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D.S.S.A. NEWS

DELAWARE STATE SPORTSMEN'S ASSOCIATION
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BULLET VOTE TIME

By: Jeff Hague
DSSA President

The June editions of The American Rifleman, The American Hunter and America's First Freedom magazines will soon be delivered to your homes, probably in the third week of May. This year the June edition is the Ballot Edition, meaning that each of those magazines that are delivered to qualified NRA voters will contain your NRA Official Ballot. Voting members who do not receive a magazine will receive their ballots via First Class Mail a few days later. The 2021 NRA Board elections will probably be the most important NRA Board Election of your lifetime.

This year we again have one of our own on the ballot, my good friend and fellow rifle competitor, John Sigler. John has served on the NRA Board of Directors for over 25 years during which time he served two terms as NRA 2nd Vice President (2003-2005), two terms as NRA's 1st Vice President (2005-2007), and two consecutive terms as NRA's 59th President (2007-2009).

During his time "in the chairs", John accomplished many important things, but high on that list of accomplishments is the creation of two new NRA committees, the Military and Veterans Affairs Committee and the Disabled Shooting Committee which is primarily focused on our returning disabled veterans.

John was planning to retire from the NRA Board this year but decided that now was not the time to do so. John told me that with all that is going on right now, both politically with the attacks on the Second Amendment and the NRA, and the current turmoil inside NRA, he just couldn't walk away – and I am personally very glad and grateful that he has chosen to allow the NRA Nominating Committee to place his name in nomination one more time.

Delaware needs John on the Board, and so does America's community of competitive shooters and Second Amendment patriots. And to be perfectly blunt, with all that's going on inside NRA, we need honest, hardworking, knowledgeable, and scrupulously dedicated people like John on the NRA's Board of Directors more than ever. We need the NRA, America needs the NRA, and right now, NRA needs John.

As you know, the NRA Board is elected in a nation-wide election. It usually takes over 100,000 votes to be elected. Every vote counts, and only the top vote-getters are elected.

When you get your ballot, you will be told that you can vote for up to a certain number of people, usually 25 or 26. But for John to win, you need to cast one vote – one vote for John, and no one else. That's called "bullet voting." If you vote for John and then vote for one or more others, you are in effect cancelling out your own vote for John.

**PLEASE – BULLET VOTE –
One vote for John Sigler and no one else.**

We need John on the NRA Board, and right now, the NRA desperately needs John on the Board.

John's photo and the biographical sketch that will appear in your NRA magazine are included below.



Capt. John C. Sigler (Ret.)
Dover, Delaware

59th NRA President. NRA Benefactor. Lifelong hunter, competitive shooter, collector, and influential Second Amendment activist. Co-Founder, Delaware Association of Second Amendment Lawyers. John frequently writes legislation for pro-gun legislators and is very successful recruiting, educating and helping to elect pro-gun candidates. Former State Chairman of the Delaware GOP and RNC Member. U.S. Navy veteran (Submarines – 1967-1971), retired Police Captain. Active High-Power F-Class Rifle competitor. Current Member, United States F-Class (Open) Rifle Team. Current NRA Director, member of Whittington Center Board of Trustees. Three-time Friends of NRA Committee Chairman. Former Delaware State Sportsmen's Association president.

Member of TSRA, NYSRPA, Ohio Gun Collectors, Dallas Arms Collectors, Missouri Valley Arms Collectors, Chapter 850 Vietnam Veterans of America. Former President, Fifty Caliber Institute. Co-founder, Delaware Foundation for Legislative Action, helped defeat numerous anti-gun/anti-freedom bills in Delaware's legislature. John has received both Delaware's Defender of Freedom Award and Taurus International's Defender of Freedom Award.

Biden declares war on gun owners, Second Amendment

By: Lee Williams

Submitted by: John Sigler

<https://thegunwriter.substack.com/p/biden-declares-war-on-gun-owners>

By nominating David Chipman to run the ATF — a gun control activist who's worked for two national gun control groups — Biden has shown nothing but contempt for our constitutional rights.

Choosing gun control activist David Chipman to run the ATF makes about as much sense as picking Howard Stern to oversee the FCC.

Chipman currently serves as the senior policy advisor for the Giffords gun control group — a position he's held for five years. Before joining Gabby et al, he was a policy advisor for Everytown for Gun Safety. Quite frankly, I don't know which group is worse. Both want total civilian disarmament, and both will use any means necessary to get there.

According to a White House press release sent Wednesday night, the Administration wants even more than an anti-gun toady regulating guns. They're going after pistol braces, which they want regulated by the National Firearms Act, and home-builds too are at risk. The DOJ will be issuing proposals to regulate both in the coming months.

I honestly don't know where this massive anti-gun push is coming from. Based on what I've seen of him lately, President Biden can't complete a sentence without a teleprompter. Someone else is definitely calling the shots.

While I expected the President to go after pistol braces and chase ghosts, the Chipman nomination is a new low for someone who campaigned on unity and inclusion. It was a slap in the face to everyone who owns a firearm or believes in liberty. It's an insult — a poke in the eye with a chainsaw bayonet.

What concerns me about the President's pick is that Chipman has taken steps to conceal his past and his opinions. His Twitter account is now private. I requested access to no avail.



David Chipman

@davidchipman

ATF Special Agent (retired), Gun Violence Prevention Advocate @GiffordsCourage, Michigander in Virginia and Proud 97%er.

📍 Arlington, VA 📅 Joined February 2009

776 Following 1,412 Followers

These Tweets are protected

Only approved followers can see @davidchipman's Tweets. To request access, click Follow. [Learn more](#)

This tells me Chipman has contempt for the First Amendment as well as the Second. These are not the actions of a future public official. These are the actions of someone who's got something to hide. It's about what I'd expect from a longtime gun control activist.

Despite his attempts to conceal his past, we can get some insight into Chipman's character and fitness for office through his previous writings and interviews.

He believes ARs should be regulated by the National Firearms Act, and he called sheriffs who remember their oath and refuse to enforce unconstitutional gun laws "renegades."

Regulating ARs through NFA is laughable. Even if the proposal survived constitutional muster and a slew of civil suits, ATF doesn't have the manpower to regulate what they've got now, much less if Chipman added millions of ARs to their plate.

And his "renegade" comment already has sheriffs buzzing. They're not pleased — especially our southern sheriffs — and they're not a good group to piss off.

And, as you'd expect from a gun control activist, Chipman is a microstamping proponent. "Intentional firearm microstamping offers an important addition to the tools available to law enforcement—it's time to encourage firearm manufacturers to include this life-saving technology in their products," he wrote in a 2019 article for Police Chief Magazine. In my humble opinion, anyone who believes in that flawed anti-gun tech — which can be erased in about five seconds with a simple nail file — is somewhat suspect. It says to me the President's pick is a theoretical crime fighter, not a real one.

Chipman has mentioned in several interviews that he's a "gun owner," as if that lends him some credibility. I take exception to that too. The mere fact he owns a pistol or a shotgun cannot excuse a lifetime of gun control activism.

To be clear, Chipman is the adversary of everyone who respects the Constitution, the Second Amendment and our God-given right of self-defense.

Given his history, he should not be given oversight of the ATF's vast resources and regulatory authority. It's clear Chipman supports confiscation and total civilian disarmament, and now President Biden wants to give him the tools he needs to accomplish this goal.

Now is the time to contact your Senators, regardless of their party affiliation, and tell them to oppose Chipman's nomination. I honestly don't think there could be any candidate who's worse.

As always, thanks for your time.

Lee

Surprise! New Zealand's 'Assault Weapons' Ban Didn't Work

By: Jennifer Sensiba

Submitted By: Vickie Prickett

<https://www.thetruthaboutguns.com/surprise-new-zealands-assault-weapons-ban-didnt-work>



"I told you so" doesn't quite cover this one. On Monday, Radio New Zealand reported that gun crimes (including violent gun crimes) haven't dropped in New Zealand since they instituted an "assault weapon" ban. In fact, they've gone way up.

What we're looking at is a piece of rushed legislation, or two pieces of rushed legislation, that went through so fast that the unintended consequences of doing that are starting to be realized, and of course the effects that we're seeing are a less safer community.

So said Nicole McKee, a legislator in New Zealand's ACT party, which stands for right-libertarian or classical liberal policies.

McKee went on to say that New Zealand's gun owners were blamed for the Christchurch terror attack two years ago

and made to feel like criminals. Meanwhile, the government took zero responsibility.

The thing that troubles me most is that police didn't have the integrity to say right from the outset, "we stuffed up, this guy should never have got a license." Sporting Shooters Association president Neville Dodd said.

As a result, 241,900 New Zealanders who've been carefully vetted, unlike Tarrant, alienated, no longer support the police and that to me is the biggest tragedy of all because we had a very good rapport with police, and that's gone.

Supporters of New Zealand's ban are doubling down. Some, like Hera Cook of Gun Control New Zealand and the country's top police official, take the xenophobia route, and blame the rise in violent gun crimes on people who were deported from Australia in recent years. Others, like the prime minister, claim that the law just needs more time to work.

To The Truth About Guns readers, the law's failure is no surprise. We know from the experience in the United States that "assault weapon" bans just don't work.

Even the New York Times has admitted that there is no evidence that the ban from 1994-2004 had any effect on violent crime or mass shootings. But, like in New Zealand, the supporters of gun control will always find another way to twist facts or use "alternative facts" altogether to justify their position. And, like New Zealand, they aren't afraid to use the racism and xenophobia they accuse Republicans of when it suits their position.

Even with these facts getting in the way, Democrats like Diane "I have no trigger discipline" Feinstein are still pushing for a law similar to New Zealand's. According to Feinstein's website, key provisions would include:

- Bans the sale, manufacture, transfer and importation of 205 military-style assault weapons by name. Owners may keep existing weapons.
- Bans any assault weapon with the capacity to utilize a magazine that is not a fixed ammunition magazine and has one or more military characteristics including a pistol grip, a forward grip, a barrel shroud, a threaded barrel or a folding or telescoping stock. Owners may keep existing weapons.
- Bans magazines and other ammunition feeding devices that hold more than 10 rounds of ammunition, which allow shooters to quickly fire many rounds without needing to reload. Owners may keep existing magazines.
- Requires a background check on any future sale, trade or gifting of an assault weapon covered by the bill.
- Requires that grandfathered assault weapons are stored using a secure gun storage or safety device like a trigger lock.
- Prohibits the transfer of high-capacity ammunition magazines.

- Bans bump-fire stocks and other devices that allow semi-automatic weapons to fire at fully automatic rates.

Exemptions to bill:

- The bill exempts by name more than 2,200 guns for hunting, household defense or recreational purposes.
- The bill includes a grandfather clause that exempts all weapons lawfully possessed at the date of enactment.

Unlike the previous “Assault Weapon” ban, the bill likely doesn’t include a sunset provision like the last one. The idea last time was to be able to get rid of the law if it didn’t prove effective (and it definitely didn’t). Now; despite no proof that the law would make anyone safer (except, perhaps, the would-be tyrants), they want a permanent ban.

Sure, there are exceptions, and it doesn’t take all guns away, but we know from history that gun control supporters will never be happy. Gun owners have given them a lot of ground over the years, and they’re always back asking for more. If we’d only give just a little more, all of their pretend problems would be solved, they say. Even with the exceptions and grandfathering, our children and grandchildren wouldn’t be able to get their own modern sporting rifles.

Don’t be fooled. The goal of bills like Feinstein’s is to take a down payment on a total gun ban, or enough of a ban that guns would be useless for personal defense or defense against tyranny.

And really, enabling tyranny is what gun control is all about. They know that criminals won’t follow their laws, but they do want to disarm good people. I know that my indirect defense of LGBT people in a prior article wasn’t popular among TTAG readers, but as a person in a same sex marriage, I know all too well that government can easily take away our rights if we let it, and that’s not a position that any of us want to be in.

Well, none of us other than Feinstein and her ilk.

TODAY’S GUN RIGHTS PUZZLE

Have you ever wondered why the people who want to ban guns, infringe upon your rights and curtail your freedoms are the same people who think it’s a bad idea to require a valid ID to vote? Perhaps that answer might be found in the following graphic – just something to ponder...

When Valid IDs Are REQUIRED:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driving • Boarding an Airplane • Purchasing a Car • Getting a Car Registration • Renting a Car / Boat / Jet Ski / etc. • Buying Insurance • Buying Train Tickets • Obtaining a Passport • Picking up mail from FedEx, UPS, Post Office, etc. • Renting Tools / Furniture / Equipment • Visiting a Doctor's Office / Hospital • Getting Outpatient Testing • Donating Blood • Getting a Prescription • Buying Certain OTC Cold Medications, and products like nail polish remover • Applying for a Job • Applying to School • Applying for a Professional License • Getting Married • Check Out a Book from the Library • Joining the Military • Adopting a Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transacting with a Bank • Sending a Wire Transfer • Applying for Online Banking • Applying for Store Credit • Establishing a Utilities Account (Water / Light / Electric / Cable / Gas / etc.) • Cashing a Check • Getting a Credit Card • Opening a Retirement Account • Applying for a Mortgage • Buying a House • Applying for Apartment Rentals • Renting a Hotel Room • Buying a Cell Phone • Going to Court • Entering Federal Buildings • Getting a Business License • Getting a State ID • Cashing in a Large Lottery Ticket Win • Obtaining Medicare / Medicaid • Applying for Food Stamps • Applying for Welfare • Applying for Unemployment • Using Social Security Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying for Section 8 Housing • Applying for a H-1B Visa, or Green Card • Holding a Rally or Protest • Buying a Firearm • Adopting a Pet • Applying for a Hunting License • Applying for a Fishing License • Joining a Gym • Using Pawn Shops • Buying Annual Tickets to Amusement Parks • Entering Night Clubs • Volunteering at Non-Profit Organizations • Voting in a Union Election • Buying Cigarettes • Buying Liquor • Visiting a Casino • Buying an "M"-Rated Video Game • Going to Jail • Participating in Outdoor Activities Like Sky diving, Bungee Jumping, etc • Participating in Political Events
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When Valid IDs Are NOT Required:

Voting

An 89-Year-Old Sharpshooter Takes Aim at India’s Patriarchy

By: Shalini Venugopal Bhagat

Submitted By: Vickie Prickett

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/19/world/asia/india-chandro-tomar-sharpshooter.html>

Chandro Tomar’s husband and other male relatives tried to forbid her trips to a local shooting range. Now, she’s won dozens of medals and become a feminist icon in the country.



Chandro Tomar practicing with an air pistol

The 89-year-old woman stood in the courtyard of her home in northern India and picked up an air pistol. She tucked her pink head scarf securely into the waist of her long skirt and steadied her arm, looking through the sights at her target, a bottle about 12 feet away. She fired, and the bottle came tumbling down. She fired again. And again. And again, hitting the target each time.

“You need to focus only on the target — forget about other distractions,” she said, breaking into a smile.

Chandro Tomar may look like a typical Indian grandmother, but she’s anything but: She’s believed to be the oldest professional sharpshooter in the world, and she has dozens of medals to show for it.



She’s also a feminist icon in India, having mentored and coached dozens of young women in her village and beyond for more than 20 years. There’s even a Bollywood movie, “Saandh Ki Ankh” (“Bull’s-Eye”), based on her life and that of her sister-in-law, Prakashi Tomar, a fellow competitor.

Ms. Tomar was over 65 when she first picked up a gun, and the arrival of a diminutive older woman from the rural heartland — dressed in her traditional long skirt and head scarf — initially provoked derision and laughter among participants and spectators at professional competitions. Since then, she has won over 25 medals at state and larger contests, usually competing against men who’ve been shooting professionally for decades.

Yet more than her fame and her shooting skills, she takes pride in having paved the way for countless women, including many in her own family, to take part in an activity that can be a ticket to a better life through sports scholarships and job opportunities.

“I wanted to encourage young girls everywhere to get into the sport and expand their horizons,” she said.

Today, the part of western Uttar Pradesh State where she lives has dozens of shooting clubs, and hundreds of children take the sport seriously. But things were very different 20 years ago when Ms. Tomar started out.

Gun laws in India are strict and weapons prohibitively expensive, since most are imported. Only members of royal families and people with military backgrounds had any experience with sport shooting at the time.

The region that is home to Ms. Tomar’s village, Johri, is mostly rural, with acres of sugar cane fields and a few brick kilns. There were hardly any jobs, crime rates were high and poverty was endemic.

In 1999, Johri got its first shooting range. It was fairly rudimentary, and the guns were air pistols, which use pellets rather than bullets, rather than actual firearms. But its founders, Rajpal Singh and Farooq Pathan, said they believed

that teaching young children to shoot could provide valuable skills and help discover talent.

Trying to drum up interest, they held a contest and gave away 50 air guns as prizes, said Mr. Pathan, who comes from a family of professional shooters and is now a shooting coach with the Sports Authority of India. “The air guns motivated the kids to come and try the sport,” he said.

Ms. Tomar took her granddaughter Shefali to the range one day. They were the only women or girls there, and Shefali, who was 12, felt nervous handling a gun. Watching the girl fumble, Ms. Tomar stepped in. “I told her, ‘Why are you so nervous? Just watch me,’” she recalled. “I picked up the gun, loaded it and fired. It hit the bull’s-eye.”

It was the first time she had ever picked up a gun.

Mr. Pathan was impressed but figured that the shot was a fluke, she said. “So I fired another shot and hit the target again, right next to the center.”

That was the beginning of her love affair with shooting. Watching her grandmother bolstered Shefali’s confidence. Eventually, she fired off a few rounds, too.

Mr. Pathan persuaded the pair to come back and keep practicing. But Ms. Tomar — fearing that her family would be horrified if they knew she was firing a gun — pretended to be chaperoning Shefali while they both perfected their technique.

Her worries stemmed from the patriarchal nature of much of traditional Indian society. In Uttar Pradesh, with high poverty rates and a lack of access to education for girls, most women are expected to marry young and look after their children and in-laws.

That’s the life that Ms. Tomar was expected to lead when she was born in 1931 into a large farming family, the only daughter among five siblings. Her days were spent shadowing her mother as she did her chores, and with 70 members in the household, there was always work to be done.

Having never attended school, she married at 15 and spent the next 50 years raising her family. “The farthest I ever went was out to the fields, to give the men their lunch or to help out sometimes,” she said.

Her weekly visits to the shooting range were the first time that she had had an opportunity to do something solely for herself.

“I still feel excited every time I pick up a gun,” she said.

In time, her sister-in-law, Prakashi Tomar, joined her and Shefali, and proved to be a crack shot herself.

Some months after she started training, a team from Johri competed in a shooting championship in Punjab State, about 130 miles away. Several children were selected, including Shefali Tomar.

Ms. Tomar accompanied them, the first time she had ever left Uttar Pradesh. And unknown to the rest of her family, she also participated in the veteran category. Although it was the first time she had used a real firearm, she came back with a silver medal.

Her granddaughter, who now competes internationally, won a gold medal. But when a local newspaper published an article with their photographs, there was an uproar at home.

“My husband and his brothers were very angry,” Ms. Tomar recalled. “They said, ‘What will people think? An old lady of your age going out to shoot guns? You should be looking after your grandchildren.’”

They forbade her to go to the range, she said, although her children supported her. “I listened to them quietly,” she said of the men, “but I decided to keep going no matter what.”



As a shooting team coalesced in the village, the Tomar family provided nearly half a dozen members, including Prakash Tomar’s daughter Seema and granddaughter Ruby.

In a conservative community where women had to cover their heads and faces when speaking to men and avoid eye contact with male strangers, Chandro Tomar went door to door to encourage families to let their daughters learn the sport.

She managed to win over reluctant parents who worried about their daughters’ safety while traveling to competitions across the country or even just across the village.

“Dadi was the first one to encourage us to step out of the house — she gave us a lot of support,” said Ritu Tomar, using the Hindi word for grandmother despite being no relation to Ms. Tomar, under whom she started training at age 12. Ritu Tomar went on to become a national-level shooter and is now a coach herself.

As the team started winning medals, the jeers turned to admiration. Johri has now produced nearly 30 national-level shooters, although balancing such a career with marriage and in-laws remains difficult for most young women.

Over the years, Ms. Tomar has become a celebrity, traveling widely across the country for championships and speaking engagements, where she discusses female empowerment. The family is now building a shooting range for underprivileged children in their house so that more will have access to the expensive sport.

Now nearly 90, she doesn’t wear glasses and she touched her toes to show how flexible she was. What’s the secret to her strength and agility?

“All the household chores I used to do from a young age, like grinding the wheat by hand, milking the cows, cutting the grass,” she said. “It’s important to stay active. Your body might grow old, but keep your mind sharp.”

Bridgeville IDPA Shooters at the Coastal Carolina Challenge

By: Dave Hampton and Rich Simmons

On March 26th and 27th, members of the Bridgeville IDPA Crew and Anne Arundel Fish and Game, “The Annapolis Guys” competed in the Coastal Carolina Challenge at Ant Hill Range In Bolivia NC. Over 20 competitors from Bridgeville and AAFG, (Annapolis) made the trip to a beautiful range for two great days of IDPA competition. As always Bridgeville and Annapolis represented their clubs and the sport of IDPA very well.

The top 3 finishers overall are Bridgeville members. James Cantrell took the top spot, winning the entire match in Carry Optics Master Class, followed by Chandler Schridder in second in Carry Optics Master Class and also High Junior 2 years in a row with Mike Fiori rounding out the top 3 in Carry Optics Master Class.

Top performers by division:

Carry Optics - Master

James Cantrell 1st and 1st overall
Chandler Schridder 2nd and 2nd overall and High Junior
Mike Fiori 3rd and 3rd overall
Rodney Bates 6th and 9th overall

Carry Optics - Expert

Mark Rogers 4th and 11th overall
Scot Schridder 6th and 16th overall
Pedro Chin 8th and 18th overall

Carry Optics - Sharpshooter

Garrett Slater 3rd and 20th overall

Carry Optics - Marksman

Christine Parsons 2nd and 61st overall, plus High Lady

Enhanced Service Pistol - Expert

Chas Hartley 2nd and 36th overall

Enhanced Service Pistol - Sharpshooter

Chad Rogers 1st and 32nd overall. With that 1st place finish comes a match bump to Expert!
Kyle Boone 4th and 55th overall
Dave Hampton 8th and 85th overall

Enhanced Service Pistol - Marksman

Chad McParlin 2nd and 89th overall

Stock Service Pistol - Expert

Rich Simmons 1st and 7th overall

Stock Service Pistol - Sharpshooter

Patrick McCoy 2nd and 51st overall

Spencer McKinney 3rd and 54th overall

Roy Leierzapf 7th and 66th overall

Jim Givens 8th and 92 overall

Stock Service Pistol - Marksman

Lynda Klein 8th and 129th overall

Howard Klein 9th and 130th overall

(Yes, Lynda beat her husband! Good Job Lynda!

Revolver - Expert

WG Haskins 1st and 68th overall

Chuck Limpert 2nd and 73rd overall

We would like to give a special “Congratulations” to Christine Parsons for her High Lady win. (This was her first sanctioned match and only her 19th match overall!) We think she will represent Bridgeville and all ladies very well in this sport.

Chandler Schrider, age 16, defended his High Junior Title again this year. Chandler is a great competitor and we look forward to him doing greater things in IDPA.

Thanks to all the SO’s & staff for working hard to make this a great match. This could have not been done without the hard work of Bert Winfield and Amp Mangum. If you can, give them a personal “Thank You” for their dedication to this match.

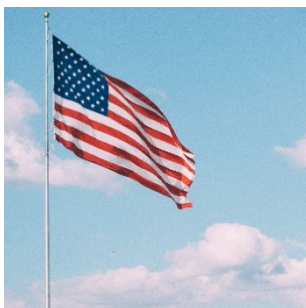
Congratulations to all the shooters for a great showing. We hope to see everyone back in 2022 to show everyone what Bridgeville and Annapolis can do.

THOUGHTS TO PONDER AND REMEMBER

Complacency and acquiescence -the twin pillars upon which despots build their empires of tyranny and oppression.

UNDERSTANDING PATRIOTISM

By John C. Sigler
NRA Past President



We all say it – we all learned it in First Grade, or before – but have you ever taken just a moment or two to understand our Pledge of Allegiance? Let’s take a few minutes together and do just that.

Our Pledge of Allegiance goes like this:

“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands; One nation, under God, indivisible, with Liberty and Justice for all.”

It’s really rather simple isn’t it? Easy to learn, easy to remember, and easy to recite – it almost has a rhythm to it—almost like a poem, or a hymn, or a psalm, or a prayer. But what does it mean? What does it really say? Well, let’s find out...

Let’s begin at the beginning, with the first clause “**I pledge allegiance**”

“**I**” – means me, myself, no one else – it’s personal to me, I am the one making the pledge, I am making the promise, and a solemn promise it is.

“**I pledge**” – a pledge is a promise, a commitment, something I will do, something I am obligated to do by my promise, a duty I am obligated to perform.

“**I pledge allegiance**” – the word allegiance engenders the concepts of loyalty, responsibility, fidelity dependability and most of all – duty.

So, the clause “I pledge allegiance” means that I will be loyal to, owe a duty to, and will forever stand with my country.

“I pledge allegiance to **the flag** of the United States of America”

Have you ever examined that flag and considered its meaning and its symbolism? Of course, the flag itself is a symbol but there is symbolism within the flag itself.

It is, of course, red, white and blue. Red for the blood that was shed in the Revolution and since in order to preserve, protect and defend our country. Traditionally, the red also stands for hardness or toughness and for valor.

White stands for purity – purity of motive, purity of spirit and purity of the meaning and purpose of our country – a concept not always achieved, not always understood, but always a goal toward which to strive. The blue is said to represent fidelity, vigilance, perseverance and justice. Notice the stars are set within the blue field.

The stars represent each of the States of the Union. Delaware, as the First State to become a part of the new Union, is represented by the star in the upper left corner – the first star in the field of blue.

Notice that there are thirteen (13) stripes, one for each of the original thirteen States.

So, the flag is a symbol comprised of many constituent symbols. The most important aspect of that symbolism is that the flag and its constituent symbols represent a country comprised of states that are united in purpose – all of the States, united as one new state – the United States of America. As you will remember, our first flag had thirteen stars in a circle

to represent that they were united, each State represented by a star, supporting the others.

"I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America **and to the Republic** for which it stands- (as a symbol).

"Republic" – a republic is a state in which supreme power is held by the people and their elected representatives and which has an elected or nominated president rather than a monarch. In both theory and original design, all power flows up from the people, to the states and then to the federal government. According to the Tenth Amendment, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." In essence, ours is a "bottom-up" form of government and NOT a "top-down" form of government as some in the government would have you believe. Our Republic is replete with checks and balances, three co-equal branches of government, a delicate system of federalism where each state has contributed a modicum of its sovereignty to create a new sovereign and where power flows up, not down.

"**One nation**" – prior to our Constitution being adopted in 1789, the United States was exactly that – a group of states united in a single cause working under the auspices of the Articles of Confederation. And that's exactly what we had – a confederation of independent states, each with its own measure of sovereignty. One might say, rather correctly, that the Articles of Confederation looked more like a treaty than a governing document. It is that history, and the memory of the Civil War that is being recognized by the phrase "one nation".

"One nation **under God**" – "Under God" was added to the original Pledge so as to give recognition to our Judeo-Christian ideals, values, and mores – the concepts of right and wrong, fundamental justice, and the omnipresence of a higher, supreme being protecting and guiding our government and our nation – called God by some, Yahweh by others, Allah by others, and even Om and Krishna by still others – all "God", within the meaning of the Pledge. The words "under God" were added during the Eisenhower Administration to combat the threat of Godless Communism.

"**With Liberty** and Justice for all" – Liberty – Liberty equals Freedom! The freedom to worship, or not, the Freedom to assemble and to associate with those of like mind. The freedom to petition our government for redress of perceived wrongs. The freedom to question our government and to criticize our elected officials. The Freedom to keep and bear arms. Freedom of an independent press watching and honestly reporting upon the government and our elected officials. Freedom from being forced to house the government's troops in times of peace. Freedom from Bills of Attainder such as the one we recently saw in the second Trump impeachment. Freedom from ex-post facto laws. And freedom from forced labor (slavery).

In addition we have the Freedom to engage in commerce, start your own business, to work for whom you want, when you

want and where you want without government interference. The freedom to try and to fail and then to try again.

"**And Justice**" – Fundamental due process including the right to meaningful and timely notice; the right to counsel; the right to a public trial by a jury of your peers (other citizens); the right to be present; the right to present witnesses on your own behalf and to cross examine the witnesses against you. The right to appeal when you believe the verdict to be in error. The right to be justly compensated if and/or when the government takes your property. The right to be free from cruel and unusual punishments. The right to equal protection under the law.

"**For All**"- Freedom and Justice for everyone, not just the rich and powerful – everyone, regardless, of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, language, political affiliation, beliefs – everyone – the rich and the powerful and the poor and dependent – everyone – because we are all equal, not just in the eyes of God but in the eyes of the law and by the words of our beloved Constitution that creates the Republic for which our flag stands.

I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

Yes. The Pledge of Allegiance is a poem, a psalm, a hymn, and a prayer, all rolled into one sincere promise of loyalty in return for the benefits of our constitutional Republic – a social contract, if you will.

When it comes time to recite the Pledge of Allegiance, stand tall, stand proud, keep your eye on the flag, with special attention to our star – Delaware's star - the first bright star on that bold blue field, and boldly make your voice be heard. Stand up for America, stand up for our Republic, and stand up for America's promise of Freedom and Justice for all under the rule of law.

God Bless America!
God Save Our Republic!

It's High Power Time Again!

By: Frank Nedza

The Orange Blossom Mid-Range Regional in sunny Melbourne, Florida was once again the initial match of the year for me, and several others from the Bridgeville High Power crew. It is always a well-attended and well-run match, attracting 'snowbirds' from many parts of the country. As always, many, many thanks to Brad and Terry, and their dedicated crew of match volunteers –doing two weeks of everyday 'cat herding' is no picnic for sure!! The state flags posted at the gate indicated that folks from about half the country were in attendance. The Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club was well represented this year, with 10 of us able to make the trip for the Mid-Range prone regional. This match is shot entirely on Silver Mountain electronic targets, so there is very little pit duty –only a little bit of help with setup and takedown each day.

Anticipation of the match made short work of the 1000 mile trip. We really couldn't wait to get down there and greet old friends who we hadn't seen for quite a while (some not since last year).

After signing in, and greeting old friends, we were able to have a bit of organized practice and dust off the rifles. This was a good opportunity to confirm (or get) zero's at each of the yard lines we would be firing in the match (300, 500, and 600 yards). It was pretty warm, at about 85 degrees, but the temperature was actually quite pleasant for the entire week down there, moderating as the week went on.

This match tends to be 'High Master' heavy, and this year was no exception, with the High Master shooters occupying 52 of the 72 positions on the line. Don't let that scare you though, as they are all GREAT people and would be happy to help newer or more inexperienced shooters. I won't go into blow-by-blow details, but links to the tabulated results are below. Our friend Mike Schallow set a new Grand Senior national record at the match with a super-nice 600-39X!

- **2020 Orange Blossom MidRange Regional Highlights**

- [MidRange 2-Man Team Match](#)
- [MidRange 4-Man Team Match](#)
 - Team Go Ahead set an Expert Any Sight National Record, 2303-79x
- Orange Blossom MidRange Regional
 - [Day 1](#)
 - Thomas McGowan tied a Junior National Record, 200-18x, 300 yards, Metallic Sights
 - SSgt John Cogshall tied a Service National Record, 200-18x, 300 yards, Metallic Sights
 - [Day 2](#)
 - Thomas McGowan, Day 2, Junior National Record, 599-34x
 - Jeff Clark, Day 2, Police National Record, 599-36x
 - [Day 3](#)
 - [Day 4](#)
 - [Aggregate Scores](#)
 - Thomas McGowan, Junior National Championship MidRange Aggregate Course, 2393-145x
 - Mike Schallow, Grand Senior National Record, 600-39x
 - Charles Rowe, Civilian National Record, 600-48x

Anyone who is interested can get more detailed information about scores here;

<http://www.orangeblossomregional.com/match-scores/>

Summary –As always, it was a great time, and a well-run match! We had seven straight days of shooting in nice, sunny

and warm conditions with friends both old and new –who could ask for anything more? My sincere thanks to the folks that run this match –the Match Director, Stats Officer, all the line help, and all the folks keeping things running in the pits – you all made this a great experience for all of us, and I am already looking forward to next year. For those reading this and thinking that you aren't ready for that level of competition, I say 'Baloney'. Yes, there are some pretty awesome shooters there, for sure. But, I will tell you that it is a neat experience being around SO MANY great shooters –it shows us what is possible, and gives us all something to work towards. Those great shooters are all willing to help you if only you ask! If you ever have the itch to get out shooting in early March, you couldn't find a better place to do it than the Orange Blossom Regional! I know that I will be going again next year!.

Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol Club Matches. The Bridgeville Rifle and Pistol club began our match season on March 27th with a Mid-Range Prone demonstration clinic open to Club members. We had somewhere north of 20 members show up for some information, equipment discussion, and hands-on shooting with coaching by some of the best shooters in the area. I think everyone had a good time, and all of the people I talked to had a very positive experience. Now they just need to come out and shoot with us on a regular basis!!

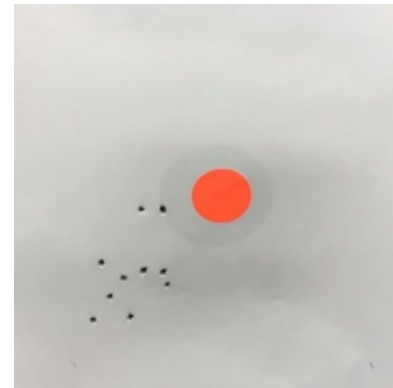
April 10th Mid-Range: Our first official match of the year was a 3 X 600 yard mid-range match. Though rain was predicted, we stayed nice and dry and had a great match experience. On the F-Class side, F-Open High Master Austin Coiro carried the day with a nice 594-37X, followed reeeeeeally closely by Paul Duret at 594-24X, with Bill Holden shooting a close in 593-38X –so while X's are nice, points matter too! Mike Haines was the leader in the Master class of F-Open at 582-19X after a long layoff from shooting. Good to see you back Mike! There were three shooters in F-T/R, with party animal Ramsey Abid leading the way with a 589-21X.

On the sling side, Grand Senior Jon Howell won the match and set a new Grand Senior National record, shooting a perfect 600 score with 43X's! And he did that with three different bullets, and with iron sights, and with a .223! THAT my friends, is some seriously good shooting! Close on his heels was Jeff Hague, shooting a super-nice 600-36X. How crazy is it that you shoot a perfect score, with a bunch of X's and come in second? Rich Kussman rounded out the top three with a still danged nice 596-33X. In the Marksman/Sharpshooter class, Greg Stanko turned in a nice 581-17X for the class honors.

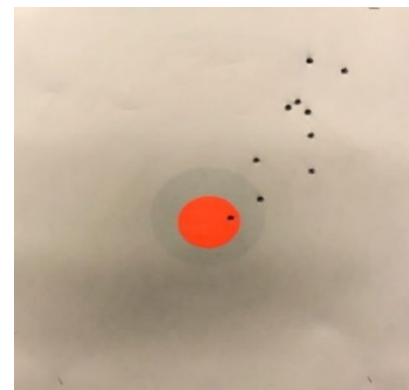
April 23rd-25th Long-Range Weekend: Our first long range weekend consisted of a practice day on Friday the 23rd, with shooting available at 800, 900, and 1000 yards just to knock the rust off the long-range rifles and shooters too! Saturday the 24th was a squadded practice session, with a wind-clinic taught by Jim Crofts, a High Master F-T/R shooter and member of the US National F-Class Team. It was also a fund-raiser for the Delaware State Sportsmen's Association, with all proceeds from the practice session donated to DSSA. We raised a good bit of much needed money to continue to

fight for our Delaware gun rights. Sunday April 25th dawned a bit rainy and windy, but patience paid-off, and we were able to begin the match with no real precipitation, and sunny skies coming in about half-way through. We shot the Palma course of fire, plus an additional 20 shot match from the 1000 yard line. For those not familiar with Palma, it is an all long-range match with 15 shots per string fired at 800, 900, and 1000 yards using (for the sling shooters) iron sighted rifles in .308 Winchester or .223 Remington calibers only. F-class shooters are not restricted in the same way, and shoot their regular match rifles. Conditions were pretty tricky for all of us, with quickly switching and variable winds throughout the day. In fact, several folks came away believing that the Bridgeville 1000 yard range is haunted! I don't place a lot of faith in that, but you never know... Anyway, in the Palma match, Joe Fogg took the win, firing a really nice 448-26X, and earning a spot in the NRA's 448 Club, an honor restricted to those who have fired a 448 or better in the 450 point match. Congratulations Joe –that is some great shooting for sure! He was followed in the Palma by Joe Wawrszaszek who fired a 443-20X. For the day's aggregate, Mike Schallow was the Match winner, firing a 640-24X, followed by 'the Joes' (Fogg and Wawrszaszek) firing 635-29X and 634-23X respectively. In F-Class, Dave Kokoszka took the Palma and the aggregate wins, with a 446-23X (Palma) and 643-35X (aggregate).

I think we are off to a good start, and hope to see some new shooters this match season! Our next match is scheduled for May 8th (a 300/500/600 yard Mid-Range match), with our Mid-Range State Championship scheduled for May 22nd and 23rd.



- Pulling shots low left (7-8 o'clock) for a right-handed shooter or low right (4-5 o'clock) for a left-handed shooter.



- Pushing shots high right at 2 o'clock or high left at 11 o'clock, also commonly called "heeling" the gun. But this is just another form of anticipation.

Anticipation – The most prevalent and difficult problem to solve for handgun shooters and instructors.

By: Roger Boyce

This article is a deep dive into the problem of "anticipation/flinching" while shooting a handgun. The article content is a combination of personal experience, lessons from other instructors, literature research and review of countless videos on the subject over several years.

This article is written around a right-handed pistol shooter. For left-handed shooters, just consider the opposite shot placement during these discussions.

Many hand-gun shooters (both semi-auto pistol and revolver) have some degree of anticipation during shooting. Anecdotally, it is believed that anticipation affects 60% of new and experienced handgun shooters.

The common definition of anticipation is "the action of anticipating something; expectation or prediction." For this discussion we are going to define anticipation as "trying to control recoil before the shot breaks."

When considered in shooting a handgun, anticipation can take several forms either singularly or in combination:

What is occurring is the shooter is anticipating the shot, pushing or heeling the gun just fractions of a second before the sear breaks or as the sear breaks, but before the firing sequence can get the bullet out of the muzzle. The result is that the shot placement is off from the intended point of aim. Anticipation should not be confused with "jerking or slapping" the trigger. Many times they occur together but they are two different problems with different corrective solutions.

It should also be noted that anticipation can (and in many cases does) appear random; meaning the shooter will intermittently shoot some good shots and then throw two or three shots in a random order. Other things may be going on such as sighting issues (flitting, progressive glasses, etc.) but they are outside the scope of this article. Assuming the shooter has a good understanding of the shooting sequence and the instructor has diagnosed and corrected any other shooting problems, this discussion will be limited to anticipation/flinching.

Many shooters with anticipation seem to have higher than average IQ's and tend to be over thinkers. It seems to coincide with difficulty focusing. It is quite common for an instructor to

tell a new shooter that you want the trigger break to be a surprise. Without realizing it, what the instructor is really saying is that you don't want the shooter to be thinking where the trigger is going to break. It should be a surprise to the shooter. This way, the shooter "lets the gun shoot" instead of "making the gun shoot." By getting a surprise break, the shooter does not know when to anticipate the shot.

The surprise break is desirable to keep from overthinking. It can be thought of as a form of meditation (Zen or the Art of Pew). You want to keep the front of the mind busy, so the rest of the mind turns off, or at least has the volume turned down. Although everything just stated about a surprise trigger break is correct, it is easier said than done. Additionally, after you have shot the same trigger several thousand times dry and live fire, you know where the trigger is going to break so it will not be a surprise. While the surprise break has some value for the new shooter, it is quickly lost on an experienced shooter.

Anticipation is known by several different names which include but are not limited to flinching, heeling, pushing, pre-ignition push and post ignition flinch. Each of these names is trying to categorize or describe a specific reaction during the shooting sequence.

Because our sport has associated so many different names to anticipation it's worth providing some clarification of terminology. Many great instructors will conflate "anticipation" with "flinching". They are both terms that have been used for years to characterize a specific shooting problem. But there is a subtle difference between anticipation and flinching, each of which require different corrective solutions. Anticipation occurs before the shot breaks. Flinching only occurs after the shot breaks.

Prior to the act of anticipation, the shooter knows what's coming, a loud sound, concussive blast and recoil, (we will call these three events "the bang"), so the shooter anticipates the event by bracing, flexing or pushing against the anticipated force (recoil). During a flinch, "the bang" has already occurred and a flinch is a reaction to "the bang" but, more importantly after "the bang" has occurred.

Classically, anticipation will start to occur after the third or fourth shot of the day by the shooter. The first one or two shots are fine and then the third/fourth shots are low left. This shot placement will cycle or get worse until the shooter takes a break. When the shooter comes back to the range (next day, week, etc.), the cycle will start all over again. It can be very frustrating for the shooter.

What is happening here? Why are the first few shots good and then anticipation sets in? The answer is simple. During the first few shots, the shooter is focused on the target, trigger press, sight alignment, etc. After the second or third shot, the shooter starts to react to "the bang" and starts pushing the gun (anticipation) just prior to the moment that the shot breaks. This is a subconsciously learned reaction to "the bang." The pushing part of the learned reaction is instinctive. It is the body/mind's instinctive way of anticipating "the bang."

Note: There are some extreme forms of anticipation that involve the shooter closing both eyes before they break the

shot. Closing both eyes before the shot breaks almost always occurs along with wincing, facial grimacing and pushing the gun in several possible directions that are not necessarily consistent. This is not flinching; it is anticipation. This is a serious marksmanship issue. In this case, the shooter has a serious fear of the impending bang. See Correcting Flinching for a discussion that will also work for correcting this form of anticipation.

Flinching happens after the shot breaks. Flinching is a natural, instinctive and a semi involuntary response to "the bang" for many shooters. The most common demonstration of flinching is closing (blinking) of both eyes after "the bang" occurs. The reaction may be accompanied by a grimace or head and other body part movement.

Diagnosing Anticipation and Flinching

Let's discuss anticipation first. When diagnosing anticipation, it is important to differentiate between a new shooter and a more experienced shooter. The reason is that the correction will be a little different for a new shooter as opposed to an experienced shooter.

You start by understanding the shooters experience. Once you know if they are new or experienced, then the first thing you do is observe their shooting sequence. During the first few shots, be sure that the grip, finger placement and stance is adequate for pistol shooting. Watch the trigger finger for proper placement, take up of slack (for semi-auto pistol), trigger press and follow through. If any of these components are a problem, fix them right from the start. If they continue, it will complicate the diagnosis and correction of anticipation. Once you have each of these components fixed, put up a new target and start over.

Note to instructors: It cannot be stated enough. While evaluating proper fundamentals and/or diagnosing anticipation you must watch the hands, not the target. Inexperienced instructors tend to watch the target for shot placement. You're missing everything. Shot placement is a result of what is occurring. To diagnose what's occurring, you have to look at the shooters hands, upper body and face as the shot breaks. Again, if you're looking at the target, you missed everything. After watching the shooter break the shot, you can turn and look at the target to confirm what you think you saw while watching the shooter. The target is just a confirmation of what you are seeing in the shooter during the shooting sequence.

With all other components correct, if the shooter has anticipation, the classic tell is the third or fourth shots will go low left or high right. Do not confuse trigger jerk or trigger slap with anticipation. Trigger jerk/slap is almost always characterized with shot placement at 6 o'clock. Anticipation will be at 7 o'clock or 8 o'clock. Again watching for trigger slapping or lack of follow through will help differentiate.

Author's note: Some instructors say they can see anticipation. In some very extreme cases you can see a push. But 99% of the time the push/heel action is obscured by the

recoil of the gun. The only physical observation that I have made that helps diagnose anticipation is watching the flexing of the strong hand forearm muscle known as the flexor pollicis longus muscle and tendon just prior to the shot breaking.



With an exposed arm, sometimes you will see the subtle flexing of this muscle. If you look for it, it will become obvious.

Once you suspect anticipation based upon shot placement and observation, move to the ball and dummy drill for a conclusive diagnosis. The ball and dummy drill substitutes dummy rounds at random in the magazine or cylinder so that the shooter does not know if they are shooting live rounds or dummy rounds.

While performing the ball and dummy drill for semi-auto pistols it is best to load the magazine in the following order:

First load 2 live rounds, 1 dummy round, 2 live rounds, 1 dummy round and top the mag off with 2 live rounds. With this configuration, you as the instructor will easily know when the dummy round is coming, and the shooter cannot see the dummy rounds when loading the magazine in the gun. The last two live rounds loaded in the magazine will be the first rounds the shooter shoots. It is important that the shooter shoots at least two live rounds to trigger anticipation which would be on their third shot. You need to be looking for it.

For revolvers, you load dummy rounds at random but you want to ensure that the first two shots the shooter takes are real. You will figure out how to do this in any given revolver.

So, the ball and dummy drill is primarily a diagnostic tool but it can also be a corrective tool which will be discussed later. When doing the ball and dummy drill, you as the instructor are doing a few things:

1. When you know the dummy round is coming, you must be watching the gun and shooter's hands, not the target.
2. You are looking for the gun (muzzle or entire gun) to dip (classic push anticipation) or rise (heeling).
3. You confirm the reaction by looking at the shot placement, low left, or high right.
4. You can also watch for the muscle flex on the top of the forearm.

Additionally, this drill proves to the shooter that they are anticipating. In most cases, they will not believe it until they see their reaction to the dummy round. Once the shooter sees the movement, they realize it is something they are doing and has nothing to do with the gun or sights.

By proving the condition to the shooter, you are making the first step in helping the shooter correct the problem.

Diagnosing Flinching

Diagnosing flinching starts the same way as discussed with anticipation. During the first few shots, watch the trigger finger

for proper placement, take up of slack, trigger press and follow through. If any of these components are a problem, fix them right from the start. Then start with a new target.

During the first three shots, watch the shooter's eyes. This will require the instructor to get along side of the shooter which will expose the instructor to some muzzle blast. Use appropriate caution.

You will only be able to see one eye at a time. If you can see both eyes, you're probably too close to the 180 of the muzzle which is not safe. Especially with a new shooter, be prepared to deflect the muzzle should the shooter lose muzzle control.

Confirm that the eyes are closing after "the bang." The eyes closing will be more than just a blink. It will look more like a wince. Is there a grimace or other expression along with the eye closure? Move around to the other side of the shooter and have them shoot again. Watch the other eye to confirm the reaction. If you observe no closing of the eyes, a wince or, grimace, then flinching is not their problem.

Correcting Flinching

Flinching is one of the easier forms of anticipation to fix. It is more common in new shooters as opposed to experienced shooters. As soon as you diagnose flinching, get the shooter on a .22 caliber handgun, and let them get use to "the bang" while trying to relax and keep both eyes open. This may take 50-100 rounds to condition the shooter.

Note: As a practice, many instructors will start a new shooter on a .22 caliber semi-auto pistol or revolver so that anticipation or flinching is avoided in the beginning of the shooter's first experience. Progress to center fire after the fundamentals and acclimation are established.

Next move the shooter up to a center-fire handgun. It is recommended that you incrementally move the shooter to a revolver firing single action to take away some of the additional complexities that come with an auto pistol.

If you have access to someone who reloads, it is best if you can start the shooter on a revolver with reduced loads which have reduced sound, concussive blast and recoil, (more bang/recoil than a .22 caliber but less than factory ammo).

After about 20-30 rounds on a reduced load with successful shooter performance, you should be able to move the shooter to factory ammo. Be sure and explain each step of the process to the shooter. Do not try and surprise them by loading factory when they think they are still shooting reduced loads. You will destroy any progress and trust that you may have made.

After progressing to factory ammo on the revolver with success, you can progress the shooter to a semi-auto pistol and incorporate the other complexities that come along with semi-auto pistols. The instructor/shooter must watch for any re-emergence of flinching. If it recurs, remind the shooter to focus on keeping both eyes open after the shot breaks until they get control again.

Correcting Anticipation

Ok. So, you have diagnosed that your shooter is anticipating. The good news is that there are several different ways to help the shooter correct the problem. The bad news is that any one method will not always work with every shooter. So, you must try several techniques to see which one helps the shooter the most.

Some of the techniques require an instructor or second person. Some can be done by the shooter on his own. Experience suggests it will take a combination of two or more techniques to resolve the problem.

The dirty little secret is that a percentage of shooters with anticipation will correct the problem only to see it return over time. So, the shooter needs to understand that the problem may come back. As soon as the shooter sees it is back, (either through the ball and dummy drill or shot placement), the shooter needs to stop their practice and perform some drills until the problem is mitigated. It never seems to get better on its own. (See maintenance to mitigate recurring anticipation towards the end of this article.)

If the shooter is a new shooter and they are anticipating or flinching with a center-fire handgun, stop shooting the center fire gun and get them on a .22 cal. With a new shooter, if you catch the condition soon enough, you can correct the problem before it becomes engrained within their psyche.

Follow the procedure described earlier. Put them on a .22 cal. Let them get acclimated to "the bang." Move them to a single action revolver with reduced loads. Then progress to factory ammo. From there they can go back to the center fire auto pistol. Using this method for a new shooter produces far better and longer lasting results for the shooter.

If the shooter is an experienced shooter and you diagnose a problem of anticipation, patience is going to be the operative word. It's going to take patience on the shooter's part and the instructor's part. It may take a couple shooting sessions to see any real success.

It should also be understood that, in some cases, anticipation may not be solved. An excellent article written by Sam Hooper, "There Is No Cure For Recoil Anticipation, Just Management," would imply that for some, the best we can do is manage or mitigate the condition.

The following drills/exercises are an assortment of tools in the instructor's tool box that they can use to resolve the problem. It most likely will take two or more exercises to find success. Success may be fleeting. So again, it will take patience and persistence to resolve the condition.

Exercises/Drills to Fix or Mitigate Anticipation

Ball and Dummy Drill – This should be your first exercise to correct the problem. The most common fix for anticipation is to educate the student that it is happening by using the "ball and dummy round" exercise. This technique was thoroughly explained under Diagnosing Anticipation and Flinching. To review the technique re-read the diagnosing section.



The ball and dummy round exercise is both a diagnostic tool and a corrective tool. Start the correction of anticipation using a dozen or so repetitions with a magazine or revolver cylinder. In some cases, just this drill alone will significantly mitigate or eliminate the anticipation at least in the short term. You and the shooter should expect to revisit this drill at some point during the second and possibly the third shooting session. If during the first shooting session, you are not seeing progress with the ball and dummy drill, move on or combine the ball and dummy drill with another exercise.

There are several versions of the ball and dummy drill. One using a revolver is called a Staggered Load drill that accomplishes the same objective. For new shooters or shooters without severe anticipation, this drill will solve about half of them. The other half will need additional exercises to mitigate the issue.

Humming or Counting This exercise's primary purpose is to clear the shooter's mind of extraneous thoughts during the shooting sequence. Remembering the discussion regarding over thinkers, some anticipation is created because the shooter has difficulty concentrating or focusing on the task at hand, sight alignment, trigger press and follow through. During this process transient thoughts will disrupt the shooter's focus allowing anticipation to subconsciously creep into the shooting sequence.

Object – to distract the student's thought processes while pressing the trigger, avoiding the anticipation.

For semi-auto pistol shooters, step the shooter through the shooting sequence. Have them come up on target, put their finger on the trigger and depress the trigger until they find the wall (sear engagement). At that point tell them to "Stop," meaning stop pressing the trigger and hold the trigger at the wall. Now tell them to hum out loud as they gently press the trigger to rear. Remind them to follow through. This may take 3 or 4 cycles for the shooter to get the hang of the exercise.

Experience with this exercise combined with the ball and dummy drill seems to help minor to mild cases of anticipation. Even still, anticipation may come back in another shooting session. The Humming exercise can get some difficult cases through a qualification round for short-term mitigation. This exercise does seem to have a shelf life and will not work for the same shooter after a while. Try it, and see if it helps your shooter.

Belly up to the Bar -Watching some shooters with anticipation, the reaction includes a significant push of the gun (several inches). This is typified by the shooter leaning

(moving) forward as the shot breaks and may include flexed elbows. As a result, the shooter subconsciously pushes the gun as they lean forward and concurrently stretches their arms forward to counter act the recoil, the resultant travel distance of the gun can be inches.

To mitigate this, have the shooter shoot with a waist-high bench, barrel or, other object in front of them. Have the shooter place their belly or hips physically against the bench so they cannot move forward. This will mitigate the leaning forward action. Concurrently be sure the shooter has their arms stretched forward to remove as much flex in the elbows and arms as possible. Combined, these two adjustments will mitigate the extent of the anticipation. This should have a measurable effect in the shot placement. In most cases this exercise should be combined with other corrective methods.

Get the Shot Off- Although not a cause of anticipation, taking a long time to get a shot off after coming up on target can vastly contribute to the onset of anticipation. We have all seen the new and even experienced shooter come up on target and go through a long ritual of getting a sight picture, preforming sight alignment, getting finger on just the right place on the trigger, re-gripping the gun several times, maybe even biting their tongue while waiting for the front sight (or dot) to magically stabilize perfectly on the target before pressing the trigger. This almost always leads to several problems:

- The shooter gets tired and forces the shot, inducing anticipation.
- The shooter tries to trap the shot because the front sight/dot does not stabilize. This exaggerates anticipation.
- The shooter has way too much time to think, again inducing anticipation by allowing transient thoughts to interrupt focus during the shooting sequence.

The shooter should come up on target and immediately place their finger on the trigger once they are in the same zip code as the target (meaning that if there was a negligent discharge the bullet would go someplace safe). Concurrently, they should take up trigger slack and stop at the wall. All of this should happen in one smooth move and quickly (3-4 seconds max).

Now all the shooter must do is confirm the sight alignment/sight picture and gently press the trigger.

If your shooter takes too long in the sighting process, have them stop, come down to a low ready, breathe and start over. Nothing good ever comes from taking too long to get the shot off.

Hand Holding (literally) This exercise involves the instructor touching the shooter's hands as the shooter is firing the gun. It is a very safe exercise but must be done with experience. If an instructor is not experienced with this exercise, they should consult an experienced instructor and preform the exercise under supervision until they are comfortable with the procedure. The instructor needs to

explain the procedure to the shooter so there are no surprises to the shooter.

This explanation is for a right-handed shooter. Basically, the shooter is going to assume the shooting position with the gun up and on target using the standard two-handed grip. The shooter should obtain a sight picture and (depress the trigger to the wall on an auto pistol) or (just place the finger on the single action trigger of a revolver). At that point, the instructor places his right hand in front of the shooter's hands. The instructor's hand must be touching/covering the shooter's right hand (see photo below).



The instructor may feel more stable by placing their left hand gently on the shooter's right shoulder.

The instructor's touch must be very gentle and subtle so as not to dominate the shooter's mind.

Now the instructor tells the shooter "don't push my hand," at which point the shooter should gently press the trigger and take the shot within 2-3 seconds of hearing the instructor say "don't push my hand". Any longer time will result in the shooter getting transient thoughts and lose focus.

The instructor needs to be feeling for any movement in the shooter's hands. In most cases, the shooter will not move the instructor's hand and the shot placement will be on point of aim. If the shooter does move the instructor's hand (even slightly), many times the instructor can catch the shooter before they break the shot by saying ah ah ah!, which will get the shooter to relax, stop pushing and make the shot.

Continue this exercise for four or five shots and assess the performance. This exercise appears to be the most successful for short-term success. It is amazing how well it works when other techniques don't.

Again, this is a short-term fix to teach the shooter not to anticipate. Anticipation can still return until such time as the shooter resolves the condition on their own. Just make the shooter aware that anticipation can return and not to get frustrated.

Meditation, Visualization, Dry Fire and Practice. Anticipation is a mental thing that produces a physical response, especially for existing shooters. It may have started as a reaction to "the bang" but the actual anticipation response became a learned behavior. As part of the learning process, the repetitive act of anticipation created neural pathways that include the push of the gun and maybe even a

slap of the trigger. The problem is, how do you stop reinforcing the incorrect neural pathways and create new neural pathways that result in a stable and desirable shooting sequence?

Now, we are getting into the areas of mystic, or what some call the “Zen of Shooting.” Is also known as “shooting in the zone”. Shooting in the zone has been described by many great shooters. It is believed to be a learned physical/mental condition that any shooter should be able to accomplish with enough practice and effort. But, the practice and effort must be done properly. Performing something wrong just reinforces the wrongly-conditioned neural pathways.

That means that typically the shooter will need a coach/instructor to observe, diagnose and show the shooter the correct procedures, drills and exercises to perform the shooting sequence properly and consistently. Then the shooter must diligently implement the procedures, drills and exercises to first learn, then maintain the desired results, thus stopping anticipation.

Along with the drills/exercises discussed, there are several things that the shooter must do on their own without a coach/instructor present.

Meditation - As stated, anticipation is a mental thing that results in a physical response. In many cases, it involves the shooter’s inability to focus (concentrate) consistently for the few seconds that it takes to perform the shooting sequence. If you don’t believe it, stop and count how many different thoughts go through your mind in 10 seconds. Shooting accurately requires focus and concentration. You need to be in the zone.



If anticipation is a severe condition or frequently recurring, the shooter may benefit greatly from daily meditation. No, you don’t have to dye your hair purple and sit for hours pondering the universe. Just simple meditation for 15-20 minutes a day can have a significant impact upon a shooter’s ability to intensely focus for that few seconds during the shooting sequence.

Look at a few YouTube videos to learn the basics of mediation. Most start you out by focusing on your breathing. Start that way to learn the discipline of the technique. Eventually you can progress to visualizing your sight picture as you’re meditating. Visualize iron sights aligned with equal height, equal light in the center of the A zone on a USPSA target. Or use the visual of a red dot optical in line with a USPSA

target and the red dot in the A zone, as you meditate, building and reinforcing proper shooting sequence neural pathways.

Visualization/Dry Fire – Dry firing will not resolve anticipation. But, if you combine dry fire with visualization, you will create new neural pathways (or correct the old ones) at a much faster and cheaper rate. Visualization combined with dry fire repetitively reinforces the manipulative skills of performing the shooting sequence. It is amazing how powerful this method can be. The only problem, you have to do it. You actually have to practice. Dry fire, dry fire, dry fire. When you’re not dry firing, visualize the shooting sequence in your mind’s eye. You have to dry fire correctly and you have to visualize correctly but the results are amazing.

Practice – You must practice. Practice must combine meditation, visualization, dry fire and live fire. The more you do the meditation, visualization and dry fire – the quicker and more consistently you will see the results in live fire.

There are all sorts of recommendations on how much you should practice. You know what is necessary for you. You can’t just think about practice. You must do it. Nuff said.

Maintenance to Mitigate Recurring Anticipation – There is an excellent drill that can help to mitigate recurring anticipation. It’s shown on several forums by description without a name. Let’s call it the Two Shot Drill. It goes like this:

As a maintenance drill on a semi-auto pistol when at the range, load a magazine. If you’re using a revolver, load every other chamber.

On the pistol, insert the magazine and chamber a round. Then remove the magazine.

At a reasonable distance (say 40’ or greater) carefully shoot the first shot at a reasonably difficult target, say a 3” circle.

Let the sights settle back and follow up the first shot with a second carefully placed shot.

The second shot will be a dry fire. Notice any movement of the front sight or red dot during the second shot?

Repeat this drill for several repetitions. Repeat as many times as you feel are necessary to re-condition you to mitigate anticipation. Two or three standard capacity mags may be necessary.

If you’re using a revolver, repeat the two shot sequence as described for pistols until you achieve the desired consistent result.

Summary - If none of these drills/exercises are helping to at least mitigate anticipation, they you are probably dealing with multiple problems. At this point you need start from scratch and evaluate exactly what is occurring. You may need an experience instructor to help you evaluate. If you determine there are multiple problems (sighting issues, flawed fundamentals, etc.), then you need to fix each issue first before you tackle anticipation. Again, all other shooting problems must be fixed before you can tackle anticipation.

Fixing flinching should be a fairly quick process. Follow the recommend procedure and you should see results in the first shooting session.

Fixing anticipation will vary greatly with each individual shooter. Give the shooter realistic expectations. Many shooters with mild anticipation can be fixed in one or two shooting sessions. Some will have recurring bouts of anticipation over their shooting career. They will have to be vigilant to recognize it early and preform necessary maintenance work to correct it before it gets entrenched back into their routine. Some shooters may have habitual anticipation. This is not common but does occur. In these cases, the shooter will have to work especially hard to manage the condition. But it can be managed with a proper and consistent practice ethic.

Note: The content of this article is based upon the most recent data and subject matter content available. If you have different experiences or subject matter knowledge, I would love to hear from you.

Get out there instruct, shoot and be safe.

Author's note: Upon the advice of several friends I have not included the procedure for producing reduce loads (bunny fart rounds) because of the high risk of squib rounds. If you're interested in learning how to make them, email me and we can discuss. We need to start off with the assumption that you are an experienced reloader.

Credits:

Joe Leary

Dr. Barbara Boyce

Chris Narwold

Countless internet forms, YouTube educational videos and periodic articles.

Corrections and Errata

The Story: "Bridgeville IDPA Shooters Do Well at 2021 Chesapeake Cup Match!" in the last edition of the DSSA Newsletter was originally written by Terry Stewart and not by Dave Hampton as credited. We regret the error.

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