

Welcome to your first IDPA match at ERGC

IDPA competition is a game based on defensive use of the handgun. While not training, per se, it employs scenarios which exercise the equipment, clothing, techniques, and mindset appropriate to carrying a concealed weapon. Scoring emphasizes a balance of speed and accuracy. Your score is simply the elapsed time plus penalties for inaccuracy and procedural errors (which are converted to time). Lowest time wins.

Safety is of paramount importance. Some of the rules may seem arbitrary or unrealistic, but many are the result of experience, and exist in the interest of ensuring a safe, enjoyable sport for all participants.

Equipment requirements are minimal. The rules encourage commonly used guns and equipment in order to keep the sport affordable and accessible to nearly anyone. Eye and hearing protection are mandatory. A cap with a brim or bill is highly recommended. A cover garment is required for most courses of fire. For most shooters a suitable gun (9mm or larger caliber) and three magazines or speed loaders are sufficient. The final required items are pouches or carriers for magazines or speed loaders, and a sturdy belt. Specific equipment requirements are described in detail in the rule book, which is available for download from the IDPA web site (<http://www.idpa.com/Documents/IDPARuleBook2005.pdf>). You'll also receive a printed copy with your IDPA membership.

Match staff at ERGC consists of the Match Director (MD), Safety Officers (SO), and Scorekeepers. While engaging a course of fire the shooter will be accompanied and supervised by the SO and Scorekeeper.

At ERGC we operate a "cold range." That is, during the match no one other than a shooter under the supervision of a SO is permitted to have a loaded weapon. When not engaged in a course of fire, all participants are required to have their guns unloaded and in their holster - no gun handling is allowed. The only exception is the "Safe Area." Thus, if it is necessary to check something on the gun or, for instance, practice the presentation (draw from the holster) or trigger press, it may be done in the "Safe Area."

It is best for competitors to arrive at the range with their gun unloaded and cased. There should be no ammunition or magazines in the case with the gun. When ready to "gun up" the competitor proceeds to the "Safe Area." There he/she will uncase the gun and ensure it is unloaded by 1) checking for an empty magazine well (or cylinder for revolvers), 2) locking back the slide and visually/physically checking for an empty chamber, 3) releasing the slide (closing the cylinder for revolvers), and 4) pulling the trigger or decocking. It is then safe to holster the gun. When ready to depart the range at the end of the match competitors must again use the "Safe Area" to ensure the gun is clear before placing it back in its case. These checks do NOT require a witness. However, if you are carrying a concealed firearm and arrive at the range with a loaded weapon you'll need to seek out a SO to supervise clearing and holstering the weapon. [Rule #1 - The gun is always loaded.]

Unlike the gun, ammunition and magazines (speed loaders for revolvers) may be handled at any time before, during, or after the match. At ERGC you can expect to shoot approximately 50 rounds in a typical match, so it's best to arrive with about double that to be safe. The classifier is a special match which is run a couple of times each year and requires exactly 90 rounds. It's best to have extra in case of a re-shoot.

Shooters must always be aware of where their muzzle is pointing. For the safety of officials and other competitors at ERGC it is not permitted to point the muzzle of the gun more than 90 degrees left or right of the downrange direction at any time. This is called the "180 rule," and violation will lead to disqualification. Disqualification will also result from "sweeping" oneself or another with the muzzle. Additionally, shooters must ensure that they do not point the muzzle behind themselves when drawing their weapon or returning it to the holster. This is of particular concern when moving from standing to kneeling or prone. One of the most common situations in which this rule may be violated is when attempting to clear a malfunction. [Rule #2 - Never point a gun at something you are not prepared to destroy.]

At ERGC, due to range restrictions, all firing must be oriented to the north. Additionally, we are required to ensure that all rounds fired remain within the confines of the range. Thus, they must impact a berm. Each shooter is responsible for every round he/she fires. [Rule #3 - Always be sure of your target and what is behind it.]

After signing-in the shooters will be assigned to squads and will remain with that squad throughout the match. At present, due to the arrangement of the available range, only one stage may be active at any time (it is planned that eventually the range will be subdivided such that simultaneous stages may be active).

Each shooter will be escorted by the SO and scorekeeper to engage his/her course of fire in turn. At the starting position the SO will call for the shooter to "load and make ready" Wait for the command from the SO. The SO will then confirm that the shooter understands the course of fire and will ask for confirmation that the shooter is ready. The SO will command "Standby." This will be followed shortly by the beep from the timer.

During the course of fire you may receive safety or procedural calls from the SO. In order of importance these include: Stop, Trigger, Muzzle, and Cover. It is recommended that you become familiar with these terms by reading the rule book. It is also very important to know the types of reload which are permissible and to master the technique, since this is an integral part of nearly every course of fire. This is covered in detail in the rule book. During the course of fire, unless you are actively engaging a target your finger must be outside the trigger guard, preferably indexed along the frame of the gun. [Rule #4 - Keep your finger off the trigger until your sights are on the target.]

When the last shot has been fired the SO will command, "If the shooter is finished, unload and show clear." The SO will need to see that the gun is completely unloaded. Again, follow the SO's commands one step at a time. Once the gun has been cleared

the SO will instruct you to holster the gun. Many people, now full of adrenaline, are nervous and clumsy at this point. There is no rush. Take your time and ensure you don't sweep yourself or anyone else with the muzzle as you holster the gun.

When the shooters from each squad have finished, and the last shooter has cleared and holstered his/her weapon, the range will be called safe and the officials will go forward to score the targets. Additionally, at this time all other shooters are requested to go forward to paste hits and reset moving or falling targets in preparation for the next shooter. When all shooters in a squad have had their turn, the squads will rotate to the next course of fire.

Set-up and tear-down of the courses of fire require some manpower. If you can arrive early or remain after the match your help will be greatly appreciated. Exact change is also appreciated when signing-in. That's it! We hope your introduction to IDPA will be safe and enjoyable and that you'll come back often.