

The Second Coming of the Single-Stack 1911 *Continued from Page 22*

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division. (The racegun division was dubbed Open.)

Shooters I've talked to who were there have given me the impression Stock was very much a bone thrown to anyone in USPSA who didn't use a racegun. "Here, go shoot something else." Unfortunately, "Stock" swiftly became "Limited" which, but for a .40 caliber minimum bore requirement to make Major and a slightly shorter magazine length restriction (which meant you could only get a picky 22 rounds of .40 S&W into your mags), turned into Open without comps or dot sights. You still had to have a high-cap 1911 to be competitive. Still expensive, still finicky.

Then in 1994 a non-USPSA match, Richard Cluver and pistolsmith Richard Heinie's 1911 Single Stack Classic, showed the way. Here was a match you could, nay were required, to fire with a street-appropriate single-stack 1911 with all your gear carried in a concealable fashion. When IDPA started in 1997, its Custom Defensive Pistol and Enhanced Service Pistol divisions mimicked Single Stack Classic rules.

In 1999, partly in response to the popularity of IDPA, partly due to the Assault Weapons Ban's 10-round mag capacity rule, USPSA introduced Limited-10.

Sadly, the only difference between Limited and Limited-10 was the number of rounds you could have in the magazine. Some people (myself among them) ran single stacks in Limited-10. But even then you had to have an extended magazine holding 10 rounds (the "skinny big stick") to be competitive. Most people shooting Limited-10 simply downloaded their high-cap .40 mags to 10 rounds.


Holster rules were the same as Open and Limited, basically anything goes. At the same time, USPSA also introduced Production division, which doesn't allow single-action autos but has Single Stack Classic/IDPA holster rules. I've always thought the best of all possible worlds would be a hybrid of Limited-10 guns (but with standard-length, concealment-appropriate, single-stack magazines) and Production holster rules. Now THERE would be a division!

Now, finally, we come to USPSA Single Stack. This is a provisional division, i.e. club participation is purely voluntary. The division

will be implemented on January 1, 2006. Given the enthusiastic response I've seen from most shooters on the Internet to the very concept, and given that clubs are – when you get right down to it – driven by shooter wants and needs, I'll bet most clubs go for it. Some clubs have asked, "Can we start running Single Stack before 2006?" The answer was yes. In three years USPSA will review the experiment and see if there's been enough participation (defined as at least 10-12 percent of shooters at clubs offering the division fire in Single Stack) to make it a permanent part of the sport.

Single Stack division rules are based on the Single Stack Classic. Minimum caliber is 9mm (.354"). Minimum caliber to make Major is 10mm (.400"). Major-power-factor guns have a magazine-capacity limit of eight. For Minor power factor, the limit is 10. It's going to be absolutely fascinating to see if those extra two rounds in the magazines of 9mm, .38 Super, etc. 1911s can overcome the .40/.45's Major scoring advantage. The conventional wisdom is they can't. Not everyone is convinced of that.

There is a very short list of permitted gun modifications. The intent is to keep the guns street appropriate. No compensators. No optics or any kind of electronic sighting devices. No barrel weights. No ported barrels. No pistols with attachment points for external lights or optics. No coned or flanged barrels (except in guns with barrels 4.2" long or less). No plastic frames. No extended magazines. Competition holsters of the racegun type are specifically prohibited. Mag pouches must be designed for continuous daily wear and be reasonably concealable. Holster and mag pouches must be worn behind the hips.

This is the opportunity we've all wanted for so long, to see the single-stack 1911, THE definitive heavy duty American defense gun, again become an important (and this time permanent) part of USPSA/IPSC. If you carry a single-stack 1911 as a concealment piece (and there are entire Roman legions out there doing exactly that) or you've just always wanted to shoot IPSC with the gun design on which the sport was built, now is the time. The single-stack 1911 has come home. 

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