

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE UNITED STATES PRACTICAL SHOOTING ASSOCIATION



USPSA

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2021 ANNUAL ISSUE

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INSIDE USPSA

By Mike Foley, RD6 USPSA President
 president@uspsa.org



INTERESTED IN USPSA SHOOTING?

Welcome 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 34,500 members strong in the US alone! We have over 750 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 AND STEEL CHALLENGE MOBILE APPS

Designed for use by USPSA and SCSA competitors, the USPSA and SCSA Mobile Apps include 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 and SCSA Mobile Apps are available from the Apple, Android, and Amazon App stores. There is no cost to download them, it is FREE, but only current USPSA members are able to log into them.

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 EIGHT TIPS TO KEEP UP WITH WHAT IS GOING ON:

- 1. Get the USPSA and/or Steel Challenge Mobile Apps** – These great new tools have a lot of information you need on the field of play and when discussing the games 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, 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 and SCSA.org** – The websites are 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 all USPSA members.
- 5. Visit the USPSA and SCSA Facebook pages** – 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 and SCSA Instagram pages – The Instagram pages are 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 34,500 members from time to time. While we don't use this as often, we do send important information to all members, and other messages targeted to range officers or Steel Challenge competitors. We won't send you any spam.

8. Setup Push Notifications – Setup Push Notifications on all your devices to get notifications that are important to you. These include major match announcements, uploaded match scores, and much more.

With all these great ways to stay informed, there is no need to rely on rumors and second-hand information from unofficial sources. 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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STAYING INFORMED WITH OFFICIAL MOBILE APPS

THE **USPSA MOBILE APP** AND **STEEL CHALLENGE MOBILE APP** ARE BOTH AVAILABLE FROM THE APPLE, ANDROID, AND AMAZON APP STORES. THERE IS NO COST TO DOWNLOAD THEM AND ARE COMPLETELY FREE. HOWEVER, YOU MUST BE A CURRENT USPSA MEMBER TO LOG IN.



APP FEATURES INCLUDE:

- // USPSA Classification Lookup
- // USPSA Rules
- // USPSA Match Results
- // Digital Membership Card
- // Find USPSA Clubs Near You
- // Classification Calculator
- // Find a USPSA Match Near You
- // USPSA Classifier Diagrams

THE OFFICIAL **USPSA MOBILE APP**

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.

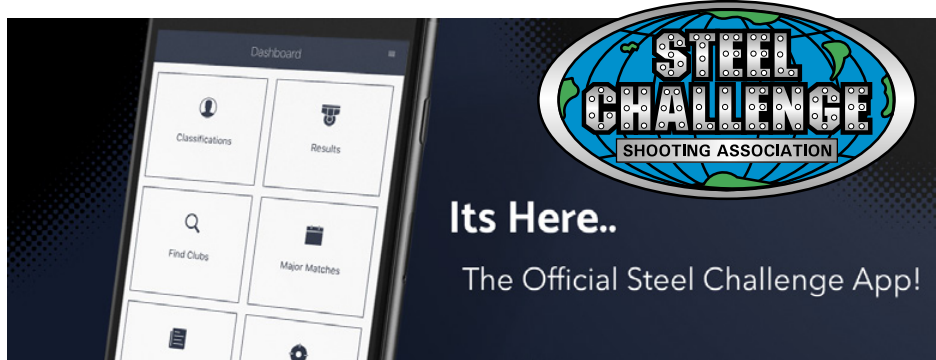


APP FEATURES INCLUDE:

- // Classification Lookup
- // Steel Challenge Rules
- // Match Results
- // Digital Membership Card
- // Find Clubs Near You
- // Classification Calculator
- // Find a Match Near You
- // Classifier Diagrams

THE OFFICIAL **STEEL CHALLENGE MOBILE APP**

The Steel Challenge Mobile App, designed to meet the needs of members before, during, and after Steel Challenge matches. Includes rules, classifier calculator, classification info, stage diagrams, finding matches, clubs, match results, and membership info.



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Casey Reed



SPEED POWER +ACCURACY

Blend 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 (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,

SCORING

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



Hit Factor = Points ÷ Time

example:

20 points / 10 seconds = 2.0 Hit Factor

.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 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.

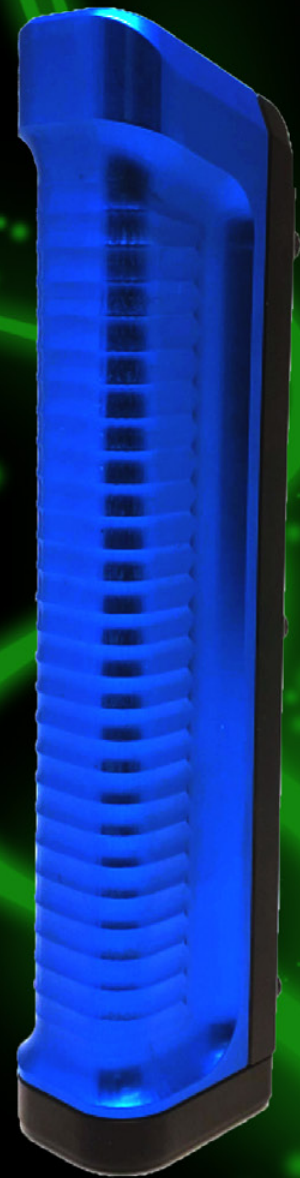
That said, don't worry about getting disqualified. Before you shoot your first match, the host club will show you the ropes. They'll run you through a “safety orientation” or “safety check” to acquaint you with their range and all the necessary rules, check your gear, and walk you through some shooting 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), 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 750 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

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 chief range officers, and also mentor Range Master Candidates.

Rules 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 officials for USPSA sanctioned events. NROI-certified range officers will be seen in uniform at the larger Area- and National-level events,





Rich Wolfe



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

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.



Austin Ariss

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 Association, 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 AND STEEL CHALLENGE ENDORSEMENT

If your interest lies in Multigun or Steel Challenge, don't despair. The MG and

Steel Challenge 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), you can gain an endorsement in either discipline through our Learning Management System, or LMS.

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 transitioned to electronic rules in 2019. A copy of all of our rules can be found and downloaded at www.uspsa.org/rules or on the USPSA App: www.uspsa.org/app.

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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Mike Howell

For more information, call (360) 855-2245 or e-mail info@uspsa.org



Kelly Brown

ASSOCIATION OF CLUBS

If 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 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,

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

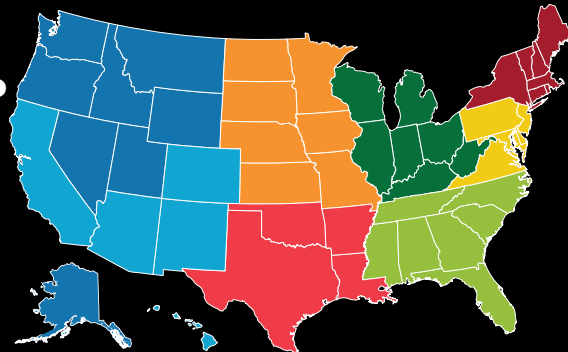
USPSA STRUCTURE

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



Johnathon Ward, Brian Conley, Tony Martin, Matt Glover



J.T. Cross



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 elect-

ed 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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FOCUS ON: DIVISIONS

WHICH GUNS DO WE SHOOT, AND WHY?

USPSA 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 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 re-

ally 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 sim-

FRANK GARCIA
SHOOTING

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THE DIVISIONS

PRODUCTION DIVISION

- Striker fired or double-action firearms that appear on the "approved list." (See 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, porting or compensators.
- 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.

John Scoutten



CARRY OPTICS DIVISION

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

- Striker fired or double-action firearms that appear on the "Production Approved List." (See 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.



ilar. 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 releases and slide stops; slide modifications and swaps are also allowed. (The Production Division Appendix was modified in 2020.)

Shooters may only load 10 rounds into 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.

Revolver shooters may score “major” us-

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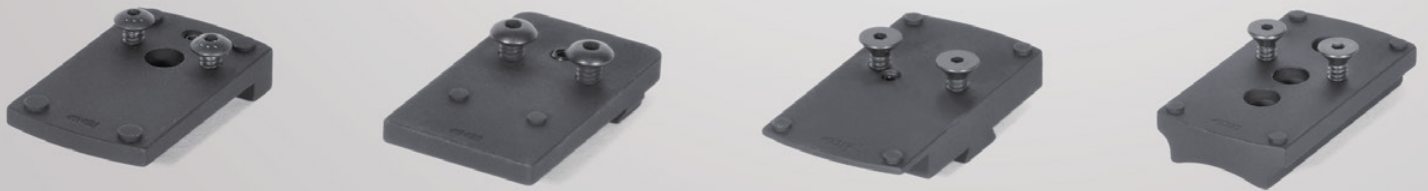
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ing any cartridge firing a bullet .355” or larger, with a restriction of only 6 rounds being fired before reloading. USPSA recently changed the division rules in revolver to allow for 8 shots being fired before reloading, but competitors choosing to 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 59-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 Carbine, 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! ■

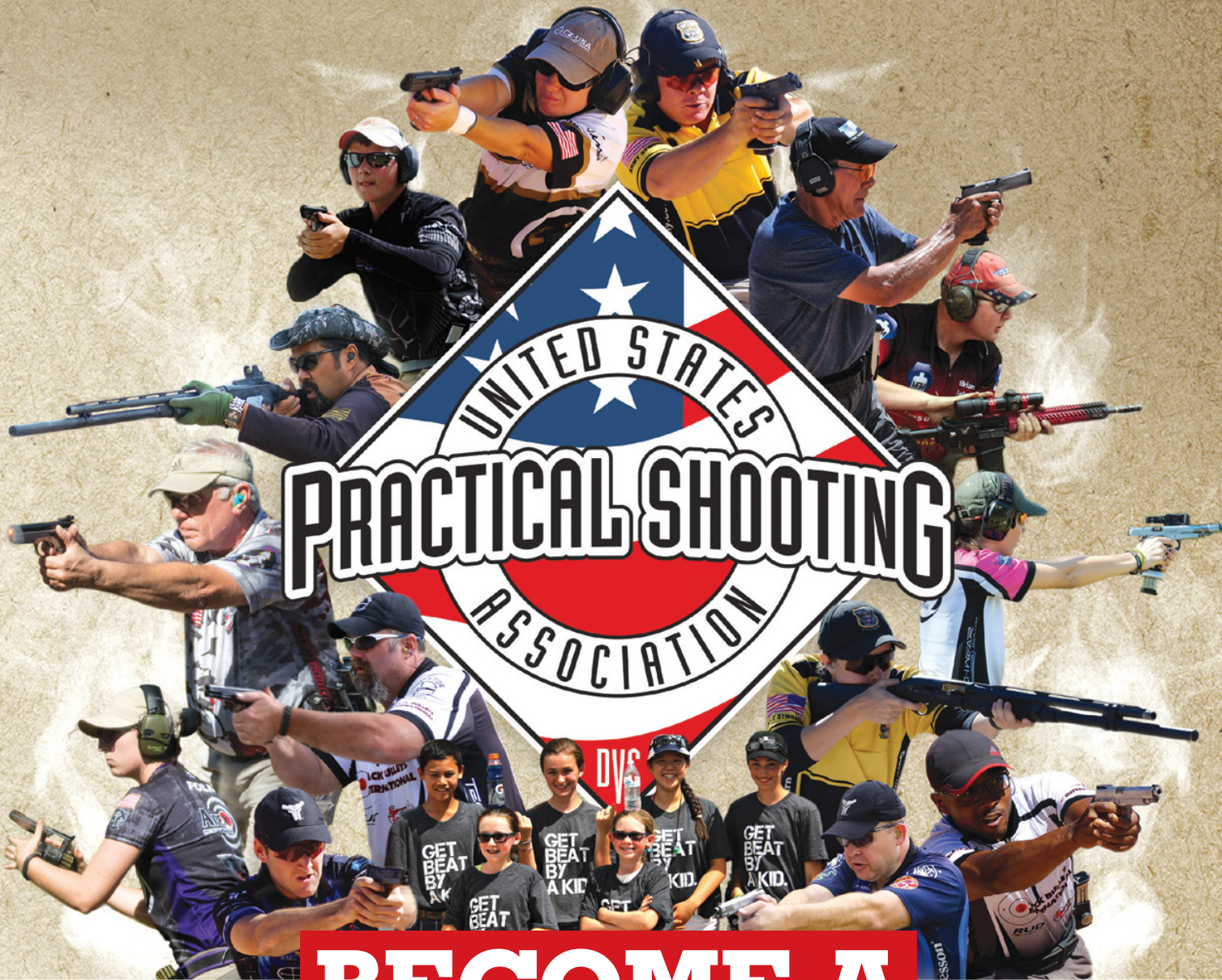
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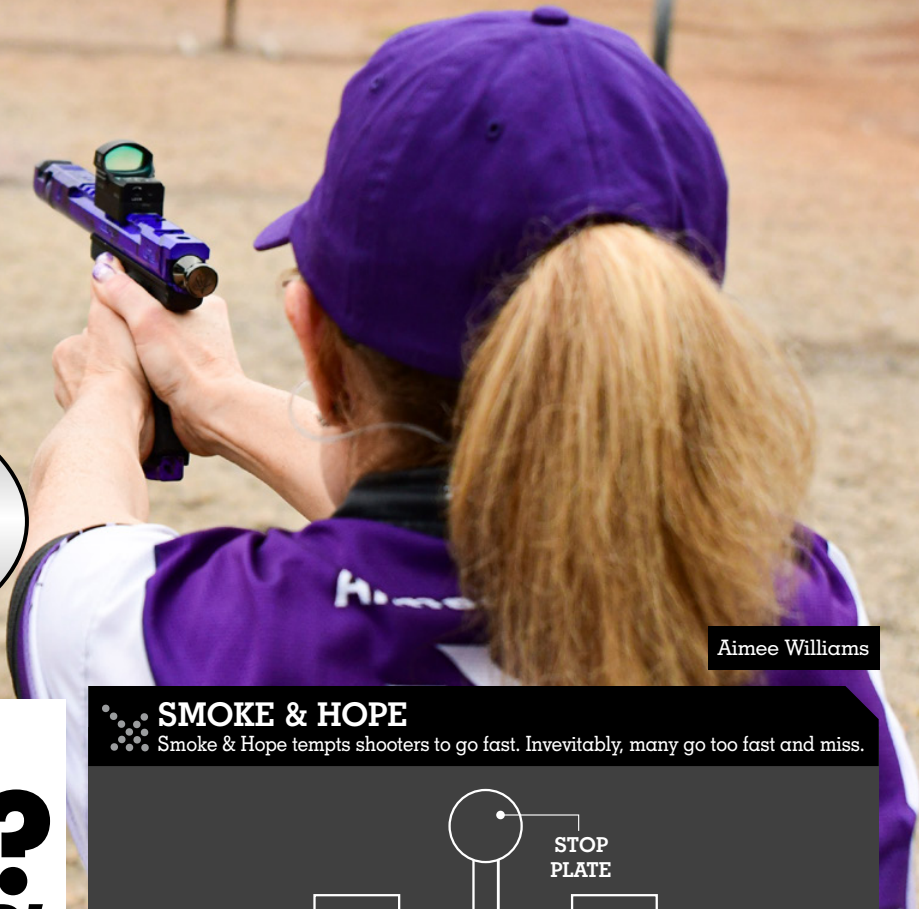
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Aimee Williams

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BY ZACK JONES
NATIONAL SCSA PROGRAM COORDINATOR
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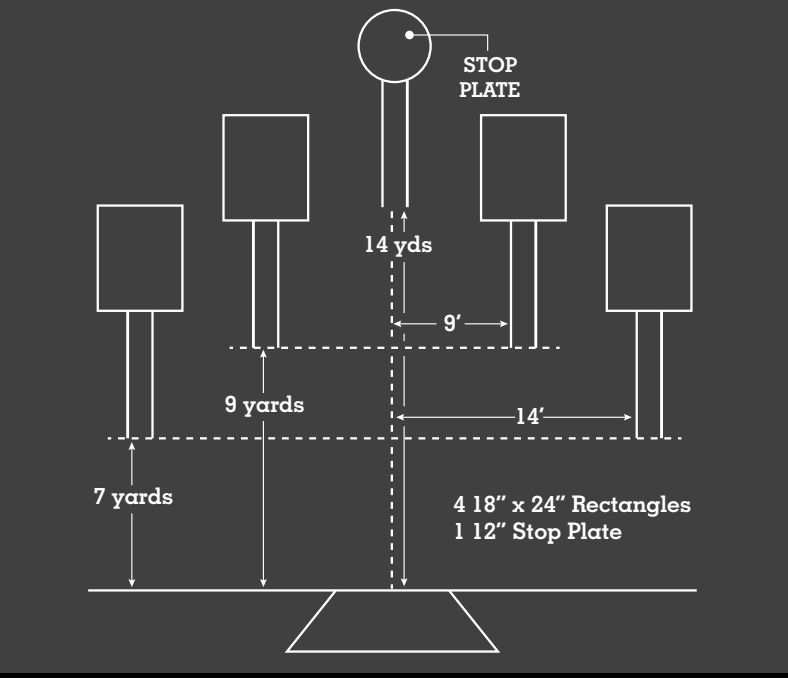
Ding, ding, ding, ding, ding! The ringing of steel plates as fast as you possibly can is what Steel Challenge is all about. Imagine hitting five plates ranging in size from 10-inch circles to 18x24-inch rectangles in under two seconds; that's what some of the fastest competitors in the world can do. 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

SMOKE & HOPE

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



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



Mark Weaver



Tresa Weaver

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", 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 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 pistols 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 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 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 and he'll be happy to help in any way he can. ■

Thomas Query



BY TROY McMANUS

MULTI-GUN BASICS

USPSA 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

Keith Garcia



Daniel Horner



Dakota Overland



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/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 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.



Tim Yackley



Beth Walker



Rich Wolfe

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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USPSA INTRODUCES AN UPDATED CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM



David Johnson

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%

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 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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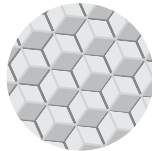


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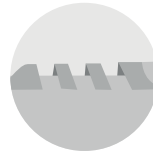
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GETTING STARTED IN STEEL CHALLENGE

BY STEVE FOSTER, A75125

Steel Challenge is one of the most exciting action shooting sports in the world. In addition to the competitive nature of the sport, an added bonus is that the whole family can come along and get involved for a reasonable amount of money. The barrier to entry into the sport is fairly low. Let's spend a few moments and walk through where to find your first Steel Challenge match and what you will need to participate.

The Steel Challenge Shooting Association released a new web page in 2019 at SCSA.org. In order to find a local match or any of the major matches, go to the website and click "Matches" in the top right-hand corner of the website. From there you will see the "Find SCSA Matches" (*image 1*).

You can click on either "View List" or "View Calendar". For the purposes of our discussion, click on "View List". You will then see a list of all sanctioned Tier I or what we commonly refer to as "local" Steel Challenge Matches (*image 2*).

If you would like more information about a match, go ahead and click on the "Match Name". You will find the date, time, location of the event, contact information for the director of the match and, typically, you will see the cost of the match (*image 3*).

You may have heard that a lot of people shoot more than one division (or gun) in a match; as a new shooter, I would recommend shooting one division. In our

example, we will need to bring \$25 for the Veterans 3 Gun Team 1100 match located at the CMP Talladega Marksmanship Park.

Now that I know where I need to go, what do I need to bring? Let's start off with the two key essentials. You may be thinking gun and ammunition – no, not yet, we will get to that in a few moments. You need to bring:

1. **Eye Protection**
2. **Hearing Protection**

When you arrive at the shooting event, always make sure you have your eye protection on before you exit your vehicle. These events are held at gun ranges with active shooting going on; you only get two eyes, so let's be diligent in keeping them. When shopping for your safety glasses, look for a pair that is tested to an ANZI Z87.1 2015 standard. This means eye protection of a .25" steel ball traveling at 150 FPS. These can be purchased for as low as \$20.

Next, make sure you have your hearing protection in your hand in case shooting is already going on. When you purchase hearing protection, you will want a Noise Reduction Rating (NRR) of at least 25. With a proper fit, foam ear plugs can offer a NRR of 32. If shooting larger caliber guns, inner ear and over ear combinations are recommended. For shooting Rimfire, foam ear plugs are a great start and these can be found for as low as a dollar a pair.

Your next question should be, what kind of gun do I need to bring? I would recommend you bring what you have. Most outdoors enthusiasts have or know someone with a Ruger 10/22 or 22/45 in their safe, or maybe a Glock 17. If you don't, email the match director of the Steel Challenge match and ask them if they know of someone in the club who has equipment for you to borrow. Worst case scenario, you can purchase a Ruger 10/22 or 22/45 Mark IV or similar setup for \$300, or less if you shop around. To start with, I recommend starting from the 'low-ready' and not drawing from a holster. When asking to borrow equipment, see if they have five magazines to use during your first match. If you are hooked

IMAGE 1

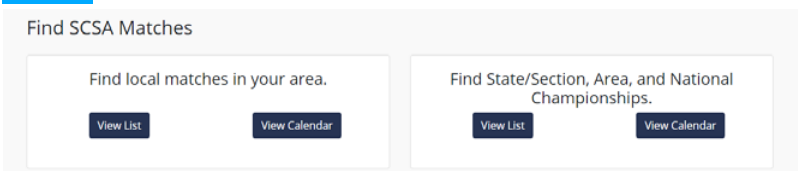
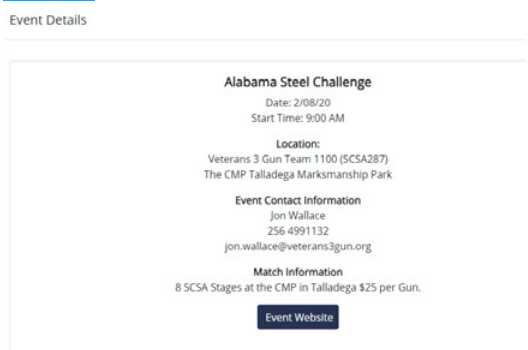


IMAGE 2

Match Name	Club	Date	Location
Palm Springs Gun Club Steel Challenge	Palm Springs Gun Club	1/26/20	Thousand Palms, CA
PGC January Match (Charleston, SC)	Palmetto Gun Club	1/26/20	Ridgeville, SC
Pricetown Steel Challenge - PRPCSCSA January 2019 Match	Pricetown Rifle & Pistol Club	1/26/20	Fleetwood, PA
First Coast Steel Shooters January match	First Coast Steel Shooters	1/27/20	New Smyrna Beach, FL
First Coast Steel Shooters January match	First Coast Steel Shooters	1/27/20	New Smyrna Beach, FL
Flagler Monday Six Stage Match	Flagler Gun And Archery Club	1/27/20	Bunnell, FL
The Range at True North Steel Challenge Match	True North Firearms Center	2/01/20	Oxford, NC
Flagler Monday Six Stage Match	Flagler Gun And Archery Club	2/03/20	Bunnell, FL
Hansen Steel Challenge	Fort Myers Practical Shooters	2/08/20	Punta Gorda, FL
Alabama Steel Challenge	Veterans 3 Gun Team 1100	2/08/20	Talladega, AL

IMAGE 3



the way I was, you will want your own equipment; having five magazines helps the shooting squads move along quicker. When you borrow or purchase a gun for the match, make sure you have a bag to bring it to and from the firing line in an unloaded and safe condition. Make sure when the “Make Ready” command is given, the muzzle end of the gun is pointed downrange. If shooting a rifle, you will need a chamber flag, which more than likely will come with the gun – if not, a simple zip tie will get you through your first match.

The only other thing you need for a match is to make sure you have enough ammunition. To be on the safe side, bring 500 rounds. For Rimfire, you can find ammunition on sale for about \$.05 a round, for a total of \$25.

When you get to the range, most times, “check in” is at a clubhouse, but every range is different. Again, check with the match director or their web site to get the check-in time, directions, check-in point, and match fee.

To recap the costs of getting started, if you are able to borrow a gun and magazines, is:

- Eye Protection \$20
- Ear Protection \$1
- Ammunition \$25
- Match Fee \$25

TOTAL \$71

You should have ammunition to come home, and your eye and ear protection is reusable if you take care of them. If you want to purchase a gun, I would add around \$300 and a bag for \$10, a total of \$310 plus tax. Most guns come with two magazines, so you will want to buy three more for about \$20 each, a total of \$60. Your own setup will be less than \$400 to get started, and you can upgrade with time.

It may seem a bit daunting, but I recommend reading the Rules of Steel Challenge located here: https://uspsa.org/viewer/2019_SCSA_Rulebook.pdf

You do not need to be an expert. There will be Ranger Officers in charge of your squad, and they will be able to answer any questions you may have.

We all started at the same starting point. Don't be nervous. Get to the range, be safe, and have fun! ■



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SHOOTING SPORTS

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO GETTING STARTED

BY STEVE FOSTER, A75125

Thirty-eight years ago, I pulled the trigger on my first gun, a bolt-action rimfire rifle. The loud crack of the bullet leaving the rifle and then hitting the intended soda can lit a spark inside me, which has developed into a burning passion in the Shooting Sports. My father was a skilled marksman who has a training heart with a “Safety First” mantra in everything we explored while I was growing up.

Steel Challenge is a great place for new shooters and youth shooters to begin their shooting career. Some of us haven't left. Why Steel Challenge? Shooting sports such as USPSA's Steel Challenge has a low barrier to entry to get your younger family members involved in competitive shooting.

Recently, I had the opportunity to meet an amazing young man. His name is Tucker, and he is nine years old. I squadded with his father Andy Browne at a Tier 1 match in Tennessee. Tucker was enthusiastic about shooting, had lots of questions, and loved to spray targets with Steel Target Paint. He did not shoot this match, but was in attendance because his father wanted to gauge his interest and readiness to attend his first match.

Shortly after meeting Tucker, his father reached out to me and stated he had successfully shot his first match. I sat down with Tucker and his father to answer some questions many of us, as parents, have about getting their children or younger family members into competitive shooting.

Royce Bright and Neil Davis



USPSA: *Andy, you are a competitive shooter, can you tell me where your home range is and what involvement you have in the sport, i.e., Match Director for X, you shoot Steel Challenge, etcetera?*

AB: I am currently a member of the Steel Target Paint shooting team and compete

in Steel Challenge competitions. I also serve as the match director for Dead Zero Steel Challenge, at the Dead Zero Shooting Park in Spencer, Tennessee, where we host monthly matches along with hosting the Tennessee State Steel Challenge Championship this year.

USPSA: *With the lack of matches being held, I traveled to Tennessee to shoot a local match with you, and I met your son Tucker. How old is he, and what is his interest in shooting?*

AB: Tucker is nine years old, and he is interested in all things shooting. He has started competing in some of our local Steel Challenge matches and shows a great deal of excitement about the shooting sports. Tucker came to watch me at some matches and really expressed an interest in competing. He saw my teammates Steve Foster and Chris Barrett at a match and he was completely hooked. After that match, he shot some of the guns used by the team, including Larry Joe Steeley's JP GMR-15 PCC and Vanessa Foster's CWA rimfire pistol. The level of excitement he showed me after that match let me know that we were on the right track to getting him involved in competition.

USPSA: *Why do you think he is so interested in shooting?*

AB: I have been involved in shooting for over 40 years, so Tucker has been exposed to shooting his whole life. We have spent many days as a family at the range having fun.

USPSA: *Tucker, why are you interested in shooting?*

TB: I like shooting guns and being able to go shoot with my dad.

USPSA: *Tucker, what is it you like most about the sport?*

TB: I like to get to shoot and try to get better every time I shoot.

USPSA: *Tucker, what do you like least about the sport?*

TB: There isn't anything that I don't really like about shooting.

USPSA: *Andy, why are you supporting him in his pursuit of shooting?*

AB: Part of my job as a dad is to support Tucker as he chases dreams. His interest in the shooting sports is something that is easy to get behind, since it such a positive activity. This also allows me to spend time with him as he grows.

USPSA: *What are your goals for him in the sport? We should talk about the ease of shooting Steel Challenge with the family atmosphere.*

AB: The number one goal I have for Tucker is for him to enjoy shooting. If he isn't having fun, then he is free to walk away from it. I have been this way with him through other sports he has been involved with. I want him to feel excited for every match he attends. Now, on the competitive end, I would love to see him become one of the next rising stars in Steel Challenge. This particular sport has so many talented young shooters, and they will carry the sport for us as the next generation. Getting Tucker involved

in Steel Challenge was a pretty easy decision, since it offers very few barriers to entry. We also have a great group of local shooters that include entire families. The environment at Steel Challenge matches is like a family gathering. I also liked the fact that there is not much movement involved in Steel Challenge stages, something that allows young shooters to better focus on safety and shooting fundamentals.

USPSA: *Let's talk about the different divisions in Steel Challenge. Which do you think is the best to start him off with? What would your advice be for other parents who are looking to get their son/daughter/niece/nephew involved in the shooting sports?*

Milo Davis and Aron Bright



AB: We started Tucker off in RFRO for a couple of reasons. Our Magnum Research Switchbolt rifles are lightweight, so even smaller folks can handle them well. The rimfire platform also has very little recoil, so it helps keep him from feeling like his rifle is beating him up. The use of an optical sight helps with the overall learning curve of picking up speed in the stages as a new shooter. A reliable rimfire rifle with either open sights or an optic is easy to shoot well and the cost of rimfire ammunition is reasonable.

For anyone who is looking to get a youngster involved in the shooting sports, I would tell them to not feel intimidated. Even if you do not have personal experience, there are very capable shooters at the matches that will gladly help a young shooter get started. Patience seems to be abundant at matches, particularly when young shooters are involved.

USPSA: *Are you concerned at all for his safety shooting at the age of nine?*

AB: We exposed Tucker to firearms at a young age so that we could start to build healthy respect for them. With the many safety features built into Steel Challenge matches, we have been very comfortable with getting Tucker involved. Tucker had to show me that he could safely handle a firearm, clear malfunctions, and shoot with reasonable accuracy before he was able to shoot in a match.

USPSA: *For our readers who are considering getting a young person involved in shooting, what gear do you recommend for a new shooter and why – guns, glasses, ears, etcetera?*

AB: One of great things about Steel Challenge is the ease of getting started. As I mentioned, Tucker is using a Magnum Research Switchbolt rifle, and it has been great. We have six magazines that he uses for matches, one for each string and a spare. Something to consider with young shooters is their physical size and how a firearm or accessory will fit them. This has been something that was challenging with Tucker when we were working on



Royce Bright

hearing protection. The “in-ear” hearing protection proved to be uncomfortable for him, so he has settled on a traditional style of ear muffs. Since being comfortable is important, you will want to get feedback from the young shooter on their hearing protection. Pro Ears most likely offers hearing protection that will work for both your budget and the shooter’s comfort. Comfortable eyewear is also an important consideration. Tucker had received a nice pair of shooting glasses from his grandparents at Christmas, so he was ready with those. Comfortable footwear is another consideration, since the shooters will be on their feet quite a bit. Also, remember to bring snacks and drinks to the range. This helps keep your young shooter fueled up throughout the match.

USPSA: *Do you have any other recommendations you would like to share with our readers on getting younger people involved in the sport?*

AB: It is imperative that we pass the shooting sports on to our younger

shooters. If you have a young person who is interested, give them all the help you can. If you are unsure about how to get them involved, reach out to your local club, and I am confident you will find them to be welcoming. All of the local clubs I shoot at go to great lengths to help youngsters or new shooters get going and feel comfortable.

USPSA: *Tucker, what message would you send to others who are not certain about shooting that are your age? What would you tell them to give them confidence?*

TB: I would tell them to concentrate on being safe and get started. I would also tell them to start with the smaller caliber guns and then work on the larger guns. It helps confidence by remembering that it is not about winning, it is about having fun and being safe.

Thank you to Andy and his son Tucker for spending time with us to share their first-hand knowledge and experience as they dive headfirst into a life-long passion! ■



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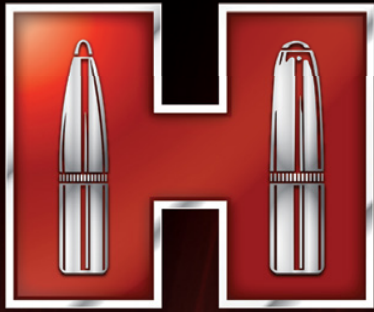




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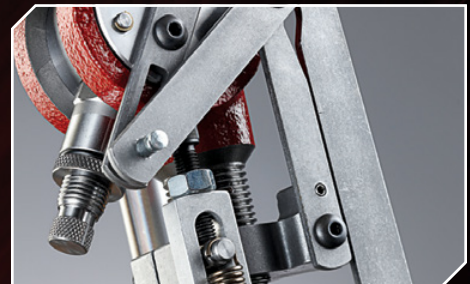
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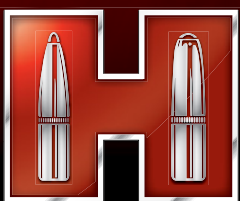
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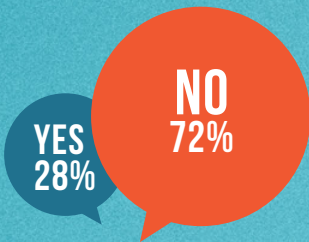


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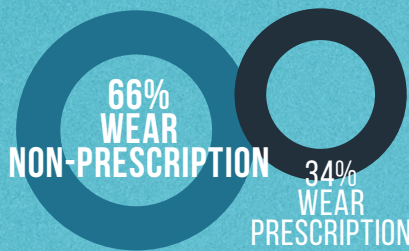
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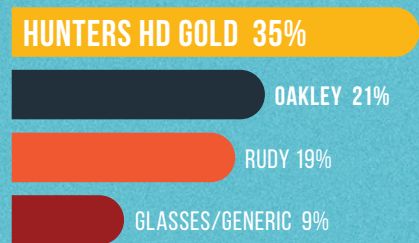
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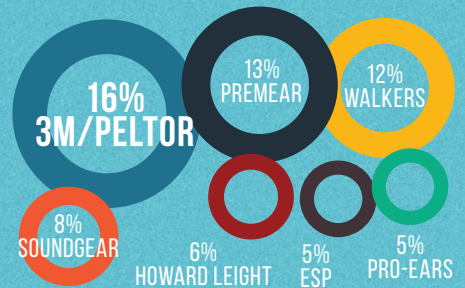
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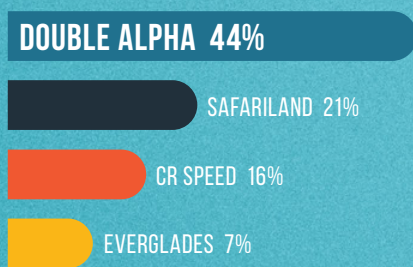
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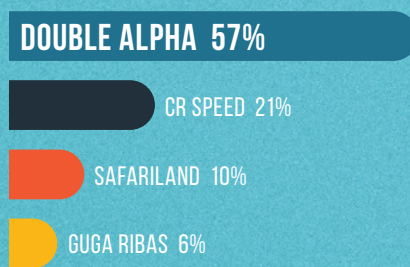
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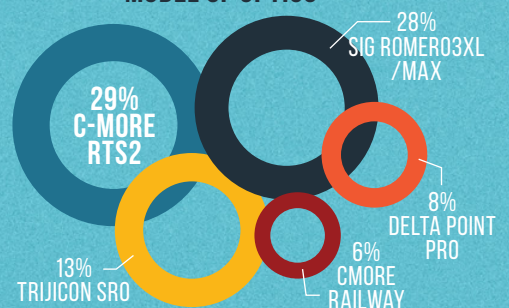
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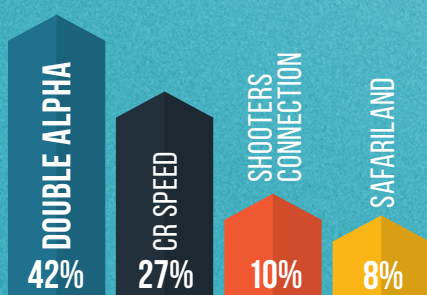
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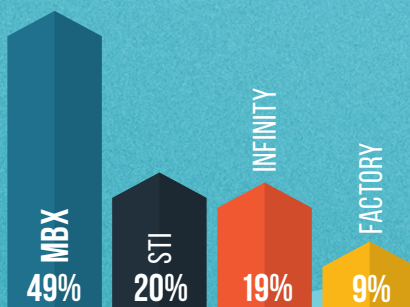
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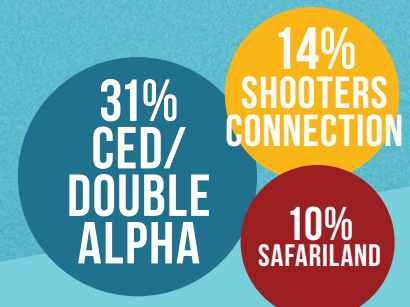
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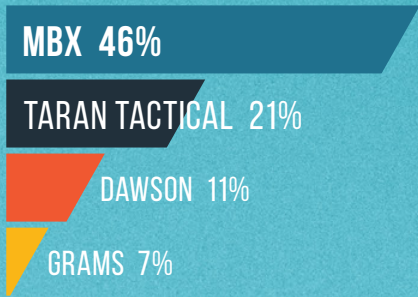
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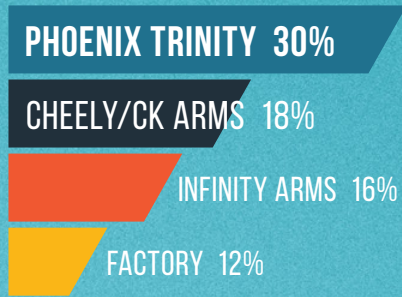
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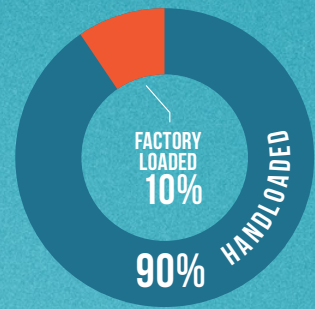
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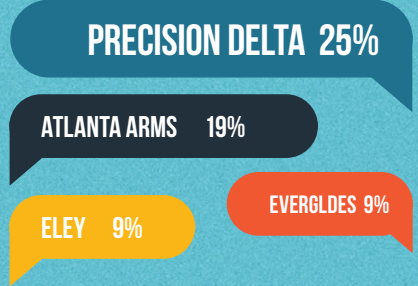
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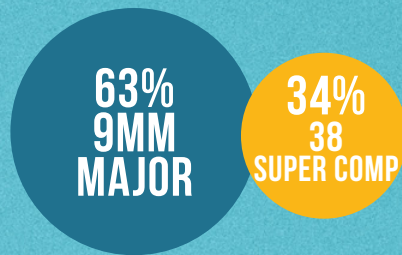
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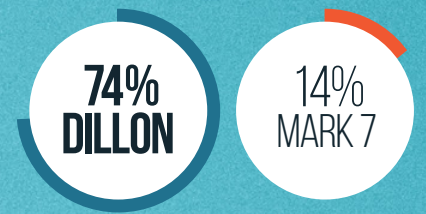
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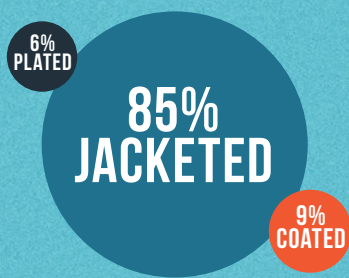
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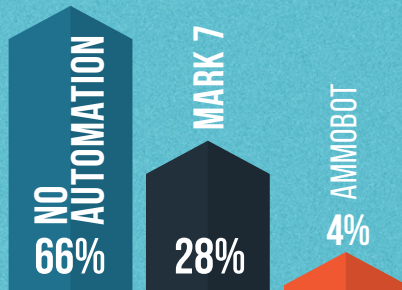
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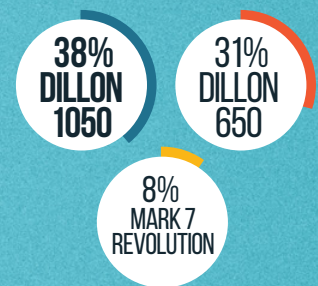
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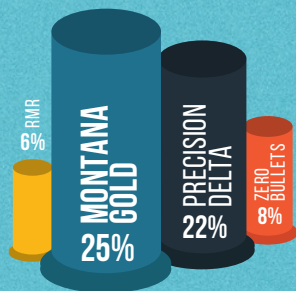
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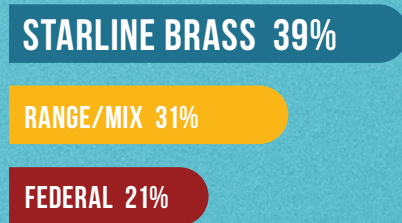
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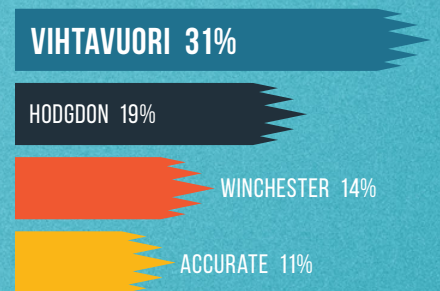
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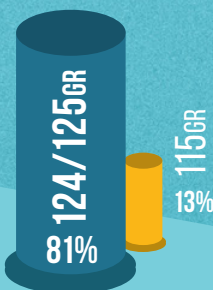
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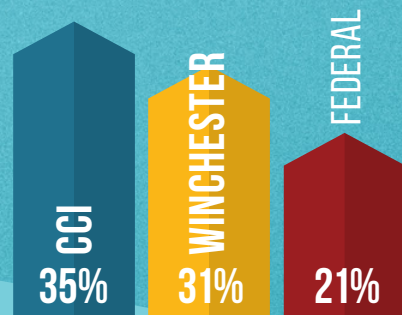
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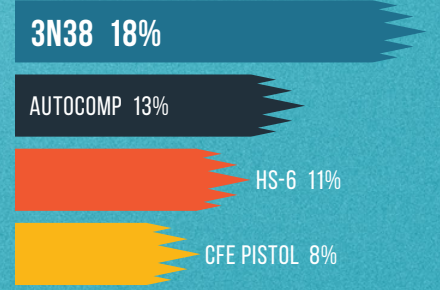
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TYPE OF POWDER



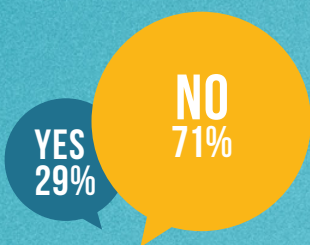


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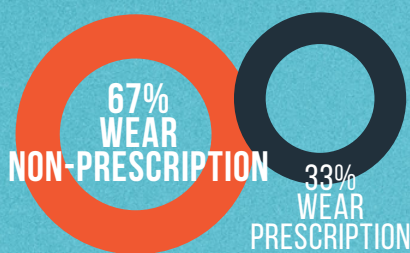
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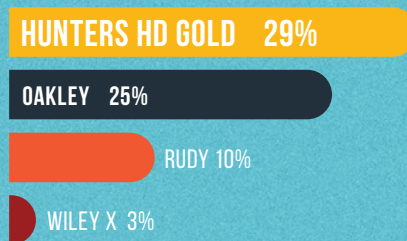
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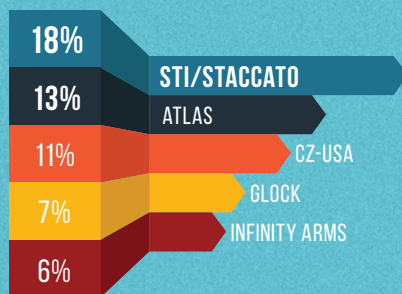
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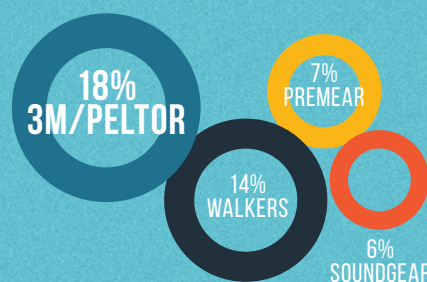
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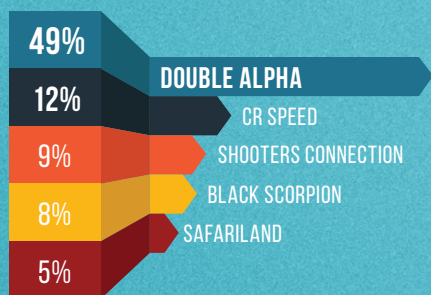
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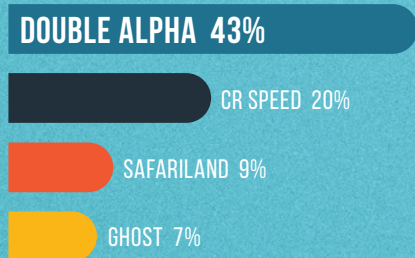
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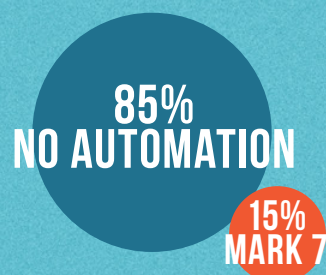
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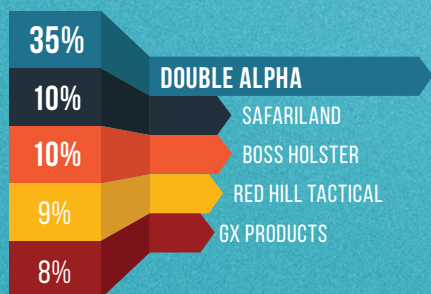
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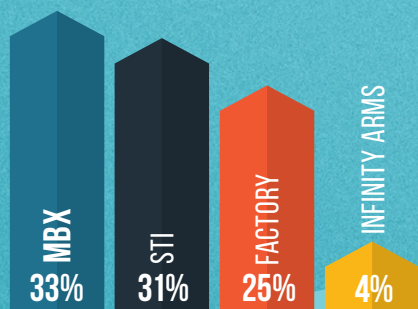
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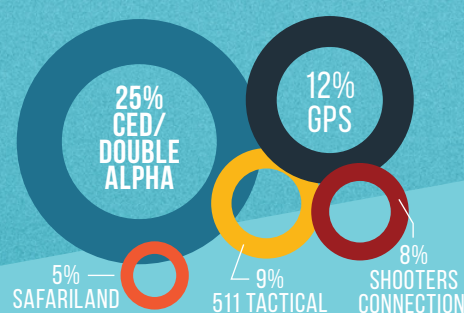
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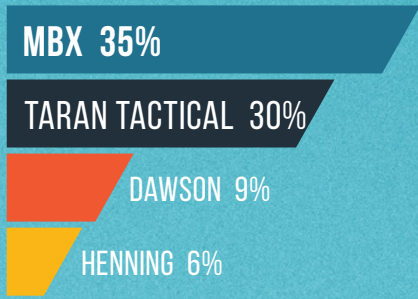
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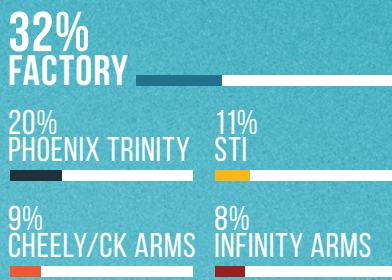
RANGE BAG BRAND



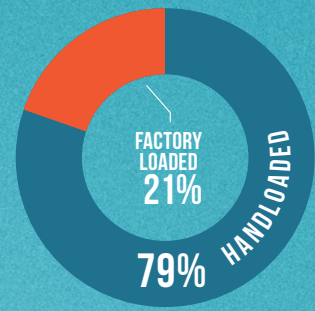
BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



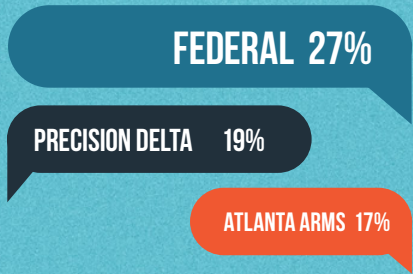
GRIP MANUFACTURERS



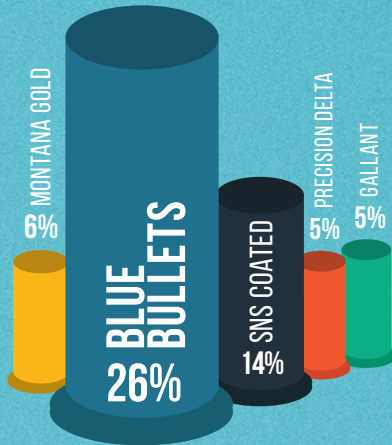
AMMUNITION



FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



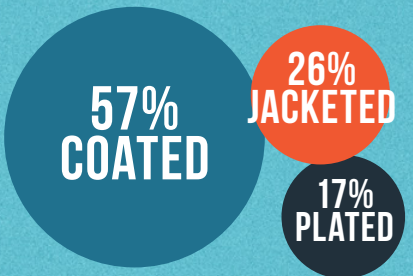
BULLET MANUFACTURER



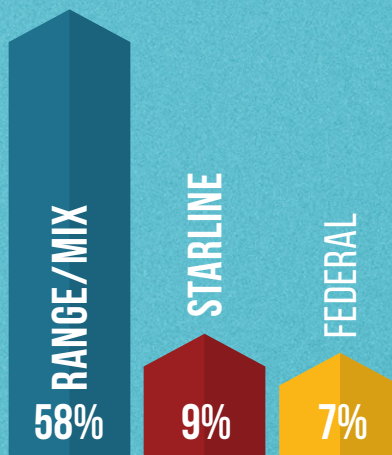
RELOADER MANUFACTURER



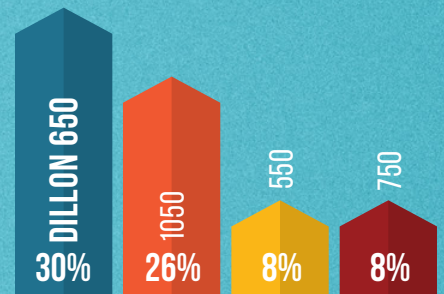
BULLET TYPE



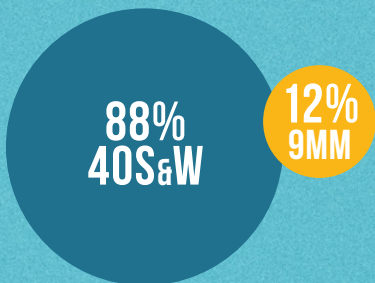
BRASS MANUFACTURER



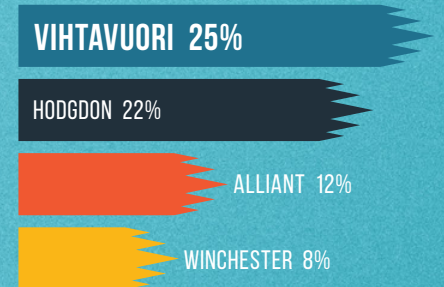
MODEL OF RELOADER



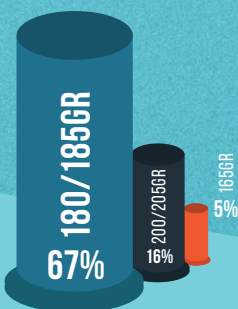
BULLET CALIBER



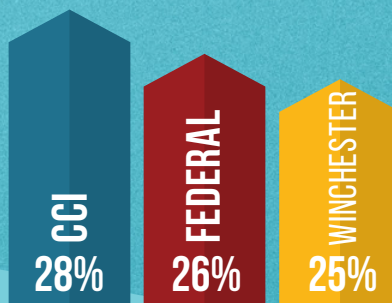
POWDER MANUFACTURER



BULLET WEIGHT



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



TYPE OF POWDER



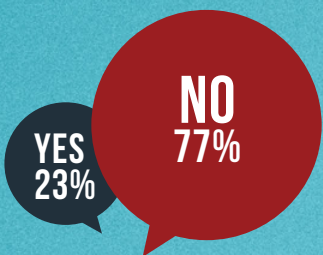


2020 USPSA NATIONALS PRODUCTION DIVISION

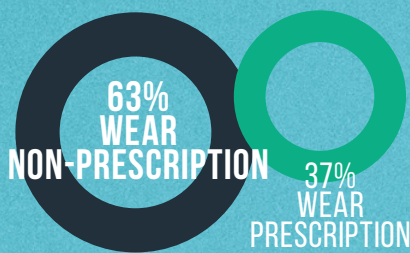
EQUIPMENT SURVEY

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

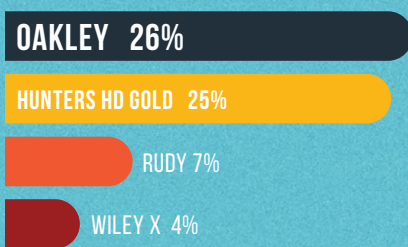
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



EYE PROTECTION



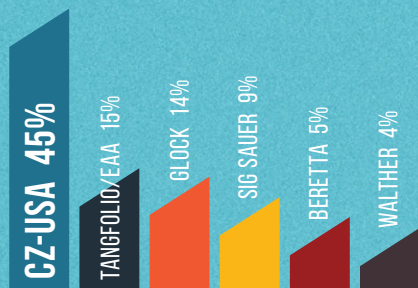
EYEWEAR BRAND



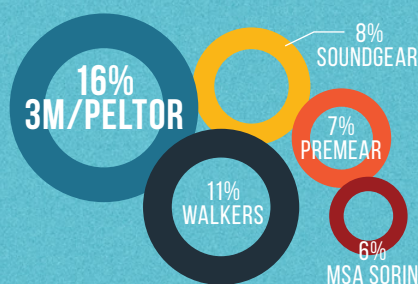
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



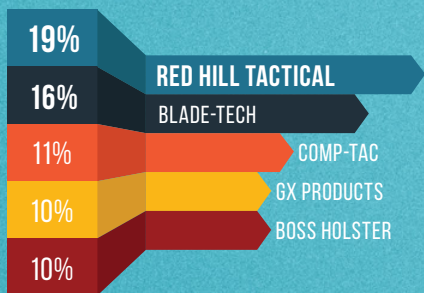
FIREARM MANUFACTURER



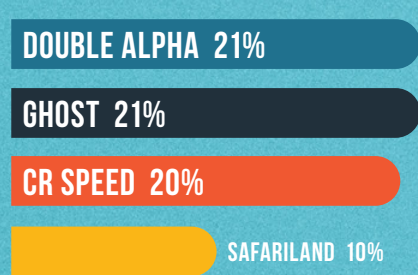
HEARING PROTECTION BRAND



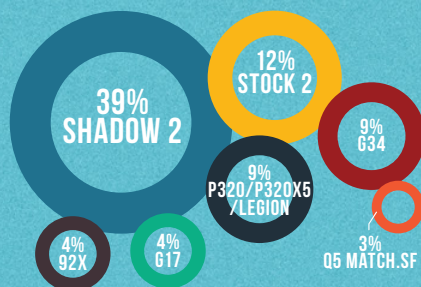
HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



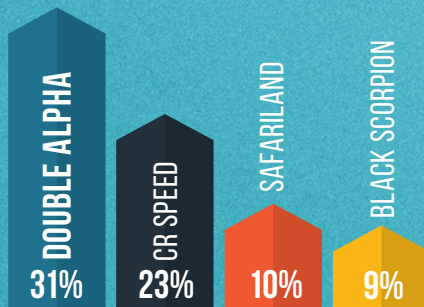
MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



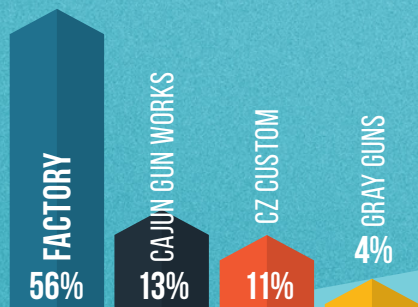
MODEL OF FIREARM



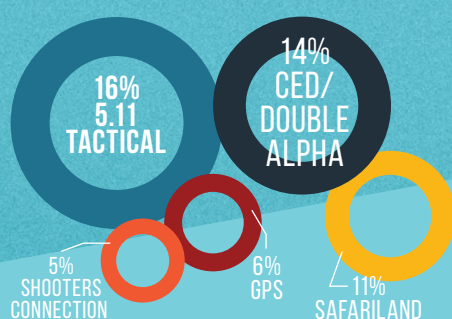
BELT SYSTEM



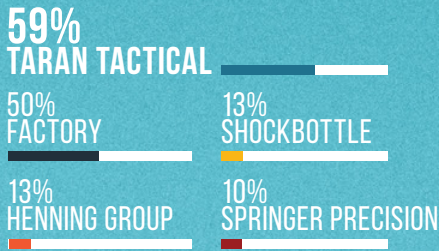
TRIGGER MANUFACTURER



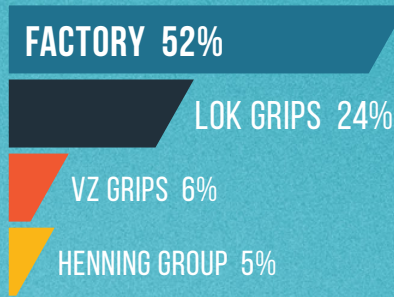
RANGE BAG BRAND



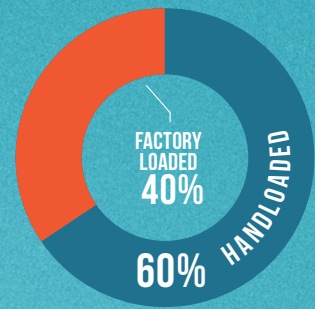
BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



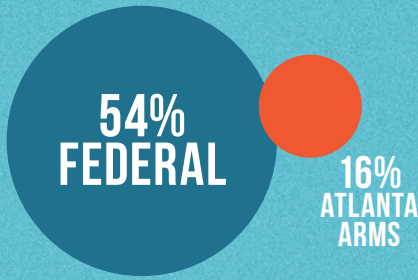
GRIP MANUFACTURERS



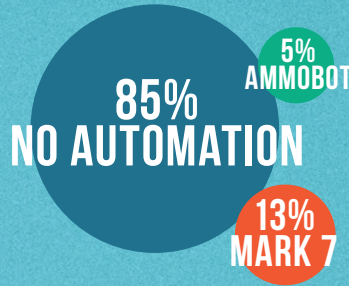
AMMUNITION



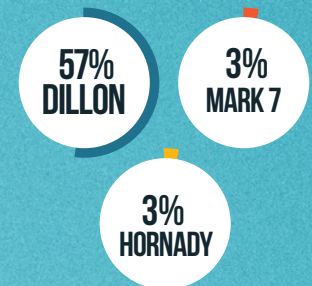
FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



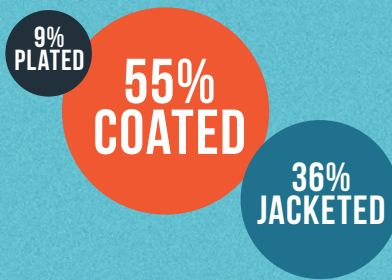
AUTOMATED PRESS



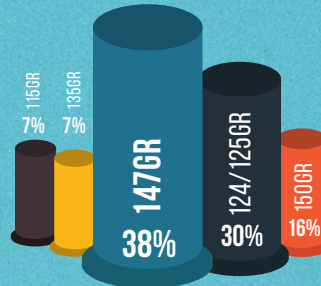
RELOADER MANUFACTURER



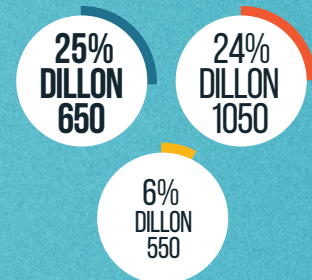
BULLET TYPE



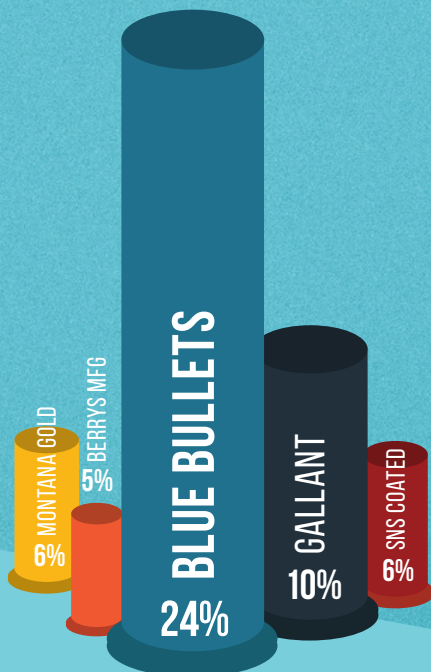
BULLET WEIGHT



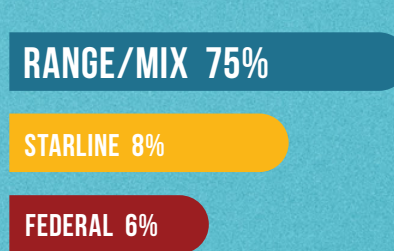
MODEL OF RELOADER



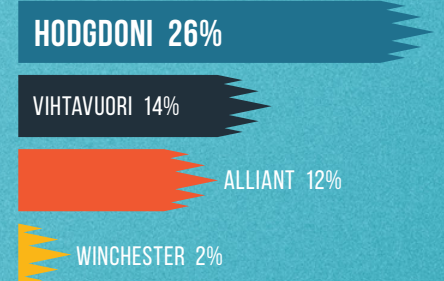
BULLET MANUFACTURER



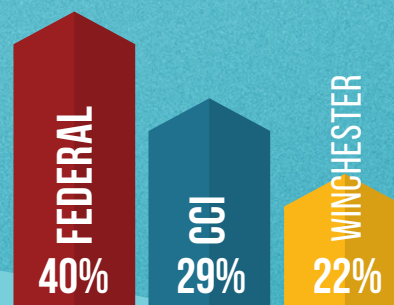
BRASS MANUFACTURER



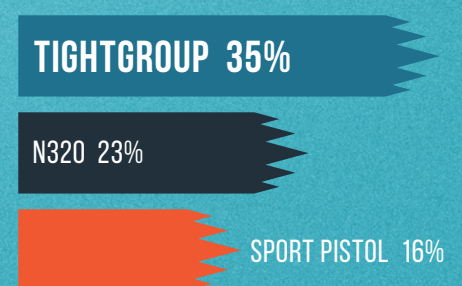
POWDER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



TYPE OF POWDER



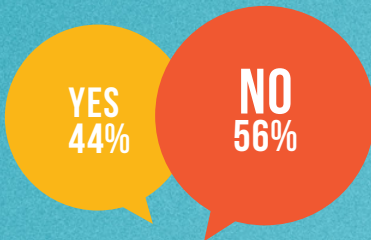


2020 USPSA NATIONALS PCC DIVISION

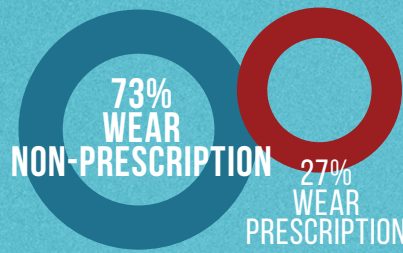
EQUIPMENT SURVEY

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

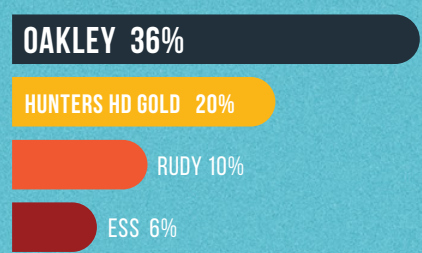
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



EYE PROTECTION



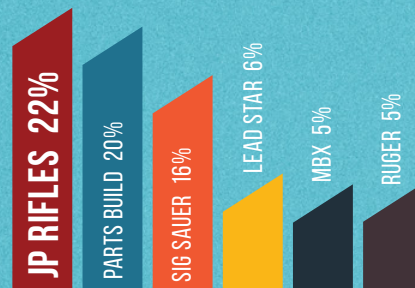
EYEWEAR BRAND



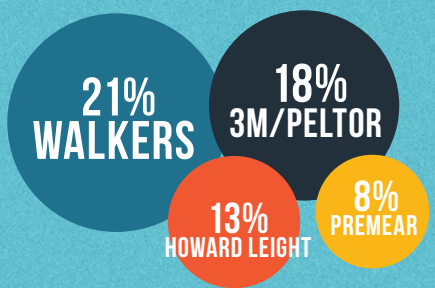
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?

- 51% OPEN REGISTRATION
- 38% FROM MY SECTION
- 5% PREVIOUS NATIONALS PERFORMANCE
- 3% STAFF
- 3% AREA MATCH PERFORMANCE

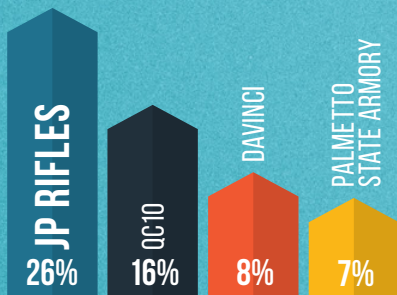
FIREARM/CUSTOM SHOP



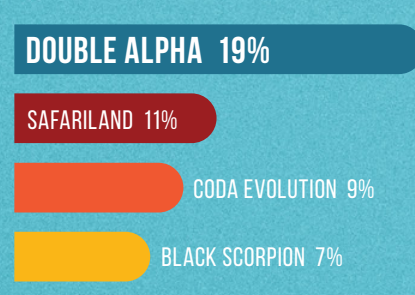
HEARING PROTECTION BRAND



PARTS BUILD LOWER RECEIVER



MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



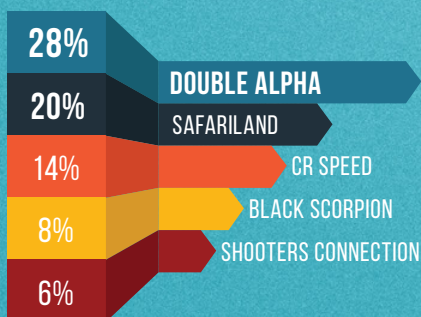
OPTIC/RED DOT

- 30% HOLOSUN
- 24% C-MORE
- 17% VORTEX
- 7% SIG SAUER
- 6% TRIJICON

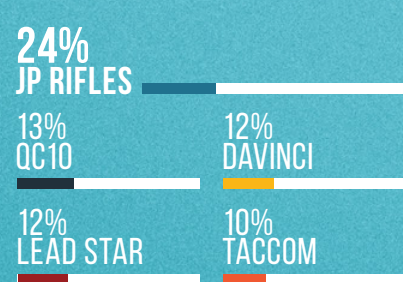
OPTIC MODEL

- 28% 510C
- 22% RAILWAY
- 16% RAZOR
- 13% 512
- 10% MRO

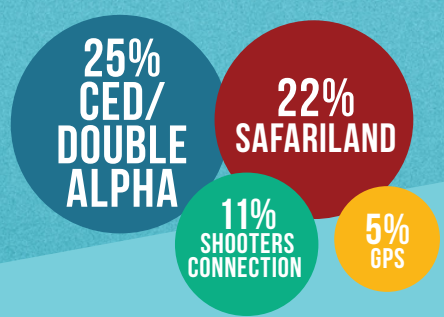
BELT SYSTEM



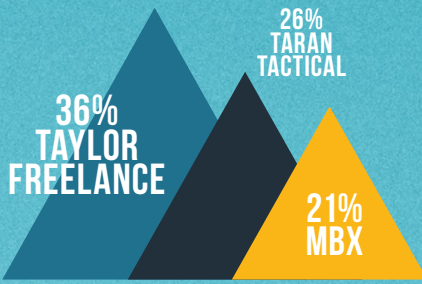
PARTS BUILD UPPER RECEIVER



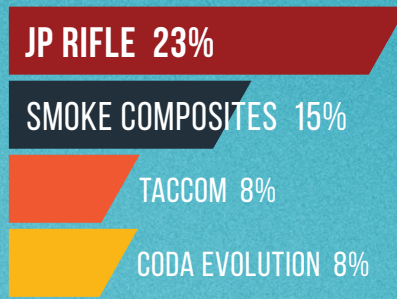
RANGE BAG BRAND



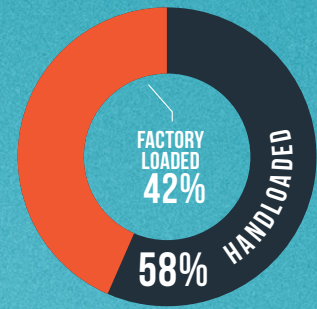
BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



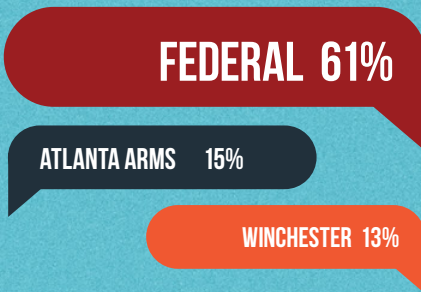
FOREARM BRAND



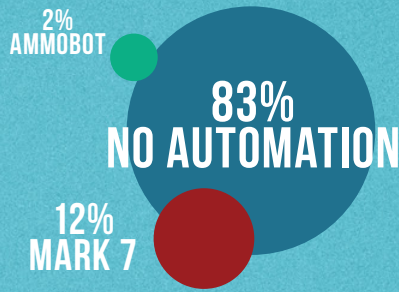
AMMUNITION



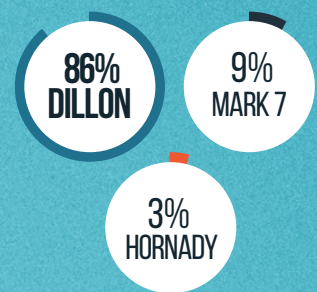
FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



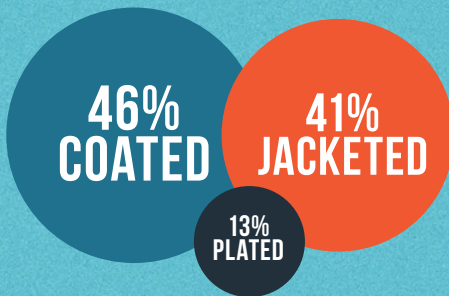
AUTOMATED PRESS



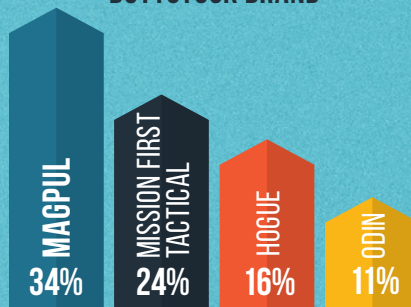
RELOADER MANUFACTURER



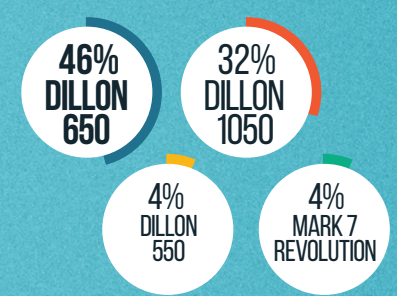
BULLET TYPE



BUTTSTOCK BRAND



MODEL OF RELOADER



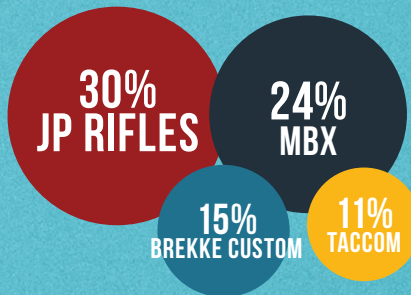
BRASS



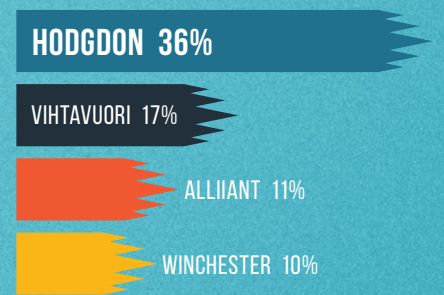
PRIMER



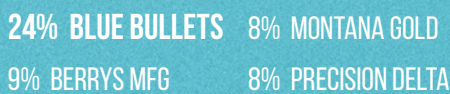
COMPENSATOR BRAND



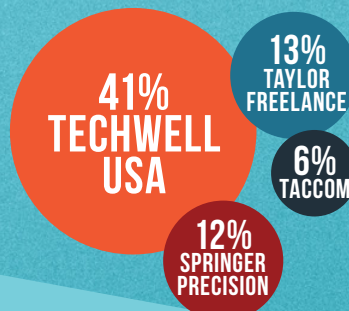
POWDER MANUFACTURER



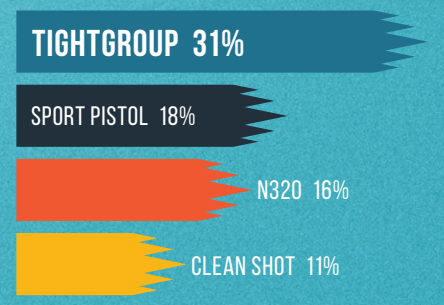
BULLET MANUFACTURER



MAGWELL BRAND



TYPE OF POWDER



BULLET WEIGHT



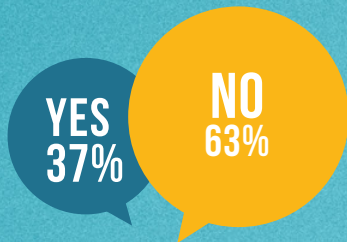


2020 USPSA NATIONALS CARRY OPTICS

EQUIPMENT SURVEY

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

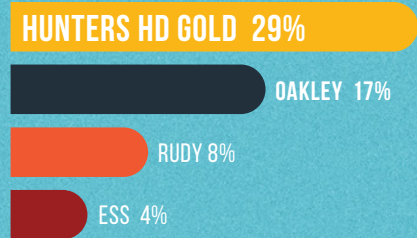
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



EYE PROTECTION



EYEWEAR BRAND



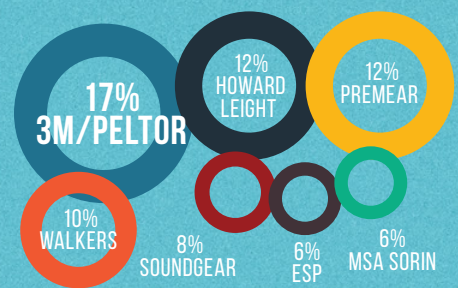
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



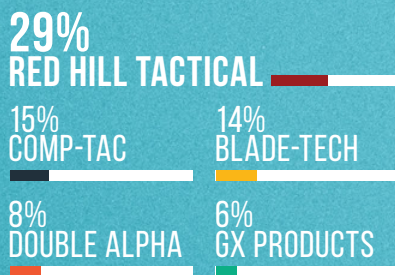
FIREARM/CUSTOM SHOP



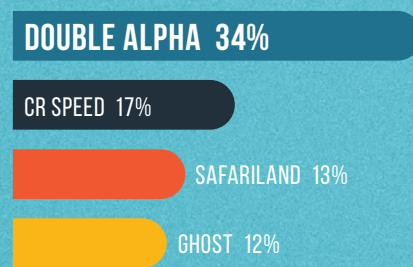
HEARING PROTECTION BRAND



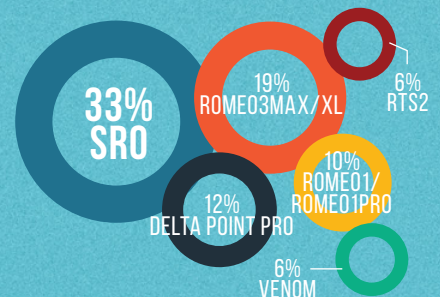
HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



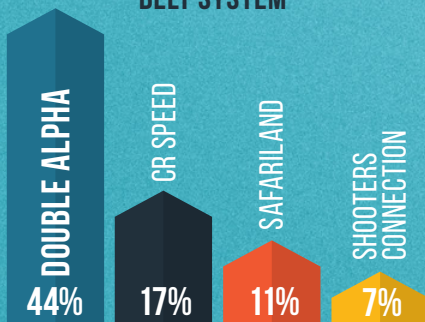
MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



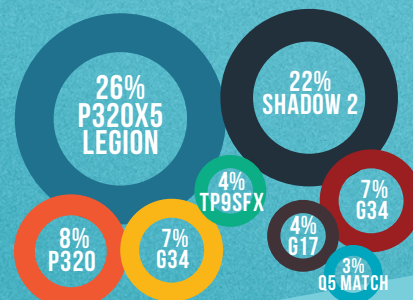
MODEL OF OPTICS



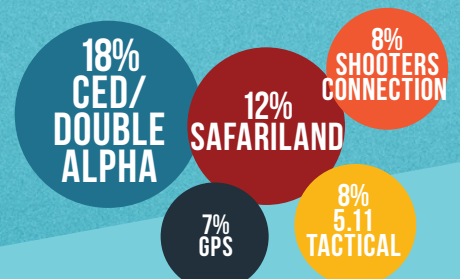
BELT SYSTEM



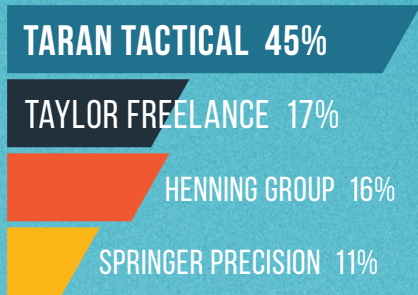
MODEL OF FIREARM



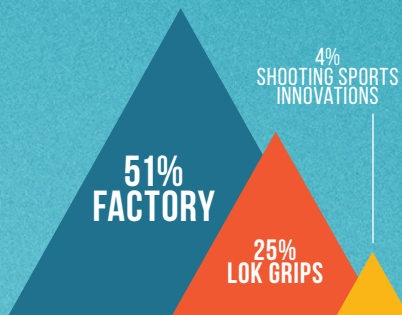
RANGE BAG BRAND



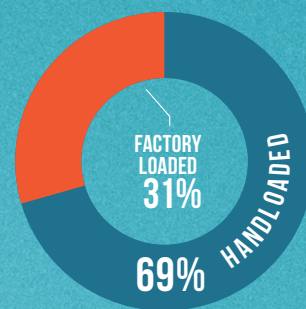
BASEPAD MANUFACTURERS



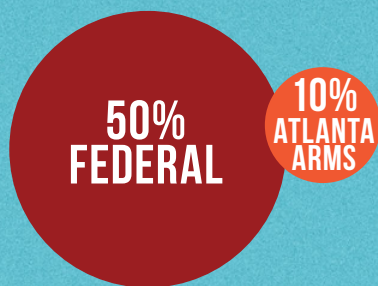
GRIP MANUFACTURERS



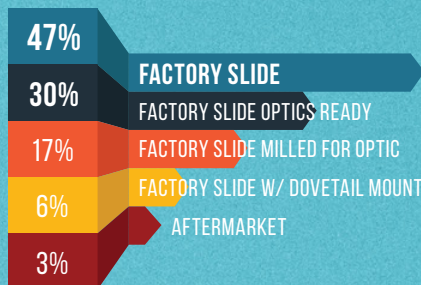
AMMUNITION



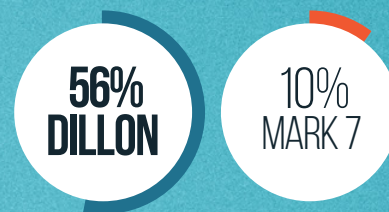
FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



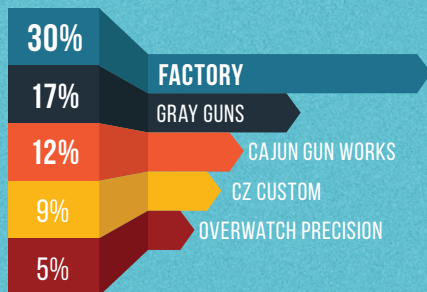
SLIDE



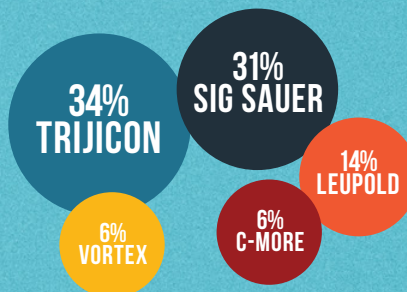
RELOADER MANUFACTURER



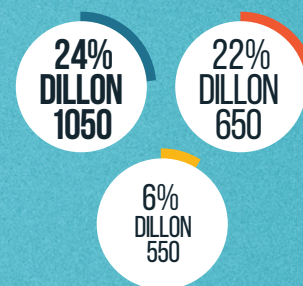
TRIGGER



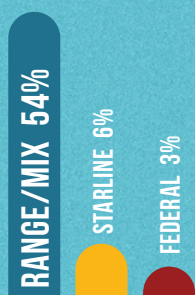
RED DOT OPTIC MANUFACTURER



MODEL OF RELOADER



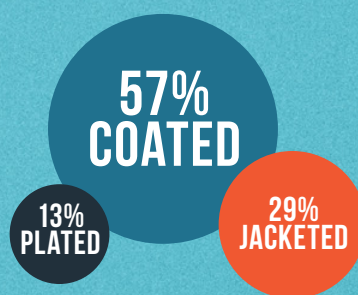
BRASS



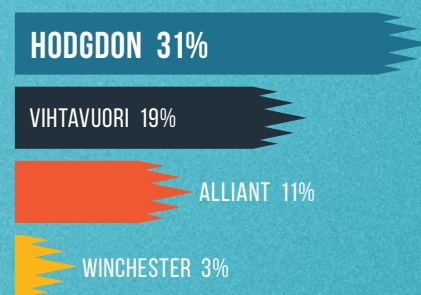
PRIMER



BULLET TYPE



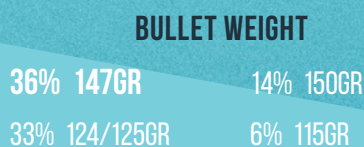
POWDER MANUFACTURER



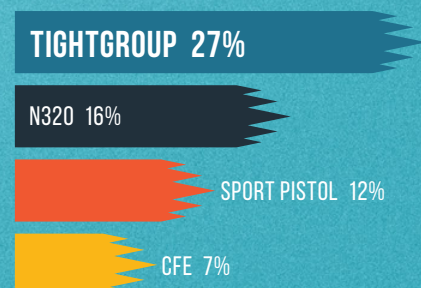
BULLET MANUFACTURER



BULLET WEIGHT



TYPE OF POWDER





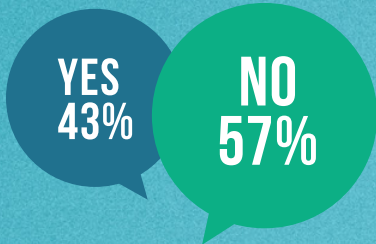
2020 USPSA NATIONALS SINGLE STACK

DIVISION

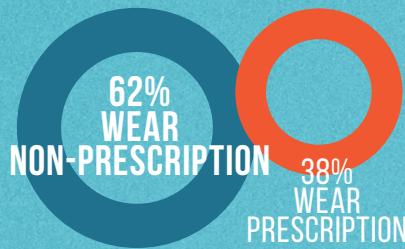
EQUIPMENT SURVEY

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

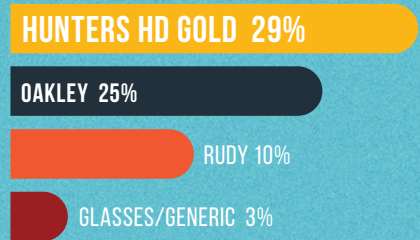
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



EYE PROTECTION



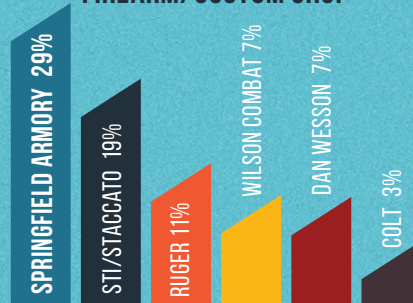
EYEWEAR BRAND



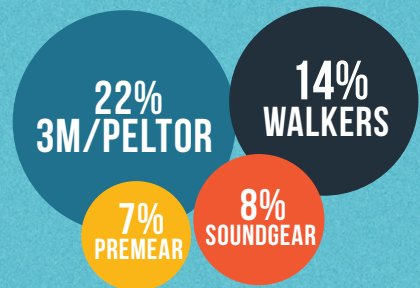
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



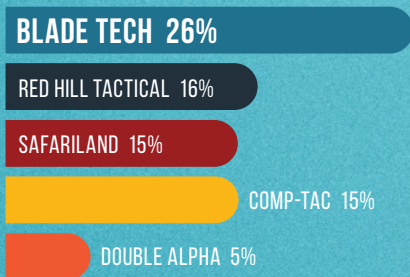
FIREARM/CUSTOM SHOP



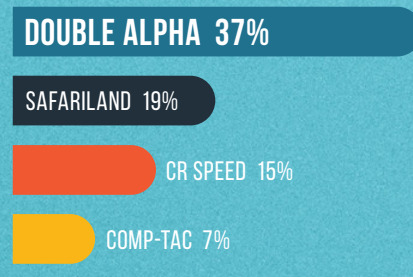
HEARING PROTECTION BRAND



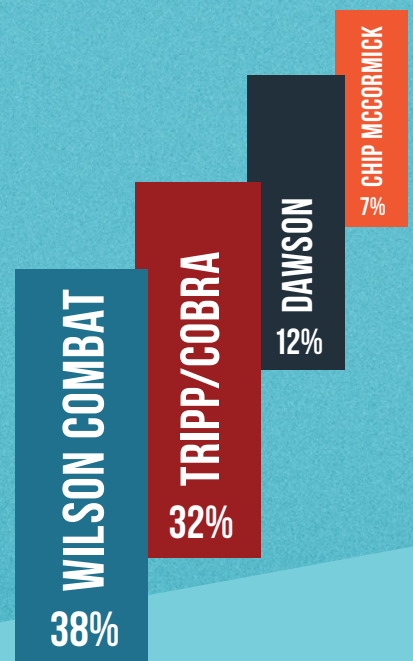
HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



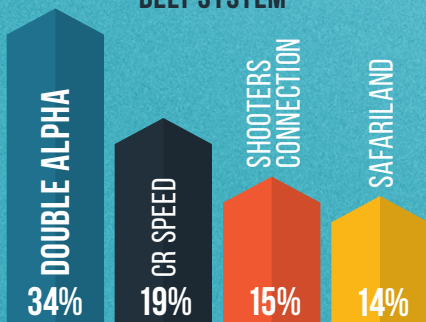
MAGAZINE POUCH MANUFACTURER



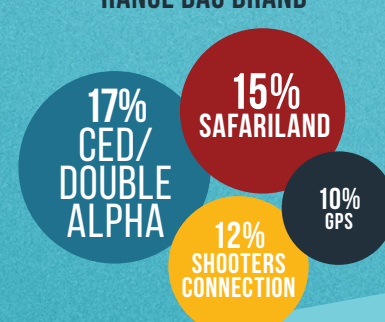
MAGAZINE MANUFACTURER



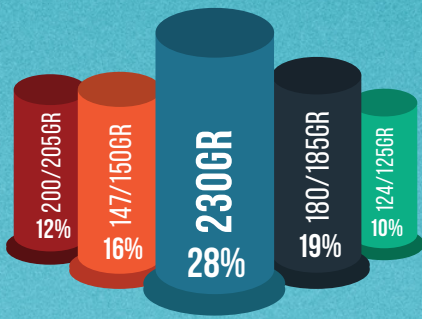
BELT SYSTEM



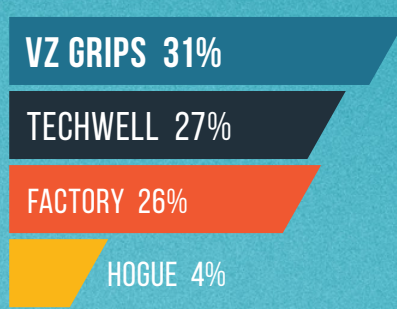
RANGE BAG BRAND



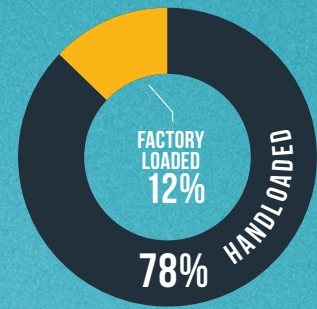
BULLET WEIGHT



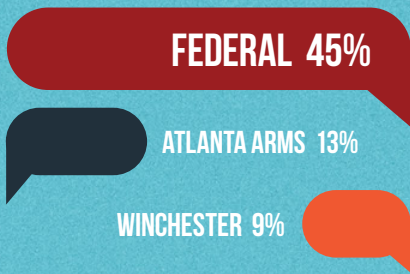
GRIP MANUFACTURERS



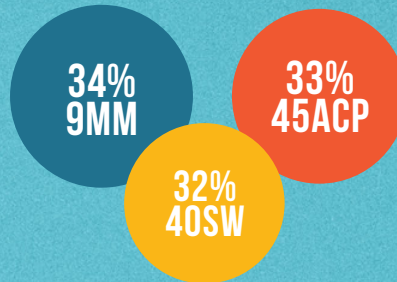
AMMUNITION



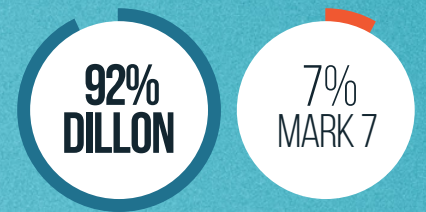
FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



BULLET CALIBER



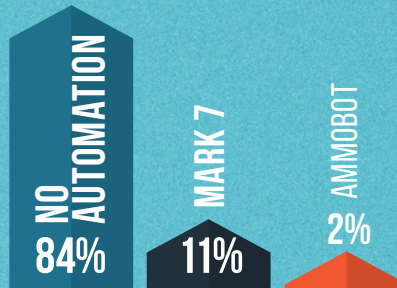
RELOADER MANUFACTURER



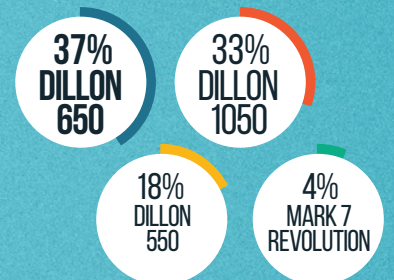
BULLET TYPE



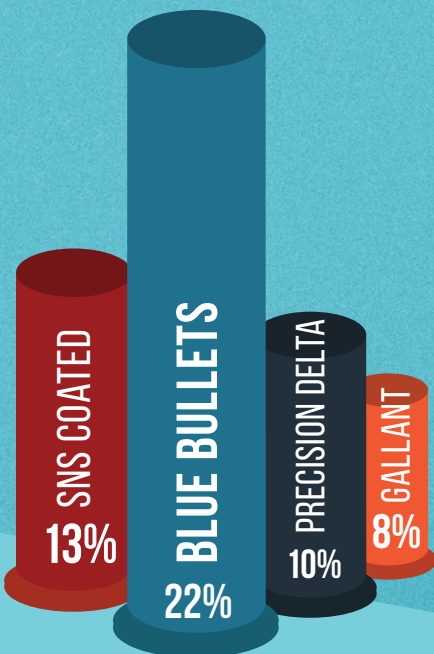
RELOADER AUTOMATION



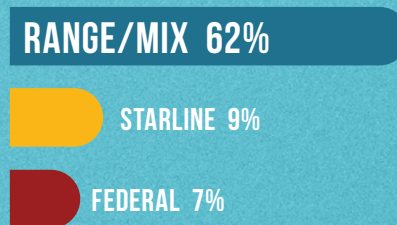
MODEL OF RELOADER



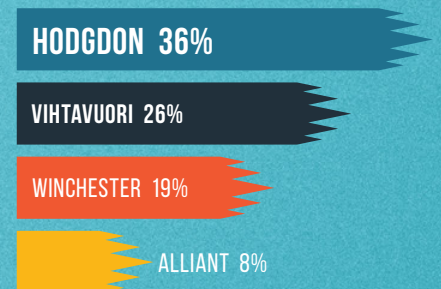
BULLET MANUFACTURER



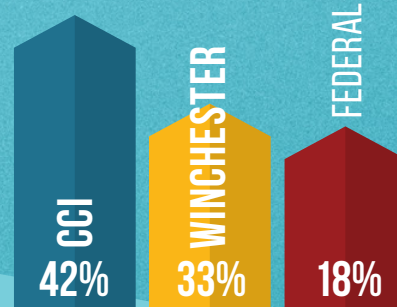
BRASS MANUFACTURER



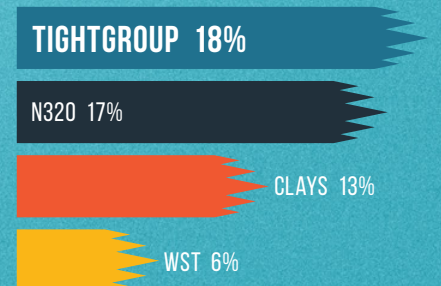
POWDER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



TYPE OF POWDER



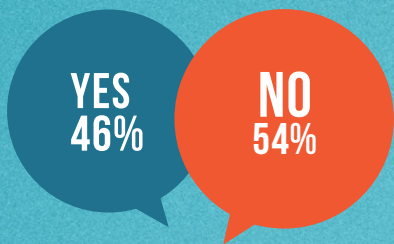


2020 USPSA NATIONALS REVOLVER DIVISION

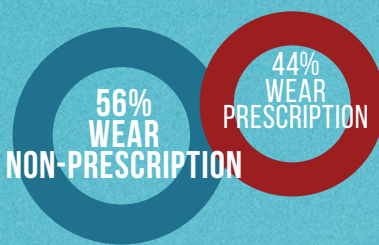
EQUIPMENT SURVEY

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

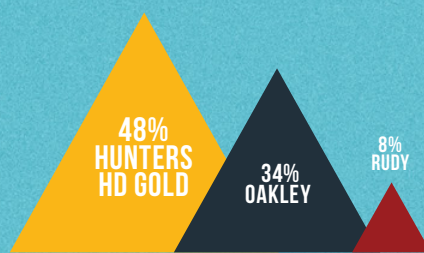
IS THIS YOUR FIRST NATIONALS?



EYE PROTECTION



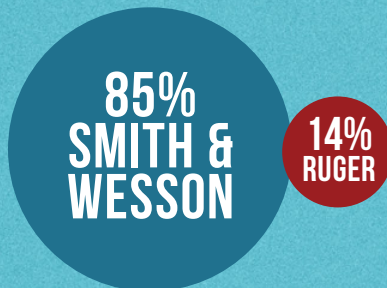
EYEWEAR BRAND



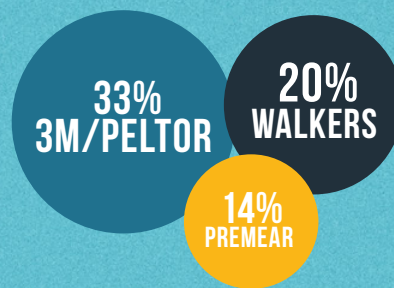
HOW DID YOU RECEIVE YOUR SLOT?



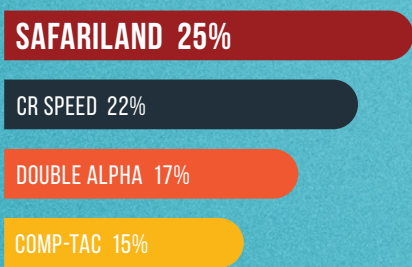
FIREARM MANUFACTURER



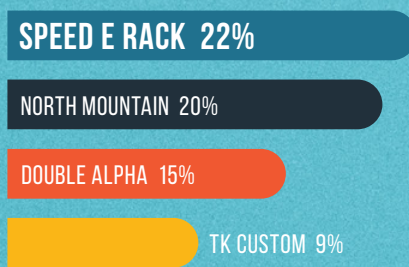
HEARING PROTECTION BRAND



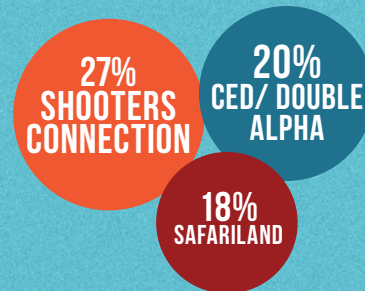
HOLSTER MANUFACTURERS



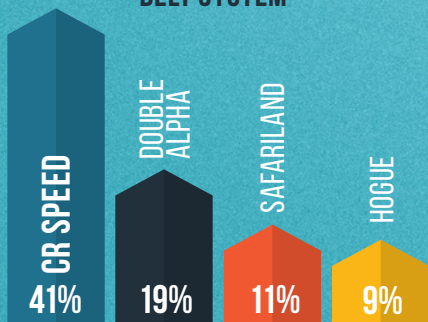
MOON CLIP HOLDER



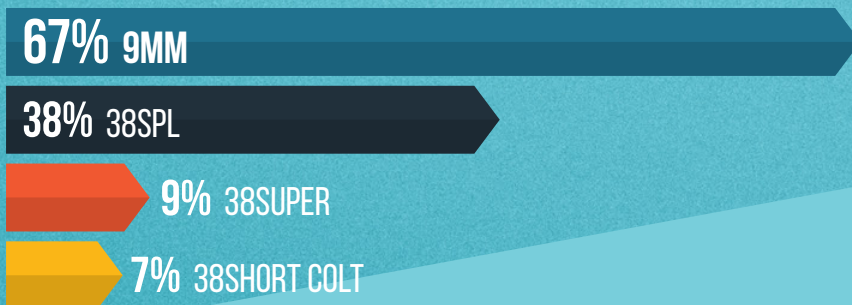
RANGE BAG BRAND



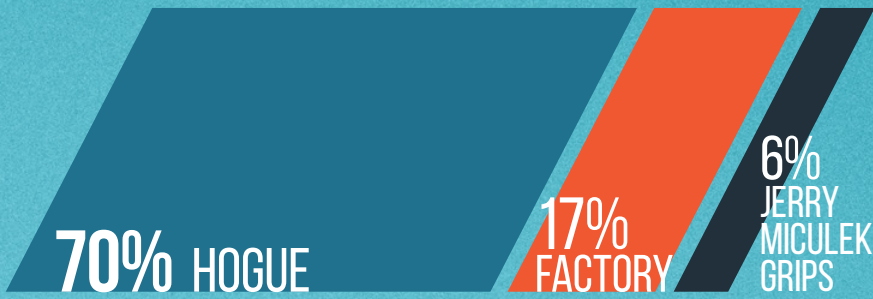
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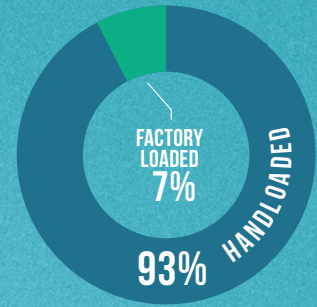
BULLET CALIBER



GRIP MANUFACTURERS



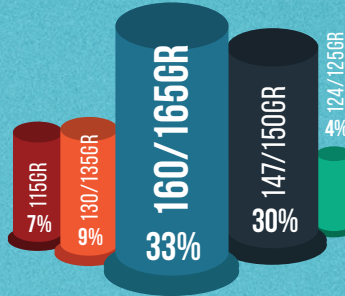
AMMUNITION



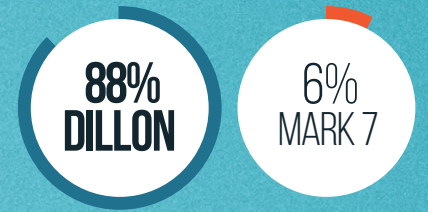
FACTORY LOADED AMMUNITION



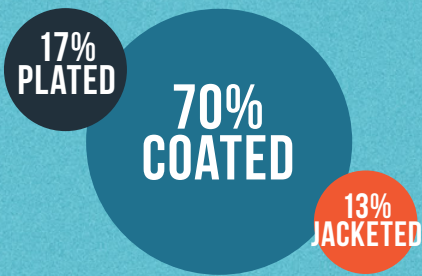
BULLET WEIGHT



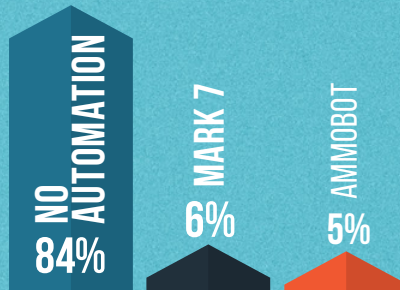
RELOADER MANUFACTURER



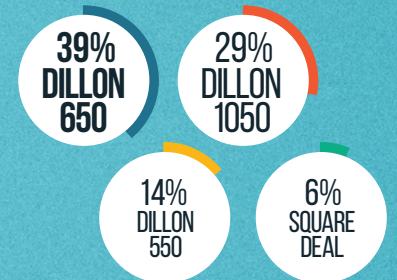
BULLET TYPE



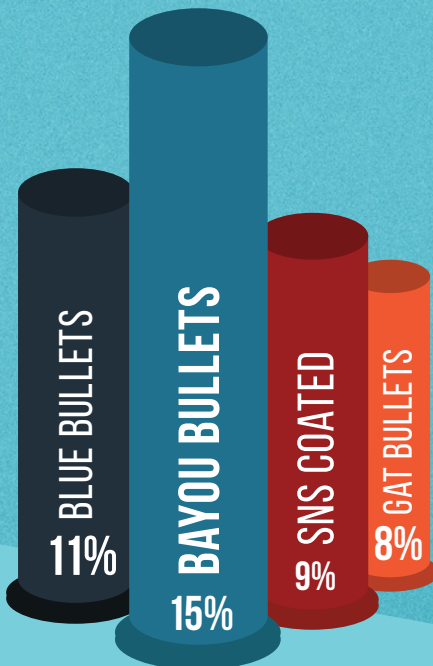
RELOADER AUTOMATION



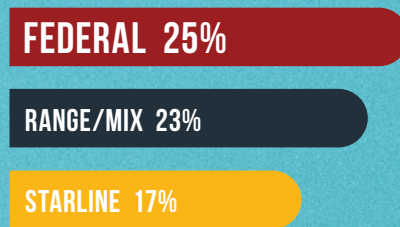
MODEL OF RELOADER



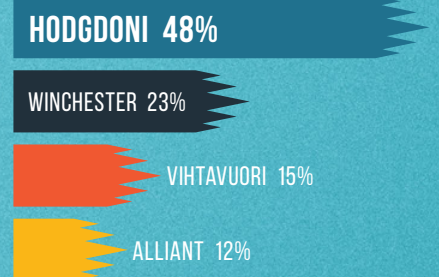
BULLET MANUFACTURER



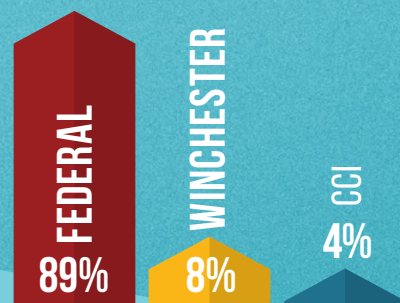
BRASS MANUFACTURER



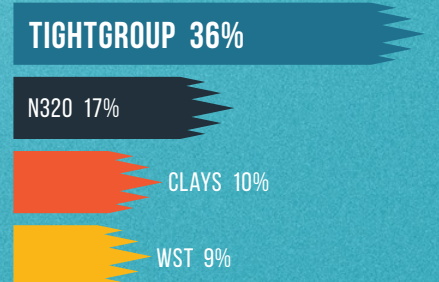
POWDER MANUFACTURER



PRIMER MANUFACTURER



TYPE OF POWDER



A NEW MEMBER'S PERSPECTIVE:

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

BY BRANDON WELLS, A115036

The 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 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

Svetlana Paegel



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

Trent Cherin



match, someone will assist you in registering 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-

Rick Brotzel



fire practice. At the time of our first match it 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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