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TACTICS & TRAINING

IDPA Report: Reloading Behind Cover

by Walt Rauch | September 24th, 2010

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By Walt Rauch



This contestant can easily

IDPA Competition Rule Number 19, Proper Use of Cover, states, “If cover is available, the shooter must use it. . . All reloads must be executed behind cover, if cover is available, and must be completed before leaving cover. . .” My personal view on the term “available” is the “one step rule.” That is, if you can take one step and get to cover, you must use it. More



le barricades for than this, it's problematic if you will gain any real
e moving and benefit as opposed to simply reloading and staying in
the fight.

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The above rule is simple but...(there's always a "but").

Take this scenario for example: The course designer has put up a wall with two windows 10 feet apart (left to right), with targets to be shot from each window. You shoot the left set of targets first and reload while moving behind cover (the wall between the windows) to the right and have completed the reload before the second window and additional threats. You are in compliance with Rule 19, for you have reloaded behind cover. Well, this is correct, but it is tactically unsound and goes against the intent of IDPA that "all courses of fire must...simulate a possible real-life scenario. . ."

In the real world, you don't know what or where the threats are, nor can you assume the threats are stationary (nor that the threats you have already engaged are all neutralized or that there are not more of them). The reload should be done at the first firing position and before moving. Those interested in winning the event will argue for movement and the specificity of Rule 19, since moving improves their overall score. Those with a more realistic bent will reload before leaving the first window.

A similar problem arises when there are multiple barricades placed near-to-far such that you can be behind the far barricade as you move toward the next set of targets after shooting from behind the first barricade. The contestant reloads while moving and is still behind cover. Sure, in the artificial environment of a shooting event we all know where the targets are, but if the scenario is viewed as a good-faith attempt to simulate a real-life scenario, the reload would be done before you left the first position.

How to solve this, assuming we all agree it needs to be solved? If a requirement to reload at a specific location is put into the match description, the "range

lawyers” will argue that this is not in the rules. There could be an off-the-clock time put in at each location for reloading, though, and the “gamers” would gain no advantage by reloading on the move. A more draconian solution is simply assessing a “Failure to Do Right” penalty, for the contestant is not following the intent of the stage nor the sport, wherein “all courses of fire...simulate a possible real-life scenario. . .”

(Note: The author’s opinions are his own and are not the official views of the Directors or Officers of IDPA.)

For more information or to join IDPA, contact the International Defensive Pistol Association, Dept. GAH, P.O. Box 639, Berryville, AR 72616-0639; telephone 870/545-3886; www.idpa.com; E-mail: IDPA.org@yournet.com.



Chris Edwards has reloaded before moving away from the problem.

While reloading on the run will increase your overall time, it doesn’t always make tactical sense to do so.

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