

LPC new shooter orientation for USPSA and Steel matches

We follow USPSA safety rules for steel and USPSA matches. Complete rules can be found at:
http://www.uspsa.org/document_library/rules/2014/Feb%202014%20Handgun%20Rules.pdf

For both matches

- 1.) **Safety, safety, safety—All our rules are based on safety and are strictly enforced. Please let the RO know you are a new shooter so they can help you finish the match safely.**
 - We run a “cold range,” which means firearms can only be handled at the Safety Area or on the stage under direct RO supervision. Pistols must be in a safe condition (unloaded, slide forward with hammer down) and in a holster or gun case. Carry guns must be unloaded and bagged at the first safety area as you come onto the range.
 - Each bay has a Safety Area (the white tables with signs). Unloaded firearms can only be handled, cased and uncased in the safety areas. No ammo in the safe area! Loaded magazines can be in your bag or on your belt, but cannot be handled in the safety area. You can load mags and handle ammo anywhere on the range EXCEPT the safety area. Also prohibited in the safety area are snap caps, dummy rounds, and empty brass. If you are caught at the safety area handling ammo, it is a DQ. If you are handling your gun outside the safety area other than when shooting the stage under RO supervision, it is a DQ.
 - If you drop your unloaded firearm outside the course of fire, don’t pick it up! Call an RO over to clear the firearm and return it to you to be holstered. Picking up a dropped gun on your own is a DQ. Same goes for a dropping a loaded or unloaded firearm during a course of fire. Let the RO pick it up, but losing control of your gun during a course of fire is a DQ.
 - DQs happen. There are 2 types of shooters: Those who *have* DQ’d and those who *will* DQ. Even experienced shooters DQ. If you DQ, please do not leave the range. Yes, you are done shooting for the day, but you can still stay and observe and help reset stages. *And most importantly, come back and shoot another match!!*
 - Things that will earn you a DQ (not a complete list, but the most common reasons): If your muzzle breaks the 180 during the course of fire, if you have your finger inside the trigger guard during loading, unloading, reloading, and movement on a stage, if you have an accidental discharge during these actions.
 - We highly recommend that you use a holster that is rigid enough that you can holster your pistol with only one hand. Sweeping your other hand as it is helping keep your holster held open is a DQ.
- 2.) **Range commands—Listen to your Range Officers when it is your turn to shoot the stage!**
 - **Make Ready:** This command indicates the course of fire has begun. At this command you need to draw your pistol and load it or make it ready as outlined in the written stage briefing. DO NOT touch your pistol before this command is given!
 - **Are you Ready?:** Stages will have a certain start position for the shooter to assume. After your pistol is ready, place your hands and feet in the proper position and the RO will give you the command. You do not need to answer. Unless you say “no” the RO will continue.
 - **Standby:** The RO will then give this command and give you the audible start signal after 1-4 seconds. When you hear the beep, start shooting the stage.
 - During the course of fire, you may hear the RO issue warnings such as “finger” or “muzzle”. These warnings are to let you know that you are close to breaking the safety rules which can lead to a DQ. If you break one of the safety rules, you will hear the RO say “Stop.” You *must* stop shooting if given that command. The RO will then direct you to clear your firearm.
 - **If you are finished, unload and show clear:** This command is given after shooting is complete. At this time, remove your magazine, eject the live round from the chamber, and pull the slide back so the RO can confirm that the pistol is clear. If you are shooting a revolver, remove all rounds and brass from the cylinder and keep it open for RO inspection. It is ultimately your responsibility to make sure the firearm is clear, not the RO. If you do not unload the firearm and have an accidental discharge during the next command, it is a DQ. *Remember that the timer stops with your last shot, so please take your time unloading—it is not on the clock.*
 - **If clear, hammer down, holster:** After the gun is clear, the RO gives this command. With the firearm pointed downrange, pull the trigger, and then holster the pistol. For a revolver, the RO will say “If clear, cylinder closed, holster.” Revolvers do not pull the trigger. *Again, this is not on the clock, so take your time.*
 - **Range is clear:** After the pistol is holstered, the RO will say this command and this officially ends the course of fire. This also means that it is safe for the squad to proceed downrange to score and reset the stage.
- 3.) **Stage reset—this is a volunteer sport and we all need to help run and reset the stages.**
 - After a stage is shot and scored the stage must be reset. Everyone needs to pitch in. The cardboard targets need the holes taped (DO NOT tape targets until they are scored). The steel targets and poppers need to have the fresh hits covered with spray paint and reset.

- We also help pick up brass (and magazines) for the shooter. Most of us reload and like to get our brass back. Usually our squads are large enough to get this done quickly, but brass pickers must not hold up the stage. Please leave the stage when the RO directs you to—the brass can be retrieved later.
- We also call out shooting orders: Joe is the shooter, Jane is on deck, and Bob is in the hole. If it is your turn, please proceed to the stage start and wait for the RO. If you are “on deck,” we don’t expect you to help reset the stage. Take the time to mentally prepare for your turn on the stage. After you are done shooting, please go reload your mags and then return and help reset the stage for the rest of the squad.

USPSA matches

1.) Stage construction

- The stages often make use of walls and fault lines to form a closed shooting area. You can only engage targets from within the shooting area. If you shoot at targets from outside that area, penalties will be assessed. If you shoot at a steel target while outside the fault lines, it may lead to a DQ for violating the safe minimum distance for a steel target.
- Walls and props, such as barrels, are used to create different target views and cannot be shot through, unless there is a port. The snow fence walls go all the way to the ground you cannot shoot under the walls unless the stage description allows it.
- Be very careful and watch your muzzle when moving around walls and in and out of ports. It is very easy to catch the front sight and muzzle on edges and lose control of your pistol.

2.) Target types

- There are 2 types of cardboard targets. Metric (has a head) and Classic (turtle shaped). Each has perfs that denote the different scoring areas. The scoring areas are A, B, C, D—except classic targets lack a B zone. Each zone has different point values with A being the highest. The more points, the better. Unless the stage description says otherwise, the best 2 hits per cardboard target count for score. So, try to get at least 2 hits per cardboard target.
- We also have no-shoot and hardcover targets. No-shoot targets are white cardboard and hits on these incur penalties (so don’t hit them). Hardcover is black colored cardboard and hits in the hardcover are scored as misses.
- There are a variety of steel targets. We use Pepper Poppers and Mini-pepper Poppers most often, but also use steel plates occasionally. All steel must fall to score. A knocked over steel is the same amount of points as one A hit on paper.
- USPSA scoring divides the total stage points earned by the time it took to shoot the stage to get a hit factor. So, going fast and getting a lot of misses can give a lower score than going a little slower and getting all your hits. The biggest thing for your first match is to take your time and BE SAFE!

3.) Scoring types

- There are 2 main scoring types in USPSA: Comstock and Virginia Count.
- Comstock means you can fire as many rounds as you want to complete the stage. Field courses are all Comstock.
- Virginia Count is used for standards type stages and limits you to a certain number of shots per target. You can take more shots, but each extra shot *and* hit on a target is a penalty.

4.) Written stage briefings

- For each stage, the RO will read the Written Stage Briefing (WSB) when the squad first arrives. The WSB provides all the information that you need to shoot the stage. It has the number of rounds, the number and type of targets, the start position, the stage procedure, and any other important info. Please listen to the WSB.
- After the WSB, the squad will then take a few minutes to walk through the stage before starting.

Steel matches

- Steel match stages usually consist of 5 steel plates of varying sizes at varying distances.
- Stages usually consist of 5 strings. You do not need to unload between strings. Just re-holster or reload and then holster to prepare for your next string. After the last string, the RO will give the command to unload and show clear.
- One plate is the “Stop Plate.” Once this plate is hit, that string is over. Make sure you know which plate is the stop plate.
- The start position is facing downrange, wrists above shoulders with pistol loaded and holstered for center fire pistols. .22LR pistols, .22LR rifles, and pistol caliber carbines start loaded and pointing downrange at the cone.
- Your slowest time is tossed, and the remaining times are added together to get your total time for the stage. All stage times are added together for the match score. The person with the shortest time is the winner.

Any questions?? Remember to have fun, and be safe!