

# IDPA SAFETY OFFICER INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CLASSIFICATION MATCH

Any Safety Officer preparing to administer the "Defensive Pistol" Qualification Match will want to review a number of factors prior to actual range firing.

1. For any new shooters, each must have safe gun-handling techniques explained and demonstrated. New shooters should be asked to demonstrate basic speed draws, safe re-holstering, and reloading skills. Muzzle awareness should be carefully explained. Placement of the trigger finger in the trigger guard will only take place when the handgun is pointed downrange or at the target.
2. S. O. should ask shooters if they have any questions concerning the range requirements and range orders.

It is wise to run each competitor through one stage at a time. At the end of each stage, score each competitors targets and paste. If the contestant makes an error and has to repeat the stage, this way only one 30 round stage will have to be completed.

## **S.O. Suggestions for Stage One**

Remind the contestants that they cannot miss fast enough to win this event. Hits on the target are the goal. The goal is to get good hits on each string of fire.

For strings 1, 2, & 3 the shooter is recommended to position himself centered on target two. After the completion of string three, if the shooter has not reloaded his sidearm, the S.O. should tell the shooter to utilize a "tactical reload" prior to string four. This will be good practice for stage three.

In the "weak" hand only part of string five, a shooter should have the muzzle of the handgun positioned at a 45 degree angle either up or down. Trigger finger must be outside the trigger guard, hammer may be cocked and safety off.

String seven is a strong hand only drill, and many shooters will be wise to start with their strong side towards the targets allowing for a much more classic "dueling type stance".

## **Stage Two**

On string one, be sure and explain to the shooter that he must fire all six shots while moving forward. If he reaches the five yard line before firing all six rounds, he will be penalized if he is firing any rounds while NOT moving. For best results the shooter should draw and begin firing as soon as possible. If the shooter takes a couple of steps before drawing and beginning to shoot, he will likely be at the five yard line before he is finished shooting.

Warn the shooters to be careful when backing up and shooting in string two. Shooters should move smooth and sure and this drill is designed to teach a person to place distance between themselves and the threat as quickly as possible while engaging the threat. All shots must be fired while moving.

In string three, instruct the shooter to load a magazine of 5 rounds in the handgun. There should already be a round in the magazine, thus he will have six rounds total in his sidearm. The goal here is to have the shooter shoot until his weapon will be empty. He must quickly reload and release the slide to charge the weapon and fire his remaining six rounds for the drill.

### **Stage Three**

The key issue in the final stage is the "tactical reload." Shooters must be warned that the "tactical reload" requires the exchange of the partial magazine for a full one from behind cover. The partial magazine must be retained in a manner of practical carry. This means the partial magazine must be placed in a pocket, in the belt, or back in a magazine pouch. Lanyards, special baggy pockets, or placing the partial magazine in the mouth is not considered practical. If the partial magazine is dropped to the ground, the shooter may pick it up for retention without penalty. This is simply a standard re-load for revolver shooters.

On string two the shooter is considered to be "LOADED" and may advance towards the barrel when the fresh magazine locks into place or revolver cylinder is closed. On string two and three, the shooter must use the barrel for cover and shoot from around the side, as such, shooters should be instructed to engage the far right target first if he is shooting from the right side of the barrel. Likewise if the shooter is engaging the targets from the left side, then he should engage the targets from left to right. This technique will teach the shooter to expose only a minimum of his body to the threat.

A wise S.O. will recommend that the shooter utilize a "tactical reload" between strings of fire and stages if possible. This will allow the shooters to become familiar with the technique of keeping his sidearm full and ready. Some range rules will require that the handgun be unloaded and maintained in a "cold" manner between stages. If possible, and range rules permit, the sidearm should be kept "hot" and ready for use.

If during the actual firing of any stage, the shooter fails to follow instructions or makes an error. The shooter may be better off to repeat the stage as to get a true picture of his skill. If penalties are used, the resulting score will not reflect the true skill level of the shooter and his "classification score" will be incorrect.

Many shooters may wish to shoot the IDPA "classification match" two or three times in practice before actual "shooting for score." The more familiar the shooter is with the stages, the less likely to make an error or have penalties.