

# Steve Anderson: Cutting Wasted Time

BY PAUL BENSON, TY-45006

A few years ago, Open GM Steve Anderson ([www.andersonshooting.com](http://www.andersonshooting.com)) wrote *Refinement and Repetition: Dry Fire Drill for Dramatic Improvement*. With modest goals for the book, Steve was pleasantly surprised at how well it sold.

Steve has followed up with another great book; *Principles of Performance: Refinement and Repetition 2*. As the ti-

tle of this article infers, Steve's book addresses things that eat up time in a shooter's performance. All told, his book looks at 50 common mistakes that add time to the clock. Here are just a few.

make a major mistake; we blow a reload, drop two hits into a no-shoot, throw three misses in a row on a Texas Star. What happens next? How often does the shooter start throwing rounds at the targets instead of looking at the front sight? I must confess I did this during the recent Area 2 match on the stage with two Texas Stars. I hit my first three plates, then started looking at the plates (instead of my front sight) and proceeded to throw rounds down range.

Steve's solution is to "shoot in the present." Forget about the past targets and shoot each new target anew. That is exactly what I did on the second Texas Star. I forgot about the misses and static reload and just focused on my front sight and cleaned five plates in five shots.

Steve writes, "When a mistake occurs, simply get an acceptable sight picture, call your shot, and you will get back to your plan."



**Keepin' the gun high.** Mark Hanish keeps his pistol up and in his vision while he charges ahead at the recent Area 2 Desert Classic.

## Don't Listen For The Steel

Hearing the bullet hit a piece of steel is a wonderful thing. It provides us with nearly-instant feedback as to our accuracy. It is instant gratification. Unfortunately, waiting to hear the steel is the WORST time-wasting habit short of WAITING for the steel to fall!

In listening, you give up more time than you ever realize. Sound travels so much slower than our calling the shot, and the falling steel can take forever. If you are waiting, you are wasting precious seconds on the clock.

(The time lag is particularly obvious on rifle courses - editors.)

Think about doing nothing else but calling your shot and moving to the next target. No waiting, no pause, just call your shot and make the transition.

## Holding The Gun Low

Too many shooters move from position to position with their gun held low, generally in the mid-chest region. When they get to their next shooting position, they spend time getting the gun up in front of their faces, locating their sights, and then shooting. By keeping the gun up in their field of vi-

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#### The Mental Breakdown

We have all seen it and perhaps experienced it. During a course of fire we

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sion, shooters can locate their sights faster, thus being ready to fire. Do the math; if a shooter takes an extra three-fourths of a second getting ready to shoot and there are four shooting areas, then the shooter has lost three seconds right off the top! Three seconds! One of the pictures associated with this article shows Mark Hanish with his gun high in his field of vision while he moves through a door going full speed, Tasha Hanish does something similar on the page

### Looking For Targets - A Bad Idea

Steve suggests that looking for targets and "not picking a spot to set up" will cost you an inordinate amount of time.

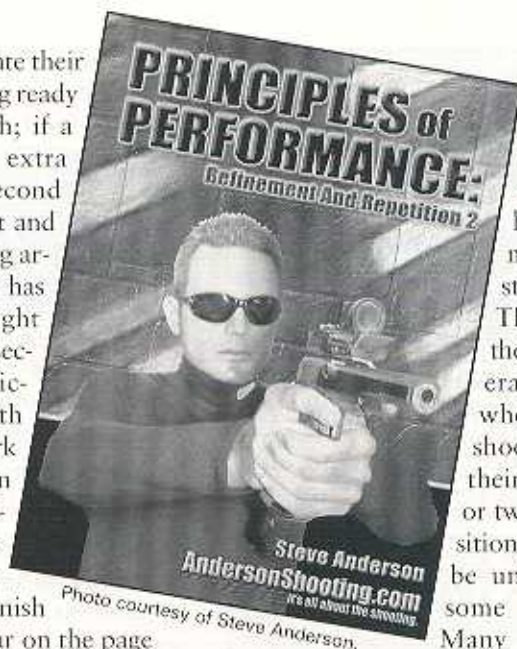


Photo courtesy of Steve Anderson.

Area 2's Desert Classic match is famous for having a memory stage or two. This year there were several stages where if the shooter planted their feet a step or two out of position, they would be unable to see some targets. Many shooters moved into a shooting position only to have to move again to see the complete array.

The trick to avoiding this problem is picking a set-up spot: the corner of a wall, a mark on the ground, etc. Steve describes a situation where he was looking for a visual cue to set up on during a particularly difficult stage at

the 2005 nationals. He used the shadow of a wall on the ground. The key is to find a place to stop knowing full well that the target(s) will become immediately visible when you get there — and no time will be wasted.

### Swingers - Don't Wait Around

During the walk through the activator will be engaged, letting you watch the swinger. Instead of just watching the swinger, Steve suggests you time it, determining the elapsed time between when the activator is en-

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gaged and when you can shoot the swinger. It is rarely less than a second and frequently more. So what are you doing for that second and a half? Steve says, "look for a stationary target nearby." Even a C class shooter can put two shots on a nearby static target and be in position to ambush the swinger when it appears.



**Tasha Hanish breaks the shot as she clears the edge of a wall. No wasted time here.**

### Summary

I remember a few years ago Paul Simon had a hit song called; *Fifty Ways to Leave Your Lover*. Steve's book

could be called *Fifty Ways to Leave Your Mistakes!* These are just five of the

50 common mistakes Steve covers. By being aware of just these five common mistakes and striving to overcome them, you will see dramatic improvement in your times. I believe I would have improved my scores by 20 percent had I not made these mistakes at the Area 2.

Remember, performance is not measured by how fast you pull the trigger, or how fast your feet move, but by how efficiently you negotiate the course of fire.

If you have any questions or suggestions, contact me at [pjbenson45@aol.com](mailto:pjbenson45@aol.com). You can also contact Steve Anderson through [www.andersonshooting.com](http://www.andersonshooting.com).

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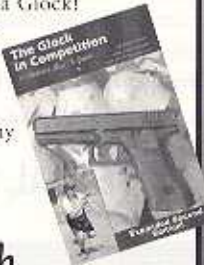
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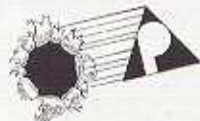
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Photo by Robin Taylor.

**Henning Wallgren charges full-speed into a barrier obscuring some low targets. By keeping his gun chest high as he enters, the gun's own momentum helps carry it out into position for an easy first shot.**



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