



Differences Between USPSA And IPSC Rule Books

Chapter 1: Course Design

1.1.5.1 IPSC: Level I and Level II matches are not required to comply strictly with the freestyle requirements or round count limitations.

USPSA: Level I matches may use shooting boxes and specify where or when specific target arrays may be engaged, and may specify mandatory reloads in short and medium courses only (not in a long course).

1.1.5.2 IPSC: Short Courses and Classifiers may include mandatory reloads and may dictate a shooting position, location and/or stance.

USPSA: Standard Exercises and Classifiers may include mandatory reloads and may dictate a shooting position, location or stance.

Summary: IPSC allows for freestyle flexibility at Level I and II matches. USPSA, in essence, is the same but only at a Level I match. IPSC allows for round count flexibility, due to the balance component (Rule 1.2.1.4). USPSA has round count flexibility for Level I and II matches. There is no balance requirement. IPSC allows mandatory reloads in Short Courses and Classifiers. USPSA allows mandatory reloads in Short and Medium Courses, as well as Classifiers. IPSC does not use Starting Boxes, which are allowable in USPSA Level I matches; although Starting Boxes are used in Classifiers, in both disciplines.

1.2.1.1 IPSC: Short Courses - Must not require more than 12 rounds to complete. Course design and construction must not require more than 9 scoring hits from any single location or view.

USPSA: Short Courses - Must not require more than 8 rounds to complete and no more than 2 shooting locations.

Summary: The round count differs. Thereafter there is a divergence. IPSC restricts the number of shots from a single location. USPSA restricts the number of locations.

1.2.1.2 IPSC: Medium Courses - Must not require more than 24 rounds to complete. Course design and construction must not require more than 9 scoring hits from any single location or view, nor allow a competitor to shoot all targets in the course of fire from any single location or view.

USPSA: Medium Courses - Must not require more than 16 rounds to complete and no more than 3 shooting locations. Course design and construction must not require more than 8 scoring hits from any single location or view, nor allow a competitor to shoot all targets in the course of fire from any single location or view.

Summary: The round count and number of shots from a single location differ. Thereafter they are similar. USPSA restricts the number of locations.

1.2.1.3 IPSC: Long Courses - Must not require more than 32 rounds to complete. Course design and construction must not require more than 9 scoring hits from any single location or view, nor allow a competitor to shoot all targets in the course of fire from any single location or view.

USPSA: Long Courses - In Level III or higher matches; must not require more than 32 rounds to complete. Course design and construction must not require more than 8 scoring hits from any single location or view, nor allow a competitor to shoot all targets in the course of fire from any single location or view.

Summary: The round count and number of shots from a single location differ. Thereafter they are similar. For USPSA, there is no restriction on the number of locations.

- 1.2.1.4 IPSC: The recommended balance for an IPSC match is a ratio of 3 Short Courses to 2 Medium Courses to 1 Long Course. Significant variance from this ratio will not be approved by IPSC.

USPSA: Has no balance requirement, allowing for multiple high round count stages.

- 1.2.2.1 IPSC: No longer offers Standard Exercises, Virginia Count or Fixed Time exercises. The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Standard Exercises - Courses of fire consisting of two or more separately timed component strings. Scores, with any penalties deducted, are accumulated on completion of the course of fire to produce the final stage results. Standard Exercises must only be scored using Virginia Count or Fixed Time. The course of fire for each component string may require a specific shooting position, procedure and/or one or more mandatory reloads. Standard Exercises must not require more than 24 rounds to complete. Component strings must not require more than 6 rounds (12 rounds if a mandatory reload is specified).

1.3.2 IPSC: Target arrays and presentations included in courses of fire submitted to IPSC, but deemed by IPSC to be illogical or impractical, will not be approved.

USPSA: Rule only applies to IPSC.

Summary: It is this rule that has resulted in the disallowance of Texas Stars and Polish Racks in IPSC.

Chapter 2: IPSC - Range And Course Construction

USPSA - Course Construction And Modification

2.1.2 IPSC: Safe Angles of Fire - Courses of fire must always be constructed taking into account safe angles of fire. Consideration must be given to safe target and frame construction and the angle of any possible ricochets. Where appropriate the physical dimensions and suitability of backstops and side berms must be determined as part of the construction process. Unless otherwise specified, the default maximum muzzle angle is 90 degrees in all directions, measured from the front of the competitor facing directly center downrange.

2.1.2.1 Subject to the direction and approval of the Regional Director, stage(s) or range specific muzzle angles (reduced or increased) may be permitted. Full details of the applicable angles and any conditional factors (e.g. a reduced vertical muzzle angle only applies when a finger is inside the trigger guard), must be published in advance of the match and must be included in the written stage briefings.

USPSA: Courses of fire must always be constructed taking into account safe angles of fire. Consideration must be given to safe target

and frame construction and the angle of any possible ricochets. Where appropriate the physical dimensions and suitability of backstops and side berms must be determined as part of the construction process.

2.1.3 IPSC: Minimum Distances – Engage steel at 7m, where a barrier is used. Where fault lines are used, place steel at 8m.

USPSA: Minimum Distances – Engage steel at 23ft, where a barrier is used. Where fault lines are used, place steel at 26ft.

2.1.7 IPSC: Common Firing Lines - 3m between competitors.

USPSA: Common Firing Lines – 5ft between competitors.

2.1.8.1 IPSC: Target Placement - Target types should be specified and identified on the target frames or stands prior to the start of the match to ensure that a scoring target is not interchanged with a no-shoot after the match has commenced.

USPSA: Target Placement – The above requirement pertains to IPSC only.

2.1.8.4 IPSC: Static Targets (i.e. those which are not activated) must not be presented at an angle greater than 90 degrees from the vertical.

USPSA: Static “Classic” paper targets must not be presented at an angle greater than approximately 45 degrees from the vertical.

Summary: Angle from the vertical does not affect the “metric”, or commonly used USPSA target.

2.1.8.5 IPSC: Appearing Scoring Targets - The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Appearing Scoring Targets - Must be designed and constructed to be obscured to the competitor (during the course of fire) prior to activation.

2.1.8.5.1 Level I matches are encouraged but not required to strictly comply with this requirement. The written stage briefing may prohibit competitors from engaging certain target(s) which may be visible prior to activation until the operation of the activating mechanism has been initiated.

2.2.1 IPSC: Competitor Movement - Should preferably be restricted through the use of physical barriers, however, the use of Fault Lines is permitted as follows:

2.2.1.1 To prevent unsafe and/or unrealistic charging at, or retreat from, targets;

2.2.1.2 To simulate the use of physical barriers and/or cover;

2.2.1.3 To define the boundaries of a general shooting area or part thereof.

2.2.1.4 Fault Lines must be fixed firmly in place, they must rise at least 2 cm above ground level, they should be constructed of wood or other rigid materials, and they should be of a consistent colour (preferably red), at every COF in a match. Unless used in a continuous manner to define the boundary of a general shooting area, fault lines must be a minimum of 1.5 meters in length, but they are deemed to extend to infinity.

2.2.1.5 If a COF has a passageway visibly delineated by fault lines and/or a clearly demarcated shooting area, any competitor who takes a

shortcut outside the passageway and/or shooting area will incur one procedural penalty for each shot fired after beginning the shortcut.

USPSA: Competitor Movement - May be restricted or controlled through the use of Physical Barriers, Fault Lines, Shooting Boxes or Off-Limits Lines.

2.2.1.1 Shooting Boxes and Fault Lines should be constructed of wooden boards or other suitable material, must be fixed firmly in place, and provide both physical and visual references to competitors. For hard ground surfaces clear of debris, 0.75 inch material is the minimum allowable size. On other range surfaces, such as covered with turf, sand, gravel, wood chips or similar, thicker material which rises at least 1.5 inches above the surface is recommended.

2.2.1.2 Shooting Boxes and Fault Lines are used to define the limits of the shooting area(s).

2.2.1.3 Fault Lines extending rearward (uprange) should be a minimum of 3 feet in length, and unless otherwise stated in the written stage briefing, are deemed to extend rearward to infinity.

2.2.1.4 The use of Shooting Boxes and Fault Lines at prone shooting positions should be avoided or used with caution.

2.2.1.5 Off-Limits Lines may be used to define an area of the range floor which has been declared off-limits. The WSB must identify the presence and location of Off-Limits Lines (if any). The off-limits area must be clearly delineated with rope, caution tape or other materials and must be at least 2 feet high and at least 2 feet from any Fault Line or Shooting Box.

Summary: A significant difference is the IPSC Rule 2.2.1.5. A deemed shortcut, outside of a demarcated shooting area, is punishable. USPSA allows for the freedom of movement, although shooting can still only

take place from within a demarcated shooting area. Furthermore, USPSA cautions against the use of Shooting Boxes and Fault Lines at prone shooting positions.

2.2.2 IPSC: Obstacles - Must not exceed 2m in height. Any obstacle over 1m must be provided with a scaling aid.

USPSA: Obstacles - Must not exceed 6.5ft in height. Any obstacle over 3ft must be provided with a scaling aid.

2.2.3.1 IPSC: Barriers - Unless supplemented by a shooting platform or similar, barriers of at least 1.8 meters high are deemed to extend skywards to infinity.

2.2.3.3 USPSA: Barriers - Unless otherwise specified in the written stage briefing, all such barriers, walls, vision barriers and snow fence barriers will be considered to go from the ground to the height as constructed.

Summary: IPSC considers barriers of 1.8 meters to extend to infinity. USPSA considers the barriers to extend to the height as constructed. If you are so inclined, you may shoot over the one, but not the other.

2.3.1.1 IPSC: Forbidden Action - The rule pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Forbidden Action - In lieu of modifying course design or physical construction, a Range Master may explicitly forbid certain competitor actions in order to maintain competitive equity.

a. Declaration of a Forbidden Action may be made to prohibit competitor movement which is likely to result in an unsafe condition or to prohibit exploitation of an unintended course loophole in order to

circumvent a course requirement and/or gain unfair competitive advantage.

b. The declaration of a Forbidden Action cannot be used as a means of compelling or limiting competitor movement within a course of fire (e.g., to prevent a shooter from “cutting the corner” on an L-shaped shooting area).

c. An area of the range floor may be declared off limits. The area must be clearly delineated with Off-Limits Lines. Crossing an Off Limits Line is considered a Forbidden Action.

d. Any Forbidden Action or Off Limits Area must be specified in the Written Stage Briefing.

2.5 IPSC: Test Firing / Sighting-In Bay - Applies to IPSC only.

USPSA: Unloading / Loading Station – Applies to USPSA only.

2.6 IPSC: Vendor Areas - Applies to IPSC only.

2.7 IPSC: Hygiene Areas - Applies to IPSC only.

Chapter 3: Course Information

3.2.1 IPSC: Written Stage Briefing - No need to specify scoring method. Everything is Comstock.

USPSA: Written Stage Briefing – Scoring method is specified, amongst other things.

3.2.2 IPSC: Reading The WSB - The Range Officer in charge of a course of fire must read out the written stage briefing verbatim to each squad. The Range Officer may visually demonstrate the acceptable Start Position and Gun Ready Condition.

USPSA: Reading The WSB - The Range Official in charge of a course of fire must read out the written stage briefing verbatim to each squad.

Summary: A significant difference is that IPSC provides for the RO to demonstrate a Start Position and Gun Ready Condition, in order to provide clarity. USPSA does not specifically include “demonstration”, although it is common practice. This does allow competitors to dispute and argue a Start Position or Gun Ready Condition, based on what may be written or omitted from the WSB, despite the use of a demonstration. However, an approved change and demonstration are quite legitimate, as per Rule 2.3.

3.2.5 IPSC: Complying - The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Complying - A written stage briefing must comply with the current USPSA rules.

3.2.6 IPSC: Controversial Competitor Action - The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Controversial Competitor Action - In the event that a competitor action contravenes the course requirements, but is not specifically prohibited in the Written Stage Briefing, the Range Master must be immediately summoned for a ruling. The Range Master may rule that the action is allowed and the competitor’s score will stand. Alternatively, the Range Master may require modifications to the course of fire, and/or may declare that the action is “forbidden”.

3.2.6.1 Following the declaration of a Forbidden Action, the shooter(s) whose action(s) resulted in such a declaration shall be required to reshoot the course of fire.

Summary: A significant difference is the USPSA Rule 3.2.6. Unless specifically prohibited in the Written Stage Briefing, IPSC allows an action, which presents an exploitable opportunity, therefore writing and presenting the WSB is an important action.

Chapter 4: Range Equipment

4.1.1.1 IPSC: Approved Targets - If one or more targets at a match fail to comply exactly with the stated specifications, and if replacement targets of the correct specifications are unavailable, the Range Master must decide whether or not the variance is acceptable for that match. However, the Range Master's decision will only affect the match in progress, and will not serve as a precedent for future matches held at the same location, or for any subsequent use of the subject targets at another match.

USPSA: Approved Targets - Only authorised targets are to be used. The sub-rule number pertains to IPSC only.

4.2.1 IPSC: Approved Paper Targets - There are two sizes of paper targets approved for use in IPSC Handgun matches. The IPSC Mini Target is intended to simulate full size IPSC Targets placed at greater distances. The two sizes may be included together in the same course of fire provided that all Mini Targets are placed at least 2 meters further rearwards of the most distant full size Target in that course of fire (i.e. if

the most distant full size Target is 15m downrange, the nearest Mini Target must be at least 17m downrange).

USPSA: Approved Paper Targets - There are two types of paper targets approved for use in USPSA handgun matches. These types must not be included together in any stage.

Summary: IPSC, essentially, has only one type of paper target, but two sizes. These sizes can be included together on a COF, but not alongside each other. They must be separated by very specific distance requirements. USPSA has two types of paper targets, but these cannot be combined on a COF.

4.2.2 IPSC: Scoring Lines and Non-Scoring Borders – Must not be visible beyond 10m.

USPSA: Scoring Lines and Non-Scoring Borders – Must not be visible beyond 33ft.

4.2.3 IPSC: Maximum Scoring Hits – Rule pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Maximum Scoring Hits - Paper targets must never be required to receive more than 12 hits before being scored and patched.

4.2.5 IPSC: Partially Hidden Paper Targets - Hard cover (and overlapping no-shoots) must not completely hide the highest scoring zone.

USPSA: Partially Hidden Paper Targets - Hard Cover (and overlapping no-shoots) must not completely hide the highest scoring zone. At least 25% of the lower A-zone, or the entire upper A-zone, must remain visible.

4.3.1.1 IPSC: Expressly Prohibited Metal Target - Metal targets and metal no-shoots which can accidentally turn edge-on or sideways when hit. Use may result in withdrawal of IPSC sanction.

USPSA: Expressly Prohibited Metal Target - The rule pertains to IPSC only.

4.3.2 IPSC: Poppers

4.3.2.1 IPSC Poppers and IPSC Mini Poppers are both approved metal targets designed to recognise power, and must be calibrated as specified.

4.3.2.2 IPSC Mini Poppers are used to simulate IPSC Poppers placed at greater distances. The two sizes may be included together in the same course of fire provided that all Mini Poppers are placed at least 2 meters further rearwards of the most distant full size Popper in that course of fire (i.e. if the most distant full size Popper is 15m downrange, the nearest Mini Popper must be at least 17m downrange).

4.3.1 USPSA: Approved Metal Targets - As follows:

4.3.1.1 Poppers are approved targets designed to recognise power and must be calibrated as specified.

4.3.1.2 Mini Poppers are approved targets designed to recognise power, are intended to simulate regular sized Poppers placed at greater distances, and must be calibrated as specified.

4.3.1.3 Pepper Poppers and Classic Poppers may be included in the same course of fire.

4.3.1.5 All Poppers shall follow the guidelines below:

1. That a minimum of 50% of the calibration zone be available at some point in the COF.

2. That the calibration will be done from a point on the COF where the calibration zone is available, closest to where the contested shot was fired.

Summary: The rule numbers took a departure here, although essentially the gist is the same. There are some major differences. IPSC has a distance requirement for combining Poppers and Mini Poppers on a COF. This is absent from USPSA. USPSA makes use of two types, and sizes, of Poppers. IPSC only has one type of Popper, but two sizes. Additionally, USPSA requires that at least 50% of a Popper's calibration zone be visible somewhere on the COF. IPSC has no requirement.

- 4.4.2 IPSC: Synthetic Targets (e.g. "self-sealing" targets etc.) – Must not be used at Level III or higher matches. However, subject to the prior written approval of a Regional Director, synthetic targets may be used at Level I and II matches held within their Region.

USPSA: May be used at Level I matches provided they comply with the specified target sizes relating to plates.

- 4.5.1.1 IPSC: Rearrangement of Surface - The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Rearrangement of Surface - A competitor is allowed to move stone, sand or other loose material at the starting position for the purposes of achieving level and stable footing.

Summary: An IPSC competitor is expected to request a Match Official take corrective action i.r.t. the surface. USPSA has included a specific exception.

Chapter 5: Competitor Equipment

5.1.7.3 IPSC: Firearm Substitution - The competitor's ammunition, when tested in the substitute firearm, must attain the minimum power factor for the Division.

USPSA: Firearm Substitution - The competitor's replacement handgun and its appropriate ammunition must be chronographed, regardless of whether or not the original handgun was previously tested.

5.1.7.4 IPSC: Substituted Handgun Subject To Testing - Applies to USPSA only.

USPSA: Substituted Handgun Subject To Testing - If the original handgun/ammunition was not previously tested, and if the original handgun has already been used on a stage, and can be safely fired (i.e. the malfunction is not related to an inability to safely fire the handgun), then the original handgun and its ammunition supply remain subject to testing.

5.2.1.2 IPSC: Holster Carry - Handguns carried in a holster must have an empty magazine well, and the hammer or striker must be de-cocked. Violations will incur a warning for the first occurrence but will be subject to Rule 10.6.1 for subsequent occurrences in the same match.

5.2.2 USPSA: Holster Carry - Competitors carrying their handgun in a holster must have an empty magazine well, and the hammer or striker must be

de-cocked. Anyone found in violation of this rule will be immediately escorted by a RO to a suitable range or safety area where appropriate corrective action shall be made.

Summary: Two opposing views. IPSC provides sanctions in the form of a warning and then a subsequent DQ. USPSA simply checks the firearm, and subsequent action is based on the state of the firearm.

5.2.2 IPSC: Handling - Except when within the boundaries of a safety area, or when under the supervision and direct command of a Range Officer, competitors must not handle their firearms. The word "handle" includes holstering or unholstering a firearm, even if it is concealed by a protective cover, and/or adding or removing it to/from the competitor's person while it is wholly or partially holstered.

USPSA: Handling - The rule number pertains to IPSC only, however it is addressed by Rule 10.5.1.

5.2.3.1 IPSC: Female Competitor Equipment Adjustments – Applicable to all Divisions. The belt carrying the holster and all allied equipment may be worn at hip level. If another belt is worn at waist level, the holster and all allied equipment must be placed on the lower belt.

USPSA: Female Competitor Equipment Adjustments – Subject to Division approval. May wear a belt, holster and allied equipment at hip level, however, the top of the belt must not be positioned below the furthest lateral point of the top of the femur (tuberosity major).

Summary: Not all Divisions, within USPSA, permit hip level equipment adjustment for female competitors.

5.2.4 IPSC: Spare ammunition, magazines and speed loaders should be carried in retention devices specifically designed for that purpose. Carriage of additional magazines and speed loaders in rear pockets of shorts or trousers is also approved.

5.2.4.1 For table starts or similar, after the Start Signal, the competitor may carry those items anywhere on their person, and this will not be treated as a contravention of Divisional rules.

USPSA: During the course of fire, after the start signal, unless stipulated otherwise in the stage procedure, spare ammunition, magazines and speed loading devices shall be carried in retention devices attached to the competitor's belt and specifically designed for that purpose. A competitor may also carry additional magazines or speed loading devices in his pockets and retrieve and use them without penalty once having dropped or exhausted his primary magazines.

Summary: IPSC and USPSA are, essentially, saying the same thing. IPSC is stipulating the position before the start signal. Equipment positioning is Division specific. USPSA is stipulating the position after the start signal. Equipment positioning is Division specific as well. USPSA does not take a position regarding table starts.

5.2.5 IPSC: Distance From Body - Where a Division specifies a maximum distance that a competitor's handgun and equipment may extend away from a competitor's body, a Range Officer may check compliance by measuring the closest distance between the competitor's torso and the center of the longest dimension of the handgun grip and/or any reloading devices.

5.2.5.1 The measurement is to be taken while the competitor is standing naturally upright.

USPSA: Where a Division specifies a maximum distance that a competitor's handgun and equipment may extend away from a competitor's belt, the measurement shall be taken in the following manner:

- perpendicular to the belt at the point of attachment to the belt
- from the inner most surface of the belt equipment (against the pants/body) to the nearest body-side surface of the handgun and/or any reloading device.

5.2.5.1 These measurements may be taken with the equipment as worn or removed.

Summary: There are differences as to how the distance between the body and equipment are measured. IPSC measures from the torso to the middle of the grip, whilst being worn. USPSA measures from the inner belt to the nearest part of the gun/reloading device. Items such as rackers, safeties, scope mounts etc are deemed to be part of the gun. Therefore it is likely that IPSC has tighter tolerances than USPA.

5.2.6 IPSC: Holster Restrictions - There are no Divisional holster restrictions.

USPSA: Holster Restrictions - Divisions may restrict a specific type of holster.

5.2.7.3 IPSC: A holster which permits the muzzle of a holstered handgun to point further than 1 meter from the competitor's feet, while standing relaxed, is not permitted.

USPSA: A holster with the muzzle of the handgun pointing further than 3 feet from the competitor's feet, while standing relaxed, is not permitted.

5.2.8 IPSC: Active Law Enforcement Officers or Military Personnel - May be entitled to use their duty holster and allied equipment.

USPSA: Active Law Enforcement Officers or Military Personnel - May be entitled to use their duty holster and allied equipment. The use of such equipment, except as otherwise permitted in the rules, is restricted to Level I matches only.

5.3.1 IPSC: Appropriate Dress - The use of camouflage or other similar types of military or police garments other than by competitors who are law enforcement or military personnel is discouraged. The Match Director will be the final authority in respect of what garments must not be worn by competitors.

USPSA: Appropriate Dress - The use of offensive or objectionable garments is not allowed. The Match Director will have final authority in respect of what garments competitors are allowed to wear.

5.4 IPSC and USPSA rules are, essentially, the same.

5.5 IPSC and USPSA rules are, essentially, the same.

5.7 IPSC and USPSA rules are, essentially, the same.

5.8.1 IPSC: Official Match Ammunition - When match organisers make official match ammunition available for purchase by competitors at a match, the Match Director must, both in advance in official match literature (and/or on the official match website), and by way of a sign certified by him and posted at a conspicuous place at the point of sale, clearly identify which manufacturer/brand, specific cartridges and load descriptions are deemed to be rated, by Division, as either Minor or Major power factor, as the case may be. The subject rounds will usually be exempt from testing by chronograph.

USPSA: Ammo must be delivered to the competitor only at the match where it will be used and designated official by the US Regional Director. Specific ammo products may be certified as meeting Minor or Major power factor for specific divisions by the US Regional Director. A competitor who wishes to use official match ammo at the certified power factor must file a declaration with the Match Director stating the official ammo product will be in use for the entire match. This declaration must be filed before starting the match. A competitor who has declared he is using only official match ammo may withdraw the declaration by informing the Range Master prior to use of any non-official ammo. At any match where competitor ammunition will be chronographed, a competitor using official match ammo will be required to provide eight rounds of this ammo at the time they pick up the ammo (delivery sample) and will also be subject to further sampling if necessary. At any match where competitor ammunition will be chronographed, a competitor using official match ammo will have ammo samples collected during the match and chronographed according to the provisions. Should the ammo so tested fail to meet the declared power factor, it shall be compared against the average of three rounds collected from the official delivery sample. If the samples collected during the match measure more than 10 power factor points below the delivery samples, the measured power factor of the ammo

collected during the match shall be used for score. The use of ammo other than official match ammunition, while declaring use of official ammunition, shall be considered unsportsmanlike conduct.

Summary: There are significant differences in how Official Match Ammunition is handled. IPSC does not subject OMA to testing, if you are in possession of a receipt. USPSA has a comprehensive testing protocol.

Chapter 6: Match Structure

Minimal differences between IPSC and USPSA. Consult the rulebooks for further clarity.

Chapter 7: Match Management

Minimal differences between IPSC and USPSA. Consult the rulebooks for further clarity.

Chapter 8: The Course of Fire

8.1.1.1 IPSC: Single Action Only Revolvers - Not approved for IPSC matches.

USPSA: Single Action Revolvers - Hammer fully down on an empty chamber or, if a safety notch is fitted, hammer down over a loaded chamber (transfer bar designs excepted).

8.1.1.2 IPSC: Double/Selective Action Revolvers - Hammer fully down and cylinder closed. If self-loading pistols prepare "magazine well and

chamber empty", revolvers prepare with an empty cylinder, otherwise revolvers prepare with a fully loaded cylinder.

USPSA: Double Action - Hammer fully down and all chambers may be loaded.

- 8.1.1.3 IPSC: Non-Traditional Revolvers - Non-traditional revolvers (e.g. those which operate in a "self-loading" mode) are subject to the Self-Loading Pistol requirements and/or any other requirements stipulated by the Range Master.

USPSA: Non-Traditional Revolvers – Not Allowed.

- 8.1.2.5 IPSC: Decocking Levers - If a handgun has a decocking lever that alone must be used to decock the handgun, without touching the trigger. If a handgun does not have a decocking lever, the hammer must be safely and manually lowered all the way forward (i.e. not just to a "half-cock notch" or to another similar intermediary position).

USPSA: Decocking Levers - The rule pertains to IPSC only.

Summary: With IPSC, the presence of a decocking lever means that the decocking lever alone must be used, and the hammer will rest where it is designed to rest (Sometimes not all the way forward). With USPSA, there is no explicit rule. Therefore it appears that lowering the hammer or decocking, in the presence of a decocking lever, is optional.

- 8.1.3.1 IPSC: Artificial Elevation - When a written stage briefing requires that a competitor's firearm and/or allied equipment be placed on a table or another surface prior to the Start Signal, they must be placed as stipulated in the written stage briefing. Apart from components normally

affixed to them (e.g. a thumb rest, thumb safety, racking or cocking handle, base pad etc.), other items must not be used to artificially elevate them.

USPSA: Artificial Elevation - The rule number pertains to IPSC only.

Summary: Artificial elevation is prohibited by IPSC only.

8.2.2 IPSC: Start Position - The competitor assumes the start position as specified in the written stage briefing. Unless otherwise specified, the competitor must stand erect, facing downrange, with arms hanging naturally by the sides. A competitor who attempts or completes a course of fire where an incorrect start position was used *may* be required by a Range Officer to reshoot the course of fire.

USPSA: Start Position - The competitor assumes the start position as specified in the written stage briefing. Unless otherwise specified, the competitor must stand erect, facing downrange, with arms hanging naturally by the sides. A competitor who attempts or completes a course of fire where an incorrect start position was used *must* be required by a Range Official to reshoot the course of fire.

Summary: In IPSC, an incorrect start position DOES NOT automatically lead to a reshoot. This remains at the RO's discretion. USPSA stipulates that a reshoot is mandatory.

8.3.1 IPSC: Range Communication - "Load and Make Ready" (or "Make Ready" for starts with an unloaded firearm) signify the start of the Course of Fire.

USPSA: Range Communication - "Make Ready" signifies the start of the Course of Fire.

8.3.7.1 IPSC: "If Clear, Hammer Down, Holster" - If a handgun has a device which requires a magazine be inserted to enable the trigger to be pulled, the competitor must, on issuance of the above command, inform the Range Officer, who will direct and supervise the use, and subsequent removal, of an empty magazine to facilitate this process.

USPSA: "If Clear, Hammer Down, Holster" – The above requirement is explicit to IPSC only, although common sense dictates that it would be a courtesy.

8.3.7.3 IPSC: Holstering - Once the competitor's hands are clear of the holstered handgun, the course of fire is deemed to have ended.

USPSA: Holstering – The above requirement is explicit to IPSC.

Summary: The IPSC requirement for hands to clear the gun is to indicate the end of the COF, and has implications when determining whether a dropped handgun leads to disqualification or not.

8.3.7.4 IPSC: "Range Is Clear" - Competitors or Match Personnel must not move forward of, or away from, the firing line or final shooting location until this declaration is given by the Range Officer. Once the declaration is made, officials and competitors may move forward to score, patch, reset targets etc.

USPSA: "Range Is Clear" - This declaration signifies the end of the Course of fire. Once the declaration is made, officials and competitors may move forward to score, patch, reset targets etc.

Summary: This command signifies the end of the COF within USPSA. Therefore, i.r.t. USPSA, a dropped gun, before this command is issued, will result in a disqualification.

8.3.9 IPSC: Hearing Disabilities - A competitor with a severe hearing disability may, subject to prior approval of the Range Master, be entitled to have the foregoing verbal Range Communications supplemented by visual and/or physical signals.

8.3.9.1 The recommended physical signals are taps on the competitor's weak side shoulder using a countdown protocol, namely 3 taps for "Are You Ready", 2 taps for "Standby" and 1 tap to coincide with the "Start Signal".

8.3.9.2 Competitors wishing instead to use their own electronic or other device must firstly submit it for examination, testing and approval by the Range Master before it can be used.

USPSA: Hearing Disabilities - The rule number pertains to IPSC only.

8.3.10 IPSC: Chronograph Commands - There are no fixed range communications designated for use at the chronograph station or at an equipment compliance check (which may be conducted at a venue away from the shooting range). Competitors must not handle their handguns until the examiner asks for them to be passed to him, in accordance with his instructions. Violations are subject to disqualification.

USPSA: Chronograph Commands - The rule number pertains to IPSC only.

8.6.2.1 IPSC: Unwelcome Interference - Any person verbally or otherwise interfering with a competitor during his attempt at a course of fire may be subject to disqualification. If the Range Officer believes that the interference significantly affected the competitor, he must report the incident to the Range Master, who may, at his discretion, offer the affected competitor a reshoot.

USPSA: Unwelcome Interference – In the above context, the rule number pertains to IPSC only, however a similar outcome is defined in USPSA Rule 8.6.2.

Summary: USPSA does not make provision for a reshoot, where a competitor has been significantly affected by interference.

8.6.2.1 IPSC: Authorised Assistance - In the below context, the rule number pertains to USPSA only, and is not permitted.

USPSA: Authorised Assistance - When approved by the Range Officer, competitors at Level I matches may, without penalty, receive whatever coaching or assistance they request.

8.7.1 IPSC: Sight Pictures and Dry Firing - Competitors are prohibited from taking a sight picture and/or dry firing prior to the start signal. Violation will result in a warning for the first occurrence and one procedural penalty for each subsequent occurrence in the same match. Competitors may, while pointing their firearm at the ground, adjust electronic sights.

USPSA: Sight Pictures - A competitor is permitted to take a sight picture prior to the start signal. Such sight picture is only permitted from the “Make Ready” location.

Summary: IPSC expressly prohibits sight pictures and dry firing. USPSA permits dry firing and sight pictures, including with a loaded gun. However, such sight pictures can only be taken from the “Make Ready” position. Permission cannot be granted to move and sight multiple targets, however one step is usually allowed.

8.7.2 IPSC: Sighting Aids - Competitors are prohibited from using any sighting aid (e.g. the whole or part of an imitation or replica firearm, any part of a real firearm including any accessories thereof etc.), except for their own hands, while conducting their inspection (“walkthrough”) of a course of fire. Violations will incur one procedural penalty per occurrence.

USPSA: Sighting Aids - Competitors are prohibited from using any guns or gun replicas as sighting aids while conducting their inspection (“walkthrough”) of a course of fire. Violations will incur one procedural penalty per occurrence.

Summary: IPSC will not permit any sighting aids, or deemed sighting aids, other than your empty hands. USPSA will not permit the use of guns or gun replicas as sighting aids.

8.7.4 IPSC: Unauthorised Stage Interference - The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Unauthorised Stage Interference - Altering stage props, targets or any other part of a COF without the approval of a Range Officer, or setting, resetting or activating moving targets on a COF identified as “Closed” or “Off Limits” will be disqualified.

Chapter 9: Scoring

9.1.1 IPSC: Approaching A Target - While scoring is in progress, competitors or their delegate must not approach any target closer than 1 meter without the authorisation of the Range Officer. Violation will result in a warning for the first offence, but the competitor or his delegate may, at the discretion of the Range Officer, incur a procedural penalty for subsequent occurrences in the same match.

USPSA: Approaching A Target - While scoring is in progress, competitors or their delegate must not approach any target closer than (3 feet) without the authorisation of the Range Officer. Violation may, at the discretion of the Range Officer, incur a procedural penalty.

9.1.3 IPSC: Prematurely Patched Targets - If a target is prematurely patched or taped, preventing the determination of the actual score, the Range Officer must order the competitor to reshoot the course of fire.

USPSA: Prematurely Patched Targets - If a target is prematurely patched or taped, prior to a Range Official determining the actual score, the Range Officer must order the competitor to reshoot the course of fire. However, if following the scoring of a target by any assigned Range Officer, the target is patched or taped by anyone other than a Range Officer, the score will stand as called regardless of the competitor's opportunity to see the target in question and the competitor will not be permitted to appeal the score as called.

Summary: Many an IPSC competitor has appealed, and won a reshoot, due to premature patching following the scoring of a target, on the basis that the competitor has not been given the opportunity to

verify the hits. This is somewhat negated by IPSC Rule 9.6.3, but remains valid for large stages and long distance shots, where scoring takes place at multiple points, simultaneously. USPSA expressly prohibits such reshoots.

9.2.3 IPSC: “Virginia Count” - In the below context, the rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: “Virginia Count” - Unlimited time stops on the last shot, limited number of shots to be fired, stipulated number of hits per target to count for score.

9.2.3.1 A competitor’s score is calculated by adding the highest value stipulated number of hits per target, minus penalties, divided by the total time (recorded to two decimal places) taken by the competitor to complete the course of fire, to arrive at a hit factor. The overall stage results are factored by awarding the competitor with the highest hit factor the maximum points available for the course of fire, with all other competitors ranked relatively below the stage winner.

9.2.3.2 Virginia Count must use paper targets exclusively, and must only be used for Standard Exercises, Classifiers or Short Courses.

9.2.4 IPSC: “Fixed Time” - In the below context, the rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: “Fixed Time” - Limited time, limited number of shots to be fired, stipulated number of hits per target to count for score.

9.2.4.1 A competitor’s score is calculated by adding the highest value stipulated number of required hits, minus penalties. The overall stage results are not factored, and competitors are ranked by the actual net points achieved by them.

9.2.4.2 Fixed Time must use paper targets exclusively and they should, where possible, be disappearing targets.

9.2.4.3 Fixed Time must only be used for Standard Exercises, Classifiers or Short Courses.

9.2.4.4 Fixed Time courses of fire do not incur failure to shoot at or miss penalties.

9.4.2 IPSC: Scoring No-Shoots - Each hit visible on the scoring area of a paper no-shoot will be penalised minus 10 points, up to a maximum of 2 hits per no-shoot.

USPSA: Scoring No-Shoots - Each hit visible on the scoring area of a paper no-shoot will be penalised the equivalent of twice the point value of a maximum scoring hit.

Summary: IPSC allows a maximum of 2 hits per no-shoot. USPSA penalises the competitor for every strike on a no-shoot.

9.4.3 IPSC: Scoring Metal No-Shoots - Each hit visible on the scoring area of a metal no-shoot will be penalised minus 10 points, up to a maximum of 2 hits per no-shoot, regardless of whether or not it is designed to fall.

USPSA: Scoring Metal No-Shoots - Each full or partial diameter hit visible on the frontal surface of a metal no-shoot will be penalised the equivalent of twice the point value of a maximum scoring hit, regardless of whether or not it is designed to fall.

9.4.5 IPSC: The rule pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: In a Virginia Count Course of Fire or a Fixed Time Course of Fire -

9.4.5.1 Extra shots (i.e. shots fired in excess of the number specified in a component string or stage), will each incur one procedural penalty. Additionally, during scoring, no more than the specified number and highest scoring hits will be awarded.

9.4.5.2 Extra hits (i.e. hits on the scoring area of scoring paper targets in excess of the total number specified in the stage), will each incur one procedural penalty. Note that hits on hard cover and/or no-shoots are not treated as Extra Hits.

9.4.5.2.1 On a course of fire using a common firing line, a competitor may not be credited or penalised for any scoring or penalty hit(s) which can reasonably be determined by the Range Officer (by caliber, grease mark, or angle of hit) to have been fired by an adjacent competitor.

9.4.5.3 Stacked shots (i.e. obviously shooting more than the required rounds on a target(s) while shooting other target(s) with fewer shots than specified in any string), will incur one procedural penalty per target insufficiently engaged in any string. This penalty will not be applied if the written stage briefing specifically authorises stacked shots.

9.4.6 IPSC: The rule pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: In a Fixed Time Course of Fire -

9.4.6.1 Overtime shots are shots fired at the targets after the signal to cease fire has been given. No direct penalties apply to overtime shots fired at disappearing targets.

9.4.6.2 Where static scoring paper targets are used, a shot (or shots) fired more than 0.30 seconds over the set time, will be considered

overtime. For example, if the time is 5.00 seconds, a shot (or shots) at 5.31 seconds or more would be considered overtime. Overtime shots will be penalised the maximum possible scoring value of each shot so fired. If the overtime shot results in extra hits on the target, only the specified number of shots may be scored.

9.4.6.3 Where static paper no-shoots are used, it is assumed that all hits occurred within the specified time, and will count in the scoring process.

9.5.9 IPSC: The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Hits upon scoring or no-shoot paper targets, must completely pass through the target to be considered a valid hit and count for score or penalty.

9.6.9 IPSC: Hand Signals - Scoring information may be relayed through the use of hand signals. If a score is challenged, the subject targets must not be restored until they have been verified by the competitor or his delegate, in accordance with whatever arrangements have been approved in advance by the Range Master.

USPSA: The rule pertains to IPSC only.

9.7.8 IPSC: Handling Original Score Sheets - No person, other than an authorised Match Official, is permitted to handle an original score sheet retained on a stage, or at any other place, after it has been signed by a competitor and a Range Officer, without the prior approval of the Range Officer or personnel directly involved with Stats. Violations will incur a warning for the first offence, but may be subject to disqualification for subsequent occurrences in the same match.

USPSA: The rule number pertains to IPSC only.

9.8.2 IPSC: Posting Stage Results - After all competitors have completed a match, the provisional stage results must be published and posted in a conspicuous place at the shooting range and, at Level IV or higher matches, at the official match hotel for the purpose of verification by competitors. The time and date the subject results were actually posted (not just printed) at each venue must be clearly stated thereon.

USPSA: Posting Stage Results - After all competitors have completed a match; the provisional stage results should be published and posted in a conspicuous place at the shooting range by the Stats Officer for the purpose of verification by competitors.

Summary: IPSC insists that results **MUST** be posted. USPSA recommends that results **SHOULD** be posted.

9.8.5 IPSC: A Match Director may elect to have results posted electronically (e.g. via a website) either in addition to, or as an alternative to, physically printing them. If so, the relevant procedure must be published in advance in match literature and/or by way of a notice posted in a conspicuous place at the shooting range prior to commencement of the match. Facilities (e.g. a computer) must be provided for competitors to view the results if a Match Director has elected to only have results posted electronically.

USPSA: The rule number pertains to IPSC only.

9.9.1 IPSC: Moving/Disappearing Targets - Moving targets which present at least a portion of the highest scoring area when at rest (*either before or*

after initial activation), or which continuously appear and disappear for the duration of a competitor's attempt at a COF, are not disappearing and will always incur failure to engage and/or miss penalties.

USPSA: Moving/Disappearing Targets - Moving scoring targets which present at least a portion of the highest scoring area when at rest *following the completion of their designed movement*, or which continuously appear and disappear, will always incur failure to shoot at and/or miss penalties.

Summary: IPSC differs from USPSA in that it defines an engageable moving target as any target which presents a portion of the highest scoring area either before, or after, activation. This is a vital distinction. USPSA only recognises this after the completed movement. What this means is that a target could disappear, post-activation, and not be a disappearing target (IPSC), if it was visible before.

9.9.2 IPSC: Disappearing Targets – Moving targets, which do not comply with the above criteria, are disappearing and will not incur failure to engage or miss penalties unless a competitor fails to activate the mechanism which initiates the target movement *before firing the last shot for that course of fire*.

USPSA: Disappearing Targets - Moving scoring targets, which do not comply with the above criteria are considered disappearing targets and will not incur failure to shoot at or miss penalties, unless the competitor fails to activate (9.9.3).

Summary: IPSC differs from USPSA in that you have to activate a mechanism before you fire the last shot. USPSA only requires you to activate the mechanism. This can be done at any point. Therefore, with

USPSA, it is quite feasible to shoot a COF and then casually activate a mechanism, without affecting your shooting time.

9.9.3 IPSC: Stationary targets which present at least a portion of the highest scoring area, either before or after activation of a moving and/or concealing no-shoot or vision barrier, are not disappearing and will incur failure to engage and/or miss penalties.

USPSA: In the above context, the rule number pertains to IPSC only.

Summary: USPSA would define concealed stationary targets, post-movement, as disappearing targets. IPSC would not, if these targets were visible at some point.

9.9.4 IPSC: Targets which present at least a portion of the highest scoring zone each time a competitor operates a mechanical activator (e.g. a rope, lever, pedal, flap, door etc.), are not subject to this section.

USPSA: In the above context, the rule number pertains to IPSC only.

9.9.4 IPSC: In the below context, the rule number pertains to IPSC only.

USPSA: Level I matches only - If the written stage briefing prohibits the engagement of certain targets prior to activation, the competitor will incur one procedural penalty per shot fired at such targets prior to operating the activating mechanism, up to the maximum number of available hits.

9.11.1 IPSC: Approved Software - The scoring programs approved by IPSC are the Match Scoring System (MSS) and Windows® Match Scoring

System (WinMSS). No other scoring program must be used for any IPSC sanctioned match without the prior written approval of the Regional Director of the host Region. In the case of MSS and WinMSS the most recent versions of the scoring programs available from the IPSC website are to be used.

USPSA: Approved Software - The scoring program approved by USPSA is the EzWinScore. No other scoring program must be used for any USPSA sanctioned match without the prior written approval of the President of USPSA. The most recent version of the scoring program is available from the USPSA website. PDA's or handheld computers may be used for the collection of scoring data for transfer to EzWinScore, provided the program and procedure has been approved by the USPSA President.

9.11.2 IPSC: The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: When electronic scoring is used, once stage scoring is completed, every competitor shall be provided the opportunity to review the PDA or handheld computer display to review their stage time and score entries. At Level II or higher matches, range officers shall also create a hard copy record that includes the hit and penalty totals, time, time of day, competitor initials and range officer initials for each stage.

Chapter 10: Penalties

10.2.6 IPSC: Creeping - If the Range Officer can stop the competitor in time, a warning will be issued for the first offence and the competitor will be restarted.

USPSA: Creeping – Same as IPSC, with the exception of above and below.

10.2.6.1 Exception: Any movement required or specified in the stage briefing (i.e., self start) will not be penalised.

10.2.8 IPSC: Single-Handed Shooting – Same as USPSA, except that increasing stability, by touching the ground, will also be penalised.

USPSA: Single-Handed Shooting – See above.

10.2.9 IPSC: Leaving A Shooting Location - A competitor who leaves a shooting location may return and shoot again from the same location provided they do so safely. However, written stage briefings for Classifiers and Level I & II matches may prohibit such actions, in which case 1 procedural penalty per shot fired will apply.

USPSA: Leaving A Shooting Location - A competitor who leaves a shooting location may return and shoot again from the same location provided they do so safely. However, written stage briefings for Classifiers, Standard Exercises and Level I matches may prohibit such actions, in which case one procedural penalty per shot fired will apply.

10.2.11 IPSC: Shooting Over A Barrier - A competitor who fires shots over a barrier constructed to a height of least 1.8 meters will incur 1 procedural penalty for each shot fired.

USPSA: Shooting Over A Barrier – The rule pertains to IPSC only.

Summary: USPSA does not deem barriers to extend to infinity. It is acceptable to shoot over the top of a barrier, if the shooter has this option available.

10.2.11 IPSC: Committing A Forbidden Action – The rule pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Committing A Forbidden Action – A competitor who commits a Forbidden Action will be stopped immediately and receive a zero score for the stage. Flagrant or intentional violation may be subject to disqualification.

10.4.2 IPSC: Accidental Discharge - A shot which strikes the ground within 3 meters of the competitor, except when shooting at a paper target closer than 3 meters to the competitor. A bullet which strikes the ground within 3 meters of the competitor due to a "squib" load is exempt from this rule.

USPSA: Accidental Discharge - A shot which strikes the ground within 10 feet of the competitor, except when shooting at a paper target closer than 10 feet to the competitor.

10.4.2.1 Exception - A bullet which strikes the ground within 10 feet of the competitor due to a "squib".

10.4.2.2 In the case of a shot striking a prop where the bullet is deflected or does not continue to strike the ground, if the Range Official determines that the bullet would have struck the ground within 10 feet of the competitor had it not been deflected or stopped by the prop, the disqualification shall apply.

10.4.7 IPSC: Engaging Steel - A shot fired at a metal target from a distance of less than 7 meters, measured from the front of the target to the nearest part of the competitor's body in contact with the ground.

10.5.17 USPSA: Engaging Steel – Same rule applies; different rule number.

10.4.8 IPSC: Discharge Due To Broken/Defective Firearm - If it can be established that the cause of the discharge is due to a broken or defective part of the firearm, that the competitor has not committed any safety infraction, a disqualification will not be invoked, but the competitor's scores for that stage will be zero.

10.4.8.1 The firearm must be immediately presented for inspection to the Range Master or his delegate, who will inspect the firearm and carry out any tests necessary to establish that a broken or defective part caused the discharge. A competitor may not later appeal a disqualification for an accidental discharge due to a broken or defective part if they fail to present the firearm for inspection prior to leaving the course of fire.

USPSA: Discharge Due To Broken/Defective Firearm – The rule number pertains to IPSC only.

Summary: USPSA does not have a broken gun alibi. If your gun malfunctions, resulting in a discharge, the disqualification remains applicable.

10.5.5 IPSC: Allowing the muzzle of a handgun to point at any part of the competitor's body during a course of fire (i.e. sweeping). A disqualification is not applicable if sweeping occurs while drawing or re-holstering a gun, provided the competitor's fingers are clearly outside the trigger guard.

USPSA: Allowing the muzzle of a handgun to point at any part of the competitor's body during a course of fire (i.e. sweeping).

10.5.5.1 Exception – A match disqualification is not applicable for sweeping of the lower extremities (below the belt) while drawing or re-

holstering of the handgun, provided that the competitor's fingers are clearly outside of the trigger guard.

Summary: USPSA provides an exception for lower extremities only. Therefore swept hands can lead to a disqualification in USPSA. IPSC provides a full exception.

10.5.16 IPSC: Drawing A Handgun Whilst Facing Uprange – The rule number pertains to USPSA only.

USPSA: Drawing A Handgun Whilst Facing Uprange – Disqualification.

Summary: Not explicitly prohibited by IPSC but interpreted as such, given that the 1m (3ft) distance concession, on drawing, only applies when facing downrange.

Chapter 11: Arbitration and Interpretation of Rules

Minimal differences between IPSC and USPSA. Consult the rulebooks, as well, for further clarity.

11.4.1 IPSC: Arbitration Amount – For Level III or higher matches, the appeal fee to enable an appellant to appeal to arbitration will be US\$100.00 or the equivalent of the maximum individual match entry fee (whichever is lower), in local currency. The appeal fee for other matches may be set by the Match Organisers, but must not exceed US\$100 or equivalent in local currency. An appeal brought by the Range Master in respect of a match issue will not incur a fee.

USPSA: Arbitration Amount – As set by the Match Organisers, the appeal fee to enable an appellant to appeal to arbitration will be US\$100.00 or the equivalent of the maximum individual match entry fee (whichever is lower). An appeal brought by the Range Master in respect of a match issue will not incur a fee.

Summary: USPSA encourages arbitration, by ensuring a lower fee. IPSC has left the option open to local organisers, who usually use the \$100 fee, despite it being many times higher than the match fee, in many instances. This discourages arbitration at the smaller matches.

Rule	Description	Distance
2.1.3	Engaging Steel	7m – 23ft or 8m – 26ft
2.1.7	Common Firing Line	3m – 5ft
2.2.2	Obstacles	2m – 6.5ft and 1m – 3ft
4.2.2	Scoring Lines and Borders	10m – 33ft
5.2.5	Equipment Distance	50mm – 2in
5.2.7.3	Muzzle Distance	1m – 3ft
9.1.1	Approaching a Target	1m – 3ft
10.4.2	Accidental Discharge	3m – 10ft