

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE UNITED STATES PRACTICAL SHOOTING ASSOCIATION



# USPSA

2019 ANNUAL vol. 36 | no. 1A

2019 ANNUAL ISSUE



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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF  
THE UNITED STATES PRACTICAL SHOOTING ASSOCIATION / IPSC

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Vol. 36, No. 1A, Annual 2019 Issue  
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**USPSA (ISSN 26375443)** is published bi-monthly  
for USPSA members by: USPSA/IPSC Inc., 1639  
Lindamood Lane, Burlington, WA 98233.

Annual Membership dues (U.S. and its  
possessions) \$40, Foreign \$50. \$18 of dues  
goes toward a one year subscription to USPSA.

Periodicals postage paid at Burlington, WA,  
and additional mailing offices.

**POSTMASTER:** Send change of address  
forms to: USPSA, 1639 Lindamood Lane,  
Burlington, WA 98233

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# INSIDE USPSA

By Mike Foley, RD6 USPSA President  
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## INTERESTED IN USPSA SHOOTING?

**W**elcome to the most fun you can have with firearms! Inside this Annual Issue, our welcoming publication for new members, you will find everything you need to know to get started competing in USPSA! Our sport was born in 1976 from a collection of combat shooting matches around the world. Today we are approximately 32,500 members strong in the US alone! We have over 600 affiliated clubs where you can test your skill on an unlimited number of courses of fire with many different types of guns in our 8 USPSA sports divisions, our USPSA multi-gun divisions, and Steel Challenge. We have the fastest and safest shooting sport in the world, with something for everyone. One thing that sets us apart from the others is our classification system. You can see where you rank among the best shooters in the world, and track your own improvement as you progress through the system. Again, welcome to USPSA.

### USPSA MOBILE APP

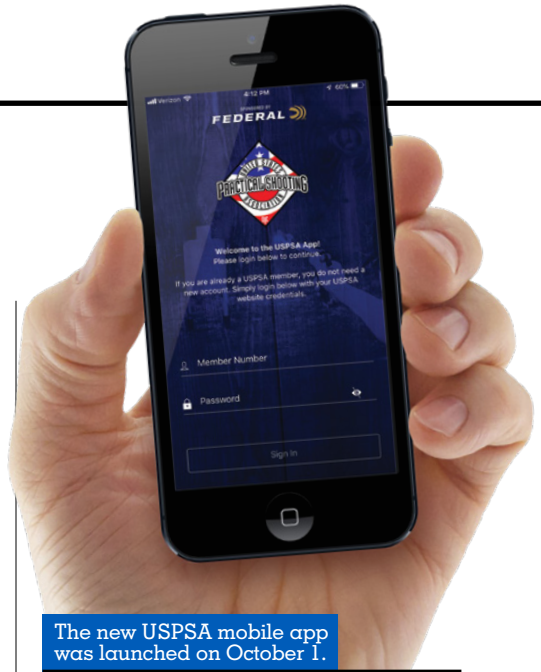
USPSA launched the new USPSA Mobile App in October of 2018. Designed for use by USPSA competitors, the USPSA Mobile App includes a member classification and classifier lookup, classifier calculator, classifier stage diagrams, a club finder, a match finder, match results and analytics, rule book, a membership card, and a contact form. Members may choose which features they want to use online and offline. The USPSA Mobile App is available from the Apple, Android, and Amazon App stores. There is no cost to download the USPSA App, it is FREE, but only current USPSA members are able to log into it. A separate mobile app is in development for USPSA's Steel Challenge Shooting Association; the Steel Challenge App will be released later in 2019.

### HOW DO YOU STAY INFORMED ABOUT USPSA AND STEEL CHALLENGE?

USPSA's recent success, and information about what is going on in the organization, is certainly no secret. My team and I are more visible and transparent than any USPSA leadership has ever been.

Here are seven tips to keep up with what is going on:

1. Get the USPSA Mobile App – This great new tool has a lot of information you need on the field of play and when discussing the game with your friends.
2. Subscribe to bi-monthly *USPSA Magazine* online and/or in print – Formerly *Front Sight*, the magazine is available to all current members. If you haven't read it, or haven't read it in a while,



The new USPSA mobile app was launched on October 1.

you are missing some great content. It isn't just about match articles anymore.

3. Subscribe to the weekly USPSA Downrange email newsletter – Every week, USPSA sends information about USPSA and other great content to over 50,000 email addresses.
4. Visit the USPSA and SCSA webpages at [USPSA.org](http://USPSA.org) and [steelchallenge.com](http://steelchallenge.com) – The website is a great place to keep up on announcements, minutes from all Board meetings, and other resources you need as a member, competitor, range officer, or match director. There are also preferred vendors here who offer promotions to USPSA members.
5. Visit the USPSA Facebook page – With original and shared content daily, the USPSA Facebook page is a great way to connect with the USPSA/SCSA community and stay informed.
6. Visit the USPSA Instagram page – USPSA's Instagram page is also a great way to see videos and promotions all about USPSA and Steel Challenge.
7. Update your email address in your profile – USPSA sends direct email to all 32,500 members from time to time. While we don't use this as often, we do send im-

portant information to all members, and other messages targeted to range officers or Steel Challenge competitors. We won't send you any spam.

With all these great ways to stay informed, there is no need to rely on rumors and second-hand information. If you get left behind, it isn't because information isn't available, it is because you have chosen not to stay connected.

Hope to see you on the range,

Mike Foley,  
USPSA President

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# SPEED, POWER, & ACCURACY

**B**lend those three elements, and you have got the most dynamic shooting sport ever devised – USPSA! Practical shooting was established as IPSC in 1976 to organize the various independent efforts to build shooting skills and train for self-defense. The early days of the sport can be traced back to the 1950’s, with the quick-draw “leather slap” matches popular in the desert southwest. USPSA was incorporated in 1983, and has grown to over 32,500 members in 2018.

Early practical shooting challenged the standards of technique, training practices, and equipment. IPSC pioneers developed scenario-based competitions to accurately measure the effectiveness of their own shooting techniques and equipment. The rapid, shooting-on-the-move stages gave birth to the term “run and gun” so commonly used to describe the sport today.

In keeping with its roots, USPSA strives to offer divisions that use state-of-the-art firearms and support equipment. Everything from revolvers to the classic 1911

auto pistol, modern service pistols, custom race guns, rifles, shotguns, and carbines can be found in the hands of USPSA competitors.

## SCORING

USPSA shooting revolves around a “points per second” concept called “hit factor.” To get a hit factor, we take into account three factors: *Speed, Power, and Accuracy.*

Each competitor shoots the course of fire against the clock. When finished, the range officers record the shooter’s time



Photo by Jake Martens. Frank Winn

## SCORING

USPSA shooting revolves around a "points per second" concept called "Hit Factor". Here is how to determine your Hit Factor in competition.



$$\text{Hit Factor} = \text{Points} \div \text{Time}$$

example:

$$20 \text{ points} / 10 \text{ seconds} = 2.0 \text{ Hit Factor}$$

(speed), and record where the shots impacted on the targets (accuracy). Penalties are recorded and points are assigned to the hits based on your ammunition. (.40 S&W and larger scores as "major," 9mm, .38 Special, and some light .40 S&W loads score as "minor.") The resulting point total is divided by the time, and voila! We have a points per second score, or "hit factor."

Most local club matches involve from four to six courses of fire called "stages," and a shooter will end up with a separate "hit factor" for each one.

Scoring officials will later compare the hit factors on each course, and give the maximum points to the shooter with the highest "hit factor." Other shooters are awarded points based on how their hit factor compares to the highest one. (90 percent of the top hit factor earns 90 percent of the points, for example.) All the points for each stage are added up, and the shooter with the most total "match points" wins!

The math sounds more complicated than it really is, but there are scoring programs available to help keep it all straight.

## DON'T MISS!

While it may sound like speed is everything, USPSA shooters' favorite cliché declares: "You can't miss fast enough to win."

Should you leave a miss, or hit a penalty target, you will lose points rapidly. An "A" hit on the target (we score A, B/C, D) earns 5 points. For each MISS, you will be penalized 10 points. So not only do you not get the 5 points possible, you LOSE a further 10. Hits on penalty targets are



Rory Wilson

Photo by Jake Martens.



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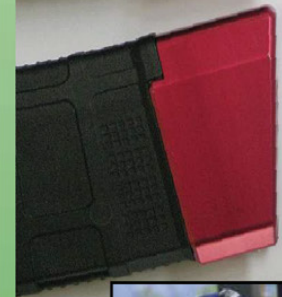
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Photo by Carol Bryant. Lena Miculek

worth a further 10-point penalty. Do the math, and you will see that the need for accuracy in USPSA shooting is very real.

## MUCH MORE THAN "SHOOTING"

USPSA competition involves more than just "shooting." Shooters are required to draw, move, reload, negotiate obstacles, analyze the course AND shoot. The timer doesn't stop until you've finished doing all those things, AND fired your last shot. If your gun malfunctions, it's up to you to fix it safely — and fast. If you need to reload, same problem. There are no breaks or "alibis" for anything short of range equipment failure and safety. USPSA competition stresses gun handling just as heavily as it stresses shooting, and our courses will force you to do a lot of it. It's thrilling, and something we're sure you'll enjoy.

## WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?

USPSA shooters are sticklers for safety — much more so than in many other shooting sports. For example, when you attend a match and aren't either shooting, or working on your pistol in the "safety area," your pistol must remain in the holster, unloaded, the entire time. Breaking this rule leads to immediate disqualification. Pointing a firearm (empty or not) at yourself, at another person, or anywhere uprange of the firing line also leads to immediate disqualification, and two range officers watch you as you shoot. The same applies to a half-dozen other safety rules, all of which work in concert to give USPSA its exemplary safety record.

As a rule, USPSA shooters are intolerant of unsafe gun handling — they expect to be able to compete in a safe

environment, and sloppy gun handling puts everyone at risk.

That said, don't worry about getting disqualified. Before you shoot your first match, the host club will show you the ropes. They'll run you through a "safety orientation" or "safety check" to acquaint you with their range and all the necessary rules, check your gear, and walk you through some shooting exercises. We all want you to succeed, and to have a good time doing it.

To find a club near you, go to the USPSA website ([www.USPSA.org](http://www.USPSA.org)), or give us a call here in Burlington, WA, at (360) 855-2245. We'll be happy to put you together with a handful of local club contacts. We currently have over 600 affiliated clubs across the United States, and in several countries around the world. ■

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# INSIDE NROI

By Troy McManus, NROI DIRECTOR  
dnroi@uspsa.org

## LEARNING THE RULES



Range Officer Larry Nelson and James DeLambert

USPSA matches challenge you mentally and physically. Figuring the fastest, easiest way to complete a course is a big part of the game.

**R**ules are the backbone of any game, and as Director of the National Range Officer Institute (NROI), it's my job to interpret those rules for USPSA, and to assist in the training of range officers at all levels.

Since this article is limited for space, I can't discuss many details of our rules here, but I will mention that the majority of them deal with safety on the range. USPSA is a dynamic sport that requires competitors to use full power handguns (and rifles and shotguns at times), to solve a competitive shooting problem under the clock. Movement is often required, as is reloading your gun on the move, so safe

gun handling skills are paramount.

The National Range Officer Institute trains and certifies range officers for USPSA sanctioned events. NROI-certified range officers will be seen in uniform at the larger Area- and National-level events,



### SAFE GUN HANDLING | THE 4 RULES TO REMEMBER

Most of our safety rules are derived from **4 basic rules** of safe gun handling:

- ▶ Treat every gun as if it were loaded.
- ▶ Never point your muzzle at anything you are not willing to destroy.
- ▶ Keep your finger off the trigger until you are ready to shoot.
- ▶ Be sure of your target and what's behind it.

### HIERARCHY OF OFFICIALS

USPSA's volunteer officials come in several flavors, all of which are trained and certified by NROI.

#### 1. RANGE OFFICERS

Certified by NROI, Range Officers perform most of the "refereeing" seen at a USPSA match. They carry the timer, check equipment, score targets, and help make sure the competitor plays in a safe manner.

#### 2. CHIEF RANGE OFFICERS

CROs are the Sergeants of the Range Officer corps. They have supplemental training in course design and range operations. They normally serve as the chief range officer on a stage, overseeing the activities of the range officers under them.

#### 3. RANGE MASTERS

Have extensive supplemental training in range operations, arbitrations, staff management, squadding, and the various fine points of the rules. RM candidates are assigned a mentor, and over the course of a year they will complete an extensive program of correspondence and on-the-job training.

RMs oversee the officials at major matches. The nationals, for example, employ two — each assigned to one half of the match.

#### 4. RANGE MASTER INSTRUCTOR

The top of the RO hierarchy, the RMIs travel the United States to instruct range officers and certified range officers, and also mentor Range Master Candidates.

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safely assisting competitors in their endeavors. The entire RO cadre also competes actively but at times they put aside their guns to help run events. The range officer corps forms the backbone of the volunteer infrastructure at a great many clubs, where you will see them competing and officiating at the same event. The best ones are often asked to travel to major events, and our people are frequently tapped by IROA, the International Range Officer Associa-



tion, to officiate at major matches worldwide (including the world championship matches held every three years). NROI certification carries a certain cachet within the USPSA/IPSC world, particularly if the RO develops a reputation for being calm, knowledgeable, and fair.

To become a range officer, we ask that you compete actively in USPSA matches for a period of time, enough to get comfortable with the basics of the sport and its terms. Prospective ROs then attend a level 1 certification class (usually over a weekend) where they are taught the nuts and bolts of being an official, and are tested on their knowledge of the rules. CRO or Chief Range Officer status can be gained by attending a level 2 seminar at a later date, and all officials at all levels are tested on the rules annually.

**MULTIGUN CERTIFICATION**

If your interest lies in the complex world of Multigun, don't despair. The MG rules have recently been revised, and NROI has the means to certify range officials in this fast-growing aspect of our sport. If you already hold a certification, (RO, CRO, RM), inquire about getting your Multigun endorsement. If you are coordinating

a seminar, and Multigun is an interest in your area, ask about adding the multigun module into the seminar.

**RESPECT AND PROFESSIONALISM**

Overall, USPSA's officials are some of the most highly-respected in the shooting sports, and because of this are often sought out to help orchestrate non-USPSA events.

Their success, diligence, and professionalism as officials are a major part of what makes USPSA one of the safest, most professional shooting sports available anywhere.

USPSA sends a copy of the rulebook to all new members, or it can be purchased for a nominal fee from USPSA. The rulebook can also be downloaded from the USPSA web page, [www.uspsa.org](http://www.uspsa.org).

I encourage you to take a look at the rules if you are interested in playing our game, and ask questions of Range Officials whenever you need additional help.

Taking a level one seminar will not only help you become a certified Range Officer, it will help you be a better competitor, knowledgeable in our rules, and more aware of the safety aspects of our game.

We look forward to showing you what we mean! Come and see us in action at a local match, and remember, shoot safe! ■

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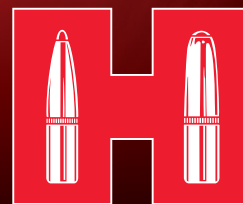
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# ASSOCIATION OF CLUBS

**I**f you're considering taking a closer look at USPSA competition, I can't urge you strongly enough to contact a local club representative and spend time on the range. They can show you and tell you more in half an hour at a match than we can tell you in this entire publication.

USPSA competition is marvelously diverse, with many subtleties that a local person can show you fairly easily. USPSA shooters are a very friendly bunch, willing and eager to help out the new shooters, so don't be bashful about asking questions.

## AN ASSOCIATION OF CLUBS

USPSA is an "association" of independent clubs as well as individuals. They all use the same rule book, but the clubs themselves are groups of local volunteers who like to shoot.

Each affiliated club has a slate of officers, and they typically appoint a contact person or two to welcome newcomers.

It's the volunteers in the clubs who make it all happen, and that's why we put such an emphasis on getting people connected with a good club near them. To find a club near you, go to [www.uspsa.org](http://www.uspsa.org) and you will see the "Find a Club" Map. Click on the state you are interested in and you can enter your address, ZIP code, county or city in the box and the club finder will show you the affiliated clubs near you. The club's contact information and Club Contact will be listed.

Currently we have some 440 clubs formally affiliated with USPSA. Together,

they offer the level playing field that USPSA shooters value so much — one that allows for fair competition throughout our national ladder.

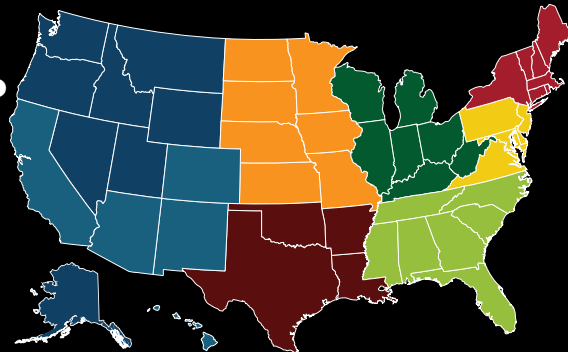
## USPSA STRUCTURE

Affiliated clubs are typically grouped into what we call "sections." Each section has a "section coordinator" who helps orchestrate things like section championships and such joint club activities as staffing booths at local gun shows. If you asked for information from us, you should find a list of section coordinators in the packet we sent you. They can easily explain the local match schedule, and will likely invite you to attend a match with them or put you in touch with a club near you.

The various sections are grouped into multi-state "Areas" numbered 1 through 8. For example, the New Mexico and Arizona

### USPSA AREA MAP WHAT AREA ARE YOU IN?

- AREA 1
- AREA 2
- AREA 3
- AREA 4
- AREA 5
- AREA 6
- AREA 7
- AREA 8





sections are part of Area 2, while Indiana, Illinois and Ohio sections are part of Area 5.

Every three years on a rotating basis, members of the various Areas elect an Area Director who sits on the board of directors for USPSA. They are the ones who orchestrate the Area-level championships and vote on USPSA's major policy decisions.

The Board of Directors is made up of each of the eight Area Directors and the President. The President of USPSA is elected to a four-year term by the members of the organization. It is the president's responsibility, with the help of the home office and remote staff, to orchestrate the national championship. Along with the small office staff, USPSA employees include a Director of Operations & Finance, a Director of the National Range Officer Institute, a Director of Media and Events, and a Director of Information Technology.

Local volunteers are the engine that makes USPSA shooting happen, and when you start shooting, you will be expected to help out. All of our matches, including the national championships, are run by volunteers. Our volunteers are the backbone of this organization; without them (particularly the officials, the ones who run the registration, who mentor new shooters, who check on range safety and who do the stats) there would be no matches, no competition – and no fun! ■

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Nick Amadio



Photo by Jake Martens.



# FOCUS ON: DIVISIONS

WHICH **GUNS** DO WE SHOOT, AND WHY?

BY TROY McMANUS

**U**SPSA shooting represents the most demanding form of **PRACTICAL** pistol competition on the planet. Manufacturers know that if their products fare well here, people notice. Problems with their designs will be exposed, studied, and repaired. If a particular firearm earns a good reputation in our sport, that opinion gets carried home by the many trainers, buyers, and officers who compete at all levels of our sport.

But what division should YOU compete in? The reasons why people pick one division over another relate to why they shoot pistols in the first place. Some are polishing their shooting skills because they might need them for self-defense. Others thrive in divisions that encourage tinkering with the guns. Still others are focused on the experience, and learn to shoot each style of pistol in turn.

As I've often told shooters who call USPSA looking for advice, the best gun to use

at your first match is the gun you already have. Unless your pistol looks like it would be at home on a Western movie set, forget about new equipment until you've got an idea how the game is played. Many of the world's top pro shooters focus on Production Division, one of the least-fancy, least expensive divisions, while others shoot space-age guns that look like race cars with a scope. The division for you is the one that puts a smile on your face — there really isn't a "best gun" for USPSA.

People choose one style over the other because they get more enjoyment out of doing it, and shooting USPSA-style is all about fun with your gun.

## ■ PRODUCTION DIVISION

Production division is limited to the use of production handguns with double- or safe-action triggers, and nicely accommodates owners of double-action 9mm or .40 S&W firearms. CZ's are popular, as are Tanfoglios, Glocks, SIGs, Walthers and a

host of others. Stock revolvers may also be used, including 8-shot versions.

As you might imagine, the Production title has a lot of marketing cachet, so you'll see many of the World's top shooters shooting Production on behalf of corporate sponsors.

Other shooting sports, such as the International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA) have similar divisions called "Stock Service Pistol", or something similar. Many shooters compete in a USPSA match one weekend, an IDPA match the next, and other shooting sports throughout the year.

Shooters are allowed to change sights, modify the grip, tune internal parts and exchange small parts like triggers, hammers, magazine release and slide stops; slide modifications other than milling for sight installation are prohibited. (The Production Division Appendix became effective May 16th, 2018).

Shooters may only load 10 rounds into

# THE DIVISIONS

## PRODUCTION DIVISION

- Striker fired or double-action firearms that appear on the "approved list." (See [uspsa.org](http://uspsa.org).)
- Shooters may modify the grip, exchange small external parts like triggers, hammers, slide stops, sights and magazine release as well as tune the internal parts of the gun.
- Max 10 rounds in the magazine
- All guns scored "Minor" (like a 9mm) – no matter how powerful the load actually used.
- Holsters and equipment must be "non-race-type" and be worn behind the hip

## SINGLE STACK 1911 DIVISION

- Single-stack Government model pistols are the only guns allowed.
- Standard-capacity magazines only (8 rounds for "major calibers, 10 rounds for "minor").
- Holsters and equipment must be "non-race-type" and be worn behind the hip.
- Shooters may change the sights, add skate tape, and tune the internal parts of the gun.
- Shooters may change grips, slide stops, magazine releases, mainspring housings, triggers, etc.
- No optics, no porting, no compensators, or "devices to control recoil," such as weights.
- Guns can be scored "minor" (9mm and light .40) or "major" (full-power .40 and larger).

## LIMITED 10 DIVISION

- Single-action autoloaders
- Max 10 rounds in magazine
- Shooters may change the sights, add skate tape, and tune the internal parts of the gun.
- Shooters may change grips, slide stops, magazine releases, mainspring housings, triggers, etc.
- No optics, no porting, no compensators, or "devices to control recoil," such as weights.
- Guns can be scored "minor" (9mm, and light .40) or "major" (full-power .40 and larger).

## LIMITED DIVISION

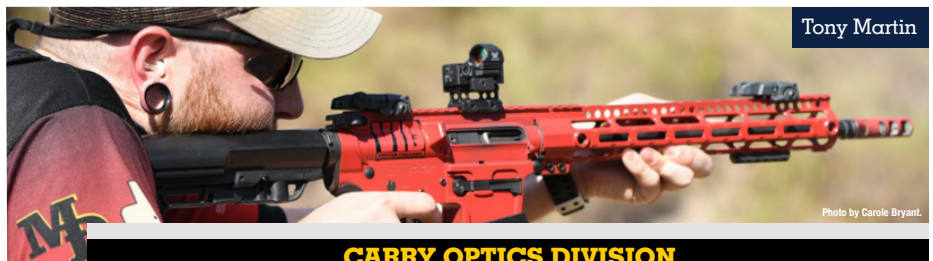
- Same as "Limited 10" except high-capacity magazines up to 140mm overall may be used (170mm for single-stack guns).
- Any gun without a compensator or optic sights fits this division; DA and Safe Action guns, along with Single Action autoloaders.
- Shooters may change the sights, add skate tape, and tune the internal parts of the gun.
- Shooters may change grips, slide stops, magazine releases, mainspring housings, triggers, etc.
- No optics, no porting, no compensators.
- Guns can be scored "minor" (9mm, and light .40) or "major" (full-power .40 and larger).

## REVOLVER DIVISION

- Eight rounds (only) between reloads for "minor", six rounds (only) between reloads for "major".
- No optical sights, porting, or recoil compensation.
- May change grips, enlarge the cylinder release, change sights, chamfer cylinders, and tune the action.
- May score "major" using any bullet .355" or larger.

## OPEN DIVISION

- High-capacity magazines no longer than 170mm overall
- Optics allowed
- "Devices to control recoil" allowed.
- Guns may score "major" with any bullet .355" or larger.



Tony Martin

Photo by Carole Bryant.

## CARRY OPTICS DIVISION

- Striker fired or double-action firearms that appear on the "Production Approved List." (See [uspsa.org](http://uspsa.org).)
- Optical/electronic sights REQUIRED; must be attached directly to slide between rear of slide and ejection port
- A slide may be modified for installing optical sights. Milling or stippling on the slide to provide texture is also allowed, cuts designed to lighten the slide, such as holes, are allowed.
- Shooters may modify the grip, exchange small external parts like triggers, hammers, slide stops and magazine release as well as tune the internal parts of the gun.
- Maximum weight of firearm with unloaded magazine measuring no more than 141.25mm is 45oz
- All guns scored "Minor" (like a 9mm) – no matter how powerful the load actually used.
- Holsters and equipment must be "non-race-type" and be worn behind the hip.

## PISTOL CALIBER CARBINE DIVISION

- Pistol Caliber Carbines in 9mm, .357 Sig, .40 S&W, 10mm, .45 ACP
- Must have stock attached and be capable of being fired from shoulder position.  
*\*Note: AR and similar pistols with arm braces are not allowed.*
- All carbines are scored "Minor" (like 9mm) - no matter how powerful the load actually used, maximum is 1600 fps
- No capacity restrictions on magazines, side by side magazine coupling is not allowed
- Optic/electronic sights and lasers are allowed



Thomas Howard

Photo by Jake Martens.



Sonny Morton

Photo by Carole Bryant.



Daniel Olschefski

Photo by Jake Martens.



Tim Heiman

Photo by Jake Martens.

their magazines, and all Production guns are scored as though they fired a “Minor” caliber cartridge (9mm) — no matter how powerful the load actually used. Holsters and allied equipment must be “non-race-type” and be worn behind the hip.

Most shooters use a standard outside the belt holster intended for daily wear, such as a Comp-Tac or Safariland lines.

### ■ SINGLE STACK

Look through any pistol-oriented magazine, and you’re guaranteed to see pictures and articles dedicated to John Browning’s signature pistol.

USPSA introduced a provisional 1911 Single Stack division in 2006, making it a full-fledged division in 2008. Single-stack Government model pistols (such as those made by Springfield Armory, STI, Wilson Combat and others) are the only guns allowed.

Shooters may use standard-capacity magazines only (8 rounds for “major” calibers — .40, 10mm, and .45 ACP, 10 rounds for “minor” — 9mm and .38 Super.) For hol-

sters, Single-Stack shooters must adhere to the Single Stack division guidelines — here, the gun rides higher on the belt, a traditional method of carry for the venerable 1911.

### ■ LIMITED 10 DIVISION

“Here in Hawaii, we’re limited to 10-round magazines by law,” says Honolulu’s Richard Abe.

Single-action autoloaders in .40 S&W and .45 ACP rule the roost here. Competitors can make various minor changes to make the gun more shootable (change sights, grips, slide stops, magazine releases, main-spring housings, etc.), but they MAY NOT add optical sights, porting (such as Mag-naporting), or a recoil compensator. The rules do a fine job of leveling out the equipment, so check the rule book for complete details.

Calibers can be either “minor” (9mm, .38 Super, and light-loaded .40S&W, for example) or “major” (full-power .40 S&W and larger).

### ■ LIMITED DIVISION

Most Limited competitors shoot wide-body

1911’s (STI, SV, Para-Ordnance), a Glock, or one of various CZ/TZ 75 variants.

“Limited lets me make the most of my equipment and skills,” says Lisa Munson, multi-year ladies Limited champion. “It lets you use the technology available today, without going all the way into driving a ‘race gun.’”

Allowable changes include all those listed for “Limited 10,” plus shooters may use high-capacity magazines no longer than 141mm overall.

### ■ REVOLVER DIVISION

Designed for stock revolvers, Revolver Division is dominated by the Smith & Wesson revolvers in minor calibers. Shooters may only fire eight rounds between reloads for minor scoring (six rounds for major), and modifications are limited. No optical sights, porting, or recoil compensation is allowed. However, shooters may change grips, enlarge the cylinder release, change sights, chamfer cylinders, and tune the action as they desire.

Revolvers shooters may score “major” us-



Photo by Jake Martens. Randle McMurphy



Photo by Jake Martens. Jamie Lenberg



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Greg Smith

Photo by Jake Martens.

ing any cartridge firing a bullet .355” or larger, with a restriction of only 6 rounds being fired before reloading. USPSA recently changed the division rules in revolver to allow for 8 shots being fired before reloading, but competitors choosing to shoot here will be scored “minor”, which makes a significant point difference for other than A zone hits.

■ **OPEN DIVISION**

Dominated by cutting-edge high-capacity 1911’s, but with many other makes holding their own, Open is the top-fuel drag racing division within USPSA.

“If you can roll it up to the line, odds are you can shoot it,” said former USPSA President Michael Voigt.

Shooters can make all the modifications allowed for Limited, and add several more. Magazines may extend to 171mm overall, optical sights may be used, and recoil compensators are practically required.

Shooters may use any caliber that fires a .355 or larger bullet, including the 9x19 (carefully hand loaded). The most popular

cartridge at this writing is one of several variations of the .38 Super.

Experimenting with equipment and technique has always been a part of USPSA, since the days of Jeff Cooper and the Southwest Pistol League in the 1950s. That experimental flavor is a big part of what keeps them coming back, there’s always some new sight setup, some new scope, some new idea to try.

■ **CARRY OPTICS DIVISION**

Red dot sights are not new to competitive shooting. “Dots” have been in use in NRA bullseye and USPSA Open Division matches for over 30 years. Over the last few years, there has been a steady increase in the number of red dot optics added to modern service pistols, and all of the major manufacturers in the firearms industry are offering more optics-ready pistols each year. USPSA responded by creating Carry Optics Division. The Carry Optics Division applies most of the Production Division rules, but with a 45-ounce weight limit on all models, requires optic/electronic

sight and additional modifications allowed. Magazines extended to 141.25mm, such as those used in the Limited Division. This division, like Production Division, is scored minor power factor only, utilizing readily available ammunition. The division has seen steady growth, and continues to be a topic of conversation with both experienced and new competitions shooters alike.

■ **PISTOL CALIBER CARBINE**

Pistol Caliber Carbines, or PCC’s, have exploded in popularity in the last two years. This exciting new division has seen a tremendous amount of participation in both USPSA and Steel Challenge competition. There are numerous manufacturers and parts suppliers making competition-ready carbines and accessories. This division also uses primarily red dot optics and is scored minor power factor only, again utilizing readily available ammunition.

I encourage you to take whatever pistol you already have, and go shoot a match or two. Odds are you’ll see someone shooting in a division appealing to you. Enjoy! ■



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**BY ZACK JONES**

NATIONAL SCSA PROGRAM COORDINATOR  
ZACK@USPSA.ORG

**D**ing, ding, ding, ding, ding! The ringing of steel plates as fast as you possibly can is what Steel Challenge is all about. Imagine hitting five plates ranging in size from 10-inch circles to 18x24-inch rectangles in under two seconds; that's what some of the fastest competitors in the world can do. Don't worry if you can't shoot that fast – there's plenty of fun to be had by competitors of all ages and skill levels! It's quite common for entire families to shoot matches together.

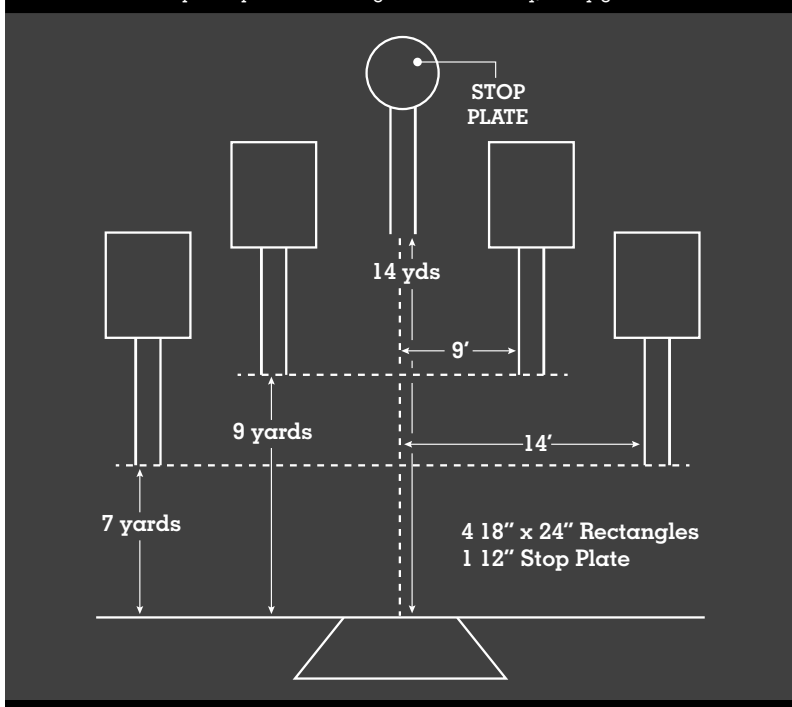
**HOW DOES IT WORK?**

A Steel Challenge match is comprised of up to eight official stages. Level 1 (club) matches are required to offer a minimum of two of the eight official stages, and may offer other unofficial stages in the same match. Level 2 (state level) matches are required to use a minimum of six of the eight official stages; only the two longest stages, Speed Option and Outer Limits, may be excluded in these matches. Level 3 (Area, Regional, and World Championship) matches are required to offer all eight official stages, with no other stages in the match. These events may also offer side matches, which are not part of the match score but allow you an opportunity to shoot a unique firearm of some sort. When it's your turn to complete the course of fire, you step into the shooting box. A range official will issue a series of commands for you to prepare your firearm; once you're ready, the timer will beep and you'll shoot the five steel plates. Four of the plates can be shot in any order you choose. The last plate, known as the "stop plate",

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**SMOKE & HOPE**

Smoke & Hope tempts shooters to go fast. Inevitably, many go too fast and miss.



must be shot last. This signifies that you have completed your attempt at the course of fire. The post for the stop plate is usually painted red or some other color so that new competitors can remember which plate to shoot last. If in doubt, just ask the range official. After shooting the five plates, your time is recorded either on paper or on the electronic scoring tablet. You repeat this process five times; each run is known as a string. After the final string is completed, your worst time is thrown out and the




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total time for your four fastest strings is your time for the stage. The competitor with the lowest total time for all stages is the winner for that match.

The event is divided into four separate matches. All centerfire pistols compete in the main match. Rimfire pistol irons and Rimfire pistol open compete in the Rimfire pistol match. Rimfire rifle irons and Rimfire rifle open compete in the Rimfire rifle match. Finally, Pistol Caliber Carbine (PCC) Irons and PCC Optics compete in the PCC match.

### PICK A DIVISION

Equipment needs are minimal for Steel Challenge. You can compete with any rimfire pistol or rifle, a centerfire firearm or, in our most recently added division, PCC. In total we have thirteen different divisions in Steel Challenge. Having five magazines is best, but you can get by with less when you are first starting out. Just bring as many magazines as you have and odds are another competitor will lend you one or would be willing to assist with reloading your magazine while you shoot to keep the match running on schedule. All centerfire firearms start from the surrender position (wrists above shoulders), so you will need a holster for your firearm. All Rimfire and PCC competitors start from the low ready position; in front of each shooting box is an aiming flag or cone which you aim at while you wait for the timer to beep, signifying the start of your run.

### EARN A CLASSIFICATION

USPSA members are eligible to earn a classification ranging from D (lowest) through Grand Master (highest) in each of the thirteen divisions used in Steel Challenge. To become classified, a competitor must be a current USPSA member, and must shoot a minimum of four of the eight official stages. It does not matter which four of the eight stages you shoot and you don't have to shoot all four at the same match. The classification system keeps track of the official stages you have shot and calculates your classification once you've shot four stages. Classifications are updated weekly on Wednesday, so you can track your progress from match to match. As you shoot each stage faster, you'll earn a higher classification. Some competitors are so dedicated to Steel Challenge



Michael Brooks

Photo by Jake Martens.



Chris Mitsuoka

Photo by Jake Martens.

that they have earned classifications in all thirteen Steel Challenge divisions!

### GETTING STARTED

Getting started in Steel Challenge is very easy. On the site [steelchallenge.com](http://steelchallenge.com) you can find a list of sanctioned matches; hopefully, one is close to you. Once you've found a match, it would be a good idea to contact the match director in advance and let him know you want to shoot the match. Some ranges may require an orientation prior to competing in the match. The match director can answer any questions that you have in advance of match day. Once you've found the match, you'll want to decide which division to shoot. As previously stated, we have thirteen divisions in Steel Challenge. The centerfire pistol divisions align with the pistol divisions used in USPSA Handgun matches; the rimfire and PCC divisions are based on whether the firearm has an optic installed or not. Once you determine the firearm you want to shoot, you need to make sure to

bring ammo, lots of ammo! A typical five-stage club match requires a minimum of 125 rounds per firearm, and you should seriously consider bringing twice the minimum. You just never know when you may need to take an extra shot. If you will be shooting a centerfire pistol, you'll need a holster for your firearm and for Rimfire/PCC, you'll need a suitable bag or case for transporting your firearm between stages. For Rimfire rifles and PCCs, you must have a chamber flag for each firearm you plan to shoot. The chamber flag allows range officials to instantly verify the firearm is unloaded while it is being transported between stages.

### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you would like to know more about Steel Challenge or have questions not answered in this article, please contact the National SCSA Program Coordinator, Zack Jones, at [zack@uspsa.org](mailto:zack@uspsa.org) and he'll be happy to help in any way he can. ■



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BY TROY McMANUS

# MULTI-GUN BASICS

**U**SPSA has included long guns in its catalog of competition almost since the organization began. Originally called 3-Gun competition, each gun was shot separately on a course of fire designed for that gun, with barely any overlap between guns. Many participants wanted to be able to shoot all three guns in one stage, however, so due to customer demand and pressure from many so-called (but exemplary) “outlaw” matches, USPSA has embraced Multi-Gun competition. This basically means that a competitor could be called upon to solve a given shooting problem using a rifle, shotgun, and handgun, or any combination of those three. Occasionally, a stage gun is thrown into the mix for even more excitement! A few years ago, the USPSA Multi-Gun Nationals employed a full auto, belt-fed .308 caliber machine gun as part of the challenge on a stage. There were many smiling faces leaving the range each day!

Multi-gun competition is varied and intense, using the same basic principles of USPSA handgun competition, namely accuracy combined

Cody Leeper



Photo by Jake Martins

Keith Garcia



Photo by Jake Martins

with speed. As you might imagine, different skill sets and equipment are needed to compete with all three guns, and this is what keeps multi-gun growth on the rise—the challenge of mastering three guns in one stage. Over the years, many changes have been made to the design and use of the modern sporting rifle, but one of the chief uses of the AR-15 and its variants is in multi-gun competition. Likewise, many semi-auto shotguns that were once the *ne plus ultra* of 3-gun competition have been replaced by new, faster-actioned, purpose-built scatterguns. Equipment for loading and reloading the rifles and shotguns used in multi-gun competition has likewise evolved to meet the ever-increasing demand for speed and precision in reloading while on the move. It's not unusual to see a multi-gun competitor wearing an assortment of high-tech magazine and shotshell holders, all designed to provide speed and ease on high round count stages requiring all three guns.

As with all USPSA competitions, safety is paramount, and Multi-Gun competitions have their own set of rules, most of which emulate the USPSA Handgun rules with regard to safe gun handling. A copy of the recently revised MG rules is available at: [www.uspsa.org/uspsa-rules](http://www.uspsa.org/uspsa-rules).

USPSA Multi-Gun competitions are divided into five divisions, based on type of gun used. Here are the basic requirements for each division. While major and minor power factor is still listed for each division, most multi-gun matches these days use Time Plus scoring, which depends less on power factor and emphasizes speed while shooting at the targets. This is explained further in the box below.

#### OPEN DIVISION

Anything goes, with the exception of full-auto guns. Competitors can use compensators to limit recoil and muzzle rise, any combination of scopes and electronic sights on any or all three guns. Bipods, flashlights, lasers—all legal here. Shotguns may have unlimited

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## HIT FACTOR VS. TIME PLUS SCORING

Some matches still use traditional USPSA hit factor scoring, but this is proving more difficult to do, since considerations for major pistol, minor rifle, and major shotgun (or a different combination of all three) must be taken into account. The more popular method of scoring multi-gun matches is called Time Plus, so named because misses and failure to shoot at penalties are simply added into your score as additional time, not points. This scoring method uses your time as your score, as long as all targets are neutralized. Missed, failure to shoot at, or poorly hit targets are penalized with additional time added. In this type of scoring, as in golf, low score wins. It's pretty simple and the courses of fire are much easier to score and reset. One A/B hit on a target or two hits anywhere on the target are enough to "neutralize" that target and not cost any penalty seconds. Don't shoot at one, or miss one, and that will add considerable time to your final score.

Multi-Gun matches are gaining in popularity, and growing across the country. Check your local club for the opportunity to shoot your AR and combat shotgun in competition.

ammo capacity and may be loaded fully; speedloader tubes and magazines are allowed on the shotgun.

### TACTICAL DIVISION

While your handgun must comply with the USPSA Limited Division rules (no compensator, barrel ports, or optics), the rifle may have a single optic installed, along with a small compensator, but no bipods, flashlights, or lasers. Restrictions on the shotgun include loading to a max of nine shells to start, and shotgun speedloaders and magazines are not allowed.

### LIMITED DIVISION

Same as Tactical for the handgun and shotgun. The main difference here is that only one non-magnifying optic is allowed on the rifle. That means you can use a 1X red dot sight on your rifle, but no telescopic sights.

### HEAVY METAL

#### TACTICAL DIVISION

Here the USPSA Limited 10 rules apply for handguns, with a .40 caliber minimum also required. Rifles must be .308 caliber and shotguns 12 gauge. There are limits on loaded capacity in all three guns. Rifles and shotguns follow the same compensator and optic rules as Tactical division.

### HEAVY METAL

#### LIMITED DIVISION

The same requirements as for Heavy Metal Tactical, but rifles cannot have optics of any kind and you must use a pump-action shotgun, 12 gauge or larger. You can however, use a compensator on your rifle, with size restrictions. ■



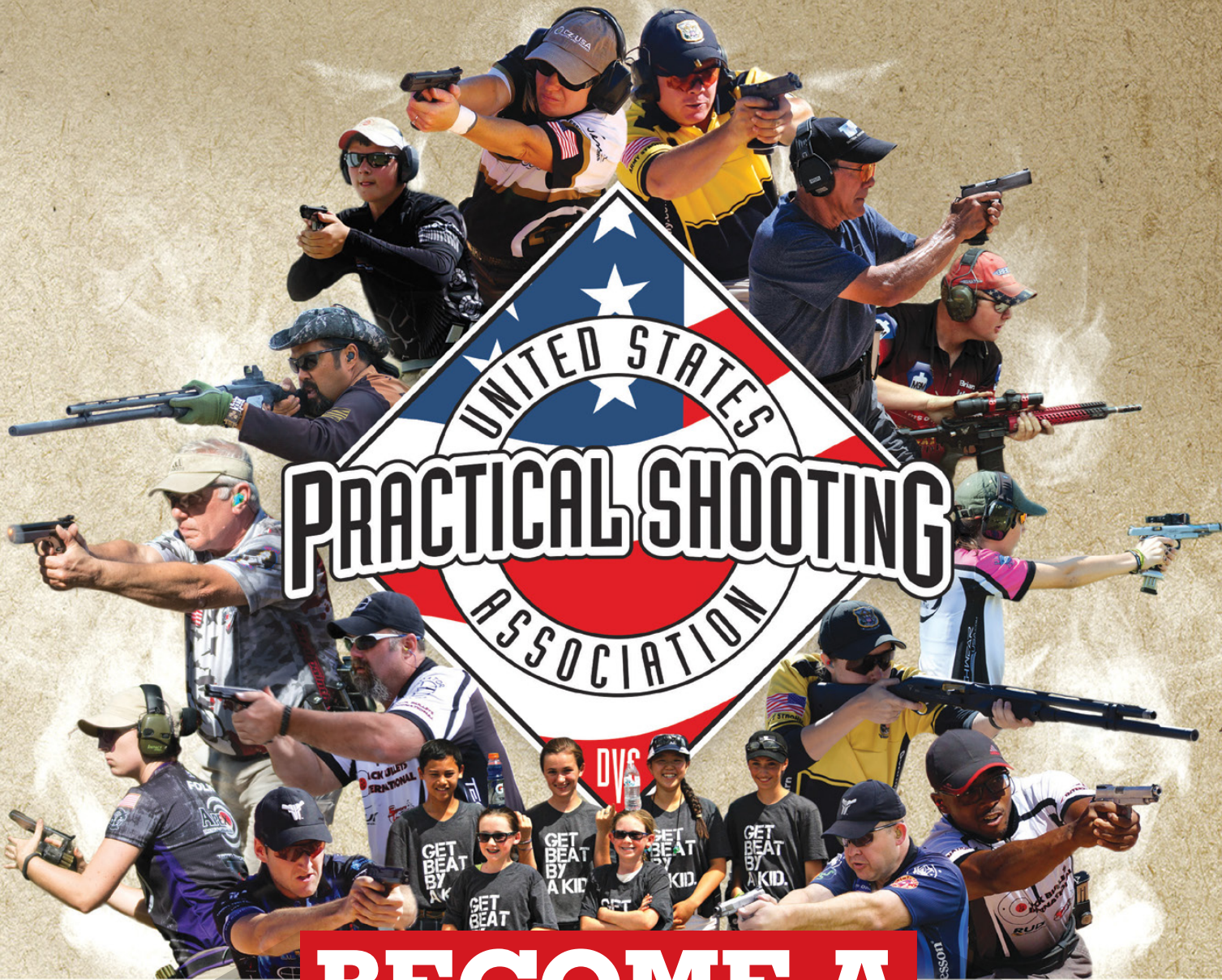
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Susan Collier

Photo by Jake Martins.

# USPSA INTRODUCES AN UPDATED CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

This past September, USPSA rolled out a new classification system that is updated weekly instead of monthly. The engine driving this new system, rather than using a two-file system of classifier scores and match scores, is now a single-file system using the match results uploaded by the clubs.

By using a single file, USPSA members benefit from having all their match scores and classifier scores available on the web site as soon as the club uploads them to the USPSA web site.

Your initial classification still requires only four valid scores in the system, but those new classifications are calculated each week, early Wednesday morning. There are caveats to this, of course, and the most important is that the clubs not only have to upload their match results no later than Tuesday, they also have to pay the activity fees before the classification program begins the process. Classifier scores that the club has not paid for will not be included in the calculations and will await payment by the club.

Once you are classified, the next time the program runs, the classification program will look at the best six valid scores of your most recent eight scores. If your average is in a higher class than your current class, you will be promoted to that class. At the same time, your classes in other divisions will be evaluated to determine whether

the board policy requires promotion in them as well. This policy states you can't have a classification in one division that is more than one class below your highest classification.

Because of this more frequent web-based calculation, USPSA no longer prints and mails new classification cards. However, you can print your own classification card by logging into your profile on the USPSA website. There you will find a link labeled Classification Card.

Also note that if you see an error in one of your scores or your member number, you must let the club know of the problem so they can fix it in the scoring program and upload a corrected set of results. The USPSA office does not have the ability to correct scores or member numbers on the website.

## A ROBUST, DYNAMIC SYSTEM

Someone once said that “changes aren't permanent, but change is.” Over the last 25 years, practical shooters have turned the shooting world on its ear, re-inventing the way we shoot, the way guns are built, the way holsters are made, and even what bullets we shoot in them.

Like a schoolteacher's bell curve, as the top end of our sport improves, the “high hit factor” required to achieve a “Grand Master” score improves as well. By continuously adjusting for change, our classification system has become the one

### CLASSIFICATION BRACKET PERCENTAGES



GRAND MASTER	95 TO 100%
MASTER	85 TO 94.9%
A	75 TO 84.9%
B	60 TO 74.9%
C	40 TO 59.9%
D	2 TO 40%

universally-recognized benchmark within the practical shooting world.

Today's practical shooter wields a level of technique and technology that outpaces the very best shooters of the mid-1980s. Thankfully, our system's ability to continuously re-set the standard of achievement has maintained the integrity of a USPSA classification.

In the same way a golfer must complete many rounds of golf on courses with a known “par” to earn a “handicap,” USPSA shooters must complete several courses with a known “high hit factor” to earn a classification. Once they've done so, other shooters (like golfers) can use that classification to judge their abilities, and arrange competitive classes where shooters compete against others of like ability.

That's the gist of the USPSA system. It's a robust system, and one that has served USPSA well. ■

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# STEEL CHALLENGE TRY IT OUT

BY JAMES DeLAMBERT, A71786

**F**or those of you out there who have not checked out the sport of Steel Challenge, I highly recommend that you do so. It is fun to watch and easy to understand, and even more fun to shoot. As a member in the USPSA, you will also hold membership in SCSA; they use your same membership number, so things are quite simple. Steel Challenge is all about having fun and shooting steel targets as fast as you can safely do so. In Steel Challenge, there are eight official stages, and most of the time a local match will use only a couple of them, so you know what to expect.

A stage in Steel Challenge consists of

five white-painted steel targets known as plates. There are four standard plates, and one stop plate. The goal is to either draw or start at low ready at the buzzer, depending on your division, and shoot the four standard plates, then end on the stop plate. You can shoot as many rounds as you need to accomplish that, but you want to shoot the standard plates first, to avoid penalties. The penalties come in the form of time added, because, in Steel Challenge, your time is your score, and the lowest score wins. You shoot five strings per stage, and the worst string is tossed out, so in the end, the time is added up and the lowest/quickest time wins for that respective

division. The absolute worst time one can have in a string is 30 seconds.

Steel Challenge uses three different-sized plates. There are 10" and 12" round steel plates, and 18"x24" rectangular plates. There are targets in close proximity on a stage like Smoke and Hope, and there are some stages like Speed Option with an 18"x24" plate at 105 feet. It is great training for working on your draw and transitioning quickly from target to target. I notice that some people at USPSA matches freak out when there is a lot of steel to shoot on a given stage. An excellent way to remedy that is to go to a Steel Challenge match and have fun shooting steel all day. After a while, you'll look forward to the ding of the steel!

I think Steel Challenge is a great way to start shooting competitions, as it allows the use of .22 caliber pistols and rifles, whereas in USPSA the minimum cartridge is 9x19. Additionally, Steel Challenge allows the same variety of handguns as USPSA does, such as Open division, Limited division, Production division, Revolver, Single



**JAMES DeLAMBERT**

- AGE 18
- GRAND MASTER PRODUCTION DIVISION USPSA
- GRAND MASTER PRODUCTION DIVISION SCSA

Stack, Carry Optics and Pistol Caliber Carbines. Another reason it is ideal for beginners is there is no down-range / up-range movement or the running that can be required in USPSA. It's an excellent way to start out getting comfortable and proficient with a handgun or rifle.

If you start with a .22, you do not draw from a holster; rather, you start your pistol from a low-ready position. Steel Challenge places a two-foot-high flag or signs 10 feet downrange that the .22 pistol and rifle shooters point at as their low-ready position. As you get proficient and comfortable in Steel Challenge, it is a great next step to shooting USPSA.

For those of you already shooting USPSA, almost all the commands in Steel Challenge will be very familiar. "Are you ready?", "Stand by", BEEP! "Make ready for your next string", "If you are finished, unload and show clear", "If clear, hammer down and holster". This means you will have that comfort zone should you wish to shoot some steel.

My favorite sport is USPSA, but I will continue to shoot Steel Challenge, as I like to set goals and attempt to achieve them. I just reached a goal I had set a few years ago, which was to become a Grand Master in the Production division of Steel Challenge. It seemed impossible, but each year I got a little faster. Shortly after that, I became a Master in .22 Open Rimfire Rifle when I borrowed my friend's rifle. It was a blast! I had not shot rifle in Steel Challenge, and it was a great change. I have now purchased a 1911 Single Stack gun as well, so I am looking forward to reaching Grand Master goals in those divisions. I enjoy the challenge, and it is making me a better shooter.

The great thing about both SCSA and USPSA is you can make it a family affair. My dad and I have squadded many times over the years at local, state and area USPSA matches. With SCSA and USPSA, there are different classification levels, but you can still get together with friends and family and shoot and squad together. I think you'll find that Steel Challenge is a lot of fun if you give it a chance. Check out your community online to find the closest match to you and go try it out! ■



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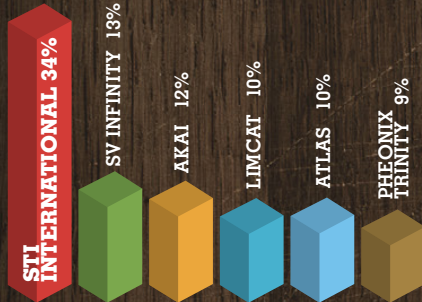
# EQUIPMENT SURVEY

# OPEN DIVISION

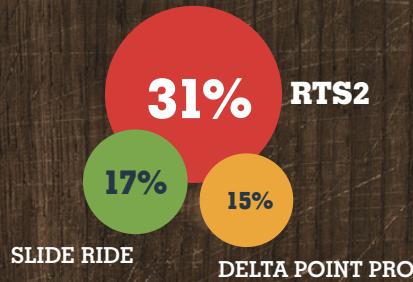
## 2018 OPTICS NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY

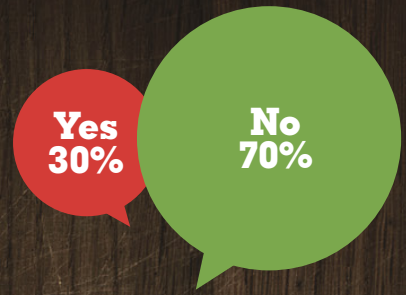
### FIREARM MANUFACTURER



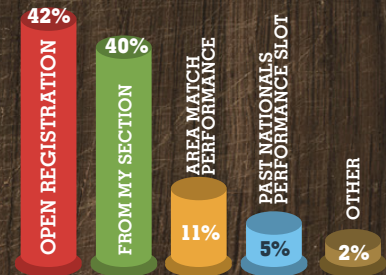
### MODEL OF OPTIC



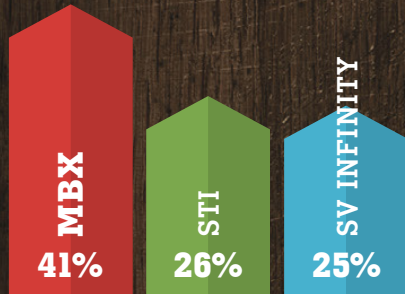
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



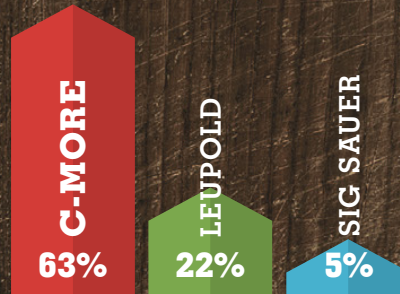
### HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



### MAGAZINE MANUFACTURER



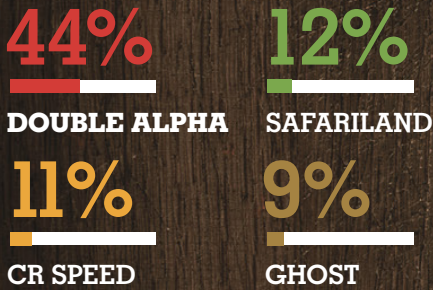
### OPTIC MANUFACTURER



### GUNSMITH/CUSTOM SHOP TOP ANSWER



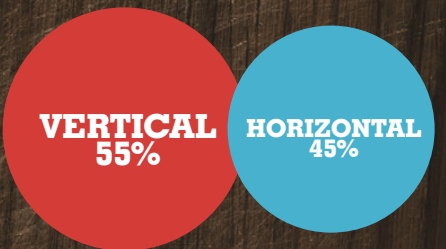
### TOP FOUR HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



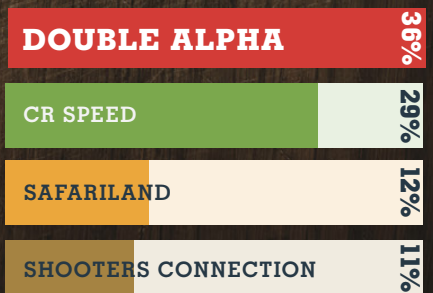
### MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



### OPTICS MOUNT

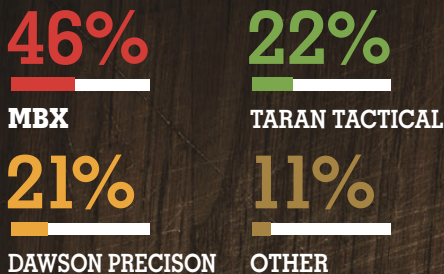


### BELT SYSTEM

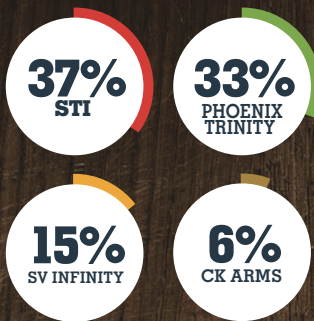


Ty O'Bradovich

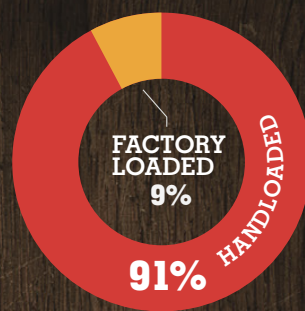
TOP BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



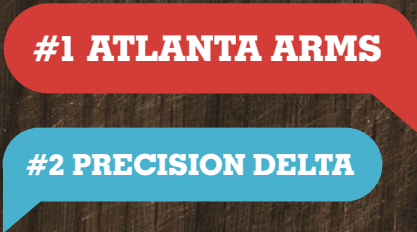
GRIP MANUFACTURER



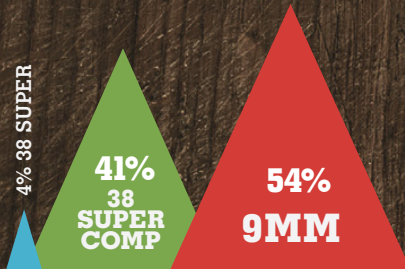
AMMUNITION



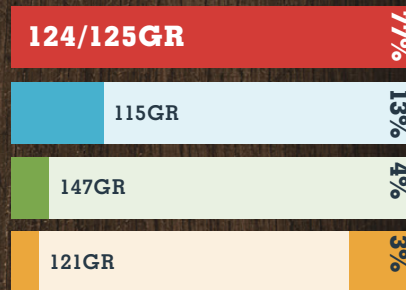
FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



BULLET CALIBER



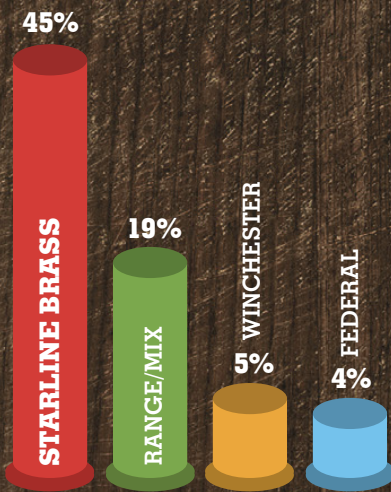
BULLET WEIGHT



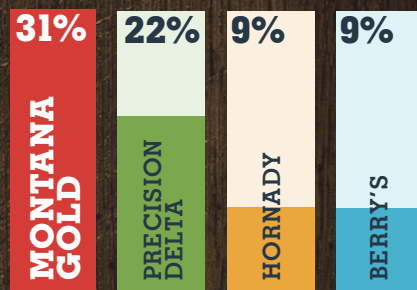
BULLET TYPE



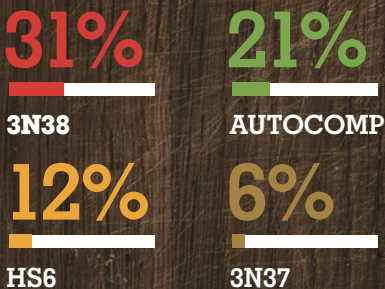
BRASS MANUFACTURER



TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



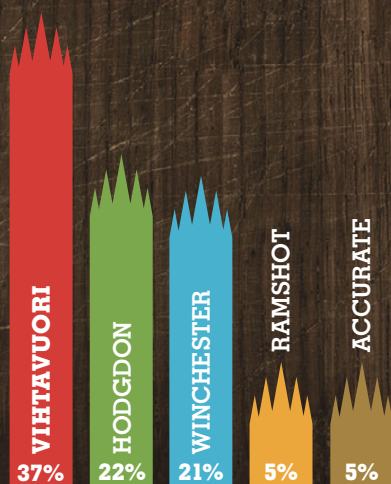
TYPE OF POWDER



MODEL OF RELOADER



POWDER MANUFACTURER



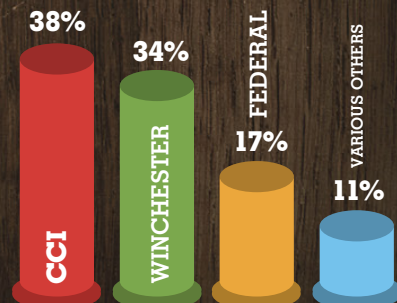
RELOADER AUTOMATION



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



# EQUIPMENT SURVEY

# CARRY OPTICS

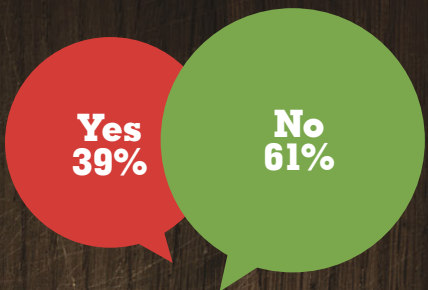
## 2018 OPTICS NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY

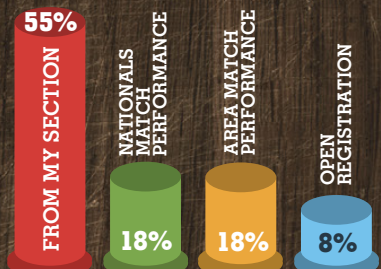


Trace Decker

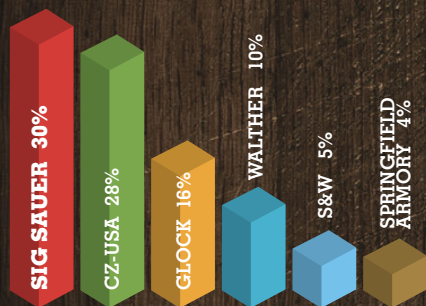
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



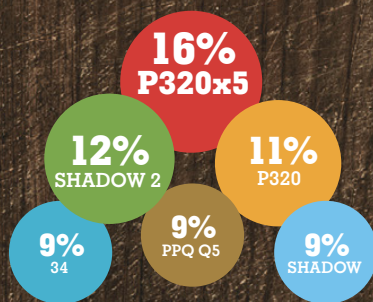
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



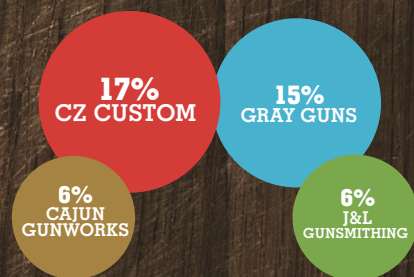
### FIREARM MANUFACTURER



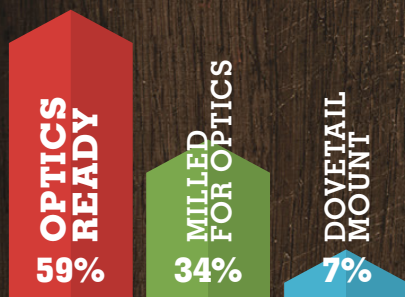
### MODEL OF FIREARM



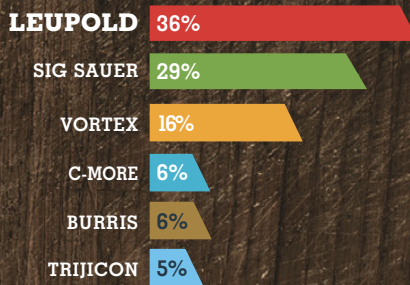
### GUNSMITH/CUSTOM SHOP TOP ANSWER



### FACTORY SLIDE



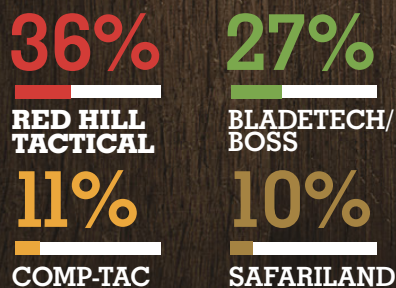
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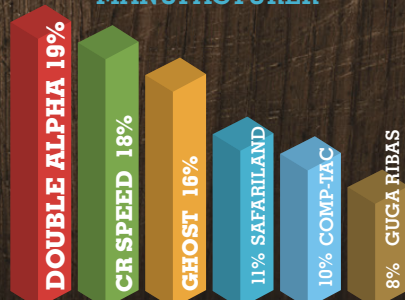
### SLIDE



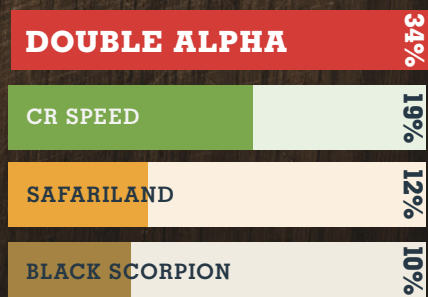
### TOP FOUR HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



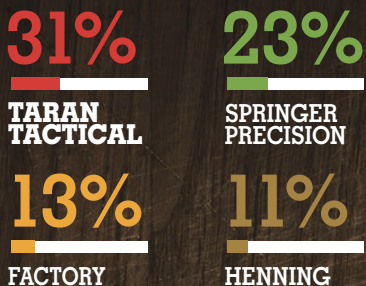
### MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



### BELT SYSTEM



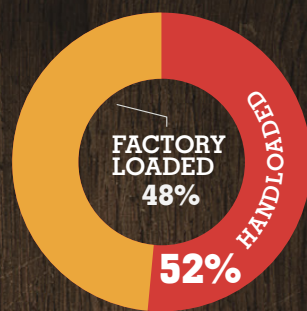
TOP BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



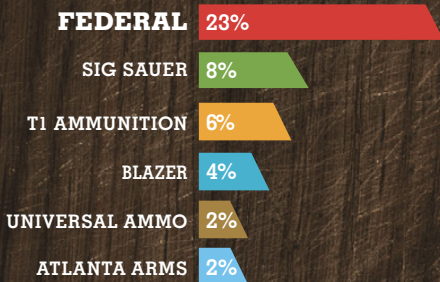
GRIP MANUFACTURER



AMMUNITION



FACTORY LOADED AMMO



BULLET CALIBER



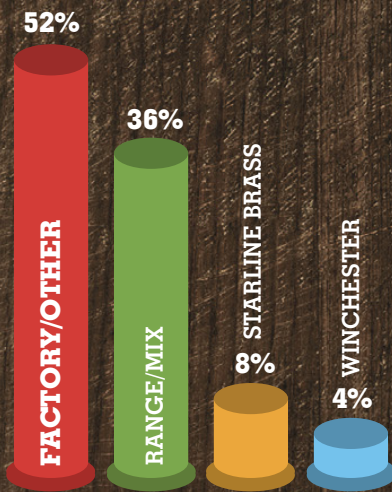
MODEL OF OPTICS



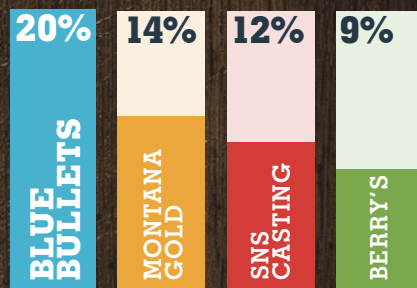
BULLET TYPE



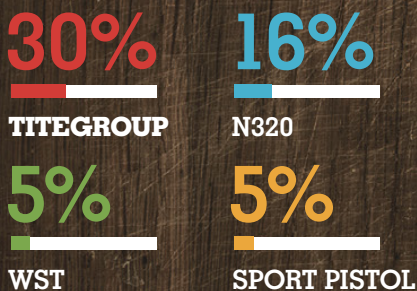
BRASS MANUFACTURER



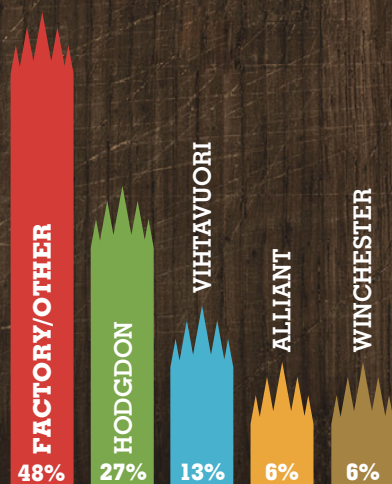
TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



TYPE OF POWDER



POWDER MANUFACTURER



MODEL OF RELOADER



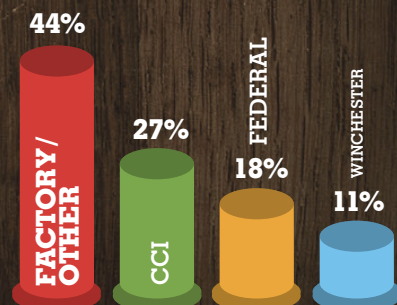
RELOADER AUTOMATION



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



# EQUIPMENT SURVEY

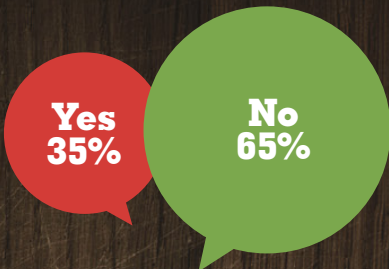
# PCC DIVISION / 2018 OPTICS NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY

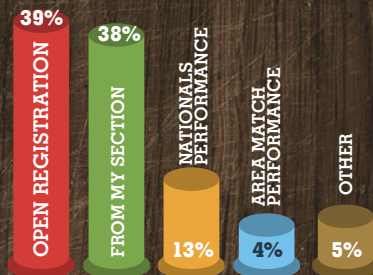


Carole Bryant

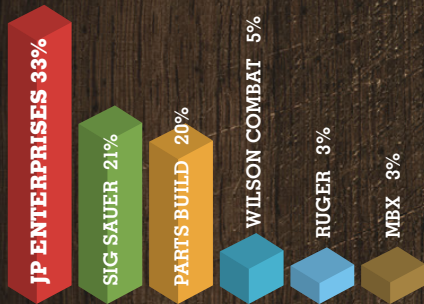
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



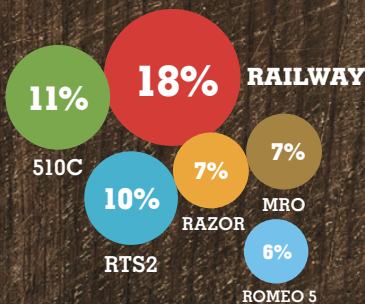
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



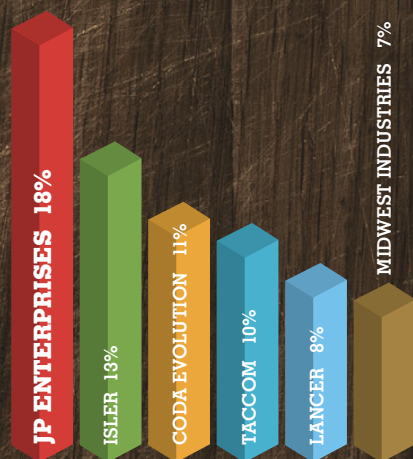
## CARBINE MANUFACTURER



## MODEL OF OPTIC



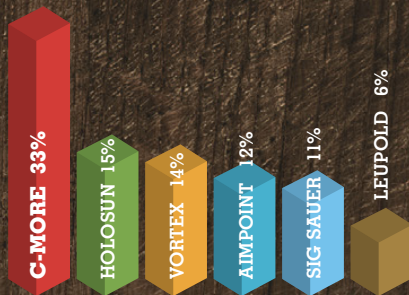
## TOP FOREARM BRANDS



## BUTTSTOCK MANUFACTURER



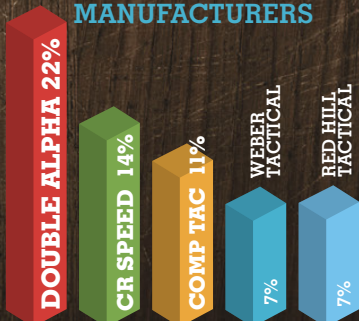
## OPTIC MANUFACTURER



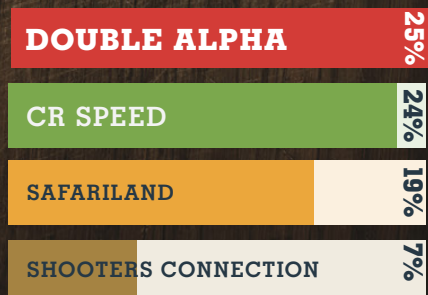
## RELOADER AUTOMATION



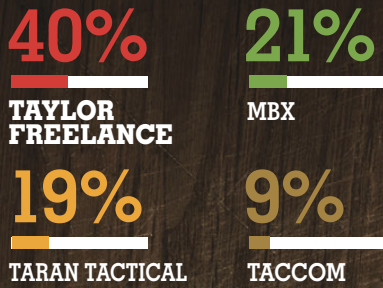
## TOP MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURERS



## BELT SYSTEM



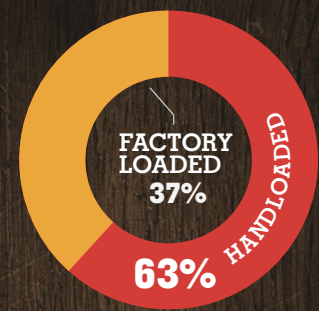
TOP BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



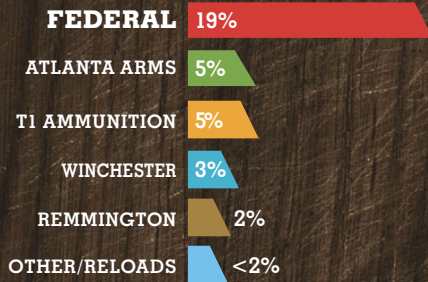
COMPENSATOR BRAND



AMMUNITION



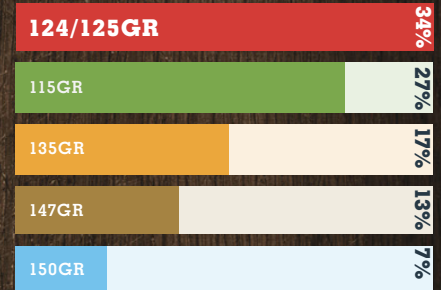
FACTORY LOADED AMMO



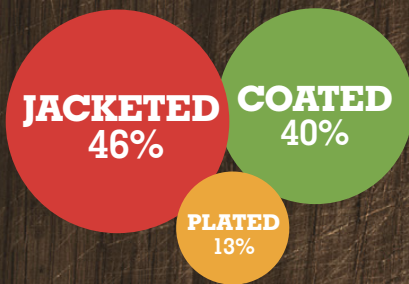
BULLET CALIBER



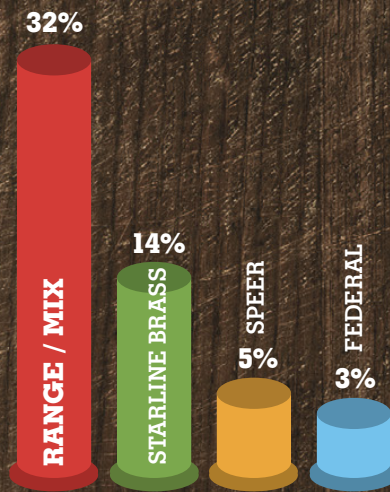
BULLET WEIGHT



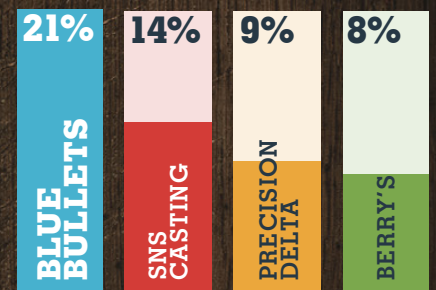
BULLET TYPE



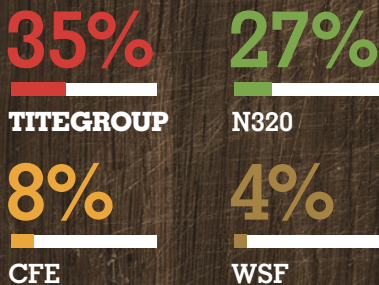
BRASS MANUFACTURER



TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



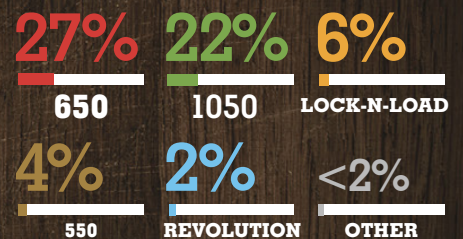
TYPE OF POWDER



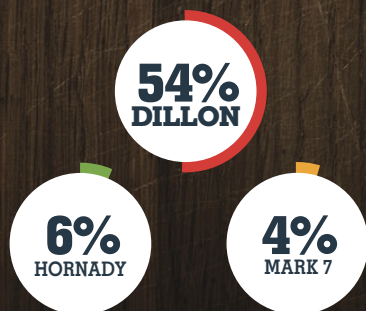
TOP POWDER MANUFACTURER



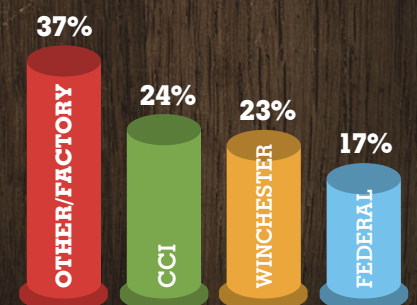
MODEL OF RELOADER



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



# EQUIPMENT SURVEY PRODUCTION

2018  
FACTORY  
NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY



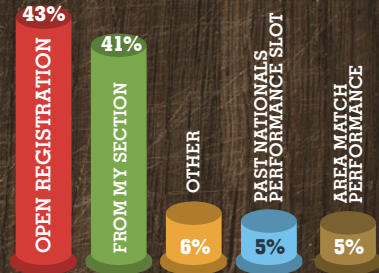
Alex Gutt

IS THIS YOUR  
FIRST NATIONALS?

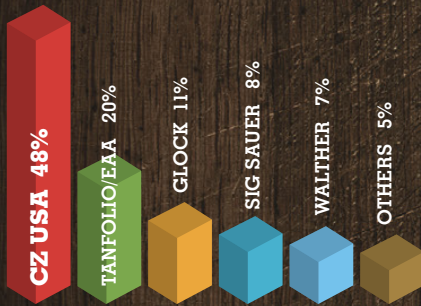
Yes  
43%

No  
57%

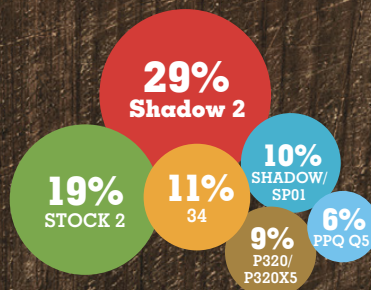
HOW DID YOU  
RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



FIREARM MANUFACTURER



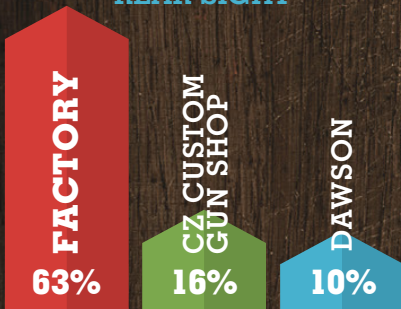
TOP MODEL OF FIREARM



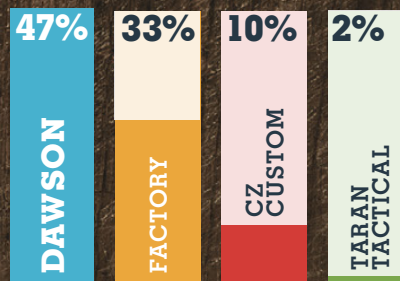
GUNSMITH/CUSTOM SHOP  
TOP ANSWER



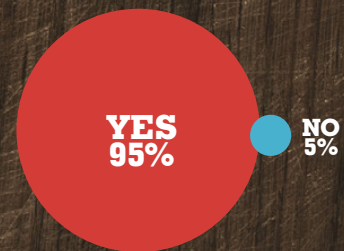
REAR SIGHT



FRONT SIGHT



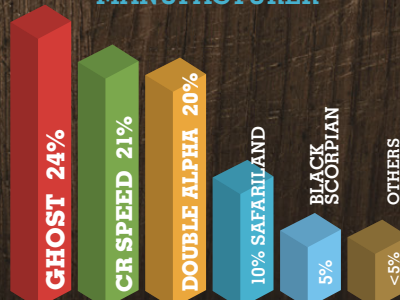
FRONT SIGHT FIBER OPTIC



TOP FOUR HOLSTER  
MANUFACTURERS



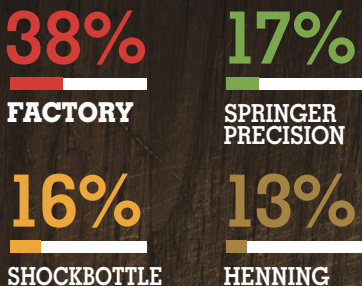
MAGAZINE POUCH  
MANUFACTURER



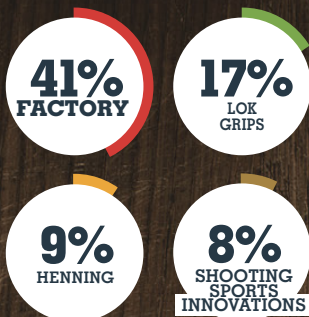
BELT SYSTEM



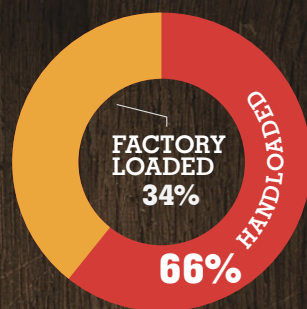
TOP BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



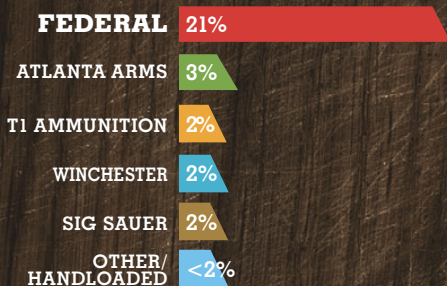
GRIP MANUFACTURER



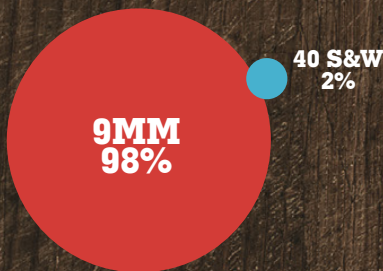
AMMUNITION



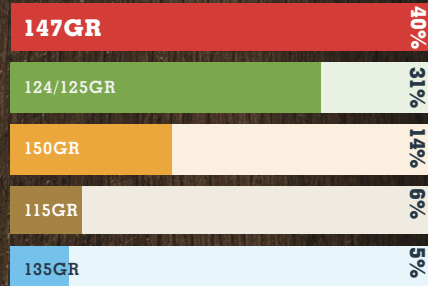
FACTORY LOADED AMMO



BULLET CALIBER



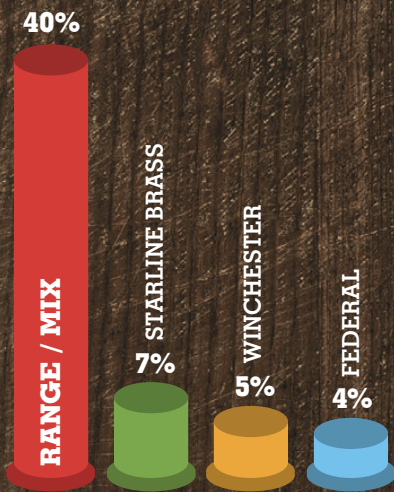
BULLET WEIGHT



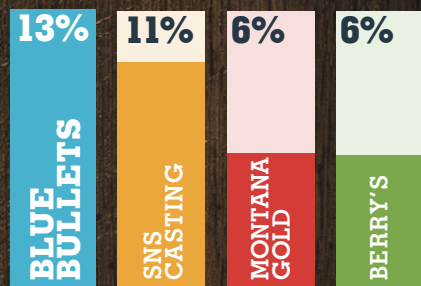
BULLET TYPE



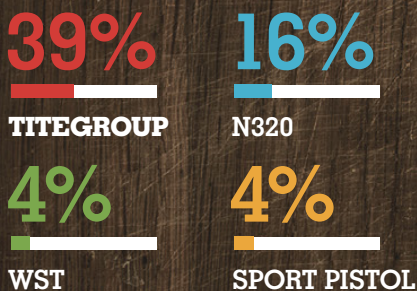
BRASS MANUFACTURER



TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



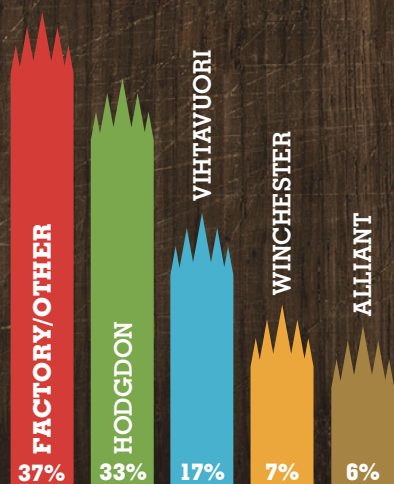
TYPE OF POWDER



MODEL OF RELOADER



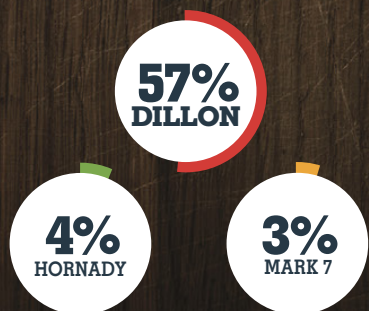
POWDER MANUFACTURER



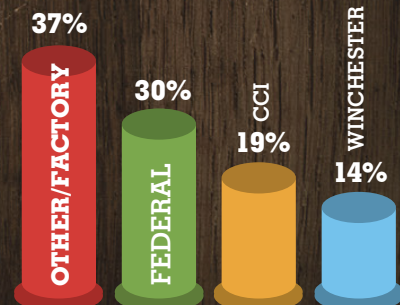
RELOADER AUTOMATION



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



# EQUIPMENT SURVEY

# SINGLE STACK

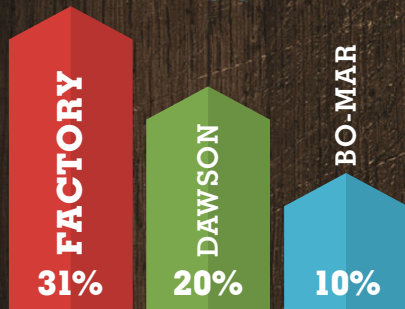
2018 FACTORY NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY

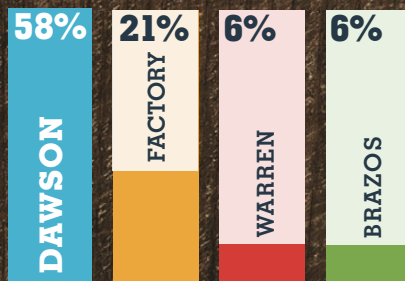


Randi Rogers

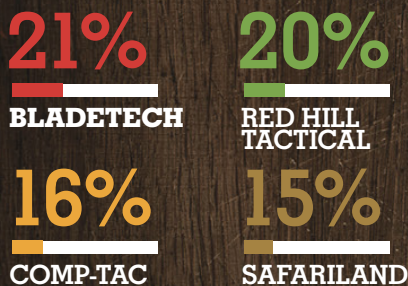
### REAR SIGHT



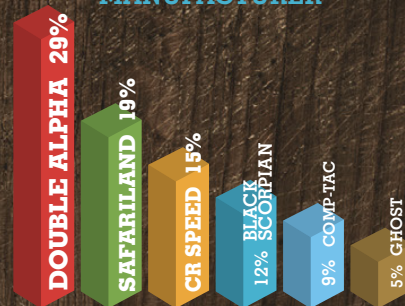
### FRONT SIGHT



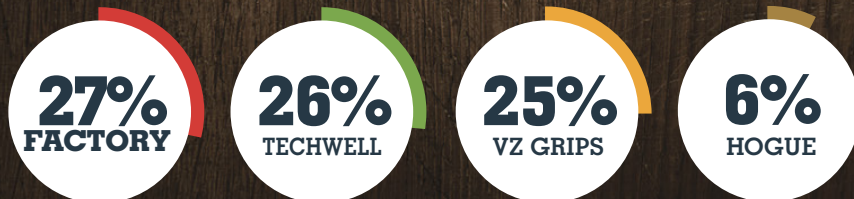
### TOP FOUR HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



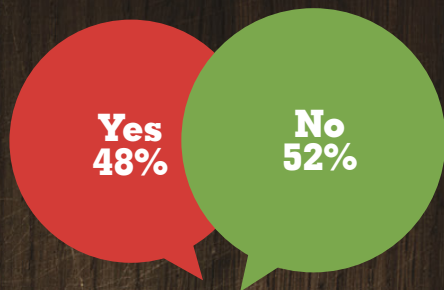
### MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



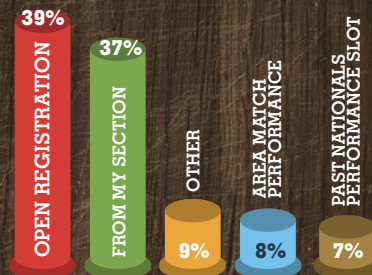
### GRIP MANUFACTURER



### IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



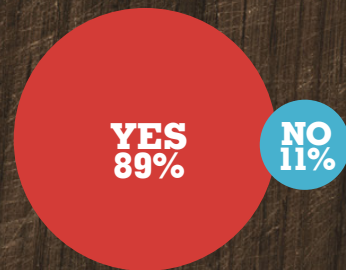
### HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



### GUNSMITH/CUSTOM SHOP TOP ANSWER



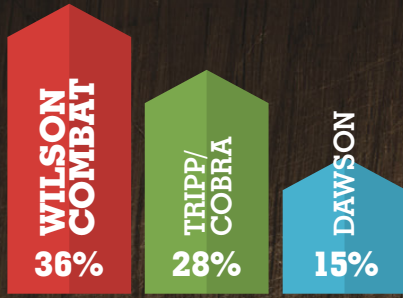
### FRONT SIGHT FIBER OPTIC



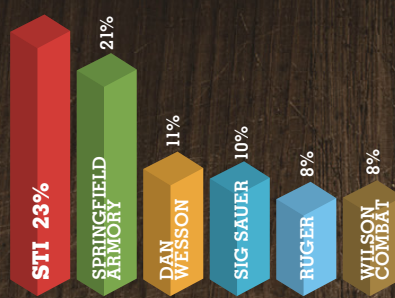
### BELT SYSTEM



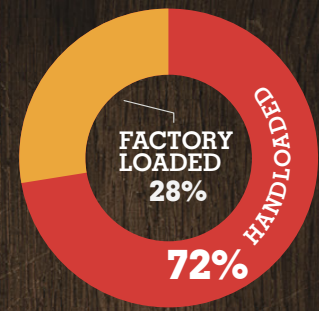
MAGAZINE MANUFACTURER



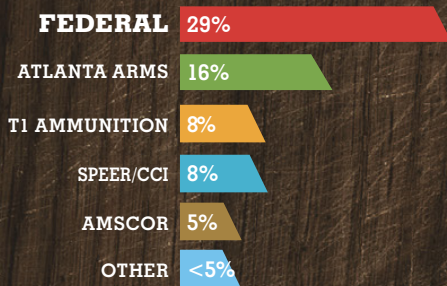
FIREARM/FRAME MANUFACTURER



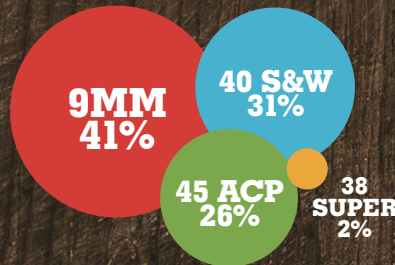
AMMUNITION



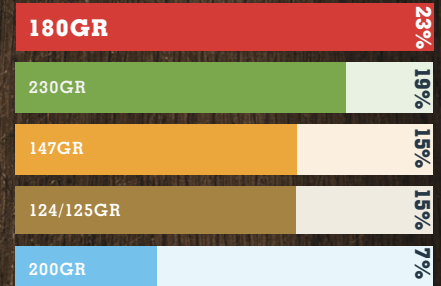
FACTORY LOADED AMMO



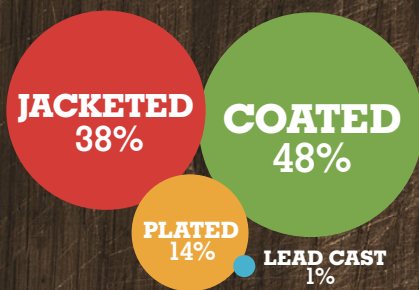
BULLET CALIBER



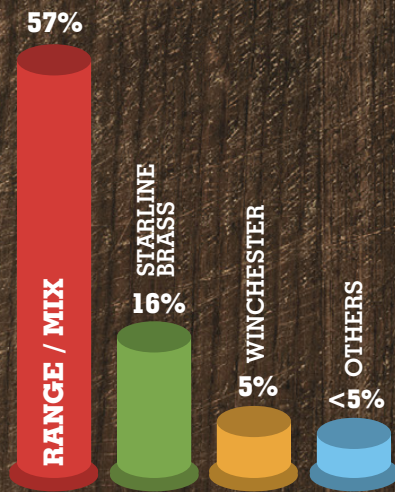
BULLET WEIGHT



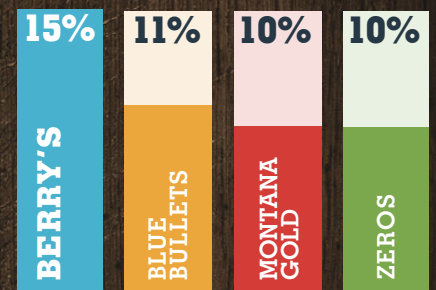
BULLET TYPE



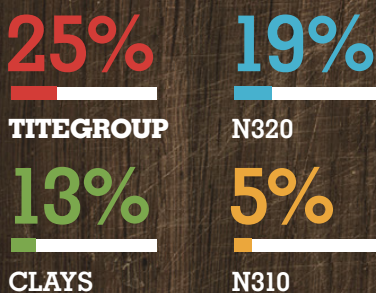
BRASS MANUFACTURER



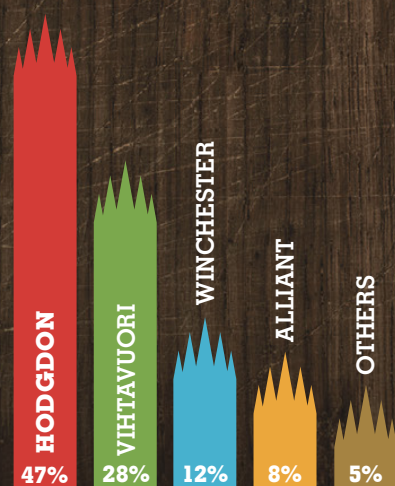
TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



TYPE OF POWDER



POWDER MANUFACTURER



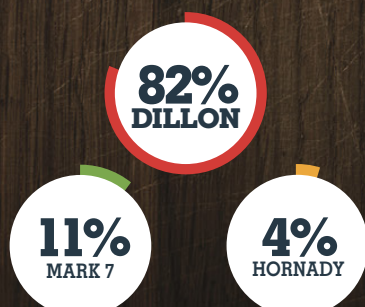
MODEL OF RELOADER



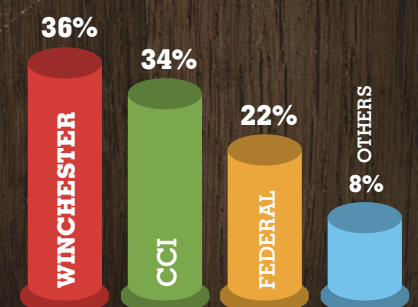
RELOADER AUTOMATION



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



# EQUIPMENT SURVEY

# LIMITED/L10

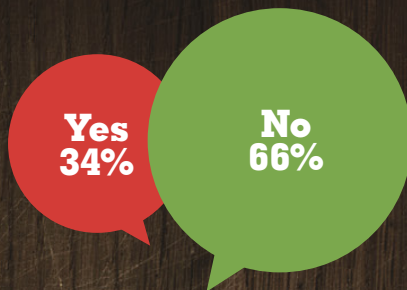
2018 LIMITED NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY

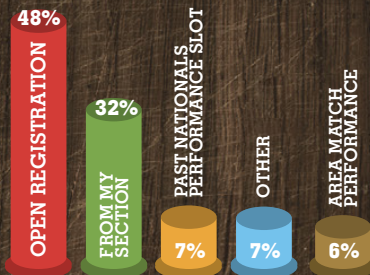


Andrew Heath

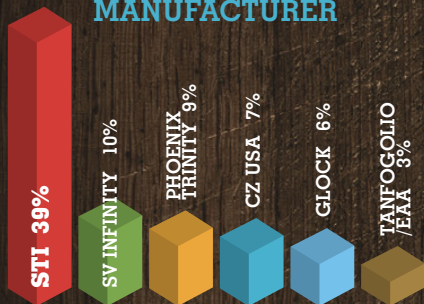
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



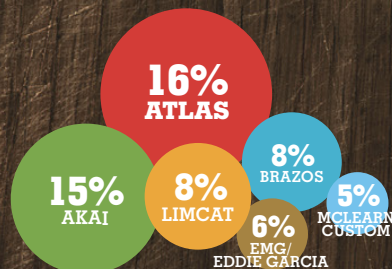
FIREARM/FRAME MANUFACTURER



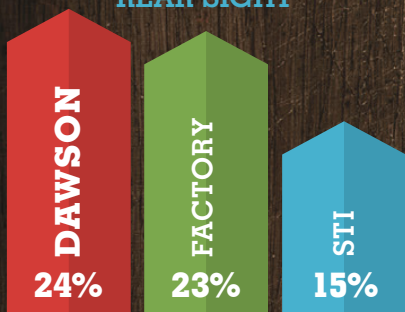
MAGAZINE MANUFACTURER



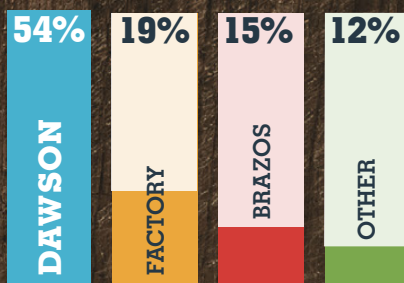
GUNSMITH/CUSTOM SHOP TOP ANSWER



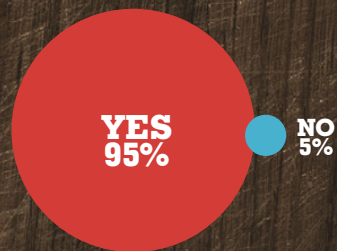
REAR SIGHT



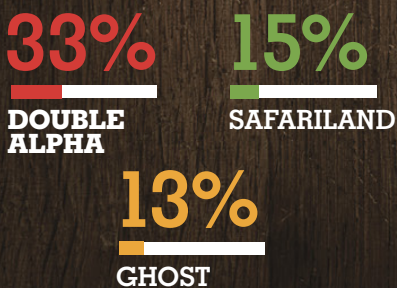
FRONT SIGHT



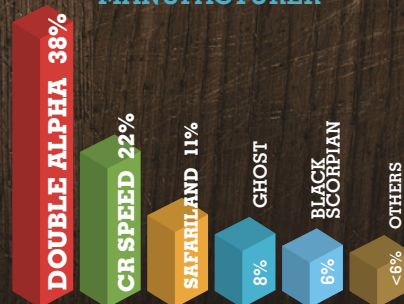
FRONT SIGHT FIBER OPTIC



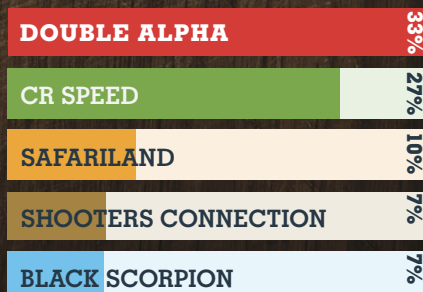
TOP HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



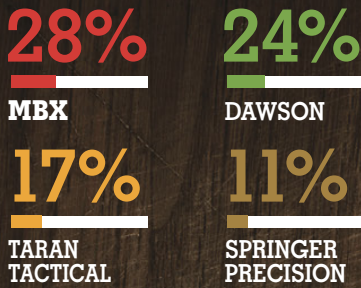
MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



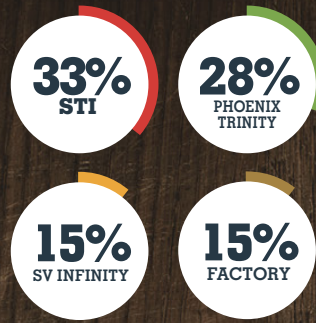
BELT SYSTEM



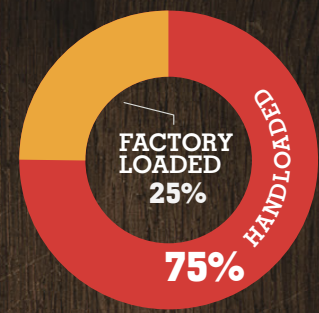
TOP BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



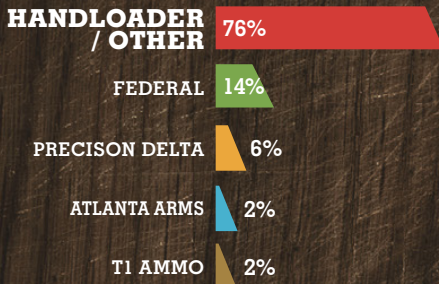
GRIP MANUFACTURER



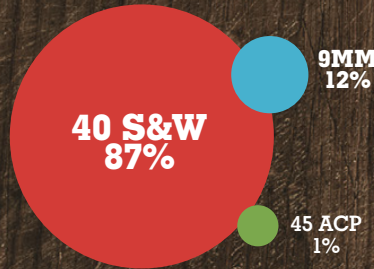
AMMUNITION



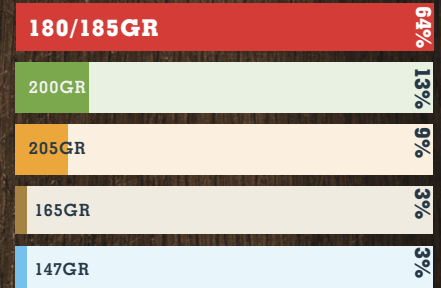
FACTORY AMMUNITION



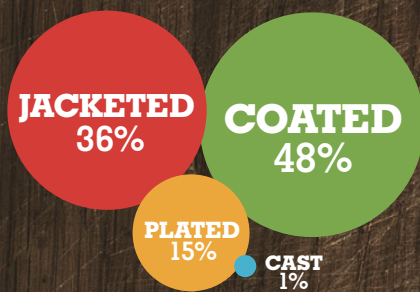
BULLET CALIBER



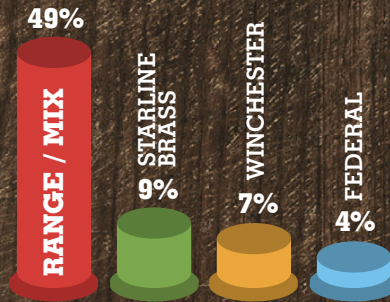
BULLET WEIGHT



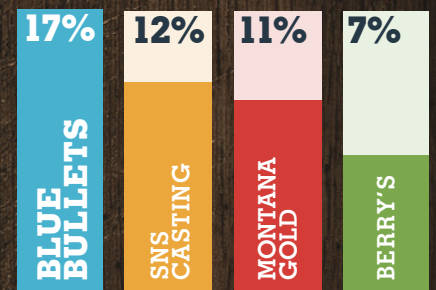
BULLET TYPE



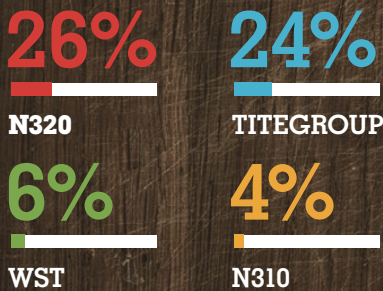
BRASS MANUFACTURER



TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



TYPE OF POWDER



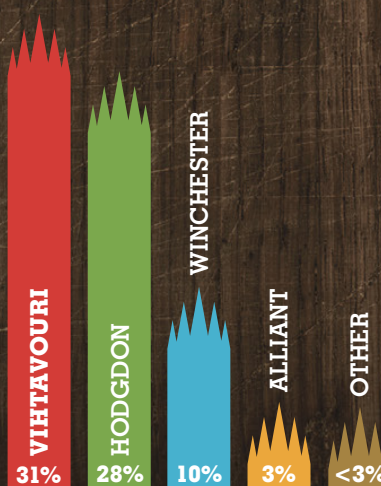
AUTOMATED



MODEL OF RELOADER



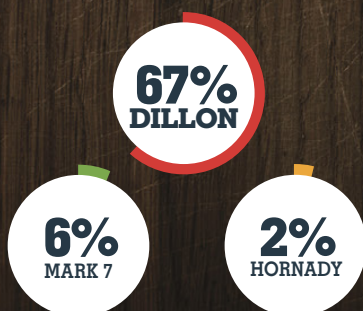
POWDER MANUFACTURER



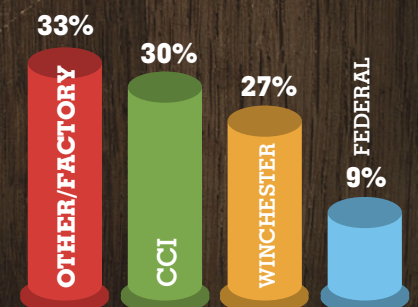
RELOADER AUTOMATION



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



LIMITED/L10

2018 LIMITED NATIONALS

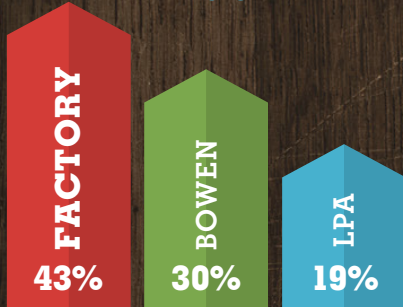
# EQUIPMENT SURVEY

## REVOLVER DIVISION

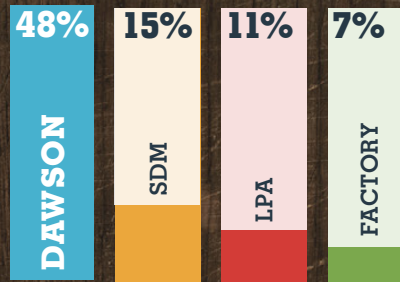
### 2018 LIMITED NATIONALS

USPSA'S LATEST TRENDS AND WHAT EQUIPMENT IS BEING USED TODAY

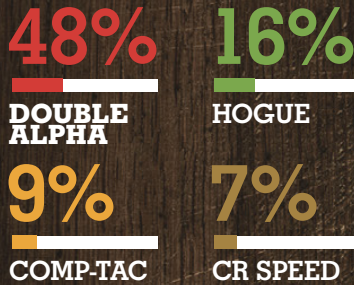
#### REAR SIGHT



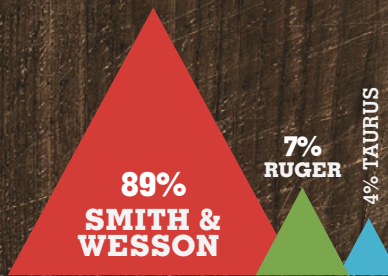
#### FRONT SIGHT



#### TOP FOUR HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



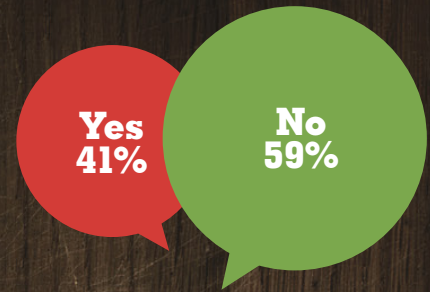
#### FIREARM MANUFACTURER



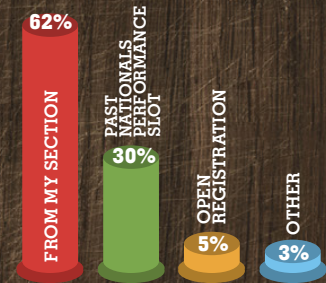
#### MOON CLIP HOLDER



#### IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



#### HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



#### GUNSMITH/CUSTOM SHOP TOP ANSWER



James McGinty

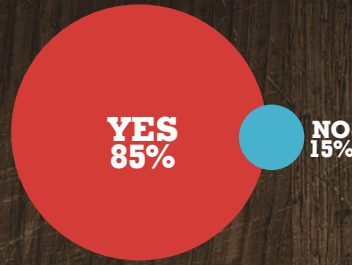


Photo by Michael Brooks.

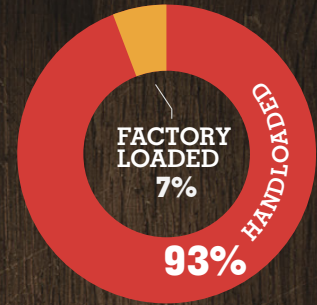
GRIP MANUFACTURER



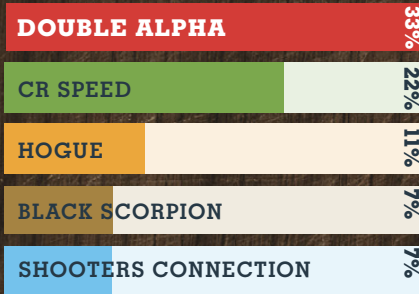
FRONT SIGHT FIBER OPTIC



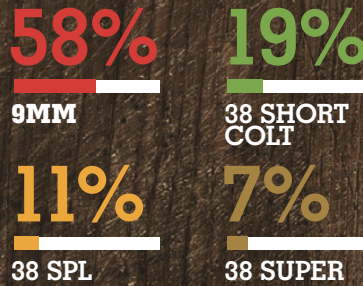
AMMUNITION



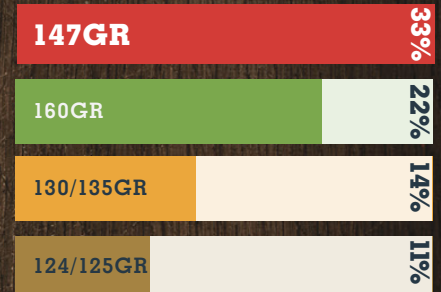
BELT SYSTEM



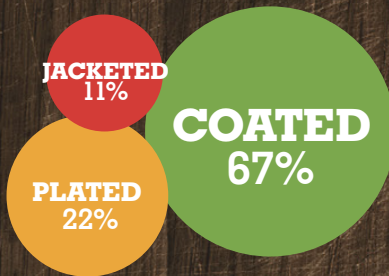
BULLET CALIBER



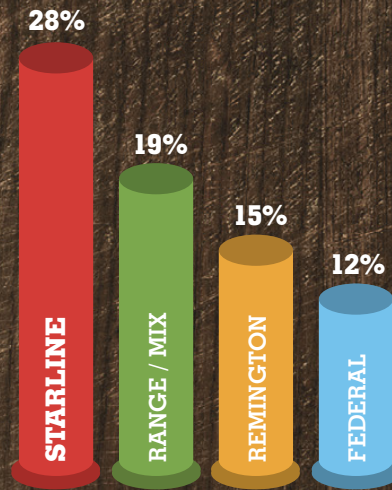
BULLET WEIGHT



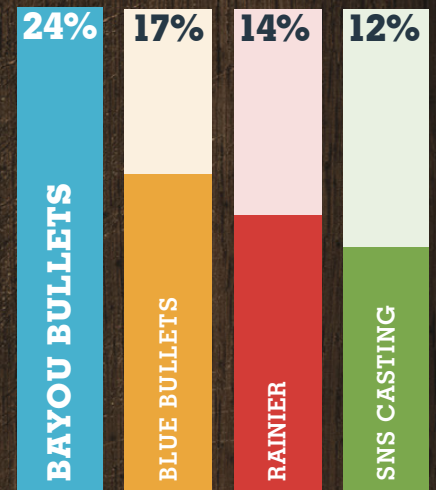
BULLET TYPE



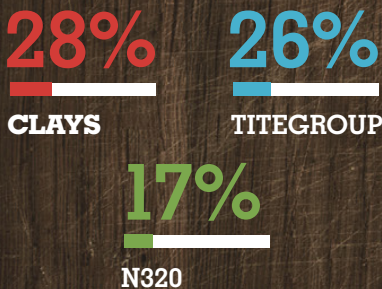
BRASS MANUFACTURER



TOP BULLET MANUFACTURERS



TYPE OF POWDER



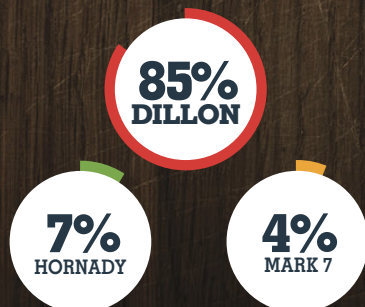
POWDER MANUFACTURER



RELOADER AUTOMATION



RELOADER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



A NEW MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE:

# WHY USPSA? & WHAT I LEARNED FROM MY FIRST USPSA MATCH

BY BRANDON WELLS, A115036

**T**he following is not the perspective of a national/world champion or even a seasoned competitor. It is the perspective of someone who up until this point has only participated in a single local match! It was not until six weeks prior to writing this story that I even learned of USPSA. I assumed there were official organizations governing and promoting competitive shooting sports; however, until six weeks ago I had zero familiarity with the USPSA and almost no familiarity with practical shooting as a sport.

I enjoy gun ownership. I purchased my first firearm in my early twenties and have since acquired many more. Although I have developed a familiarity with firearms, including their safe operation, my proficiency is at the level expected of one who has attended basic firearms courses and shoots a few hundred rounds annually at random, static targets. I own firearms because it is my right, and for the sense of security it provides. However, over the years I have recognized my gun ownership needed more meaning and practical application. And that is where I enthusiastically turned to recreational and competitive shooting sports.

This is where it gets somewhat complicated. Shooting sports vary across multiple disciplines, each defined by differences in popularity, equipment, participation, shooting distances, level of commitment, required athleticism, minimum investment, and a myriad of other factors. From shooting bullseyes to flying clay targets, from slow fire to rapid fire, from sitting at a bench to riding a horse, there is probably an option for everyone. I explored a variety of options over the last few months, and USPSA appeared to be the most practical, not necessarily for the



Max Bedwell

Photo by Jake Martens.

same reason as the name implies. Entry level USPSA participation requires very minimal investment. Shooting 150 rounds of factory 9mm ammo from a production handgun at short range seems to me considerably more cost-effective, achievable, and practical than shooting big bore rounds from a custom high-powered precision rifle at 1,000 yards.

Many who read this undoubtedly were introduced to practical shooting under similar circumstances, and may even share similar experiences leading up to his or her first match. It is also likely many have different opinions and may emphasize different lessons learned; however, this is my perspective as a new member and a few of what I consider important recommendations and lessons I

have learned. I acknowledge I have many more lessons to learn and skills to develop, and my opinions will surely evolve. In the meantime, perhaps my perspective will be shared with others looking to participate in their first USPSA match and provide a practical approach to entering the world of USPSA as a beginner.

Upon reflecting on the events and my initial beliefs leading up to my first USPSA match, I was surprised how incredibly easy it was to get into USPSA practical shooting. I am not suggesting the sport itself is easy; my first experience participating in an actual match was shockingly challenging, compounded by my own nervousness and anxiety. However, the sport is effectively

structured to accommodate beginners while providing the rigor required to be considered a serious competitive sport.

I joined the USPSA and over the following six weeks leading up to my first match as well as throughout the initial match, I learned, and recommend the following:

### + **Download the USPSA mobile app.**

After joining USPSA, start with downloading the mobile app. I found multiple useful resources on the USPSA mobile app. From the app I found a local club, and was able to find, and register for, a match. The mobile app also provided access to all the rule books as well as the classification diagrams. The classification diagrams were a useful resource for understanding what to expect with a stage layout, courses of fire, and procedures. Since registering as a member I have not really used anything other than the mobile app for referencing USPSA media and other content.

### + **Check out YouTube.**

If you want to know what it is like to shoot USPSA, watch a few YouTube videos. It is fast, exciting, and who does not want to shoot like John Wick? But here is the truth – you will not shoot like the guys on YouTube (at least not your first match). I assumed before attending my local match that most would be shooting very fast and very accurately, exactly like the guys I watched on the online videos. After watching dozens of videos, I was convinced that most competitors shoot like the guys in the videos at something like a Grand Master level. Those assumptions made me extremely nervous and very hesitant to compete. However, I quickly learned while observing during my first match that most shooting probably is not YouTube-worthy, although the match I attended had some very good competitors.

### + **Forget about divisions, forget about power factor, forget about scoring, and forget about classifications.**

Just grab your handgun and whatever ammo you like to shoot and leave it at that for your first match. When you attend your first match, someone will assist you in registering

Jason Linn



Photo by Jake Martens.

Matt Hopkins



Photo by Jake Martens.

in the right division (probably production or limited, assuming you are participating with a gun you already own). You will compete unclassified for at least your first four matches. The goal is to shoot fast and accurately. During your first match you will do neither – at least not very well. This is irrespective of whatever division you decide to shoot. Your gun is only going to perform as well as you do. I believe I expended more time than required for a first match trying to learn beforehand about all the divisions and equipment requirements, how to score, and getting preoccupied with classifications and how to move up in class. I am convinced after shooting my first match that none of this matters for your first match.

### + **Study and learn the core fundamentals.**

You need to study and learn the fundamentals, which is not the same as mastering the fundamentals. If you think you need to master all practical shooting fundamentals before shooting your first match, you will probably never shoot your first match. I recognize a variety of techniques and skills

require mastery beyond the fundamentals I list below, including movement, stage techniques, et cetera. I also understand there are dozens of books and other media that cover all these areas, as well as specialized and formal training options. Nonetheless, just follow the crowd and shoot the stage as you observe others shooting the stage. Focus on fundamentals like basic marksmanship, stance, grip, trigger control, draw, index, target transitions, and reloading. Nothing else really matters for your first match. You need to be able to safely draw, acquire a target, fire rounds, transition between targets, and occasionally reload. You need to be able to safely move with a loaded firearm. If you can do all that and do it safely, you are good to go for your first match.

I think most of these concepts can be learned at a level acceptable for your first match through simple “dry fire” practice. My son, who also joined me, had not fired a single live round prior to competing in this first match; all the fundamentals mentioned above he learned through a couple of weeks of dry-fire practice. At the time of our first match it



Doug Koenig



Ryan Stincer

was clear, within seconds of shooting the first stage, that we had not mastered any of these skills. However, we were able to safely perform the minimum basic functions, although with arguably awkward techniques and a few bad habits. The more you can do without thinking, I suppose the less you have to worry about on match day. Still, be prepared to forget and struggle the first match. I recall being seriously confused on my very first stage on how to deal with the simple prop. I was told that I just stood motionless for at least several seconds just holding the prop.

**+ Read the rules.**

Safety is first in USPSA. In my opinion, the most important safety rule (beyond the four universal rules of firearm safety) is the 180-degree rule. As a new competitor, simply never allow the handgun muzzle to point up-range at any time. I noticed during my first match just how easy it can be to violate this rule. Completing a course with a loaded handgun can obviously be done safely. However, with the pressure and nervousness of a match I had to conscientiously work to keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction.

**+ Start with basic equipment.**

All you need to compete in your first match is eye and ear protection, a handgun, a few magazine pouches, extra magazines, and

ammunition. Acquire a few extra magazines for your existing semi-automatic handgun. I carried five magazine pouches on my belt. (I did not use more than three for any stage.) Factory ammunition worked great for a first match. After your first match you are going to have a starting point of where to go next in terms of equipment, which will be driven primarily by the requirements of each division. Handgun modifications are going to be of no significant value for your first match. I am convinced the upgraded guide rod, connector kit, springs, magazine base pads, and anything else I added to my Glock 34 did very little to influence the outcome of my first match.

**FOR THE MATCH:**

**+ Show up early.**

Most competitors at my local match showed up just prior to the match start time. With the early morning Idaho cold, I do not blame them. However, I think significant value in learning the sport as a newcomer comes from showing up early and volunteering with the stage setup.

**+ Bring a friend, or better yet, bring your family.**

I brought my son. So why convince my son to join USPSA? Besides building character, self-esteem, discipline, and physical development,

I am simply interested in helping my kids develop a wide range of interests and more active habits. I do not see the value in spending excessive time delving into the electronic world of video games and social media. Even with the advances in virtual reality and 3D gaming, shooting stages at a USPSA match is much more thrilling than sitting on the edge of the couch manipulating a 1911 with a videogame controller while engaged in a scene from *Call of Duty* (just ask my teenage son).

In addition, unlike alternative competitive sports, I cannot think of too many examples where I can participate and compete alongside my son, even while performing at different levels. Really, USPSA shooting can easily be adopted by the entire family. The match was also much more enjoyable sharing the experience with someone familiar. You are also going to want someone to record your new shooting talent and snap a few photos. Finally, it does not take but a single match to recognize that the future of the sport is dependent on attracting and engaging more youth and the younger generation.

**+ Observe and participate.**

Attending a USPSA match is not all about just showing up and shooting stages. Even with six stages at a local match, I probably spent less than three minutes of actual shooting (a really conservative estimate, considering the idea is to shoot fast) during a match that lasted several hours. In addition to observing other competitors, we helped tape targets, reset poppers, and record scores. I learned more through active participation and observation in my first match than I did during the entire six weeks prior to the match (I admit I even read a couple of books on practical shooting before the match).

USPSA is just as the name implies – it is practical. It is also dynamic. And it is fun! I recognize I have only experienced the surface of what USPSA has to offer as shooting sport. I recognize it may be years before I realize my goal to be a GM class competitor. In the meantime, time to register for my second match. I wish I had found USPSA years ago! ■

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