

Taft IDPA

Taft Sportsman's Club

This report is a detailed account of events surrounding the negligent discharge and subsequent gunshot wound to a competitor in the September 17, 2011 Taft IDPA monthly match.

On Saturday September 17, 2011 The Taft IDPA, chartered through the Taft Sportsman's Club, (Taft, CA) hosted their monthly match. The match consisted of six stages laid out in four bays. The match started with 25 shooters, one was subsequently disqualified for pointing their weapon in an unsafe direction and an additional shooter was disqualified for a negligent discharge and is the subject of this report.

The shooter with the negligent discharge has extensive firearms experience and has been competing in IDPA completions for over one year and is a current IDPA member. His personal information is being withheld, as it serves no purpose to disclose it.

At approximately 1135 hours a six person squad lead by IDPA certified safety officer Geoff Demalade, were in Bay Two completing the lone stage set up there. The stage consisted of a stationary IDPA target behind a "drop turner" apparatus with a no shoot target stapled to it. At the start signal the course of fire required the competitor to draw and activate the drop turner via a step activator that is commonly used in IDPA and other action shooting competitions.

Demalade was being assisted by another shooter, Steve Miller, who was noting times and points on score sheets. Demalade was standing to the right and slightly behind the shooter. Miller was behind the shooter and Demalade, centered between them.

On the buzzer, the shooter began to draw his .40 S&W M&P from a BLACKHAWK Serpa retention holster. The shooter cleared the weapon from the holster and immediately pressed the trigger, firing one round. The bullet struck him in the upper front right area of his right thigh. The round traveled diagonally about 16 inches through his thigh and exited the rear of his thigh about five inches above the back of his knee. The round continued and struck the rear lip of the plate activator, causing it to ricochet back and into the clipboard being held by Miller. Miller was uninjured by the ricochet.

The shooter was sat down against the side of the bay. Direct pressure was used to stop any bleeding until a first aid kit could be brought to the bay. The shooter's weapon was immediately unloaded and secured.

Match Director, Joe Little, and another IDPA Safety Officer, Jeremiah Morris, were summoned to the bay and all range activity was stopped. Little requested the small trauma kit the IDPA had, brought to the bay and the emergency action plan be implemented. Taft IDPA has an emergency plan that is displayed on a three by four sign that provides exact directions to the range and where to stage personnel to direct emergency crews.

Another competitor, Marilyn Langford, who is a registered nurse, also responded to the injured shooter. Langford, having the most medical training, took control of the injured shooter with assistance from Morris. She was assisted by another competitor, Julian Delgado, who has a larger and more extensive trauma kit. The wound was not bleeding heavily but gauze bandages were still used to apply pressure. The shooter's spouse was contacted and arrangements were made for their transport to meet the injured shooter at the hospital.

Within five minutes Hall Ambulance, Kern County Fire and Taft Police had arrived at the range. They were briefed by Langford and Little. The shooter was transported by Hall Ambulance to Kern Medical Center. The Taft Police took several statements, including the injured shooter, and examined the M&P pistol. It was turned over to a friend of the shooter, per his instructions, when Taft Police were through with it.

After the injured shooter was transported Little called a shooter's meeting to discuss what had happened. All the shooters were asked if they wanted to continue shooting and all did. The remainder of the match was completed without any further incident.

Following the match, Taft IDPA staff met and discussed the procedures and equipment that was needed. We recognize our trauma kit was undersized, especially the number of large gauze bandages. We are purchasing a much larger trauma kit with an emphasis on gunshot wounds. A secondary general first aid kit will still be available for common injuries such as small cuts and light burns.

During this meeting we were informed the injured shooter was going to be released from the hospital. There were no fragments in the wound and stitches were not going to be required.

Little spoke with the shooter who took full responsibility for what happened. The shooter did express the holster may have, in some part, attributed to the negligent discharge, but ultimately all blame belonged to the shooter.

This report is for informational purposes only.

Joe Little

Match Director, Taft IDPA

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<http://www.taftidpa.com/>