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# Gunfighter Moment – Ken Hackathorn

Get on any of the internet tactical/gun forums and you will note an array of people arguing about meaningless issues like the proper way to press the magazine catch on their pistol or carbine, or some such topic. We see folks getting wrapped around the axle about issues that are not really all that important. One topic that gets some real traction is the issue of whether you should reload your pistol or carbine before it goes empty or at slide/bolt lock. Some instructors teach to count your shots and always reload before the gun goes empty.

Yea, right. They haven't been in many shootouts if they believe in that sacred cow.

I once asked Jim Cirrillo about when did you know to reload in your many shootings. Jim used the NYPD issue 4″ Heavy Barrel M10 S&W .38 special revolver. He was a highly skilled PPC competitor, so in theory he should have been able to count 6 times or sense when his revolver was empty…right? Well, Jim's answer to my question was very straight forward, "When the trigger went 'click-click' two or three times, I knew it was time to reload."

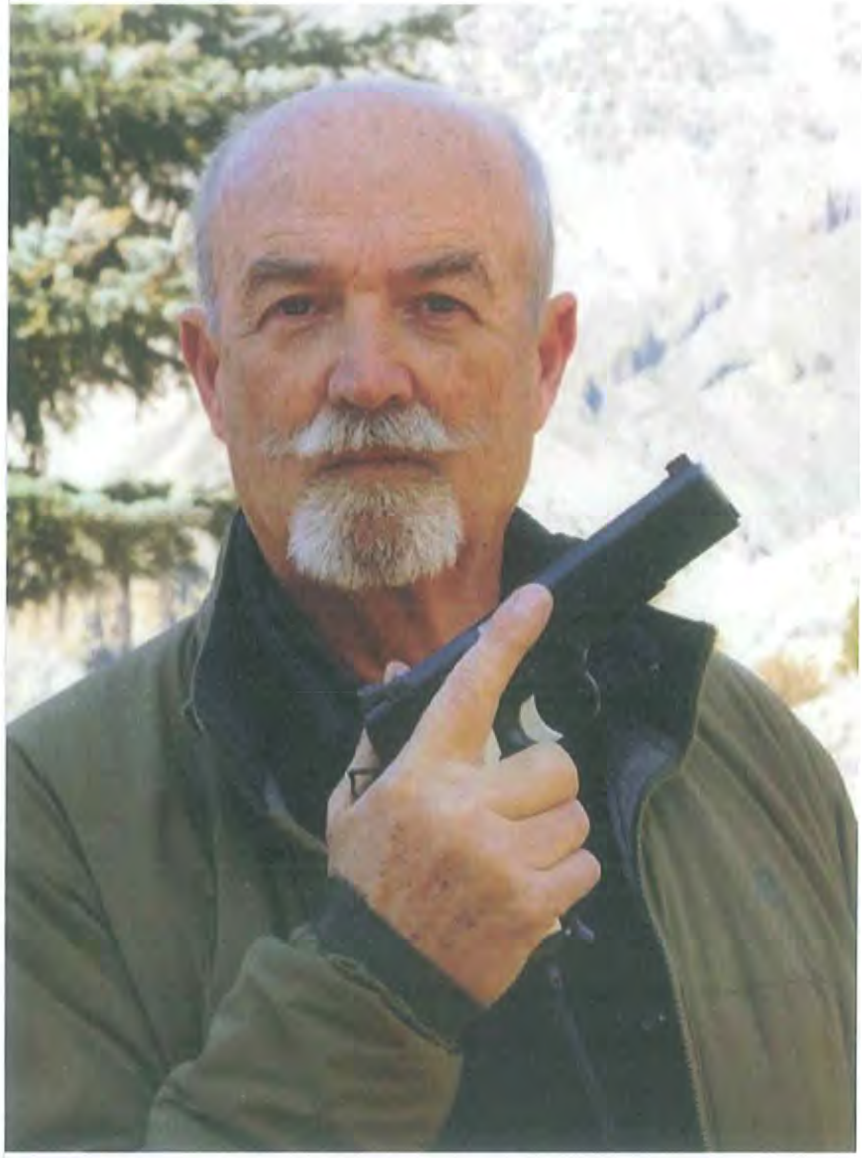
The game boys of USPSA often complain about IDPA because IDPA dictates either slide lock reloads or tactical
reloads from behind cover. A common line from them is," I want to reload when I want to, not when I have to." I
would like to have a full head of hair and a 32″ waist line too, but reality is that you rarely get to reload when you want to, most of the time it is when you are pulling the trigger and there are no loud noises.

Running around the range leaving a trail of partially loaded magazines may be great fun when you can plan on how many targets you will engage with 2 rounds each, but just doesn't work out very well in a world where you don't know how many targets you will have to engage or how many rounds it will take to make them stop doing what it is that requires you to ventilate them. Plus, most folks don't always have a large number of spare magazines on them.

Hope for the best scenario, but you damn well better prepare and train for the worse. I note that many folks now advocate carrying just one spare magazine in their hip pocket. Bravo for at least carrying a

spare, but remember, if you ever need it, you will need it real fast. A belt pouch is a much better solution when that time arrives.

-Ken Hackathorn



Ken Hackathorn has served as a US Army Special Forces Small Arms Instructor, Gunsite Instructor, and NRA Police Firearms Instructor. He is currently an FBI Certified Firearms Instructor, Certified Deputy Sheriff with Washington County SO, Ohio, and a SRT member and Special Response Team trainer. Ken has trained US Military Special Operations forces, Marine FAST and SOTG units and is a contract small arms trainer to FBI SWAT and HRT.

Ken has provided training to Federal, State, and local law enforcement agencies and been active in small arms training for the past 25 years. He has written firearms related material for Guns & Ammo, Combat Handguns, Soldier Of Fortune, and currently American Handgunner and contributed to at least six other gun/shooting journals. Ken was also a founding member of IPSC and IDPA.

To see Ken's Training Class Schedule visit **aliastraining.com**.