2013 was a stellar year for The United States Practical Shooting Association. We tried a few new things and learned a lot along the way.

Here’s A Look Back:

- 2013 was the second year in a row that we entered more than 100,000 scores. A comparison to 20 years ago? In 1993, USPSA entered just a little over 66,000 in two divisions. Even just five years ago we only entered 88,000 in six divisions. That’s growth we can get behind. Perhaps in 2014 we can top 120,000.

- We beat our 1998 record high of 400 active clubs. We’re currently right at 412 and have no intentions of slowing down.

- Over 65 major matches were posted to the USPSA online calendar. From coast to coast and beyond, over 22,000 active members were busy throwing some serious lead downrange.

- Nearly $400,000 in cash and prizes was awarded at our National Championships, to say nothing of our Area Championships. Our sponsors and partners continue to impress and amaze with their unprecedented support of our organization. Please continue to support those companies who so graciously support you.

- We now have nearly 100,000 followers on Facebook – that’s from just a little over 14,000 in January, 2013. Everyone’s talking and we hope you’ll join the conversation.

In addition to the statistical success of 2013, I have had the pleasure of meeting and working with some amazing USPSA members this year. This organization is truly made up of some of the best of our country and I want to thank each and every one of you who has participated in a USPSA match in 2013 in any capacity. The love of the sport and the camaraderie of the members make this the most rewarding job I’ve ever had.

We have had a lot of great growth and feedback in 2013 and hope to continue that well into the New Year. We’ve listened to your suggestions, complaints and ideas and have taken them all to heart. As we gear up for 2014, here are some of the big ideas we’re working towards as well as the changes you can expect to see in the coming months.

**Increased Club Support**

One of our major goals for 2014 is to increase club support and communication. We will be implementing several new web features we hope will make our club and section coordinator's lives easier. We’ll also be using the website more effectively to deliver information back to our clubs and their officials in a timelier manner. Additionally, we are evaluating the activity credit policy to see how we can more effectively reward our clubs for submitting official USPSA activity (more on that below). Finally, we’re nearly finished updating the Club Program Manual and will begin the Section Coordinator Manual next.
Dedicated Club Page

While website construction has gotten significantly easier in recent years, it is still no easy task for many and few people have ample time on their hands to learn web programming. Therefore, each affiliated club and section in good standing will be given the option of a dedicated web space on uspsa.org where they can post directions to their club, match schedules, club membership information, and match results. As part of our focus on communication we will be building in a module of the new website to allow USPSA affiliated clubs and sections to host their own club page under the USPSA.org domain. These domains will have customizing options and will be administered through an easy-to-use dashboard very similar to composing an email. Our hope is that clubs without a web presence or an electronic way to communicate with their members will utilize the new club portal to create a club website without all the technical issues they may have on their own, all at no cost to the club.

Activity Credit/Nationals Slot System

The slot system served its purpose well over the years, but we’ve found that increasingly fewer sections and clubs take advantage of it. While some clubs and sections have members who enjoy attending the nationals, many others have members that are content to stick closer to home. Unfortunately, that means those sections and clubs with no use for slots end up missing out on a major benefit to their affiliation. To address this, we are moving forward with plans to offer additional options in the slot/activity credit system for 2015. Clubs and sections will earn points for their activity that can be exchanged for slots and other valuable items. We’re brokering deals for steel, paper targets and other consumables clubs might need. We’re also working on adding software, hardware and apparel needs to the list. Clubs and sections can also use points to pay for NROI training seminars. We will add new items to the catalog as we negotiate further deals and would welcome any ideas you might have. Our hope is that the new system will provide better value to clubs and give them the tools they need to succeed.

Electronic Scoring

EzWin Score is a great program built from the ground up to service the scoring needs of our organization. It brought us out of the dark ages and allowed faster and more accurate scoring and results calculation. It is, however, a little long in the tooth and the software used to create it is no longer being supported -- making future updates and upgrades more difficult.

For the past year we have been working with match officials to determine what they would prefer as the most efficient method of scoring and submitting scores to USPSA. Overwhelmingly we have heard that the PractiScore application is meeting club and member needs better than anything that came before. We used PractiScore as the official scoring method in several area matches and at the Back to Back Handgun Nationals with stellar results. Members like the app for its usefulness and interactivity. Clubs like it because it's convenient and user-friendly. Therefore, the Board of Directors has now officially approved PractiScore as the official scoring method for USPSA and we are in the process of developing a method of transmitting official scores and activity reports directly to USPSA via the program. PS will handle scoring for all USPSA matches, including the Multi-Gun and Steel disciplines.
We understand that the hardware needs and training for PractiScore are not trivial, so EzWinScore will continue to be available and maintained at least through 2014. However, USPSA will not be adding new features to the program going forward. Much more information to come as the official procedure is developed and tested. We will keep you up to date as we progress.

**Quicker Classification Updates**

The move to the new scoring system has a big advantage beyond convenience. It allows us to calculate member classifications virtually immediately upon submission. No more waiting all month to see if the classifier you shot is going to move you up – you will know as soon as it is submitted. This has been a major request from USPSA membership and we have worked hard to develop a good way to accomplish it.

In order to avoid the complications of classification changing in the middle of a major match the current plan is to have the classifications become effective once per week. This will increase the importance of clubs submitting scores in a timely manner, so please take note of the changes as they relate to your individual clubs.

To simplify the process of submitting activity, USPSA is working with PractiScore to integrate the upload of match results and classifiers into a single operation. This single upload – which can be completed directly from your scoring device – will dramatically reduce the complexity of submitting activity to USPSA and score posting.

**Ending the Classifier Limit**

One major administrative change for 2014 is the elimination of the 12 per year limit on USPSA classifier score submissions. The development of the new activity credit system means there is no longer a need for this restriction and clubs may now submit as many classifiers as they like. This also means the restriction of one classifier per match without a special classifier is also removed. We hope this gives clubs more flexibility in their match design and helps clubs get new shooters classified faster.

**USPSA.org Overhaul**

In 2014 we will unveil a complete overhaul to the USPSA.org look and function. The site as it exists is somewhat difficult to navigate and keep updated. It can be daunting to new visitors and doesn’t quite meet the needs of our membership. Our goal with the new site design is to streamline your online experience and help you find the information that you want faster. Information will be better organized and easier to find. Additionally the new interface will help the home office staff better communicate important information to all club contacts and members and allow members greater control over their own membership. This is a huge change that we hope will provide much better support for USPSA members and clubs alike.
MyUSPSA App

In addition to the improvements to the USPSA.org site we are also in the process of developing an application that can serve to push important information to USPSA members. The application first and foremost will host an electronic, evergreen copy of the USPSA rule book. This will make pushing out any rule book updates from NROI and the Board of Directors much simpler and is probably the number one requested item from members we have spoken with. It will also integrate with PractiScore to allow all-in-one access. Members will be able to manage their membership, scores and match calendar, receive Front Sight as an e-zine, browse the USPSA Classifier library, and much more.

Front Sight Magazine

2013 saw the complete redesign of Front Sight Magazine and I’m pleased to report it was a smashing success. I received a great deal of feedback and it was almost unanimously positive. A number of you took the time to offer feedback, praise and little tweaks that really made a difference. As it’s written by and for our members we always appreciate your suggestions. We have lots of new improvements coming in 2014 so keep reading. If you’re interested in contributing to Front Sight in 2014, please contact our Associate Editor at frontsight@uspsa.org for more details. We are always looking for coverage of local matches and events and will help with the editing.

It is our ultimate goal to incorporate a digital version of Front Sight into our App, along with the rulebook, classification library and club manuals.
USPSA Junior Program

One of the goals of USPSA is to be a resource to train a new generation of competitive shooters. With that in mind we undertook a massive reworking of the Scholastic Steel Challenge to create a new program that will do a better job of supporting USPSA juniors. The new USPSA Junior Program will use the established rules of both USPSA and SCSA with a much broader approach to junior activity.

The new program will continue to offer our juniors an opportunity to compete against their peers for endowment funds, cash, prizes, experience and, most importantly, fun and camaraderie. The Midway Foundation, one of the main sponsors of our former Scholastic Steel Challenge program, has already approved a 2014 USPSA Junior Program grant request.

This is a fantastic opportunity for us to reach many more juniors who may be exploring disciplines aside from strictly steel challenge. Rather than start them off with a special rulebook and limited opportunities for competition, we are opening the sport up to them completely and letting them guide us on where they most want to play. They've shown they're capable and competent young men and women and we owe them the respect of a challenging program with many options available to compete and learn and grow.

The new USPSA Junior Program also allows us to add many new services and opportunities. We have plans for scholarships, a community service rewards program, essay contests, postal matches and family events.

Perhaps the biggest addition to the program is the implementation of a USPSA Junior Camp. We are pleased to announce that STI International has stepped up to become the title sponsor of the inaugural USPSA junior camp to be conducted June 21-23rd in St. George, Utah. Featuring training from some of the top competitors in the country - who also happen to be USPSA members anxious to help train the next generation. In addition, we'll be offering something no other junior camp does; range safety officer training from our renowned NROI Instructor Corps. This will provide exciting opportunities to train from both a competitive and a safety standpoint.

More details about the new program, including a camp application and curriculum overview, will be available on the new junior website, available in the next couple of weeks. USPSA is still committed to supporting the MGM and AMU camps with the great work they have been doing for years and we have no plans to terminate that support with the addition of our own dedicated camp. In fact, Mrs. Rhonda Gibson of the MGM camp has stepped up and offered to pitch in with getting our first camp off the ground. As this is a brand new venture for us, we'll take all the help we can get.

We hope you'll also get involved with the new local USPSA Junior Program Club coming your way soon and support the youth of our sport. If you are interested in volunteering or learning more about the USPSA Junior Program, contact program organizer, Tricia Gensman at tricia@uspsa.org.
Steel Challenge Merges into USPSA

When USPSA purchased the Steel Challenge Shooting Association in 2008, the former administration was advised to set it up as an LLC to protect the parent organization. After recent meetings with the organization's attorney and CPA Firm, it has been determined that the need for an LLC no longer exists. Therefore, USPSA and SCSA will be merging into one association with Steel Challenge becoming a shooting discipline alongside practical shooting and multi-gun, all under the USPSA umbrella.

If you have time left on your current SCSA membership we will credit that time to your USPSA membership. If you are not a dual member your membership will automatically convert to a USPSA membership of the same type with the same membership expiration date. If a member has a Life membership in both organizations their membership will be converted to a USPSA Benefactor Member.

As for clubs, we will continue to maintain separate affiliations, but we will only charge for one. We have found that some clubs prefer to keep their Steel and Practical disciplines separated with a unique organizer for each. We understand that and have decided to continue to allow separate club affiliations. That is, a club can affiliate as a USPSA club, SCSA club or both for one fee. All rules and regulations for each respective discipline still apply, but so do all benefits and rights. Additionally, we will honor those clubs who are currently multi-year affiliates, but in the future, we will offer only single-year reaffiliations, just like USPSA.

In a nutshell, we are now offering affiliation in either or both organization for one price –and no, that price is not going up as a result. If you are currently an SCSA-only club and would like to add USPSA affiliation for no additional charge –or vice versa-- just shoot club organizer, Val Reule (val@uspsa.org) an email and she’ll set you up with your complimentary affiliation.

Steel Challenge classifications will be maintained under your USPSA/SCSA member number, but will be independent of your USPSA classification

World Speed Shooting Championships

Speaking of the Steel Challenge, I’m pleased to announce the dates and venue for the 2014 match. It will be conducted at the Southern Utah Shooter’s Sports Park in St. George, Utah June 25 -28, 2014. Practice bays will open Monday, June 23 and remain open through June 28th.

We’ll be bringing back walk-up events and adding some exciting new divisions and side matches, along with some demos by the top Steel Shooters in the country, a raffle and much, much more. You won’t want to miss this revival and we’ll hope you join us. The new website will be revealed shortly and will contain match and hotel information as well as an application. Get yours in fast.
USPSA Report to the Membership

Slots to Nationals

As mentioned above, beginning in 2015, the way Nationals slots are distributed will be changing. USPSA will automatically send an invitation to the top 16 men, 8 ladies, and top junior, senior and super senior from each division of the previous year’s nationals. USPSA will also set aside a number of slots for clubs and sections to redeem with activity points as outlined above. All other slots will be issued on a first come, first serve basis. We will announce the date the application goes live and then place it on the web for instant sign up. In the event that the match fills we will still administer a wait list and will still try to accommodate walk-ons where we can.

Continued Marketing Focus

We have worked hard to get more people interested in USPSA events in 2013 and have had a lot of success. In 2014 we will continue that push and work to move even more people to join in on the fun of practical shooting. To do so we will need your help. We ask all our members who are active in social media to please follow USPSA on Facebook and Twitter. More importantly, make a resolution to invite your friends to a match in 2014. 2013 saw record numbers of new gun owners – let’s see how many we can get to participate in USPSA events.

We hope you enjoyed this update and are as excited as we are about all the new changes and improvements on the way. We are looking forward to a great year with tons of new opportunities for USPSA members. Please let us know how we can help you and your club or section succeed in the New Year. We are always open to feedback.

On behalf of myself, the USPSA board, and the staff at USPSA HQ, we wish you all good things in the year to come. Now get out there and shoot!

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