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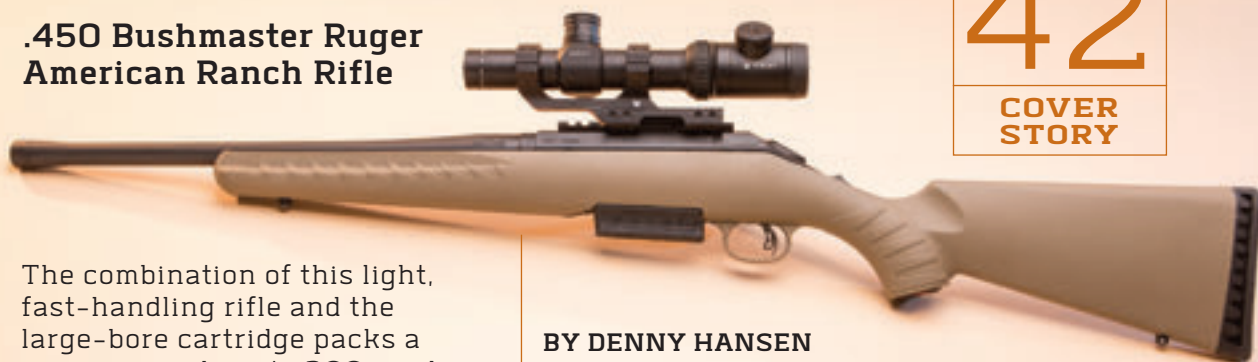
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BY DENNY HANSEN

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National Concealed Carry: A Good Idea?

TO begin with, I agree with most of President Trump's stated positions on the Second Amendment. I say "most," because one—which on the surface may look like the light at the end of the tunnel—may actually be an oncoming train.

What I'm talking about is national reciprocity for concealed carry permits, and I'm totally against the idea.

Why am I against national concealed carry? To begin with, who knows what the law might entail and what amendments would be added?

"But," you say, "a concealed carry permit would be just like a driver's license!" Actually no, it would not.

Driver's licenses are an interstate compact, or an agreement between states and not covered by Federal law. The exception is a Commercial Driver's License (CDL), which does carry Federal restrictions.

In my home state of Arizona, my concealed weapon permit is currently recognized by 37 states. (On a side note, I have little or no desire to travel to the 13 states that do not acknowledge my rights as a citizen.)

Arizona is a "constitutional carry" state. No permit to carry—either concealed or openly—is necessary. Permits are available that allow an individual to carry a concealed weapon, serve as a prima facie proof of a background check so an NICS check is not necessary when purchasing a firearm, and a few other "bennies."

But what if a national concealed-carry permit would accept the California model of "need to show cause" to obtain a permit? Also in some locales, owning a jewelry store or carrying cash is enough to show "need," but saying you want a permit for self-defense is not justified. Such laws place loot before life, and there is no guarantee that a new Federal law would not encompass at least some of them.

In my opinion, dot gov is already too large, and I don't want their fingers anywhere near my firearms or my God-given right to possess/carry them, and adapting a national permit allows federal control where it doesn't belong.

Trump promised to "drain the swamp." Let's hope he doesn't add any more putrid water to the swamp with unnecessary laws.

Until next time, stay low and watch your back. ☹

Denny Hansen

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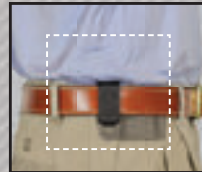
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SOLID GOLD

I suspect you and your staff don't need me to tell you that your December issue is one of the best you've produced. From *Briefing Room* to *Training and Tactics*, it's solid gold.

I'm plenty computer and social media savvy, having worked in high tech for decades, but my chosen download for S.W.A.T. is still the print magazine. I'm just too stubborn to let my whole life revolve around a cell phone.

I burned through the December issue like an October grass fire on a windy day. After *Briefing Room*, I jumped to the cover article, *Bolt-Action Evolution*, maybe out of loyalty, being an MPA BA owner. The sleeper article to my eyes was Dave Bahde's *Practical Precision*—it's refreshing to not see the same old training class review (looks at bank balance to see how long it would



take to save up for admission to Deliberate Dynamics' class...). Justin Dyal's *Hot Trends vs Cold Facts* was another example of how S.W.A.T. routinely cuts through the BS by bringing intelligent, reasoned, expert perspective to important topics. The whole issue was full of great coverage—kudos! What a way to close out the year.

I can only hope that some undecided voters read *Enemy at the Gate* and realized that this election isn't only about gun control; it's about the core of our value systems.

Amid the chaos of the bizarre election, it was easy to feel that people like us are in the minority, but I don't buy it. I think those who give a damn showed up and voted so those "liberties we can't do without" didn't disappear. Just think back to 9/11 and remember who the frightened masses looked to for secu-

rity—it sure as hell was not those who want gun control.

Regardless of who won the election, we always need to be ready to strap our boots down tight and dig our heels in. As *Briefing Room* pointed out, this is no time to make excuses.

Thanks for speaking for us all.

J. McCoy, email

Thank you for the kind words and feedback.

What will happen between now and the mid-term elections is anyone's guess, but the fact remains that those who would like to strip us of our God-given rights will not go away. Even if pro-Constitution justices are appointed to the Supreme Court, it is only cause for cautious celebration.

RESPONSE FROM LATVIA

I'm contacting you in response to Mr. Mueller's comment in the December *Mail Room*: "the entire piece was a bunch of BS, and I believe this is an-

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other case of a magazine pandering to its advertisers. There is no way an AK rifle is capable of sub minute-of-angle accuracy."

It is quite bold to make such a categorical statement about something one has not experienced/tested himself. And while blogs on the Internet are sources of information, they are not 100% reliable. One must approach blogs with a great deal of caution and at least some personal hands-on knowledge of the subject. Judging from Mr. Mueller's other comments, my impression is that he has close to zero experience with AK rifles.

Such words could be warranted from a person who has extensive knowledge and practical experience with a wide selection of AK rifles produced in many different countries, in different environments (shooting ranges, various tactical training and combat deployments, armorer's work, etc) and has come to the conclusion from his personal experience that the AK is a worthless piece of war engineering. If that were the case, the AK would not be the most produced

small arm on the planet.

I have shot both weapon platforms, and both have advantages and disadvantages. The M16/M4 offers better accuracy due to its design, but AK accuracy can be improved to a certain point depending on what tuning is done to it. However, for combat I would choose the AK platform for its reliability. That being said, I would not call the AR platform a bad weapon because it is not, especially the new versions with short-stroke gas piston systems installed over the direct impingement system.

But this is my personal preference due to my very fundamental experience with the AK. I was introduced to it when I was ten years old. In the Soviet Union, boys that age volunteered for military training, which included fieldstripping the AK, doing obstacle courses, firefighting, first aid, and NBC training. Besides that, it was mandatory for every 17-year-old boy and girl in the Soviet Union not only to field strip an AK, but also to fire it. It was done to prepare boys for mandatory service in the military and to prepare the popu-

lation for the possibility of all-out war with, at the time, NATO and the U.S. Invading the Soviet Union would have been a catastrophe, as everybody from ages 16 to 70 could handle an AK.

I am not saying the AK is a jam-proof firearm. It is not, but to a far lesser degree than the AR. In my 26+ years of experience, I have had it jam twice, and that was not due to the rifle's quality or design, but due to old surplus ammo and extremely harsh operating environments.

R. Zelcs, Latvia

Thank you for taking the time to contact us and share with our readers your extensive experience with the AK platform. It is rewarding to know that S.W.A.T. is so widely read, including among our NATO allies. ☺

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Meco's Masterpieces

While searching for a holster for a very unusual handgun a few years ago, I came across Meco Pocket Holsters, one of a few leather houses that offered a scabbard for my rare and limited-production firearm. In other words, Meco was abreast of the latest gun-world offerings, even those that were quite hard to find.

Meco was founded eight years ago by Robert Locke, a retired federal employee. He and his son Tim Anderson shared a passion for creating the finest leather pocket holsters for the smaller concealable handguns that are so popular today.

Locke was mentored by master craftsman R.J. Hedley of Florida, whose influence is apparent in the finished Meco offerings. Father and son were very close and Robert's enthusiasm for his work was contagious. Unfortunately, Mr. Locke passed away suddenly last September, but Tim inherited the San Antonio shop and continues his father's legacy with work that is indistinguishable from his Dad's.

Many Texans have a degree of Spanish ancestry, and the Lockes have a lot in their family background. Meco is derived from "mijo," which means "my son" in Spanish. When Robert Locke was growing up, he acquired the nickname "meco," a slight alteration of "mijo."



Meco Paddle Holster and magazine pouch holding Bowie Tactical Glock 43 and six-round magazine with +2 magazine extension.

Tim's father always demanded Grade A leather. Tim is equally selective and continues to acquire only the best. Tim believes that "it is plainly evident in the end product."

Leather sides are purchased from Wickett & Craig tannery, well known for their quality leather since 1867. In addition, Tim lines his leather holsters

with pigskin. Its softness and smoothness aid in the draw and protect the handgun's finish. With paddle holsters, he uses a piece of Kydex® molded into the bend where the holster slides over the belt. The Kydex is glued and sewn between the two pieces of leather. It stiffens the leather.

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tity of leather, wet molds them to the gun and lets them dry, he is ready to join the layers of leather together by gluing them with contact cement. Everything is sewn together on an industrial sewing machine using Number 277 bonded Nylon thread.

Meco also responds to customer preferences and will use rivets if the customer wants them.

Edges are burnished and, if requested, dyed per the customer's order. The holster is then sealed to protect it from moisture and contaminants. Once dry, the scabbard receives a spray shine that further augments leather protection.

My rig for my Glock 43 pistol is simply referred to as the "Paddle Holster." It weighs close to five ounces and its accompanying magazine pouch comes in at a hair under three ounces, lighter than many Kydex holsters in my inventory.

It's a strong-side, straight-drop affair with a counter-balancing pendulum-like paddle that extends deeply down one's waist and over time will mold itself to one's anatomy.

Its color may be described as bone or blond and it has that wonderful fresh leather smell. The only scents that compare to it are fresh-cut firewood and rich pipe tobacco.

Although I specified straight drop, Tim will give the holster a 15- to 20-degree cant or adjust it for crossdraw if so desired. Just because the option is not on his website doesn't mean he cannot or will not do it.

Fit is so snug that it takes a fair number of draws to break in. Retention is excellent. It is advisable to use a G43 magazine with a two-round extension base pad with the pouch. The pouch is deep and swallows the six-round tubes. Though not as concealable as an IWB holster, this rig rides very close to the body and, with its generously sized paddle and my light pistol, I hardly know it's on.

For care and preservation, Tim recommends saddle soap with a damp cloth for cleaning, mink oil to keep the leather pliable, and removing the firearm from the scabbard overnight to let the leather breathe. ©

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Crimes Against Children

One of the most common questions I received during my cop-shop career was also one of the most unsettling: How do I protect my kids from sexual abusers?

The answers might surprise you. There are all the standard “rules” you can research about child safety, but I’ll share a few things most of the writers can’t (or won’t) share. To do so, let’s dive with both eyes open into one of the slimiest, most unthinkable cesspools of deviant human behavior to discuss ideas for protecting your child against sex crimes.

The stereotypical child predator is a creepy guy wearing a trench coat and sitting in a clapped-out old van near the schoolyard, a bag of treats on his lap and a roll of duct tape in the passenger seat. Such people actually exist in nearly every community, and cops are always on the lookout for such perverts.

Children are easy to overpower and simple to trick using even a lame ruse, which is why child-snatchers are so dangerous. When they eventually choose to elevate their obsession to the actual kidnapping of a child, they are generally successful. Considering it takes only seconds to lure or force a child into a vehicle or secluded area, vigilance on the part of the entire community is the first line of defense.

“If you see something, say something!” doesn’t only apply to terrorism. In fact, even if you live in Pig Knuckle Junction, Alabama, it is far more likely that a potential child predator is currently living in your area rather than a cell of Middle Eastern terrorists. That’s why nosy neighbors, concerned citizens, attentive school employees, and other adults are so important in thwarting the activities of those who prey on children.

However, for all the justified press and nightmares generated by the textbook boogeyman sitting in his van, there is a far more common and insidious type of suspect: somebody you know.

For the few newsworthy “stranger-danger” cases I’ve been a part of, there were literally dozens of others where stepdads, real fathers, neighbors, Sunday school leaders, live-in boyfriends, uncles, teachers, and countless others did some incredibly horrific things to kids. In the interest of fairness, I’ll include females as perpetrators, but in the end, it’s usually guys who can’t keep their deviant sexual urges toward kids in check.

The real untold secret about child predators is that statistically speaking, strangers aren’t an overwhelming danger to kids, but your circle of acquaintances, friends, and even

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family certainly are. Since we can't and shouldn't keep our children from interacting with people on a daily basis, we need to focus on three other effective lines of defense: raising strong kids, maintaining a safe environment, and complete destruction of your denial mechanism.

As a parent, your goal should be to raise kids who are self-confident enough to draw boundaries about their own bodies and tell you if the boundaries are crossed. Unfortunately, it is very common for even outgoing and self-assured kids to hide victimization, so it is incumbent that parents take further measures.

To maintain a safe environment, take a hard look at your own lifestyle. Kids are often placed in the care of someone the parent either doesn't know or knows minimally. This is somewhat unavoidable when taking a child to daycare, after-school activities, or other such places, but it is totally inexcusable when it involves a parent who entrusts significant unsupervised child-care responsibilities to someone they've only known a short time.

This is why "mom's live-in boyfriend" and "next-door neighbor" appear so often in crime report forms in the "Relationship to Victim" blank.

You don't have to hire a cadre of investigators to verify the intentions of the friendly school crossing guard, but you need to consider who has access to your kids and what you know about those people. The level of knowledge certainly depends on the age of the children and the circumstances, but simply accepting people at face value, especially because it is convenient, is utterly foolish.

The third line of defense, suspending disbelief, is probably the most controversial yet most important piece of the puzzle. I have seen so many cases where a spouse, caregiver, or other person in proximity to the abuse knew something was very wrong, but simply explained it away because "He's not the type" or "The teacher would never do that!" or "My kid would tell me if something was going on."

Wrong.

We cannot go through life assuming the worst of our spouses, teachers, friends, family, ministers, scout lead-

ers, and others who interact with our kids every day. But if anything piques your concern about behavior toward a child, don't ignore those inner alarms or assume you are just being paranoid. Instead, redouble your efforts to determine the source of your concerns.

Ask the child in an appropriate manner, have a meeting with someone in charge, discuss the situation with a thoughtful friend, talk to the police, or do whatever you think is proper for the circumstances. Above all, do not ignore that little voice, because if you're wrong, you've now become a part of the abuse.

Most people don't even want to think about these crimes, but hiding your head in the sand isn't the answer. The stakes are just too high to believe "It can't happen to my kid." ©

Brent T. Wheat is a former SWAT officer, canine handler, detective, and patrol supervisor who retired after a 30-year law enforcement career. Brent is the publisher of WildIndiana Magazine, a regionally focused outdoor magazine. He can be reached at btwheat@wildindiana.com.

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Shomer-Tec Food Procurement Survival Kit

Shomer-Tec prides itself on offering a unique line of military and law enforcement products, along with spy and revenge products. Yes, revenge products. A quick look at their website and the picture becomes clear: they offer some useful stuff plus some possibly gimmicky items.

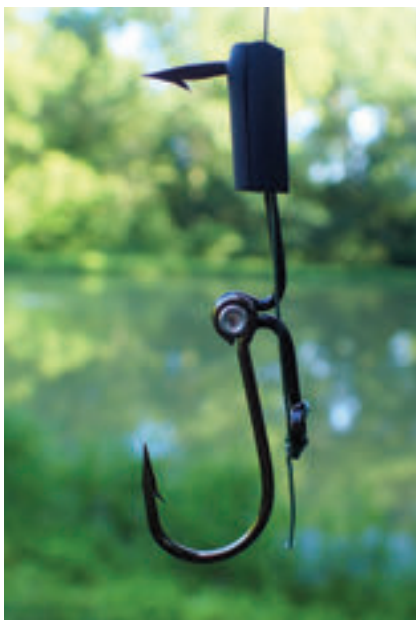
One kit I had been curious about was the Food Procurement Survival Kit, which revolves around two unique dual-action fishhooks that are designed to catch prey and lock them in, preventing them from escaping.

Although they are obviously fishhooks, they can be used on land to catch small game as well as in the water for fishing. Included in the kit is a two-piece trigger system for twitch-up traps. These two small titanium pieces are not only super-lightweight, but can be used in water without fear of corrosion.

Additionally, the kit includes 25 feet of 200-pound breaking strength Kevlar survival cord (blue), which can be untwisted and tied into 75 feet of



Shomer-Tec Food Procurement Survival Kit contains survival fishhooks and a two-piece trap trigger system, along with Kevlar cordage intended to provide the survivor with a good head start in securing much-needed calories.



Hook set up for fishing. When hook is baited and fish hooked on, two hooks are meant to close on fish and trap it.

67-pound breaking strength (great for traps and utility). For fishing, Shomer-Tec includes 75 feet of 80-pound breaking strength Kevlar Trip Line (green). The kit comes packaged in a small clear polypropylene container measuring 2.75 x 3.75 x 0.75 inches. Instructions are included, and the overall weight of the kit is 1.5 ounces.

THE POND

My buddy tested the kit in Georgia in his pond that has catfish, bream, and large-mouth bass. He had caught fish there many times, so this would be a good test.

The dual-action fishhooks were attached to the 80-pound test Trip Line and baited. I watched my friend repeatedly try to catch something in the pond, but every time he withdrew the line, the dual hook mechanism was in the closed position. This wasn't a fish tank, so it was hard to see if the hook



Baited hook would close when retrieved from the water. Hook would close easily when underwater, rendering both hooks useless.

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was closing only when bringing the line out of the water or worse, if it was happening while casting or in the water.

If the latter were true, it would suggest the hooks were closing when they were needed the most and would render the whole design useless, because the hooks would not be utilized.

The task was repeated to ensure the line wasn't getting caught on debris or any underwater growth, but the results remained the same. The hooks were closed and the bait was still on the hook.

Even if the hooks came into contact with debris or growth, it would be something that could happen in any situation where a person was fishing for recreation or survival. But a regular hook would not suffer this type of failure from normal use because it has no moving parts. This is one of those situations where simple is better and less is more. Why try to reinvent the wheel?

EPIC FAILURE

Moving on to the rest of the kit, I used the Kevlar line in conjunction with the two-piece trap trigger system on a twitch-up trap I made in the woods. Although trapping is illegal in most states, this was on my buddy's land and set up for testing purposes only. I found a small green sapling that had enough bend to be used as the engine for the trap.

There are many ways to make and set up a twitch-up trap. This was just a basic set up using the dual-action hooks rather than a noose made from cord.

The two titanium pieces simulate what is usually made from two opposing pieces of wood called an L7, where the two pieces fit into each other and are held by extreme tension from the engine (sapling), with a noose attached to the top piece and sapling. When the animal gets caught in the noose, it separates the L7 and sends the top portion up, strangling the animal.

The benefit of having these two pieces already available is time. No time or calories are spent looking for the right pieces of wood and carving the L7 parts. All the time and energy can be spent on finding the right place to set up the trap, such as on a small-game trail or outside a squirrel hole.

The bottom piece of the trap part needs to be secured to a wooden peg in the ground. A simple tent-style peg



Two-piece titanium trigger set is a unique portable design that saves survivor from having to make more things. With a cord noose, this would be a great option and safer for the user to set up.

will do. It needs to be about six to seven inches long and pounded into the ground at an angle facing away from the tension of the sapling. This keeps it more securely in the ground.

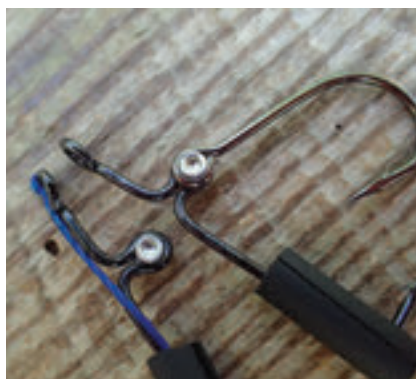
The top trigger piece is the one with two holes. One is for attaching it to the sapling, and the bottom hole is for attaching the hook or conventional cord noose. I used the supplied blue Kev-

lar cord for the twitch-up trap. A little trial and error gets the parts locking together and the hook dangling at the correct height.

When setting up a conventional twitch-up trap, there is a high probability the trap will disengage and could whack the person in the face, just like setting up a deadfall trap comes with a chance of not getting it the first time

RIGHT: Bottom hook separated from mechanism when trap was triggered. Engine's force seemed too great for the hook attachment.

BELOW: As trap was triggered, hook attachment failed. Author felt a single hook or conventional noose would work better in this scenario.



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and smashing the hand a bit. But using the hooks instead of the cord noose makes it even more dangerous, because if the sapling doesn't smack you, the hooks will snag you and ruin your day.

The final test came when the trap was ready to be triggered, just to see if the hooks would close and how the two pieces would disengage. When the bottom hook was tapped with a stick, the pieces came apart smoothly and with great force, as expected. Unfortunately, the hook came apart with the force of the trap and was flung into the woods, never to be found. Epic failure.

The hook came apart after the first time the trap was triggered, but I wonder if it would have done so if there had been an animal on the hook? Either way, the hook fastening point may not have been strong enough to hold the weight of a rabbit or squirrel, let alone the force of the empty hook being triggered.

CONCLUSION

Primitive cultures around the world have managed with the simple fish-hook design up through the present day, and the design hasn't changed much, just the materials and sizes available.

Survival in general is a short-term ordeal, not long term. Food isn't necessary for survival until approaching day 30, so depending on a kit to get your food should be weighed against bringing something else more important that works, such as a way to purify water.

Shomer-Tec has a great idea with the two-piece titanium trap trigger set but should focus on making the product work before selling it. I look forward to trying more Shomer-Tec products, but this one simply didn't make the grade. ☹

Reuben Bolieu is an adventurer, writer, photographer, and survival instructor for Randall's Adventure & Training. He has spent most of his life hiking and backpacking through the wildernesses of the world. A lifetime student of survival, he has studied primitive survival techniques from all over the world.

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WET-WORK *WONDER*

Beretta 71

By Justin Dyal

Every now and then, surplus importers temporarily flood dealers' shelves with an undeniable must-have. This is often most obvious in retrospect, as in when shooters are jabbering away ten years later and lament not picking up one of the "deal ABCs" when they were everywhere "for only 'XYZ' dollars!"

This is one of those stories, except I am giving you fair warning to strike while the iron is hot. A sizable quantity of Beretta 71s recently made land-fall stateside. They are absolutely irresistible and priced to move.

The Beretta 71 was a fairly common plinker in the 1950s and well regarded. The Model 71 is a fixed-barrel, open-slide blowback .22 Long Rifle pistol. The little 17-ounce Italian single-action autos dried up when the Gun Control Act of 1968 made little guns into "bad guns" and ceased importation of many small handgun models. The 71 essentially became a secondhand-market curiosity for Beretta fans.



ABOVE: Beretta 71 is a traditional single-action with 1911-style thumb safety. Triggers broke at just over four pounds.

LEFT: Even with its six-inch pipe in place, Beretta 71 had no problems ringing RSR steel target out to 70 yards, and brought impish grins to all involved.

RIGHT: Faux pipe blocks sight picture but hitting at plinking distance remains simple. Dab of paint helps separate front sight from the clutter.

BELOW: "Suppressed" and custom 71s next to Glock 17 for size comparison.



I was recently doing some business with Guerrilla Armament, a very savvy gun and gear store near Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, and happened to see a little auto all lonely on the bottom shelf. I initially looked right past it because it had one of those goofy fake “suppressors” on it, but something made me look again. On second glance, I realized it was a Beretta rimfire.

Okay, I was then at least curious but not exactly interested. The pistol got dragged out of the case and examined. I cycled the slide a time or two, and the incredibly smooth action set off bells and whistles in my head.

As much as I didn’t “need” a .22, especially one with a six-inch pipe hanging off the front, I immediately realized this was a chance to grab a blued steel .22 made “like they used to” at a price under the soulless alloy plinkers of today. Haggling commenced.

WHISPERS AND RUMORS

Legend has it that the little Beretta 71s were issued by, and popular with, the Israeli Mossad. Gunlore typically ascribes the shadowy spy service using suppressed 71s to X out any

number of terrorists, including those involved in the Munich Olympic murders.

Unattributed rumor has it the threaded-barrel 71s that have been imported with the pseudo cans might even be Israeli surplus. Who knows? I’m sure someone does, but I’m happy with the possibility rather than an exact provenance. Better a possible spy gun than a certain pedigree to the Lithuanian Girl Scouts.

The guys at Guerrilla Armament told me the pipes were relatively easily removed, in most cases with the threads intact and ready to get back to work. The Italian .22 uses a 1/2x20 thread pitch, while most rimfire suppressors use 1/2x28. A simple thread adapter twists right over to solve the problem and can be picked up for minimal cost for those looking to go quiet on set.

OFF TO THE RANGE

I left the pipe in place and took the spy gun out to the range. With the pipe on, the pistol weighs 34 ounces and essentially has a buntline barrel at nine inches. In handling, it balances well and compares favorably in overall length and weight to the famed six-inch K22 Smith & Wesson target revolver.

The sights are obscured, much like with a real suppressor. The shooter can get sight alignment and then cover the target, relying on memory’s mental picture to place the shot as one method. The other is to just use the long barrel and sight down and over it much like with a shotgun. Both



LEFT: Guerrilla Armament removed pipe and cut barrel back behind the threads to 3.2 inches on this surplus 71.

BELOW, LEFT: .65-inch, 25-yard group with Guerrilla Armament 71. Little pocket pistol shoots like a full-size target auto.

BELOW: Surplus, yes, but 71s are old-school blued steel and build quality at bargain prices.



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methods met my plinking needs with complete satisfaction.

One of my go-to non-scientific measures of precision is how well I can hit a nearly index-card-size 3x6-inch steel target at distance. That target never had a chance inside 15 yards. Stepping back to 20, the tally was consistently six hits per eight-round magazine. At ten yards, I had no issues keeping Winchester M22 inside the center half-inch “white” of an EZ2C bullseye by sighting down the pipe. The fun factor was almost embarrassingly high.

On a later trip to a closed facility that caters to government clients, the Beretta came out at lunch for show and tell. A line formed among some seriously experienced shooters to try the spy gun. All had the little grin that seems reserved for cool plinking guns as they rang an RSR Steel Silhouette out to 70 yards with the open-top rimfire.

As much as I had mentally snickered at the fake can on the Beretta, I have to admit I was pretty taken with it after shooting. The muzzle-heavy auto hangs on target very well and gives the gun a curious slight totter on the negligible recoil as the momentum transfers to the steel pipe. It’s almost impossible not to like.

The Beretta cycled standard- and high-velocity loads without complaint. CCI Quiet .22 didn’t quite cycle the slide. Aguila Colibri didn’t budge the slide but were a hoot to fire in the backyard at stale fruit, taking the whole pretend suppressor thing to a convincing level of silence. The open-top action works so slickly that manually cycling rounds in this manner is too easy.

CUSTOM WORK

The Guerrilla Armament crew had shown me one of the guns they had cut back behind the threads and recrowned, and it was very slick with a unique look to it. The concept kind of got under my saddle and I decided to pick up a second gun and have them give it the same treatment.

They chopped the barrel to 3.2 inches, nearly flush with the slide, and recrowned it. The result looks sharp and handles well. The newly cut and crowned barrel shot like a champ, piling up a 25-yard group with CCI Standard Velocity that had the best four in a remarkable .65 inch.

This little pocket pistol has the heart of a match gun. Winchester Subsonic M22 put down 1¼-inch groups. Stepping back to 30 yards, the heavier 45-grain M22s rang my 3x6-inch “truth teller” repeatedly. At right at a pound, the custom 71 is like a J-Frame that you can plink the eyelashes off a gnat with.

My custom 71 fit pretty well into a Galco 1911 Yaqui Slide if I wanted to use it as a trail gun. I can see it just as likely riding in a back pocket with chamber empty (Condition 3) carry.

The .22’s sights are small but well executed, allowing a good sight picture once the pipe is removed. The single-action triggers break crisp after a bit of movement, at 4.2 and 4.5 pounds on my pair.

The eight-shot magazines release via an old-school European button on the bottom of the left grip panel and are a bit of a hassle to load, in the manner of most older rimfire pistols. The thumb safety snicks on and off like a familiar 1911.

GET IT

All the steel bits are old-world polished and precise, and Beretta’s reputation for quality work still stands out on these, though they are many decades old. I suspect that to have a company in the current market make a .22 the way these were made would run into some serious cost—probably well over a grand

I’ll warn you fair and square: these Berettas are keepers and will be one of the more enjoyable handguns in your pile. If you wait, you’ll likely be telling the “one that got away” regret story at the range in a few years, as the current owners hoard their “new favorite” Italian spy .22s and the supply dries up. ©

Justin Dyal retired from the U.S. Marines as a Lt. Colonel with worldwide experience in specialized units. He has taught and been responsible for numerous advanced skills and weapons courses within multiple organizations.



Aguila Colibri hand cycles through Beretta for backyard plinking or pest control.

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Of Guns and Bananas

IN an experiment years ago, five monkeys were confined in an enclosure, in the middle of which stood a stepladder. From the ceiling, and within the monkeys' reach from the top of the ladder, hung a bunch of bananas. Of course the monkeys wasted little time in making a move for the bananas. Unfortunately for them, as soon as they made the effort, the experimenters drenched them with cold water. This unpleasantness was directed at not only the monkeys on the ladder, but at all five of them—even those not currently attempting to reach the bananas.

Naturally, the monkeys' enthusiasm for getting to the bananas was quickly, er, dampened. But it went beyond that. Any of the more stubborn (or perhaps simply dimmer-witted) monkeys who could still not resist the siren song of the tasty fruit, so close

and yet so far, found that the other monkeys were unwilling to wait for the dousing, and instead physically attacked the banana-seeking monkeys in order to spare themselves the cold deluge that would otherwise soon follow.

It did not take long for even the most stubborn (or dimmest) monkey to decide that between the cold water and its cellmates' attacks, there was nothing but hardship to come of trying to get at those bananas.

Next, a monkey was removed from the enclosure and replaced by a new one. The newcomer, not knowing how things worked in this enclosure, predictably made his own attempts to reach the bananas. Had the experimenters forgotten to pay the water bill, it would not have made any difference in the outcome, because no water was needed. The other four monkeys saw

to it that the stranger never got close enough to trigger the hosing down.

After a time, a second monkey was removed and replaced, and again, the newcomer was quick to attempt to reach the forbidden fruit. Again, he was violently thwarted by his fellow monkeys, *including the one who had never experienced a soaking*. When a third monkey was removed and replaced, *this* newcomer was similarly immediately set upon by his fellows when he headed for the ladder, including the two who knew nothing of the cold water.

This was repeated until the last of the five original monkeys had been replaced, so that none of the current residents had ever been sprayed with cold water, and still, the four who had been there for some time would beat the stuffing out of the fifth when he went for the stepladder, *despite none*

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of them having any idea why going for the bananas was wrong. The banana taboo was a rule of their little society, a rule that was sacred simply because "it had always been that way."

All right, so what do monkeys and bananas have to do with American citizens and guns? Simply that we have no room for smugness. Monkeys aren't the only primates who allow themselves to become slaves to social pressures—social pressures based on nothing that those succumbing to them can identify.

The only difference between us and the monkeys on that score is that human intellect has made it possible for some members of our own species to be the ones manipulating social pressure in furtherance of an agenda. And quite often, the agenda is "gun control."

Sometimes the manipulators do not even bother to try to hide their machinations. In 1994, Dr. Mark Rosenberg, director of the Centers for Disease Control's National Center for Injury Control and Prevention, told the *Washington Post*, "We need to

revolutionize the way we look at guns, like what we did with cigarettes. Now it [sic] is dirty, deadly, and banned."

Likewise, former Obama Administration Attorney General Eric Holder actually used the word "brainwash" in describing what needed to be done about Americans' attitude toward guns: "We need to do this every day of the week, and just really brainwash people into thinking about guns in a vastly different way."

And just as the hose worked to turn monkeys into anti-banana crusaders, without the monkeys even knowing why, in the wake of these efforts, much of the American public has come to believe that "gun violence" can be dramatically reduced by the implementation of restrictive gun laws.

They believe that banning so-called "assault weapons" is key, despite such firearms being used in a minuscule proportion of violent crimes. They believe that the answer to terrorism is to empower the government to block gun sales to people on the "terrorist watch list," despite the fact that all acts of terrorism committed in the U.S.

with guns were committed by people not on the list.

They believe that banning rifles chambered for the powerful .50 BMG cartridge is vital to Americans' safety, despite their inability to cite a single instance of such a gun being used to kill in the U.S. They believe that the families of people murdered with guns should be able to sue gun manufacturers and retailers, despite those businesses not having had anything to do with the murders. And on and on.

At the time of this writing, the anti-gun social engineers appear to have been dealt a setback, with a new Gallup Poll finding public support for banning so-called "assault weapons" at an historic low across all demographics, despite prolonged intense effort (enthusiastically abetted by the mass media) on the part of gun-ban zealots to lead Americans to believe that such a ban is both "common sense" and utterly vital.

Perhaps *some* monkeys are finally learning to enjoy their bananas, despite the disapproval of those who think they can brainwash us. ©

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Hindsight & Resolutions

THE year 2016 saw a paradigm shift in the manner in which police applications of force are viewed through the lens of the public. This is not an insignificant matter, in the fact that anyone reading this and currently serving in law enforcement could very well find himself the subject of national scrutiny in the event his application of force was placed into question.

Training can go a long way to avoiding such hazards. The greater skill sets one possesses, the greater degree to which one can allow a situation to degrade before taking action. Most probably, if this is the case, the choice and actions taken will therefore be the correct ones. I discuss this subject in my first book, *The Art of Modern Gunfighting*.

LAPD will soon institute body cameras for all officers. Other departments

had instituted this policy well before LAPD, and it appears to me that it is often more than beneficial to the officer. Such camera footage has helped me personally when defending an officer's actions in court.

Instead of being a one-dimensional depiction of events, body-camera footage is truthful in its overall capture of the event sequence. Less-lethal munitions such as the beanbag shotgun and Taser will soon be in every patrol vehicle as well. These will give officers an array of options when dealing with unpredictable situations, which is the very essence of police work. (In my day, one simply had a straight stick baton, six-shot .38-caliber revolver, 12 spare rounds, and one's wits. Talk about change!)

Today's officers will be held to a high degree of accountability as to

the rationale of their decisions and the validity of their actions. This does require a significant upgrade in one's ability to articulate such actions and as such, this should be addressed through training. Reading real books penned by real authors (the postings of internet trolls in no way, shape or form constitute proper prose) improves one's lexicon, which in turn presents a more articulate and professional demeanor on the stand. Perhaps a good New Year's resolution is to read more.

One should never be surprised at the prospect of a deadly force encounter. Surprisingly, I have found this to be the case more than once when defending officers. Police work is an inherently dangerous and unpredictable profession. If this is not for you, I suggest baking cupcakes as a career choice.



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There is a reason you are armed, and it is precisely for the unpredictability of human actions. When a deadly force encounter comes, it most probably will be sudden, without forewarning, and rapid in execution. Again, a good resolution is to train more, even if it is on your own time and at your own expense to ensure you emerge unscathed, intact, and whole at the end of watch.

When you retire, you can dust off the surfboards, golf clubs, fishing gear, and all ancillary equipment to enjoy life to its fullest. But for most working officers, I strongly encourage them to train a bit harder toward the possibility that they might have to defend themselves or others in an evolution that spans mere seconds. This allows one to retire in one piece as opposed to the alternative.

On a lighter note, I have now arrived at the stark realization that men do not think like women, nor do women think like men! My wife, Brett, cares naught for my handcrafted, personally hand-shaped Phil Edwards surfboards. Nor does she find my Mizuno MP67 grain-flow-forged golf irons

anything to rave about. As a point of fact, much of what I treasure and find fascinating holds little interest for her. The specifics as to why men treasure one thing and women another goes back to Neolithic times.

The Neanderthal took great pride in a well-crafted spear tipped with a high-grade hand-flaked obsidian tip. The cave woman, on the other hand, took great delight in acquiring the newest off-the-rack, giant ground sloth full-length fur coat.

Armed with a good stone axe, a bow and a dozen arrows, our knuckle-dragging ancestor sallied forth with his buddies with the express intent to down a T-Rex (yes, I am aware of the timeline) and in turn, he returned with a bunch of T-Rex teeth to proudly display on his rock bench in his man cave. Cool.

Meanwhile, our cavewoman had decorated the cave with animal skins and flowers and the like while attending to obnoxious cave babies. Not cool. So, the following are Uncle Scotty's resolutions for 2017.

I will attempt not to bore Brett with the specifics of an Accurate fishing reel,

Rory McElroy limited-edition putter, tungsten-carbide kinetic energy projectile from an M1 Abrams tank, the inner working mechanisms of a Panerai watch, the merits of a museum-grade replica of the Apollo space capsule, the coolness of an inert five-inch naval gunfire shell, or anything else that she finds nauseatingly trivial in nature.

On the other hand, I will attempt to express an interest in draperies, couch fabrics, flowers, and all other ancillary products and items, which seem to fascinate females to no end. (Brett is actually very cool with most guy stuff—just not *my* guy stuff.)

My other resolution is that, while teaching firearms classes, I will strive not to express frustration when posited the following questions: Are we going to fire real ammunition on the range? Does that gun you're wearing have real bullets in it? Did you ever have to fight bad guys when you were a police officer? Why don't police just shoot by, instead of at, the suspect so he knows you are serious?

In any regard, hopefully 2017 will prove to be a good year despite a rather tenuous beginning. ☺

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Czech Vz61 Skorpion Machine Pistol



Vz61 with stock deployed.

THE Czech Skorpion is a hard weapon to assign a purpose. It's a machine pistol, which means it isn't really a pistol or a submachine gun, though it's usually classified with the latter. Although versions were reportedly made in .32 ACP, .380 ACP, 9x18mm Makarov, and 9x19mm (9mm Luger), in years of encountering the Skorpion, I have only seen .32 ACP versions.

Actually, those other versions are designated as Vz64 in .380, Vz65 in 9mm Makarov, and Vz68 in 9x19mm Parabellum. In the Vz61, you have an oversized weapon chambered for an underpowered cartridge. There is also the M84 version produced in Yugoslavia and later Serbia.

The .32 ACP chambering has some logic, as the weapon was originally used by Czech internal security units such as the StB (equivalent of the KGB) or the police, which also issued the Vz70 .32 ACP pistol.



With practice, Vz61 stock may be deployed somewhat quickly when debussing from a vehicle.

During the Cold War, when I studied Warsaw Pact airborne and special forces units, Czech paratroopers were armed with the Vz61 for a time. Indonesian combat swimmers used the Vz61 as well, as did some Soviet Spetsnaz. It used to be encountered in Africa and South America in use with Marxist-oriented factions.

In fact, I first began training with the Vz61 for familiarity when I was doing close protection work. In South America and elsewhere, the Vz61 was popular with hit teams composed of a motorbike driver with a Vz61 gunner on the rear seat.

I also trained some VIP drivers who carried the Vz61 for use with one hand while driving. A few of them even became competent with it.

Over the last 30+ years, I've had enough chances to fire the Vz61 to become relatively familiar with it, so I'll offer some opinions.

As machine pistols go, I rate many others more highly, especially the

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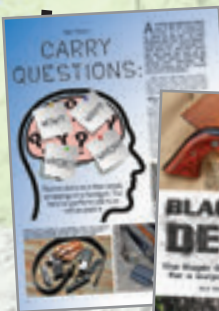
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Stechkin and Glock 18. I would also rate the HK VP70 and Beretta 93R superior due to their 9x19mm chambering. I would probably even rate the Mauser Schnellfeuer ahead of the Vz61.

Still, the Vz61 was quite possibly the most widely distributed machine pistol in the world and hence likely to be encountered in trouble spots. At least some U.S. Special Forces units received foreign weapons training with the Vz61.

On the positive side, the Vz61's top folding stock is more ergonomic than the holster stocks used on most other machine pistols or the detachable skeleton stocks used on the Beretta 93R and Glock 18. Another positive for the Vz61 is that the .32 ACP chambering allows the Skorpion to be controlled more readily than other machine pistols.

I've trained on counter-ambush scenarios firing a Vz61 in short bursts from within a vehicle and found that its compact size and light recoil permit effective engagement from the "shot-gun" position in a vehicle.

Somewhat of a positive is the leather holster for the Vz61, which allows the Skorpion to be carried with the stock folded. For carrying in the holster, the ten-round magazine must be



used. The larger capacity 20-round magazine would obviously be more effective in full-auto usage.

I have already mentioned many of the Skorpion's negatives. In .32 ACP, the weapon is underpowered. Tactically, the best use of the Skorpion is in firing bursts. In effect, putting multiple .32 ACP bullets into an enemy is equivalent to firing a blast of 00 buckshot.

The folding stock is at best usable, but once again the light recoil keeps it from being uncomfortable in use. Sights are acceptable to 50 meters, which is about as far as I've ever fired the Skorpion. As with the AK, adjustments are made to the front sight.

For one-handed use, the grip-to-barrel angle is not very good. As a

For use by security teams, Vz61 Skorpion does have some advantages: it is compact enough to handle within a vehicle, recoil is light enough that it can be controlled well on bursts within the vehicle, and there is less blast when it's fired within the vehicle.

result, the Vz61 handles poorly one-handed and does not allow instinctive shooting. But to be fair, I know some who have experience with the Vz61 and like the pistol grip, finding it less fat than some other machine pistols that have the magazine well in the grip. I don't agree.

I have fired the Skorpion one-handed on select fire and kept bursts on a silhouette target at 10 yards, but on semi-auto I have not done very well at 25 yards. Firing in semi-auto, the Vz61 may be used as an oversized and underpowered pistol using a two-handed hold. For accurate longer-range shooting, firing on semi-auto using the stock is probably most effective.

Since the magazine does not fit

Vz61 with stock folded. Small "buttons" are used for cocking the Skorpion.



into the grip, as on many machine pistols, the 20-round magazine can get in the way. I normally rest my support hand on the front of the magazine well with fingers in the lightening cuts, but care must be taken that the hand does not stray in front of the short 4.5-inch barrel.

There isn't a protective ridge around the magazine button, which could lead to it being hit inadvertently.

I also find the selector arrangement a bit counterintuitive. Unlike most selectors, on which the safe position is farthest to the rear, on the Vz61, safe is in the middle position, with semi-auto ("1") rearmost, then safe, and full-auto ("20") farthest forward. The lever is large enough that it is easy to operate.

Assuming the Skorpion is carried with the stock folded over the top of the weapon, to bring it into action it is necessary to hit the small release button, then slap the stock up and back into the locked position. With practice, it can be done relatively quickly.

I have also found that the small cocking buttons on the bolt are somewhat hard to pull back when cocking the closed-bolt weapon. The Skor-



Vz61 has been used by some VIP drivers, as it allows one-handed use. Personally, I always told the drivers I trained to use their offensive/defensive driving training, which required both hands.

pion is a blowback design. The trigger guard is large enough to allow use with gloves, which can be a plus.

As with the Franchi SPAS-12, the Vz61 is a popular weapon in films and television. Occasionally, they get it right and have the Vz61 as a signature weapon with terrorists, as a lot of Czech weapons found their way into terrorist hands in the day.

In other cases, the Vz61 seems to

be used because it appears "tactical." I remember, for example, in the film remake of *Get Smart*, Agent 99 was armed with a Vz61! At least it would fit in the phone booth elevator.

I used to teach a class for individuals who were going to be working in dangerous places. On the more advanced version of this class, if I could arrange access to a Vz61, I included it in the weapons familiarization section on how to pick up an enemy weapon and turn it on them.

As mentioned earlier, I also encountered the occasional "Emerging Nation" protective team that used Vz61s, so I had to develop rudimentary tactics for their use. Basically, these consisted of shooting burst "zippers" to maximize the .32 ACP round.

Recently, a semi-auto pistol version of the Vz61 has been available in the U.S. To use the stock, the weapon would have to be registered as an SBR. I can say without hesitation that I have not been tempted to acquire one.

Still, the Skorpion is a classic example of the machine pistol. If you get a chance to shoot one, by all means do so. ☺

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Thumper

.450 Bushmaster Ruger American Ranch Rifle

THE .450 Bushmaster is descended from the “Thumper” concept popularized by Jeff Cooper. Cooper was not a fan of the 5.56x45mm NATO round and envisioned a need for a large-bore cartridge in a semi-auto rifle that would provide one-shot kills on big game animals at 250 yards.

Bushmaster Firearms worked closely with Hornady and the .450 Bushmaster “Thumper” was born.

Hornady’s load for the .450 Bushmaster (.450 BM) consists of a 250-grain FTX bullet leaving the muzzle at around 2,200 feet-per-second (fps) with almost 2,700 foot-pounds of energy. This actually exceeds the ballistics of the .45-70 Government round loaded with the Hornady 250-grain MONO-FLEX™ bullet.

I received the first production Bushmaster XM-15 rifle chambered for the then-new cartridge. A few weeks after receiving it, I shot a large razorback while hunting with S.W.A.T. Publisher Richard Lucibella and Ashley Emerson in Texas.

As the hog crossed in front of me at a full run, I put



Ruger American Ranch Rifle chambered in .450 Bushmaster and Ruger Muzzle-Brake knife are a great combination for big game.

By Denny Hansen

Photos by Straight 8 Photography

Bolt-ActionThumper

the circle-dot reticle of the Leupold CQ/T on the nose and pressed the trigger, hitting just above the shoulder. Feral hogs are not easy to kill, especially one that's fully adrenalized, but the hog went down with a single hit. I became an instant fan of the cartridge.

In recent years, there have been reports of large elk and even bison taken with the .450 BM. The cartridge is capable of taking any big game in North America.

RUGER AMERICAN RANCH RIFLE

Just as this issue ships to subscribers, Ruger has introduced a rifle chambered for the .450 BM. With Ruger's expertise in AR-type rifles, they could easily have gone with the platform the cartridge was designed for. Instead they opted to go with a bolt-action rifle from the popular American Series, specifically the American Ranch Rifle. I think it was a good choice.

The American Ranch Rifle is a short, handy rifle, measuring only 36 inches from muzzle to buttpad. Due to the large bore size removing more steel, this rifle is slightly lighter than other Ranch Rifles, weighing in at 5.5 pounds.

Also contributing to its light weight is the Ranch Rifle's synthetic stock. The stock color is close to Flat Dark Earth and has texturing with unique serrations on the forend and pistol grip area. The pistol grip cap is black with a red Ruger logo. The black buttpad is a soft, but not spongy, rubber. Sling studs are located at the front and rear of the stock.

The barrel and action are matte black, though the bolt handle is blued. The one-piece bolt has three heavy lugs. Bolt throw is 70 de-

grees, providing good scope clearance, while dual cocking cams allow the action to be worked effortlessly from the shoulder. The bolt handle is smooth, which equates to fast, efficient manipulation.

The thumb safety is well placed below the bolt and can be used with equal aplomb by either a right- or left-handed shooter. A cocking indicator directly above the safety extends from the bolt when the rifle is cocked.

The rifle has Ruger's Marksman Adjustable™ trigger, which is user adjustable between three and five pounds. The trigger pull on the test rifle broke cleanly and consistently at 3.5 pounds as measured by a Lyman Electronic Trigger Pull gauge.

The cold hammer forged barrel is 16.1 inches long with a 1:16 twist. The muzzle is threaded (11/16x24) for use with a suppressor or other muzzle device. The rifle comes with a cap to protect the threads when a muzzle device is not installed.

Sights are not provided with the Ranch Rifle, but it has a factory installed five-inch aluminum Picatinny rail, so the user can mount the optics of his choice.

Rifle outfitted as used in the evaluation with Vortex Viper PST 1-6X24 in Vortex one-piece mount.

Chambered in .450 BM, it is not a precision rifle by any stretch of the imagination, but it's sufficiently accurate for the task at hand, and will take any game in North America.





Black pistol grip cap with red Ruger logo adds a bit of color. Note texturing on pistol grip.



One-piece bolt has three heavy locking lugs. Serial number matches the rifle.



The magazine is made from a tough polymer, and a spring-loaded magazine release is incorporated into the front of the mag. The magazine well has a slight bevel to aid in inserting the mag.

Due to the diameter of the cartridge, magazine capacity is three rounds for a total on-board capacity of four rounds. The tip of the cartridge is approximately $\frac{1}{2}$ inch from the front of the magazine, but due to the generous length of the feed lips— $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches—the cartridge stays in place until it is guided smoothly onto the feed ramp.

OPTICS

While powerful, the .450 BM is optimally a 200-yard cartridge. With this in mind, I wanted a low-power scope that would enable me to keep both eyes open to perform a snap shot up close and provide a wide field of view. A variable-power scope would let me dial up to a higher power for a more precise shot at distance.

Bolt-Action Thumper



ABOVE: Indicator above safety is exposed when rifle is cocked.

BELOW: Cap is included to protect threads on barrel when a muzzle device is not attached.



With this criterion, I decided on a Vortex Viper PST 1-6X24. This optic has a 30mm tube to allow ample light transmission, a field of view of 98 feet at 100 yards on 1X, and a four-inch eye relief. It's fairly compact, with a length of 9.7 inches, and weighs 14.4 ounces.

The Viper PST has an illuminated reticle with ten brightness settings. The illumination is turned off between each setting, and runs on a CR 2032 battery.

The scope uses Vortex's TMCQ reticle, which is a circle broken down into four segments with a small dot in the center. It has subtension lines for determining holdovers, range estimations, and moving target leads.

The Viper PST was mounted in a Vortex one-piece mount. With the scope installed, the Ranch Rifle is still fast handling, tipping the scales at around six pounds.

RANGE EVALUATION

Overall fit and finish were quite good, but machining marks were visible on the inside of the receiver on the sample rifle. Although the bolt functioned smoothly, it operated with a grating sound due to the machining marks—not like fingernails on a blackboard, but still noticeable.

Factory specifications for the .450 BM are based on a 20-inch barrel, so I used a PACT Professional chronograph—firing a 20-round string—to establish the velocity out of the Ranch Rifle's 16-inch tube. I was a bit surprised to find the shorter barrel only lost 15 feet-per-second (fps) from the factory published specs. Ammo was Hornady 250-grain FTX.

I mentioned earlier that the .450 BM is best to about 200 yards. Putting all the pertinent info into my ballistic program with a 100-yard zero, the table showed a drop of 8.42 inches at 200 yards and 31.26 inches at 300.

At 100 yards, the bullet is still traveling at 1,856 fps and packing 1,913 foot-pounds of energy. This drops to 1,560 fps and 1,352 foot-pounds at 200 yards, and 1,296 fps and 932 foot-pounds at 300. At 400 yards, the bullet has gone transonic and the drop is over six feet.

I shot the Ranch Rifle for groups from prone using a Harris bipod. I fired five, three-round groups and came up with an average group size of 1.36 inches. The smallest group was .79 inch measured center-to-center. With the big .45-caliber holes, it was almost a one-hole group. Not bad at all.

In contrast, my Bushmaster AR shoots about 2.5-inch groups on a good day. Still



ABOVE: Magazine well has slight bevel at rear to aid in inserting the mag.

RIGHT: Magazine has built-in mag release. Due to large diameter of the round, magazine capacity is three rounds.

BELOW: Like all Ranch Rifles, sample evaluated uses Ruger's Marksman Adjustable™ trigger.



Bolt-Action Thumper



Forend is textured for a sure grip.

» SPECIFICATIONS

RUGER AMERICAN RANCH RIFLE

MANUFACTURER	Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc.
MODEL	American Ranch Rifle
TYPE	Bolt action
CALIBER	.450 Bushmaster
CAPACITY	3+1
BARREL	16.1 inches, 1:16 twist
LENGTH	36 inches
WEIGHT (empty)	5.5 pounds
TRIGGER	Adjustable, 3 to 5 pounds
FINISH	Matte black
STOCK	Tan synthetic
SIGHTS	None, one-piece scope base installed
MUZZLE	Threaded, includes thread cap
SUGGESTED RETAIL	\$599.00



Black soft rubber buttstock contrasts nicely with FDE colored stock.

» AMMUNITION PERFORMANCE

BRAND	LOAD	VELOCITY	AVERAGE GROUP SIZE
Hornady	250-gr. FTX	2,185.7 fps	1.36 inches

Velocity obtained with PACT Inc. Professional chronograph, 20-round string with first screen ten feet from muzzle. Elevation 4,843, temp 68°F, barometric pressure 29.53. Group size is average of five, three-shot groups.



Ruger American Ranch Rifle ships from the factory without sights, but has a five-inch Picatinny rail that lets the end user mount optics of their choice. Production models will have a factory installed muzzle brake as shown here.

Photo: Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc.



Rifle is handy even with suppressor installed, such as this Gemtech Lunar-45.



Hansen took this Texas hog with one shot from the first production Bushmaster XM-15 rifle. He became an instant believer in the .450 Bushmaster cartridge.

“minute-of-hog,” but almost twice the group size the Ranch Rifle turned in.

Considering that you’re shooting a 250-grain bullet travelling at 2,200 fps out of a light rifle, recoil is quite manageable. I’d put it roughly in the same class as a .30-06 firing a 180-grain bullet.

SUMMARY

The Ruger Ranch Rifle is a light, fast-handling rifle. Chambered in .450 BM, it is not a precision rifle by any stretch of the imagination, but it’s sufficiently accurate for the task at hand, and will take any game in North America. I send the majority of firearms I test back to the manufacturer, but this one is a keeper. ©

[Editor’s note: above evaluation was based on an early version received in November of last year. Production Ranch Rifles in .450 Bushmaster will have a factory installed muzzle brake.]

SOURCES

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GEMTECH

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RELOADING THE .450 BUSHMASTER

As with all centerfire cartridges I own, I reload for the .450 BM. In this case, it is not only to save a few dollars and tailor loads to my rifle, but because due to supply and demand, not a lot of gunshops stock it. None in my area do.

The .450 BM is a straight-walled case with a rebated rim that head-spaces on the case mouth. It is important not to use a heavy roll crimp with bullets that have a cannelure, as this can create potentially dangerous headspace problems.

I use a Hornady four-die set with Hornady’s 250-grain FTX bullet, which does not have a cannelure, and a taper crimp.

My powder of choice for the .450 BM is 35.4 grains of Hodgdon Lil’ Gun for about 2,100 fps out of a 20-inch barrel. I

normally use CCI #400 small rifle primer, but I have also had good luck with WSR (Winchester Small Rifle) primers.



While .450 BM is a great cartridge, it is not stocked in some areas. Reloading prevents having to special order it from your local gunshop.



KIMBER COVERT .45 ACP PISTOL



KIMBER COVERT

The grand prize for this sweepstakes is the new Kimber Covert .45 ACP pistol. Kimber Coverts are the perfect combination of light weight and meaningful features. With a new gray color palette and flush-cut barrel, Covert pistols feature both the new Crimson Trace Lasergrip and Tactical Wedge tritium night sights—two sighting systems that will ensure you acquire your sight picture regardless of light conditions.

The Carry Melt treatment contours, rounds, and blends all edges so they won't snag on clothing or holsters. The 30 LPI front strap checkering with bordered base helps ensure a positive grip.

The Covert features a Kimpro Charcoal gray finish that is complemented by the urban black and gray digital camo Lasergrips.

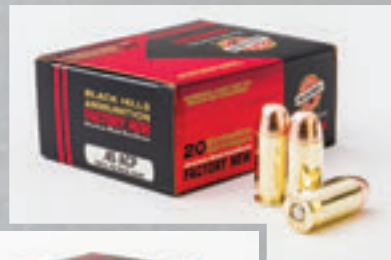
The Kimber Covert quality ensures unequalled accuracy and dependability. There's no reason to be afraid of the dark.

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BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION

For over 35 years, Black Hills Ammunition has been handcrafting ammunition for the folks who demand that it works every time. The winner of this sweepstakes receives 200 rounds of Black Hills .45 ACP 230-grain, which is equally at home on the target range or in bowling-pin competitions, with the accuracy and impact performance needed to clear the table.

The winner also receives 100 rounds of .45 185-grain TAC-XP +P. From a defensive standpoint, there is nothing better than Black Hills .45 185-grain TAC-XP +P. With a velocity of 1,000 feet per second and muzzle energy of over 400 foot-pounds, this round truly fills the needs of the tactical shooter. Penetration in ballistic gelatin is over 12 inches with an expanded projectile diameter of .816 inch. Target or tactical, you can count on the performance of Black Hills Ammunition.



DESANTIS GUNHIDE

To securely carry the Kimber Custom Covert, the winner receives a DeSantis Thumb Break Scabbard.

This Level II security holster has a thumb break backed up with a strip of steel, riveted above and below the snap for a sure release. Further adding to the security aspect is a tension screw behind the trigger guard that lets the user adjust how much exertion is needed to draw the pistol.

A DeSantis double magazine pouch and lined 1¾-inch fancy stitch lined belt are also included.

ELZETTA BONES FLASHLIGHT

This sweepstakes also includes an Elzetta Bones flashlight—a bare-bones, no-frills flashlight with legendary Elzetta performance and durability. Operation is bone-simple. There are no secondary modes, and on/off is achieved via the push-button on the tail cap.

The Bones generates 650 lumens with an optimum balance of throw and spill through its standard 7/8-inch thick optical lens. The beam quality produced by the optical lens is superior to any reflector-based flashlight on the market and must be experienced to be fully appreciated. Runtime is rated at 1.5 hours from two CR123A batteries. The Bones is constructed of 6061-T6 aluminum with a natural/gray Type III hard anodizing for extreme hardness and long wear.



SOURCES

KIMBER MFG., INC.

(888) 243-4522
www.kimberamerica.com

BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION

(605) 348-5150
www.black-hills.com

DESANTIS GUNHIDE

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SEVEN-SECOND AR-15 BARREL CHANGE



Cry Havoc Tactical QRB

By Gary Paul Johnston

Cry Havoc Tactical Quick-change Rifle Barrel system is compatible with any AR-15/M16-type milspec lower receiver group, such as this BCM4.

THE search for the “perfect” quick-change AR barrel seemingly never ends. Even with the simplicity of pushing out two receiver pins to change upper groups, the quest for something better has continued.

A dozen or so contemporary AR-type rifles offer barrels that are changeable in the field. Some of these are faster than others, but is faster always better? For example, the Steyr AUG probably has the fastest system out there, but the AUG is a bullpup rifle, and for those who don’t prefer a bullpup, its barrel-change speed is secondary.

MISSION REQUIREMENTS DICTATE THE RIFLE

There is also the question of repeatable accuracy. If minute-of-angle accuracy is the major consideration with a changeable barrel, then a pre-sighted-in optic will be mandatory with the replaced barrel.

Mission requirements always dictate those of the rifle, and can run from a short-barreled rifle (SBR) to a three-barrel, three-caliber contraption with three different types of ammunition and three magazines with plenty of pain relief all in one giant case.

But here we are dealing with .223, .300 Blackout, 6.8x43mm SPC, 7.62x39mm, and the like that will fit into an AR-15 envelope.

Although not necessarily in order, the requirements of a quick-change barrel rifle/carbine include reliability, accuracy, effectiveness, and simplicity. Then we might want to add repeatability, ease of concealment, weight, suppressor capable and, let us not forget, speed of deployment.

MISSIONS

Utilitarian values of a quick-change barrel can run from backpacking to truck guns to covert needs where an SBR is preferred, and an SBR is limited to law enforcement and BATF&E registration in states allowing such firearms. The same goes for sound suppressors.

Backpackers often select a 16-inch barrel takedown rifle with magazines adhering to hunting regulations. Depending on location, truck guns carried by ranchers might have similar limitations.

Where LE is concerned, the deployment of rifles and especially SBRs is limited to departmental regulations and proper training. Takedown rifles with shorter barrels can be carried in a patrol car with a long-range heavier barrel or upper receiver group stored in the trunk with appropriate optical sight and other accessories. In other conditions, a takedown SBR can be stowed in a very small space or a carrying case with a label that does not telegraph “gun” to passersby.

THE QRB AND HOW IT WORKS

As mentioned above, quick-change and takedown rifles are nothing new, with a number of them from which to choose. Now there is another: the Quick-change Rifle Barrel, from Cry Havoc Tactical (CHT) of Florida.

Available just as the QRB system itself, it can also be had as a complete upper component to fit any milspec AR-15 or M16 lower receiver using parts of the customer's choosing or fitted to the customer's existing mil-spec barrel/receiver group. Here's how it works.

Using two round 6061-T6 hard-coat alloy plates, the rear plate is called the "receiver plate assembly" and is secured to the upper receiver by the special QRB nut that CHT calls the barrel nut. Similar to an AR-15 barrel nut, this one is shorter with the toothed flange thinner.

Since this nut has nothing to do with securing the barrel, I'll refer to it as simply the QRB nut. It is secured with no more than 40-inch-pounds and is slightly recessed to mate with the barrel flange when assembled. The front of the threaded receiver ring is recessed .025 inch.

When in place, the QRB nut secures a round steel bushing containing the special recessed rear portion of the gas tube, thus becoming the QRB gas-tube extension. The front of the bushing houses (by my measurements) .464 inch of the QRB gas tube, which is shortened from a standard tube.

This tube protrudes .464 inch from the front plate, which is called the barrel plate assembly. The QRB gas



Basic QRB components on AR-15 upper separated for storage.



QRB receiver and barrel plate assemblies with special QRB nut, gas tube extension, stainless steel locating pin, and locking arms.

Starting with the disassembled AR-15 lying on a table, I can assemble, load, and fire it accurately in seven seconds.



Sample QRB was assembled on excellent BCM KMR handguard. While barrel remains in exactly the same configuration, handguard is moved forward 1.425 inches and uses KMR barrel nut.



ABOVE: QRB receiver and barrel plate assemblies are attached to the receiver and handguard. Two-piece gas tube meets precisely when assembled.

BELOW: Components of QRB can go from unassembled to fully functional in seconds.



tube enters the larger section of the QRB gas-tube extension and abuts the gas tube when assembled.

Above the gas tube bushing is a hole in the receiver plate assembly to accept a hardened steel locating pin .125 inch in diameter. This pin is fixed in the forward section of the barrel plate assembly above the gas tube, resulting in both the pin and the tube locking the plate from rotational movement.

The front portion of the barrel plate assembly contains a duplicate of the threaded section of an AR-15 upper receiver and onto this is screwed the barrel nut used with the handguard selected.

For example, if a BCM KMR handguard is used (as shown), the barrel is first inserted through the rear of the barrel plate assembly as far as it will go, with the locating pin in the barrel extension in the recess. The barrel nut is then tightly screwed onto the forward section of the barrel plate assembly to no more than 40-inch-pounds.

When the barrel is secured to the barrel plate, the gas block and special gas tube are assembled. Then the handguard is assembled per its instructions. The BCM KMR handguard uses two opposing bolts, but these are left loose until the gas tube and two top rails are aligned.

A master locking bolt in the bottom of the barrel plate is then tightened, followed by tightening the two handguard cross-bolts. Other handguards are mounted accordingly, all with Loctite 242 recommended.

With the QRB system installed, the barrel extension and .025 inch of the barrel extension flange protrude from the rear of the barrel plate assembly to locate in the front of the receiver plate assembly like a standard AR assembly.

To secure the system, hardened stainless steel locking hooks on both sides of the barrel plate are used to lock onto two hardened vertical pins recessed in the sides of the receiver plate. But first these hooks are each adjusted by hex bolts, measuring with calipers using the instructions, again with Loctite. When adjusted, the hooks are rigidly locked to the pins by depressing pivoting flaps forward.

When the QRB system is installed and assembled, the top rails of the receiver and handguard are separated



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by 1.425 inches, but the barrel remains in exactly the same place in the receiver. While the assembly procedure may seem complex as explained here, it is not.

Once the QRB system is assembled, amazing things begin to happen. Starting with the disassembled AR-15 lying on a table, I can assemble, load, and fire it accurately in seven seconds (a video shows the designer do this in four seconds). Add another three seconds to open a carrying case, and you get the picture.

I took a standard 14x18-inch pistol hard case and put a 16-inch barrel, Aimpoint Comp M4 optic, and 30-round magazine in it with room to spare. An SBR would add even more internal space.

DOWNRANGE

What about shooting the QRB? Cry Havoc claims .75 MOA accuracy with a match barrel and .223 ammunition. This would satisfy me all day.

I took the sample QRB upper, attached it to a BCM lower and took it to the private 900-yard range belonging to Jim

Carroll of Carroll Targets and home of the Ultimate Precision Shooting Rest in Montrose, Colorado.

Using this Ultimate Precision Shooting Rest with several brands of .223 ammunition, the QRB, equipped with a Leupold 3-10X42mm Mark 4 scope, produced five-shot groups of .72 to 1.23 inches from the rifle's Voodoo match barrel.

While the BCM issue trigger is quite smooth, with an eight-pound let-off, a better aftermarket trigger would no doubt help improve accuracy even further, not to mention an upper receiver group with a heavy match barrel.

Using the QRB with multiple barrel groups would require only one upper receiver with the receiver plate mounted and as many barrel groups as desired each (with a barrel plate). No malfunctions occurred throughout more than 180 rounds, some of it full-auto with my M16 lower receiver group, and that brings us to another new product.

MAGPUL D-60

If you're like me, you've been patiently awaiting the availability of the 60-round drum magazine from Magpul



Jim Carroll puts .223 rounds through QRB using select-fire lower at his range. There were no malfunctions throughout the tests.



DI Optical's superb new DCL-30 red dot sight and 3XP Extender had to be mounted this far apart on QRB system, but worked just fine. These optics are military grade.



Sixteen-inch barrel QRB easily goes into standard pistol case with DCL-30 red dot sight, 30-round magazine, and room to spare.

Industries. I received one just before shipping this report on the QRB. The D-60 is of Swiss-watch quality and surpassed all my expectations.

Using a finger-operated lever to depress the follower, the D-60 can be loaded singly or with a G.I. AR-15 charger guide and chargers. The D-60 can also be left loaded indefinitely without spring fatigue, and can be disassembled for cleaning if necessary. The D-60 has a window to count remaining rounds and, being the same length as a standard 30-round magazine, it allows prone shooting.

DI OPTICAL

While at SHOT Show 2016, I met my good friend Michael Beltran (who needs no introduction to spec-ops types) of DI Optical. Mike showed me DIO's new military-grade optical sights, including the new DCL-30 red dot and the company's 3XP Extender with its A.R.M.S. Tactical Integrated Tilt System (T.I.T.S.). This is the best such mount going, truly living up to its acronym! The new milspec 9,000-hour 1.5 MOA dot DCL-30 also virtually drips quality!

For those who want MOA accuracy from an SBR in a tiny container and that's ready to use in seconds, Cry Havoc's QRB is here. The QRB is equally at home on a heavy-barreled precision AR-15 rifle to be stowed in a short rifle case.

And remember, the police will always arrive in time to remove the body. To keep your QRB and the rest of your guns, join the NRA! ☺

SOURCES

CRY HAVOC TACTICAL

(321) 537-2141
www.cryhavoctac.com

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(508) 584-7816
www.armsmounts.com

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TRAIN LIKE YOU BLEED

Dark Angel Medical Direct Action Response Training

By Eugene Nielsen

Photos by Daniel Graham

Emergency medical training should be part of the basic skill sets of every firearms owner. In fact, it should be part of the basic skill sets of everyone. The time to learn how to use a trauma kit is not when someone is bleeding out.

I recently had the opportunity to attend the Dark Angel Medical Direct Action Response Training (DART) hosted by Scottsdale Gun Club in Scottsdale, Arizona. Geared toward those with little to no medical training or background, the 16-hour, two-day course is designed to fill the niche between military self-aid/buddy-care training and civilian EMS training. The course provides the student with critical information that can be utilized in a number of situations.

The course included lectures, slide presentations, videos, question and answer sessions, and hands-on practical skills application. A training manual and all necessary materials for the course were provided.

The course I attended was taught by Kerry "Pocket Doc" Davis, founder of Dark Angel Medical, and Ross Francis, his chief instructor. Both are

outstanding instructors who brought with them a wealth of practical real-world experience and passion for the material they presented.

INSTRUCTORS

Kerry Davis joined the U.S. Air Force in 1991 and served until 2007 as an ER medic, flight medic and officer training school instructor. He attended U.S. Army Airborne School at Ft. Benning, Georgia while stationed as a flight medic at Pope Field in Ft. Bragg, North Carolina.

He subsequently worked as a civilian paramedic and completed his RN. He has worked as a critical care and emergency room RN since 2003. Kerry is an avid shooter. He has instructed with Magpul Dynamics and is currently a part-time instructor with SIG Sauer Academy.

Ross Francis is a U.S. Navy combat veteran with multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan as a Navy Corpsman and later as a contractor. He is a nationally registered EMT. Ross has flown with the Air Force Pararescue Jumpers (PJ) and was attached to Marine Force Recon scout sniper units as a Corpsman. He currently works in San Bernardino, California as a paramedic.





ABOVE: Measuring a nasopharyngeal airway. Prior to insertion, measure it from the ear lobe through to the tip of the nose. Safety pin can be inserted through NPA to mark proper depth of insertion.

LEFT: Student practices insertion of nasopharyngeal airway (NPA), which can also be employed as expedient oropharyngeal airway (OPA). NPA is employed in situations where an artificial form of airway maintenance is necessary, but it is impossible or inadvisable to use an OPA.

BELOW: Students role playing. Every student got the chance to play both patient and emergency caregiver. Instructors assessed and debriefed students on patient assessment and treatment.



DART COURSE

The DART course is quite intensive and covers the following:

- Need for training
- History of emergency care
- Ethics and legality
- Physiological and psychological reactions to environmental stress
- Importance of proper combat mindset
- Basic anatomy and physiology of life-sustaining systems
- H, A, B, Cs—Hemorrhage, Airway, Breathing and Circulation
- Breakdown and usage of Individual Med Kit (IMK) components
- Proper stowage and employment of IMK
- Hands-on application of IMK
- Basic and advanced airway management: treating and monitoring tension pneumothorax, sucking chest wounds, and flail chest
- Airway adjunct device placement: nasopharyngeal airway
- Basic first aid and advanced wound care
- Application of bandages, hemostatic agents, and tourniquets
- Recognition and treatment of various injuries (gunshot, laceration, burn, airway, head, orthopedic, environmental)
- Recognition and treatment of hypovolemic (hemorrhagic) shock
- Moving and positioning victims with various injuries
- Response to active shooter situation
- Proper use of cover and cover vs concealment
- Casualty recovery in active shooter situation
- Mass casualty triage procedure
- Emergency medical dialect/lingo (911 protocol, cooperation with LE, Fire and EMS and first responders)



Direct Action Response Training class was taught by Kerry “Pocket Doc” Davis, founder of Dark Angel Medical (LEFT), and Ross Francis, his chief instructor. RIGHT: Francis discusses airway adjunct device use and placement. Nasal airway is preferred due to ease of use and decreased possible complications.

Although that’s a lot to cover in a two-day course, the material was presented with professionalism and enthusiasm, in an efficient, thorough manner conducive to learning. The instructors clearly not only know their stuff but how to present it in an engaging way that keeps the students focused.

The training was conducted much as one would build a building. The instructors first laid down the foundation then built the structure. The slide presentations and videos, many of them quite graphic, and instructor demonstrations reinforced the instruction and drilled the points in, as did the intensive hands-on training that gave students the opportunity to practice the skills they were taught. Students were encouraged to ask questions throughout the course.



ABOVE: Ross Francis demonstrates use of SAM splint as cervical collar on student. SAM splint is a compact, lightweight, and highly versatile device.

LEFT: Student practices wound packing with hemostatic gauze. Goals are to pack wound tightly and down to the bone, occluding the artery and creating focused pressure on the hemorrhage. Wound packing is not used for wounds of head, neck, and torso.

TRAINING DAY 1

We began by covering the need for training, history of emergency care, ethics and legality, and warrior mindset. The right mindset will get you through the toughest situations. We covered combat psychology, the effects of stress and the body alarm response. We learned that the keys to success are long-term potentiation ("train how you bleed") and staying focused.

We moved on to scene safety, situational awareness, and the Cooper Color Code System. Common factors that can affect situational awareness, such as low-light conditions and environmental factors, were also discussed, as well as the importance of personal protective equipment. Personal safety trumps everything else. The instructors presented options to preserve our safety while still providing patient care. It doesn't help for the healer to become another patient. Sometimes hard decisions have to be made.

We moved on to basic anatomy and physiology, with the H, A, B, C, D, Es (Hemorrhage, Airway, Breathing, Cir-



Kerry Davis discusses hemorrhagic injury management and tourniquet placement with students. Hemorrhage is most preventable cause of death in compressible injuries, accounting for about 80% of battlefield deaths and 50% of civilian trauma deaths.



Student with SOFTT-W tourniquet. Bleeding out can occur in less than five minutes. Tourniquets stop life-threatening hemorrhage fast. Students became proficient in rapid and proper application of them.

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culation, “Da Brain” (Neuro), and Expose and Environment) the areas of focus. We learned how to assess a patient and identify and treat the most life-threatening injuries.

HEMORRHAGE

Early in the course, the instructors began to explain the importance and various types of tourniquets. Roughly 80% of combat deaths and 50% of civilian trauma deaths are attributable to hemorrhage. It's the most preventable cause of death in compressible injuries. Proper use of tourniquets saves lives. We also learned wound packing and the types and use of hemostatic agents and pressure dressings.

Every student was given a Combat Application Tourniquet (C-A-T) at the beginning of class. At random intervals throughout the course, the instructors would call out “tourniquet” and a specific limb for us to apply it. It became a race to see who could be the first to *properly* apply the tourniquet to our limb. We also took the tourniquet home with us overnight to practice more with it. Needless to say, we all became quite proficient.

AIRWAY & BREATHING

After we dealt with treating massive blood loss, we moved on to the respiratory system. The brain constantly needs oxy-

gen, so it's vital that we get the patient breathing and oxygenated blood circulating as quickly as possible.

We learned to identify whether or not patients had patent (an open and maintainable airway) breathing. We studied the anatomy of the respiratory system and common airway and breathing injuries that could arise as a result of trauma and how to treat them.

Types and use of artificial airways, artificial respiration, barrier devices, and occlusive dressings (and field expedients) were covered, as well as c-spine precautions, c-spine control, the recovery position, and special considerations.

CIRCULATION

After any massive bleeding has been stopped and the patient's breathing has been assessed, we need to make certain that blood is circulating throughout the body. The body is a hydraulic machine, and blood is the body's hydraulic fluid. As emergency caregivers, we must keep as much of the patient's blood inside the body as possible and ensure it is circulating properly.

We studied the anatomy of the circulatory system and learned how to assess and interpret pulses from various points on the body, skin temperature, color, and capillary refill. The importance of thoroughly reassessing the patient

D.A.R.K. TRAUMA KIT (Gen3)

The Dark Angel Medical Direct Action Response Training gives you the skills. The Dark Angel Medical D.A.R.K. (Direct Action Response Kit) Trauma Kit (Gen 3) gives you the tools. To quote the company, “This kit has everything you need and nothing you don't. Life is hard. Keep your med kit simple.”



Each D.A.R.K. has four main components: a custom MOLLE/PALS-compatible pouch, Combat Application Tourniquet® (C-A-T®), trauma shears, and a vacuum-sealed poly bag that Dark Angel Medical refers to as the “insert.” The D.A.R.K. may also be ordered with the SOF® Tactical Tourniquet-W (SOFTT-W). Rip Shears can be added to the D.A.R.K. as an upgrade, instead of the standard shears.

The D.A.R.K. insert is custom built by Dark Angel

Medical “in house” and includes HALO™ chest seals, a nasopharyngeal airway (NPA), QuikClot® Combat Gauze LE or Milspec Combat Gauze® (depending on D.A.R.K. model), NAR Compressed Gauze, four-inch Israeli Bandage®, polycarbonate eye shield, and a Mylar emergency blanket. ChitoGauze hemostatic gauze may be substituted for the Combat Gauze.

Milspec D.A.R.K. kits include a 14 Gauge ARS Chest Decompression Needle (Chest Dart). Civilian/LE kits do not.

The insert poly bag is 5-mil thick for maximum durability and has quick-tear perforations at each corner. One side of the bag features a zip-style closure so the bag can be resealed and stowed if necessary.

Custom made for Dark Angel by First Spear, LLC, the outer pouch is constructed of 500D NIR nylon and features a cap-style lid with a pull-tab, built-in TQ pouch, PALS webbing on both sides, and a retention strap to secure the trauma shears.

It's available in four colors: MultiCam, Coyote, Ranger Green, and Black. Measuring only 8x3x2.5 inches, the pouch is roughly the same size as a standard double 30-round magazine pouch.

MSRP for the complete kit (Civ/LE) is \$169.99. If you ever have to use your D.A.R.K. to save a life, simply provide official documentation and Dark Angel Medical will send you a replacement kit free of charge.

Essentially if you buy a D.A.R.K., you have a kit for life, which is a pretty good guarantee.

periodically or if the condition deteriorates was stressed.

"DA BRAIN," EXPOSE & ENVIRONMENT

We covered the anatomy and physiology of the neurological system and learned how to assess the Level of Consciousness (LOC). Instructors stressed the importance of constantly reassessing mental status. An altered level of consciousness can be an early indicator of "things going bad." Any deficit in blood, sugar and oxygen will present in the form of an altered LOC.

The next topic was the last step in the assessment process: to expose the patient to assess for further injuries. You don't want your patient to die due to your lack of attention to detail. After exposure and assessment, take into account the environment. Cover the patient up and keep them warm.

INDIVIDUAL MEDICAL KIT

The instructors then went over the Individual Medical Kit (IMK). Many students had purchased Dark Angel



Direct Action Response Training class is hosted at different locations around the country. Scottsdale Gun Club in Scottsdale, Arizona hosted class author attended.

Medical's own kit, the D.A.R.K., and the instructors went over each of the kit's components and why they were included.

For example, you should always use nitrile, since many people have a latex allergy and can go into anaphylactic shock as a result of contact with

latex. Many of the kit's components have "other capabilities" than their primary purpose, and we were given examples of how they may be used. For those who didn't purchase the kit, time was spent on putting together one's own kit.

SPECIFIC INJURIES

We moved on to specific injuries and how to diagnose and treat them. There is no hard and fast rule in trauma. The situation and injury dictate the treatment. Injuries were broken down into three categories: minor, emergent, and environmental injuries.

Minor Injuries

These include:

- Lacerations
- Avulsions
- Contusions
- Abrasions
- Fractures

Emergent Injuries

These are severe, sudden traumatic

» Continued on page 89

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TRAINING



for the REAL WORLD

Ken Hackathorn Firearms Instructor Course

By Dave Morelli

Recently I had the honor to attend Law Enforcement Firearms Instructor training taught by Ken Hackathorn.

I became certified as an NRA Police Firearms Instructor in 1982 and have attended many firearms training courses over the years. I could relate to Ken's rendition of how training in law enforcement began and has changed over the years. Hackathorn's training focuses on the things we have learned from shootings. Love or loathe dash-cam and body cameras, they have taught us a lot about the logistics leading up to the fight and the actions and reactions of the players. This is the basis of Ken's training.

The class consisted of a mix of several agencies of law enforcement firearms instructors from eastern Idaho. Idaho just changed the firearms qualification, bringing it to a superior standard over the old one, and Ken included the new qualification drills in the training. Qualifications are just that, a test of skills, but they are not training.

Hackathorn uses the phrase "real world" a lot in his training. When asked what the real world is, he replied, "The real world is not what is here on the range. In the real world, the target is shooting back. We practice stationary on the range from a firing line on one stationary target. We are concerned with range safety. The firing line in the real world is 360 de-

grees. In the real world, there are people in front of you and behind you, not on a line. And they'll be moving when the loud noise starts."

Hackathorn falls back on two important rules of firearms safety. Don't cover things you don't want to destroy, and keep the finger indexed well off the trigger until you're ready to send lead into the bad guy. Following these rules, you can work around your partner or citizens safely and still be ready to engage threats.

DISTANCE

Studying incidents of police shootings shows us that the distance of encounters is usually ten yards or less. Hackathorn points out that an officer's shooting distance is most likely closer than a private citizen's because the policeman is usually closer to the bad guy as he gets close to investigate the problem.

Coming up to a vehicle on a car stop, moving into talking distance of a domestic call, or walking into a group of people to find out what's going on puts him at ten yards or a much shorter distance to the threat.

Years ago, training spent a lot of ammo on longer distances, but recent statistics show ten yards or less is the norm. Ken advocates practicing at longer distances but spending more time on the more likely situation.

LOW/NO-LIGHT SHOOTING

There was a lot of discussion about low light/no light as they are prevalent conditions in defensive shooting. Even in the daytime, when you go into a building or certain areas, the light will be reduced. Why does most of our training take place during the day? In this course, we spent several hours practicing low-light shooting in the evening.

One thing I liked about Hackathorn's training is how he covered all aspects of shooting at night. We trained with handheld and weapon-mounted lights. The majority of departments and officers are now using

In between drills, Hackathorn talks about tactics, training mistakes, and history of development of police tactics. He is a wealth of information about these topics from living through them.



Situations may dictate you can only shoot with one hand. Make sure each shot counts.



Students perform tactical reload before leaving the line.

weapon-mounted lights, and a number of holster manufacturers are producing equipment to allow the light to be on the weapon all the time. Lights are smaller and brighter than ever before.

I grew up in police work before all this technology and learned the various ways to shoot with a handheld light, but I admittedly shoot better with the light on the pistol.

Hackathorn uses the acronym LIE for light use. Locate the person, Identify the threat, Engage if necessary. However you carry your light, you must be able to LIE. With a weapon-mounted system, an alternate light is desirable for non-threat searches and administrative uses.

We did several drills using a light in as much darkness as the outdoors would allow. This was a low-light situation where you could see and locate the target and engage without a light, but after three shots the flash of the shot made it hard to see the target, let alone identify a threat. As it got darker, the light was used to locate, then identify and engage.

Hackathorn had us shoot at night with duty ammo. Some ammo has lower flash powder and doesn't create as much night blindness from the flash. I was using practice ammo and the flash was blinding. We shot and observed everyone in the class shooting different ammo.

This brightest flash was mostly white, with yellow and orange being less. Some ammo produced a red flash, which was noticeably less bright. Most of the duty ammo we shot was red, and even that ammo varied in the amount of flash.



Hackathorn observed everybody one-on-one during the class.



Moving in and out of friendlies using Position Sul in order not to cover good guys.

Another part of the training was to light up the target, identify, engage, and immediately shut off the light while moving a step to the right or left. We also practiced walking toward and away from the threat using light. Remember, the light also tells the bad guy where you are.

ACTORS, AKA BAD GUYS

Statistics show that bad guys are usually pack animals, and a likely encounter is between one and three individuals.

Police qualifications are usually at a stationary single target, but training should be on multiple targets. We did several drills with three targets to practice engaging multiple attackers. This is one reason it is important to assess after the primary threat is down. Look to the left, right, and rear to make sure the bad guy's partner isn't an active threat.

Hackathorn points out to check the guy you just shot before assessing. He has the final vote if the fight is over.

ACTION OF ACTORS

This refers to moving. Nothing will be stationary in the real world like it is on the range. Bad guys will be moving and you will be moving, most likely away from the shooting. At times it will be appropriate to move toward the threat while shooting, but mostly away would be desirable, to put distance between you and the attacker.

We practiced forward, backward, and lateral movement while shooting.

NUMBER OF SHOTS FIRED

Ken divides this into two categories: shootings and gunfights. Shootings are when only one person is shooting, and the average is one to three rounds. Gunfights are when bullets are going back and forth, and magazines will be emptied.

This brings us to reloading. Hackathorn advocates that when the fight is on, reload when you have to. This is the emergency reload. The slide is locked back and the pistol won't go bang. Many of the drills were set up so a mandatory emergency reload was needed to complete the drill.



If you have to resort to weak-hand shooting, it will be because your strong hand is disabled and your gun will likely be on the ground.

Ken moves through the drills with a smoothness and perfection that actually look like he is going in slow motion.



Position Sul was used for moving through people without covering non-hostiles.



Some drills were fired from kneeling position.



Reload when you can, not when you have to. The quick load was incorporated into the drills, and since students loaded each other's magazines, they didn't know when they were going to need to.

The time for the drill wasn't generous enough for a sloppy reload. It is a skill that needs to be practiced. As far as tactical reloads, when the drill was over and the shooting stopped, the pistol was brought to maximum capacity using a tac load before leaving the line.

So far it sounds like an ordinary class, right? As I said, I have been to numerous trainings over the years and most were excellent, some not so much, but I always managed to get something worthwhile from each.

FUNDAMENTALS

The first paradox of this training was that by learning how to teach others to shoot well, we shot better. Hackathorn advocates whatever drill you ask the student to shoot, you need to be able to demonstrate it with skill.

The second paradox of the training was fundamentals. Hackathorn is big on fundamentals and says there is no magic in shooting. Most of the training he conducts is going back to teaching students to master the fundamentals, after which, noticeable improvement occurs when shooting the drills. As Ken said, "Don't practice stupid s##t!" Practice the fundamentals correctly so that when doing a more complex drill, the fundamentals will automatically be correct.

The first two fundamentals of good shooting are sight alignment and trigger press. Nothing new here. Of the two, Hackathorn teaches the more important is a smooth, straight-back trigger press.

Sight alignment is important, but Ken had us do an exercise that shows the sights can be slightly misaligned and still get accurate hits on the target. He had us take shots with the front sight slightly to the left in the notch, slightly to the right in the notch, and the same up and down. With the front sight out of alignment slightly but somewhat in the notch, the shots were still in the "A" box on the target.

We also found that a slight trigger snatch was not as forgiving on the target, with either an out-of-the-box hit or complete miss.

TRIGGER RESET

Hackathorn is not a fan of teaching trigger reset as far as learning to keep the finger on the trigger after reset to avoid slapping the trigger on the next shot. It is important to make the student aware that there needs to be reset before the next shot, but training to keep the finger on the trigger for the next shot isn't that important.

He demonstrates this by pointing out he is a fan of indexing the finger as high on the side of the pistol as possible. He likes to see the finger close to the ejection port. Practice making good trigger presses from here, so presses just off the trigger—such as in a double tap slightly in front of the trigger—will be correct.

We did some experimental shots with the timer to prove keeping the finger indexed is plenty fast and only 10ths of a second more than shooting with the finger on the trigger. For students who think they need the finger on the trigger to be able to get a defensive shot off, this is a drill to show them.

Keeping the finger on the trigger comes from the revolver and double-action auto days, when the first trigger pull was 16 pounds or the trigger travel was greater than an inch. Today most law enforcement guns are striker fired and still many 1911s (which by the way is the finest close-combat fighting tool of all time) have four-pound triggers and ¼ inch or less of travel.

Keep the trigger finger indexed off the trigger. Don't practice stupid s##t!

We did another valuable exercise prior to moving and shooting. One challenge to moving and shooting is keeping a good sight picture on the target for an accurate shot. The sights are moving around because of the nature of walking. Much of this can be controlled by placing the feet while in a lightly crouched position with the knees bent. We have all been taught that. The trick is to avoid snatching the trigger at that perfect time when the sights are on target and aligned. This results in a miss.

Hackathorn had us practice first from a stationary position, moving the sights up and down and side-to-side, keeping the sights inside the target "A" box while depressing the trigger. We also did this while moving the sights in a figure eight, keeping them in the box.

By pressing the trigger smoothly, the pistol goes off while the sights are in the box without a violent snatch and a miss. We then started moving and shooting and used the same technique. It quickly shows a guy that snatching the trigger is what causes the miss.

Another difference in Ken's training was when we got into the moving and shooting. After we practiced for a while, he staggered the line so the guy next to me was forward of the firing line and he was moving back while I moved forward, putting me forward of the firing line.

I use the words "firing line" to describe it, but in reality Ken had removed the firing line concept from the training, giving people shooting next to, beside, and behind me experience while I was doing the same. I know this will make some people cringe and give early coronary problems to administrators, but I believe it is necessary for professional gunfighters.

ONE-HANDED SHOOTING

As you would expect, this training also covered one-handed shooting. We did strong-hand and weak-hand drills. When talking about the strong hand, Hackathorn pointed out that if the officer or citizen is surprised, the shot will likely be one handed. If you think about it, in a close-quarter surprise attack—especially from the strong side—the natural reflex will be to draw, assess, shoot.

In the real world, you may be using only your weak hand because the strong hand is out of play due to an injury or being shot. What is the most likely position of your weapon? It will probably be on the ground.

Instead of switching hands and firing weak handed, we retrieved the gun from the ground in front of the shooter and then engaged the target both from standing and kneeling.

Another reality concept is starting position. Some instructors have students start with hands up, to the side, or whatever silly competition deal we pick up from different schools of thought. Ken comically responds to the hands up by saying, "I'm not going to rob you." He had us start in the interview position—a non-threatening position used while talking to people and that most officers will be in.

SNAKE DRILL

One of the last drills we did was moving and shooting in between non-hostiles, sometimes referred to as the "snake drill." We lined up three students, one in front of another

perpendicular to the target line and seven to ten yards from three paper targets. The three students had three feet between them, so there was enough room for a shooter to weave in and out of the line.

The shooter moved and engaged the first target, then traveled through the first gap, finger off the trigger and pistol in Position Sul, stepping on the other side off the line and engaging the second target and through the line again for the third.

This totally throws the firing line and range technique out the window, but can be safely done with personal safety rules like keeping the finger indexed and not covering non-combatants as you move.



Ken demos one-handed shooting.

Hackathorn demonstrated a number of drills to test our skills. The 1-2-3 Drill, The Wizard Drill, The Test, The Bill Drill, The BFM Drill (a combination of three drills), and of course the old standby El Presidente.

One last thing I noticed with Ken: He demonstrated all the drills he taught and watching him was learning in itself. Hackathorn is a modern embodiment of what Wyatt Earp meant when he said, "Take your time, but be in a hurry" referring to gunfights. Ken moves through the drills with a smoothness and perfection that actually look like he is going in slow motion, but when you look at the timer, it's really fast.

His efficiency in movement, eliminating unnecessary motion, and taking time for the perfect press when the sights are on were also demonstrations of confidence in ability—the final and really important lesson of the class.

That, and don't practice stupid s##t! ☺

SOURCE

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www.aztectrainingservices.com

BROWNING AMMUNITION

Winchester and Browning, Together Again



John Browning with his BAR. Rifle served the U.S. in World War II and Korea and armed our allies in Vietnam.

Born in 1855 in Ogden, Utah, John Moses Browning is arguably the most influential gun designer in human history. Kalashnikov made more guns and Maxim likely spilt more blood. But Browning left his impression on just about everything. No matter where your gun nerd proclivities may lie, there's a fair probability that something old John Moses designed is languishing in your gun safe.

John Moses' father Jonathan took part in the mass Mormon exodus that left Illinois for Utah in 1852. The Browning family sought to escape religious persecution at a time when Americans still tolerated such foolishness.

The elder Browning subsequently opened a gunsmith shop in Ogden, and young John Moses began work in his father's shop at

By Will Dabbs, M.D. ■ Photos by Sarah Dabbs

Author ran new Browning line of pistol ammunition through these four platforms. The 1911A1 and Browning Hi-Power are 70 years old, while Rock Island Armory Baby Rock and Glock 22 are brand new. All performed swimmingly.



Now in addition to its extensive line of firearms, apparel, and accessories, Browning offers its own distinctive line of premium ammunition.

Defensive loads from Browning incorporate high-tech BXP expanding bullet. Nose of design sheds barrier material, while projectile's cross-shaped heart expands in soft media.



age seven. He designed and built his first firearm, a falling-block single-shot rifle, at age 13. Browning was awarded his first of 128 patents at age 24.

The breadth of John Browning's influence on modern gun design cannot be overstated. He is personally responsible for the development of seven cartridges, among them the .25 ACP, .32 ACP, .380 ACP, .45 ACP, and .50 BMG.

He designed 13 disparate handguns including the .22 Colt Woodsman, a wide variety of concealable defensive pistols, the timeless 1911, and the eponymous 9mm Browning Hi-Power.

His shotgun designs include the Winchester lever-action model 1887 as well as the 1893 and 1897 slide actions. His

fertile mind also birthed the classic squared-back Auto-5 shotgun.

Browning-designed civilian rifles include the Winchester 1886 and 1894 lever actions. The 1894 is the most produced sporting rifle in human history and has put untold tons of venison on American tables. He also contrived the adorable little Browning .22 automatic rifle as well as the FN Trombone pump-action .22.

But Browning had what is arguably his greatest impact on military arms. Browning designed six different machine guns for military use. The M1895, M1917, and M1919 recoil-operated guns equipped generations of American fighting men, while the Browning Automatic Rifle was America's first



practical Squad Automatic Weapon. The M4 37mm automatic aircraft cannon gave the unconventional Bell P-39 Airacobra unprecedented punch in World War II, and the same lightweight automatic cannon adorned the decks of quite a few Navy PT boats as well.

John Browning designed the .50-caliber M2 belt-fed, recoil-operated machine gun, along with its massive half-inch cartridge, to bring down observation balloons during World War I. That same devastating weapon soldiers on functionally unchanged atop gun trucks, MRAP vehicles, and M1A2 Main Battle Tanks in the ongoing operation overseas even today. Fast-firing M3 versions armed every major combat aircraft produced by the United States in World War II.

PRACTICAL USAGE

The 1911 pistol and its heavy .45 ACP cartridge arose from some of the U.S. military's earliest encounters with fanatical Islamic terrorists. American soldiers facing Moro tribesmen during the Philippine Insurrection found that the .38-caliber revolvers of the day were simply inadequate to stop charging Muslims drunk with blood lust.

Considering these early jihadists were known to tie wet leather thongs around their testicles that shrunk as they dried, it is no real surprise that they could be impressive on the battlefield. Even a century later, no commonly used pistol cartridge is more effective than the .45 ACP.

The 1911 is the military service pistol that will not die. The single-action trigger is simply superb, and the basic design lends itself to customization unlike any other handgun.

Despite being formally replaced by the Beretta M9 in 1985, the 1911 remains in service with Marine Corps Special Operations units and any number of elite law enforcement



Browning's 1911 was official U.S. pistol from 1911 to 1985, serving through two World Wars, Korea, Vietnam, and numerous other small engagements. It remains in service with some units to this day.

and military agencies even this deep into the Information Age.

Browning's 1911 retains a timeless and rabid following among citizen shooters, and I myself am a card-carrying member.

John Browning's son Val was a gifted gun designer in his own right and was said to have been the first American soldier to fire the Browning Automatic Rifle in anger in World War I.

The BAR was long, bulky, and sinfully heavy. But at a time when the state of the art was a bolt-action repeater, this magazine-fed, gas-operated, man-portable machine gun offered a tremendous tactical edge. The BAR soldiered on throughout World War II and Korea and even armed our allies in Vietnam.

The basic recoil-operated rifle-caliber Browning machine-gun action is remarkably versatile. The belt feed is readily reversible, the gun ejects conveniently out of the bottom, the action lends itself to firing remotely via solenoid, and the weapon is monotonously reliable.

These rifle-caliber guns adorned tanks, jeeps, helicopters, and APCs around the globe. The massive .50-caliber version is still teaching terrorists the salient but critical differences between cover and concealment as I type these words.

Browning's last handgun design was incomplete when he died of heart failure sitting at his workbench in Liege, Belgium in 1926. Belgian designer Dieudonne Saive completed the gun as the GP35 in 1935. The pistol was marketed worldwide as the Browning Hi-Power.

Browning-designed 1911 is the most customized handgun in history. Whether in its GI-issue configuration or fully tricked-out as shown here, 1911 is a seminal firearm.



This same telescoping slide and short recoil operating system went on to drive most every SIG, FN, S&W, and Glock handgun in use today. The spirit of old John Moses rides in the holsters of just about every present-day cop in America.

CONTEMPORARY TREATMENT

John Moses Browning's first major business enterprise spawned from a collaborative agreement with Winchester Repeating Arms. Early on, Browning sold the rights to manufacture his guns for a fixed fee.

It was his desire to secure per-weapon royalties for his Auto-5 shotgun that drove him away from Winchester and into the willing arms of *Fabrique Nationale* in Belgium way back in 1898. Had the president of Remington not died unexpectedly of a heart attack during negotiations, Browning likely would have kept his business on this side of the pond.

Recently the company that bears Browning's name entered into yet another agreement with Winchester. This time Browning wanted their Winchester partners to produce a line of premium ammunition adequate to perpetuate the Browning legacies of quality and innovation.

As the Winchester ammunition plant chugs out several million rounds per day right down the road from where I sit, it is a subject with which I have some personal experience.

BROWNING AMMUNITION

We accumulated Browning pistol ammunition in .380 ACP, 9mm, .40 S&W, and .45 ACP. The cases are finished in a unique black nickel color that looks either gorgeous or sinister, depending upon your individual comportment.

This unique shell casing material is corrosion resistant and optimizes reli-



1911A1 is a powerful and effective combat handgun. Even in its basic wartime configuration, 1911A1 offers reliability and unparalleled stopping power.



ABOVE: John Browning even indirectly armed the Soviet Union during World War II. TT-33 Tokarev was clearly based upon early Browning designs.

BELOW: 1887 lever-action Browning shotgun gained fame as Schwarzenegger's weapon of choice in the movie *Terminator 2*. Gun loads from the top and sports a tubular magazine.





This Nazi Hi-Power was built in the FN plant during World War II under German occupation.

ability. The cases are boxer primed and suitable for reloading. Headstamps incorporate the Browning stag logo.

Full Metal Jacket bullets are of a truncated cone geometry. These economically priced training rounds are called BPT or Browning Performance Target loads. These rounds will not expand in common targets and cause minimal fouling in your weapons.

Bullet weights and velocities exactly match their corresponding hollow-point defensive loads for seamless training. This ensures consistency between training and defensive applications.

Jacketed hollow points employ silver jackets and an unusual X-shaped geometry in the nose that incorporates BXP or Browning X-Point technology. This unique bullet is designed to shield the soft expanding portion as it passes through barrier materials, yet allow the bullet to expand and decelerate quickly in a soft medium.

The BXP X-Point is purpose-designed to shed intervening barrier detritus then enable maximum energy dump at the optimal spot. Our informal testing against wet targets like water bottles, Coke cans, and milk jugs showed them to be devastating downrange, even when fired through intermediate barriers.

.380 ACP

To test the new Browning BXP ammunition in .380, we chose a comparably new single-action Baby Rock .380 automatic from Rock Island Armory. Rock Island Armory is the American face of Armscor in the Philippines, the most prolific producer of 1911 pistols on the planet. Their extensive line



Browning Hi-Power was a prized sidearm for *Waffen SS* and *Fallschirmjäger* personnel.

of 1911 variants stands as remarkable testimony to the staying power of John Browning's designs.

The Baby Rock is a sort-of scale replica of the standard .45 ACP 1911 that is markedly smaller than its larger forebear while remaining large enough for comfortable use. The manual of arms is the same as that of any other single-action 1911 pistol. The combination of Browning's inimitable single-action trigger and the soft-shooting .380 ACP chambering makes the gun a sweetheart on the range.

For those who want single-action Condition One precision in a small-framed concealable chassis, the holy union of the Browning-inspired .380 Baby Rock and Browning's new BXP defensive ammunition makes a stellar combination.

9mm

The Browning Hi-Power was the last of John Browning's many handgun designs. The gun used to test our new Browning 9mm ammunition is a Nazi-issue P35 built by FN in Belgium under Nazi occupation.

The Germans captured the *Fabrique Nationale* facility intact during their *blitzkrieg* through Western Europe in 1940 and press-ganged the employees and facility into weapons production for the Nazi war machine.

The *Waffenamt*-marked P35 was designated the Pistole 640b by the Germans. The "b" stands for *belgisch* or Belgian. *Waffen SS* and German *Fallschirmjäger* personnel prized this state-of-the-art combat pistol for its crisp single-action trigger, superb reliability, and high-capacity 13-round box magazine. During our range time with the new Browning ammunition, this 70-year-old warhorse never hiccupped.



Slide-action 1897 shotgun looks like a sewing machine on the inside. Despite its mechanical complexity, this venerable scattergun rendered reliable service in both military and civilian applications.

.40 S&W

The Austrian Glock pistol transformed the modern combat handgun. Introduced when the 50-year-old Walther-inspired single/double-action trigger on an aluminum frame was still popular, the polymer-framed striker-fired Glock was genuinely revolutionary.

Nowadays 65% of the cops in America carry Glocks. A buddy who retired after more than a decade with the Combat Applications Group (Delta Force) informed me that Glocks are the go-to handguns for most of their operators as well.

The .40 S&W cartridge was designed to be the arithmetic mean between the 9mm and the .45 ACP. When launched through a Glock 22, the .40 S&W indeed offers greater down-range thump than a 9mm without all the recoil of the .45 ACP. The Glock 22 is a proven combat tool that packs 15 rounds.

Love it or hate it, the sharply swept grip-to-frame angle also facilitates distribution of the recoil impulse more directly through the shooter's arm, minimizing muzzle flip.

.45 ACP

The 1911 .45 ACP is considered by many to be John Browning's masterwork. The pistol we evaluated for this article is a wartime original Remington Rand 1911A1 that rolled off the line in 1944.

Incorporating the arched mainspring housing and scalloped frame that most readily distinguishes the 1911A1 from its earlier 1911 forebear, this old Remington Rand with its black-green Parkerized finish is typical of the combat handgun with which American soldiers freed continents during WWII. Military SOP at that time was to carry the 1911 in

Condition Two—magazine loaded, empty chamber, hammer down.

A friend who survived nearly two years of combat in Italy during WWII carried his 1911A1 in a custom low-ride thigh holster he improvised from a standard leather hip rig. He stated that he carried his weapon with the hammer back and safety on.

When I queried him on the merits of carrying a 1911 in Condition One in a flap holster, he answered, "A combat pistol isn't much use if you can't put it into action quickly." Who am I to dispute a man with such qualifications?

MUSINGS

The name Browning is justifiably synonymous with quality. Now in addition to its extensive line of firearms, apparel, and accessories, Browning offers its own distinctive line of premium ammunition. Designed to be optimally effective and available in rifle, pistol, shotshell, and rimfire loads, the new Browning line of ammo ably carries on old John Moses' legacy.

I think he would be pleased.

Special thanks to www.worldwarsupply.com for the gear used to outfit our "soldiers." ☺

Will Dabbs grew up in the Mississippi Delta and has a degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Mississippi. He is Airborne qualified and accumulated 1,100 hours flying UH-1H, OH-58A/C, CH-47D, and AH-1S helicopters. He currently works in his own medical clinic and maintains a licensed 07/02 firearms manufacturing business building sound suppressors. He has written commercially on the subjects of firearms, medicine, and survival for more than 20 years.

» BROWNING AMMUNITION PERFORMANCE

FIREARM/LOAD	VELOCITY [fps]	GROUP SIZE [inches]
Baby Rock, .380 ACP 95-gr. BXP	833	3.00
Hi-Power, 9mm 147-gr. BPT	960	2.25
Glock 22, .40 S&W 18-gr. BXP	1,015	1.75
1911A1, .45 ACP 230-gr. BPT	863	1.60

Caldwell Ballistic Precision Chronograph set ten feet from muzzle.
Accuracy is edge-to-edge measurement of best five shots at 15 yards.

SOURCES

BROWNING AMMUNITION
www.browningammo.com

ARMSCOR INTERNATIONAL, INC.
www.armscor.com

GLOCK, INC.
(770) 432-1202
www.glock.com



INCONSPICUOUS PREPAREDNESS

High Threat Concealment Low Profile System

By Todd Burgreen

Numerous companies are involved in producing tactical gear to enable users to more efficiently deploy their weapons. This was not always the case: not that long ago, your primary tactical gear option was a visit to the local Army/Navy store.

Business competition has not only spurred R&D but also made gear choices available to a wider range of clientele.

A company helping equip our military, law enforcement, private security contractors, and private citizens is High Threat Concealment (HTC).



Cover garment being swept out of the way to permit access to rifle magazine. Photo: HTC

Nothing is as individual as deciding how to carry immediate-action items such as a handgun, magazines (handgun and rifle), medical IFAK, radio, and whatever else is deemed a necessity in high-risk environments.

Factors such as accessibility, adaptability, fit, weight-to-mobility ratio, retention, and most effective use of limited real estate found on an operator's body all come into play in the decision-making process.

GOING LOW PROFILE

Let's face it: the world is becoming a more dangerous place, not only overseas but also here in the U.S. With this said, lower profile has much going for it. This statement is not confined to private security contractors. Even our military forces and law enforcement see the benefit of not rolling around in full kit as typified by chest rigs and ballistic helmets in certain environments.

Military, law enforcement, private security contractors, and private citizens each have stimuli dictating which carry method works better for them. Training experience, observation, and communication with personnel from the above-mentioned cross-section indicate that patrol-belt use is gaining ground as a favored base method, with chest rigs or body armor carriers available to supplement as needed.

High Threat Concealment (HTC) focuses on a way to do this more discretely without sacrificing effectiveness. This leads us to our specific topic: HTC's Low Profile System (LPS) belt rig. The LPS is an adaptation of the patrol belt that can be concealed under a light jacket or shirt.

HIGH THREAT CONCEALMENT

Veterans James Overton and Adam Garrison founded HTC, a small business specializing in the development of low-profile tactical gear for close protection and/or low-visibility operations in both permissive and non-permissive environments.

Both have extensive experience in the U.S. military, Department of State Diplomatic Security, and/or as private security contractors. With this background, it's not hard to arrive at the genesis of the LPS concept. HTC's founders expanded on what originally was a solution for their own needs when faced with gear visibility restrictions during their protective security details.

HTC's modular and minimalist designs allow operators the unique ability to tailor the equipment to specific mission requirements and carry the gear they need while reducing the tactical profile of their appearance. The HTC concept, based on their own experience and feedback from others in the field, is to minimize the visibility of their gear without compromising the ability to react and engage threats.

LOW PROFILE SYSTEM

According to HTC literature, the LPS is tailored to those assigned to dignitary or executive protection details or for any

Even if the low-visibility factor associated with the HTC LPS is discounted, the LPS belt rig is a viable candidate for use as an everyday belt rig, no matter what mission is involved.

unit or personnel operating in a non/semi-permissive high-threat environment. HTC utilizes the latest in compression molding, vacuum forming, and injection molding combined with the highest quality thermoplastics and milspec hardware to make some of the most effective low-profile tactical gear available today. All HTC products and accessories are proudly manufactured in the U.S.

The HTC LPS comes standard with a dual pistol magazine holder, two single rifle magazine holders, blowout kit, radio holder, and handgun holster. The rig's individual components are interconnected via belt attachment loops integral to the various pieces.

Each piece can be relocated per individual preference within the framework of the LPS. Adjustable retention screws are included. The system is adaptable and modular, with other components available.

For example, the blowout kit and radio holder can be replaced with the HTC Modular Accessory Panel (MAP), allowing for adaptation to other gear items such as a dump

Front of Low Profile Belt is leather to give it a more typical appearance versus a rigger's or duty belt when cover garment is in place.





Nothing is as individual as deciding how to carry immediate-action items such as handgun, weapon magazines, medical IFAK, radio, and other necessary items in high-risk environments. High Threat Concealment LPS provides a great solution.

pouch, handcuff pouch, or general utility pouch. The blowout kit pouch can be purchased stocked or left empty for the user to outfit as they see fit.

Multiple handgun holster styles (including fitting red dot sights and lights) and magazine types (rifle, handgun, SMG) can be accommodated when ordering the LPS. One key to the LPS's success is how close the components sit next to your body, allowing for discreteness.

LOW PRO BELT

The HTC Low Profile System does not come standard with a belt, but this doesn't mean options aren't available. HTC doesn't want to dictate belt use to a customer. This lets the user choose the best belt for their intended operating environment.

HTC has designed a two-piece belt specifically for the LPS. The Low Pro Belt is a hybrid of 1.5-inch leather and 1.75-inch milspec Type 13 webbing, designed to look like an average leather belt when worn beneath a jacket or open button-front shirt. This makes it even easier to blend into your surroundings.

The HTC Low Pro Belt combines the qualities of a leather gun belt with the comfort of tactical nylon webbing. A removable buckle allows the Low Pro Belt to be

threaded through your trouser belt loops, further adding to the discrete appearance of the LPS rig.

The HTC Low Pro Belt is 1.75 inches wide from hip to hip and lined with Velcro-like hook receptacles, narrowing to 1.5-inch wide leather in front, and paired with a 1.5-inch matching web underbelt surfaced with loop receptors.

With the underbelt threaded through your pant loops, the Low Pro overbelt holds your equipment and components securely in place without the need for belt keepers, while still allowing for easy removal and reattachment without having to remove the entire ensemble.

Anecdotally, a 1.75-inch Tactical Cobra Belt also works well when low visibility is not the highest priority with the LPS rig.

All these positive attributes of the HTC LPS rig would mean little if the LPS did not perform in the field in terms of gear retention and proper placement for access of items.

FIELD TESTING

I headed to Echo Valley Training Center (EVTC) to verify both of these. First up was a run through EVTC's obstacle course to find out if items would stay in place with the HTC LPS rig during physical exertions such as rope as-



HTC offers a myriad of holster options in terms of handgun makes and accessories such as mounted lights. Photo: HTC

BELOW: Adjustable retention screws hold carbine and handgun magazines in place while still allowing fast access. Photo: HTC





Back of LPS system with med kit being removed from rear MAP panel.
Plastic fork tines enable quick removal and reinstall from LPS.

cent/descent, fence climb, pull-ups, and squeezing through tight spaces.

Next was range work moving around and between obstacles and shooting stations during team tactics drills. This activity was chosen for its combination of movement, magazine changes, and transition drills when the handgun is required.

Lastly, I rode and walked multiple times through the EVTC Jungle Walk while wearing the LPS. Target arrays of paper and steel were engaged after dismounting from the vehicle or moving to cover after my training partner gave a signal.

All these activities at EVTC reinforced my initial solid impression of the LPS design. Even if the low-visibility factor associated with the HTC LPS is discounted, the LPS belt rig is a viable candidate for use as an everyday belt rig, no matter what mission is involved.

One concern related to the med kit/IFAK on the LPS. Most daily activities involve walking or riding, and the location of the medical IFAK at the rear of the belt proved problematic and uncomfortable while riding. However, the middle back location is key for being able to reach your med kit with either hand.

HTC has developed a solution for this, thanks to a

handle that connects the med kit to the MAP panel via MOLLE slots. A quick pull of the handle detaches the kit when needed for emergency access, riding, working in close confines, or more discretion with the cover garment. The ability to quickly remove the LPS belt system from the inner belt and then place it back lets the medical kit be reinstalled quickly.

The Department of State Diplomatic Security, Customs and Border Patrol, Israeli units, private security contractors working government contracts, and many other entities use High Threat Concealment's Low Profile System. This is a strong endorsement for any person or organization looking for a belt rig that does so many things right. ©

SOURCES

HIGH THREAT CONCEALMENT

(757) 750-0300

www.highthreatconcealment.com

ECHO VALLEY TRAINING CENTER

(540) 450-7998

www.echovalleytrainingcenter.com



TERMINATING TERRORISTS

The Head-Shot Triad

By Bob Pilgrim

IN my years of firearms training, I have frequently encountered failure, Mozambique, or standard response (two to the body, one to the head) drills in the private training sector and as part of some police courses of fire, but no head-shot-first phases. Perhaps that has something to do with employing firearms to stop rather than kill.

In our current era of active shooters and terrorists who often augment their small-arms firepower with suicide belts and vests, it is imperative to shut them down immediately to prevent further bullet or bomb carnage.

As a result of their modus operandi, “experts” have been recommending engaging these threats with head shots immediately, rather than scoring center-mass hits first to quickly interrupt the Central Nervous System. Body shots may break the subject down, but as long as there is oxygen available to the brain and the hands are still working, he could continue firing for 20 to 30 seconds or detonate his murder bomb.

Furthermore, suicide vests involving chest-carried explosives may be sympathetically detonated if torso shots are delivered.

IMMEDIATE INCAPACITATION

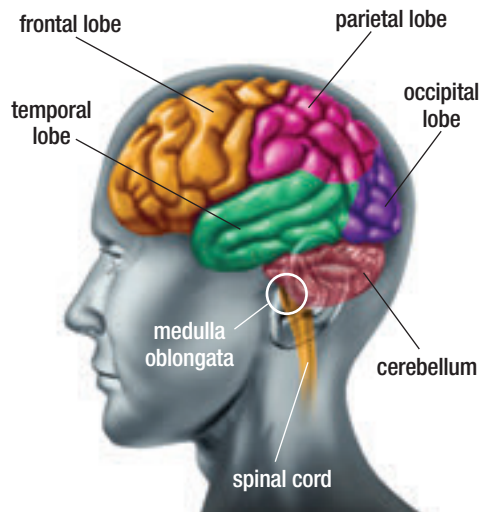
If the head is the ten ring, the medulla oblongata is the X ring. It is located low and at the brain’s rear on the brain stem. It controls many functions, including the heart and hands. Snipers attempt to access it via an imaginary two-inch circumferential band superimposed frontally over the eye socket area. However, almost any penetration of the brain-mass area will turn out the lights in the majority of human beings.

HEAD-SHOT TRIAD

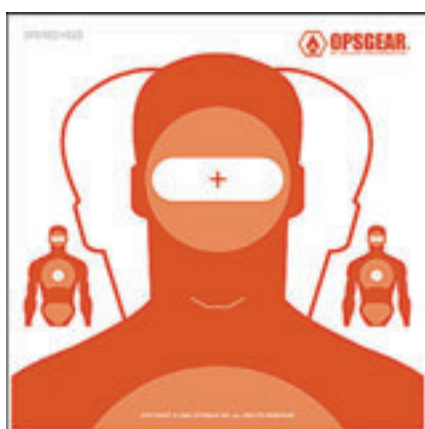
If you must confront one or more of these monsters, while hopefully enjoying the element of surprise, you need to

- Possess the necessary skills to consistently make both short- and long-range shots and know where to place your shot.
- Your firearm must be inherently accurate enough to accomplish this.
- Your load and bullet must be accurate enough and capable of penetrating the skull from all angles out to at least 25 yards—perhaps 50 if explosives are involved.

This is the Head-Shot Triad that must be satisfied well



Protected position of medulla oblongata, which controls many neuro-muscular functions including the heart and hands. This is ideal shot placement, but almost any head shot will do as long as the brain is penetrated.



Two-inch band that accesses the medulla oblongata.



before any confrontation occurs. Low-capacity personal-defense pocket guns may not cut it, but may be all you have at the moment you are caught up in such a scenario. Determine beforehand what your standoff head-shot limitations are with your concealed-carry piece and ammunition and work on extending it. Practice head shots at all distances from braced and unbraced positions, preferably from a prone stance or behind cover to avoid a potential blast wave and shrapnel.

Shots commencing at 75 and 150 feet may be necessary to avoid a bomb's blast radius. For a ten-pound belt of shrapnel-laced explosives, an indoor evacuation distance of 90 feet is recommended and 1,080 feet for outdoor situations. The shorter indoor standoff may be derived from blast-absorbing structures, cross-compartments, and obstacles normally found in building interiors.

If confronting a terrorist wearing a vest that could weigh 20 pounds or more inside a building, an evacuation space of 110 feet is recommended and in open terrain, 1,360 feet.

Obviously, open-air expanses are appropriate for rifles to resolve, but indoor scenarios could be solved by an accomplished shooter with a good handgun, perhaps augmented by a red-dot optic and quality ammunition. At Col. Jeff Cooper's Gunsite, it was not uncommon for students to drop partially obscured steel Pepper Poppers at 100+ yards with one shot in the Donga events with concealed-carry pistols and using Academy reloaded ammunition.

MORAL OBLIGATION

If you are a law enforcement officer, armed oath taker, or carry concealed under HR 218, the Law Enforcement Officers Safety Act (LEOSA), you are expected to move toward the sound of gunfire. Without compromise, get as close as you can or is prudent and, considering the situational variables, take your shot.

If the head-shot is beyond your capabilities, take what you can get of the bad guy's anatomy. That might be enough to stop the threat or have him prematurely detonate his device. Subjects hugging the floor are vulnerable to the bouncing bullet phenomenon. Aim a couple of feet in front of the subject, and the bullets will carom into the threat.

Yes, you are taking a huge risk and may not survive the confrontation. For police officers and the military, the choice has been made for them.

For LEOSA members, you are not supposed to carry solely for personal protection. While enjoying only limited citizen-arrest powers, you have volunteered to lawfully intercede to stop a criminal action.

Maybe it's time to reconsider your LEOSA motivation and your small limited-capacity firearm and instead opt for a full-sized service pistol and dress to conceal it.

Thank you for your sacrifice. ☉

Bob Pilgrim holds an MS degree, was a Marine Infantry officer during the Vietnam Conflict and retired from the FBI as a special agent where he was the field SWAT program manager. His Special Operations and Research Unit created and trained the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team. After retirement, he was an adjunct instructor at the Smith & Wesson and SIG Sauer Academies and a subject matter expert for the USDOS's Anti Terrorism Assistance Program.

Twenty-five-yard head-shot group fired standing, two hands by author. Ammo is Winchester 230-grain Ranger SXT. Hold was bottom edge of red paper. Know thy skills, weapon, and ammunition.

SMALL CALIBER, BIG SAVINGS

Reloading the .223

By Ned Christiansen



MY first reloading experience was in Dad's basement shop, watching, then helping him reload .38s and .30-06. I was about ten, and I still have the trophy he won at a local DCM (Department of Civilian Marksmanship) match with his handloads.

Later, during my toolmaking apprenticeship, I moonlighted for a gentleman who made bullet-making dies for the benchrest competition elite. Most top shooters used Bob Simonson's dies, including the founder of one of today's premium bullet companies. I learned a ton about accuracy from Bob.

I've reloaded every caliber I have used, but mostly .45 ACP; still my volume leader. With .45 ACP, I pick up brass,

Double Star upper with their Dragon forend, new barrel from Wilson Combat, Milazzo-Krieger trigger, and Trijicon 5-50X Accupoint scope helped make author's handloads look good at 500 yards.

tumble it (sometimes I don't even do that), and feed it into my Dillon progressive reloader. Reloading bottle-necked rifle cartridges, though, is more involved.

My .223 handloads carried me through a period of NRA High Power shooting culminating in a not-shameful showing at the Camp Perry National Matches, and trips to South Dakota to, shall we say, help manage the prairie dog population.



ABOVE: Cases are shiny clean after tumbling, but flash holes must be checked for stuck chunks of tumbling media (crushed walnut shells).

BELOW: Case preparation tedium *ad nauseam*. De-crimping military primer pockets cannot be skipped. Sectioned case shows top punch and swager with radiused step. Case web is squeezed via reloading press, crimp is reformed into a radius that eases insertion of new primer. No decrimp, no new primer insertion.

A note on shooting skills: Every American who wants to be called a rifleman should go to Camp Perry at least once, or shoot some local High Power matches. More might be learned in a season of competition than in a decade of informal range days. It might not seem “tactical,” but becoming intimate with your gear and honing marksmanship translates well into anything you do with a rifle. My best results here would not be impressive to top High Power shooters, who shoot 10s and Xs at 600 yards—with iron sights!

Why did I stop reloading .223? Match weekends and rodent safaris became less frequent. I got involved in police training, where we definitely stress precision, but there is no need to put all rounds into the same hole. Quite honestly, for most of this training, fodder-grade ammo gets it done.

The other reason I stopped reloading .223 is that it can be a little tedious.

But the savings are significant. That’s part of the reason I got back into reloading .223. Also, I simply wanted to again feel the pride of loading my own ammo that would shoot boast-ready groups, and to facilitate getting my bullets-clan-gin’-distant-steel fix.

“SAVINGS”?

Shop for .223 or 5.56 ammunition featuring 69-, 75-, or 77-grain OTM (Open-Tip Match) bullets and you’ll be looking at nearly a buck a round, and up to \$1.50 or more. Even at \$1.10, that’s \$1,100 per 1,000 rounds. The cost of components for 1,000 rounds is under \$340:

- 3.5 pounds Alliant RL15 powder: \$90
- 1,000 Nosler 77-grain bullets: \$220 (I found them on sale for \$190)
- 1,000 primers: \$25
- Brass—no cost, as in, I had it already. Total: \$335, meaning \$765 saved.

“But what about all the time you had to put into it?” you



ask, and rightly so. Once I got my tools and procedures dusted off and a new set of Forster dies set up, my time invested in 1,000 rounds was about a minute a round, or 17 hours. Distributed over enough long Michigan winter evenings, it's not as bad as it sounds.

How much time would one have to put in at work to make the additional \$765 to just go out and buy that ammo? \$765 savings divided by 17 hours is \$45/hour. I look at it like this: I'm paying *myself* \$45/hour instead of someone else. And that 17 hours can be pared to about five. More coming on that.

I picked the 77-grain weight because across several brands it is universally an accurate weight to work with in .223. The extra weight reduces the effect of wind, especially when going beyond 200 to 300 yards. Few bullets heavier (and therefore longer) than 77 grains can be loaded in .223 without exceeding the maximum cartridge length, which prevents feeding them from the magazine of an AR-15.

The Barnes 85-grain Match Burner can be loaded short enough; I tried it too.

MY PROCESS Case Preparation

Tumble brass.

Resize and deprime brass. Cases must be lubed. The lube has to come off.

Wash brass in hot soapy water to remove lube, including a quick brushing-out of the case mouth. Rinse and dry the brass. I don't know anyone else who does this, and brass will be re-tumbled anyway, but I like getting the lube off so the cases aren't slippery in subsequent operations.

Trim brass to length—an absolute must. Resizing lengthens the case slightly, and if it gets too long for the neck of the chamber, reliability will suffer. Safety too, as the chamber



ABOVE: The easy part—inserting primers, dropping powder charges, seating bullets in a Dillon progressive loader, at about 240 per hour. Unfortunately this can't happen until brass is pre-processed. Author dispensed with that time-consuming phase by purchasing pre-processed once-fired brass.

BELOW: Factory 5.56 ammo fired in commercial-spec .223 chamber can cause excessive pressure, resulting in loose primer pockets that often cause primers to fall out of the case upon ejection. When the reloader inserts a new primer, it may fall right back out. It's best to know the provenance of your brass. Case on left can be ID'd as a reload with primer crimp having been chamfered out. Other indicators of a high-pressure event are extractor and ejector marks on case head.



may squeeze the case mouth down onto the bullet, making it harder for the bullet to exit the case, driving up pressure.

Deburr, chamfer case mouths inside and out.

Brush out primer pocket bottoms to remove carbon left from previous firing. Many people skip this, but I believe it's worthwhile for more positive and consistent primer seating. A special tool makes it easy.

Remove crimps from primer pockets of once-fired military brass. It's tempting to skip this, but if you do, it will be nearly impossible to get a fresh primer seated. You can chamfer it out with the case mouth deburring tool, or use a swaging tool offered by several companies.

Re-tumble brass, subsequently inspect cases for chunks of tumbling media stuck in flash holes, and poke them out.

Loading

Insert new primers. I sometimes do this with a hand-priming tool as it gives more "feel" to the process. This tells me right away if a case has a loose primer pocket—one that may lose the primer upon ejection, dropping it into the rifle and causing a malfunction. Such cases may be common when using range pick-up brass of unknown provenance. This condition is usually caused by 5.56-spec ammo, which is a tad hotter than .223 commercial-spec being fired in a commercial-spec .223 chamber, commonly and inexplicably found in many brands of AR-15. It is advisable to know the source of your brass.

Drop powder charge into case. I use a Forster benchrest-style powder measure for this.

Seat bullets. I use a seating die with a spring-loaded slid-

ing cartridge guide that helps ensure perfect alignment of the case and bullet before the bullet enters the case neck. Several companies offer this style of seater.

I can save a lot of time by combining these loading steps on a progressive loader. Using my Dillon press for priming, powder charging, and bullet seating, my rate for these final steps is about 240 per hour.

But because cases need degreasing, trimming to length, deburring, and possibly primer crimp removal, attempting the entire process straight through on a Dillon is not feasible.

SAVING TIME, BIG TIME

Knowing that readers are still saying to themselves, "Did he really say 17 hours? *No way*," I have good news.

From the above, it is clear that case prep is the big time sponge in this process. There are places offering once-fired fully prepped brass: resized, trimmed, deburred, primer pockets swaged, and tumbled—all ready for those last three steps. I bought some from three different sources at an average of \$150 per 1,000, boosting my outlay per 1,000 from \$335 to \$500-ish.

Still a huge savings, but the big thing is the approximately 12 hours of case prep time saved. \$150 versus 12 hours of tedium? Two words: "Worth it."

The path to gratification was so shortened that I doubt I will be processing my own brass much in the future.

I wanted to come up with a load that was far enough below "absolute max, danger zone" that I could enjoy the convenience of using mixed cases. Different brands of brass have different internal volumes and exert varying neck ten-



ABOVE: A recipe book, ingredients, utensils, tasty results. Anyone can do it—if they commit to being methodical and not straying from recommended loads and procedures.

LEFT: This 5.56 NATO loading fired in a .223 Remington chamber caused a pressure spike, which in turn caused the case to expand and lose the primer upon ejection.

sion on the bullet, affecting pressure, velocity, and accuracy. I'd had good results with mixed brass for years, but I wanted to approach it more scientifically this time.

OPTIMAL CHARGE WEIGHT

Where previously I would try different powder charge weights and settle on the tightest-grouping one, this time I used handloading consultant Dan Newberry's "Optimal Charge Weight" (OCW) method to find the best powder charge.

Briefly, one picks a powder charge weight and makes five variants of it in 1% (I used .2 grains) increments. Fire groups with each load. The load selected is not necessarily the one showing the tightest group, but the middle group of the three having the most similar point of impact. This is the load that will best tolerate small variances such as case volume or powder charge weight without significantly degrading accuracy. As a bonus, cold-bore shots will stay closer to group center with such a load.

My new top-end for testing consisted of a Double Star upper receiver with their Dragon free-float forend and a unique bipod from Vltor featuring individual legs that clamp onto side rails.

Wanting glass that would help me look good on the target, I used a Trijicon Accupoint 5-20X. Wilson Combat of 1911 fame is now making their own rifle barrels, and I used their heavy stainless 20-inch 1:8 twist Super Sniper barrel.

For a trigger group, my old Magpul-stocked Sabre Defence lower got a Wisconsin Trigger Company two-stage. This target-only trigger is a reincarnation of the Milazzo-Krieger trig-

» HANDLOAD RESULTS AT 100 YARDS

BULLET	AVERAGE VELOCITY	AVERAGE GROUP
85-gr. Barnes	2,448 fps	.920 inch
77-gr. Nosler	2,652 fps	.930 inch

Average of three or more ten-shot groups, fired in several sessions from a bench or prone off a bipod, with rear bag. Temperature: 58-70°F. Wind: light breeze.

ger that has been a mainstay of top AR-15 target shooters for decades. It is as good as ever and now finally easier to obtain.

PUTTING HANDLOADS TO THE TEST

I baselined this barrel with some known tight-grouping factory ammo and from the very first shots, I knew I had a "hummer." It made my handloads look good at the sub-1-MOA goal and I got my first-ever, honest-to-gosh, one-ragged-hole group with 69-grain Nosler Match Grade ammo.

On a lark, I fired two factory loads that are not offered as match ammo, but both sur-



Steel tells the tale at 500 yards.

Ten-shot groups into six to eight inches are not record-setting, but neither are they bloody awful. Time of flight to 500 is about .7 second. "Clang" takes another 1.4 seconds to reach the anxious ear of the shooter.



Having a quantity of ammo with a known level of precision takes a shooter to the next plateau of familiarity with his rifle. Knowing the capabilities and limitations of the rig as a whole facilitates increasing the skill level.

If a new or field-expedient position leads to larger groups, rifle and ammo are not to blame.



Advantages of unique Vltor bipod are a wide stance, and in stowed position it leaves forend's bottom smooth. Ease of adjustability and fine-tuning of leg heights are not as good as with some bipods.

prised me with decent groups. The zinc-cored, 52-grain Barnes Range-AR is meant as economical training or 3-gun competition ammo. The Sinterfire 45-grain load's bullet is pressed powdered copper intended for safe close-range training on steel, where the bullet disintegrates into dust on impact.

Both closely mimicked the 77-grainer's POI at 100 yards and grouped at an inch or just under.

My reloading results were entirely satisfactory-plus.

SUMMARY

My handloads aren't setting any records: expensive factory ammo shoots tighter groups. But in dozens of groups fired, I have yet to exceed 1¼ inches at 100 yards even for ten-shot groups, and got down to 1.3 MOA at 500 yards.

I saved significant money and passed some pleasant evenings running the ammo faucet. It makes one a little bit more independent, and even mediocre results are instructive. Good results are instructive and rewarding. ☺

SOURCES

BARNES BULLETS

(800) 574-9200
www.barnesbullets.com

BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION

(605) 348-5150
www.black-hills.com

CORBON

(800) 626-7266
www.corbon.com

DOUBLESTAR CORP.

(859) 745-1757
www.star15.com

FEDERAL PREMIUM AMMUNITION

(800) 379-1732
www.federalpremium.com

NOSLER

(800) 285-3701
www.nosler.com

TRIJICON, INC.

(800) 338-0563
www.trijicon.com

VLTOR WEAPON SYSTEMS

(520) 408-1944
www.vltor.com

WILSON COMBAT

(800) 955-4856
www.wilsoncombat.com

WISCONSIN TRIGGER CO.

(920) 253-1516
www.wisconsintrigger.com

TRAIN LIKE YOU BLEED

✚ *Continued from page 63*

injuries that can be immediately life threatening. They may be a combination of injuries. Emergent injuries include:

- Gunshot wounds
- Stabbing/impaled objects
- Amputations
- Blast injuries
- Chest trauma, including flail chest and sucking chest
- Wound and tension pneumothorax
- Facial injuries compromising airway
- Eviscerations
- Hypovolemic shock
- Anaphylactic shock

TRAINING DAY 2

Environmental injuries, which are often overlooked, were the first topic of discussion. They are easy to prevent but can have serious, immediately life-threatening consequences. They include toxins, heat and cold injuries:

- Poisonous plants
- Snakebites
- Insects
- Carbon monoxide
- Thermal injuries, including heat exhaustion, heatstroke, burns, frostnip, frostbite, and hypothermia

The amount of detail and time spent on each type of injury varied, with the greatest emphasis on traumatic injuries and injuries that could be immediately life threatening. Pediatric and K9 injuries were also discussed.

Rather than memorizing one action for each injury, as taught in many first aid courses, we learned that common treatment modalities can address multiple injuries—a trauma treatment force multiplier. A few different techniques can be utilized in multiple combinations. Once again, this is where the understanding of anatomy and physiology comes into play.

With specific injuries out of the way, we moved on to victim movement, victim positioning, cover vs concealment, low-light environments, NBC/HAZMAT operations, triage guidelines, and incidents with more than one victim.

Triage is based on a color-code system:

- Green: Minimal (walking wounded)
- Red: Immediate
- Yellow: Delayed

- Black or Blue: Expectant (nothing can be done to save)

Triage prioritizes treatment. In a tactical environment, colored Chem-lights are often used to tag victims. The most important thing to remember is “do the most good for those you can help.”

HANDS-ON TRAINING

Hands-on skill stations were set up in the classroom. We practiced inserting the Nasopharyngeal Airway after measuring its correct length on an airway management training dummy. We practiced applying different types of tourniquets, packing wounds (on wound-packing trainers), and applying direct pressure and pressure bandages.

We also practiced splinting and tying a sling and swathe. The instructors were always there to guide us and answer questions. After we had rotated through all the hands-on skill stations, we felt quite confident in our abilities.

Finally, students were paired up to practice our assessment and treatment skills on each other. We each had the opportunity to play emergency caregiver and victim. The victim or an instructor chose the injury. The instructors evaluated and critiqued our performance. It was an excellent learning process.

Each student who completed the training was awarded a certificate of completion and a cool Dark Angel Medical challenge coin.

MY THOUGHTS

I have only praise for Dark Angel Medical Direct Action Response Training. It's an outstanding course. The training you receive is invaluable. The course is hosted at various locations around the country throughout the year. Cost is \$400 and worth every dollar. You can add a D.A.R.K. Trauma Kit (Gen 3) for only \$135 additional as part of your tuition (\$169.99 if purchased separately). To register for a course or for information on hosting one, contact Dark Angel Medical. ☺

SOURCES

DARK ANGEL MEDICAL, LLC

(720) 836-7150
www.darkangelmedical.com

SCOTTSDALE GUN CLUB

(480) 222-4351
www.scottsdalegunclub.com

Southern Grind Jackal Pup

Grammy® Award-winning artist and knife enthusiast Zac Brown created Southern Grind to represent what he believes knives should be—ruggedly dependable and highly functional, using the highest quality materials and workmanship second to none.

The mission of Southern Grind goes beyond making state-of-the-art knives. It's also about giving back to the community. The efforts of Southern Grind benefit Zac's passion project—Camp Southern Ground.

Nine weeks out of the year, Camp Southern Ground acts as a summer camp. The remainder of the year, the campus is used to bring together leaders in the fields of neurobehav-

ioral disorders, military respite, and more to discuss how Camp Southern Ground can serve all those groups.

As a former camp counselor, Zac knows the benefits a positive camp experience can have on a child's life. Camp Southern Ground is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. It serves children from all backgrounds, races, and religions, with special emphasis on children with Autism Spectrum Disorders such as Autism and Asperger's Syndrome, learning and attention issues like ADD, ADHD and Dyslexia, social or emotional challenges, and those with family members serving in the military.

Southern Grind offers an ever-growing line of products. The Southern

Grind Jackal Pup immediately caught my eye with its compact EDC-friendly size. A scaled-down version of the full-size Jackal, the Jackal Pup retains most of the features of its bigger brother.

Like the Jackal, the Jackal Pup features full-tang construction, a modified clip-point flat-ground blade with finger choil and thumb ramp, 8670M high carbon steel construction, and sculpted G10 scales (handles). Also like its bigger brother, the Jackal Pup is available in a variety of handle and sheath colors and blade finishes.

8670M is a non-stainless, low-alloy tool steel. Think of it as a super L6 steel. The 86xx series low-alloy steels were developed during World War II to conserve nickel and other alloying ele-

**Fit and finish on the Jackal Pup are flawless.
The attention to detail is immediately apparent.**

Southern Grind Jackal Pup is a compact, multi-use fixed-blade knife that's ideal for EDC.





Versatile Kydex sheath with adjustable/removable belt clip.

ments critical for the war effort. 8670M is a specialized steel with a 320,000 psi tensile strength. Commonly used for circular-saw and band-saw blades, it's a tough steel with good wear resistance. Southern Grind cryogenically quenches the blade to -300°F for maximum strength and durability.

Although 8670M is a top steel for hard use, it will rust and stain if not properly cared for. Keep your knife sharp, clean, dry, and oiled and it won't let you down.

The Jackal Pup has a 2.8-inch blade. Blade thickness is .135 inch at the spine. The knife has a 2.95-inch handle length and overall length of 5.75 inches. It weighs 2.8 ounces. It's the perfect size for an EDC fixed blade and is also an outstanding caping, bird and trout knife.

Clip-point blades are very popular and date back to at least Macedonian times. The modified clip-point blade of the Jackal Pup provides a sharp and controllable point that's good for piercing and has plenty of belly for slicing. It's an excellent all-around blade.

The blade is finished with a Physical Vapor Deposition (PVD) coating. PVD is a vacuum deposition method that produces a thin, hard, and corrosion-resistant coating that is often more durable than even electroplating. The Jackal Pup is available with Black, Gunmetal, and Desert Tan PVD coatings.

The 3D milled G10 scales are attached with three Torx screws. The sculpting on the handle, coupled with the shape of the handle and finger choil, not only looks awesome, but also serves a practical purpose by providing a very secure, comfortable grip on the knife with any grip technique



Jackal Pup is scaled-down version of Southern Grind's Jackal. This Jackal has Gunmetal blade and Black and Tan handle. Photo: Southern Grind

and with wet or bloody hands, without being abrasive on clothes. The Jackal Pup is available with Black, Black and Tan, Desert Tan, Jade Ghost Green, and OD Green scales.

The Jackal Pup comes with a versatile multi-carry formed Kydex® sheath in your choice of Black, Coyote and OD Green. It holds the knife by a secure friction fit with no rattle. As with all Southern Grind products, the sheath exhibits great attention to the details overlooked by some, such as the small molded drain hole in the bottom.

The belt clip is attached by two



Jackal Pup's sculpted G10 handle slabs and finger choil provide comfortable, secure grip under all conditions. Thumb ramp offers added control for fine tasks.

Chicago screws and can be positioned for ambidextrous IWB/OWB carry or removed for carry on a neck chain as a neck knife. The clip fits belts up to two inches wide. It's MOLLE/PALS compatible.

Fit and finish on the Jackal Pup are flawless. The attention to detail is immediately apparent. The grinds on my knife are perfect. The scales are perfectly mated to the tang. Southern Grind takes great pride in its products. Every knife comes with a card signed by both the assembler and the final quality inspector.

The blade comes out of the box with a sharp factory edge. The 8670M blade is hardened to RC 58-60 and holds its edge well, yet is easy to sharpen. If you register your knife with Southern Grind, you'll receive free sharpening for life from the company.

The Jackal Pup has a suggested retail price of \$129.95. All Southern Grind products are made in the USA by American craftsmen and come with a limited lifetime warranty. And not only is the Jackal Pup an outstanding knife, but your purchase helps support a very worthwhile cause too. ©

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www.southerngrind.com

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www.zacbrownband.com

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Enhancing Gun Storage Safety

Gun safety is a constant concern of responsible gun owners.

Another push is on by the federal government for “Smart Guns.” Liberals want to pick winners and losers with taxpayer money and reportedly want to extend this technology to the military. But there are simpler and more reliable solutions to deny accessibility and unauthorized use and still make the firearm readily available for action.

GunBlocker has developed a variation on a security theme and is offering to the public internal gun locks for rifles and pistols called gunBlocker.

Its purpose is not to render safe your carry gun or bedside blaster, but for longer-term storage where unauthorized individuals might be able to access the firearm.

Labeled the AR-15, which today is really a generic term, the blaze orange, plastic and metal magazine insert fits any AR-style rifle that accepts milspec magazines. In fact, it currently resides in my IWI Tavor’s magazine well. It’s a sturdy piece of gear made with first-class materials.

To introduce the system into the breech and bolt area of your rifle, lock the bolt assembly to the rear and per-

form a thorough safety check. “Load” the gunBlocker into the magazine well with the black plunger forward. Pushing in the plunger projects a stainless steel bolt into the bolt face of the bolt assembly. I had to pull my bolt all the way to the rear to both seat and unseat the bolt from the bolt face.

Pushing up on the plunger retracts the male bolt. To prevent this, a set of locking keys locks its internal mechanism. They are attached to a coded credit card, so you can order replacements should they become misplaced.

The handgun is not neglected. The gunBlocker system for pistols consists

Pistol gunBlocker in process of being locked into a SIG Sauer 1911 Scorpion Carry pistol. Installation tool is still attached to barrel stick. Three polymer parts of pistol gunBlocker are displayed below pistol.

Its purpose is not to render safe your carry gun or bedside blaster, but for longer-term storage where unauthorized individuals might be able to access the firearm.





AR-15 gunBlocker with black plunger in unlocked position. Pistol gunBlocker is also displayed. It consists of blocker, barrel stick, and installation tool.

of three polymer parts. The long barrel threading installation tool locks the blocker and barrel stick into the pistol's partially open or out of battery chamber. The blocker fits most pistols from .380 caliber to .45 ACP, but may have to be trimmed for a specific model.

AR-15 gunBlocker rendering IWI Tavor bullpup inoperable.

With a clear and safe pistol and the slide locked to the rear, slide the round lug of the blocker into the weapon's chamber. Insert the barrel stick into the end of the installation tool. Then insert the barrel stick into the muzzle with the installation tool. Hold the blocker and align the barrel stick and twist until the threads engage. Hand tighten the blocker and barrel stick together. Remove the installation tool from the barrel, leaving the barrel stick in place

with the blocker. Release the slide.

The barrel, action, slide, and magazine well are now blocked. Like the AR-15 block keys, the installation tool should be kept in a secure place. ©

SOURCE

GUNBLOCKER
www.gunblocker.com



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SIG Sauer MPX[®] Carbine in 9mm

The modular 9mm SIG MPX Carbine maintains all of the ergonomic superiority of the short-barrel rifle and pistol variants, but now with a 16-inch hammer-forged barrel. A full-length aluminum KeyMod handguard provides ample room for mounting lights, lasers, and grips.

Completely ambidextrous, the SIG MPX Carbine is great for left- or right-handed operators with its dual-sided selector switch, magazine release, charging handle, and bolt release.

Familiar AR-pattern controls and ergonomics reduce the training curve and are instinctive for anyone experienced with the AR system.

The three-position collapsible stock features integrated QD sling cups for fast and easy sling attachments. A full-length Picatinny rail allows for solid, consistent mounting of optics and targeting lasers. SIG Sauer[®] folding iron sights come standard.



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Hodgdon CFE BLK Powder

Hodgdon, The Brand That's True[®], is excited to announce the release of CFE BLK[™], a new Spherical powder specifically formulated for the .300 AAC Blackout cartridge. CFE BLK joins the Hodgdon CFE[™] family of CFE 223[™] and CFE Pistol[™].

This new powder provides full function of AR-type rifles throughout the range of bullet weights, and is perfect for those subsonic reduced loads. In addition to being the perfect solution for the .300 Blackout, it performs beautifully in many smaller-capacity cartridges, in particular varmint cartridges such as the .17 Hornet and .17 Ackley Hornet, as well as the 6.8 Remington SPC and 7.62x39mm Russian cartridge. This fine powder meters like a dream and leaves no copper residue, extending accuracy for longer shooting periods and making cleanup quick and easy.



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Building on the incredible success of the Colt Competition Pistol[™], the historic firearms manufacturer expands the line by offering the same great feature set in a series of stainless steel models.

The stainless steel Colt Competition Pistol features Colt's innovative Dual Spring Recoil System[™], which reduces felt recoil and helps keep shots on target at critical moments. Other features include Novak's new patent-pending adjustable rear sight and fiber-optic front sight, competition ergonomics including an undercut trigger guard and upswept beavertail safety, and a National Match[®] barrel. The stainless steel Colt Competition Pistol is available in .45 ACP (\$1,049), 9mm (\$1,049), and .38 Super (\$1,099).

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Ashley Performance Lever-Action Scope Mount

Ashley Performance, LLC announces a mount that positions a conventional scope low and forward on Marlin®, Henry®, and similar 1895/336-style lever guns. This facilitates running the gun from the shoulder, improves thumb access to the hammer, and minimizes the chance of the scope contacting the shooter's face during recoil. The mount is machined from heat-treated 4140 steel and attaches with four screws to the existing threaded holes on top of the receiver. No firearm modification is necessary. Using recommended scopes and rings, the bottom of the eyepiece is only .110 inch above the receiver. The front ring is cantilevered over the barrel, and a brass-tipped stop screw is adjusted to approximately .003-inch barrel clearance to prevent deformation.



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www.ashleyperformance.com

Aimpoint 3X-C Magnifier



The new Aimpoint 3X-C Magnifier, which debuted at SHOT Show 2016, is now available from authorized Aimpoint dealers. Designed for the citizen shooter at a budget-friendly price point, the 3X-C can be used in conjunction with all Aimpoint sights for long-range aiming or observation. Additionally, a variable (-2 to +2) diopter setting allows this magnifier to be adapted to the individual shooter's eye. The 3X-C can also be used as a handheld 3X monocular.

Aimpoint magnifiers utilize the red dot in Aimpoint sights as the aiming reticle, eliminating the need for re-zeroing when shifting between non-magnified and magnified aiming. The 3X-C is encased in a shock-absorbing protective rubber cover that also creates an ideal ergonomic grip. Internal optical adjustments make aligning the magnifier and sight quick and easy. Suggested retail price is \$307.00.

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The Inceptor® RNP Sport Utility Ammo™ line is available in .380 Auto, 9mm, .40 S&W, .45 Auto, and .38 Special.

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Second Amendment in Action

Stopping a Rampage

The parking lot of an apartment complex in Cedar Falls, Iowa turned into a crime scene one Monday night in October, when a resident turned on a neighbor unexpectedly and began stabbing him with a knife. The man, who had never had any problems with his fellow tenants, had stabbed his victim 24 times when a car pulled into the parking lot.

The car's driver, who was the manager of the complex, got out of her vehicle and was set upon by the knife-wielding attacker. He stabbed her multiple times before her boyfriend arrived on the scene, their cars having become separated at a traffic light. The boyfriend, who was licensed to carry, drew his pistol and the attacker dropped his knife and surrendered. Police arrived to find the suspect lying on the ground and the defender's handgun already holstered.

SOURCE: *The Waterloo-Cedar Falls Courier*, Waterloo, Iowa, 11/14/16

Pizza Place Stickup Thwarted

The lobby of a Levittown, Pennsylvania pizza place was empty except for one customer, an employee manning the counter, and a second employee in the back of the store. This tableau was disrupted late on a Tuesday evening by a pair of intruders wearing masks and surgical gloves and waving pistols. "Give us all your s**t!" demanded the intruders as they began pistol-whipping the employee and customer.

When their attention was momentarily diverted, the customer produced a .45-caliber Glock from beneath his coat and opened fire, striking both intruders, one fatally. The second intruder, hit in the neck and shoulder, was transported to the hospital. The customer was not seriously hurt, according to authorities. The intruders, who turned out to be brothers, had attempted to rob the store with realistic-looking pellet pistols.

SOURCE: *LevittownNow.com*, Levittown, Pennsylvania, 11/16/16

Do you have an intermediate level of force between "Harsh Language" and "Shoot This Dude"? A less-lethal alternative is sometimes handy.



Floridian Samaritan

Not long after rush hour ended on Interstate 75 in Fort Myers, Florida, a state trooper working an accident scene was narrowly missed by a speeding car. Realizing that the driver had deliberately tried to hit him, the trooper got in his patrol car and went in pursuit. Pulling the speeder over, the trooper suddenly found himself in a fight for his life.

Entangled and rolling on the ground, the trooper tried to protect his holstered handgun while his attacker repeatedly punched him and attempted to gain access to the weapon. A passing motorist noticed the struggle and pulled over.

Exiting his vehicle, the motorist drew his own pistol and commanded the attacker to get off the trooper. When the assailant didn't comply, the Good Samaritan opened fire, killing the attacker and saving the trooper. Little attention was paid in the mainstream media to the fact that both the Good Samaritan and the assailant were black and the trooper was white.

SOURCE: *WTVT-TV*, Tampa Bay, Florida, 11/16/16

Invaders Repelled

It was just past eight in the morning in the town of Rosharon, Texas, south of Houston, when an elderly resident was surprised by a noise at the back door of her house. Two masked men kicked the door open and entered, brandishing firearms and demanding money.

The woman was on the phone with her daughter, who lived in the house across the street. The daughter alerted her husband, who grabbed a firearm and ran to the rescue, engaging the would-be robbers in a shootout that left one suspect dead and sent the other fleeing. The slain invader, who was out on bond for an aggravated robbery charge, was wearing a GPS ankle bracelet.

Deputies were still looking for the second suspect at the time of this writing.

SOURCE: *Brazosport Facts*, Clute, Texas, 11/16/16 ☺

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The Myth of Muscle Memory

A lot of hackneyed phrases are floating around out there. One of them is, if you practice garbage, after 20 years you'll end up with perfected garbage. The antithesis of this is, if at first you don't succeed, try, try again. Both have validity.

Unfortunately, what Robert the Bruce learned from watching a persistent spider while hiding in a cave may not apply to the struggling pistolero. When you're battling to hit the target on a firing range, it doesn't help to have the local sage tell you to "remember Bruce and the spider"—especially if he doesn't have any constructive information. So you wind up with either arachnophobia or a backstop full of expended projectile garbage. Or as a last resort, you could try a different approach to the problem.

A long time ago, I discovered the hard way that quantity should never supercede quality—at least not when trying to improve shot placement ability during training sessions. Following a short bout of meningitis, my up-until-then reasonable accuracy and shooting scores plummeted. To reacquire my pre-illness eye-to-hand coordination and marksmanship ability, I did what everybody else does—I expended a lot of time and piles of ammunition to retrain my "muscle memory."

Here's some earth-shattering information: your muscles don't have a memory. Your brain does. You can practice on a specific target at a specific distance until you encounter polar bears in the Sahara Desert, but that doesn't mean you're a marksman merely because you're hitting that particular target. Move the target angle and/or distance, and your projectiles go astray. Move the battleship and you're just another blooper of a water geyser in the middle of the ocean—and you don't get another try to retrain your "muscle memory."

Most authorities seem to have settled on the magic number of 4,000 repetitions of a specific act to supposedly impregnate that action—such as a pistol drawstroke—into one's synapses and "muscle memory." In my opinion,

you can replace that 4,000 figure with 40,000 or 400,000. Authorities and expert opinions are all well and good, but remember that authorities and experts conceived and built the "unsinkable" Titanic.

Reverting back to the original shooting problem, the above diatribe implies that quantity doesn't replace quality—and it doesn't fix the inherent problem. All it does is produce a self-delusional eye-blind.

If, for example, you fire ten rounds and hit the target nine times, you do have a 90% hit ratio. But the bad news is, you have a 10% miss ratio. Not satisfied with that—and rightly so—you decide to crank a bucketful of ammo downrange at the same target, from the same distance. Five hundred rounds later, you have a great-looking target, with the center drilled out in one ragged hole. Unfortunately, like many other things in life, what looks good at first glance isn't as satisfactory under closer scrutiny.

After totaling the individual bullet perforations that impacted around the periphery of the large central orifice, you find that you fired 50 "loose" rounds out of 500. You still have a 10% miss ratio. So not only have you expended a bunch of ammo, you're also stuck with your basic problem. You fire 500 rounds during a training session to maintain a level of ability, not to try to overwhelm a single paper target with an illusionary primary hole.

What to do? First, define what is causing the loose rounds, either from personal past experience or from a knowledgeable friend or instructor.

Second, do not initially try to correct the issue by launching a plethora of ammunition at the target. Start off with a minimal amount of rounds and force yourself to have to work for success. In other words, don't crank off 100 rounds at an IPSC target situated ten feet from your belly button. You know you can hit that accurately.

How I cured my personal post-meningital accuracy plunge was by self-imposed mental control. Since I was working graveyard shifts at the time, I

had the firing range available during weekday daylight hours. I forced myself to drive a time-consuming route around the city to reach the range, and went through the rigamarole of setting up the firing range. And most importantly—and the primary success element for my personal ballistic rehab—I took only 25 rounds to the range. Obviously this was other than my carry rounds, which were not to be expended on the range, even if the last of the practice rounds was a miss.

We've all been down that route. "Well, I'm not going to quit with a miss. I'll hijack one of my carry rounds so I can have the satisfaction of positive reinforcement with a last practice-round hit." Eight misses later, you're hoping you won't be assaulted on your way home because you've been through half your carry ammo.

Once I was hitting with all 25 rounds, I pushed the tally to a total of 35, then 50, then 100. I implemented each increase in round consumption only after I was getting the desired results from prior range visitations with a lesser total amount of ammunition. Did I miss the desired mark on occasion? Sure—we all do. But the primary successful facet was that I was no longer trying to fix the problem by sending hundreds of rounds of garbage quantity downrange, but instead substituting quality for quantity.

I later picked up an excellent pistol practice drill from Colonel Cooper. It will either perfect your mechanical shooting ability or cause you to mentally self-destruct. Starting with a holstered pistol, fire one round at an eight-inch target from 25 yards—two-and-a-half-second time limit. It's plain, simple, and combines many facets of basic defensive shooting. It also requires the absolute maximum mental control for each and every shot fired. If this doesn't work, nothing will.

Your alternative is to follow the old adage: "If at first you don't succeed, try duct tape or give up." ©

[This column first appeared in the March 2008 issue of S.W.A.T.]

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