

So, what is IDPA all about, anyway?

First allow me to thank you for your interest in an exciting and fast-paced, growing shooting sport called International Defensive Pistol Association. Our local club is located at the Gateway Rifle and Pistol Club facilities on the westside of Jacksonville, not far from I-10, I-95 and I-295.

Our matches are on the first Saturday of every month. For general information, please view www.idpa.com. But, more specifically, our club matches are based upon scenarios which could happen in real life, in which you might “have to” respond with deadly force in “defense” of your own life, or that of another person with the use of a concealed handgun. We strive to achieve realism, except for the good news that no one will be shooting or stabbing you. We have at least 5 different scenarios per match. Bring at least 75 rounds of ammo, better if you have 100, and a belt held holster (no cross-draw, small of the back or shoulder holsters please), eye and ear protection (those two even if you’re only going to watch the match), at least 4 speedloaders if you use a revolver, and at least 3 magazines if you use a semi-auto pistol. Most often, except during the hottest of summer months, we require a “concealment” garment to be worn only while on the shooting line, so that the handgun may often, but not always, start from a concealed holster. The scenarios involve decision-making between “shoot and don’t shoot,” movement, use of cover, shooting from different positions, some shooting with one hand only (sometimes your non-dominant hand...simulating a wound to your ‘strong’ hand), use of realistic props and a whole lot of fun with similar-minded good people who will fast become your newest friends. By the way, you don’t need anything more than a stock, out-of-the-box, semi-auto pistol (9mm or larger caliber) or revolver (.38 special, or larger caliber) to join-in on the fun. There’s no need to spend a small fortune on a handgun to have fun and be competitive. This sport emphasizes the use of a handgun which would easily be carried in everyday life by those who hold concealed carry permits. Ultra-competition guns “need not apply.”

What if you are new to IDPA? We have found a wonderfully easy way for you to quickly pick-up the rules and regs of IDPA. It is called the New Shooter’s Squad. No, it’s not for people who have never shot before, but for those who are new to IDPA. We assign extra Safety Officers (range officers) to help guide you through the scenarios very comfortably as you become accustomed to this fascinating sport. After virtually every match you’ll go home, or to work on Monday, having lots of stories to tell, all of which will start with, “You’re not gonna believe what I did this weekend...” Why? Just come and you’ll find out! If they don’t believe you, tell them to look up on our website about a week after the match to view action photos of you in the midst of the firing and gun-smoke.

Try to arrive for sign-ups at the range by 8:30. By 8, if you would be so kind as to help us set-up the props for the various scenarios, as that would be most appreciated. The match fees are \$15 per match for non-Gateway members and \$10 if you are a member of Gateway. No, you don’t need to be a member of Gateway Rifle and Pistol Club to shoot an IDPA match there, but once you’ve seen how wonderful the Gateway facilities are,

with multiple ranges for rifle, handguns and shotguns, and their air-conditioned, full facilities clubhouse, you might just want to stop in at their office and see about joining. Speaking of joining, you do not have to be a member of IDPA to shoot a match with us, but beware...it is so much fun that you will probably want to join IDPA. We have all the necessary paperwork to join IDPA at our matches. To be an ongoing shooter of IDPA matches with us, it is required that you join IDPA. That is mandated by the IDPA HQ. It is not cost-prohibitive at only \$40 for an annual membership for which you'll also receive a quarterly issue of the Tactical Journal magazine, an IDPA hat, and credentials that will allow you to shoot anywhere around the world in this global shooting sport. IDPA HQ receives funds to stay in business only from membership dues, and not from our local match entry fees.

Our matches usually finish by 1:30-2:30, depending upon how many shooters are present, and it is greatly appreciated that everyone help put away all the props and target stands we've arranged across the ranges for your shooting enjoyment. Some of our targets move, some are steel, some are covered with t-shirts so you can't see the "bullseyes" underneath, because threatening adversaries most often do wear clothing. Remember, it's all about simulating realism. The use of survival tactics and strategy in solving the "problems" you will encounter in these scenarios is not only encouraged, it is rewarded.

We've had shooters attending from all over Florida and elsewhere around the southeast on any given weekend. To date the farthest shooters have travelled to partake in our fun matches is from England and Italy. Our website has the latest information about each match, will have the match scores posted within a few days after any match along with any photos taken of shooters in action during the match. Oh, by the way, if you're a wanted criminal, don't come to our matches because they are so popular that many local, county and federal law enforcement officers come out to shoot our matches every month. They offer some great real life stories to share with the rest of the shooters and they appreciate the honing of their personal skills with these tactical scenario simulations. So will you. What are you waiting for? A whole group of new friends are waiting to meet and greet you so you'll feel right at home in no time. While you're at it, bring a friend or two of your own to introduce to the most exciting shooting sport around that simulates reality.

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