

## Steel Challenge Stage: Five To Go

Steel Challenge is the drag race of the shooting sports focusing on the delicate balance between speed and accuracy. In order to place well, you have to shoot all eight stages well or your competition will. In order to be proficient on all stages I am starting a stage breakdown series focusing on some tips and helpful hints on how to maximize your performance in your next match.

Let's start by examining The Steel Challenge Stage Five To Go, arguably one of the slower and more methodical stages. So, what is the fastest order for this stage? The most popular and accepted option as we are looking down range and is shot 1-2-3-4-Stop Plate. This pattern does not differ for most with the type of division being shot; when shooting any gun from the low ready or from the holster the order is the same.

Here are some tips to be successful on this stage:

Tip #1: I prefer to have my index setup on Plate #4. I test this by pointing my pistol straight out and it will show me where the gun is pointed. I will also hold a rifle like a pistol and do the same check. This allows my body to wind up on my first shot and when I transition the gun fast, the height of the gun does not change.

Tip#2: For those who are starting at the low ready, take a few 'sight picture' repetitions to the first plate to make sure when you move the gun up the dot or front sight is on the middle of the target. This allows you to get the gun up fast and get a solid first shot.

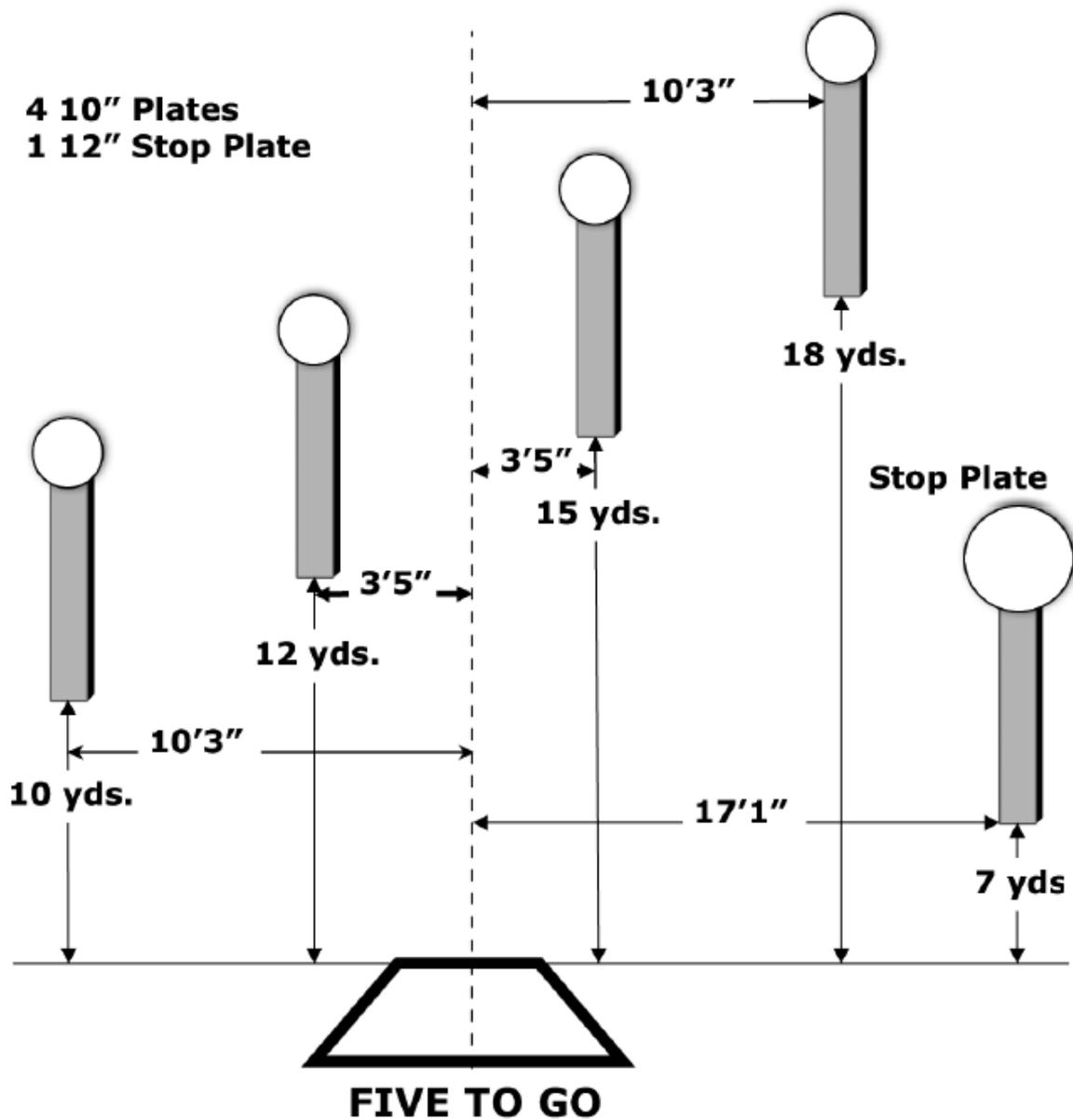
Tip#3: The most missed plate on this stage is plate #4, make sure you see the dot or front sight on this target as you pull the trigger. This will make sure you get a solid hit before moving to the stop plate.

Tip#4: Keep the gun moving. You need to slow the gun down enough to get an acceptable sight picture and then take your shot. On the first couple of plates, a brief slowing down of the gun will be all that is required to get an acceptable hit. Practice this in your next range session.

Tip#5: Just because the first four plates are the same size, does not mean they look the same when you are standing in the shooters box and they require a different sight picture. Plate #1 visually looks to be 2-3X the size of Plate #4. As we know from shooting, it takes a little bit longer to get a solid hit on a further or smaller plate compared to one closer up or bigger. Consider this as you transition the gun and pulling the trigger.

Tip #6: Drive your lower body to the stop plate. Practicing your transition to the stop plate will help ensure you are on the stop plate and your sight/dot will be where you expect it to be. For most of us, driving at the knees will payoff on the timer.

Tip #7: Follow through on the stop plate. The concept of follow through when shooting in steel challenge on a stop plate means as you drive the gun hard to the stop plate, stop the gun on the stop plate as you are pressing the trigger. I advise students to count "One Mississippi" with the gun on the plate. This helps reinforce the concept of "calling shots".



Keeps these tips in mind the next time you step into the box in practice or in a match and watch your times fall! Stay tuned for more analysis of the other Steel Challenge Stages.

See you out on the range soon!

Steve