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Smith & Wesson Sets The Stage With First Ever IDPA Back Up Gun Nationals

*Company Hosts Inaugural Event November 14-16th
Smith & Wesson Employee Shooting Sports Center*

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. (**November 14, 2013**) --- Smith & Wesson Corp. announced that with today's historic first shot of the International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA) Back Up Gun (BUG) Nationals, the stage has been set for what many believe will usher in a new chapter in competitions for concealable firearms. Deemed the BUG Nationals for its emphasis on small frame defensive semi-automatic pistols and revolvers, this unprecedented match has been developed through the combined efforts of the IDPA and Smith & Wesson. With over 200 of the industry's top professional shooters descending upon the Smith & Wesson Employee Shooting Sports Center, this year's inaugural BUG Nationals will likely set the standards for future defensive style competitions regarding concealable handguns at IDPA sanctioned matches.

"The concept of the BUG Nationals was designed in many ways to help bring IDPA competitions back to their roots," said Mario Pasantes, Senior V.P. of Marketing and Global Professional and International Sales for Smith & Wesson. "Historically, the IDPA has always sought to help firearm owners hone their defensive skills through the use of competition. Now, with the BUG Nationals, the IDPA is in a better position to recognize the growing trend of concealable firearm purchases and provide us with a format that will help set standards regarding future matches while at the same time continuing to promote responsible training in an enjoyable, challenging manner."

Encompassing three days of action packed competition across 13 challenging stages of fire, this year's inaugural match is drawing support from companies across the industry. Companies have raced to lend their support for this one-of-a-kind match, and competitors have worked against the clock to familiarize themselves with the new rules while polishing skills with their favorite back up guns.

At this year's BUG Nationals, competitors will be split into two main divisions – revolvers or semi-automatic pistols – all with a barrel restriction of 3 inches or less. Normal classification of shooters will still exist, but each competitor will be limited to a five-round string of fire, narrowing the gap between pistol and revolver capacity. Another changeup will feature competitors beginning each stage of fire at the low ready or with firearms positioned in sanctioned safe areas. Competitors will not be permitted to have additional sighting capabilities on their competition guns. Each shooter will therefore cope with the challenges of a shortened sight radius.

"The anticipation and buzz concerning this year's BUG Nationals has been both exciting and contagious for everyone within the IDPA," said Joyce Wilson, Executive Director for the IDPA. "When Smith & Wesson first approached us with the idea to host a back up gun match, we knew it had great potential. This year's inaugural match will help set new requirements in which other IDPA matches can be sanctioned, essentially making future back up gun matches only limited by the creativity of the people involved."

Wilson continued, “For me personally, one of the most exciting things about this match is the commentary I’ve heard from several of the top competitors. Many are cautious about exchanging their standard competition gun for a small frame revolver or pistol. I think this deviation from the norm will certainly help to level the playing field while also adding a new sense of competition to the mix.”

As competitors work to improve their scores, a reduced sight radius and magazine capacity won’t be the only challenges awaiting them in Springfield, Mass. Held on the same grounds as the hallowed IDPA Indoor Winter Nationals, this year’s BUG match is designed to push competitors out of their comfort zones. During the BUG Nationals, competitors will cope with changes in light conditions, varying target distances, pickup gun stages featuring designated Smith & Wesson firearms and challenging course setups, each designed to simulate common self-defense shooting scenarios.

Support for this year’s BUG Nationals includes a number of sponsors: Brownells®, Harris Publications, Apex Tactical Specialties, Glock®, Michigan Ammo® Company, the National Shooting Sports Foundation®, Panteao Productions, the Self Defense Association, SIG SAUER®, Springfield Armory®, and Wilson Combat®.

For more information on IDPA, the inaugural Smith & Wesson IDPA Back Up Gun Nationals or to join the more than 22,000 members competing each week all across America, visit www.IDPA.com.

About Smith & Wesson

Smith & Wesson Holding Corporation (NASDAQ Global Select: SWHC) is a U.S.-based leader in firearm manufacturing and design, delivering a broad portfolio of quality firearms, related products and training to the consumer, law enforcement, and military markets. The company's brands include Smith & Wesson®, M&P® and Thompson/Center Arms™. Smith & Wesson facilities are located in Massachusetts and Maine. For more information on Smith & Wesson, call (800) 331-0852 or log on to www.smith-wesson.com.