

Welcome to the Shooters Corner. Vol. I

For those of you that do not know me my name is Patrick Holsted and I am currently serving a second time for the office of Vice President of the club. I have met and shot with a lot of you members at club events and on the plinking range, but I know there are still more of you out there that I have not come to know yet. I am a new comer into the shooting world. I was introduced to shooting in my youth but it was only for hunting and as much as I loved hunting I always wanted to do more but was never able to. When I joined the Army in 1994 I got in with a great bunch of shooters at the Ft. Bliss Rod & Gun Club. This was my very first introduction to competitive shooting but the problem was at this time I was on a very limited time and money budget. It was not until three years after moving to Benton that I heard of the Benton Gun Club. I came to one of the club meetings and joined that night and made my safety orientation the following Saturday.

It was about six months later in one of the newsletters that I read the club was putting on a Concealed Weapons Permit class so I joined up. At this class I met a lot of members and am still friends today with some of them to this day. They started talking about this match called Falling Plates. Sounded fun to me but I was a little intimidated because some of the guys and girls could shoot.

Well I decided to show up for my first Falling Plate Match and I left all my guns and gear in the car because I wanted to walk around and see if I knew anyone and to scope out what kind of guns and gear the other shooters were using. I was just so scared that if I pulled out my stock Ruger MKII I would be laughed off the shooting line. As it turns out the Ruger was in strong attendance that day along with many other finer guns but I started to feel a little better about the match and I was starting to have fun. Well by the end of the first match I had shot a 32 of 48 and a 36 of 48 on the any sight match using the same stock Ruger MKII. Now these scores were not even close to the top shooters I was like a kid in the the candy store for the first time. I was in the last relay and after I saw how the match was ran and the distances you were shooting at targets so I was thinking to my self I would be lucky if I got 22 or 23.

Now I left this match and the first thing I started on was to go on line and start looking for after market parts to get a smother and more crisp trigger on my Ruger. I also added an after market muzzle break and new sights. I was thinking to my self I am now ready to go do some shooting. I showed up at the next match ready to shoot and all I see people getting ready to shoot with are center fire pistols. I quietly walked over to the match director and ask what gives? He proceeds to tell me that every other month they rotate from center fire falling plate to rim fire falling plate. I dropped my head down and started walking to the car to go home. The match director comes over to me and ask where I was going, I told him all I had to shoot with was this Ruger MK II pistol. He laughs a little and says come on over here you can shoot one of mine I have plenty of ammo and we would love for you to shoot with us. This was the beginning of a new friendship.

This was a whole side of shooting I had never experienced before. These were some of the nicest people I have ever met and they would do everything in their power to make newcomers feel welcome and to get them to shoot. We would have people show up to the matches and say oh we are just here to watch and more than one person would say it's only \$3.00 to shoot the match and \$25.00 to watch. Then the next thing you know they were bringing extra ammo and guns for the newcomers to look at to find one that fit and shot good in their hands

From this match I started shooting IDPA and am the current IDPA Match Director. I am also a Certified IDPA Safety Officer and a Certified IDPA Safety Officer Instructor. I really love the action shooting sports whether it's an IDPA match a tactical two gun match, or three gun match. But just as much as I love these action sports I enjoy meeting the members at the range and learning a little about them and what they think of the club. Lots of times I hear this is great I love it. Other times they make recommendations on things they think would make the club a better and safer place. These are the things I want to hear. This is your club and if the Officers of your club do not know what you are thinking then we don't know just how we are doing in our jobs. For our job is to work for you. And to make sure that this club is ran in such a manner that the membership deems fit.

Well I just wanted to use this first column to let you know a little about me and how you can contact me for any club related questions or concerns.

In next months column I will go over the current state of the club with all the construction that has been taking place and where I hope the club will be in the next 5, 10, 15 and 20 years.

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