



**New Zealand Pistol Association  
(Inc)**  
Founded 1969

# **Club Range Officer Manual**

# **Action**

**2001**

## **Training Course and Reference Material**

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# NZPA CLUB SAFETY RANGE OFFICERS MANUAL Action

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## **DEFINITIONS:**

### **Organisations**

#### A - NRA

National Rifle Association. American organisation controlling many shooting disciplines. The Action Shooting programme adopted by the NZPA comes from NRA rules.

#### B - IPSC

International Practical Shooting Confederation. An international organisation founded in the USA in 1976 to rationalise and organise practical pistol shooting. It controls and sets procedures for practical shooting competitions. NZPA Practical Pistol matches are based on IPSC principles. Practical Rifle, Practical Shotgun, and 3-Gun matches are also based in IPSC rules and procedure.

#### C - PA

Pistol Australia. Controlling body for some international pistol shooting in Australia. NZPA has quite a close relationship with this body and has adopted PA's Muzzle-loading and Service Pistol matches.

### **Action Shooting**

This is an expression used as a generic term to cover matches from a number of disciplines which have some features in common – pistols are carried in a holster worn on the shooter's belt and are drawn from this at the start of the shooting stage or series; one or a small number of shooters fire at one time under the control of one RO; there is generally not a single fixed firing point and shooting may take place from several different firing points during a match.

### **Match segment descriptions**

This can be very confusing, as each discipline refers to parts of a match differently, and we tend to use a variety of terms to avoid repetition. For the purposes of this manual, some definitions have been attempted (copied from IPSC mostly).

String or Series – a number of shots fired during a defined time period, and a collection of which will go to make up a Stage or Match. Not necessarily scored individually.

Stage – Used in IPSC to describe an individual shooting “problem”. Fired in one time sequence and scored individually.

Match – a number of stages or strings run as a whole to provide an overall score and position for the shooter. May be the same as a competition.

Competition – a contest consisting of a number of matches, the winner of which may or may not be determined by the sum of the match scores

Championships – a major competition, which may take place over several days and venues, and at which titles are at stake.

Course of Fire – details of procedure for shooting string, series or stage. Also called Stage Instructions.

## PART I

### 1. SAFE HANDLING OF PISTOLS

The phrase “Action Shooting” covers matches from several organisations. Each of these has developed different safety rules, procedures and range commands. There has been a significant degree of rationalisation in recent years, but there are still some differences between the disciplines. In New Zealand, where many if not most shooters follow more than one discipline, we have tended to use only one set of safety rules for basic training. These are generally the rules of the International Practical Shooting Confederation, which is the strictest of the disciplines in regards to safety. Range Commands are now common across Action matches with very minor exceptions.

**Action shooting does require special attention to be paid to safety matters – shooting is fast, with Centrefire pistols; most matches require drawing from the holster; IPSC matches often involves movement with a loaded pistol, and shooting non-standard matches which may require individual safety rules.**

**It is important that shooters coming to Action Shooting from other disciplines do understand that these factors make safe behaviour even more necessary. Training for Action Shooting must emphasise SAFETY above technique. Action Shooters are required to undertake Holster Qualification training provided by NZPA to fully participate in Action Shooting matches, although there is some provision for unqualified shooters.**

**Clubs must provide a basic safety-training programme for shooters before allowing them to take part in any sort of Action Shooting, and before they undertake Holster Training. Suitable pre-holster training material is covered in the NZPA “Introduction to Pistol Shooting course”.**

Cowboy Action Shooting (CAS) is covered in a separate course.

#### **Coming to the Range**

***Range Officers observing deviations from the following procedures should advise shooters that they are not adhering to police requirements, and also inform Club officials.***

When taking pistols to and from the range they must be kept in a locked box in the boot of the car. Pistol pouches are not considered to be acceptable as the sole means of securing a pistol. In transit, pistols must be in a “stout” locked box.

The magazines and the pistol itself must not be loaded, and ammunition must be stored in a separate container.

Pistols should never be pointed at anyone or handled in such a way as to appear to be pointed at anyone.

***At an Action range, the only place where pistols may be handled, other than at the firing line under the control of the Range Officer, is the Safety Zone.***

#### **Safety Zones and their use.**

After arrival at the range, pistols must be transferred from the carrying box to holster or to a carry pouch if this is how the shooter prefers to carry the pistol when not shooting. There will also be times when it is necessary to clean or repair a pistol at the range, or when a shooter may wish to show someone else the pistol for some reason. These activities may only take place in a Safety Zone.

All ranges must have at least one designated Safety Zone. This is the only area other than the firing point in which pistols may be handled. Shooters must specifically **not** take a pistol from its box and holster in the car park.

The Primary Safety Zone (which must be provided) is an area with benches on which pistol boxes may be placed while removing the pistols for holstering.

On an outdoor range the Safety Zone will be a designated, but not necessarily fixed, area. Any Primary Safety Zone will have an indicated safe direction in which pistols may be pointed and tested, sighted or dry fired. This should be such that if a round is accidentally fired it will not do any damage. At any sort of competition at which there will be a steady flow of shooters through the Safety Zone it is desirable that a Range Officer is provided, to supervise activities.

### **Clearing Pistols**

The first thing to do when handling a pistol in the Primary Safety Zone and before doing anything else, is to clear it, that is to check that it is unloaded, by opening the action and inspecting the chamber.

Note that on an Action range, all pistols are considered to be in a permanently cleared condition, as they should have been cleared before being holstered, and always after being used. Nevertheless, it is still sensible to assume any gun is loaded until proved otherwise. Note that pistols are not allowed to be carried around a range with a magazine in, loaded or not.

### **Secondary Safety Zones**

Each individual range should also have a Secondary Safety Zone specifically for the purpose of holstering pistols before shooting. This allows shooters to carry pistols in a bag, pouch or box from one range to another rather than wearing them. They then transfer the pistol from bag/box to holster in the Secondary Safety Zone. ROs may discourage the potentially time-wasting practice of taking pistols to the firing line in a pouch or bag, and require shooters to use the Secondary Safety Zone for this purpose, if one is provided by the club. The Secondary Safety Zone is also used for adjustments to sights, replacement of batteries etc. It is not intended that such secondary safety zones are safe for dry firing.

### **Ammunition in Safety Zones**

International rules, which New Zealand follows, do allow taking ammunition into a Safety Zone, but it must not be handled. This would include wearing magazines, loaded or not, but magazines must not be placed in the pistol. ***If a shooter needs to test the operation of an unloaded magazine in the Safety Zone this must be directly supervised by an RO. Local club rules may disallow taking ammunition into a Safety Zone and this can take precedence, but if so, it must be clearly signed and briefed. Live ammo testing, whether or not it includes firing, can only be done on a live range***

### **Transport of pistols around the range**

While not actually shooting or at a firing point a pistol must either be kept in a closed bag or box, or in a holster worn on the person, and not handled except in a Safety Zone. We recommend that pistols should be bagged when shooters have to wait between stages, or while not expecting to shoot soon. If the pistol is kept in a bag or box, it can only be transferred to the holster in a Primary or Secondary Safety Zone, or at the firing point if there is no Secondary Safety Zone.

### **Holsters**

A New Zealand requirement is that holsters must only be worn on the strong side (i.e cross draw holsters are not permitted), and the holster must cover the trigger. The gun butt must not be below the belt and hold-down ties are not allowed for Action Matches (although they may for CAS matches). The holster must be “serviceable and safe” and must retain the pistol during movement, and during a retention test if applied. Other than this, discipline requirements apply. ***Note that current procedure is not to have equipment inspection as a separate function and to rely on ROs doing this on each range.*** In doing so, ROs should check that holsters are of a suitable standard and fit the pistol being used.

## **Magazines**

Magazines may be loaded at any time, and may be worn on the holster belt, or carried in a bag, or pocket, except in a Safety Zone. A shooter should arrive at the Firing Point with enough ammunition for the whole stage. All magazines needed should be loaded and easily available. IPSC require that during the course of fire, a shooter must carry on the person all the magazines and equipment needed for the course of fire.

### **At the firing point**

At each range there will be at least one Range Officer, and he/she is in charge of all the shooters at that range, and responsible for their safe behaviour while shooting. Once a shooter has been called to the Firing Point, he/she will follow the Range Officers instructions and commands for undertaking the course of fire.

***The Range Officer also has responsibility for and control over the behaviour of immediate spectators and other squad members.***

## **MAIN POINTS:**

- PISTOLS MUST BE BROUGHT TO THE RANGE IN A LOCKED BOX (NOT A BAG), AND IN THE BOOT OF THE CAR
- ALWAYS CLEAR A PISTOL BEFORE HANDLING
- PISTOLS MAY ONLY BE HANDLED IN A SAFETY ZONE OR UNDER THE DIRECT CONTROL OF A RANGE OFFICER
- PISTOLS MUST ALWAYS BE UNLOADED EXCEPT AT THE FIRING POINT

## **2. SECURITY OF PISTOLS AND AMMUNITION**

***ROs should be prepared to watch security and warn shooters who are not being careful of their pistols' security. Covered in Introduction to Pistol Shooting.***

## **3. PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT AND CLOTHING**

***ROs must ensure that all persons on their range wear acceptable eye and ear protection at all times. In particular a shooter should not be allowed to start shooting unless wearing both forms of protection. Covered in Introduction to Pistol Shooting.***

## **4. RUNNING A MATCH**

The successful, safe and efficient running of a match should be the aim of every Range Officer and every shooter. This will come about if both Range Officers and shooters understand what is expected of them, so before going into running the match we will consider the duties of Range Officers and the responsibilities of shooters. If both parties know these, everything will go smoothly and safely.

### **Duties of Range Officers**

This section covers the duties of Range Officers which are common to all Action Matches and which should be quite clear to all Range Officers and to all shooters.

Duties of the Range Officer are to:

- Ensure that competitors understand the procedure and start position
- Ensure that all those present on the range adhere strictly to all safety procedures.
- Ensure pistols are always checked, cleared, and holstered before targets are marked, and that magazines are removed.

- ❑ Ensure that all rules of the event being shot are followed exactly.
- ❑ Give range instructions clearly and unambiguously and follow the prescribed pattern
- ❑ Run the event efficiently and smoothly without wasting time, but also without rushing the shooters.
- ❑ Deal correctly with breaches of rules or safety violations. Be aware of dispute procedure for the competition being held.
- ❑ Ensure that shooters are not distracted by avoidable extraneous activities or noises, particularly from spectators, and equally are not coached by spectators except when actually undergoing training.
- ❑ Control the operation of the targets where relevant, and either personally do the scoring (depending on the match) or supervise the activities of the scoring team.
- ❑ Ensure that all the necessary materials and personnel are available before the detail starts.
- ❑ Be responsible for ensuring that scores are recorded correctly and clearly.
- ❑ When required ensure that RO and shooter have signed the score-sheets.
- ❑ Clear the range quickly and efficiently when the detail is finished, and pass the results on quickly to the organisers.

#### **A Range Officer should be**

- ✓ Cool and confident at all times, and clearly in charge of the range.
- ✓ Unbiased
- ✓ Firm
- ✓ Quiet and tactful when dealing with competitors
- ✓ Remembering that he/she is there to help the shooters
- ✓ Give warnings clearly so there is no doubt a warning has been given

#### **How the Range Officer runs the match**

##### **Range Commands**

**Range commands are used by the Range Officer to inform the shooters which part of the match has been reached and to instruct them as to their actions. By international convention range commands have become simple, and use as few words as possible. However, each range command, although expressed in few words, is essentially an instruction to carry out what may be a complicated procedure, which has to be followed exactly.**

It is very important that shooters understand exactly what is meant by each range command, and that Range Officers have a good understanding of what shooters are supposed to do as each command is given. Ignorance from either party can, at best, spoil a shooters enjoyment of the match, and at worst cause an accident, and is not acceptable as an excuse.

The Range Officer should make sure that shooters **do** understand the course of fire. In Service Match the details of each stage form part of the Range Commands. In NRA matches it is not mandatory, but recommended that the Range Officer provide some identification of progress through the match. In IPSC matches the Range Officer should start with “**If you understand the course of fire .....**”

A detailed explanation of each range command follows. All Action Matches now use common commands, with minor variations that are discussed in the Match Rules Section.

1. “**Range in Use**”. This warns all present that the range has been declared safe for shooting, which will start shortly.
2. “**Shooter(s) to the Line**”. This command may be given if the next shooter or shooters are not actually on the firing point.

**3. “Load and Make Ready”:** This is the order given by the Range Officer to initiate the shooting of a stage or section of a match. The order requires the shooter to load the pistol, make it ready to fire, apply the safety catch (if applicable) and to place it in the holster or any other place specified by the course of fire. The shooter then adopts the Ready Position applicable.

**3. Ready position:** This is the position which the shooter must adopt before the stage can start. For IPSC matches it is defined in the stage directions, but is commonly standing with the hands relaxed at the sides. For all other matches, with rare exceptions, it is to stand with both hands raised above shoulder level. **Adoption of, and remaining in, the ready position is a signal from the shooter to the Range Officer that he/she is ready to start.** Premature moves from this position may be penalised.

**4. “Are You Ready?”:** When the Range Officer sees the shooter(s) adopt the ready position he/she asks “**Are you ready?**” (or “**Shooter(s) ready?**”). This is to confirm that the shooter is ready, and if he/she is not, provides the shooter with his/her only opportunity to say so by calling “**Not Ready**”. There is no requirement for the shooter to reply, and a non-response is to be taken as agreement. If the shooter does not call “**Not Ready**” quickly, the RO should proceed, and will prepare to commence the timing cycle. If a shooter does call “**Not Ready**” the Range Officer should also call “**Not Ready**”, and wait until the shooter looks ready. Shooters must not be allowed to take an unreasonable amount of time, nor to call “**Not Ready**” unnecessarily.

**5. “Standby”:** This is the command given by the Range Officer to tell the shooter that the timing cycle will start within a few seconds. The Range Officer will, within 5 seconds, start the timer, or generate the start of the match in some other way. (*Note that “Standby” is not used in Service Match*). It is better to vary this time between 2 and 5 seconds from shooter to shooter rather than using exactly the same delay for all shooters.

**6. “(If you have finished), Unload and Show Clear”.** When the Range Officer considers that the shooter has finished shooting he/she gives this command. Normally it will be quite clear that the shooter has finished, but the “**If you have finished**” precludes any attempt by a shooter who has inadvertently not finished from claiming that the Range Officer told him/her to stop. (*“If you have finished” is only used for IPSC stages which are not fixed time*). The command means to unload and demonstrate that the pistol is empty. The actual procedure is covered under Holster Training, and both RO and shooter should be fully familiar with it.

*The Range Officer – and the shooter - will both check that the pistol contains no ammunition. Note – it is regarded as the shooters responsibility to make sure the pistol is unloaded; the Range Officer is checking, not doing.*

**7. “Gun Clear, Hammer Down, Holster”.** When the Range Officer is satisfied that the pistol contains no ammunition, this command instructs the shooter that the RO is satisfied that the pistol is unloaded; and to test fire it, and holster it. A semi-auto pistol must have the hammer dropped as if it were to be fired (note this is to be rigorously enforced). This means: -

- *To point the pistol towards the backstop (but not at a target);*
- *To hold it as if it were going to fire (i.e. firmly not loosely);*
- *To allow the hammer/striker to fall by pulling the trigger in the normal way (i.e. not by lowering it by hand);*

*Shooters who do not comply with any of these requirements should be made to do so.*

For a revolver, the cylinder is closed and the gun holstered, **with the hammer down**. It is not necessary for a revolver to have the hammer dropped, although the same command is used.

**8. “Range is clear” (for scoring):** When he/she has cleared the shooter’s pistol and it has been replaced in the holster, the Range Officer announces that the range is clear and that range staff may go forward. ***This is the standard IPSC command and should be used for all disciplines and matches, as an unambiguous statement.*** The Range Officer should add a specific instruction relevant to what is going to happen i.e. scoring and patching, replacing targets, painting etc. ***No-one should go forward of the firing line before this command has been given.*** After this command the shooter may inspect targets, collect brass, and leave the range.

**RANGE COMMANDS ARE IMPORTANT SHORTHAND INSTRUCTIONS COVERING A COMPLEX SERIES OF ACTIONS AND MUST BE THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD BY BOTH RANGE OFFICERS AND SHOOTERS.**

### **Control of the match**

In IPSC and Speed (Steel Challenge) matches, only one shooter goes through a stage at one time, and he/she has one-on-one supervision by the Range Officer. The RO is responsible for ensuring that the shooter follows the stage procedures correctly; for keeping a record of the time taken; and most importantly, for making sure the shooter completes the course of fire without committing any breaches of the safety rules.

Generally the Range Officer remains in charge of one stage, and each shooter goes through it and then leaves, either in squads or individually. The scorer or No 2 RO will keep the scores, and make sure that the shooters are ready to take their turn when it comes. This team of two people makes for efficient and consistent running of matches. Scoring is done on the range immediately each shooter has finished and the range is declared clear. Target repair is done simultaneously, so shooters can be progressed through the stage as quickly as possible.

The proper procedure is that the RO and the shooter will inspect each target. The RO will decide the score for each shot and call it out. The scorer (#2 RO) will write it down. Only after this will targets be patched or replaced. It is often possible and convenient to score the early targets while the shooter is still shooting, or shortly after, and for the scores to be decided by someone other than the RO. While this *is* efficient, and useful in getting shooters through a stage, be aware that it is not standard procedure, and a shooter could protest and even demand a reshoot.

In NRA and Service matches from one to four shooters go through a course of fire at once under the control of a RO. Normally each shooter has an observer to watch them during the shooting, and there may also be a timer operator. The RO will be responsible for making sure that the correct procedure for the course of fire is followed and for giving the range commands. The individual observers are responsible for watching for safety or procedural errors.

In these matches, shooters will fire a number of time sequences in succession on the same range, with targets changed at some stage during the match. It is normal practice for ranges to be run “hot”. This means that after the initial command to load and make ready, the shooters will reload and holster after each segment, and only unload and show clear at the end of the match. In the case of Service Match this is done at the end of each distance segment, at which time the targets are scored and repaired. Shooters may be required to unload while targets are changed, but this is not normal, and the observers make sure that no gun handling takes place during this time. The Match Rules section covers variations from this.

***An important safety aspect to be watched out for by shooters and Range Officers is direction. During loading and unloading, and movement, it is only too easy to unwittingly point the muzzle of the pistol in an unsafe direction. Even momentary inattention to this could result in an accident. Shooters need to practice carrying out all activities safely. Range Officers need to watch out for muzzle-waving and be prepared to warn shooters if necessary. A warning is better than a DQ!***

## **5. UNQUALIFIED SHOOTERS**

Generally, all shooters participating in Action Matches will be Holster Qualified. This means that they will have been trained in the correct and safe methods to draw a pistol from a holster quickly and have been tested as such. Holster Qualified shooters may shoot in any Action Match from any allowed position.

Non-Holster Qualified shooters will also want to be able to shoot Action Matches in the period before they are Holster Qualified, particularly at club level. This is allowed subject to certain restrictions:

- a) All shooting which would normally require drawing from the holster is started with the pistol held at 45°. The pistol should be in the same condition it would be if located in the holster of a Holster Qualified shooter i.e. loaded and cocked, safety on, for a semi-auto; hammer down and loaded for a revolver. Finger off the trigger.
- b) Other stage start positions, e.g. on a table, are acceptable.
- c) No shooting during movement between positions, and movement to be walking not running.
- d) Shooting to be done from standing position only unless absolutely necessary for the match. In this case, no change of position while holding a loaded pistol –it is either unloaded or placed on the ground, safety on, while the shooter changes position.
- e) No shooting any speed matches.

In practice, this means that NRA and Service matches can be shot as normal except for a 45° start. IPSC matches may require changes to standard procedure for a stage, but since all tyros only compete with each other, there is no competitive advantage or disadvantage. See some notes under matches.

## **6. DISCIPLINE**

The primary responsibility of the shooters is to comply with all safety and procedural rules, and to obey range commands as presented. The primary responsibility of the Range Officer is to help the shooters to do this, but also to penalise them when they don't.

Shooters can be penalised for two reasons – failing to follow the match procedures correctly, and committing a breach of safety rules.

- Failing to follow match rules will incur a points penalty.
- Failing to follow safety rules is regarded more seriously and for most breaches the penalty is disqualification from the entire match.

In IPSC matches shooters are disqualified from the entire match for violation of any of the stated safety rules.

NRA regards some safety violations as less serious than others, and awards a safety violation for the first incidence of such a violation. Disqualification results from the second such violation and for all others.

Safety is a main responsibility of ROs and a good RO should not hesitate to warn shooters about dangerous tendencies that the shooters may not have observed. Better an informal warning than a Disqualification!

Details of procedural and safety rules are covered in the rulebooks, but shooters and Range Officers must be familiar with those breaches of safety rules that will result in disqualification and those for IPSC (and generally observed in NZ) are:

- ❖ Handling a pistol anywhere on the range other than in a Safety Zone or at the firing line during a match, unless under instruction by an Range Officer;
- ❖ Pointing a pistol uprange (defined as beyond 90° of the downrange direction);
- ❖ Pointing a pistol at yourself or anyone else;
- ❖ Dropping a pistol at any time;

- ❖ Moving more than two steps with the finger in the trigger guard;
- ❖ Accidental discharge;
- ❖ Handling ammunition in a Safety Zone
- ❖ Consumption of alcohol or drugs while any shooting is in progress
- ❖ Unsportsmanlike behaviour

Pistol shooting in New Zealand in all its forms has an excellent and well-earned reputation for safety. This has only been earned and maintained by extreme vigilance on the part of range staff. While shooters individually do not usually intend to act dangerously, lack of thought and enthusiasm to shoot fast, particularly in IPSC matches, which involve speed and movement, can lead to dangerous acts. The Range Officer must be constantly on the alert for these actions and be ready to deal swiftly and properly with breaches of safety rules.

### **Disqualification procedure**

While we hope that most people will not be involved in a disqualification, sooner or later all ROs probably will be, and it is important to be aware of how to deal with it when it happens.

If you see any of the listed safety violations (or any other new serious hazard):

- ❖ Stop the shooter immediately by calling **STOP!** Be prepared to take hold of his/her pistol if he/she turns towards the uprange direction (or the RO!)
- ❖ Instruct him/her to unload and show clear
- ❖ Then, tell him/her you have to DQ him/her and state the reason
- ❖ Record this incident on his/her score sheet, and send someone to inform the Match Director
- ❖ The effect is that his/her score is immediately zeroed, and he/she is not allowed to continue shooting at that competition.

In many cases, but not all, the shooter will realise that they have committed a safety violation, but this is not always the case, and they may make an appeal against the disqualification. They may do this in any case even if they do know that they should be disqualified. A shooter who realises they have committed a disqualification offence should not just carry on, but stop and wait for the Range Officer's instructions.

Be aware that an appeal can only be made against whether the action was unsafe, not on whether it occurred. This means that the ROs decision that an act occurred may not be challenged; all that may be challenged is whether it was unsafe. Any of the acts listed above cannot be realistically challenged. It is thus a serious responsibility for the RO.

***Because of the possibility of an appeal, it is important to have a second person as a witness if possible, and to document what has happened.***

***Read up on DQ offences for the match you will be ROing before running a match. On your stage (IPSC) be aware of any special hazards. Warn shooters about them during the walk-through). You need to be quick-acting and correct. However, in view of the importance of safety, it is better to stop what you regard as unsafe behaviour. If there is a protest, the Arbitration Committee will make an expert decision. If you do not act, an accident may occur then or later.***

## **7. SCORING**

In all matches or practices, correct scoring procedures are an important part of matches, which need to be understood by both shooters and Range Officers. Failure to do this properly can result in a shooter being given too low a score in which case he or she is penalised, or too high a score, in which case everyone else is.

### Who does it and when?

This varies from discipline to discipline and the exact methods are covered under Match Rules. It is **always** the Range Officer's responsibility to make sure that it is done properly on his/her range. Briefly it proceeds as follows

- ✓ For IPSC matches, each shooter's point score (time and shots) is determined immediately after he/she has shot the stage, and is recorded, agreed by signing off, and the targets repaired.
- ✓ For NRA matches, the targets are changed for every 12 shots that are placed on them, and they are scored off-range
- ✓ For Service Match, the targets are scored on-range and repaired after each segment of the match
- ✓ For Steel matches, the time and any penalties are written down as soon as each shooter has finished each stage.

***When targets are scored immediately after being shot, it is important to do this as well as possible given the condition of the targets. Any errors can effect the final position of a shooter, and since the targets are then repaired, errors cannot be corrected.***

When targets are repaired by being patched on the range, it is worth taking some care to do this properly, as this will make scoring subsequent hits easier, and also make the targets last longer.

When the score is decided on the range, once the shooter has agreed it the shooter and the **Range Officer (*not the person writing the score down*)** must sign it off on the scoresheet. It is the RO's responsibility, not that of the scorer. If the shooter does not agree with the score, he/she should not sign it off.

Note that in no match is a competitor allowed to touch his/her own target before it has been scored. In any match it is important that scores, or targets if these are scored off-range, are sent to the scoring office as soon as possible after the match is finished.

### Scoring Problems

In matches involving steel targets there is only one score - a hit or a miss. Steel targets may or may not be required to be knocked down. In IPSC and NRA generally they are, in Steel they are usually not.

In all matches using paper targets a shot is given the value of the highest value scoring ring it touches.

In most instances the location of a shot is quite clear; when a shot is very near the outside of a ring, however, it can be difficult to decide if it is touching the ring or not. In cases where it is not clear a gauge is to be used only by the Range Officer, to aid the decision.

### Gauging

A plug gauge *may* be used, with a spindle and flange of appropriate diameters for the calibres being used. For 9mm and all its varieties a 9.65mm flange should be used ("38 cal") A flange diameter of 11.43mm (.45) is used for all calibres over 9.65 (usually only .45).

However, the recent proliferation of intermediate calibres, and the destructive nature of plug gauging means that, increasingly, plug gauges are not used (except by referees or MDs) and instead a clear plastic template (or overlay) with the various size holes marked on it, is used. This enables determination of the shot hole location in relation to the scoring rings without damaging the target, or altering it so as to prevent any further examination (which is the case after a plug gauge has been used).

**Skid shots.** If the shot hits a turning target as it is turning away at the end of a timed series (as occurs in NRA and Service matches), it will make an elongated hole. This will also apply to a turning or disappearing IPSC target. The non-circularity may range from an oval to a line virtually cutting the target in half. The length of the hole determines whether it is scored as a hit or a miss. A hole longer than 11mm for Service or 1.5 times bullet diameter (NRA) is deemed to be a miss.

IPSC now score all skid shots, however long, on any target, as a hit. In the case of doubt a skid gauge is used - this is a sheet of clear plastic with pairs of lines engraved on it, spaced apart by the distances shown above.

### **Disappearing targets**

In IPSC matches any targets which move, or turn, or flip up, or appear and disappear once, and which end up in a position where the scoring zones cannot be seen by the shooter are classed as “disappearing”, and any misses or failure to hit them are not penalised other than by not getting a score. If a moving target remains partially visible after it stops moving, or which is exposed to view more than once before disappearing will incur a penalty for each miss.

In general only flip-over targets or ones that pass behind a barrier will now be classed as disappearing.

### **Penalty targets**

In addition to the normal targets, in IPSC matches “Penalty” (previously “No-shoot”) targets are also used. These are distinguished by being of a different colour, or having a large cross marked on them, and they are used to conceal some part of a normal target, or to control the direction of shooting. A penalty is incurred for hitting a penalty target. It is important to remember that any particular shot can touch both a scoring target and a covering penalty target when it passes through the intersection of the two targets. In this case the shot incurs a penalty, but also gets the value of the hit. Note that any hit on a penalty target incurs the penalty of double the maximum possible score. This includes a penalty steel target, which does not need to fall (and so should be carefully examined, and repainted after every hit).

Note that badly placed penalties and/or targets may result in a shot passing through one into the other. In this case, remember that both are deemed to be impenetrable and so any “shoot-throughs” are ignored – either way. Since this can lead to arguments and difficult decisions, it is better if the stage layout avoids shoot-throughs.

### **Calling scores**

Part of scoring accurately is calling the scores unambiguously and writing them down clearly. This is particularly important when the scores are recorded on the range, and the targets then repaired, so inaccuracies cannot be subsequently checked.

**Service Match** uses special scoring forms with a space for each of the standard 90 shots. Calling the wrong number of shots is quite clear. It is easier and better to have one person calling the shots (properly this is the RO) and one writing them down (the scorer). The writer should acknowledge that all shots are accounted for before patching takes place.

**NRA** targets are usually marked off the range, and counting that there are 12 shots is the first task of the scorer. Shot targets should be stored unpatched until after the match in case there are any challenges.

For **Steel** matches the Range Officer will call out the time shown by the timer and add any penalties. The scorer should call out the time he/she is writing down for confirmation.

In **IPSC** matches, it is difficult for scorers because each stage is different, and it is patched and shot on again immediately. This is why fixed staff on each range is very useful. Score sheets should be provided for each stage, with the correct number of spaces (the scoring programme will generate these). Scores are values as “A”, “B”, “C”, “D”, “Miss” or “Penalty”. To avoid ambiguity the person calling the score should use the NATO phonetic alphabet and the letters used are Alpha (A), Bravo (B), Charlie (C), Delta (D). A miss can be called as: “Mike” or “Miss”. A typical call might be e.g. “Target 1, one Alpha, one Charlie”, “Target 2, two Alpha”. A steel target hit is referred to as “Popper 1, down”. Note there is no B zone on the “new” Classic targets.

The writer should record the number of hits of each rank in the spaces provided for each target as “1” or “2” not hash marks (#). Note that in IPSC a shooter cannot score less than zero for a stage however many penalties are incurred!

## **PART II RULES FOR ALL MATCHES**

These notes are intended as guidance to running and shooting a match, not as a replacement to the rulebook. Details will be found in the rulebooks for each event, and the current version of each is also appended. The matches are described more or less in the order in which they were introduced to New Zealand. Which means first is Service Match, which was introduced to New Zealand in 1983 and was for about five years the only Action match we were allowed to shoot.

### **1 SERVICE MATCH**

There are two principal and traditional classes of pistol used for this match and at least two others have been introduced. We consider first the two traditional classes and then the other possible combinations.

Trigger pull must be 1360 grammes minimum for all classes.

#### **Classes of pistol**

- ◆ **Service Pistol Unrestricted.** Any semiautomatic pistol or revolver in calibre from .30" (7.62 mm) to .45" (11.43 mm), with barrel length not less than 4" or 100 mm. There is no power restriction on ammunition
- ◆ **Service Pistol.** Any semiautomatic pistol or revolver in calibre from 9 mm to .45" (11.43 mm), with barrel length not less than 4" or 100 mm; which fits into UIT gauge box; and weighs less than 1400 gms. Must be able to use roundnosed or semiwadcuter ammunition.

In NZ we have added:

- ◆ **Service Revolver.** Revolver only as per SP but the only permitted modifications to "out-of-box" condition are to improve trigger pull, and reshape factory grips. Only roundnosed or semiwadcuter ammunition to be used and to be within standard length. Single action mode must be functioning.
- ◆ **Service Semiautomatic.** Semiautomatic as per SP for, except that non-standard adjustable open sights may be fitted. Barrel length requirement must be met.
- ◆ **Unlimited.** Any revolver or semi-automatic, which includes allowing compensators, and optical sights (non-enlarging). This class is designed to allow use of pistols made for other Action Matches.

At Championships, only Service Pistol and Service Pistol Unrestricted must be shot; the other classes can be shot if desired.

#### **Holsters**

Service Match is shot in all classes except Unrestricted by drawing from the holster like other Action Matches. However this is only allowed for holster-qualified shooters, for whom all Action gun-handling rules and commands apply. The normal holster specifications apply, except for shooters who use the holster only for carriage.

For non-qualified shooters, all matches are shot from the 45° "Ready" position, and holsters are permitted for carrying unloaded pistols on the range under the control of the Range Officer, not at any other time e.g. in the range buildings. The pistol must be held in the holster with the muzzle pointing downwards. Holsters may not be concealed. Speedloaders, spare magazines, and ammunition containers are allowed.

**Ammunition** must meet a "power floor" of 120,000 (projectile weight in grains x speed in fps), except for Service Pistol Unrestricted. This is the same as for NRA Action matches. The rules state that projectiles may not be jacketed (in Australia) but are not otherwise restricted to type. Ammunition used should be the same throughout the match.

### **Ranges Required.**

Shooting distances are 50 yards, 25 yards, 10 yards and 7 yards. These can be met by using a 50-metre range with stationary targets for the 50-yard stage and a 25 m range with turning targets for all other stages. If only one range is to be used (i.e. a 50 metre range) then it should have turning targets. The firing points are to be marked. A barricade post of about 1.8 m high and 100 mm square (or an actual barricade) is required at the 50 yards and 25 yard points.

### **Targets**

Those used at all distances are four ISSF International Rapidfire (1986 or pre 1989 style) targets at 750 mm centres (normal ISSF Rapidfire spacing) numbered 1 to 4 from left to right.

### **Commands**

All stages start with “**Load and Make Ready**”; this is followed by “**Are you Ready?**” *but not by Standby*, and the time starts after this, or the targets turn. At the end of the stage the command “**Unload and show clear**” is given, and the pistols are cleared, followed by “**Range is clear for scoring**”. A description of the stage details should also be given.

### **Start Position**

The start position for all courses except 50 yards is either gun loaded and holstered and hands above the shoulders (“surrender position”) if holster qualified, or loaded and held at 45° with one or both hands as appropriate. At 50 yards unqualified shooters place the loaded pistol at the firing point and stand 2 metres back with hands above shoulders.

Service Pistol Unrestricted is shot as if unqualified for all shooters.

### **Course of fire for all Service Pistol Matches**

Total shots 90. Total possible score 900.

There is 10 minutes Preparation Time before the first stage, which is:

#### **50 yards - 24 shots**

The shooters load their pistols with 6 rounds only and either place it on firing line and then step back about 2 metres, or into holster (if qualified). The shooter fires 6 shots from each of four positions, reloading between series in the total time. These positions are prone at Target 4; sitting or kneeling at Target 3; right hand side of the barricade at target 2; and left hand side of the barricade at Target 1. Total time for 24 shots is 165 seconds.

The command “**Stop**” is given at the end of the time. Targets are then scored and patched. Total time allowed for this is 165 seconds (2 minutes 45 seconds).

#### **25 yards - 24 shots plus 12 shots**

From the right-hand side of the barricade 6 shots are fired on target 4 in 15 seconds. From the left-hand side 6 shots are fired on target 3 in 15 seconds. Then a combined series of 12 shots in 35 seconds is fired, 6 each on targets 1 and 2 from the right and left-hand sides. Targets are scored and patched. From the standing position without using the barricade 3 shots each are fired on targets 1 and 2 in 6 seconds. From the standing position 2 shots each are fired on targets 2, 3 and 4 in 6 seconds. Targets are patched and scored.

#### **10 yards - 18 shots**

From the standing position 6 shots are fired on target 4 in 4 seconds. Then 3 shots are fired with right-hand only, then 3 with left hand only in a total of 8 seconds on target 3. 3 shots each are fired on targets 1 and 2 in 4 seconds. Targets are scored and patched.

### **7 yards - 12 shots**

6 shots each are fired on targets 1 and 2 from the "crouch position" (i.e. unaimed) in a total of 15 seconds. Targets are scored and patched.

### **Rules, Procedures, and Penalties**

General rules for all Action Matches apply, and indeed many of these which are NZ specific were developed during the time when we only shot Service Match. Some points particular to Service Match are:

- ◆ Only Holster Qualified shooters may draw from the holster in this match, but non-qualified shooters may start from the 45° position, and are encouraged to use holsters for retention of the pistol between stages.
- ◆ Only six shots may be loaded at one time. This applies to semi-autos as well as to revolvers.
- ◆ Unless specified all shooting may be with the pistol held with one or both hands. Where shooting from the barricade is required actual firing of the pistol must be with the same hand as the side of the barricade. ***This is different to NRA***
- ◆ When shooting from the barricade the feet must be inside (not on) a line extending back from the same side of the barricade.
- ◆ When shooting from the barricade, the muzzle shall be in front of the face of the barricade.
- ◆ When shooting from 50 yards the pistol must be unloaded and cleared before changing to a new position, and may not be reloaded before the new position is taken up. Moving from one side of the barricade to the other does not constitute a change of position.
- ◆ Feet must be behind (not on) firing line at all distances. If the line is not clearly marked then the shooter should stand at least 50 mm behind the obvious area.
- ◆ There is a 10 point penalty for violating any of the above rules
- ◆ Late shots on turning targets are ignored. On fixed targets the highest value shot or shots is cancelled.
- ◆ From the crouch position no part of the pistol may be above the shoulder. A 10-point penalty will be incurred for **each** shot fired in violation of this rule.

*Observers should be allocated to each shooter and their job is to note any foot faults, breaches of safety and if turning targets are not used, to watch for any late shots after the command or signal to stop. After each stage the Range Officer will ask for penalties and declare them after they have been noted down.*

**Safety Violations**      Safety violations listed in Part I for IPSC apply.

### **MAIN POINTS for SERVICE MATCH**

- 90 SHOTS ARE FIRED IN A FULL COURSE.
- VIOLATIONS OF RULES INCUR PENALTIES
- ONLY 6 SHOTS LOADED AT A TIME
- WHEN FIRING FROM BARRICADE FIRING HAND IS SAME AS SIDE OF BARRICADE.
- WHEN FIRING FROM CROUCH POSITION, SIGHTS CANNOT BE USED.
- DISTANCES ARE 50, 25, 10 and 7 YARDS.

## 2 NRA ACTION

The National Rifle Association of America runs many shooting matches. Amongst these is the “Action Pistol” programme, a group of matches shot to similar overall rules. Of these, four are shot together to make up the “Bianchi Cup” and they are also shot at the World Championships, and the NZPA Action Pistol Nationals.

### **Pistols**

Open Class A variety of modifications can be fitted to maximise performance at each of the stages of the match, such as an adjustable sight-base to allow for lead on the Moving Target; a special sight mount or barrel shroud to allow a firm grip on the barricade; and extended butt plates to allow for resting on the ground in the prone position. *All these are allowable, but any modification or accessory must be fitted to the pistol throughout the entire match, and may not be added or removed to suit each stage.*

Stock Class This class is for almost unmodified pistols. The following are not allowed – optical sights, compensators, wings, butt rests, mover base etc. All stages must be shot standing, except 50 yards in the Practical Match.

### **Holsters**

In theory although not always in practise, a holster retention test is applied. *If a strap or other device is needed for this test to be passed, then it must be used throughout the match.* Other than this, NZPA standards apply,

### **Ammunition**

Must meet a power floor (factor) of 120,000 (projectile weight in grains x speed in fps), but is otherwise unrestricted as to type.

### **Targets**

Four types of target are used in NRA Action; only two of these in the Bianchi Cup match. The NRA D-1 target has four scoring zones – A, worth ten points; B, worth eight, and the rest outside of the B-zone is C, worth five points. There is a central X-ring worth ten points used for tie-breaking. No more than 12 shots should be allowed to be fired on a paper/card target before it is changed or repaired. The steel plates used for Falling Plate are the same size as the A-ring, and so score 10s (and rate as Xs). Special steel targets are used for the Speed Plates match. The B-18 target is similar to the Service Match Target and is used for the Combat match, which has not been widely shot in New Zealand.

### **Commands**

All stages start with “**Load and Make Ready**”; this is followed by “**Are you Ready?**” and then by “**Standby**”, and the time starts after this. In most NRA matches, the range is run “hot”, that is shooters reload after each segment, and guns are only cleared at the end of the entire match. The shooter is expected to reload and make ready after each series (until the last), and so after the first “**Load and Make Ready**” the Range Officer only gives the “**Are you Ready?**” and “**Standby**” commands.

At the change of targets in mid-match, the Range Officer will check that all pistols are holstered and not handled before giving the command “**Range is clear, change targets**”.

At the end of the match the command “**Unload and show clear**” is given, and the pistols are cleared, followed by “**Range is clear, change targets**”.

## Courses of Fire

Four events, the Barricade, Practical, Moving Target (modified), and Falling Plate make up the Bianchi Cup programme. Other events may be shot at a competition and Range Officers should make themselves familiar with the rules for any events to be controlled by them.

The four Bianchi events are quite different and illustrate the range of the NRA Action Pistol programme.

In the **Barricade Event** the shooter fires 6 shot strings alternately from each side of a barricade. Distances are 10, 15, 25 and 35 yards.

The **Practical Event** involves shooting at a pair of targets with first one round per target, then two rounds per target, then three rounds per target. Distances are from 10 to 50 yards.

The **Moving Target Event**, as the name suggests, is fired at a target which travels from side to side over 60 feet in 6 seconds. Distances are 10, 15, 20 and 25 yards. Six rounds are fired per pass at 10 and 15 yards, and 3 rounds per pass at 20 and 25 yards. A total of 12 rounds is fired at each distance.

The **Falling Plate Event** uses six steel plates 8 inches in diameter, which are shot at from 10, 15, 20 and 25 yards. Two series of six shots are fired at each distance.

These matches are shot in increasing times at the increasing distances. Apart from the Falling Plate match, these matches are fired at the NRA D-1 target.

## Rules, Procedures, and Penalties

Some points particular to NRA are:

- ◆ Only Holster Qualified shooters may draw from the holster in these matches, but non-qualified shooters may start from the 45° position, and are encouraged to use holsters for retention of the pistol between stages.
- ◆ Any number of shots may be loaded, but only six shots may be fired in one time series.
- ◆ Unless specified all shooting may be with the pistol held with one or both hands. Where shooting from the barricade is required actual firing of the pistol can be with either hand, and typically shooters hold the pistol to the barricade with the same hand as the side of the barricade, and fire with the other. ***This is different to Service Match***
- ◆ When shooting from the barricade the feet must be inside the box behind the barricade frame.
- ◆ The start position at the barricade is with the palms of both hands touching the face of the barricade. For all other matches the start position is with both hands above the shoulders.
- ◆ When shooting from the barricade, the muzzle shall be in front of the face of the barricade.
- ◆ Feet must be behind (not on) firing line at all distances. If the line is not clearly marked then you should stand at least 100 mm behind the obvious area.
- ◆ There is a 10-point penalty for violating any of the above rules, and for firing late shots or extra shots.
- ◆ Any shooting position may be adopted (i.e. standing, sitting, prone) provided the shooter can comply with any other match requirements.
- ◆ A sight picture can be taken at the start of each match and when changing shooting position during the match, with permission from the Range Officer.

Observers should be allocated to each shooter and their job is to note any breaches of safety or procedure. After each stage the Range Officer will ask for penalties and declare them after they have been noted down.

## Safety Violations

NRA recognises a difference between safety violations and disqualification violations. The DQ violations listed in Part I apply, but NRA regards some others as earning a safety violation, a second of which then results in disqualification.

## **MAIN POINTS for NRA ACTION PISTOL**

- BIANCHI CUP CONSISTS OF FOUR OF THE 15 NRA ACTION MATCHES.
- VIOLATIONS OF RULES INCUR PENALTIES
- NO MORE THAN 6 SHOTS FIRED AT A TIME
- EXCEPT WHEN SPECIFIED EITHER OR BOTH HANDS CAN BE USED.
- START POSITION EXCEPT BARRICADE IS HANDS ABOVE SHOULDERS
- NO MOVEMENT IS INVOLVED DURING STAGES
- DISTANCES ARE 50, 35, 25, 20, 15, 10 and 7 YARDS.

### **3. SPEED - (STEEL CHALLENGE)**

The World Speed Shooting Association devised a series of matches that involve firing at steel plates of different sizes and shapes arranged in set patterns. After some changes in the events, and arguments over the ownership of the name, the programme has settled down to a selection of stages each with five steel plate targets. Seven of these courses have been shot annually as the "Steel Challenge" and New Zealand has adopted the same seven matches as our National Speed Championships. It is relatively easy to develop variations, and the New Zealand Pistol Association Speed Shooting Rules list some 35 events.

#### **Pistols**

Any pistol can be used. Minimum calibre is 9mm.

#### **Holsters**

As per NZ standards, except that "breakfront" holsters (i.e. those with no front, and in which the pistol can be drawn straight through without lifting) are not allowed.

#### **Ammunition**

Does not have to meet any minimum power factor, but where *falling* plates are used (e.g. in the Action Challenge shootoff) they will be calibrated to "Minor" (Power factor of 125) – see IPSC.

#### **Ranges**

No special range requirements except that some matches have quite a wide field of fire, and so ranges will need adequate back and side stops. Distances are from 7 to 40 yards.

#### **Targets**

Only two type of steel plates are currently used; 10" or 12" diameter round plates and 18" x 24" rectangles. These are fixed to the top of wooden or steel posts, desirably in such a way that they are free to move and thus "ring" when hit. They are painted white for *each* shooter so ***the Range Officer can identify hits***. In the US fall-over plates have been adopted, but we have not yet followed suit.

## Commands

All stages start with **“Load and Make Ready”**; this is followed by **“Are you Ready?”** and then by **“Standby”**, and the timer starts after this. The shooter is expected to reload and make ready after each series (until the last) at each stage, and after the first **“Load and Make Ready”** the Range Officer only gives the **“Are you Ready?”** and **“Standby”** commands.

At the end of the stage the command **“Unload and show clear”** is given, and the pistol is cleared, followed by **“Range is clear, paint targets”**.

## Course of Fire

The aim of the matches is to hit all the plates in the correct sequence in the fastest possible time. Each stage is shot generally five times, the lowest four times being aggregated as the time for that stage. A competition consists of a number of stages, and the winner is the shooter with the lowest total time.

A target is either hit or missed, with time penalties for misses, and the only score recorded is the time. All mainstream matches use some combination of five plates, one of which is designated as the stop plate, and must be hit last.

The usual competition consists of seven stages, and each of these is set up on one range. The shooters move from one range to another, and shoot the stages in order.

## Rules, Procedures, and Penalties

Some points particular to Speed Shooting are:

- ◆ Sight pictures may be taken before each series.
- ◆ Any number of shots may be loaded.
- ◆ The start position is with both hands above the shoulders.
- ◆ “Creeping” or false starts are penalised with a five-second penalty.
- ◆ Feet must be behind (not on) firing line.
- ◆ All misses incur a five-second penalty (except for the Speed Option plate in this match)
- ◆ The stop plate must be hit last – if it is hit before any other plates are hit, they are regarded as misses.
- ◆ Failure to hit the stop plate will incur a 30 second penalty

## Safety Violations

Same as for NRA

## MAIN POINTS for SPEED SHOOTING

- ONLY STEEL TARGETS ARE USED.
- NO POWER FLOOR FOR AMMUNITION.
- VIOLATIONS OF RULES INCUR PENALTIES.
- ONLY ONE HIT IS REQUIRED PER TARGET.
- STOP PLATE MUST BE HIT LAST.
- START POSITION IS HANDS ABOVE SHOULDERS.

#### **4. PRACTICAL SHOOTING**

Practical shooting gives equal value to Accuracy, Power and Speed - “*Diligencia, Vis, Celeritas*” - DVC, the IPSC motto.

The matches are not fixed courses of fire, but are made up of a combination of segments or stages different for each competition. This makes Practical shooting more of a challenge for shooters and more interesting for Range Officers. For both groups the particular match cannot be learned or practised in advance, and so ROs must pay particular attention to learning the peculiarities of a stage that they are running, and be careful to provide consistent information to all shooters.

##### **Pistols**

There are now a number of recognised classes of pistols for these matches (see current rules for details)

- Open. This has virtually no limits on pistol design or capacity other than that it must be “safe and serviceable”, and allows the use of optical sights, compensators, and high capacity magazines.
- Modified. Any handgun that can fit in a box of 225 x 150 x 45 mm, with a magazine.
- Standard (also called in NZ and elsewhere, “Tactical” or “Limited”). This pistol must fit in the same box, and in addition must not have optical sights or a compensator and has a restricted number of modifications that can be made to a production pistol.
- Production. 9mm and unmodified
- Revolver

The Range Officer is not required to assess suitability for the Modified or Standard classes, but if there is doubt about eligibility, should refer the matter to the Match Director or Chief Range Officer.

##### **Holsters**

NZPA standards apply, and over-ride IPSC specifications. If a retention device is fitted it must be used throughout the match, even if it is not needed. Holsters must retain pistols during any movement required during a stage.

Holsters must keep the pistol butt within 50 mm of the body. For Standard, Production and Modified class matches, all equipment mounted on the belt (ie holster and pouches) must be behind the “forward prominent part of the pelvis bone”. This means behind the hip in practical terms. Range Officers **are** responsible for making sure that equipment is not adjusted subsequent to the initial inspection so that it does not then comply. Open and Revolver classes may have the holster in any safe position – *on the strong side only*.

##### **Magazines etc**

All magazines and other equipment required during a stage must be carried on the shooter’s person, but may be carried in a pocket.

##### **Ammunition and Power**

The third element of IPSC, Power, is called Power factor and is measured as for NRA by speed multiplied by velocity (here divided by 1000), but there are two levels. Minor (a typical 9mm load) at 125 for all classes is similar to that used in NRA and Service, but Major (a typical .45 acp load) at 160 for Open and 170 for the other classes requires heavier loads to achieve, and in general will make shooters go a little more slowly. Production class only has Minor. Use of Minor calibre reduces by one point the score for the target zones other than the centre, thus countering the supposed greater ease of shooting of the lighter loads.

In Standard and Modified classes Major Power Factor is defined as only being met by a minimum calibre of .40.

### **Ranges**

Because every match is different, it is impossible to define a range, and indeed stages will be designed to fit into existing ranges. However, because of movement and non-standard courses of fire, particular attention must be paid to ensuring that bullets or ricochets do not escape the confines of the range. Each stage should be inspected with this in mind before shooting commences, and Range Officers should remember this when doing their own walk-through.

***Range Officers are recommended to use a standard (written) briefing that covers special points of safety and procedure relevant to that stage, and which is given identically to all shooters.***

### **Commands**

All stages start with **“If you understand the course of fire, Load and Make Ready”**; this is followed by **“Are you Ready?”** and then by **“Standby”**. The timer is then started within a time from about 2 to 5 seconds. When the Range Officer considers that the shooter has finished shooting he/she gives the command **“If you have finished, Unload and Show Clear”**. Normally it will be quite clear that the shooter has finished, but the “If you have finished” precludes any attempt by a shooter who has inadvertently not finished from claiming that the Range Officer told him/her to stop. When the Range Officer has satisfied him/herself that the pistol contains no ammunition he/she gives the command **“Gun Clear, Hammer Down, Holster”**.

### **Courses of Fire**

As befits the title of Practical, matches are not shot to fixed and predetermined rules and courses of fire (called “stages”). A competition will consist of a number of individual stages put together by the organisers in a sequence unique to that venue, and this particular format will possibly never be used again. Though the programme should be known to shooters before they actually compete, they will not generally have been able to practice it.

There are three basic types of stage.

- **Standards** are often to fixed times, and at an array of targets which is difficult enough to require careful shooting.
- **Speed** shoots usually have a small number of targets, and are probably fired from one position, without movement.
- **Field** courses may involve large numbers of targets, and many rounds of ammunition, and shooting from many different firing positions. Targets of card or steel can be arranged in an endless variety of ways.

**Scoring** is done by dividing the target score by the time. In general, scoring is normally done on a computer, using a programme designed specifically for the purpose, but Range Officers should be aware of the three basic methods of scoring:

- Fixed Time – fixed number of shots; only hits and penalties recorded
- Virginia Count – fixed number of shots; time, hits and penalties recorded
- Comstock Count – any number of shots; time, best (two) hits, penalties recorded.

See Part 1 for details of how to record scores. This can be more difficult to do properly in IPSC, because of the non-standard score-sheets, which are different for each stage although similar in lay-out. As for the Range Officer, it is useful if the same person does the scoring for all shooters on a stage.

### Rules, Procedures, and Penalties

Some points particular to IPSC are:

- ◆ Only Holster Qualified shooters may shoot all IPSC stages from any position, but non-qualified shooters may shoot most stages from the 45° position, subject to the restrictions shown in Section 7, Part I.
- ◆ Any number of shots may be loaded.
- ◆ The usual start position is with hands relaxed by the sides, but any safe position may be specified in the stage instructions, and the Range Officer will enforce adoption of the correct position.
- ◆ In fixed time and Virginia Count stages only the allowed number of shots can be fired.
- ◆ When shooting from shooting boxes the feet must be inside (or on, but not touching the ground outside) the sides of the box.
- ◆ Feet must be behind (not on) charge lines.
- ◆ Failure to engage any target with at least one round is a procedural error.
- ◆ However, missing or not engaging a disappearing target is not penalised.
- ◆ Failure to complete the course of fire at the competitor's choice is called DNF (did not finish) and receives zero score for that stage.
- ◆ There are procedural penalties of 10 points for violating any of the stage instructions, or committing procedural errors.
- ◆ Except that if when is deemed that a competitive advantage had been gained by the rule violation, then the 10-point penalty will be imposed *per shot*.
- ◆ Any shooting position may be adopted (i.e. standing, sitting, prone) provided the shooter can comply with any match requirements.
- ◆ Sight picture may not be taken at any time during the stage, but a non-sighting check may be made that a sight is switched on

### Safety Violations

*In IPSC all safety violations incur disqualification.*

### MAIN POINTS for PRACTICAL PISTOL

- CARDBOARD AND STEEL TARGETS ARE USED.
- POWER FLOOR FOR AMMUNITION DEPENDS ON CLASS.
- VIOLATIONS OF RULES INCUR PENALTIES.
- SAFETY VIOLATIONS ALL INCUR DISQUALIFICATION
- STAGES ARE NON-STANDARD AND VARY IN SCOPE AND NUMBER OF SHOTS
- START POSITION AND METHOD IS SPECIFIED BY THE RO.
- MOVEMENT MAY BE INVOLVED DURING A STAGE.

### 5. BOWLING PINS

The manufacturer of a brand of body armour designed a match called the “Second Chance” after his/her product, which involved the use of used ten-pin alley bowling pins as targets. This became an annual event, and has also been shot in New Zealand for many years as an annual (or

more often) fun match. In fact it was one of the earliest “action” matches shot here, because it does not involve drawing from the holster.

There were originally several “standard” matches, and variants to these have been developed as time has passed, but the original few matches are usually shot.

In general this match poses no great problems for shooters or Range Officers, except that you need to watch out for enthusiasm overcoming safety, as in other action matches.

***Shooters who do not shoot Action Matches regularly, but participate in Bowling Pin matches need special attention by Range Officers.***

#### **General**

General rules are that the matches are all shot from the 45° ready position, and so may be shot by non-holster-qualified people. Other than this, pistols are normally carried in a holster, and all normal action match safety standards and rules have to be followed (and normal penalties are incurred by unsafe behaviour). Normal action Range Commands are used.

#### **Pistols**

Most of the matches involve knocking the bowling pins off a table or at least over, and so need heavy loads. They also frequently involve firing large amounts of ammunition with reloads, and so Range Officers do have to be alert for carelessness.

#### **Competitions**

A competition normally consists of a number of stages, which the shooters go round in squads. Stages usually involve knocking down the standing pins in as short a time as possible, and these times are aggregated through the competition. The winner (or winners if a team event, and is now common), have the shortest total time.

A description of one of the remaining original “standard” matches, which is usually shot, will give an idea of this type of match.

**Power Alley.** Five pins are stood at the front edge of a steel or steel protected table four feet deep by eight feet wide and 24 feet from the shooter. The shooter loads six rounds only and at the signal fires at the pins. The time ends when all the pins have been knocked off the table, or 30 seconds, whichever comes first. Any number of reloads is allowed. Usually three runs are allowed and the time aggregated of the best two.

Variants on this are more pins, teams of shooters, and different number of runs.

Bowling pin matches can also be shot with a shotgun or rifle.

## **6. COWBOY ACTION SHOOTING**

Cowboy Action Shooting is a form of Action shooting which generally follows IPSC principles. Firearms used are single action pistols, double-barrelled shotguns, and lever action or single shot rifles. The stages are designed to be suitable for these firearms. This has a separate CRO manual and exam.

### ***NZPA Club Action Range Officers Course v 1.1 July2001***

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