By Duane Thomas  
*An IDPA Master Tells You How to Do It, Too!*

Parts 1 and 2 of this series on shooting the IDPA classifier addressed Stage 1, Strings 1 thru 4, all incorporating head shots. After String 4 there are no more head shots, from String 5 thru to the end of the classifier it’s all chest shots. Now let’s discuss Strings 5 and 7, off-hand-only and master-hand-only shooting respectively, since the tips that apply to one mostly apply to the other, as well.

**STRING 5: Off hand only, from Low Ready fire 1 shot each T1-T3.**  
(My time: 3.74 seconds.)

**Tip #1:** What I am about say is true for every shot on the classifier, but especially for the one-hand-only strings where errors of technique are magnified. We will decrease that phenomenon immensely if we simply look hard at where we want our bullets to go. There is a tendency when shooting at large IDPA targets to think of the entire target as the goal. At a more-refined level we think of the 8” circle as our target, which does improve matters. Instead of either of those options, think of the very center of the 8” circle as your goal, especially when firing one hand only. LOOK AT IT. Even if you’re a bit off from your aiming point, you will still be inside the 8” circle. Look at it before you draw, then switch your eyes back to the sights, which you will find – then go right where you were just looking.

**Tip #2:** Raise the gun in a smooth, controlled fashion. Don’t try to be fast, just put the gun on target, taking up the slack and prepping the trigger as the gun comes up. As soon as the gun stops moving, the shot fires. (Because we’re not wasting any movement, we will of course be fast – without trying.)

**Tip #3:** If you shoot off hand only with the gun canted, then as you wait for the start signal with the gun at Low Ready, already have it canted. It’s a much simpler movement to raise a gun that’s already canted than to raise and twist simultaneously.

**Tip #4:** Lean forward into the recoil. I used to blade my body severely. Then I figured out that really wasn’t necessary as long as I still leaned forward. Shooting from a more “normal” stance, with my upper body parallel to the target, since I am cross dominant (right master hand, left master eye), using a less-bladed stance means I actually have to turn my head to the right when shooting right hand only, and rest my cheek on my shoulder, to bring my left eye in line with the sights. Hey, it works for me.

**Tip #5:** Move the gun toward the centerline of the body when transitioning, which is where it wants to move in recoil anyway. If right handed, when shooting left hand only start on T1 (the far left target) and move toward the right.

**Tip #6:** Ride the recoil between targets. Let the gun move itself for you. Shoot a target, the gun rises in recoil, it should come down on the next target,