

RANGE ORIENTATION

Introduction: The goal of this information sheet is to explain the matches sponsored by the South East Idaho Practical Shooters (SEIPS), and the processes invoked during those matches. It is hoped that the new shooter will be better informed, and therefore more comfortable at those matches.

1. BASIC SAFETY

All shooters understand that Safety is the prime priority of all shooting sports. It is also stating the obvious that guns and alcohol/drugs do not mix, and not allowed at the range. One should consider the effect of prescription drugs on awareness/alertness also. The universal shooting safety rules apply, including the mandatory use of hearing and eye protection in the shooting bays. The 180 degree rule (not allowing the muzzle to break the 180 degree plane) should always be followed, and one needs to be aware of the vertical plane as well as the horizontal sweep. Be alert to down range hazards, as occasionally hikers, horse back riders, and/or ATV's may suddenly present. If seen, stop shooting and immediately notify the other shooters of the hazard.

If a gun is dropped on the range, it must be cleared by the Range Officer (RO). If the gun is loaded, this will result in disqualification (DQ) for that match. If the gun is empty, the RO will check the shooter's equipment to determine if an adjustment is in order. Please do not pick up a dropped handgun under any circumstances.!

2. PRESENTATION TO THE RANGE

The SEIPS range is a "cold range," meaning that no loaded guns should be brought onto the property, and guns are to be carried in a safe condition-empty chambers/no magazine in gun, hammer down or striker decocked. The Safe Area (located to the east of the parking lot) is the location where guns are uncased, holsters attached to belts, and guns holstered. To ensure safety, no ammunition may be handled in the Safe Area. This includes dummy ammunition, snap caps and empty cases. Although ammunition can be handled anywhere else on the range, the bays or covered shelters are areas where the loading of magazines, moon clips/speed loaders is usually performed. Guns are not loaded until the shooter is at the Firing Line of the Stage and only under the direct supervision of the Range Officer.

If you arrive at the SEIPS range with a loaded handgun on your person, an unload station is provided just inside the range entrance. Please carefully unload your handgun within the confines of the protective berm. The unload station is clearly marked. Proceeding beyond this point with a loaded firearm will be grounds for a match DQ.

3. REGISTRATION FOR MATCH

Registration occurs in the sheltered areas. Match fees are paid here (the first shoot is free, see SEIPS Rules). The match sheets for each stage must be completed. Name, Division of competition, and Power Category are completed for each stage, with one stage on each side of a sheet.

4. MATCH CATEGORIES

Matches are categorized by the rules of the organization under which the stages are designed. Those organizations are: United States Practical Shooters Association (USPSA), International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA), and the International Confederation of Revolver Enthusiasts (ICORE). These are the organizations for the tactical pistol shooting sports. The cowboy action shooters' organizations are the Cowboy Action Shooters (CAS) and the Single Action Shooters Society (SASS). SEIPS also has "fun" shoots in the form of plate matches in which steel plates are shot at varying distances with fixed times for each stage. It should be noted that the rules of the International Practical Shooters Confederation (IPSC) are almost identical to those of the USPSA, and the subtle differences are not a consideration for SEIPS matches.

5. MATCH DEFINITIONS

Each bay has a Stage set up in it. The Stage has a defined Course of Fire (CoF), or rules for engaging the targets. A String is a CoF within a stage, with a time and score for the targets engaged (e.g., strong hand String, weak hand String). If the of the match is under USPSA rules, the CoF may require Comstock or Virginia count, which is the way the number of shots allowed for each target is conveyed. Comstock Count allows for unlimited number of shots, but a required number of hits per target. If steel targets are in the mix, the CoF is Comstock. Virginia count requires a limited number of shots with a required number of hits per target.

If the match is under IDPA rules, the number of shots allowed is defined by the terms Vickers and Modified Vickers Count. Vickers Count allows for unlimited number of shots, but required number of hits/target, and Modified Vickers requires limited number of shots with a required number of hits/target.

Some Stages at a match may be identified as Classifiers. This means the CoF is a standard course, defined by the rules organization under which the match is being held. It allows for a shooter to benchmark him/her self compared to others who belong to the organization and shooting the same CoF.

6. SHOOTING THE STAGE

After the shooter takes his place at the Firing Line, he will hear the RO issue the commands describing the subsequent actions to be taken. The shooter may ask any questions about the CoF at this time. With "Load and Make Ready," the shooter will load a magazine in his pistol and chamber a round, or load the cylinders of his revolver, then holster the gun. With "Shooter Ready?" the shooter will assume the posture defined by the Stage (hands at side, "surrender position," etc.), and inform the RO he is ready. The RO will then call out "Standby" and within 5 seconds the start beep will be heard and the shooter will engage the targets. After the last target is engaged, the RO will state "If finished, unload and show clear." The shooter will then empty the gun by dropping the

magazine and ejecting the round in the chamber, visually checking the chamber, or emptying the cartridges from the cylinder. The gun should then be held so the RO may see the chamber is empty. “Hammer down and Holster” should result in the shooter pointing the gun down range and pulling the trigger on the empty chamber, then holstering the (proven) safe condition gun. “Range is clear” lets other shooting squad members know the Stage is safe.

Other warnings/safety commands which the RO may find necessary to state during the CoF must be immediately followed by the shooter. “Finger” means the finger should not be on the trigger, usually issued when the shooter is touching the trigger when an unsafe discharge may occur, such as moving between (target) arrays. “Muzzle” is the warning issue issued if the muzzle is pointed in an unsafe direction, usually violating the 180 rule. “Stop” or “Halt” are obvious commands, and must be followed immediately, before firing another round.

When not engaged in shooting, it is expected that match participants will help at the stage by taping targets, resetting steel targets, and picking up brass generated by the shooter at the line.

7. SCORING

Scoring considers the power factor of the rounds fired. See Appendix A for the definition of power factor, and the explanation of the shooting divisions. In USPSA the target zones are alpha designated. An “A” zone hit is worth 5 points, regardless of power factor. B/C zones are with 4 points for major, 3 points for minor. “D” hits are 2 points major and 1 point minor.

For IDPA scoring, the targets have 3 numeric zones which define penalty seconds for hits other than center of mass. The “0” zone obviously has no penalties. The other zones result in penalty seconds equal to the designation.

ICORE scoring mirrors IDPA.

It should be noted that there are “Procedural Penalties” which can result in alteration of the shooters score. Examples of USPSA penalties include a Foot Fault (stepping outside the a designated Shooting Box while engaging a target) and a Failure to Engage (not identifying and putting shots on a target). Examples of IDPA penalties include Failure to Neutralize and Failure to Retain Magazine. For more complete understanding of the rules of each organization, one can find them on their web page.

Scores from each Match are posted on the SEIPS web page within a few days after the shoot.

8. MATCH DISQUALIFICATION

Match disqualification will result if a shooter violates shooting safety and/or (potentially) endangers other Match participants. Examples of such actions include unsafe gun handling, breaking the 180 rule, accidental discharge within 3 meters (10 feet) of the Firing Line, shots going over the berm, firing while moving without engaging a specific target, and unsportsmanlike conduct.

9. RANGE MANNERS WHEN USING THE RANGE FOR PRACTICE SESSIONS

Only paper targets or the steel targets present in the bays should be used for targets. Only the steel targets in place on the rifle range should be engaged with rifle rounds. No glass or other garbage should be brought on the range to shoot. Other generated waste, e.g. cups, wrappers, cigar/cigarette butts, etc. must be placed in the garbage barrels. Respect for other shooters also using the range should always be demonstrated.

Please pick up after you are done. This includes moving any props or targets, target stands, and other items used during practice to the front of the bays.

10. RESOURCES

For further information, each of the sanctioning organizations have web pages with more comprehensive information. In addition to the complete rules, the membership process and other helpful information resides on those pages. The SEIPS home page has much valuable information, including the clubs by-laws, with which every member is expected to be familiar.