

What is the Walt Wise Match?

(2024)

Introduction

Every year, on the 3rd weekend in September, Precision Pistol (aka Bullseye) shooters from far and wide make their pilgrimage to Harrisburg Hunters & Anglers (HH&A), Harrisburg, PA to shoot the annual Walter Wise Memorial Police Pistol Match. It's not uncommon to have competitors show up from as far away as Arizona and Florida to reunite with old friends and fellow shooters for a weekend of pistol competition and great fun. It is a social event as much as it is a pistol match!

In its heyday, we had up to 280 shooters registered and ran 4 full relays on Saturday and Sunday to accommodate everyone. Although Bullseye shooting has been in a slow decline in recent years, the Walt Wise match still remains one of the largest Bullseye pistol matches on the East Coast.

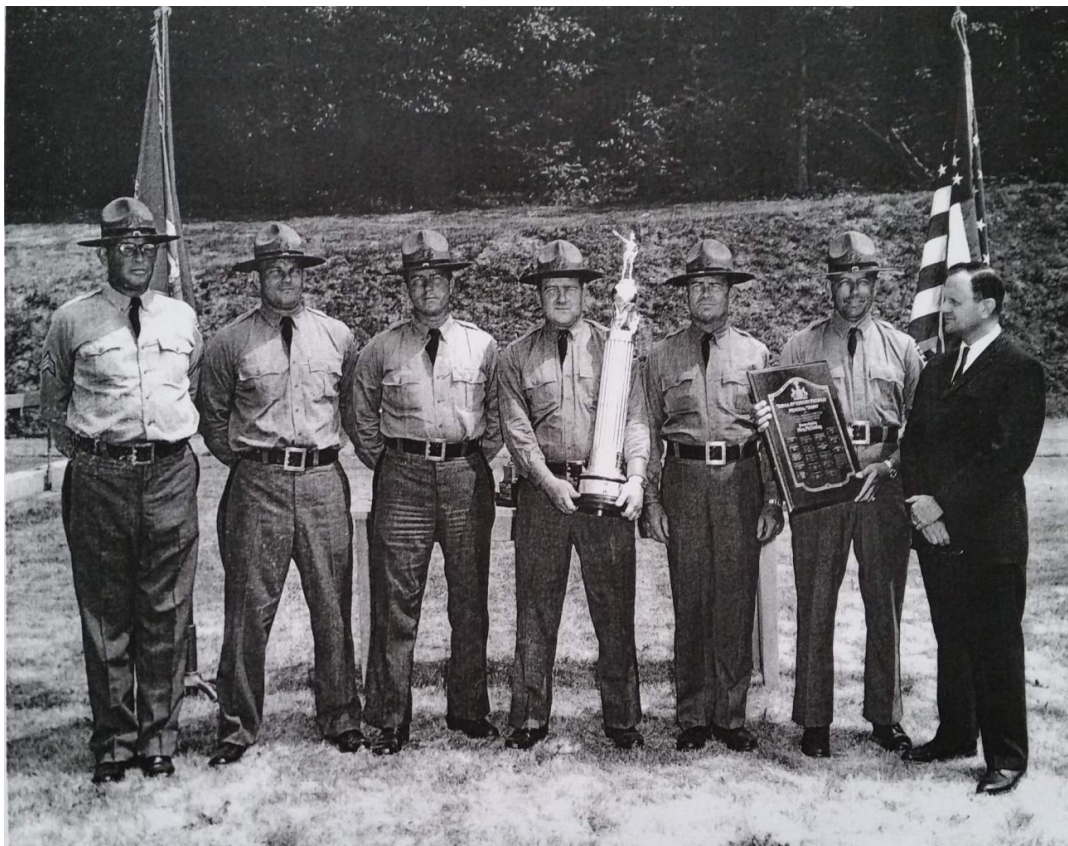
This year was the 65th anniversary of the Walt Wise match with 73 shooters attending. Next year, we hope to be back on the rise.



Walter Wise Memorial Police Pistol Match

Brief History

The match originated back in 1959. Walter A. Wise, a Sergeant with the Pennsylvania State Police, was instrumental in organizing and getting the match started. The matches were held at the 60-position covered, outdoor Bullseye pistol range at HH&A where Walt was a member.



***PA State Police Pistol Team (date unknown)
L to R - Walt Wise, Joe Vrabel, Richard Courson, Gene Szanca, Bill Eiker, Carlo Lonardi, and
PSP Commissioner E. Wilson Purdue***

Walt served as the Match Director from 1959 through 1984. He was a great promoter, and the match was regarded as one not to miss. During these early years, the shooting sports were very popular, and the match was widely attended by some of the best Police Pistol Teams of those times. Needless to say, the competition was fierce. Some of the shooting records set back then still stand today.

Over the years, the match has gone through numerous name changes:

- West Hanover Lions Club Pistol Match (1959 – 1969)
- Harrisburg Hunters & Anglers Police Pistol Match (1970 – 1981)
- Walter A. Wise Police Pistol Match (1982 – 1983)
- Harrisburg Hunters & Anglers Police Pistol Match (1984 – 1985)
- Walter Wise Memorial Police Pistol Match (1986 – Present)

In addition to running the matches for many years, Walt was also very active in the leadership at HH&A, serving as its President for four years, on the Board of Directors for five years, and as the Newsletter Editor for one year. He was also the Team Captain for HH&A's State Pistol Team for six years.

Sadly, Walt passed away in January of 1985. In 1986, the match was renamed as the Walter Wise Memorial Police Pistol Match to honor Walt for his many years of service and leadership.

Kay Bischof took the helm as Match Director in 1998, and thanks to her excellent leadership and direction for 25 years straight, we are proud to say that Walt's matches have continued to go strong!



Kay Bischof, Walt Wise Match Director, 1998-2022

However, Kay decided to step down as Match Director, after completion of the 2022 match, and take it easy for a while. We owe Kay a great deal of gratitude for the outstanding job she has done over the years, and wish her the very best!

Note: A special, cake-cutting ceremony was held at the clubhouse at lunchtime on Saturday, September 16, 2023 for Kay Bischof. Kay was honored to thank her for her 25 years of outstanding service (1998-2022) as the Match Director for the Walt Wise match. Kay's name was added to a plaque that the club maintains to honor those who have given so much in support of the club's pistol competitions, she also received a Certificate of Recognition for her 25 years of service, and we all wished her the very best in her retirement. The ceremony was a big surprise for Kay, and it was very emotional for her and all of her long-time friends who were present as well.

It will certainly be hard to fill Kay's shoes, but Marianne Corl and Jen Montefour stepped up to serve as co-Match Directors of the Walt Wise Match starting with the 2023 match, and we are very happy to report that their 2023 and 2024 matches were a resounding success! They look forward to keeping this prestigious match going strong in the future, and will be in communication with you again in the coming months, asking for feedback so that we may continue to improve the event.

Match Information

The Walt Wise Match is a Bullseye Pistol match which is shot, standing without support using a one hand grip, at Police-L turning targets set at 25 yards.

The course of fire includes slow fire, timed fire, and rapid fire, and both rim fire and center fire handguns (semi-autos and revolvers, with iron-sights or red dots) may be used.

Due to the number of shooters participating, two relays of rim fire matches are held in the morning and two relays of center fire matches are held in the afternoon both days. Also thrown into the mix is a Commemorative Revolver Match, and 2-Person and 4-Person Team Matches.



Shooter Collage

Team trophies are awarded to the 4-Person Team Grand Winner, and to the 1st Place and 2nd Place Team winners in Lewis Classes A and B for both the Rim Fire and Center Fire Team Matches.

We pay cash awards to the winners of the following:

- Top 10 Places in Lewis Class A, B, and C in each of the 23 Individual Matches and Aggregates
- 2-Person Teams on both Saturday and Sunday
- Commemorative Revolver Match
- High Civilian
- High Police
- High Service

- High Woman
- High Junior (age 20 and under - no cash - Trophy and Certificate of Achievement only)
- High Senior (age 60-69)
- High Grand Senior (age 70-79)
- High Super Senior (age 79 and higher)

The Lewis Classification System is used to determine the awards, so all shooters have a fair chance to win something.

As mentioned earlier, the Walt Wise match is held annually on Saturday and Sunday of the 3rd weekend in September, with Relay 1 starting at 9:00 a.m. each day. Advanced registration is highly recommended to reserve a spot on the line. The match is open to the public. Please join us if you can. Bring some shooting friends with you. It's a really fun match - don't miss it!

Please visit our web site for details on registration, cost, course of fire, standing records, etc. at <https://www.harrisburghunters.org/waltwise>.

Breakfast and lunch are served both days at the clubhouse, and a Sportsman's Yard Sale is held on Saturday morning concurrent with the match.

Hotels are located close by, and camping (without hookups) is available on the club grounds.

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