

The Origins of PPC

In 1957/58 the Department of Police Administration at University of Indiana, (Bloomington, Indiana), developed a handgun course that was more suited to Police training. Prior to that point, all Police handgun training was done “Civilian” style... one handed, single action, on a Bullseye target. Colt had developed a man sized target with all areas of the body counting as a hit and worth points: 5, 4, 3 and 2 (for arms). This target was modified for competition use and included two vertical lines, three and one half inches apart, extending from the point of the chin to the bottom of the 5 ring. There was also a six inch circle in the center of the chest. This entire area was designated as the 5-X ring and was used to break possible ties.

In September of 1958 the Assistant Director of Police Training at the University of Indiana, asked the Colt Patent Firearms Company to host the first International Shoot, at the University Range. They agreed and the first Match was held in June of 1959 with 429 Police Officers from 22 American States, 4 from Puerto Rico and 6 from Canada (Winnipeg Police Dept.) attending.

The University was so impressed by the attendance that they hosted the match again in 1960 and 1961, in association with Colt. For a look at the Match Flyer from the 1960 tournament [click here](#). Interesting to note there

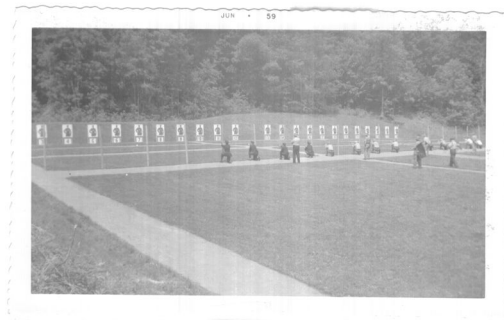


Figure 1: Picture was taken in 1959 at the Bloomington, Indiana University Range (*courtesy of Stan Smyth - Winnipeg Police*).



Figure 2: The 1959 Winnipeg Police Team attending the first ever U.S. National Police Shooting Championships (1st Colt's I.U. International Police Combat Pistol Match). Members of that team: Stan Smyth, Bob Taylor, Stan Miner, Ron Truesdale, Norm Stewart and Don Thorsteinson. They had use of the Police Association V.W. Bus and \$900.00 for 9 days.

was no registration or entry fee for the tournament. Also, notice the original course of fire... 5 shot strings (not 6 as we use today)... hip shooting at 7 yards... loading done from rounds in the pocket... stage 4 shot prone from 60 yards in 35 seconds.

In 1961 Winnipeg Police hosted the first Canadian PPC competition (at the Miller Road Range)

In 1962 the National Rifle Association (NRA) expanded its' program to include police shooting competitions and joined with the Department of Police Administration at Indiana University to conduct a revised and renamed shooting tournament.

The 1962 National Police Pistol Championships and Firearms Instructors' Course was held August 22 to 26, 1962. To download a copy of the 1962 Tournament Match Booklet please [click here](#).

Reading through the booklet you'll notice a number of interesting items...

- Total "package" price to shoot all the matches was \$8.50 plus \$2.00 registration fee
- Loading: "All loading will be with cartridges taken from the competitor's pocket. A competitor will have in his possession only the number of rounds of ammunition required for the match being fired..."
- Crouch Shooting: "The position used at 7 yards stipulates a position which is commonly referred to as 'hip shooting'. In this position the gun must be supported by one hand only and held below shoulder level. The arm holding the gun must be visibly bent at the elbow."
- There were six matches outlined... if you look closely at the specific

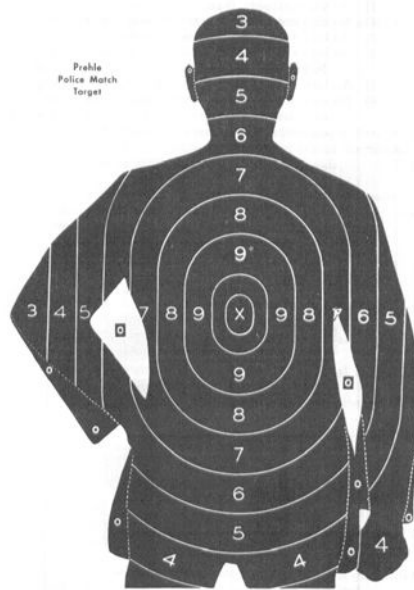


Figure 3

courses of fire you'll see the early beginnings of what was to become today's 1500 Aggregate Match.

- The shot strings went from 5 (as had been used by Colt the previous three years) to 6
- The 60 yard prone stage was changed to 50 yards.

Another change made by NRA was the adoption of their own target, the Prehle B-27. For the Championships, only hits in the X, 10, 9, 8 and 7 rings counted. All other hits were scored as misses.

By the following year (1963) the NRA's police programs had expanded to include a variety of elements: affiliation of law enforcement agencies, certification of Police Firearms Instructors, registration of Police Qualification Courses and registration and approval of Police Pistol Tournaments.

The 1963 tournament program shows how quickly the rules and format was changing (even from the previous year's event).

A number of noteworthy examples are:

- Loading was now allowed: "with cartridges taken from the competitor's pocket, cartridge belt or special pouch. Cartridge belts and special pouches may be used if they are practical for police duty use..."

- Courses of fire now specified Matches #1 through Match #5 and an Aggregate Match #6 which was used to determine the National Individual Police Pistol Combat Championship (*i.e. our present day 1500 Aggregate match*).
- Match #1 was essentially the same as today's Match 1 except that it was fired in 25 seconds (remember this pre-dates speedloaders) and it was fired using the Crouch position.
- Match #2 was identical to today's version (18 rounds in 90 seconds fired from 25 yards, kneeling, standing left barricade and standing right barricade)... except no speedloaders, reloads were by hand.
- Match #3 was also the same as today (24 rounds in 165 seconds fired from 50 yards, sitting, prone, standing left barricade and standing right barricade).
- Match #4 introduced 25 yard standing without support. As we do today, two stages of 12 rounds in 35 seconds from 25 yards standing unsupported... once again they didn't have speedloaders so the 35 seconds included the time to reload by hand from the pocket, or cartridge belt or pouch.
- Match #5 was also adjusted to incorporate this new 25 yard standing unsupported stage (eliminating the original Colt 60 yard prone stage). Match #5 which was renamed the "Modified Practical Pistol Course Match" now looked like today's familiar Match 5 with the exception that the first stage allowed 25 seconds (later shortened to 20 seconds with the advent of speedloaders) and required the use of the Crouch position (not sighted fire).

PPC has had several handles over the years. In the past it was known as Practical Police Course, Practical Pistol Course, Practical Pistol Combat and what the NRA currently terms Police Pistol Combat. It is interesting that the word Pistol was often part of the name, even though this was primarily a revolver sport until approximately 1990 when the Semi-Autos came on the scene. The format has developed over the past 40+ years, creating a venue in which officers compete and compare their abilities, to promote skill development and proficiency.

The front cover of the current NRA PPC Rule Book still reads:

"The intent of police competition is to provide the Police Officer a competitive program which will improve the officer's skill and competence as a law enforcement professional."