3 | Union Arms Shooting Academy |
| July 25 | Coastal Carolina Challenge 2020 - Tier 3 | Armed IDPA Club |
| July 25 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| July 25 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| August 7 | Idaho State IDPA Championship - Tier 3 | Idaho State IDPA Club |
| August 8 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| August 8 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| August 21 | 2020 New England Regional Championship - Tier 4 | Newport Sportsmen's Club |
| August 29 | 2020 Tennessee State IDPA Match - Tier 3 | Chattanooga Tactical Shooting IDPA |
| September 4 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| September 5 | 2020 Western Regional IDPA Championship - Tier 4 | Sacramento Defensive Pistol Shooters |
| September 5 | TN County Sportsmen Challenge - Tier 2 | TN County Sportsmen's League |
| September 5 | Arkansas IDPA State Championship - Tier 3 | Mountain Valley Sportsmen's Association (MVA) |
| September 12 | Old Dominion Classic - Tier 2 | Fairfax Rod and Gun Club, Inc. |
| September 16 | West Virginia Classic - Tier 2 | Hancock County Sportsmen's Assoc., Inc. |
| September 23 | 2020 IDPA US National Championship - Tier 5 | IDPA HQ at Carnes Shooting and Education Complex |
| October 2 | 2020 Lake County IDPA Championship - Tier 2 | Lake County IDPA |
| October 9 | Texas Scurfiers IDPA Championship 2020 - Tier 3 | East Texas Rifle and Pistol Club |
| October 10 | Holiday Havoc 2020 - Tier 3 | WSSC Practical Action Shooting |
| October 10 | 2020 Ruger LPFOD IDPA State Match - Tier 4 | Plenax Sportsmen, Inc. |
| October 16 | Liberty Match @ Valley Forge - Tier 4 | Lower Providence Rod and Gun Club |
| October 17 | Arizona State IDPA Pistol Championship - Tier 3 | Pima Pistol Club |
| October 17 | 2020 Alabama State Match - Tier 2 | Central Alabama Gun Club |
| October 17 | Fall Brawl - Tier 3 | Central AR Shooters Association (CASA) |
| October 23 | 2020 Georgia State Championship - Tier 3 (CONDUCTED BY IDPA LOCALS) | OT South Practical Shooters Club |
| October 24 | Southern Belle IDPA Championship - Tier 2 | South Louisiana IDPA |
| November 6 | Archangel Lane Star Championship 2020 - Tier 4 | Port Meador Rifle and Pistol Club |
| November 13 | 2020 Space Coast Challenge - Tier 4 (CONDUCTED BY LOCALS) | Cross Timbers Action Shooting Association |
| December 10 | 2020 Shooting CCF Championship (CONDUCTED BY IDPA LOCALS) | Little River Sportsmen's Association IDPA |

Due to ongoing match changes and cancellations, we ask that you please refer to the website for match information.

WINNER'S CIRCLE



A great match for a great cause, the LRSA Rolling on the River match benefited the Lowndes High School JROTC program. We salute everyone involved in this worthy event. It's awesome to see a high school program that welcomes support from the responsible gun owning community. We look forward to hearing more about this in a future issue.



Aaron Brulc
SSP Division Champion



Brent Sizemore
1st ESP EX



Brent Sizemore
High Senior



Chris Gay
1st CDP MM



Don Coleman
1st REV MM



Garrett Luce
ESP Division Champion



Jacquelin Cocke
1st ESP NV



Jeffrey Harrison
REV Division Champion



Joe Varga
1st SSP MM



Joshua Grayson
1st CCP NV



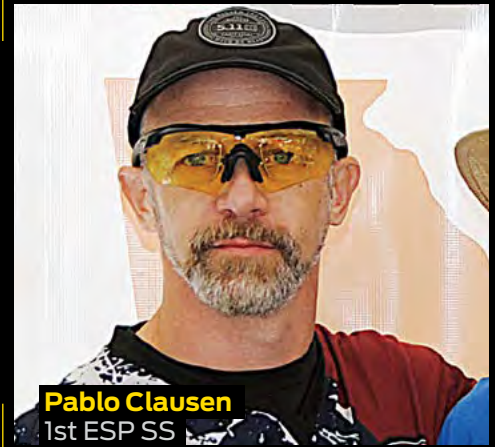
Joyce Hernandez
High Lady



Karl Eutsler
1st CCP EX



Mark Few
1st CDP EX



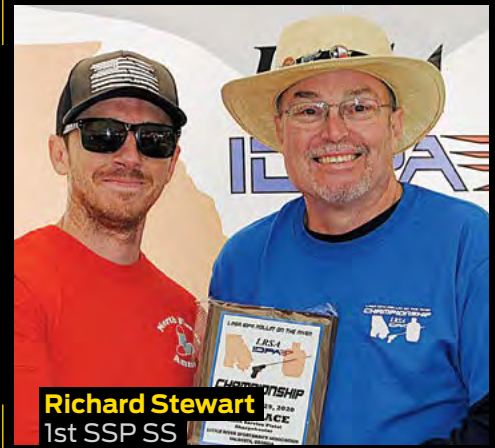
Pablo Clausen
1st ESP SS



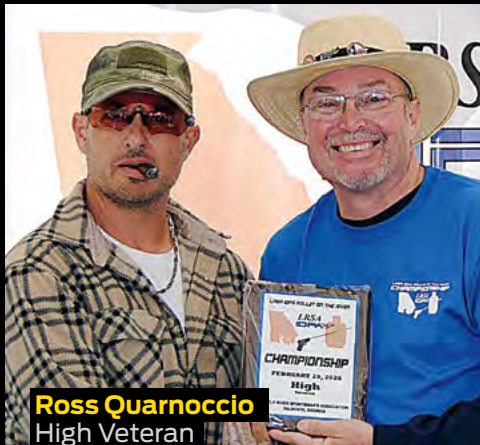
Ralph Edwards
High Distinguished Senior



Randy Meadows
1st CO MM



Richard Stewart
1st SSP SS



Ross Quarnoccio
High Veteran



Tyler Bartlett
CO Division Champion



Wayne Lemond
CDP Division Champion

PARTING SHOT

PRESENTED BY



IDPA is giving you the opportunity to take a parting shot-but be kind, we don't want to hit you with a Failure To Do Right. Submit your own original caption for the photo below by emailing it to partingshot@idpa.com. We suggest you don't post your entry on Social Media to keep others from "stealing" your idea. Once your entry is received a super secret panel of judges (think of them as a Trilateral Commission or the Illuminati) will review the entries and select their top three. So bring the funny.



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

I shot so many no threats on this stage, they're making me bury 'em!
—Rod Snell, A07459 (1st)

Second Place

"I told you I was going to bury the competition"
—Gene Mastro, A642144 (2nd)

Third Place

"Bring over the non-threats"
—John Guegold, A53140 (3rd)



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