

BETTER SHOOTING

Dave Anderson

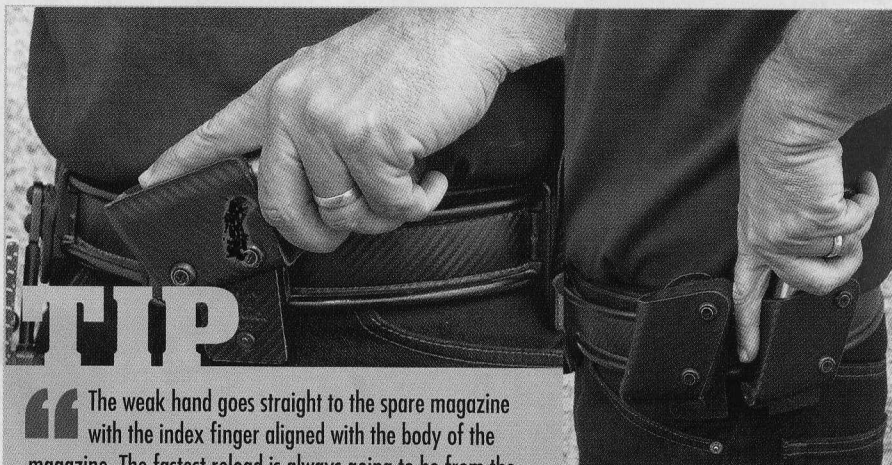
Mike Voigt On The Speedload

At a 1990 match near Reno, Nev., the organizers had an El Prez side match, unlimited runs for a buck each. I recall watching Mike Voigt, after a few warm-up runs, post a time of around 3.6 seconds, one or two points down. Voigt's reloads were amazing, consistently under .80 of a second, and that's with both shots hitting the A-zone, not just making a noise. Today Voigt is 14 years older and USPSA president, but neither age nor the burdens of office have slowed him down. I asked him for a few tips on high speed reloads.



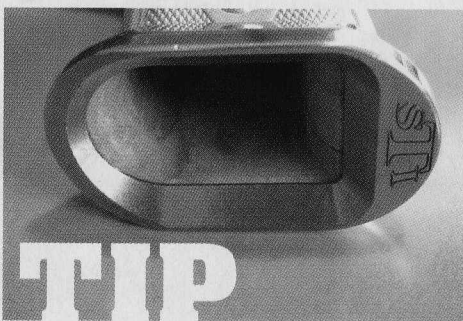
TIP

“ A common mistake is to bring the gun down during the reload then bring it back up to the line of sight, which just wastes time. Keep the gun high. A good check on gun position during practice is to hold the gun in this position, looking through the trigger guard and framing the next target to be engaged in the guard. That's the position you want the gun to be during the reload.”



TIP

“ The weak hand goes straight to the spare magazine with the index finger aligned with the body of the magazine. The fastest reload is always going to be from the mag carrier worn over the belt buckle simply because less movement is needed. If the first magazine is gone, or if the mag carrier is being worn behind the hip, the weak hand just sweeps back further. The grip on the magazine is the same.”

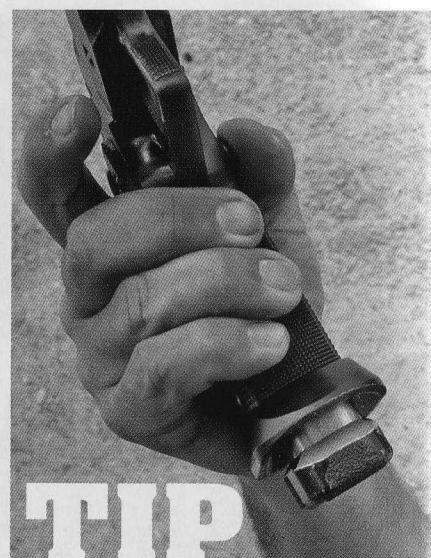


TIP

“ The index finger of the weak hand indexes the magazine with the mag well. I want the fresh magazine aligned as closely as possible with the mag well, both side to side and front to back, so it goes straight into the mag well. This is where you're most likely to wreck a reload, just as the fresh magazine is being started into the mag well. I can do a pretty good reload without looking at the gun, even with my eyes shut, but for the

fastest and most consistent reloads, focus on the mag well during the reload. I'm not just looking at the gun, I'm focusing as intently as possible on the right side of the well, at the line between the magazine chute and the actual mag well. Some shooters even put a strip of white paint along the edge of the mag well to help maintain a sharp focus.

“If I tell you to clap your hands together as quickly as possible, you move both hands. You don't hold one hand still and bring the other to it. Similarly I don't hold the gun still while the weak hand is seating the fresh magazine. The base of the weak hand pushes the magazine up. At the same time the strong hand is bringing the gun down to meet it. Both hands move together, then as the magazine is seated and locked, the weak hand keeps moving up, back into the shooting grip as the gun is indexed on target. The gun doesn't move down much, you likely wouldn't even see it except with a high-speed video camera, but it's one of the little ways of shaving tenths of a second.”



TIP

“ During a reload the first thing that happens is the trigger finger comes out of the trigger guard; the last thing that happens is the trigger finger goes back in the guard as the gun is indexed on target. I flip the gun to the left a bit to help hit the mag release button fast, then immediately reacquire the shooting grip with the strong hand. The gun stays high, between my eyes and the target. The weak hand goes straight to the spare magazine.”



TIP

“ The weak hand reacquires a shooting grip as the gun is being indexed back on target. If the gun has gone to slide-lock, the weak-hand thumb depresses the slide stop to let the slide move forward and chamber a fresh cartridge.”