Is your pistol IDPA legal?

The internet forums and message boards are consistently flooded with the question; "Is my pistol with X, Y, Z parts IDPA legal?" or "(Insert manufacturer's name here) just produced a new pistol. Will it, or is it IDPA legal in my division?" These same questions are going to be asked from here to the end of time as long as manufacturers produce new products. The first step in finding out is to <u>use the IDPA rule book</u>. To guide you to the answers, we look at the 2015 IDPA Rulebook Section 8 – Equipment Rules. This section covers everything from pistol divisions to how you wear your gear and ammunition power factor. But let's just focus on the pistol divisions. As you know, there are 6 divisions in this sport: Stock Service Pistol (SSP), Enhanced Service Pistol (ESP), Custom Defense Pistol (CDP), Compact Carry Pistol (CCP), Revolver Stock & Enhanced (Rev-S or E) and Back-Up Gun Semi Auto or Revolver (BUG-S OR BUG-R). Of the six divisions, CCP & BUG are new as of March 1, 2015.

Let us get magazine limits out of the way first. Here are the respective limits for each division:

- 1. SSP 10 rounds
- 2. ESP 10 rounds
- 3. CDP 8 rounds
- 4. CCP 8 rounds
- 5. REV 6 rounds
- 6. BUG 6 rounds total

These are magazine limits for magazines on your belt only. You are able to start with a full magazine and one round chambered.

The IDPA box! All pistols (except revolvers) must fit with the largest magazine inserted with the lid closed. The IDPA box measures: 8 % x 6 x 1 5/8. There are smaller box inserts for CCP and BUG division, but we will get to that later.

Since IDPA is a defensive scenario based sport, there are certain features or attachments that are not permitted. These are:

- 1. Compensators on barrels or barrel porting.
- 2. Add-on weights, (but is not limited to) weighted magazines, tungsten guide rods, brass magazine wells, weighted grips, and weighted grip plugs.
- 3. Heavy and/or cone style barrels without a barrel bushing except as allowed in ESP, CCP, BUG and CDP divisions with length restrictions.
- 4. Sights of non-standard configuration (ghost rings, Bo-Mar ribs, etc.).
- 5. Disconnecting or disabling of any safety device including (but not limited to): manual safeties, grip safeties, firing pin, striker, and hammer blocking safeties, 1911 series 80 firing pin safeties, 1911 Swartz safeties. 1911 series 80 frames may be used with series 70 slides or vice versa. Revolver actions may not be modified so that the hammer can fall when the cylinder is open.
- 6. Lights mounted on firearms.
- 7. Rail mounted lasers and bolt-on trigger guard mounted lasers are not allowed.

With the above restrictions in mind, let us start with Stock Service Pistol Division. This division was created as the name implies for stock pistols that are straight out of the box with minimal investment to compete in IDPA matches. The first thing we need to look at is if the pistol you have chosen has a minimum production number of 2,000 per year or if no longer made did the manufacturer make at least 20,000 of that model. Next, the pistol must be a semi-automatic that is double action, double action only or striker fired that fires a 9x19mm Luger/Parabellum cartridge or larger. The pistol cannot weigh more than 43 oz. (2 lbs. 11 oz.) with the heaviest magazine inserted in the empty pistol. Most pistols weigh below this, but make sure you put it on at least a home postal scale to confirm it. You would not want to show up at a sanctioned match with a heavy pistol after you have spent the time and money for travel expenses.

Well, since the restrictions are out of the way let us see what can be done to the pistol. These are the permitted modifications or inclusive list:

- 1. Sights may be changed to another notch and post type. Slides may not be machined to accept different style sights. (Ghost ring type sights are not allowed. Or to recut the slide for a new type of sight other than what came from the factory.)
- 2. Grips may be changed to another style or material that is similar to factory configuration and do not weigh more than 2.00 oz. than the factory standard weight for that model.
- 3. Magazine releases, slide stops, safety levers, de-cocking levers, hammers, and triggers, that are stock on one SSP legal firearm may be used on another SSP legal firearm from the same manufacturer provided they are drop in replacements. Parts in this list must be factory installed on a standard production firearm or firearms. Special parts that are available installed only from a factory custom shop are not eligible in SSP. (You can mix and match different parts off of different models of pistols.)
- 4. Recoil spring guide rods and dual spring recoil systems made of material that is no heavier than stainless steel.
- 5. Frames may be replaced with identical frames from the same manufacturer. (Meaning a Glock 17 frame can be replaced with a G34 frame and the like).
- 6. A slip-on grip sock and/or grip tape, skateboard tape, etc. may be used.
- 7. Internal action work may be used to enhance trigger pull as long as safety is maintained (no visible external modifications allowed). Internal reliability work. (*This is polishing or replacing internal components that are not visible unless you field strip the pistol.*)
- 8. Aftermarket extractors and pins may be used.
- 9. Internal accuracy work.
- 10. Replacement of barrel with one of factory configuration that uses the original cartridge. (Yes, you can put an aftermarket barrel in your pistol, if it is the same original caliber.)
- 11. Plastic plugs may be used to fill the opening behind the magazine well.
- 12. Custom finishes may be applied. Stock slide cover plates may be refinished. Slides may be engraved. Engraving is defined as etching into the slide of logos, letters, and graphics no deeper than the original factory logos.
- 13. Stippling and texturing may be performed on readily replaceable parts of the grip frame such as replaceable back straps and replaceable grip panels.
- 14. Aftermarket magazines may be used provided they do not weigh more than 1 oz. over the same capacity factory magazine. Aftermarket magazine base pads may be used provided they do not make the magazine weight more than 1 oz. over the same capacity factory magazine. Magazine base pads may be modified by reshaping, texturing, or adding bumper pads provided that they do not make the magazine weigh more than 1 oz. over the same capacity factory magazine. Magazines that are longer than stock may be used provided they meet all other division requirements.

Stock Service Pistol Division (SSP) has its own additional restrictions which are called Excluded Modifications. These include but are not limited to:

1. Externally visible modifications other than those listed in the Permitted Modifications section.

- Aftermarket or visibly modified magazine releases, slide stops, safety levers, de-cocking levers, and hammers.
- 3. Robar-style grip reduction.
- 4. Add-on magazine well opening.
- 5. Slide inserts to accommodate a different recoil assembly design.
- 6. A barrel that uses a different cartridge that is not offered in the original factory model.
- 7. Customization of the slide by adding front cocking serrations, tri-top, carry melts, and high power cuts.
- 8. Compensated/ported firearms with non-compensated/ported barrels installed.
- 9. Checkering or stippling on non-readily replaceable parts of the grip frame.
- 10. Aftermarket slides.
- 11. Removing material from the magazine well opening.
- 12. Aftermarket grip tang extensions or beavertails.
- 13. Disabling the slide stop

The next division we come to is the *Enhanced Service Pistol* (ESP) division. This is where you can pretty much modify your pistol any way you like. It still has to fit in the IDPA box, meet the 43 oz. (2 lbs. 11oz.) weight limit, however porting or compensators are still not allowed. It can be double/single action or single action only and must be chambered in at least 9mm Para. All pistols that are legal in SSP are also legal in ESP. As the rule book states, this provision may be used for firearms that violate an ESP rule to still be used in ESP, provided the firearm meets all SSP requirements. Such as a CZ SP-01 series, or other steel dust cover or light rail over 3.25".

There are a few different features or modifications that you *can* have in ESP.

- 1. Slides may be machined to accept different style sights, but still have to be notch and post type.
- 2. Robar-style grip reductions
- 3. Replace the barrel and use a stock or non-stock caliber.
- 4. Aftermarket triggers with visible over travel stops
- 5. Checkering, serrating, and stippling the frame
- 6. Extended and/or ambi-safety and beavertail grip safety
- 7. Grip tang extensions or beavertail
- 8. Heavy or cone style barrels less than 4.25"
- 9. Slide inserts for different recoil assemblies
- 10. Magwell mods or add on magwells
- 11. Slides with front cocking serrations, tri-top, carry melts, and high power cuts
- 12. After market safeties along with Swenson style thumb shields and frame mounted thumb shields.
- 13. Aftermarket magazine base pads may be used and magazine base pads may be modified by reshaping, texturing, or adding bumper pads if they do not make the magazine weight more than 1.50 oz. over the same capacity factory magazine. Magazines that are longer than stock may be used provided they meet all other division requirements

Excluded or *not allowed* in ESP are:

- 1. Steel dust covers and rails over 3.25" (82.6 mm) (as measured from the rear of the slide stop pin to the most forward portion of the dust cover or rail) are not permitted.
- 2. Removal of material from the exterior of the slide other than front cocking serrations, tri-top, engraving, carry melts, and high power cuts.
- 3. Trigger shoes.
- 4. Disabling the slide stop.

Believe it or not the rest of the semi auto pistol divisions are fairly easy and are almost the same as ESP apart from a few exceptions.

Custom Defensive Pistol (CDP) division is next. All pistols that are legal in SSP are also legal in CDP. Again, this provision may be used for firearms that violate a CDP rule to still be used in CDP, provided the firearm is .45 ACP and meets all SSP requirements. All of the allowed and excluded modifications are the same as ESP division. The only difference in pistol requirements for this division than ESP are:

1. Must use .45 ACP cartridges.

Let us go over the newest division, *Compact Carry Pistol division (CPP)*. The only differences in pistol requirements for this division than ESP are:

- 1. Barrel length of 4.10" (104.1 mm) or less.
- 2. The unloaded firearm with the heaviest magazine must weigh 37.00 oz. (1048.9 grams) or less.
- 3. The firearm with the largest magazine inserted must fit in the IDPA gun test box measuring 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 6" x 1 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
- 4. There are no dust cover length limitations.

The next division is *Revolver (REV)*. I know what you are saying. Who really still shoots those things, right? Believe me, there are still quite a few competitive shooters using revolvers. You may not see them that much at the local Tier 1 matches, but they come out in force for regional, state and national matches. Try it sometime. You will come out a better shooter because of it. Anyway, this division was one of the new rule book changes. It has combined Stock Service and Enhanced Service Revolver under *one* division with *two sub-categories*, Stock and Enhanced Revolver. Both revolver barrel lengths should be of 4.25" or less and must be loaded to the division capacity of six (6) rounds in the cylinder. Seven (7) and eight (8) shot revolvers are permitted, but may only load six (6) rounds.

The Stock Revolver sub-category pistols must have:

- 1. Any revolver that uses .38 Special or larger cartridges with a rimmed case and is <u>not loaded with moon clips</u>.
- 2. The unloaded firearm must weigh 43.00 oz. or less.

The Enhanced Revolver sub-category pistols must have:

- 1. Any revolver that uses .357 magnum or larger cartridges with rimmed or rimless cases.
- 2. The unloaded firearm must weigh 50.00 oz. or less.
- 3. May be loaded via speed loader or full moon clip

The revolvers may not use trimmed down cases other than what is listed on the side of the revolver. This means if your revolver shoots .38 special or .44 special, you cannot shoot those cases trimmed down to .38 Colt or .44 Russian length case or shorter in the pistol except in the following case combinations:

- 1. 38 special in .357 magnum
- 2. .44 special in .44 magnum
- 3. .45 Auto Rim or .45 GAP in .45 ACP
- 4. .45 ACP or .45 GAP in .45 Colt
- 5. .40 S&W in 10mm

Next we have the permitted modifications for both Stock and Enhanced Revolver. Notice that a lot of these are the same as the semi-auto pistol modification.

- 1. Sights may be changed to another notch and post type. The frame and barrel may be machined to accept different style sights.
- 2. Action work to enhance trigger pull as long as safety is maintained (smoothing the trigger face, removing the hammer spur, use of over travel stop, conversion to DA only and addition of ball detent are considered action work and are permitted).
- 3. Grips may be changed to another style or material that is similar to factory configuration, provided they do not weigh more than 2.00 oz. (56.7 grams) more than the factory standard weight for that model.
- 4. Grip tape, skateboard tape, etc. may be used.
- 5. Cylinder latches may be changed to another factory offering from the firearm manufacturer.
- 6. Chamfer the rear of the chambers.
- 7. Shortening of factory barrels. (This is usually done if you cannot find a 4" replacement barrel.)
- 8. Re-barreling to another factory offering for that model.
- 9. Firearms converted to accept moon clips may be used in Stock Revolver provided moon clips are not used.
- 10. Custom finishes.
- 11. Enhanced Revolver Additional Permitted Modifications (Inclusive list):
- 12. Cylinder latches may be modified or replaced, but may not protrude past the frame in any direction and may not be thicker than 3/8" (9.5 mm) as measured from the side plate of the frame.
- 13. Conversion to accept moon clips.

The Stock and Enhanced Revolver *Excluded* Modifications or not allowed list:

- 1. Oversize or heavy barrels.
- 2. Hogue Big Butt grips and similar are not allowed. The maximum grip dimensions allowed are: 5.00" high, measured from the bottom of the hammer opening in the frame to the bottom of the grip 2 3/8"deep and 1 5/8" wide.

Back-Up Gun or (BUG) division is something that IDPA has been tossing around for some time now. Smith and Wesson now regularly hosts the Back-Up Gun Indoor Nationals at their headquarters in Springfield, Mass. This is a fun match to shoot and it really tests the limits of these little firearms. BUGs are the small pocket guns that are smaller than a CCP pistol, larger round capacity than a derringer and just as easy to carry. There really was not any place in the shooting sports to test your proficiency with a small pocket gun. With the popularity of the pocket pistol, IDPA HQ has decided that giving it a place in competition, hopefully bringing out more shooters, give another option for current shooters and help them become proficient in a controlled setting. It is still is a very new division and hopefully will catch on with more local match directors.

Well since the rule book says it so well let me quote it. "The Back-Up Gun division is a required division for Tier 1 local matches and is an optional division that may be included as a competition division in a Tier 2 – Tier 5 Sanctioned match at the Match Director's discretion. The Back-Up Gun division may also be used to create a specialty BUG only match. Match directors may prescribe conditions for courses of fire such as the start condition, holster use, and reloads on the clock. Handguns permitted for use in BUG are categorized into one of the following sub-categories: Semi-Automatic BUG (BUG-S) and Revolver BUG (BUG-R). Other Special Sub-Categories can be defined by the MD."

All BUG Permitted Modifications are:

- 1. Storage locks may be disabled or removed.
- 2. Magazine disconnects may be disabled or removed.
- 3. Lasers that are incorporated into the firearm or sights are legal if they comply with all other division rules and the laser is not activated.

- 4. BUG-S must comply with all Enhanced Service Pistol (ESP) features and modifications, and equipment restrictions
- 5. BUG-R must comply with all Stock Revolver features and modifications, and equipment restrictions

For all BUG Excluded Modifications or not allowed mods you can look at Non-IDPA-Legal Modifications for all 8 Divisions. In the Semi-Automatic BUG (BUG-S) sub-category permitted pistols must have:

- 1. Be semi-automatic single action, double action, double action only, or striker fired type pistol
- 2. Use .380 ACP or larger cartridges.
- 3. Barrel length of 3.60" or less.
- 4. With the heaviest magazine must weigh 29.00 oz. (822.1 grams) or less
- 5. The largest magazine inserted must fit in the IDPA gun test box measuring 7 1/2" x 5 1/2" x 1 1/2"
- 6. In BUG-S the shooter will start with one round in the chamber and 5 rounds in the magazine, and 6 rounds in each additional magazine

In the Revolver BUG (BUG-R) sub-category permitted pistols must have:

- 1. Any revolver that uses .38 or larger cartridges with a rimmed case and is not loaded with moon clips.
- 2. The use of trimmed (shortened) ammunition is not allowed.
- 3. Barrel length of 3.00" or less.
- 4. The unloaded firearm must weigh 38.00 oz. or less.
- 5. Loaded to the capacity of six (6) rounds in the cylinder. (*This does not exclude 5 shot J-frame style revolvers. They may be loaded to 5 rounds in the cylinder.*)
- 6. Must fit in the IDPA gun test box measuring 8 3/4" x 5 ½" x 1 5/8"

We have finally come to the end of the divisions. In no way is this supposed to take place of the rule book and is just a guide to help the interested shooter become more familiar with the pistol rules. So that being said let us take a pistol and put it to the test. The CCP division, as stated above, is one of the newest divisions. I think that this will be a good place to start.



I am partial to CZ pistols and I have been shooting them in competition and concealed carrying with them for over 10 years. My current carry pistol is an OD Green CZ 75D P0-1 compact in 9mm. It is of 2006 vintage and it has served me well as a daily carry piece. I occasionally do use it in a match shooting under the SSP division in place of my SP-01 Tactical, but let us go through the list of requirements and see if I can now shoot it in CCP. Now, I am not going to list everything permitted as it is a long list, but I am going to list everything that is critical and might violate the CCP division rules and possibly get it moved to another division or disallowed all together.

With my digital calipers and handy postage scales at the ready, here are my results.

Must be Semi-automatic:

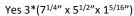
Must use 9mm or larger caliber: Yes (9x19mm)

Barrel length of 4.10" or less: Yes (3.634" from muzzle to chamber)

Unloaded with the heaviest magazine weighs 37.00 oz. or less: Yes 1*(27.40oz) 2*(27.30oz) 3*(27.70oz)



With the largest magazine inserted fit in $8^{3/4}$ "x6" $x1^{3/8}$ " box:





Does the extended magazine release protrude more than 0.2": No (0.127")

Compensator of any type including ported or hybrid barrels: No

Rail mounted or attached to trigger guard lights or lasers: No

Disconnected or disabled safety devices, FPB, grip or thumb safety: No

Notch and post type sights:

Added weights tungsten guide rod or brass mag wells: No

Heavy and or cone style barrels without a barrel bushing: No (Allowed in CCP if 4.10" or less)

Grips heavier than 2.00 oz. over factory:

No 1*(Rubber OEM 2.20 oz.) 2*(VZ 1.40 oz.)



Non-permitted removal of material from the exterior of the slide:

No

Slide stop disabled:

No

As you can see from the list above, the CZ P-01 as I have it configured does qualify for CCP and is ready to be put through a challenging Course of Fire.

I would like to go over a few of the things on the list to clarify what I have measured or weighed. First of all I have quite a few magazines for my CZ pistol that are different capacity and use different base pads/ plates.

#1 is an OEM 14rd compact magazine with a steel base plate.

#2 is an OEM 14rd compact magazine with an OEM rubber base pad. (Standard when you buy P-01)

#3 is an OEM full size 16rd (really 17rd) with a factory plastic base pad / spacer that covers the gap between the bottom of the pistol frame and the bottom of the magazine.

I carry one or more of these magazines on my person at any given time so it made sense to me to weigh all of them. The rule book does require the heaviest and largest magazine to be measured that you are going to compete with. I did measure my pistol with the #3 magazine inserted since it is the longest of the three. I came in well within the box limits required for CCP. Did you notice that the steel base plate magazine weighed 0.10 oz. more than the rubber padded base pad? No my scale is not broke and there was not a fat thumb on the scale. It was weighed on two different scales with the same result. Honest! I was curious and pulled the magazines apart and did not notice a difference in the internals of either magazine.

Recently I purchased a pair of fine VZ grips for my pistol as I have been running the OEM rubber grips since I have had the pistol. I normally run VZ grips on my competition pistol as I have found that the VZ grips reduced the felt grip profile and allowed me to get a better handle on my pistol while shooting. I have medium sized hands and I chose these examples since they were the only ones I had access to at the time. There are other options out there such as aluminum grips with grip tape added and nice wood grips also.

If you have any further questions about your pistol, please feel free to call or email your local IDPA club contact, Chief Safety Officer, Match Director or Area Coordinator to help you with answers to your questions. We have the knowledge and ability to guide you through the rule book so you will have a fun experience with the sport and want to continue to further your shooting abilities.

Jason C Armstrong

Temple Texas Gun Club IDPA CSO / Match Director Owner of Hammer Down Sports Gunsmith Services