

The Recipe for the 2010 Area 5

BY EVA L. MICKLETHWAITE A22355

Start with some of the most challenging stages that could be presented, add some of the best shooters in the country, mix in 25 guns at stake for the winners, sprinkle with some of the friendliest people hosting, and you have a fantastic recipe for the 2010 Area 5 Championships.

Co-Match Directors Jim Thompson and Dale Hayen, Range Master Ray Hirst, and the Tri-County Gun Club in Polo, Ill., far exceeded any expectation one may have had for this match.

The Area 5 match was moved to the Tri-County Gun Club in Mid-December, which did not leave a lot of time to put together a Level III match. Despite



Photo by Rich Dettelhouser

Ted Puento scrambles for position.

the hurry-up start, they received their first entry Dec. 31, and eventually hosted 337 competitors. Limited division reined in the most competitors at 97, with Open close behind at 84, and Production division with 69 shooters.

To put this into perspective, Jim Thompson and Dave Sharp built 137 new wall sections and set up the match with the aid of a small but dedicated



Photo by Russell Micklethwaite.

Russell Micklethwaite drills a target.

crew (Dan and Nate Vestal, Michael Steven, Mike Bytnar, Denny Shadel, Bob Hale, Lyle Kurtz, and Bruce Carby). According to Dale, Jim was adamant that there be 12 stages. The most ever run at this range was 10 stages. With heavy equipment, one bay was turned into four, while other bays were cleaned up and berms built up. By match day the Tri-County Gun Club members' hard work paid off. This range was well laid out, easy to navigate and green, green, green!

The match spanned a 4-day shooting schedule. The shooters are able to select their own shooting schedule via the USPSA Self-Squadding tool. I personally liked this concept and wish more major matches would consider using it.

The match officials started the match with more than 1600 bottles of water and still ended up buying another 30 cases. This wasn't a dry heat, we were dealing with Polo, Ill., in more ways than one!



Photos by Russell Micklethwaite.

Above, TD Roe and Sarah Irish, below, the Area 5 match staff.





Photo by Rich Dettelhouser

Flames erupt from Sherwyn Greenfield's compensator.

sider. As Ben Stoeger mentioned, he and Matt Mink never did agree on the best way to shoot a stage. The unanimous opinion was that this match was one of the most difficult matches shot this year, but it was said without complaint, rather with praise for the course designs. There is a fine line between "too difficult" and "challenging." This match had the perfect blend. Max Michel added, "I must say, the entire operation was first class and felt like a National Championship with the stage difficulty/top notch staff. I truly look forward to shooting the Area 5 once again next year!"

The competitors were given 12 courses of fire to shoot, requiring a total of close to 300 rounds, sometimes fired in pouring rain. That involved swingers, very fast max traps, drop turners, a gravity swinger, Mozambique paper, steel setups, and a rack of triple "can can" swingers. Quite a few targets had either hard cover or no-shoots on them with more than their fair share of poppers and plates. The "aiming" aspect of this match seems to be a trend in competition. It played to Limited Division winner Robert Vogel's style, who edged out Blake Miguez by just over 16 match points.



Photo by Rich Dettelhouser

Travis Tomasi making one of his signature speedy reloads.

Combining his recent Area 6 win with other USPSA and IDPA titles, Robert picked up his 50th major match win at Area 5 and in doing so also won a Custom Caspian 6" Limited gun built by Rich Dettelhouser of Canyon Creek. Congratulations!

With three activators and lots of running, Stage 2, "The Mess," seemed to be the competitor's favorite. The shooters started with their heels touching a fault line. On signal they proceeded to the top of a platform where they met their first activator, a swinger, two poppers, and four targets. Moving to the next shooting position off the platform, they met their second activator, another swinger which was much faster and had hard cover, then two partial targets. The next position required the shooter to make a few decisions on target acquisition, with a US popper that was way too far out there and two more targets. The shooter ended by going through a door and engaging a drop turner that



Photo by Russell Micklethwaite.

Eva Micklethwaite vies for top lady. She would come in second by less than a match point.

was activated by another popper. This was Carrie Carlson's favorite stage, and one can see why when looking at the results. Carrie placed 14th overall on this stage, which helped her bring home the Area 5 Limited Lady title as well as placing 2nd in "C" Class.

On the flip side of the spectrum, Stage 8, "No Shoot Nurses," seems to have won the title of being the most difficult stage amongst the shooters, with Stage 10, "Goodbye Farewell

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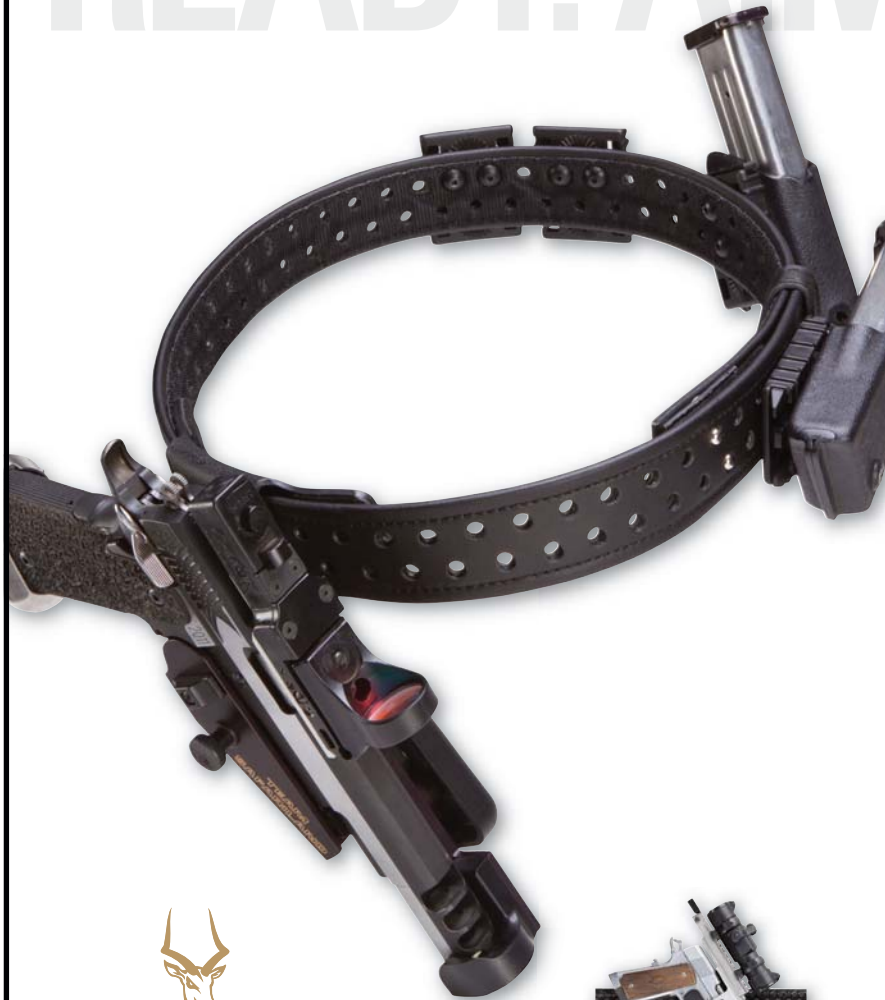
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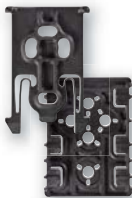
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Photo by Rich Dettelhouser

Ryan Bradley making a move.

Amen," following closely behind. The shooter started Stage 8 sitting in a chair with their gun unloaded on a table a few steps away. After lots of awkward movement and difficult shots, you ended up in a particularly awkward corner. My vote went for Stage 8 as the most difficult stage in the match. However, Stage 8 was Sarah Irish's favorite stage! After hearing many of the comments, Sarah decided to take her time and prepared a solid plan. She placed 15th overall on this stage, which was what she needed to win the Area 5 Women's Open Title. A nail-biting battle right to the end between Sarah and me, with Sarah on top by 0.74 match points! Very, very nicely done!

Stage 10, "Goodbye Farewell Amen," was based on the Mozambique concept, but the head shot was a steel plate placed above the body of a target. In order to be effective on this stage, the competitor really needed to keep moving while engaging the Mozambiques. With seven of these arrays, one could see many shooters fight the aiming part of this game. It was a deceptively easy trap to fall into; shoot fast, move, miss, miss, move, shoot, miss, miss. Then, as if it couldn't get more difficult, it did. At the end of the stage awaited an activator popper and a US Popper that forced the shooter into a low squat, only to have to pop right back up to engage another one of those fast bear traps and the last Mozambique array. Several competitors didn't quite sneak that last bullet in before the bear trap closed, and paid the penalty price.

Stage 5, "Latrine Swing," best captured the overall spirit of Area 5 with a little of everything included in this stage. The shooter started sitting on a latrine behind a wall with an empty gun and all loaded magazines on the other side of the wall. On signal, the shooter passed through a door, grabbed the magazines needed to complete the course of fire, loaded the firearm, and proceeded to the first array of targets. This stage presented a handful of tight shots which required good positioning, and ended with the "can can" array of three simultaneously swinging targets placed behind three square plates. Stage 5 definitely showed the creativity of this match staff.

The consistent positive note across the board from the shooters, with the rain and humidity to contend with, was that the match RO's and staff were fantastic! The match seemed to flow smoothly with very minimal waiting on large and complex stages. These guys and gals really worked hard to get the competitors through the stages.

Junior Successes

The USPSA junior program appears to be paying off with the likes of Nicholas Neel who was fifth overall and Sarah Irish who was 27th overall in Open. In Production Craig Tappe came in at 13th followed closely by Alexander Gutt at 16th. We had Austin Cisna at 21st in Single Stack with Tyler Galde in 23rd. Teepy Porter rounded it off at 44th Limited. Way to go Juniors!

Honors To VanZielegem!

We should note, this was Jennifer VanZielegem's first major match and she has been shooting USPSA matches for less than five months. Jennifer shot all 12 stages in one day and volunteered to RO, working with CRO Scott Hatrup for the next three days. "I felt the awesome weight on my shoulders to be responsible for the timing and safety of my stage. That, coupled with scoring and how shooters could argue

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Area 5 Sponsors:

Match sponsor: Canyon Creek.

Stage sponsors: Rudy Project, Heinie Specialty Products, Brian Enos, Techwear USA, Brownells, Competitive Edge Dynamics, Manny USA, Shooters Connection, Velocity Shooter, Competition Electronics, STI International, Springfield Armory, Sig Sauer, Team Glock, Drazy Metal Works, C-More.

Area 5 Match Winners:

Limited: Robert Vogel, Jennifer VanZielegem

Limited-10: Todd Kunz, Lori Casper

Production: Dave Sevigny, Carrie Carlson

Revolver: Matt Griffin, Sue Irish

Single Stack: Kyle Seipp, TD Roe

Open: Max Michel, Sarah Irish

Area 5 Champions:

Open: Jeff Budewitz

Production: Benjamin Stoeger

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with some of the calls. I experienced un-restored targets, prematurely pasted targets, a squib, a calibration request, and finally out of 337 competitors I was responsible for calling one of the four DQ's." Sorry to hear about the DQ, but thanks, Jennifer, for your hard work and congratulations on your win!

Dale Hayen would like to thank his Co-Match Director Jim Thompson for the tremendous job he did, and Range Master Ray Hirst for running a smooth match. A job well done should also go out to the stats team (Sally Retek, Leah Smith and Brian Frayne) as well as the registration and operations team (Barb Hayen, Andrew Hayen, Kim Frayne, and a host of club members), along with a big thanks to the amazing RO staff. These guys and gals did such a fantastic job that Ted Puente suggested next year we consider kicking in a few bucks to buy them dinner!

To summarize the Area 5 Championships, when asked about his overall opinion on the match, Ben Stoeger answered "I would go back... isn't that what it's all about?" It was a fantastic match and definitely that's what it's all about!

**CONNECTION** *continued from page 32.*

The first products I carried were bullets, powder and shooting bags. The first match was the Alabama Sectional at the FOP range in Birmingham. I spent five years on the shooting circuit building the business and furthering my shooting career. Those were hard, but fun years. I missed many, or most, of the kids' birthdays and ball games since we were hitting around 25 major matches a year. Once the initial shooting goal was met and the foundation was laid for the company I decided to back off and concentrate on my kids.



Photo courtesy of Shooters' Connection.

Barry West with a Shooters' Connection tournament range bag.

You were not always at this location, were you?

"At first, I operated out of a 10x15 outbuilding with a trailer. Then I added a metal container, and then a second. The local fire department didn't care for me having 3,000 pounds of gunpowder stored in one of the containers. It was a small town and nobody really cared, and it didn't hurt that I was the Mayor. I wouldn't even try doing that today. We ended up having to stop selling powder due to regulations.

I always wanted my own shooting range and a place to build a house and was able to purchase 26 acres at an estate auction back in 1993. In 2000 we built a house on the land with a dedicated area for Shooters Connection. Soon the business had reached the point where it was hard to provide the level of service I wanted to give, and the customers expected, at that location by myself. In 2006 it was time to grow and the only way to do that was with more room and with some help. So Shooters Connection purchased a 15,000 square foot old bowling alley in Georgetown, Ken., and hired an employee.

Today, we have two full-time and two part-time employees in addition to myself. At Shooters Connection it is all about the customer. If a shooter wants personal attention, they can call and talk to Barry, Mike, or myself. We know IPSC shooting. I am a GM in Open and Limited, Mike and Barry are Master class shooters. Mike and Barry have done well in IDPA also. They both are avid 3-Gunners and Steel Challenge shooters which adds to our competition knowledge base. We spend much of the day helping customers getting the equipment they need for their specific application. Most of our business is via internet and phone, but if you are ever heading through Georgetown, please stop by for a visit. "

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