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SWAT

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MARCH 2016

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Defending Home, Community and Country

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BY EUGENE NIELSEN

Cover photo by Travis Tipps

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Fire Mission!

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THE figures for the number of NICS (National Instant Criminal Background Check System) checks performed in 2015 are in. Due to his anti-gun rhetoric, Barack Obama once again holds the unofficial title of gun salesman of the year. The number of new gun sales crushed previous records and included many first-time buyers.

The good news is that it will become harder for Congress to pass any new anti-gun legislation with more and more of their constituents owning firearms—especially in an election year. The bad news is that anti-gun politicians will continue to tell lies—lies that some uninformed fence sitters may believe.

An excellent example is this statement made by Clinton Part Deux: “92 percent of Americans support common-sense measures like opening up gun makers and sellers to lawsuits over gun crime.” The problem, of course, is that most statistics are made up on the spot and not based on actual facts.

The words used by anti-gunners—such as “gun crime” or “gun violence”—are calculated to invoke a visceral reaction in those on the fence. An inanimate object is not capable of committing a crime or causing violence.

The simple fact that you are reading *S.W.A.T.* means that for all intents and purposes, I am preaching to the choir, so consider this a “fire mission.” Gift an NRA membership to someone. It includes a subscription to one of three NRA magazines, so choose the one you think they would enjoy the most.

Take a friend who is not in our community shooting. I humbly suggest a .22 for first timers. Handing a man a Magnum pistol or a woman a 12 gauge (with a stock that is probably already too long) is irresponsible, as it may intimidate them and cause more harm than good.

This is an excellent time to show it is the person pulling the trigger who is responsible for doing good or evil, not the firearm itself. For example, talk about the woman who killed one person and wounded dozens when she drove her car onto the Las Vegas Strip a few days before last Christmas. No one blamed the automobile. I’m sure you can find numerous instances from your own area to use as analogies.

And unlike those who spread lies, make sure you can back up your claims/statistics with facts.

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

Denny Hansen

SWAT

**EDITORIAL
INFORMATION**

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press releases or questions,
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WOLF PISTOL

I enjoyed Dave Spaulding's article on his Wolf Pistol (*THE WOLF PISTOL: Custom-Built Combative Handgun*, December 2015 S.W.A.T.). He doesn't mention how much it cost him to build it and I have a few other questions.

Is it something anyone can build? I am by no means a gunsmith, but I can put parts together (most of the time). Would this project be feasible for me? Or would I need a gunsmith or armorer to do it for me? What kind of money am I looking at if I want to build a gun like it? Thanks again!

A. Wheeler, West Virginia

I'm not going to kid you, while Lone Wolf did not give me the parts for the gun free, they did offer a promotional discount. If you look at their website, you will see the primary components are: frame \$234, barrel \$149, slide \$175, and trigger \$99, for a total of around \$560, not including the smaller parts like springs. I built my gun for \$420 with my discount.

Yes, you could buy a Glock cheaper, but you won't have a custom gun you built yourself! All you need to be is a Glock Armorer to build a Wolf Pistol. It is not complicated and the truth is, I really enjoyed the process!

I hope this helps. All the best!

Dave Spaulding

REVOLVER RESURGENCE

Thank you for including articles about the "outdated" wheelgun in your recent issues. Many younger folk either think of a wheelgun as an old-guy tool or a backup piece of equipment. A competent shooter is as well armed with a full-sized revolver as he would be with a full-sized pistol. Thank you again.

W.C. Self, Illinois

Thank you for taking the time to contact us and provide us with feedback. We agree that in the hands of a competent shooter—and with the correct mindset—the revolver is still a viable and very reliable weapon.

RUGER RIFLES

I found the recent article on the Ruger American rifle very interesting (*PRAC-TICAL TACTICAL: Ruger American Predator .308*, January 2016 S.W.A.T.).

I purchased a Ruger American Ranch Rifle in .300 AAC about six months ago. It is even lighter and shorter and will put Hornady 110-grain V-Max into about 1.25 inches with the 1-3X Weaver I have on it. I find it much easier to hit with beyond 50 yards than the Winchester M94 .30-30 that it replaced as my truck gun.

It should also make a good backup deer rifle for anyone to use due to the good trigger and low recoil. I have read reports of magazine/feeding issues but have not had any problems with mine.

M. Howard, email

Thank you for your comments and for contacting us.

We also heard some reports of feeding problems with the American series of rifles, but most of them were several years ago. It is our understanding that



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Ruger has worked out any bugs the earlier magazines may have had. Ruger's customer service is excellent, and they will replace any magazines that do not function properly.

COMPACT WOES

I recently attended a pistol course with a compact (3½-inch barrel) 1911-type pistol. When I told the instructor what I would be shooting, he said if that was my preferred carry gun to shoot it, but don't expect it to finish the course. I had fired about 300 rounds through it already with no problems, and I felt

good about my decision.

About 150 rounds into the class, my pistol started to experience feeding problems. I had brought an S&W M&P as a backup, and finished the course with that pistol. The instructor said, "I told you so," but did not offer any guidance as to the root of the problem. Have you heard of this?

D. Heiskel, email

Compact 1911s, like .357 Snubbie revolvers, are designed to be carried a lot but seldom fired. They cycle very fast due to their short barrels, and this puts

a lot of stress on the recoil spring, which should be changed as soon as functioning becomes a problem. My personal SOP is to change the recoil springs on my compact 1911s at 400 rounds.

If your instructor had been more familiar with the 1911 platform, he would have advised you to bring an extra recoil spring when you told him what you were bringing to class.

Denny Hansen

ONE BOX RIFLE WORKOUT

Just wanted to thank Ethan Johns for the article on the one box rifle drill (*ECONOMICAL RIFLE PRACTICE: One Box Rifle Workout*, January 2016 S.W.A.T.) I was amazed at how many skill sets I could practice with only 20 rounds of ammo.

H. Smith, email

Thank you for the feedback. We agree this is a very practical drill when short on time, cash or both.

LEFT-HANDED GLOCK?

While perusing the January 2016 issue, I noticed an anomaly. The pictures furnished for the Weaver Stance article seemed a little off. Upon closer look, it seems as though the negatives for the article's pictures were reversed, causing a left-handed ejection port on a Glock. Is this a new Glock or are my eyes deceiving me?

You might want to check out the Kahr CW9 for a concealed carry weapon. It's an excellent shooter at CQB range.

Keep up the good articles.

J. Risher, email

Good catch! When I received the January issue, something about this article's photos did not seem right to me, but I could not put my finger on what the problem was because I was concentrating mostly on the stance—hands, elbow, feet, etc—as that was the focus of the story.

I take the entire blame for not spotting the error. Thank you for taking the time to contact us and for pointing it out.

Denny Hansen ☺



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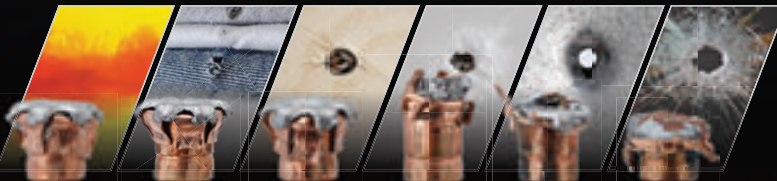
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Raven Concealment Systems Gear

OVER the years, I have accumulated several boxes of holsters and magazine pouches. Some I use occasionally, depending on what handgun I intend to carry and how I will carry it.

Whenever I evaluate a holster for S.W.A.T., I wear it for at least three to four weeks, so I can present an honest, informed opinion. Those I find too bulky, of poor quality, or just plain uncomfortable for extended wear get thrown in a box. You won't read about them here, as there is no sense in wasting ink on something I can't truthfully recommend.

Recently my Dad acquired a Glock 19 for a special event he will be attending that will be featured in a future issue of S.W.A.T.

To carry it, he chose a holster and magazine pouches from Raven Concealment Systems (RCS). He was so impressed by the gear that he asked me to cover it here.

The holster is the Phantom Modular Holster. Checking the RCS website, I was amazed at how many options they of-

fer the consumer: left or right hand, any model of Glock (or other pistol) you can think of, four different color choices, four different sizes of belt loops, full or short body shield, and eight different types of belt loops for inside (IWB) or outside the waistband (OWB) carry!

The model evaluated here is a Phantom for OWB carry, with full body shield and 1.75-inch belt loops in Coyote Brown.

The Phantom is made from two pieces of tactical-grade Kydex® held together with grommets. All edges are smooth and burnished.

The holster is molded to an exact fit for the specified firearm. And when I say exact, I mean just that. Every detail of the pistol—right down to the muzzle—can be seen on the holster. The pistol clicks positively into the holster.

To test the retention, I inserted an unloaded Glock 19 in the holster. It took about ten seconds of violently shaking it over my bed before the pistol finally fell out. There is no other tension device, as it is unnecessary.

Front of Raven Concealment Systems Phantom Modular Holster alongside Glock 19 shows detail molding.



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Conversely, while retention is superb, drawing it was smooth and easy when worn on the belt.

You may order an OWB Raven Concealment holster and change your mind and decide you want to carry IWB or appendix. You can use the same holster and only change out the belt loops—and as mentioned earlier, Raven Concealment has many types to choose from. You can change back and forth from OWB to IWB depending on your style of dress or other criteria.

The full body shield on the Phantom extends to the rear of the slide. When worn OWB, it helps prevent clothing from being abraded. It serves the same function for skin if worn IWB.

The above-mentioned magazine pouches included RCS's Double Modular Pistol Mag Carrier and AR/M4 Modular Magazine Carrier. They are made in the same fashion and with the same quality as the holster.

Like the Phantom, holster magazine pouches can be ordered for either OWB or IWB carry, and right or left hand. Both samples were in Coyote Brown with 1.75-inch belt loops for OWB carry.

With some companies "what you see is what you get," but RCS gives the consumer the option of bullet tips oriented to the front or rear. The Double Modular Pistol Mag Carrier can be had with either a standard cut or what RCS calls an "MD Cut," with the leading corner of the pouch trimmed down. The samples evaluated were standard cut with the bullet tips pointing forward.

Both magazine pouches feature a screw to increase or decrease the amount of tension needed to withdraw the mag. On the pistol pouch, the screw is located between the two compartments, with a rubber "O" ring sandwiched between the two pieces of Kydex.

The screw on the carbine mag pouch is located at the lower left edge. There is no "O" ring on the carbine pouch, and either tightening or loosening the Kydex adjusts tension.

After using this gear for several weeks, I can see why Dad was so impressed with it. Give it a try and you will too. ☺

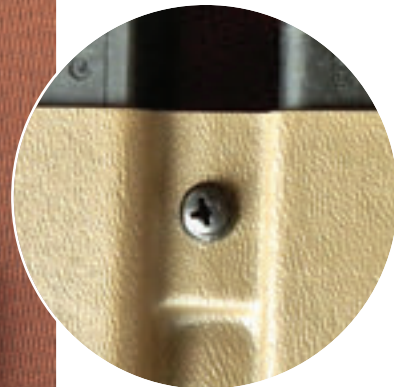


Rear of RCS Phantom Holster illustrating belt loops and full body shield.

SOURCE

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Double Modular Pistol Mag Carrier and AR/M4 Modular Magazine Carrier were also evaluated. Note detail molding and tension devices.



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Overthinking Handgun Bullet Design

THE other day I was unloading the rounds from my personal handgun during qualifications at the police department when one of the instructors commented on the fact that I was carrying, by his reckoning, a bullet that was designed sometime in the sixties—the 1860s.

I just laughed and then proceeded to shoot a perfect score just to show that those of us on the “senior tour” still remember how them newfangled shoot-in’ irons work.

In truth this exchange awoke a major pet peeve from among the thousands on my huge peeve ranch, perhaps the largest in the lower 48 states. Among that fine and well-fed herd of irritations, one stands above the rest: all this incessant talk of handgun bullet design and performance.

I understand, really I do. It’s pretty obvious when you consider that the only

actual physical connection between you, the heroic good guy (or gal), and a dangerous two-legged bag of crap is a bullet. When you are legally and morally justified in stopping a troublemaker, there are few better ways to do it than sending along some copper-jacketed lead.

Thus I will ungrudgingly admit that bullets are pretty darned important in the scheme of things.

But can we stop all the chatter for five minutes?

My exasperation centers around handgun bullets because they inspire most of the excessive lip service on the Internet, in the popular press, and at gun-store counters.

Rifle bullets are just as important for social work but don’t get the same attention because virtually all centerfire rifles pack enough kinetic energy to do exceptionally rude things to an assailant. That’s why the focus in rifle bullet

design tends to be on long-range accuracy rather than what happens when they enter a chest cavity. The whole point of tweaking bullet design is usually rendered moot because, with reasonable marksmanship, the bad guy’s entire chest cavity looks like bad left-over corned-beef hash.

But handguns are a different kettle of fish as they are an underpowered weapon that is carried primarily for convenience rather than “ultimate stopping power.” It stands to reason that we want a handgun bullet to perform as well as possible when it hits someone. Therefore, we talk, talk, talk, and talk some more about handgun bullets.

However, stop and listen to what we just agreed upon: handguns are underpowered weapons. This is highlighted by the somewhat dubious but still reasonably accurate urban legend that says 80% of handgun wounds are non-lethal.

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This highlights my theory that the best bullet in the world coming from this underpowered weapon isn't going to be terribly more effective than any other comparable bullet.

But to listen to the hand-wringing, it seems apparent we are determined to squeeze that one last ounce of "lethality" (whatever that is) out of handgun bullet design. That's all well and good, but here are a few things I'd like to bring into the discussion:

- Very few people truly understand terminal ballistic performance in flesh. Many make claims, but even leading scientists don't often agree on the most important bullet characteristics for inflicting maximum damage.

- There is such a thing as "technological plateau," in which a field of knowledge reaches the point where new improvement is evolutionary, not revolutionary. I would suggest handgun bullets have already reached that stage.

- In all likelihood, you personally have not performed scientific, thorough, repeatable bullet testing on calibrated ballistic gelatin in a laboratory under controlled conditions. I haven't, and I write about guns for a living.

- If you aren't a cop, soldier in a combat zone, or emergency medical person, your real-world experience with fresh bullet wounds is limited. Even if you are, such evidence is useful but highly anecdotal.

Taking all this into account, I would say that everything most of us "know" about "the best handgun bullet" is pure hearsay colored by marketing or gun media spin.

I've shot a lot of handguns, hung around with real experts on the topic, and occasionally ponder the few people I watched die from bullet wounds. And yet, in spite of a fairly well-rounded career, I don't have the slightest idea of the "best" or "ultimate" bullet for a particular caliber.

In actuality, the whole thing is pretty simple: if the bullet/cartridge has enough "oomph" to reach the vitals of a large assailant when shot on a lateral plane through the arm and on into the chest, while retaining the majority of its starting weight, you have a winner.

So pick a well-known, tested and respected cartridge that functions flawlessly in your weapon, from a manufacturer you trust, and buy a whole bunch

of them. Then use the excess inventory to practice because unarguably the most important key to "stopping power" is bullet placement.

Whatever bullet you use, you must be able to place it precisely in a vital area as fast as possible under high stress conditions. If you can do that, even the .22 LR cartridge can be deadly, as witnessed by the hundreds of murders and suicides committed via this totally impractical defensive round.

It has been said that novices talk about hardware while masters talk of concepts. Take a page from the masters' playbook and quit all the fretting, discussing, and arguing over bullet shoulder geometry, proprietary metal technology, advanced swaging, and other such esoterica. Just go shoot! ☺

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

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Clark Jungle Hammock MARK2

Being a hammock camper and having slung my bear taco in places from the Amazon Jungle to the Rocky Mountains and the woods of upper Michigan, I can't picture backpacking without one. And therein lies the problem—any time I head out, I have the nagging worry there may be insufficient trees to sustain a hammock.

Case in point: my brother and a friend frequently go on rafting trips down the Colorado River. I have been planning to make a trip with them, but my brother has informed me there are from zero to very few trees at some of their stops, so my hammock is not going to work for me. The Clark Jungle Hammock MARK2, a ground tent/hammock hybrid, offers a good solution to this problem.

One of the things I really love about hammocks is their ease of setup. Depending on how sophisticated the system is, I can have a good hammock up in five to ten minutes. For that reason, setup is something I focus on when reviewing a suspended sleeping system.

SUSPENDED SETUP

Due to the fact that the MARK2 has poles, for the ground tent setup, there is a little more work than for a typical suspended sleeping system, but it's negligible. There are only two collapsible poles and they slide nicely into their sleeves. Make sure you pay attention to which sleeve you put each pole into—there is a longer pole and a shorter pole for the two different ends.

Due to the pole setup, I felt it hung

a little weirdly and had a bit of a list to it, but once I was in it, it righted itself pretty well. The rainfly was very slick and hard to manage at first, but once it was in place, it encapsulated the entire hammock like a waterproof cocoon.

GROUND TENT SETUP

The ground tent setup was even easier than the suspended setup. All I had to do was put the poles in, stake down one end of the hammock, pull the other end tight and stake it down. Just by pulling the other end tight, the poles raised up, creating a spacious interior.

The whole thing can be set up in about three minutes and is as comfortable as any ground tent. Being a hammock, it's a small, one-person ground tent, so there's not much room for your



Clark Jungle Hammock MARK2 is completely self-contained, but author chose to put a tarp over everything so he could keep his gear covered. Inset: Packed up, MARK2 is just a little larger than a Nalgene water bottle.



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MARK2 only took a couple of minutes to set up on the ground and was as comfortable as any ground tent. Inset: Due to the flexible fiberglass poles, **MARK2** is very roomy inside.



gear, but it is a very effective shelter. The thick sealed floor/bed adds to the water resistance of the **MARK2**.

COMFORT

All in all, it was a comfortable sleeping system. The poles made it feel very roomy and kept the sidewalls off me while I slept. The sealant used to waterproof the bed prevented slipping and helped keep my sleeping bag and pad in place, which was helpful, but it had its downside. If my bag and pad did move at all, it was very difficult to get them back into place under me and almost required getting out to reposition them.

I like the fact that you can open the entire top and use it as an open hammock, but it did not allow for one side of the netting/WeatherShield to be open on its own. When opening one side alone, the netting/WeatherShield kept falling back into the hammock and getting in my way. I would have preferred the ability to open one side at a time so I could situate my bedding and gear

without opening the whole hammock. I think some sort of tieback would be sufficient for that.

The **MARK2** is not a cold-weather solution, so if you're going out late in the season, make sure to have a good sleeping bag and pad to keep under you. Our first night out, the temp got down to 29° and it was 44° in my hammock. My son was using my Clark North American Four-Season and he was very warm. But with my modular sleeping bag system and sleeping pad tucked in between two of the layers, I was still warm. Without them it would have been a cold night.

FOOTPRINT

I was quite happy with the footprint in my pack. My concerns about the **MARK2**'s size and weight with the included structural poles were alleviated. It wasn't too large, with a packed size of only 14x6 inches and weight of just over three pounds. It was not overly cumbersome for the options it provided.

FEATURES

As far as features go, the **MARK2** is a fairly simple suspended sleeping system. I do like that it includes a loop at the head, stitched directly in-line with the suspension rope, for resituating yourself during the night.

Also, I always wear an ABC (altimeter, barometer, compass) watch while camping and like to be able to hang it above my head while sleeping so I can monitor the internal hammock temperature and the barometer to make sure nothing nasty is heading my way. The

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Small loop on interior let author hang his ABC watch to monitor interior temperature and external barometer.

MARK2 provides a small loop overhead that lets me attach a small clip to hang my watch from.

That loop, combined with the small ridge loop at the other end, permits you to rig an internal ridgeline between the two for hanging small essentials like a pouch or light.

I would have liked a couple of small interior pockets somewhere toward the head for holding items like glasses and a flashlight, and a small external pocket for storing the hammock's and my sleeping bag's stuff sacks to make it more self-contained.

Due to the design of the rainfly, you may want to bring an extra tarp for use as an awning for your gear and a place to hang out during inclement weather.

CONCLUSION

Overall, for its simplicity and bare-bones features, the Clark MARK2 is a good hammock. Even though it doesn't have some of the features I like to see in a suspended sleeping system, Clark did design features that let you expand on it to include extras of your choosing.

The fact that it can be set up as a ground tent is what really wins me over with the MARK2, because it takes the worry out of backpacking in various regions.

I will probably opt for my Clark North American any time after mid-October, but will get a lot of use out of the MARK2 during the spring and summer months. And with a few modifications and additions, the MARK2 has the potential to be the hammock I really appreciate on any given trip. ☺

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CALL TO ARMS

Defending Home, Community and Country

BY PATRICK A. ROGERS

If you are reading this article, in this magazine, you are probably in some manner familiar with guns. Maybe a little, or maybe a lot. But the great majority of people believe that no matter what happens, someone will come to save you! After all, isn't that the job of the police and fire departments? And if injured, EMS will provide pre-hospital care for you. All you have to do is exist. Everything will be accomplished by someone else. Just not by you....

You need to understand that the world is not unicorns emitting rainbows from their hindquarters. The world changed drastically on September 11, 2001, and will continue to change—for the worse—until your children's children have had children. The current Administration cannot even admit who the enemy



United Airlines Flight 175 is flown into Two World Trade Center on 9/11/2001. We are more likely to see individual or small groups of terrorists using small arms and explosives during future attacks. Will you be prepared to do what is necessary?

is, never mind destroy them. And within the United States? That changed when idiots elected a Marxist who has been imposing his Marxist policies upon us. No matter how often these people tell you they will take care of you, it is not borne out by reality.

The demonization of the police by members of both political parties has had a cascading effect on how cops view their job, which means the drastic downtick in proactive police services will continue. The bleating about some police units wearing pants with cargo pockets and having wheeled vehicles that have armor to protect the occupants means that fewer and fewer cops will be prepared to respond to a serious incident.

Yeah, you'll get the police departments you wanted. This is the new now. But you need to ask yourself a serious question. Who has the ultimate responsibility for the safety and security of you and yours?

A) You

B) The government

If you chose B), please put on your rose-colored glasses and leave. If you chose A), please continue reading.

IT COULDN'T HAPPEN HERE

Gun magazines and social media have a lot of chatter about "armed citizens" and how a Mumbai/Paris attack could never happen here because of our gun culture and such. This bears some serious scrutiny. First and foremost, the mere possession of a firearm does not bestow magical powers upon the possessor. Without the training on how and when to use that firearm, and without the proper mindset, you are a long way from being functional.

Very few of those who own a firearm actually shoot it even occasionally, if at all. And I have no problem with that, nor any issues with those who use the gun to hunt once or twice a year, engage in competitive shooting sports that require only marksmanship



Some run out, while others run in. During the Westgate Mall attack in September 2013, local security forces were largely inept. Some did step up to the plate and took action. You may be the only one who can influence the situation.



How you influence a situation may not always be with a gun. Here, a man rescues a child during the attack on Westgate Mall.

(bullseye competition and such), or have it “just because.” They are exercising their right to have a firearm, as granted to us by people smarter than those now in power. But while that may make them an armed citizen in the broad sense, it does not mean they have the ability to thwart an attack and defend themselves and their family.

Consider for a moment how many people in this country have the ability to legally carry a handgun. Then consider how many actually carry. Not occasionally, or when they “think” there may be a threat, but every day. While there is no database on this, my feeling based on 40+ years of asking is that very few carry religiously.

I understand that some would carry, but their employer may forbid them from carrying at work as a condition of their employment, or where it’s illegal or otherwise prohibited. That would be foolish and I am not advocating it. I also understand at times it may not be appropriate, for example when drinking copious quantities of adult beverages.

EXCUSES PART 1: NOT CARRYING

Got it, but let’s just look at those who can but won’t. Following are some excuses I hear regularly:

It’s too much trouble.

What, like tying your shoes? Putting your wallet in your pocket?

It’s not comfortable.

That gun is meant to be comforting, not comfort-

able. However, if it is aggravating, reconsider your choice of gun, holster, and magazines.

It clashes with my clothes/outfit/costume.

Sigh....

I don’t feel a need.

If you have the mental powers of the Great Karnak, don’t waste your time with guns, but please contact me with the winning Powerball numbers ASAP!

As for actually training, I commonly hear these excuses:

I was in the Army/Navy/Marines/Air Force and they taught me how to shoot.

Really? When? What was your MOS? How do you train now?

I can’t afford it.

I understand how the money thing is. But how much do you spend going to the movies? You know, the things produced and acted in by people who hate you and hate your guns. Or maybe football pools.

I don’t need to train. The 2A doesn’t require it.

No, it doesn’t. But if you are that thick headed, maybe you shouldn’t carry a gun.

I have no problem with people who are not of our guild staying away from guns. And there are some people who do carry who have not sufficiently thought out the ramifications of owning a gun.

YOU’RE NOT AN ARMED CITIZEN IF ...

In the January 2015 issue of S.W.A.T., I wrote an article about the fallacy of the “one shot, one kill” (*ONE*

SHOT, ONE KILL: A Contradiction in Terms) mantra so often uttered by the unknowing. I used a picture of a dead bad guy to illustrate the point. Some were upset about this, and one sent a letter to *S.W.A.T.* Editor Denny Hansen stating that after he saw the image, he could not carry a gun again. I applaud his honesty, though I don't agree with it. We carry a firearm for only one reason: To prevent someone from using or attempting to use Deadly Physical Force or force equating to Serious Physical Injury against you or a third person. That's it.

Let's slide back to the armed citizen thing. There is a difference between one who carries a gun and one who is prepared to use that gun in defense of him/herself or a third person. If you carry the gun as an afterthought or have never considered the results of taking the gun out of its holster, you are not an armed citizen. If you own a gun and do not train how to use it, you are not an armed citizen. If you can legally carry a gun and don't, you are not an armed citizen. If you have received training and do carry a gun but have not developed the proper mindset and have the standard 0% situational awareness, you are still not an armed citizen. It is that simple.

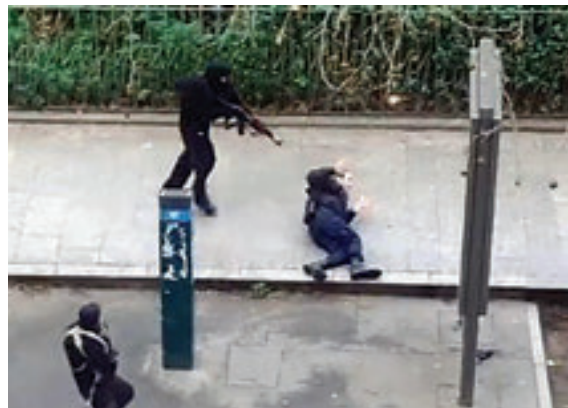
But it gets worse. Some cops refuse to carry while off duty. This is alien to me, as when I was on the NYPD, we were required to be armed 24/7—something I agreed with 100%. Even if they hadn't required it, I would have carried. And I continue to do so now. To not carry when you legally can is, in my opinion, madness.

READY TO DEFEND

The fact that there have been so few successful terrorist attacks against this country since 9/11 is because a lot of very dedicated folks are doing a lot of hard work to prevent it, in spite of the intransigence of the current Administration. But other deadly attacks have occurred on a smaller scale, including Fort Hood; Garland, Texas; UC Merced, California; and San Bernardino, California.

Consider this. Today *you* may be the only person on the face of the earth who can positively influence a situation. Are you prepared to do that? Develop the proper mindset. Carry the necessary equipment that will allow you to influence the situation at hand. Then become politically engaged—and stay engaged.

It should be glaringly obvious, but the ability to possess a firearm is pretty much central to what has been stated above. We have been granted that right by the Second Amendment, and it has kept us free since the birth of this great country. But it isn't as simple as we should expect. Our rights—all of them—have been under constant attack by those who have an agenda



Unarmed Paris police officer is executed by jihadist during Charlie Hebdo attack in January 2015. You can beg for your life or fight back.

that apparently is directly opposed to what the framers of the Constitution had in mind. Chief among them is our right to possess arms. Those who champion the usurping of the Constitution and the confiscation of our firearms belong primarily to one political party. Their arguments are false, but they have a propaganda machine that equals Josef Stalin's during the Cold War.

The enemy—and make no bones about it, they are the enemy—is highly organized, highly motivated, and lavishly funded. They have a functional media machine grinding out lies at the cyclic rate, and the uneducated voter is in the majority. And they hate you. They dislike your lifestyle, your freedom.

FRACTURED GUN COMMUNITY

On the other hand, our community is fractured and underfunded. Because each segment of the gun community is pretty much separate from the others, it is difficult to have a single voice in the fight. Each separate discipline is, by nature, concerned primarily with their particular endeavor.

Competitive shooters are interested in ensuring that their discipline is safe from the onslaught. Hunters are interested in hunting, but primarily in the type of hunting they engage in. Every one of the shooting communities believes that their community is safe from the attack because their guns aren't black, are used only for sport, and so on. They are horribly mistaken. Hunting rifles will be re-labeled as sniper rifles. Action shooting will be labeled paramilitary. Cowboy Action Shooting will be glorifying genocide and racism, etc.

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gaged. But politics is a multi-headed beast and comes with a plethora of agendas. We have reached the point of critical mass when it comes to our guns, and because of that I have become a single-issue voter. Why? Because if we lose the 2A, the rest will follow rapidly.

Some very active and functional state level associations do sterling work at the local level, and they deserve support from gun owners, but they have minimal influence above that level. Only one organization at the national level has the experience and expertise to successfully carry the fight—the National Rifle Association. If you are a gun owner, or just have values other than Marxist, you should belong to the NRA.

EXCUSES PART 2: NRA

I have heard all the excuses as to why one does not belong:

They are always asking for money.

No kidding. Look at how much Bloomberg and his rich fellow travelers have spent trying to usurp your rights. We simply can't match them dollar for dollar. It requires money. Donating is always great, but membership is greater by an order of magnitude.

They don't care about us; only hunters and competitors.

The reason the NRA started was to provide the nation with trained marksmen. The thrust had been that



Jihadist is stopped by gunfire after attack on a Christmas party in San Bernardino, California, December 2015.

way for a long time. But the Institute for Legal Action in particular and the NRA as a whole have been strongly engaged on the political side for a long time.

Whaaa, a long time ago so-and-so said/did something I didn't like, so I won't support them.

Really? Has your mother/father/mentor never said something you didn't like? Grow up. This is not about you. It is about *us*, as a community and a nation.

They don't care about black rifles.

Au contraire. They do; big time. Bigger than you might believe.

They always say the sky is falling.

News flash, sports fans. It is. Every day. No matter how hard we try, the enemy is well organized, well funded and well motivated. To quote a line from *Men in Black*, "There's always an Arquillian Battle Cruiser, or a Corillian Death Ray, or an intergalactic plague that is about to wipe out all life on this miserable little planet." Stop making excuses. If you will not contribute to the solution, you are the problem.

Money tight? Yup, got it. For everyone. Pay your membership on installment. The NRA has run some very attractive membership upgrades recently, which puts it all within your budget. Annual membership is only \$25 a year. Upgrades to higher levels of membership are sometimes offered at a deep discount.

I believe in the NRA and what they do for us. I cannot imagine why any legitimate gun owner in this country does not belong to the NRA. I became an NRA member in 1959 and a Life Member when I returned from the former Republic of Vietnam in 1966. I became an Endowment Member several years ago, and have just submitted to become a Patron.

SINGLE-ISSUE VOTING

The upcoming elections should be a single issue for us, and that is the Second Amendment. If that falls, so will everything else. Don't believe me? Look at how much this country has lost in the past two national elections. Suck it up. Stop whatever else you are doing and join the one national organization that can make a difference.

Become a single-issue voter. That issue is guns. If you whine about how all politicians are alike and permit them to retain power, you are complicit in the downfall of this country. If they get our guns, everything else follows.

Everything. ☺

Pat Rogers is a retired Chief Warrant Officer of Marines and a retired NYPD Sergeant. Pat is the owner of E.A.G. Inc., which provides services to governmental organizations and private citizens. He can be reached at info@eagtactical.com.

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Clinton's Confiscationist Agenda

AT a "town hall" appearance in New Hampshire last October, Democrat presidential candidate Hillary Clinton told her audience that the Australian approach to gun regulation policies was "worth looking at" and "worth considering."

"The Australian government, as part of trying to clamp down on the availability of automatic weapons, offered a good price for buying hundreds of thousands of guns, and then they basically clamped down going forward in terms of having, you know, more of a background-check approach, more of a permitting approach."

By "automatic weapons," she presumably meant "semiautomatic weapons," but as with many other advocates of banning so-called "assault weapons," Clinton evidently prefers her audience to ignore the difference between semi

and fully automatic firearms.

That, though, is not the worst of the deceptions in that sentence. She also did not bother to mention that the "good price for buying hundreds of thousands of guns" wasn't negotiable for the "seller." The "sale" was mandatory, and owners of any semiautomatic rifles or shotguns (and indeed even pump-action shotguns) were forced by the government to surrender them.

Commerce is a mutually voluntary act. Both buyer and seller believe the transaction suits their respective purposes. If not, one or the other party would reject it. That is not what happened in Australia. The "buyer" set the price and told the "seller" he had to accept it. If he refused, the government's hired muscle (probably armed with the very type of firearm the government insisted on "buying") would

come and take the guns by force. If the "seller" resisted, he faced the very real possibility of death at the hands of the government.

To put it less delicately, if what each Australian gun owner was forced by the government to do is a sale, then any rape victim whose assailant tosses them a dollar after the rape is a prostitute.

But that's not what Clinton wanted to talk about. Instead, she compared the possibility of an American gun "buy-back" to the Obama Administration's "Cash for Clunkers" program, in which owners of older, less fuel efficient, less environmentally friendly cars could sell them to the federal government for credit toward the purchase of a new car.

The theory was that the benefits would be multifold: gasoline would



be conserved, environmentally harmful emissions would be reduced, and the reeling U.S. auto industry would be stimulated, as program participants spent the money given to them for their "clunkers" to buy new cars.

Whether or not that theory had much to do with reality, and whether or not, indeed, there is any Constitutionally enumerated power by which the federal government has the authority to use the people's tax revenue for such purposes is a discussion for another time.

What is relevant here is that Clinton is clearly not looking for a way to stimulate the gun industry, and is certainly not trying to induce Americans to upgrade the firepower in their gun safes. Her intent was very nearly the exact opposite.

Gun rights advocates, of course, had something to say about Clinton's admiration for the Australian plan. The response was sufficiently heated that Clinton campaign strategists felt compelled to hastily backpedal away from the gun confiscation precipice. As reported in *The Hill*:

Asked during a Monday interview if Clinton was suggesting the confiscation

of guns, Clinton communications director Jen Palmieri said, "Of course not."

"What she was referring to is places where there have been mass shootings and the countries have done something to act on it," Palmieri said on MSNBC's Andrea Mitchell Reports.

What Palmieri failed to address was that the "something to act on it" done by the one country Clinton mentioned was indeed the confiscation of hundreds of thousands of guns (which, in the U.S., would scale up to scores of millions of guns).

Are we really to believe that Clinton was unaware of that when she touted the Australian measure? Even if so (a very big "if"), are we to be comfortable with Clinton's competence to set gun policy when she claims not to support the central element of the gun restriction plan she praised so lavishly?

Of course not.

Clinton was fully aware that the Australian measure was mass gun confiscation, and she thinks that approach is "worth considering" for the U.S. Fine. "Consider" it, Clinton. But then consider—and consider well—what the reality would look like. Thousands—perhaps tens of thousands, or hundreds of thou-

sands, or even millions—of Americans would sooner use their semiautomatic firearms than surrender them.

And by "use," I mean use against the confiscators.

And about those confiscators: How many would decide to enforce such a "law," in defiance of the Constitution (not to mention simple human decency)? Of those who would, how many would not change their minds when they saw their brother and sister officers (and/or military service members) killed trying to disarm their countrymen?

Not enough for your purposes, Clinton. Not nearly enough.

If the government tries to force citizens to "sell" our guns, the price will not be cash, but blood. And the confiscationists don't have enough of that to afford it. ☹

A former paratrooper, Kurt Hofmann was paralyzed in a car accident in 2002. The helplessness inherent to confinement to a wheelchair prompted him to explore armed self-defense, only to discover that Illinois denied that right. This inspired him to become active in gun rights advocacy.

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Border Battles

AS the politicians ramp up their rhetoric, establish their platforms, and make their many campaign promises, the real problems that we face in our world continue and in many cases even grow. One constant fight has been our battle in the Southwest against the Mexican cartels.

The battle for control of U.S. soil blazes on, and there is increasingly more at risk. The threat of these cartels partnering with or assisting terrorist organizations that are conducting hit-and-run attacks on soft targets around the world has become more of a reality than ever before.

The cat-and-mouse games going on in the wide-open deserts and border towns of the Southwest have evolved and continue to plague this region of the United States. The Mexican cartels

continue to fight for land and “plazas” on the Mexico side of the international border, while these same cartels work harder than ever to strengthen their networks on the U.S. side of the border.

Not much has changed in the way of U.S. law enforcement, as we battle these sophisticated criminals with the same determination we always have. However, many agencies face ever-decreasing budgets in the face of criminal organizations who are gaining strength.

This problem is amplified by the false narrative being pushed by a vocal minority of citizens in our country claiming persecution by peace officers because these officers are enforcing the laws of the land.

All these factors seem to be the makings of a perfect storm for those thugs whose modus operandi is much

like a shark circling the waters waiting for that prime opportunity to strike. We have seen the Mexican cartels learn from their mistakes, advance in their technology, and progress in their violence.

If you look back just five years, when law enforcement would take an enforcement action against one of these groups, it would not change their methods or operating procedures. These cartel groups would not make any changes until several law enforcement actions caused them losses or took their people into custody.

But today, the response from the cartels is almost immediate. Law enforcement takes action on a group or individuals involved in a cartel, and within hours these bad guys are putting out orders to their people to change the

Essentially, the Mexican cartels are more powerful and violent than ever and are no more contained by law enforcement.



Cartel lookout caught on trail camera checking his area. Note use of “sneaky feet” or “carpet shoes” designed to eliminate shoe prints.



Federal government signs located approximately 70 miles north of U.S.-Mexico border.

methods and routes used. How is this possible? The answer is that there are more members of these Mexican cartels, or people employed or utilized by them, than ever before.

This increase in personnel and operatives is most evident in the scouts or lookouts located from the international border all the way to the outskirts of major cities such as Phoenix—the sixth largest city in the nation. In Arizona, approximately 100 miles of terrain is monitored and essentially controlled by Mexican cartels. This includes routes leading from the U.S.-Mexico border all the way to just outside the Phoenix city limits.

The landscape along these routes is filled with scouts, who use everything from rudimentary systems to high-end encrypted radio systems to perform their duties, with complete logistical support that includes food drops (as they spend weeks in position) and solar panel and battery setups to operate their radio systems.

The cartels have also learned how to better insulate themselves against prosecutions. They employ teams of lawyers

to obtain the police reports, fight the legal battles, and instruct their clients on exactly how they may have been caught. This allows the cartels to refine their methods and tactics to make capture more difficult.

Along these same lines, the cartels ensure that people they employ follow stricter guidelines and use more violent methods, including actions that used to be taboo, such as the execution of women and children.

Essentially, the Mexican cartels are more powerful and violent than ever and are no more contained by law enforcement. In fact they now have a worldwide presence and network, and are arguably one of the world's richest and most powerful organizations. They have established networks in Europe, Canada, Africa, and many other locations. They not only deploy their own personnel to these areas, but also partner with local criminal organizations.

Despite what political “experts” may spew as fact, our Southwest borders continue to be porous and are indeed the “soft belly” of the United States. While the Mexican cartels may not

have an interest in attacking our country or citizens, there are radical terrorist organizations that have only that goal in mind. These terrorist organizations have long been connected to the Latin American world and thus connected to the Mexican cartels that have almost free rein on our southern borders.

While many choose to assume the risk to our nation is being overstated, I am telling you from the front lines of this fight, from my personal experience, that the threat is real and the fight is real.

We should all demand answers and solutions to these problems, and hold responsible those politicians we choose to support. The only ways our country will remain intact are to be informed and stay vigilant. ©

Matthew Thomas is a 22-year veteran of the Pinal County, Arizona Sheriff's Office and holds the rank of Lieutenant. He was a member of the regional SWAT team for 17 years and retired from the team as the SWAT Commander. He is currently the regional Commander for the San Tan Valley patrol region.

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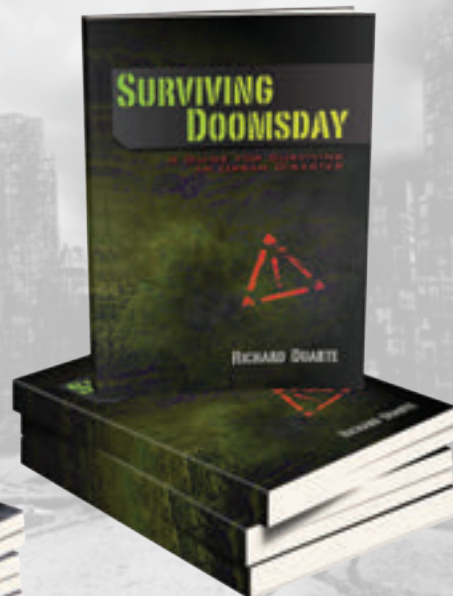
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Leupold Blue Line Police Tactical Scope

Left side of Leupold Blue Line shows its different controls.



Top view of custom dial shows various information including caliber and load.

I have used Leupold's Custom Shop for some years, mostly for custom dials that tailor my scope to a specific caliber and load. But a few weeks ago, the Custom Shop built me one of their new Blue Line scopes, which are designed specifically for the law enforcement market.

The designation "Blue Line" was given to the scope on the assumption that it will appeal to law enforcement officers. In fact, the Leupold Custom Shop will engrave an agency logo on the scope if so ordered.

The Blue Line allows the purchaser to customize one of the scopes in the Leupold Tactical line to fit his specific needs. Leupold also builds custom hunting and target scopes. In my case, the scope is based on the VX-6, 3-18X50.

I knew right away that I wanted the scope tailored to my Steyr SSG04 in .300 Win Mag. This is the only .300 Win Mag sniping rifle I own, so it gets used for ammo tests, as well as articles evaluating different sniper rifles. I can generally shoot ½ MOA groups with it, assuming good ammo and scope. I figured a Blue Line designed to maximize the SSG 04 was just what I wanted.

Among the features I chose are an illuminated TMR (Tactical Milling Reticle), mil adjustments, and two-revolution zero-lock dial. Although I had used mil-dot reticles for years, I've now been using the TMR reticle on the latest Leupold scopes I've tried.

Without going into great detail, any-

Specs and features aside, the best thing about the Blue Line is that it is easy and effective to use.

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one who has used the mil-dot reticle can adjust to the TMR quickly. Just as the mil-dot may be used for ranging, so can the hash marks/stadia lines on the TMR. For me, the hash marks allow more precision than the mil-dot. Adjustments for elevation and windage are also in mils.

Even though I lived and worked in Europe for a couple of years, I still think in inches and convert mils to decide on clicks when I measure point of impact in inches: 0.1 Mils at 100 yards equals .36 inch. As a result, three clicks equals 1.08 inches at 100 yards. Lines on the reticle vary in distance between them, thus allowing them to be used for ranging.

For example, thick black lines that lead the eye to the center of the reticle are 5 Mils in length, which equals 18 inches at 100 yards. Hash marks separated by 0.5 Mils translate to about 1.8 inches at 100 yards.

Normally, tactical marksmen learn the heights/widths of various items likely to be encountered (e.g., mail boxes, fire hydrants, car license plates). Distances may then be approximated. Or average heights of men or women may be used. For example, men are typically about 5 feet, 9 inches tall, so the 5 Mil bar should cover about half of the man's height at about 200 yards.

A useful manual on using Mils is available from Leupold to aid in learning the system. Since my Blue Line was built with Mil adjustments, they are consistent with the reticle.

My scope has an illuminated reticle, which shows the center portion of the reticle in red. The left side of the parallax adjustment dial contains the button for illumination. Pressing and releasing the button turns on the illumination. Pressing the button repeatedly can increase the bright-



Author shoots Steyr SSG 04 .300 Win Mag with the Leupold Blue Line scope mounted.

ness to suit conditions.

Illumination can be turned off using the button, or if the scope does not move for a short time, the illumination turns off—a good system for keeping the battery from running down.

The two-revolution zero-lock dial is a useful feature, though more so on one of my .338 Lapua rifles than on a .300 Win Mag. Let me explain.

The two-revolution dial allows the dial to be turned through 720 degrees (or close to that). The zero-lock is designed to allow the shooter to return to the correct point of zero on the dial even when it has been passed by turning the dial more than 360 degrees.

Since one full rotation of the dial takes me to 1,000 yards, that should reach my outer range for the .300 Win Mag. To be honest, I would normally consider about 800 yards the max for me.

I also wanted to match the elevation dial to the load I use. I have found Black Hills 190-grain Match HPBT .300 Win Mag exceptionally accurate, so I ordered my Blue Line scope with an elevation dial matched to this load.

This CDS (Custom Dial System) dial also allows me to zero the rifle at the proper distance—in the case of the .300 Win Mag, 200 yards. Then, once zeroed, I can quickly adjust for elevation at a different range by just turning the dial to the mark for that distance (e.g., 4.5 equals 450 yards).

It is an excellent system that saves having to calculate and count clicks. I feel it is a real boon on a sniper rifle.

Blue Line scopes also feature all the other elements that make Leupold scopes so good. Anyone interested can read the details online, but I will mention the Diamond/Coat 2 lens treatment that aids light transmission and abrasion resistance. Leupold scopes have held up well against abrasion in Afghanistan and Iraq, a testament to Diamond/Coat 2.

Leupold's Argon/Krypton waterproofing allows



Elevation dial zeroed to 200 yards. Also note zero-lock button above the "2."

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the scope to be used in very damp, humid conditions. I have done quite a bit of shooting in the rain using Leupold scopes and have never had any moisture get inside them.

One feature I appreciated immediately when zeroing and using the Blue Line is the 6:1 zoom ratio, which keeps images clear from the lowest to highest setting. On some variable-power scopes, there is degradation of the image in the middle range. Since I expect to use the Blue Line most often in the 6X to 12X range, this is appreciated.

Some of the scope's specs are worth noting as well. Linear field of view at 100 yards on 3X is 38 feet and on 18X is 7 feet. Weight is 20.7 ounces, which isn't bad for a scope with this much power. Overall length is 13.5 inches.

Specs and features aside, the best thing about the Blue Line is that it is easy and effective to use. I had the elevation dial regulated for a 200-yard zero. I didn't bore sight the Blue Line, but instead fired a few rounds at 25 yards to get close, then moved to shooting at 200 yards to zero the scope.

Using the Black Hills 190-grain loads for which the dial is set, groups were very good, with ½ MOA being the norm. One or two groups were barely over that, and the best group was 0.75 inch for three shots at 200 yards. Once zeroed, I moved the elevation dial to "3" and fired a couple of groups at 300 yards, one just under 1.5 inches and one just over.

I was low on .300 Win Mag ammunition so did not move to longer range. As soon as I get in some more Black Hills ammo, I'll shoot out to 500 yards or farther.

When I test a Leupold scope, I expect it to perform well, and I was not disappointed. Everything on the Blue Line worked the way it should, and the scope paired with the SSG 04 and Black Hills ammo made me look good.

I have described the scope as I ordered it. The Leupold Custom Shop can work with the customer to design a Blue Line that fits his needs. ☺

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Eight Essential Survival Skills

SKILLZ?

BY RICHARD DUARTE

When a disaster beats a path to your front door, it's reassuring to know you're prepared. That means having gear, a plan, and skills. Many of us have the gear part covered, somewhat, but skills do not get nearly as much attention. Developing skills is actually a two-part process—learning the “how-to” part from a book or other resource, and then the hands-on part, where you do it yourself, get it right, and then practice the skill often. Once you've learned one particular skill, move on to

the next. Knowing various ways of accomplishing your goals gives you options. By having redundant capabilities, you can usually obtain the desired results under many different circumstances.

As a bonus, this knowledge becomes part of your mental everyday carry and goes with you everywhere. Here are eight important survival skills that may one day help keep you alive. This list is by no means complete. Think of it as the first steps in a process that will hopefully become a lifetime of learning.

DISINFECT WATER

At first glance, this may sound like something you only need to know for outdoor or wilderness survival situations. But it's a valuable skill no matter where you are, for two important reasons: 1) Unsafe water can be found just about anywhere and 2) Drinking suspect water can make you very sick and possibly kill you.

It's not unusual for urban water sources to be contaminated after a storm, flood, or other natural or manmade disaster. Before you drink suspect water, make it as safe as possible. Learn the following methods and commit them to memory. You want redundant methods in your survival toolbox, since you never know which hand you'll be dealt.

Clear water can be made safe by the following methods:

Heat: Boil water for at least two minutes. Set it aside to cool.

Chemicals (Bleach): Add two to four drops of chlorine bleach for every U.S. quart and let it sit for at least 45 minutes.

Chemicals (Iodine): Add five to ten drops of iodine, 2% solution, for every quart and let it sit for at least 45 minutes.

Solar Radiation: Place water in a washed clear-plastic two-liter container and let it sit in full direct sunlight for a minimum of six hours. (Remove all labels from the plastic container to expose the water to the maximum amount of direct sunlight.)

For cloudy water, let it sit so sediments settle at the bottom. Run resulting water through a clean cotton cloth or coffee filter to remove debris. Repeat until water runs clear, then disinfect as detailed above. These disinfection methods will not remove pollution or the chemical contaminants commonly found in urban water sources.



Knowing various ways to disinfect drinking water greatly improves your chances for survival. In bright sunlight, solar disinfection is a very effective and efficient way to process suspect water.

BASIC SELF-DEFENSE

Violent crime is everywhere and can affect us at any time. But we are especially vulnerable during a disaster, since outside help may be delayed or altogether absent, and the criminal element is likely to be out in force.

While it's usually better to avoid violent confrontations, sometimes there's no choice but to fight. By basic self-defense, I mean just that—basic. Most of us will never achieve any high-ranking martial arts status. But that doesn't mean we can't defend ourselves.

The key to quickly disabling an attacker is knowing the most vulnerable body parts and how to strike them for maximum effectiveness. These are valuable skills even if it's just to buy you enough time to escape the threat. Vulnerable body parts include:

Testicles/Groin: A solid strike to the groin is a very powerful motivator. If a strike is not possible, grab the groin, twist and pull down with all your strength.

Eyes: Applying pressure to the eyes with your thumbs causes tremendous pain and temporary blindness.

Ears: Cup your hands and forcefully clap your open palms over the attacker's ears. (This may cause the ear drum to rupture and could render the attacker unconscious.)

Nose: A sharp upward blow to the bottom of the nose using the heel of your palm can be very effective.



Throat: If an attacker can't breathe, he can't attack you. A blow to the throat can cause severe damage to the airway. While he's catching his breath, you can be running away.

Knees: A solid kick to the front or either side of the knees can quickly force an attacker to the ground.

There are many other vulnerable body parts, but these are the most accessible. Once you disable the attacker, get away as quickly as possible.

NAVIGATE

Navigating with a map is a skill that has largely been lost. Today people rely heavily on GPS and other electronic navigation systems. During a disaster, these systems may be unavailable.

While navigation and map-reading skills are outside the scope of this article, it's well worth your time to research and learn at least the basics. Here are some tips to get started:

- Get a high-quality compass and learn to find north and to orient the map accordingly.
- Use the map's index and grid numbers to find certain locations.
- Learn to locate prominent landmarks and to use them to navigate.
- Learn how to read and use the map's legend.
- Learn how to plan a route between two points on the map.
- Collect paper maps of your immediate vicinity and any anticipated travel areas.



USE BASIC TOOLS

During a disaster, you will often be required to use tools to secure, or possibly repair, structures in or around your dwelling. I'm always shocked to see how many people have difficulty using simple hand tools. Improper use of even small hand tools can cause serious injuries.

Injuries are the last thing you need during a disaster, especially to your dominant (shooting) hand. Having good tools is always important, but knowing how to use them safely and effectively is

even more important.

Always use the right tool for the job and its intended purpose.

Never extend your reach beyond a comfortable distance to control the tool you're using.

Always wear work gloves and safety goggles.

Don't use tools with greasy or oily hands.

Secure your work material in a vise or clamp.

START A FIRE

Modern society has lost its connection with fire. Today many of us consider fire a risk to be avoided rather than a lifesaving tool. But in a survival situation, fire can be a trusted ally to help keep us warm, disinfect water, and provide light, protection and comfort.

You need to know how to get a fire started. While there are many different ways to start a fire, and it sounds simple enough, I've seen people struggle for hours trying to light a fire even when they had matches. The trick to building a fire is preparation—start small and feed it slowly. Here's what you need:

Ignition Source: Matches, lighter, rubbing two sticks together, etc. Make life easy and always have a lighter as part of your EDC.

Tinder: Dry tinder catches the initial spark from the ignition source to let you transfer it to the kindling. Use dry leaves or grasses, shredded paper, cotton, dryer lint, or wood shavings for tinder.

Kindling: This is the next step in the process. Use dry twigs, cardboard, or small pieces of wood. Look for materials with surface area and room for controlled air circulation.

Fuel: Logs or scrap wood pieces.

Build a safe platform for your fire and take precautions to contain it. Create proper ventilation and avoid building fires indoors.

Always have a nearby bucket of water, sand, dirt or some other appropriate substance to quickly extinguish the fire if necessary.



Starting a fire is a critical lifesaving skill. Learn to build a fire in small steps, from a source of ignition to the tinder and kindling and finally to logs or scrap wood pieces.



A knife is an indispensable survival tool, but it's also extremely dangerous. Learn knife-handling skills and use common sense.

USE A KNIFE

A knife is a must-have tool in just about every survival situation, but using this tool incorrectly can bring you a world of trouble.

Always cut away from the body and keep your fingers far away from the blade.

Keep the knife sharp. A dull blade is dangerous because it can cause you to exert more pressure.

Use your knife for its intended purpose. It's not a screwdriver or a pry bar. And use the right knife for the job. Don't use a huge survival-style knife for a small cutting job.

Keep the handle clean and free of slippery substances.

Once you're done, store the knife safely in its sheath.

These suggestions may seem obvious, yet people injure themselves all the time (even some so-called *experts*). During a disaster, a knife wound can become infected and create a life-threatening situation.

SHOOT A FIREARM

The first priorities in most survival situations are security and self-defense. No amount of food, water, or supplies will do you any good if you're dead. Knowing how to use a firearm is critical under these circumstances.

Seek out a firearms instructor you're comfortable with, and who teaches in a way that suits your needs and style. If you decide to add a gun to your survival plan, it's your obligation to be well trained. The best way to learn is to spend the money and take classes with professionals.



Find a professional firearms instructor, take training classes, and get plenty of quality practice. During a rifle class are (left to right) firearms instructor John Gardner from Force4Training, author, and former Army Sgt. Michael Denton. Mike was awarded the Silver Star for valor and gallantry in action during the battle of Wanat, 13 July 2008, while deployed in Afghanistan.

FIRST AID

During a disaster, medical help may be delayed or completely unavailable. Accidents and injuries will happen no matter how careful you are. The only thing you can do is be ready with the skills to render immediate assistance. Here are some tips:

- Have a quality first aid kit well stocked with basic emergency supplies and medications to help you treat common injuries, burns, cuts, and trauma. Just as important is knowing how to properly use those supplies.
- Take a basic first aid class. If possible, have at least one member of your group be trained to deal with pre-hospital trauma.
- If you encounter a medical situation and are unsure what to do, it's often best not to do anything that will end up causing more harm.
- Talk to your doctor and make sure you are prepared to attend to members of your group with known medical conditions that may flare up during a crisis.



Learn first aid basics and be prepared to assess and stabilize an injured person until help arrives.

WRAP UP

Skills and knowledge are integral parts of any viable survival plan. In a disaster, you need supplies, but you also need the ability to perform the tasks that will keep you and yours alive and safe. The skills you learn today are an investment that someday may pay huge dividends. Stay safe and be prepared. ©

Richard Duarte is an urban survival consultant, writer, and firearms enthusiast. He's the author of Surviving Doomsday: A Guide for Surviving an Urban Disaster, and the Quick-Start Guide for urban preparedness. For the latest news and updates, connect with Richard on www.quickstartsurvival.com

DECODING A KRYPTEK MESSAGE

Daniel Defense DDM4V11



BY EUGENE NIELSEN | PHOTOS BY TRAVIS TIPPS

Daniel Defense has gone Kryptek®. Kryptek camo, that is. The Daniel Defense MK12 SPR, which features an 18-inch cold-hammer-forged stainless steel barrel, and the DD-M4V11, with 16-inch chrome moly vanadium steel barrel and mid-length gas system, are now both offered in the Kryptek Typhon™ pattern finish.

THE FINISH

The water-transfer printing process—also known as hydro-graphics or immersion printing—employed for this finish provides a durable uniform coating that holds up well and is resistant to even the harshest environments.

Kryptek Typhon was developed for night-time urban operations and definitely rates high on the coolness scale. Kryptek patterns share a common geometry, but with color palettes that are designed to complement a specific environment

Daniel Defense has added Kryptek Typhon pattern to its best-selling DDM4 MK12 and V11 rifles. *S.W.A.T.* was one of the first to get hands on with the DDM4V11.



or range of environments. Kryptek was one of the finalists in the U.S. Army's recent search for such a family of camouflage patterns.

Here's what Kryptek Outdoors says on how the camo works: "Kryptek utilizes a multi-directional design to effectively conceal in a multitude of terrains that have lateral or vertical flows. The bi-level layering of the patterns incorporates background transitional

Milspec lower receiver with enhanced flared magazine well.

shading and sharp random geometrical foregrounds to create a three-dimensional effect, ensuring the utmost in concealment at both close and long ranges. These components, combined with colorations selected and matched based on input from testing and observations from operators in the field, make Kryptek patterns optimal for many different environments."

C2 Tactical opened in 2013 and has an amazing array of offerings for the modern shooter. This 23-lane indoor range offers an automated target retrieval system from Meggit that allows individuals to self-pace their activity on the range and not have the traditional waiting times seen in outdoor facilities.

The class offerings are second to none, with over 25 classes avail-

THE CARBINE

Daniel Defense has been building M4-style carbines for a number of years. They have established a well-deserved reputation as a manufacturer of top-tier firearms and accessories. The company has been featured multiple times in Inc. Magazine's top 5,000 list of fastest-growing private companies in the United States and has acquired such prestigious



C2 TACTICAL

When Thomas Carlson, Director of Marketing for Daniel Defense, offered me the opportunity to evaluate the new Daniel Defense DDM4V11 Typhon, I jumped at the chance. I immediately arranged to have a sample sent to the FFL dealer I often work with, C2 Tactical Indoor Shooting Range in Tempe, Arizona.

able, including ladies only courses and a Women of Steel™ program that is amazing for first-time ladies in the sport. Whether you are brand new or a shooting sports veteran, you will find something that meets your fancy.

C2 also has an impressive number of firearm rentals, including some very special full-auto shooting packages.

customers as USSOCOM and the UK's Ministry of Defence.

The DDM4V11 is designed for shooters who prefer the benefits of the KeyMod system integrated in the new Daniel Defense SLiM (Slim Lightweight Modular) Rail™ free-float handguard. KeyMod is a universal direct attachment system for mounting accessories that eliminates the need for heavier, non-ergonomic M1913 (Picatinny) rails for hard-mounting accessories such as grips, lights, and lasers.

Originally developed by VLTOR® Weapon Systems, the KeyMod system is growing in popularity, and more major manufacturers are offering direct-attach accessories for it. It is now seeing competition from the more recently developed M-LOK system developed by Magpul® as a successor to its popular MOE system. Both are freely licensed platforms.

The SLiM Rail 15.0 is the first forend design from Daniel Defense to incorporate the KeyMod attachment system. CNC machined from 6061-T6 aluminum and milspec Type III Hard Coat Anodized, it features a continuous 12 o'clock Picatinny rail and KeyMod slots at 3, 6 and 9 o'clock.



Chrome-lined M16 profile bolt carrier group has properly staked gas key.

Daniel Defense DDM4V11

The long 15-inch rail allows the support hand to be extended out closer to the muzzle, so the gun can be driven with greater precision.

The upper and lower receivers of the DDM4V11 are CNC machined of 7075-T6 Aluminum, Type III Hard Coat Anodized. The lower receiver is milspec with an enhanced widened and beveled flared magazine well and rear receiver QD swivel attachment point.

The lower also incorporates an inte-

gral oversized trigger guard that covers the gap between the grip and the lower receiver and doesn't require a roll pin.

The upper receiver is milspec with polished M4 feed ramps for smooth feeding. The bolt carrier group is full-auto compatible, M16 profile, chrome lined, and has a properly staked gas key. The DDM4V11 has a six-position milspec 7075-T6 aluminum receiver extension and H buffer.

The DDM4V11 has a chrome moly

vanadium steel cold-hammer-forged, 1:7 twist 16-inch government profile barrel. Daniel Defense cold hammer forges the chamber and bore simultaneously for perfect alignment. The barrel is chrome lined and milspec heavy phosphate coated. The muzzle is threaded in the normal ½x28 TPI.

The muzzle device is a DD standard-length flash suppressor constructed of 17-4 PH stainless steel and salt bath nitride finished. The flash suppressor



Fifteen-inch DD SLiM Rail is the first forend design from Daniel Defense to incorporate KeyMod attachment system. Continuous 12 o'clock Picatinny rail and KeyMod slots at 3, 6, and 9 o'clock ensure plenty of real estate for optics and accessories. All rail positions are marked.



Daniel Defense Rail Mounted Front Sight/A1.5 Fixed Rear Sight Combo backed up Aimpoint Micro T-1.



Rear receiver QD end plate is standard.

Daniel Defense DDM4V11



Above: DD flash suppressor is compatible with Advanced Armament Omni, Gemtech Halo, and KAC NT-4 QDSS sound suppressors.

Below: DD buttstock constructed of proprietary glass-filled polymer with soft-touch rubber overmolding.



» SPECIFICATIONS

DANIEL DEFENSE DDM4V11

MANUFACTURER	Daniel Defense
MODEL	DDM4V11 Typhon
CALIBER	5.56mm NATO
GAS SYSTEM	Direct impingement
FEED TYPE	Any AR/M4 magazine (comes with one 30-round PMAG)
OVERALL LENGTH	(stock collapsed) 32¼ inches
BARREL	Cold hammer forged, 16 inch, 1:7 twist
WEIGHT (empty)	6.28 pounds
LOWER RECEIVER	Milspec with enhanced flared magazine well and rear receiver QD swivel attachment point
STOCK	Daniel Defense, six position
HANDGUARD	Daniel Defense SLiM Rail 15.0
UPPER RECEIVER	Milspec
MUZZLE DEVICE	Daniel Defense flash suppressor
CASE	Daniel Defense Full-Latch Impact Plastic Case
FINISH	Kryptek Typhon
SUGGESTED RETAIL	\$1,649.00

is compatible with Advanced Armament Omni, Gemtech Halo, and KAC NT-4 QDSS sound suppressors.

The carbine features a mid-length direct-impingement gas system. It has a low-profile gas block that is CNC machined of 4140 hardened steel and a mil-spec heavy phosphate coating. The mid-length gas system provides smoother operation, less felt recoil impulse, and is easier on the parts than would be the case with a carbine-length gas system on equivalent barrel lengths due to the reduced dwell time (distance from the gas port to the end of the barrel).

The DDM4V11 has a DD buttstock and pistol grip that are constructed of a proprietary blend of glass-infused polymers and feature soft-touch rubber overmolding at strategic points. The adjustable buttstock has very little forward or lateral play, which is an issue with many buttstocks on the market. The pistol grip shares the angle of the classic 1911 pistol for the most natural hand position and control.

» Continued on page 88

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SWAT

SWEEPSTAKES

WIN THIS!

DANIEL DEFENSE M4V11 SLW



The Daniel Defense M4 Carbine V11 SLW is one of the lightest, fastest-handling rifles available in the DDM4 line-up. Built around a cold hammer forged 14.5-inch, 1:7 twist lightweight profile barrel, the V11 has an extended flash suppressor that is pinned and welded to reach the NFA required 16-inch minimum barrel length.

The mid-length gas system provides smooth, reliable cycling under any conditions and reduces wear on moving parts and perceived recoil. A free-floating SLiM Rail 12.0 handguard offers incredible weight savings as well as superior

cooling, ergonomics, and modularity while maintaining the strength and durability expected from Daniel Defense.

With numerous KeyMod attachment points at three, six, and nine o'clock and an uninterrupted 1913 Picatinny rail on top, the V11 SLW has plenty of room for the sights, optics, and accessories an operator may require. The rifle comes with the rugged and comfortable Daniel Defense Buttstock and Pistol Grip, one Magpul 30-round PMAG, and is finished in Daniel Defense Tornado™ Cerakote™.

AIMPOINT MICRO H-2

Aimpoint recently announced the addition of pre-mounted Micro H-2 sights that are immediately ready for use on AR-15 and M4 carbine style rifles. The winner of this Sweepstakes will be among the first to receive this rugged red dot sight.

The sight comes equipped with Aimpoint's Lever Release Picatinny (LRP) Mount and a 39mm spacer that provides absolute co-witness with backup iron sights on AR-15 and M4 carbine style rifles. The 39mm spacer can be removed in order to lower the optical axis of the sight for use on shotguns or submachineguns. The rail pressure on the LRP is fully adjustable, and the mount allows return-to-zero replacement if the sight is removed and replaced in the same position on the same rifle.



C PRODUCTS DEFENSE MAGAZINES

Extra magazines are always a good thing, whether you're going in harm's way or just loading up for a day at the range. This Sweepstakes includes six 30-round magazines from C Products Defense.

Caliber-specific geometry and a unique manufacturing process make this magazine the toughest on the market today. The body is 400 series stainless steel, robotically welded, ensuring consistent weld penetration and depth. The spring is 17-7 milspec stainless steel. The follower is glass-filled nylon, self-lubricating and anti-tilt.

The black non-reflective finish is scratch-resistant and becomes an integral part of the steel. A proprietary Teflon coating is added, providing optimal protection against rust and external damage, as well as decreasing the coefficient of friction to make this the smoothest magazine available.



BLACK HILLS 5.56MM 69-GRAIN TMK

Early last year, Black Hills introduced a 69-grain version of the Sierra Tipped MatchKing (TMK). This Sweepstakes winner will receive 200 rounds of this premium ammunition.

The ballistic coefficient (BC) of the new projectile is an impressive .375 versus .301 for the standard MatchKing. This increased BC makes the 69-grain TMK the ballistic equal of the popular 77-grain bullet, but at a significantly higher velocity. The better BC also increases accuracy at longer range. The Black Hills version features an exclusive projectile cannellure to ensure flawless function in semi- and full-auto firearms.



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SOURCES

DANIEL DEFENSE, INC.
(866) 554-GUNS
www.danieldefense.com

AIMPOINT INC.
(703) 263-9795
www.aimpoint.com

BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION
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Or even easier, click the March Sweepstakes tab on the S.W.A.T. Magazine Facebook page at www.facebook.com/swatmag.



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LIGHTS, & SIGHTS LASERS



Police Low-Light Training

BY DAVE BAHDE

Flash out of a short AR can be significant and in some cases dangerous.

I first met Wes Doss a few years ago when we were both traveling to the United Arab Emirates as guests of Caracal. The long trip to Abu Dhabi to test Caracal's precision rifle and prototype pistols provided ample opportunity for us to get to know each other.

Doss' law enforcement and military backgrounds are extensive. He has been developing courses and teaching officers for well over 25 years. He has been a competitor and a martial artist, with a broad range of skills as a practitioner, trainer, and teacher. Add to that his PhD in Performance Psychology, and the resume just does not get any better.

But I read people, not paper. Conclusions as to character are based on who they are, not their PR packet. After three decades of dealing with "experts" in the police world, I've found that, more often than not, the man does not match the myth. Thankfully that was not the case with Wes.

His character was immediately evident. Honest and forthright, his experience and understanding of real-world police operations are clear. As we discussed training philosophies, tactics, and techniques, I found we had much in common. The inevitable low-light conversation arose, along with mention of an idea he had for what would become Lights, Sights & Lasers.

LIGHTS, SIGHTS & LASERS

Lights, Sights & Lasers started as a collaboration between XS Sights and Wes and his wife Hye Chong Doss in late

2012. Recognizing the limitations to police training—especially low-light instruction—they wanted their program to be free, and wanted to present it all around the country. The lofty goal was to condense roughly 40 hours of training into a single day program.

The concept is bringing consistent cutting-edge training not only to officers everywhere, but law enforcement trainers as well. In 2013, they trained over 1,500 officers in 236 different jurisdictions. Year two was just as successful, reaching more officers and even more venues.

Wes and Hye Chong went about gathering more sponsors and facilitating more venues. They now manage the entire process and have almost 20 well-known companies as sponsors.

Last year was a banner year, with more agencies and sponsors looking to join for 2016. It results in proven techniques and viable tactics being taught nationwide to any officer willing to take a day and bring their weapons and ammunition. It's truly a new way to tackle training, and has been tremendously successful.

Last year in Salt Lake City, I jumped at the chance to take this training for the second time. My first time through Wes's curriculum had been in Washington in 2014.

Much of the training is spent dispelling myths and bringing a bit of reality



Wes Doss briefs class on what to expect during LSL course. Below: AK-74 in a sea of short-barreled ARs.





Above: Indexing the rifle is fast and accurate at close range.



Colorado Shooting Sports Lightning Bolt made AK reloads fast and precise, allowing author to keep up with the ARs.

to how we function in low light, how often officers fight in it, and how best to deal with it. Void of the mind-numbing scientific lectures inserted by lawyers, Lights, Sights & Lasers (LSL) is practical, purposeful and immediately applicable.

LIGHTS, LUMENS, AND VISION

Lumens make for great comparisons of lights. But just because the number is high does not mean it is usable. Candlepower can be instructive in comparing light conditions, not just the brightness. Both are useful, but candlepower makes it easier for me to compare conditions. One striking statistic was that most low-light shootings occur at .25 candlepower, meaning $\frac{1}{4}$ of the power emanated by one candle. Yet officers are expected to see a threat, identify it, and engage it, shooting accurately—in many cases with a substandard, barely functional, or no light.

Vision considered “perfect” is generally measured at 20/20. That measures clarity and acuity—your ability to define detail. Normal vision (20/20) means the line you see has the clarity of a normal person at 20 feet. If your vision is 20/40, you have the same clarity as a normal person at 40 feet.

Best possible starlight yields 20/180 vision. What you would see at 20 feet has the clarity and acuity of a normal person at 180 feet (60 yards). Low-light shootings occur at as little as 20/300, meaning you are legally blind at 20 feet. With no light—and no training on how to use it—you are identifying, aiming and shooting at a threat as if you were legally blind and 100 yards away. Bottom line: you need a light and you need to know how to use it. With 80% of shootings occurring in low light, most officers are shooting almost literally blind.

TIME, TIME, AND LESS TIME

The next relevant statistics are the distance and time involved. The average fight is completed in +/- 2.5 seconds. Some are longer, but most are over very quickly. Adding to the stress, they generally occur within ten feet.

Does that mean all training should be close? Of course not. But coupled with low-light conditions, you have no time, you are reactive, shooting blind, and probably not going to spend much time aiming. Your training must deal with how you react—not from a ready or fighting position on some range.

Practice from a natural position, getting on target quickly and accurately. Unless you spend your shift walking around like a ninja, you will never fight that way. Practice from relaxed and natural positions. Practice, practice, practice, to the point that needed skill sets become automatic. Use various methods, recognizing the fight is what you get, not what you want.

ON THE RANGE

Lights, Sights & Lasers is a one-day class that is usually offered two consecutive days at the same venue, allowing as many officers as possible to attend. Because I would be writing about the course for *S.W.A.T.*, I was permitted to attend both days. Using different weapons each day let me try different systems. Most of the emphasis in the Washington class had been pistol. The rifle was the primary weapon in the Salt Lake City classes.

I used my Seekins Precision .300 BLK SBR with Gemtech GMT-300BLK Titanium suppressor on day one. My HK VP9 was carried in a thigh rig nestled in a Safariland ALS holster using a SureFire X300 WML (Weapon Mounted Light). It used a Trijicon MRO RDS and Daniel Defense fixed front sight. Day two I used an Arsenal AK-74 with Aimpoint T2 and fixed sights.

Wes starts with the student's rifle hanging from the sling, hands in the air. He wants you out of a normal position, with your hands off the rifle. When the whistle blows, you access the rifle and put two rounds into a six-inch circle at seven yards. Red dot sights are off and rear sights folded down (if possible). You are aiming over the sights, indexing the rifle quickly and staying focused on the target. While not unsighted, you are not aligning sights either. It's about getting on target fast. We moved as far back as 15 yards using the same method.

Once dialed in, the AR was pretty fast, but not as fast as the AK-74. Typical AR sight offset is about 2.5 inches, half that on the AK-74. Indexing the rifle centered in my chest, it became a point, shoot, and dead center hit event. Moving through the drills, we were down to 1.5 seconds from rest to two shots on target. Using the AK found me done and waiting for the 1.5-second whistle with shots clustered inside a couple inches.

Next, three circles with numbers were placed on the target in different spots and engaged in order. Loaded with three rounds, two shots are fired into each circle, requiring a reload. No RDS, only the front sight. Working the AR was fast, the reload equally as quick. Accuracy was solid, but the AK-74 was better.

The reload on the AK was slower, though not as much as you might expect. Equipped with the Colorado Shooting Sports Lightning Bolt, which has charging handles located on both sides of the rifle, I did not miss the bolt locking to the rear. Hooking the magazine in place, I was as fast as or faster than some. There is no need to turn the rifle over or reach around to charge it. Our last daylight drill was the same with a pistol transition, adding some complexity and providing the opportunity to work out issues with slings and gear.

The last course for the night was a modified "El Pres" in



Your flash may overpower your light at night—make sure to check.



Bahde used an Arsenal AK-74 with Aimpoint T2.

low light. Starting from rest and facing up range, you turn and engage three targets with two rounds, reload and repeat. Wes wants you to work the light, so you must turn it off during the reload. The light should only be on when you are on target.

Misses added time, extra rounds or failing to manipulate the light resulted in a DQ, with heckling mandatory. The winner gets a prize package worth a couple grand, so every effort was made to win.

You get a good idea of how well your flash hider works (or doesn't). Most of the SWAT rifles had short barrels, which made them flame throwers. It may not mess with you, but it might mess with your teammate. They also throw out debris and excess powder and are *loud*. Some flashes overpowered the lights—another consideration. Longer barrels were better, and the AK-74 was similar. The Seekins .300 BLK had no flash to speak of.

FINAL THOUGHTS

You can only do so much in one day, and Wes packs a ton of useful information into this class. Half the day is classroom, the rest on the range, depending on factors like weather and range issues.

Once the shooting starts, it goes fast and furious. All range training mates to the curriculum and complements the tac-



Quality weaponlight is a must on a fighting carbine.



Reloading AR while keeping the rifle in the workspace.

tics and philosophy. It is practical, useful, and provides officers and trainers a different perspective, one they can pass on to their departments.

This is not a beginner's class. Officers need to have qualified on their rifles prior to attending. No time is spent getting people spun up, so you need to know how to handle your rifle and maintain safety on the range. You start out fast and move faster, so make sure this is not day one for you and your carbine.

The class featured more and different information this second time around for me, so I recommend taking it more than once. I will be in San Antonio when the LSL Tour returns, and plan to attend it again.

Officers often complain about not being able to attend training. There is no excuse here. Not only is it free, but you leave with a bag of nice swag and the chance to win a prize package worth a couple grand—all donated by some fantastic sponsors.

If the LSL Tour makes it to your area, jump on it. You will leave a better shooter than when you came, and learn a ton. Sign up is as easy as logging on to the LSL Tour website, filling in some info, and hitting enter.

Take the time. You won't regret it, and it just might save your life! ☺

SOURCES

LSL TOUR

(877) 884-0909
www.lslustour.com

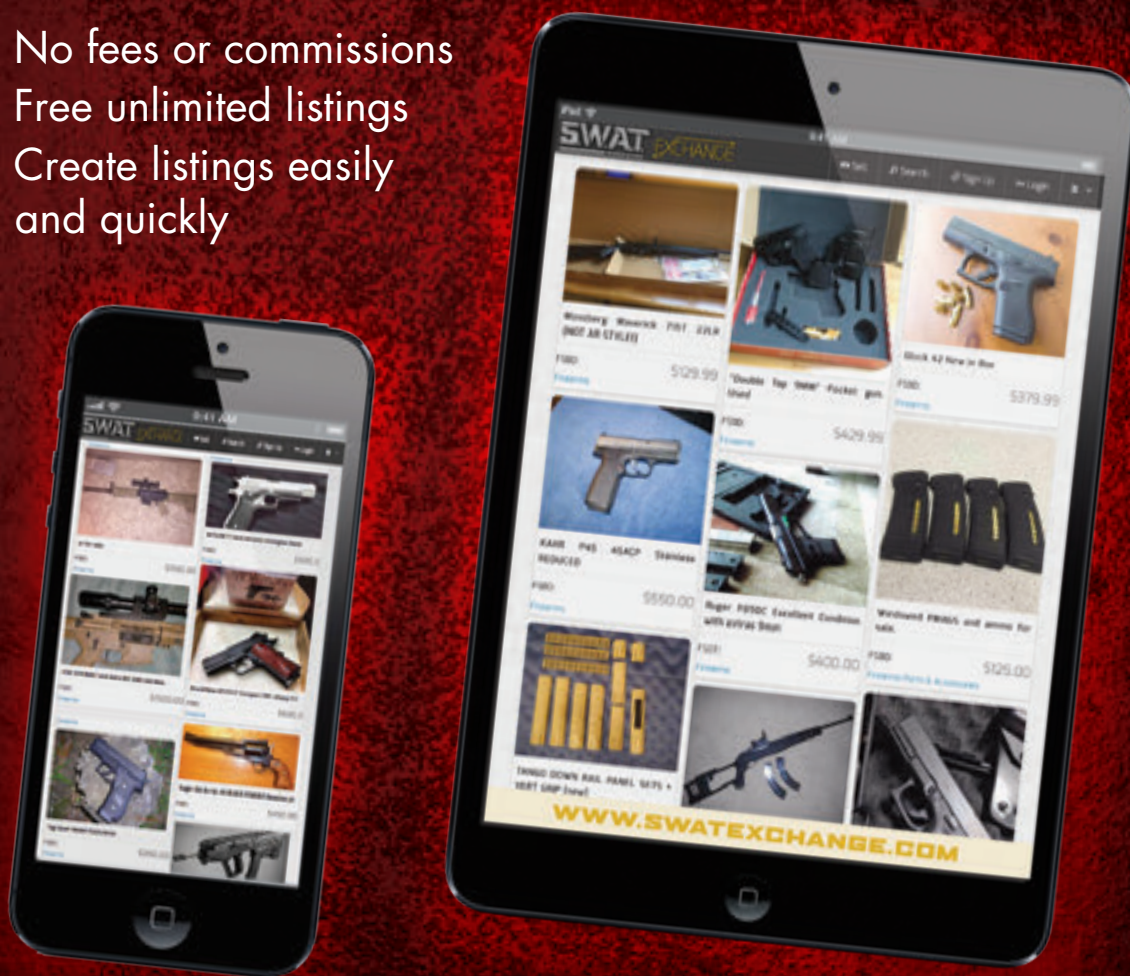
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REACHING FULL POTENTIAL

ROBAR Customized CZ 75 B SA

BY BOB PILGRIM
PHOTOS COURTESY ROBAR



CZ Custom Shop competition fiber-optic front sight. ROBAR melted all edges and cut forward grasping serrations.

When you have a superior product, it makes little sense to change it. But engaging in variations on the theme is a way of tweaking a design to possibly contemporize it, and more importantly to appeal to a wider group of shooters. CZ's flagship pistol, the double/single-action CZ 75 with cocked and locked option, has existed since 1976 and has gone through a number of changes and calibers, but the all-steel pistol's signature profile has essentially remained the same.

CZ offers over 30 steel and polymer variants to the shooting public and in every popular defensive caliber except .357 SIG.

COLONEL'S APPROVAL

At its American debut, the late Colonel Jeff Cooper—1911 pistol aficionado, owner of the famed Gunsite Academy, and father of the Modern Technique—had high praise for the CZ 75 in spite of its DA/SA action, which to him was partially acceptable because of its cocked-and-locked carry option.

Top: Starboard side of ROBAR's superb creation exhibits NP3 finished slide. ROBAR added CZ Custom Shop full-size aluminum grips (which have been stippled), relieved ejection port, and ambidextrous thumb safety.

I attended his shooting courses several times and had a brief stint as one of his adjunct instructors under the mentorship of Jack Furr. If Jeff were still alive, I would love to see his reaction now when he picked up one of CZ's latest variations, the CZ 75 B SA (Single Action) pistol. The "B" designates a firing pin safety. His only anticipated objection might be that it was not yet available in .45 ACP.

Like most CZs, this is a beautiful and graceful pistol. Its slender trigger has a modicum of slack, breaks crisply at 4.5 pounds, and resets quickly. In short, it is a combat pistol with competition features. But before I get too far down the specifications road, let me back up a bit.

ROBAR AND CZ CUSTOM

When I live with a pistol for a while and decide if it's a keeper, I often assess it for possible improvements or how can I make it unique among myriad similar handguns. A lot of firearms enthusiasts like to have guns specifically made or

modified to their specifications. I am one of them and, when I think of customization houses that combine practicality with art, I immediately think of Robbie Barrkman of The ROBAR Companies.

Robbie specializes in many makes of short and long guns, but this was the first time he agreed to work on the Czech import. In addition to ROBAR, I was very fortunate to recruit CZ Custom/Ghost Products Shop, and Robert Bagnato kindly donated full-size aluminum grips, a competition sight package, competition hammer to improve trigger pull, and magazine base pads.

ERGONOMICS

CZs are noted for the slide riding on the inner rails of the receiver, which gives the slide full support. Dorsally, the deeply blued slide has very tasteful and attractive striations that draw the eye toward its dovetailed and pinned white dot front sight. The dovetailed fixed rear sight is a simple vertical blade featuring two white

The pistol slips into the hand like a friendly handshake.

ROBAR upgraded CZ 75 B SA by installing CZ Custom Shop competition sights and hammer, full-size aluminum grips, and enhanced magazine base pads; melting edges; cutting forward grasping serrations; serrating the hooked trigger guard; and finishing the receiver in corrosion- and abrasion-resistant black Roguard.





Above: ROBAR relieved ejection port for more positive ejection.

Below: ROBAR installed CZ Custom Shop competition sights and ambidextrous thumb safety.



dots that are smaller than the solo dot on the front blade.

Rear slide serrations provide a gripping surface for manual slide manipulation but are very conservative because of the slide's deep position in its receiver. Its hammer is the bobbed Commander style, its extractor is external, and its ejection port is adequately sized for reliable ejection.

The receiver is traditional CZ 75, but its beavertail is tastefully and practically extended and has slightly enlarged ambidextrous thumb safeties. These are augmented by a firing pin (B Model) block and hammer stop.

The only checkering or disruption of steel for improved gripping are the above-mentioned slide serrations and horizontal cuts across the front of the hooked and enlarged trigger guard.

Both the slide stop and dust cover are standard size, and the latter does not have an accessory rail. The magazine release is oversized and reversible but not so large that it can be inadvertently engaged when holstered.

Steel magazines are staggered box without base pads and store a sweet 16 of 9x19mm rounds. Grips are plastic with palm swells. In short, CZ ergonomics are excellent, and the pistol slips into the hand like a friendly handshake.

Its single-action trigger is a stark departure from the usual curved CZ trigger. It is relatively straight with a slight hook on the bottom, and adjustable for overtravel. My sample had some take-up before hitting sear resistance and a bit of creep before breaking crisply.

I felt like a kid at Christmas when UPS knocked on my door and had me sign for the package. My excitement was justified when the CZ 75 B SA emerged from its box. The words graceful and beautiful immediately came to mind, and it felt terrific in my hand. Although muzzle heavy, I knew it would become nicely balanced with a full magazine in place.

REACHING FULL POTENTIAL

ROBAR's work is attractive, practical, and expensive. His work makes firearms more durable, enhances their ergonomics, and improves their shootability. ROBAR's NP3 coating was administered to the slide, barrel, and internals of the CZ 75 B SA to resist cor-

rosion and increase lubricity. Lubrication is not necessary and carbon deposits can be wiped off with a rag.

A trigger job accompanied installation of a CZ Custom Competition Hammer and hammer spring, which reduced trigger weight by a very smooth—and crisp breaking—one and a half pounds. Forward slide serrations were cut into the slide and they are very functional because of the limited purchase available on rear serrations.

Fixed CZ Custom sights were installed. These consisted of a fiber-optic red sight and ramped rear that extended sight radius by 0.779 inch. Magazines were finished in Roguard and CZ Custom enlarged base pads were added. To complement the enhanced magazines, the magazine well was beveled.

CZ Custom's full-size aluminum grips were also installed, and both front and back straps were stippled with borders. ROBAR's famous Semper Vincio (Always Win) logo was engraved into a black Roguard finished receiver.

GIBRALTAR SPEED SCABBARD

The all-steel CZ 75 B is not a light handgun, so selecting a secure holster that distributes its weight was paramount. Master leathersmith Ken Null answered that requirement with his Gibraltar Speed Scabbard.

The 4.4-ounce shell horsehide scabbard is an open-top rig with FBI cant. Widely separated belt loops give it a pancake profile that hugs the body, distributes weight, and provides good security, which is augmented by the holster's hand-molded friction fit. A shirt guard is also featured.

Null's work truly complements the handsome profile of this pistol.

BEST GUN TESTED

Recently I have been very fortunate that I can rely on the generosity of world-class shooters to extract the inherent accuracy out of the firearms I write about.

Top Shot All Stars finalist William Bethards fell in love with the custom-

» SPECIFICATIONS

ROBAR CZ 75 B SA CUSTOM

MANUFACTURER	CZ USA
MODEL	CZ 75 B SA
CALIBER	9mm
ACTION	Short recoil, locked breech
CAPACITY	16+1
BARREL LENGTH	4.76 inches, 1:9 twist
OVERALL LENGTH	8.1 inches
OVERALL HEIGHT	5.4 inches
OVERALL WIDTH	1.4 inches
WEIGHT (unloaded)	35.68 ounces
CONSTRUCTION	Steel
FRAME FINISH	Satin black Roguard
INTERNAL FINISH & SLIDE FINISH	NP3
FRONT AND REAR STRAPS	Stippled
SIGHTS	Ramped rear, fiber optic front
TRIGGER WEIGHT	4.5 pounds
MAGAZINE RELEASE	Enlarged
MAGAZINE WELL	Beveled
SAFETIES	Ambidextrous manual, firing pin block, hammer stop
STOCKS	Factory plastic, custom aluminum
TOTAL COST (Including Custom Work)	\$1,878.00

CZ 75 B SA with handmade K.L. Null Gibraltar Speed Scabbard.



Right: ROBAR CZ 75 B SA parked securely in K.L. Null Gibraltar Speed Scabbard for field evaluation.

Below: William Bethards, *Top Shot All Stars* finalist and former double distinguished Marine team shooter, executes controlled pairs and triple taps with CZ 75 B SA. Pistol was easy to control, very accurate, and had a great trigger.



Photos: author



Left: While still a great pistol, stock CZ appears rather plain compared to ROBAR customized gun.



» AMMUNITION PERFORMANCE

BRAND/LOAD	VELOCITY (fps)	ACCURACY (inches)
Atlantic Marksmen 80-gr. Poly Case MEN/ARX	1,535	1.36
Federal 115-gr. JHP +P+	1,279	2.17
Hornady 125-gr. HAP	1,082	2.16
HPR 80-gr. Black Ops	1,307	1.09
SIG 124-gr. JHP	1,197	2.09
Speer 115-gr. Lawman TMG	1,311	1.49
Speer 147-gr. Gold Dot JHP	990	2.03
Velocity Tactics 80-gr. PFMG	1,390	1.39
Winchester 147-gr. BJHP	995	1.59

Average velocities obtained from five-round strings fired through a Competition Electronics M2 chronograph, ten feet from muzzle. Average five-round groups obtained from a handheld rest at 25 yards. Temperature: 90 degrees F.

ized CZ 75 B SA right after he broke the first shot at 25 yards. He was so enamored with the gun's single-action trigger and ergonomics that he plans on purchasing his own CZ. Bethards exclaimed this was "the best handgun we've tested so far."

Bethards prefers heavy guns like the 1911, and the CZ has this characteristic, which gives it excellent balance. To him, it is as if CZ has merged the excellent ergonomics of the FN Browning with the trigger of the Smith & Wesson Model 52s. He used the S&W 52 extensively when on the Olympic shooting team and said he liked its long and deliberate but smooth take-up and very crisp break. During rapid-fire strings, Bethards had no problem with recoil, including +P+ ammunition. He kept the pistol indexed on the "A" zone of the target.

Bethards also deployed the CZ from the Null holster. He described it as very

comfortable and “forgot he had it on.” Before we wrapped up our session, I had to remind him to return it.

SHOOTING RESULTS

The best handheld five-round groups at 25 yards were with HPR 80-grain OTF at 1.09 inches. Highest average velocity for a five-round string was attributed to Atlantic Marksmen’s conical copper Poly Case MEN/ARX 80-grain bullet at 1,535 feet-per-second (fps). This ammunition also won accuracy honors from the bench, as four rounds went into a 0.69-inch ragged hole, with one flyer half an inch out but still in the black. CZs can shoot.

SUMMARY

What else is there to say? If you are into steel handguns and don’t mind the weight, the updated CZ 75 in SAO is as good as it gets. CZ makes all kinds of firearms using traditional and contemporary materials, and I have never heard any serious complaints about anything they make that goes bang. And they are all reasonably priced.

My CZ also reflects old-world workmanship and attention to detail. CZs run well out of the box, but if you want to personalize your piece with additional practicality and beauty, you cannot beat the man from Arizona, Robbie Barrkman, and his martial artisans. ☺

Bob Pilgrim holds a 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.

SOURCES

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THE EVACUATION CHALLENGE

Getting Out of Dodge in Your Dodge

BY KEN MATTHEWS



Those of you who are into preparedness likely have Return to Home, Shelter in Place, and Evacuation plans for different emergency scenarios and contingencies. Bug Out Bags (BOBs), Get-Home Bags, and stored food and supplies give you the edge if you need to set these emergency plans in motion, and hopefully you've trained and practiced for those scenarios.

In most cases, it makes sense to hunker down and shelter in place, at least until the initial event has transpired. But if the disaster or emergency event requires evacuation from your home and neighborhood, are you ready to efficiently pack and load up to get out of Dodge?

THE CHALLENGE

There's been a regional natural disaster and you must move your family to a safer locale. You've got 30 minutes to pack your vehicle and be on the road: GO!

Without some preplanning, referencing an equipment and supplies checklist, and practicing the load-out a few times, you will likely take too long, forget vital items, and possibly miss the deadline altogether.

OBJECTIVES AND FIRST STEPS

In this scenario, plan on a standard 5x8 covered utility trailer as the primary load hauler. You could use a non-covered utility trailer or just the space in the bed of a truck. By preplanning what you're taking, how much the sup-



Your bug-out vehicle needs to be capable of varied terrain, loads, and weather conditions.

plies weigh, and where they need to go in the available space, plus labeling and pre-staging some of the supplies, you can mobilize, load and go much more efficiently regardless of the hauler's size.

For planning purposes, tape out the floor space of the trailer with masking tape, which lets you work through many of the loading issues without needing the trailer right there. Then, when the list and loading sequence are finalized, practice with the trailer or specific vehicle you'll be using.

Regardless of the load hauler, start by generating a prioritized equipment list for the evacuation. The items and amounts of specific supplies on the prioritized list are contingent on what you're planning and preparing for.



For instance, your food and water load-out will be much different if you're planning on a two-week event versus a three-day event. Likewise, if you have six people in your group, you'll need a lot more for the same length of time than if you have two people.

Are you planning on support from local or regional governments, municipal entities, or church groups? Your needs will change dramatically if you're temporarily housed in a school gymnasium as opposed to bring-your-own shelters in a field. And remember, just because



If your load-out looks like this, you can benefit from some preplanning and loading exercises.

you head out thinking you'll be in a school gym, all may not go according to plan and you may need to be self-reliant regardless of initial intent.

Next, identify capabilities (weight and space) of the vehicle, trailer, ball hitch, and attachment point on the tow vehicle so you stay within safe handling limitations with your load. Then determine equipment load sequencing and weights so you can get the heavy stuff low and maintain a safe center of balance and gravity.

Using a standardized color-coding of the supplies and transport containers can help with easier identification and inclusion into the load process, minimizing confusion. During this preplanning exercise, identify additional equipment and supply needs, and finalize the transport containers you want to use. The bottom line is you want your supplies labeled and organized to enhance your ability to identify, load and move equipment rapidly.

CONTAINERS

Military and commercial ammo cans and transport boxes make good travel containers, although often they are heavy. You don't want to use valuable bandwidth in your weight limits just on containers.

Some of the inexpensive totes and footlockers available at big-box retailers can help you stay organized and make it easier to load. While these containers aren't generally as heavy duty as the military ones, they are usually much lighter. Consider the trade-offs. Remember your labeling system and color-code containers and items for rapid identification.



© Can Stock Photo Inc. / EEI_Tony



Coding containers with colored tape or labels makes quick identification for loading easy.

VEHICLE PREP

Preventive maintenance can go a long way toward keeping your intended vehicle ready for emergencies. Spare tires, oil, fuel, and high-turn-over parts can keep you moving when the going gets rough. I've had a rash of flat tires while playing out in the desert lately, and it has driven home the idea of having *two* spares, not one. Remember the adage "Two is one, one is none."

It makes sense to keep gas tanks closer to full rather than empty—a disaster is no time to get in line at the gas station. Fill up when you get to 3/4 of a tank.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

After you hit the trail, you need to be able to communicate with other vehicles in your group. Cell phones, with all their wonderful bells and whistles, may be rendered nearly useless during a



Above: A good rule of thumb is: the higher the load, the lighter the weight.



Bigger vehicles and bigger trailers are easier to overload ... plan wisely.

PRIORITIZED EQUIPMENT LIST

- ✓ **Food:** In this scenario, prepacked ready-to-eat meals make the most sense. With everything that will be going on, the last thing you want to worry about is complicated food preparation. MREs and freeze-dried meals rule here!
- ✓ **Water:** Many inexpensive and portable containers work for water storage. Remember the one-gallon-per-person-per-day rule as a minimum, and also plan for purification needs.
- ✓ **Clothing:** Each group member should have a backpack or duffle bag with heavy-duty cold-weather-capable clothing. Good boots, lots of socks, insulating layers of fleece and thermal underwear, weather-proof shells, hats and gloves will be worth their weight in gold if this event occurs during or overlaps into inclement weather months.
- ✓ **Shelter:** Tents, tarps, bungee cords, twine or cordage, extra tent stakes, and sheet plastic will be invaluable if you need to fabricate shelter for yourself. Don't forget extra duct tape, small tools, nails, screws, and other little necessities. The tent-style portable shower/privacy shelters make it nicer to deal with a portable outhouse. All these supplies will also be useful if you end up in a shelter-in-place scenario and have any glass or structural damage to your home.
- ✓ **Toiletries:** Along with the portable outhouse shelter, pack toilet paper, baby wipes (cheap shower), paper towels, feminine products, baby/infant-specific items, spare contact lenses and glasses, solution, and any other normal-use items.
- ✓ **Communications:** Two-way radios (discussed on page 69) help you stay in touch with other members of your group as you get out of town. Spare batteries, solar panels, and small generators can be very useful too. Throw in some extension cords and power strips just in case you end up being able to access some AC power.
- ✓ **Medical:** A good first aid and medical kit can save lives! If you don't already have one, get one—and learn how to use what's inside. Every member of your group should know where the med kit is and have a rudimentary knowledge of the contents and their use. Pack extra over-the-counter and prescription medications, and vitamins and supplements.
- ✓ **Weapons and Ammo:** Having the means to defend yourself and your loved ones is imperative in a disaster situation, as is being able to feed the weapons you have. Include extra ammo, magazines, cleaning and maintenance supplies, and a few spare parts. Don't forget holsters, slings and some sort of load-carrying gear to help you stay functional.



Preplan ammunition calibers and quantities.



Green military containers (left) are much sturdier than most commercial containers but also much heavier.



Taped-out transport space lets you work out load plan and sequencing.



large-scale emergency. Even if the grid stays intact, cell towers will likely be totally overloaded by everyone trying to track down loved ones and come up with a last-minute action plan.

What does that leave? Two-way radios! The little FRS radios sold by big-box retailers will be useful but, like cell phones, will likely have dozens if not hundreds of people trying to use the limited channels. HAM radios (with appropriate licensing), UHF and VHF commercial radios, and CB radios may work well to keep groups connected.

Test your comms in scenario-based exercises so you know what kind of performance you can realistically expect. Do *not* trust the marketing hype on the little radio packages that tout a “24-mile range” with half a watt and a two-inch antenna—it’s not gonna happen!

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Run drills with your family, friends or group. Nothing works out the bugs like a real-time function test. Each participant should have a preplanned list of the items they are responsible for. They should be able to grab these items and stage them for load-out.

A simple method of running your plan is to tape out the trailer size on a garage floor or driveway and then “load” the taped area. This will help you identify what you can fit in the trailer or vehicle, and whittle down your load to a realistic level.

Remember to reverse load, meaning put the items in last that need to come out first. You don’t want to be tasked with setting up tents when it’s dark, raining, and the tents are in the front of the packed-tight trailer.

By running load-out drills, you can fine-tune your emergency preparations for an evacuation scenario. ©

Ken Matthews is a former SWAT team member with a Utah police department, fulfilling collateral responsibilities as a sniper and team medic depending on the mission. He has been an underground miner, EMT and Ambulance Commander, and a Flight Nurse and Air-Medical Program Director with over 1,000 patient missions.

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THE MUCH-MALIGNED CROSSDRAW

Practical Possibilities

BY BOB PILGRIM



Above: Former Supervisory Federal Air Marshal Ken Trice draws across body, immediately orienting gun's muzzle toward opponent. Off hand blocks or creates openings in close combat.

Left: With body bladed toward threat, Trice easily accesses ROBAR CZ 75 B SA. Unlike strong-side draw from concealing garment, CD gun hand has only one job—grasp the gun.

Crossdraw (CD) or support-side carry was verboten in the FBI and, when a CD student showed up at a private-sector shooting course, he was eyed with suspicion and concern and moved to the far end of the line to avoid safety violations caused by his muzzle sweeping a fellow student on the line or breaking the 180 rule. Crossdraw in crowds was considered unsafe and subject to relatively easy gun takeaways.

REVOLVERS AND SABERS

Historically, as firearms began to mature, CD was the preferred method of handgun carry, and the 1861 Army Manual of Arms for Sharps Rifle, Colt Revolver and Swords, specified that the “pistol” should be worn on the left side in front of the saber-hook. If necessary, the trooper could draw with his support hand from his CD rig and execute the Cavalry Draw or reverse draw.

In 19th century militaries, southpaws were often forced to shoot and wield swords right handed. As an alternative, troopers also carried the flap-holstered sidearm butt forward on their dominant side and executed the aforementioned Cavalry Draw, which left the saber side unencumbered.

James Butler “Wild Bill” Hickok, one of the most noted gunfighters of the old West, carried his favorite pair of Colt 1851 Navy Model revolvers crossdraw.

CD PERSISTS

When I was in the Marine Corps, sidearms, with the exception of the Tanker shoulder or chest holster, were normally holstered and carried on one’s strong or dominant side in leather or synthetic flap holsters. As mentioned, this was not always the case historically and, sometime after World War I, American military pistols and revolvers began to migrate to the soldier’s strong side. The British and Germans continued to favor CD rigs.

Many U.S. police departments and highway patrol officers placed their flap holsters on their offside, particularly if they spent the majority of the job in a vehicle. In the 1980s, I attended a conference hosted by the Michigan State Police. Highly polished CD situated leather flap holsters protected their revolvers.

ADVANTAGES OF CD

While driving, flying or seated, in general it is much easier to access a sidearm from the CD position. While driving, CD avoids the seat-belt lock and places the firearm as far away as possible from a front-seat passenger, making a gun takeaway more difficult. More and more assaults are occurring in medical facilities, and CD is most suit-

able for doctors as well as businessmen seated behind desks.

Standing or sitting, CD is more subtle, and the shoulder does not have to be raised as it does for a strong-side draw, which telegraphs the move. CD is ideal for air marshals and armed pilots.

Persons with rotator cuff or shoulder injuries do not have to involve the shoulder as much as is required to execute a strong-side draw.

Concealment is a tossup. The butt of the weapon prints against the coat with a strong-side draw location, especially when bending over or reaching forward, and it can clunk against a hard-backed bench. A CD carried gun does not print or make noise when performing these motions.

In crowded areas and at extreme close quarters, the concealed CD is easier to access.

A person carrying CD can still reach and extract the handgun from a rear bear hug. It is possible to fire and hit by turning the body.

During dynamic movement, the dominant hand may be required to perform offensive or defensive tasks, and the support hand can stabilize the holster and retain the handgun, especially in holsters with limited retention levels.

Cold-weather environments may dictate CD carry via a shoulder holster under a bulky coat.

Hand position: During field interviews, plainclothes officers may have their hands clasped at sternum level or holding jacket lapels. From these non-threatening positions, CD may be more convenient and possibly faster than strong-side draw. From a folded-arm position, you can have your hand discreetly on your piece without brandishing or telegraphing, and cut your draw time in half.

Carrying a backup gun or immobilizing weapon on the support side permits dominant-hand access to both primary and secondary armament.

DISADVANTAGES

In CD, the muzzle of the handgun is constantly oriented toward persons on the gunman’s support side, violating the 180-degree rule. When drawn, the gun’s muzzle sweeps persons located on the shooter’s support side. This safety issue can be mitigated with a straight drop holster and by blading toward the threat.

The pistol is more accessible to an opponent. Gunmen employing CD must be proficient in defensive tactics and gun retention. I would not carry CD unless I employed at least a Level I security holster.

When drawing, the muzzle is not oriented immediately toward the threat. It must be swung into alignment



Wild Bill Hickok carried a pair of Colt 1851 Navy Model revolvers crossdraw.



Above: While belted in and driving, Hogue PowerSpeed Level I security rig orients ROBAR CZ 75 B SA in straight-drop configuration. Seat belt is not an impediment to CD. Gun is farthest from passenger seat.

Right: CD facilitates contested vehicle exits. Shots downrange can commence as soon as pistol clears holster.



and a gunman could swing past the target unless the offside is bladed toward the threat. This is mitigated if a straight drop CD holster is employed, the body bladed, and the draw is across the body toward the strong-side hip.

The gun arm is easily pinned against the front torso, preventing draw.

The CD butt is more exposed when the coat is open and more difficult to conceal, especially when the gun's butt is angled forward.

Obese people may not be able to access a CD-mounted weapon.

REMEDIES

During his interview with me on crossdraw (see page 73), Massad Ayoob proffered remedies to mitigate the main problems attributed to CD and recommends employing a straight drop or less acutely angled rig, blading the body by dropping your strong-side foot to the rear, and angling your support side toward the threat (fighting stance).

This will orient the CD gun's barrel toward the threat and will not sweep innocent bystanders. As with any defensive situation, try to maintain your personal body space and not let your opponent penetrate it.

DRAW SEQUENCE

Mas also stipulated that proper and safe practice is mandatory and describes the CD in the following five-step sequence:

1. Step back with the dominant-side foot and blade the body as one would with the Weaver stance. This orients the CD's gun barrel toward the threat. This stance can also be accomplished by stepping forward with the support-side foot into a boxing stance.

2. As you access the gun's butt with your dominant hand, raise your support hand to defend or open the concealing garment. This keeps your support arm from being swept by the gun's muzzle.

3. Release any security system and draw the gun across your torso toward your dominant side until the muzzle indexes the threat. No lateral sweep should result and the gun should travel up and out toward the threat. The trigger finger contacts the trigger when the muzzle indexes the target.

4. One- or two-handed, lift and punch the gun toward the threat. Upper body can remain bladed (Weaver) or square up to the threat (Isosceles) by bringing the rear foot forward.

5. A two-handed hold is established if there is time to do so.

PROLIFIC RIGS

Most strong-side holsters can be shifted to the support side and serve as CD rigs, especially those that can be adjusted for cant/rake. But there are almost as many CD-specific holsters as there are holster manufacturers in business. There are some beautiful examples in rich leather and slick Kydex, but unfortunately, a number of these are open top with no security mechanism other than glove-like fit and tension screws.

FOUR CHAMPIONS ON CROSSDRAW

In the early days of USPA/IPSC competition, CD was the preferred position for the holster and handgun. I interviewed four champions of that era and they had this to say about the much-maligned crossdraw:

MASSAD AYOOB

Massad Ayoob, director of his Lethal Force Institute and author of many books and countless articles on weapons, self-defense and use-of-force legal matters, carried strong-side and CD depending on the type of competition—and he competed in just about everything on the circuit. The last time he used CD in a major competition was during the

1989 Bianchi Cup. CD preference was dictated by economy of motion.

Early matches often required the surrender (hands up) or interview stances (hands together at sternum level) to start festivities. In those locations, the fastest way to the gun was CD. Hands at sides favored strong-side carry and preference for that start position phased out CD more than anything else. In Ayoob's *Gun Digest Book of Concealed Carry* (Second Edition), he covers the art of CD extensively.

MIKE DALTON

Mike Dalton of Steel Challenge fame was a member of the 1976 Columbia Conference, which founded USPA/IPSC competition. He advised three start positions were adopted: hands at sides, surrender, and interview. He advised that CD can still be used in IPSC, though it is rarely seen today. As far as speed is concerned, he gives the edge to strong-side carry, but they are only separated by about .500th of a second.

When he shoots Bianchi Cup, he uses CD because it is more natural for him to access when he goes prone and

shoots around barricades. If you have to present from concealment, like in IDPA competition, he prefers strong-side carry, and the new holster designs seem to favor dominant-side draws. He frequently switched from one style of carry to the other without any confusion.

Competitors often looked at the holstered gun rather than the target before drawing. Mike recalls that Ray Chapman of the Chapman Academy, the first IPSC World Champion, was one of the first to adopt CD, which lent itself to his favored Weaver Stance. When bladed to the target, the gun was exposed to the threat but could be rocked out of the holster and with little movement brought to bear while blocking or distracting with the support arm and hand.

MICKY FOWLER

Mickey Fowler and Dalton are close friends and spent hours together shooting, analyzing and refining their techniques. Fowler also favored CD for the same reasons mentioned above and advised that the interview position actually pre-

ceded the surrender position. Furthermore, some matches allowed the shooter to have his hands hovering over the gun. Fowler continues to hunt on his ranch and carries his heavy-caliber revolver on his left hip. The biggest problem when “smoking” a CD was swinging past or oversweeping your target, because the gun's muzzle was not being driven straight to target.

JOHN SHAW

John Shaw, owner of and former chief instructor at the famous Mid-South Institute of Self-Defense Shooting, was expert at CD and won countless matches, including the Steel Challenge, SOF combat shoot, two IPSC Nationals, and second in the 1983 World IPSC contest. John later transitioned to Cowboy shooting and won the Cowboy Nationals in 1999 with a two-gun rig.

Initially, he drew his first Peacemaker from his CD holster, emptied it with a two-handed grip, shifted it to his left hand, and reholstered it while drawing his strong-side Colt with his right hand. In regard to CD dominance, he agrees with his fellow competitors. It was simply a matter of economy of motion. At Mid-South's beginnings, John taught student competitors the offside draw, but focused on strong-side carry soon after that. He never carried CD concealed with his pistol and estimates he picked up a tenth of a second in speed when he switched to strong-side carry.

To mitigate one of the major criticisms of vulnerability to gun takeaways, I am only recommending those holsters with at least Level I security. The only drawback to these security systems is they may make the Cavalry Draw more difficult to execute. Generally, dedicated CDs ride a little higher than strong-side scabbards and present the gun's butt at a straight up or forward angle.

Active Pro Gear

Active Pro Gear (APG) makes a variety of high-quality concealed-carry holsters in synthetics and leather. Its Level I thumb-break security M10-G42 steer-hide rig is specifically designed for CD while driving or seated. It snaps on and off a belt and is situated between the hip and navel. Its angle of cant is ideal for cross-body withdrawal.



Blackhawk SERPA cradles ROBAR Custom G42. It offers security and generous degree of rake adjustment.



Safariland ALS holsters are among the finest holsters that combine speed of access with security. Chosen by the FBI, they also lend themselves to CD with larger pieces, like this Templar Custom Arms G17. Rig should be situated at point of the hip.

Blackhawk

Blackhawk's SERPA is an excellent choice for CD because of its security and generous degree of rake adjustment. Smaller guns can be brought forward between hip and navel and not dig into the thigh.

Dara

The John Dara holster house is not well known to me, but its molded Level III scabbard is constructed of first-rate .093-inch Boltaron/Kydex synthetics. It has limitless adjustments for draw angle and retention tension, making it one of the most flexible systems on the market. Hardware is Melonite-finished hardened steel. Consequently, the Dara is rust- and impact-proof and guaranteed for a lifetime.



Dara LIII security scabbard provides almost unlimited adjustments ideal for CD. It's an extremely rugged holster that will match the service life of the Templar Custom Arms G17 it carries. These holsters should be adjusted for straight drop to minimize rearward muzzling.



Designed for driving or sitting, APG LI security leather CD sheath positions ROBAR G42 between hip and navel. Draw is subtle and muzzle does not dig into thigh.

Hogue PowerSpeed

Constructed of aerospace polymer, the 6.8-ounce PowerSpeed features a large thumb-deactivated automatic retention lock that is intuitive and is situated between the gun and body. Draw angle is completely adjustable and, with spacers for creating space between the body and rig, it is well suited for CD. It comes with paddle and belt mounts. A shoulder rig and MOLLE adapter are available as options. Texture is plain or carbon fiber.

Safariland

Safariland's new Model 7378 7TS with ALS (Auto Lock System) has been adopted by the FBI for special agents. Firearms instructors praise saving substantial training time with its intuitive thumb release that also requires zero break-in time. The 7378 is constructed of SafariSeven non-marking nylon blend and features internal non-finish-marring stand-offs that allow dirt and moisture to clear quickly and facilitate smooth release of the gun. If more angle or cant is desired, the belt mount can be turned upside down for more extensive adjustments.

CONCLUSIONS

CD is not for everyone but will assist one in being more responsive tactically in certain situations and operational environments. Physiologically, personnel with shoulder problems or very tight shoulders resulting from aging or strenuous work can better access their sidearm via CD. With the newer security holsters, gun takeaway has been substantially mitigated. Draw speed from a covering jacket can be cut in half from a folded-arms position. CD is worth exploring even if your preference is strong side. ©

SOURCES

ACTIVE PRO GEAR, INC.

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BREACHER UP!



Student practices
“break and rake.”

THE days of handing Mongo a battering ram and commanding him to “Open that door” are over, at least if Bryan Hillis has any say in the matter.

For a majority of police and military units, forced entry and door breaching during tactical operations have long been afterthoughts. Too often they are considered pregame warm-ups for the main event: the actual entry into a structure to neutralize bad guys and rescue hostages.

This is why the typical operation starts with the largest and/or most aggressive operator in the team being handed various implements of destruction and told to remove doors and windows so the “real” work can get underway.

This approach works often enough that it continues to be the norm. However, as bad guys get more sophisticated and liability concerns grow even greater, the entire process of making quick forced entry needs to be approached with the same amount of preparation, planning, and training as other facets of an operation.

Alexander Global Strategies Breaching Class

BY BRENT T. WHEAT



Above: Alexander Global Strategies CEO Bryan Hillis demonstrates proper technique for using a “hooligan” tool.

Right: Hillis addresses class inside a breaching simulation house at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center.



BREACHING ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

That idea is what Hillis, President and CEO of Alexander Global Strategies, sees as his mission. “Everything we do,” said Hillis, “is trying to change the way teams, team commanders, and administrators deploy and use breaching. So often, it’s the newest guy or strongest guy—we need to change that philosophy. This is a specialized skill within your unit and it should be treated as such.

“You can’t just give a ram to a guy and tell him ‘figure it out,’ “ he continued. “This is a high-liability area. You’re talking about destroying somebody else’s property, and so many times it’s not thought about in that way. We’re trying to reshape that.”

To that end, Hillis and his company, Alexander Global Strategies, have created a Three-Day Manual, Mechanical, Ballistic, and Thermal Breaching Course that is taught primarily at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center (MUTC) in rural southeastern Indiana, tucked among rolling hills approximately halfway between Indianapolis and Cincinnati.

The facility, operated by the Indiana National Guard, is one of the most unique in the country and, coupled with Hillis’ course, offers a world-class forced-entry training opportunity.

TRAINING CREDENTIALS

Hillis is a 15-year veteran police officer from northern Indiana and has an impressive resume. An instructor in various disciplines for 20 years, he is a long-time member of his agency’s SWAT

team and also did a stint as a contractor for the U.S. Diplomatic Security Service.

Among other things, he spent time in the Middle East as part of a U.S. cadre training a national Presidential Protective Detail in various anti-terrorism skills. He has also provided executive protection services for many high-net-worth individuals and at least one A-list show business personality.

But aside from his resume and experience, what sets Hillis apart from many other qualified instructors in the training industry is his devotion to the fine art and science of breaching.

"I've attended a handful of schools [that touched on forced entry], but in 2002 I took a dedicated breaching class and kinda got bitten by the bug," Hillis said. "Things in that course just resonated with me and it's continued from there."

But Hillis has realized that forced-entry training isn't nearly as popular or deemed as important as the sexier aspects of tactical operations, such as

entry techniques or shooting. "What we're finding is that industry-wide, it [breaching training] seems to be the biggest afterthought," he said.

IDEAL TRAINING CENTER

In response, Hillis created the breaching course. Then, when looking for a place to conduct training, he realized MUTC offered the ideal classroom.

The training center started out in 1919 as the Indiana Farm Colony for Feeble Minded Youth. The name eventually was changed to the more palatable Muscatatuck State Developmental Center and was Indiana's largest mental hospital, housing over 3,000 patients. For various reasons, the center was closed in 2001.

Once the facility closed, the state found itself holding a 1,000-acre fenced compound containing hundreds of buildings that required daily maintenance and was located in a very rural portion of the state, limiting possible

re-use options.

Fortunately, an ambitious plan was developed and the facility was turned over to the National Guard to build MUTC. The purpose of the facility is to train civilian first responders in disaster response, while the military uses the area to practice urban warfare, especially units preparing for deployment overseas.

In real terms, the mission includes a variety of groups and activities. At the same time as the breaching class was in session, FBI evidence response team members were training on evidence collection throughout the compound, and U.S. Marines were seen challenging robbed "insurgents" during urban clearing operations.

Not only are there hundreds of buildings and tunnels, but the U.S. govern-

Sparks fly as student slices through steel debris with thermal torch.



ment has built the most extensive and realistic post-apocalyptic urban landscape imaginable. There are hundreds of destroyed vehicles across the property alongside single-family dwellings, gas stations, churches, and other buildings in various stages of pseudo-destruction. Several parking garages were actually built in a collapsed state.

In addition, a junkyard, farm, motor pool, embassy, full-size prison, and a variety of other specialized buildings were erected specifically for tactical training. And if that weren't enough, the site includes a wrecked airliner, an actual flooded neighborhood, and a wrecked passenger train that resulted from a "washed-out" bridge.

Best of all from a breaching standpoint, many of these items can be cut, smashed, and bashed at will. In fact, a full neighborhood of houses are set up with reusable breaching doors and windows made with frames for quick replacement of glass panes.

"This facility is great," Hillis said. "We treat this as a living, breathing laboratory. Bring all of your stuff. Now is the time to try it and then stand back to say, 'If I did this, what happened?' We put problems in front of students and have them solve those problems with their own issued tools in hand."

Right: Training with quickie saw, student slices through reinforced concrete.

Below: Results of shotgun breaches.



BREACHING CLASS

Training Day One of the class covers mechanical breaching, safety and general concepts. Students learn basic and advanced techniques for using brute force correctly to open structures, with a focus on proper physical mechanics and intelligence gathering. Total classroom time is held to a bare minimum.

Day Two covers ballistic breaching, i.e., using the shotgun to break open doors and locks. Students use their own weapons and rounds to work through various scenarios in both the indoor simulators and the breaching neighborhood.



The training day is long, with students collapsing in their bunks close to 2300 hours. But a primary goal is to afford extensive low-light practice in both manual and ballistic breaching. Many students commented that even those with prior formal training had never been allowed to spend hours practicing the skills at night, even though many breaches occur in darkness.

Students get to experience a variety of situations including multiple manual and shotgun breaches on a variety of doors, plenty of shattered window glass during “break and rake” sessions, shooting car doors, and even learning to penetrate chain-link fence in a quick and efficient manner.

SAW AND THERMAL BREACHING

The final training day covers the “Quickie” K760 Rescue Saw and Broco Thermal Lance. Hillis likes both tools because they are widely available. Every fire truck in the U.S. has a quickie

saw, and many departments also have a thermal lance or its equivalent.

“I think it’s important because it’s readily accessible. If you go to the local firehouse, they have it. Then, when a situation is life-threatening, it’s important that you know how to grab that stuff and deploy it,” he said.

While thermal and saw breaching are only needed in certain specialized instances—breaching windows with security bars or entering a heavily fortified building such as a jail—these skills round out the abilities of a team.

“It has its place,” Hillis said. “A guy can go 15 years and never use it, but you might leave here tomorrow and grab it off the truck. If you narrow it down and only give yourself two or three methods of entry, you’re not doing yourself justice. The word ‘toolbox’ is overused, but you need to have many things you can grab, use and deploy with confidence so you have other options.”

Bryan Hillis instructs student who is practicing with thermal torch.

While both the saw and lance seem straightforward, students quickly found there is a learning curve for even these relatively uncomplicated tools. Fortunately, along with static practice stations provided by the instructor, throughout the facility a plethora of junk exists to practice cutting.

The thermal lance is simplicity itself: a hollow metal tube with pure oxygen fed through the center and ignited via a battery, creating a burning metal jet that cuts through steel quickly and with relatively little noise.

In use, students learned a subtle “touch” is necessary to keep the cut moving quickly and prevent a shower of 4,000-degree liquid metal from hitting the operator. But the site has no shortage of steel structures to practice

on, so each student gets nearly as much torch time as he desires.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

New SWAT operator Steve Linville of Dayton, Kentucky was impressed with the course, the facilities and Hillis. "Quality of instruction is great. It's very laid back. I've found just in my limited time on the job a more laid-back approach gets better reception from people. It's easier to learn that way.

"I'm a lot more comfortable with breaching, especially with the manual breaching with the ram. They really broke it down here in terms of body mechanics. I'm the smallest guy on the team and it may take me more hits than another guy, but with the mechanics

Though it appears to be a post-apocalyptic landscape minus zombies, this is actually one purpose-built street inside MUTC.

I've learned, I won't get nearly as exhausted," he added.

Detective Shawn Hines from the Bloomington, Indiana Police Department liked the "real world" conditions. "I think it's fine to sit in a classroom and talk about it, but to get out into the field in a laboratory situation and get hands-on is great," he said.

He also had high marks for Hillis. "I think one of the unique things about this course is the instructor. He makes himself readily available at night, so once the class is stopped, it's not over yet. He's still there to bounce ideas off of," Hines said.

"We don't train until 4 o'clock and call it a day," Hillis said in response. "Our philosophy is that we try to exceed the standards and confirm that guys comprehend what we're trying to accomplish. We don't train to time, we train to comprehension," he continued.

Ultimately, Hillis is doing his best to change how SWAT teams and military units approach forced entry. "Nowadays, everybody is so enamored with handgun and carbine courses. We're trying to reshape the mindset of the younger SWAT officers. We really want them to know how important this [breaching] is. You can't go and do all that cool-guy stuff unless you get inside first," he noted.

In that regard, three days spent at one of the most unique training sites in America during the Manual, Mechanical, Ballistic and Thermal Breaching Course will leave any operator much better prepared to clear the way—even when Mongo isn't available. ©

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FIRECLEAN

Next-Generation Lubrication

BY ETHAN JOHNS

Above: FireClean is a market leader among next-generation non-toxic, high-performance lubes.

FOR years the pat answer for reliability problems with semiautomatic rifles or handguns was to replace the magazine and lubricate the action. Magazines have come a long way in the last few decades across all platforms, as has understanding that the box magazine is a consumable item that will eventually need replacement.

That leaves lubrication.

Many shooters are still using traditional lubricants that were designed before the first computer. These products still work, but like advances in all other aspects of shooting, improved lubricants have been hitting the market at a rapid rate. These lubes typically offer

better staying power on surfaces, are more “slippery” and reduce friction better, contribute to easier cleaning, and are either non or less toxic than traditional petroleum-based products.

OK, blah-blah, whatever—lubrication can seem as exciting as talking about a better toothpaste. But some of the best new lubricants are offering performance increases that are worth turning the page for. FireClean is one of these.

FireClean has been quietly sweeping the high-end shooting circles. I became aware of the product early on and yawned, stretched, and went back to what I was doing. Outrageous claims are commonplace in the lubricant sector, and I had a supply of products that performed quite adequately.

Then in the space of a month, I heard rave reviews of FireClean from two shooting buddies who instruct in two different branches of the SOF community and are highly knowledge-

able and skilled high-volume shooters. I took a sample and put it into rotation.

That was three years ago, and gradually FireClean displaced all the other bottles on my gun table. It is a unicorn in the oil business—the impressive claims are simply borne out in use. It is non-toxic, which is good for the user and hugely significant for organizational application, where environmental compliance is a massive burden.

The lube stays in place like nothing I have used, yet doesn’t seem to gum up. FireClean is the slickest lube I’ve yet experienced, challenging moly grease for its ability to change the feel of parts contacting into a silky transition. The slickness and staying-there-ness are hard to reconcile with an odorless oil that is as thin as FireClean.

The “and wait, there’s more!” part is that cleanup of hard-used, high-round-count uppers or pistol slides becomes a wipe it off with a paper towel affair. I was pretty happy with

some earlier non-toxic lubes that outperformed traditional milspec CLPs (Cleaner, Lubricant, Preservative), but the more I used FireClean, the more impressed I became.

During this time frame, I also dabbled with a few other offerings that had recently come to market. Simply put, some were more sizzle than steak; new doesn’t automatically mean better.

THE TEST

This year FireClean approached me with a proposal: Take a random basic milspec upper, lubricate it with FireClean, and see how far it would go on that initial lubrication. No spot lubrication in-stride, no cleaning, nothing other than shoot the carbine and see what happens.

This sounded like an interesting project. I had successfully taken previous uppers through higher-than-average round counts between lube touch-ups with FireClean, and was curious to



BCM bolt upon initial application at kick-off of endurance test.

see just how far is too far.

Basic parameters were set. We chose a Bravo Company Mfg upper with a milspec bolt carrier group, dropped it onto a Noveske N4 lower with a Magpul Slimline stock and VTAC Super V trigger, and secured six new Gen 3 PMAGs from Magpul to be the exclusive mags used throughout. Ammo was Federal American Eagle XM193 on stripper clips.

CONTEXT

A spectrum of lubrication regimens exists. On the one hand, you have the “shoot it, clean it obsessively, and lubricate it each time” camp. On the other is the “keep adding lube until reliability is affected or the sludge oozing out of the action becomes a distraction” camp. Both work.

The “add lube” approach is pretty common among high-round-count (1,000 to 1,500 rounds) carbine classes, and every instructor I’m familiar with tends to recommend something like lubrication at mid-day, or about every 250 rounds. In an operational

setting, experienced shooters tend to check carefully before each mission and more likely than not will add a drop or two of lubricant to key areas.

Bone dry is a minefield of problems, and I have seen clean and dry weapons become sluggish or start to have problems in as little as 100 rounds.

Some other numbers are helpful in the background. I recently polled a number of my teammates with experience across multiple deployments to different highly active areas in Iraq and Afghanistan. Each identified the average rounds fired per man from the M4 on “average” offensive missions in a bracket from 15 to about 35 rounds, depending on the area and whether the mission was direct action or area clearance.

When asked about the epic, days-

long battle with resupply scenarios, each recalled a very similar figure of about 220 to 250 rounds. (Belt-fed weapons, of course, were a different story!)

FIRE(CLEAN) IT UP

Upon project kick-off, Ed from FireClean showed me how he has come to treat the whole action, not simply the bolt. He recommended getting a good film of the lube (with about 20 to 28 drops) on the entire bolt, carrier, and interior of the upper. He emphasized the locking area of the barrel extension, where the bolt twists in and out of upon locking and unlocking. He also emphasized the action spring, buffer, and receiver extension. Freshly treated with FireClean, the rifle had a silky smooth

I am less concerned with the specific ingredients and formulation of a product than its proven performance.



FireClean recommends 20 to 28 drops—amount shown on this blade—to treat an entire AR. A little goes a long way and lasts.

feel upon cycling. The bolt locked and unlocked with no hesitation.

We then proceeded to shoot the snot out of it. At key intervals, we stopped to examine the rifle and document its condition while we refilled the PMAGs.

180 ROUNDS

At the end of six magazines of M193, the rifle was absolutely unremarkable. It cycled the same as round one, the bolt showed the same wet sheen as upon application, and just the slightest tinge of carbon was near the vent holes. I am pretty sure I could have convinced any shooter accustomed to military CLP or similar that the rifle had less than 30 rounds through it.

Also worth noting is there was no “spray” or splatter when shooting commenced as is common with some lubes when applied as liberally as the FireClean was. It stayed put and there was no smeary mist on the eye protection.

500 ROUNDS

When the rifle hit 500 rounds, we took a break to let it cool and checked out the innards. A little more accumulation of soot was on the bolt’s indentation, but no difference in feel and, if I wasn’t counting rounds, I would have no inclination to add any lube in a different setting.

1,000 ROUNDS

At the end of a solid training day, we had 1,000 certified rounds on the gun. As you can see in the picture at the bottom of this page, there was a little soot, but on the whole the bolt retained an oiled appearance on all reciprocating parts and surfaces.

Again, I suspect I could convince an experienced bystander that the

weapon had less than half of the actual round count through it by appearance. The feel when cycling the action was still smooth and wet, just not quite as magically slippery as when shooting commenced.

2,000 ROUNDS

Two weeks and two training sessions later, the rifle was at 2,000 rounds of



Test was conducted over several months and numerous training days at high-volume pace that would exceed many training classes.



At 1,000 rounds of XM193, bolt retained very little carbon and most of the FireClean.

the 55-grain XM193. The rifle had remained in my sole possession and had not been cleaned in any way or had any lubrication added. The one change was that at 1,300 rounds, I added a BCM Gunfighter compensator to the end of the barrel.

As an aside, the little birdcage profile comp made a dramatic difference in recovery. After 1,300 rounds in short order on the same rifle, it was quite noticeable how much faster I could follow up and how flat the rifle stayed. I have used the longer BCM comp on 14.5-inch barrels extensively, but the shorter unit on this 16-inch barrel exceeded expectations.

The rifle cycled exactly as one would expect it to, with no sluggishness whatsoever. At the 2,000-round mark, it was starting to look a little dirty and the oily sheen was visible in spots but not prevalent.

There was no tactile friction or resistance even when opening the bolt slightly to perform a chamber check and slowly returning the charging handle. This is a particularly telling

sign. Many rifles that are traditionally lubricated at intervals and are at this many rounds would sluggishly respond to a chamber check or require an assist to fully return to battery.

2,430 ROUNDS

Seven weeks, six range trips, and 2,430 rounds from lubrication, I swapped the optic from a Bushnell 1-6.5X to my world-travelled Aimpoint T-1. At this point, the rifle cycled smoothly but without as wet a feel to it.

Left to my own devices, I might have chickened out and added a drop or two of lube, but the FireClean crew reassured me the rifle was good to go. We scheduled a training day to get over the hump with our remaining XM193.

3,000 ROUNDS

Nineteen PMAGs of 5.56 later, the BCM upper was at 3,000 rounds. No stoppages, no pushing on the forward assist to chamber rounds, no drama of any sort. The photo on page 87 shows the bolt's condition. It was dirty but

much less so than other bolts I've seen with half as many rounds and steady lube. Cycling the action was still smooth.

There was a slightly dirty feel, but not that dry, with a sluggish feel that says "lube me!" The carbon on the bolt carrier was soft rather than baked on, and my experience with the oil on other uppers assures me that the weapon could be returned to a remarkably clean state with nothing more than a paper towel.

3,090 ROUNDS

When I looked at the calendar and realized the rifle was six months from its initial and only lubrication, I decided to take it back out and get a quick training session in.

The bolt was unchanged from its condition and feel months prior as I loaded up the PMAGs with some Hornady Steel Match 55-grainers. The BCM upper purred through three magazines, bringing the total on the gun to 3,090 rounds across six months and eight sessions.



Rifle is purring along at 2,000+ rounds. Only changes during test were adding BCM Gunfighter Compensator and swapping to Aimpoint T1.



At 3,000 rounds, bolt group was dirty but cycled without complaint.

That is pretty remarkable performance. From the condition of the bolt and upper, I would not be able to predict how much longer it would run, but it seems like it could go on for quite a while.

SUMMARY

It is worth repeating that this was an endurance test for data purposes. I would not choose to depend on a rifle six months out and over 3,000 rounds from cleaning or lubrication in an operational setting. It is nice to know I could probably do so, but why tempt fate?

There are over 150 unique firearms-specific lubrication offerings on the market. I'm not sure many could equal that performance and wouldn't expect any to be capable of doing so until they proved otherwise. If some can, then

it's all good for the consumer.

The lubrication sector of the industry is fiercely competitive, and plenty of shooters are strangely attached to their brand of choice, their celebrity endorser, or their home-brew mix of motor oil and whatnot.

With many of the latest non-toxic (and typically higher priced) lubricants, you can find a variety of Internet accusations that they are simply this or that repackaged. The nature of the Internet will ensure these rumors multiply and recycle. I am less concerned with the specific ingredients and formulation of a product than its proven performance.

The latest generation lubricants outperform traditional ones by a significant margin. FireClean is at the leading edge of that development. ☺

SOURCES

FIRECLEAN

www.cleanergun.com

BRAVO COMPANY MFG.

(877) 272-8626

www.bravocompanymfg.com

MAGPUL INDUSTRIES CORP.

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The sample DDM4V11 was equipped with an Aimpoint® Micro T1 red dot sight with DD Micro Mount and Rail Mounted Front Sight/A1.5 Fixed Rear Sight Combo. The DDM4V11 is sold without sights; they must be purchased separately.

Total weight without accessories is 6.28 pounds. Overall length is 32¼ inches with stock collapsed. That coupled with the SLiM Rail makes for a sweet-handling AR.

ON THE RANGE

Black Hills Ammunition provided me with 500 rounds of 5.56mm ammunition for the evaluation: 69-grain Sierra TMK, 77-grain OTM and 77-grain TMK. Black Hills ammo has a consistency that makes it the choice for testing by a number of major firearm manufacturers.

To avoid any magazine-related issues, Magpul® PMAG® 30 AR/M4 GEN M3™ mags were used exclusively throughout our testing.

Mag/ammo management was provided by Haley Strategic Partners excellent Disruptive Environments™ Chest Rig with optional MP2 Magazine Pouch Inserts—in Kryptek Typhon, of course.

Testing was conducted at Rio Salado Sportsman's Club/Usery Mountain Shooting Range in Mesa, Arizona and at C2 Tactical. The DDM4V11 performed flawlessly throughout our testing. The DDM4V11 has a milspec single-stage trigger that's a bit heavy but better than most milspec triggers.



DDM4V11 is designed for shooters who prefer benefits of KeyMod system integrated in new Daniel Defense SLiM Rail free-float handguard.

Fired from a rest, the carbine grouped under an inch at 100 yards with all ammo tested. The heavier Black Hills 77-grain OTM and 77-grain TMK provided the best accuracy, with a number of three-shot groups under half an inch.

The DDM4V11 Typhon is available for purchase from authorized Daniel Defense dealers or directly from DD. Suggested retail price is \$1,649.00. It comes with a Daniel Defense Full-Latch Impact Plastic Case, 30-round Magpul PMAG, and operator manual. All DD products carry a 100% lifetime satisfaction guarantee against defects in original materials and workmanship.

Although I had to send the sample DDM4V11 back when I'd finished the testing, it's definitely at the top of my list for purchase. The Kryptek Typhon finish is icing on the cake. ☺



Testing was conducted at C2 Tactical in Tempe, Arizona and Rio Salado Sportsman's Club/Usery Mountain Shooting Range in Mesa, Arizona. C2 Tactical was named Arizona's best indoor shooting range.

» AMMUNITION PERFORMANCE

BRAND	LOAD	AVERAGE VELOCITY (fps)
Black Hills Ammunition	69-gr. Sierra TMK	2,767
Black Hills Ammunition	77-gr. OTM	2,640
Black Hills Ammunition	77-gr. Sierra TMK	2,648

All loads 5.56x45mm. Velocity obtained with Oehler 35 P chronograph, ten-round strings with first screen ten feet from muzzle. Elevation: 3,202 feet, 65 degrees F, 60% humidity.



Carbine comes without sights.

SOURCES

DANIEL DEFENSE
(866) 554-GUNS (4867)
www.danieldefense.com

AIMPOINT INC
(877) 246-7646
www.aimpoint.com

BLACK HILLS AMMUNITION
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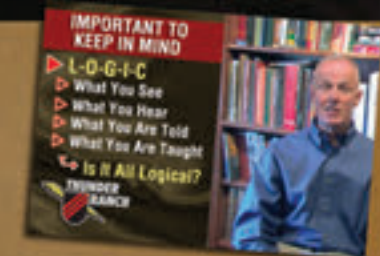
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Winkler Knives

Born of warriors' experiences is how Winkler Knives can best be described. One look at the line of knives offered by bladesmith Daniel Winkler and it is obvious that his passion and roots derive from early 18th century woodsmen.

His fascination with the American Frontier and the woodsmen of yesteryear, who carried gear that was meant for sustenance and survival in an unforgiving landscape, inspired Daniel to make knives. Daniel said, "My goal is to make tools of uncompromising quality that will last a lifetime and survive as heirlooms for future generations."

Daniel initially started Winkler Knives making hand-forged knives and axes, but walking through his booth at a knife convention or taking a gander at his website tells a story of the two sides of Winkler Knives.

While working with Special Forces

teams in the United States Military, as well as Allied Forces, Daniel had a chance to branch out and create a production line, thus Winkler Knives II (WK II) was born. This line is made using stock removal rather than being hand forged. The three knives I was loaned for testing and review were all from the WK II lineup.

REAL WORLD

In June 2015, I was in Alabama helping with a Field Survival training class put on by Randall's Adventure & Training. Students and instructors were able to try out the tools first hand—and try them out they did. I chose knives that would cover all bases of knife use, such as slicing, chopping, carving, emergency response, and general outdoors use.

The Operator is a collaboration between Kevin Holland (who spent over 15 years serving as both a Navy SEAL

and Army SOF Operator) and Daniel Winkler. When Daniel asked Kevin what he would consider to be the perfect knife for his use based on his experiences, the Operator knife was conceived.

The Operator knife has a four-inch long blade and overall length of 8.5 inches. It features a tapered tang on the handle for reduced weight, and the blade has a distal taper, gradually thinning toward the tip. This design is made for speed and deep penetration. The knife is outfitted with a black leather sheath that can be used in a vertical or horizontal fashion. This knife only comes in a Casewell no-glare finish for low visibility. Scales offered are black, green and tan micarta or maple (wood), walnut (wood), and rubber (black).

The WK II Striker is a robust medium-sized knife. If memory serves me well, I was told this was a collaboration with an Australian Special Ops team



WK II Striker (top) and WK II Operator (bottom) are two offerings from Winkler Knives II that are robust, hardcore tools for military, law enforcement, and outdoorsmen.

that wanted a hammer pole striker on the butt of their knife. The hammer pole striker protrudes about 1/8 inch from the handle and covers an area of about 3/8 inch. The knife itself has an overall length of 9¾ inches, with a 5¼-inch blade. The handle tang is skeletonized and tapered to reduce weight. Depending on its handle material, the WK II Striker weighs about eight ounces. The knife I received featured a rubber handle and Casewell no-glare finish. It fills the palm and is comfortable bare-handed or gloved.

My initial cutting tests were devoted to fibrous materials such as rope, 550 paracord, rubber, zip ties, nylon webbing, and plastic. It cut well due to the full flat grind, which always aids in slice-ability.

The striker is flat and rectangular, giving it more of a smashing profile than a glass-breaking profile. I felt that using the striker's corner, it would do well as a glass breaker. It packed a mean punch and shattered automobile glass with both the flat hammer and by using the corner.

When testing the cutting edge and coating by stabbing the knife into the hood of a car, the flat hammer pole was also a good place to pound with the palm of the hand to apply pressure into the cut. The tip was excellent at penetrating lightweight metals and plastics. Winkler found a happy medium between a sharp, penetrating tip while keeping it robust enough for impact and lateral movement. The coating was pretty resilient. Only small surface scratches were visible after much prying and jarring back and forth. The handle was comfortable throughout the testing, and the cutting edge was unaffected throughout the evaluation process.



WK II Parang is closest to an authentic Malaysian Parang author has used. Shape allows blade to precede the wrist when chopping, making for a powerful, more efficient chop.



Military veteran Kevin Holland helped design WK II Operator (foreground). WK II Striker (background) was a collaboration with an Australian Special Ops team.

PARANG

A few years ago, many American knife companies went through a “machete phase” and offered their versions of Latin American styled machetes rather than thicker knives with nine- to 12-inch blades. In reality, most were made by one or two companies in Latin America but fitted with a better edge and handle. The companies that decided to make their own machetes made them too thick and cumbersome for real machete work.

However, I have yet to see an American knife company offer a Malaysian-style Parang that was even close to authentic. Sure, some companies have made a big chopping blade loosely based on the Malaysian chopper and called it a Parang. But they all seemed to have been designed based solely on the shape rather than really using one from its origin.

There is a certain feeling to a Malay-

sian Parang, a glide that is not present in a thick, heavy blade. Every Malaysian Parang has a stick-tang, meaning the blade tapers into the handle material a few inches in where it is friction fit, using some type of material to help bond the tang to the handle material. The WK II Knives model is the closest to a real Parang I have ever handled.

The blade is full tang, but the weight and feel are just right. The WK II Parang has thin rubber scales that make the user need to grip harder. Chopping puts a tremendous amount of friction and impact on skin and joints alike. Rubber scales on any chopping tool shred the hands something awful, and this Parang was no different. I cut about eight forearm-thick pieces of green wood with the Parang and had some horrible blisters—fast.

In my opinion, wood scales on this Parang would make it just about the perfect chopping blade, or you can just use gloves, but the extra traction from gloves slows down the swing.

Winkler Knives has two faces, and both are 100% reliable, elegant, and based on years of experience. I'd love the chance to try his hand-forged blades. ☺



Using WK II Striker's hammer pole as a pounding surface helps make controlled penetration cuts in materials without user discomfort. Blade was unaffected by repeated stabs into the hood of a car.

SOURCES

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www.winklerknives.com

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Hornady Bolt Ball



Hornady Bolt Ball is generously sized and has a slightly tacky feel, as can be seen from above.

IN the shooting world, buying performance with widgets is usually the idea that leads to a lot of money sunk for little if any gain. However, once in a great while there is a simple fix that costs an hour's wages rather than a car payment and actually makes a difference. This is one of those stories.

The market has populated like an unattended rabbit farm, with tactical bolt guns from the major manufacturers and custom makers. For perhaps the first time, there is a generation of shooters whose entry to the bolt gun world is more likely to have been via a sniper or tactical rifle than a hunting rifle.

To these shooters accustomed to oversize bolt knobs, the svelte teardrop or gentle bulb on the end of the typical rifle is too small.

Likewise, the shooter who is primarily an AR guy or gal may look at the cycle time of the average standard bolt as unacceptably slow.

Enter the Bolt Ball.

The Hornady Bolt Ball is a simple rubbery ball that slips over the bolt knob on a bolt-action rifle. It looks for all the world like a gumball machine bouncy ball that someone bored a hole halfway through. Attractive it isn't. Mounted on the bolt, it looks like a tactical black clown nose on the rifle. However, it works and works well.

I picked mine up at a major sporting goods store for about \$10 on a whim and immediately put it on a Ruger American Predator I've been shooting. Installation was a simple press fit, but once there it was firmly in place, and months later is just as solid.

Its appearance is a little off-putting, but you simply can't miss the bolt knob. There is little to no spin-up time—the bolt is suddenly just there. The material has a slight tack to it that even sweaty hands aren't slipping off of.

At the range, I took the Ruger .308

The performance-oriented crowd will see this as a perfect add-on to tactically slanted bolt guns.



Ruger bolt with Bolt Ball next to tactical bolt handle from a Steyr Scout rifle gives an idea of the Bolt Ball's relative size.

through a number of timed drills that I had recently recorded data on with the stock bolt. In each case, the Bolt Ball helped me considerably, both to cut cycle time, but more importantly, in making the bolt throw surer and requiring less effort. This was most noticeable from prone but was evident from barricades and standing also.

At seven yards, my previous times shot-to-shot at max speed to a silhouette with the American Predator had averaged 1.17 seconds. With the Bolt

Ball in place and shooting Winchester 147-grain ball, the rifle quickly averaged .99 second, with a low of .89.

I had tried mightily to get under a second with the stock bolt, so an immediate near quarter-second boost was pretty rewarding. Anyone who has tried to run a bolt at speed can appreciate just how significant that is.

I tried the ball while running the bolt with constant pressure between the thumb and forefinger, with the palm of the hand, and with the knife hand

methods (fingers straight and working the bolt with the palm of the hand) of cycling the bolt. It worked pretty well in each, seeming more positive than the factory knob.

The Ruger is an easy-opening bolt gun with a short lift. I would expect the ball to be even more useful on a stiffer action. If a rifle has minimal space between the bolt and the mounted optic, the shooter would have to ensure the Bolt Ball would clear.

The thought of putting this protuberance on a fine classic bolt gun is probably enough to turn a purist queasy: I get that. For some, a bolt gun is a fine item that is technically a repeater, but with little thought of speed.

But the performance-oriented crowd will see this as a perfect add-on to all-weather, tactically slanted bolt guns such as the Predator.

It is too soon to say if the Hornady Bolt Ball is a legitimate substitute for a custom bolt handle on a dedicated tactical rifle, but that doesn't seem to be its market. It does give the shooter a faster, more certain follow-up shot for very little cost. ☺



Hornady Bolt Ball is a simple and inexpensive accessory that slips over the existing bolt knob to enhance and speed cycling of practical rifles such as this Ruger American Predator.

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Crimson Trace Glock 43 Laserguards

Laserguards® LG-443 (red) and LG-443G (green) laser sights serve double duty by fitting onto Glock Model 42 and 43 pistols. The new compact and thin profile Glock 43 pistol is designed for self-defense concealment while being chambered in 9mm. To keep the concealed carry characteristics, Crimson Trace's Laserguard LG-443 and LG-443G laser sights add little to the pistol's overall size, profile, or total weight.

The Laserguard LG-443 and LG-443G offer many accuracy and target acquisition advantages. LG-443 models feature Crimson Trace's proprietary Instinctive Activation®, adjustments for windage and elevation, and easy installation onto the firearm's existing trigger guard without requiring any gunsmithing. Suggested retail price for the LG-443 (red) is \$229 and LG-443G (green) is \$299.

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Cornered in the Corner Store

At 1900 hours in a corner store on the southwest side of Chicago, a man entered, drew a handgun, and announced to the clerk behind the counter that he was robbing the place. A second employee emerged from the stockroom and was also taken at gunpoint by the perpetrator, who herded her toward the rear of the store.

At this point a customer, who had a legal Illinois CCW permit, drew his own pistol and opened fire on the robber. Hit, the robber crumpled to the floor and was pronounced dead at the scene by responding emergency services.

SOURCE: *Chicago Tribune*, Chicago, Illinois, 11/3/15

Home Alone 2

It was broad daylight on a weekday afternoon in Ladson, South Carolina, a suburb of Charleston. A 13-year-old left home alone heard a car pulling up behind his house, followed shortly by the unmistakable sounds of forced entry at the back door. The teen retrieved his mother's 9mm Glock and stationed himself inside the back door. When the intruder didn't stop, the boy fired through the door, and the would-be intruder returned fire, so the boy loosed a salvo of several more shots.

The home invader's accomplice, who was later arrested, dropped him off, fatally wounded, at a nearby hospital. Police examining the scene found a Colt .45 pistol in the bushes outside the back door, where the intruder had dropped it.

SOURCE: *The Post and Courier*, Charleston, South Carolina, 11/10/15

Four Invaders

A San Antonio, Texas woman heard the sounds of a forced entry in the middle of the night. Someone was pulling the window A/C unit out and a crew of intruders was trying to climb into the house through the opening. The woman called her husband, who fetched his handgun, confronted the four attackers, and then opened fire.

One intruder, a 19-year-old woman, was killed. Two teenage males were hospitalized with gunshot wounds, and a third was arrested. Police found a 9mm handgun and burglary tools at the scene of the crime.

SOURCE: *San Antonio Express-News*, San Antonio, Texas, 11/13/15

Fast-Food Defense

Leaving a Tulsa, Oklahoma Burger King, a customer was confronted in the parking lot by a crowbar-wielding assailant who was "not acting normal," according to witnesses. Fearing for his safety, the restaurant patron drew his legally concealed handgun and fired on the attacker, hitting him in the shoulder and sending him fleeing.

The wounded would-be robber was apprehended at the hospital by the police, and was reported to be a 31-year-old "career criminal." The citizen was reported to have acted lawfully in self-defense.

SOURCE: *Tulsa World*, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 11/29/15 ©



Do your loved ones know how to use your firearms? A South Carolina teen's ability with his mom's Glock saved the day.

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Shooting Too Accurately

"Think small, shoot small."

While it sounds like a brilliant idea in principle, sometimes when something walks like a duck and looks like a duck, it turns out to be a Mallard. And despite the fact that the Think Small, Shoot Small concept may work for a minority percentage of shootists, for everyone else this thought process invariably exacerbates already existing problems—like oversize groups or low hits caused by yanking the trigger.

If it were such a good idea, why do most people shoot a smaller-sized group at the torso of a target than they do at the head of that target? Usually if it's your inevitable ho-hum rectangular flat piece of cardboard, a relatively accomplished trigger-stroker will shoot quick four- to six-inch groups in the center of the chest of said target from generic five- to ten-yard distance markers.

However, once he's asked to shoot a string of rounds between the running lights of the head portion of the target, the usual result is a couple of good hits accompanied by one in the shoulder and one or two entire misses, undoubtedly sliding past the cockpit of a terrified NASA space shuttle commander. Since Triggerman invariably takes more time for the *bulleta en la cabeza*, to ascertain a refined sight alignment/sight picture/trigger control triad on the smaller target, "think small, shoot small" obviously hasn't resulted in the personification of a roaring success in his case.

Since a one-dimensional piece of rectangular cardboard bears not the slightest resemblance to a human enemy, and since you aren't facing any physical danger from the target, this is clearly merely a mechanical test of target-shooting ability. So why would you shoot a larger slow-fired group at a smaller target if the Think Small concept worked? Because it doesn't work for most people, that's why.

The problem lies within the gray mass the Creator saw fit to place inside a human head. Some people use it for thinking, others use it simply to keep their ears apart—and others misuse it and overthink a problem. Witness the same

shootist trying to shoot his seven-yard, six-inch group at the torso from 25 yards, and he ends up with the same trashy net result as his six-yard head shots.

Ask him to make a two-second shot at a bowling pin 25 yards distant, and he magically shoots a six- to eight-inch group. Okay, one more time, shoot at the bowling pin—but this time hit it, even if it takes you half an hour. Result? Sometimes he hits it, but usually it's a 20-inch group again. Apparently of all the \$2,000 pistols guaranteed to shoot into one inch at 50 yards, you bought the only runt in the litter. Of course it only shoots large groups and/or left and low when a damned precision shot is required—must have something to do with that damned thingummybob they put in to reduce damned lock time after firing.

Damned gunsmiths. Damned ammunition manufacturers. Damned sun in your eyes. Damned boyfriend your daughter had ten years ago. Damned traffic laws. Obviously it has to be one of these damned things causing the problem, because you know it can't be your own damned brain. Not Master Mensa, surely? Hate to tell you this, Mister Harvard graduate neurosurgeon, but you're allowing yourself to be outwitted by a two-pound piece of metal that has the IQ of rocking-horse droppings.

And of course, you insist on trying to "think small, shoot small." That's why that "ignorant peon" on the firing line next to you is still hitting at distance with his "inaccurate" snub-nosed revolver. It's because he worked three jobs to pay his ailing mother's medical bills, so he didn't make it to university, so he doesn't have the money for a one-inch-at-50-yards pimp pistol—or the "higher learning" to overthink a problem, which is exactly what you're doing.

So snuggle up close and listen for the Grasshopper, because herewith is your problem—and how to fix it. You're trying to shoot too accurately on precision targets.

What kind of idiotic statement is that? Well, since you're the one with the shooting problem, and seeing that you've already waded through the preceding text, you may as well read the rest.

If you try for a perfect shot, you'll wind up with garbage. Anybody who shoots air pistols will tell you that much. But if you go for 95%, you'll be rewarded with at least 95% results. In other words, if you attempt to hit somebody exactly between his beady little eyes while firing a pistol from ten yards, you'll attempt to "tell" the weapon when to fire, or you'll unknowingly look for bullet impact before the projectile exits the gun barrel. This will result in either left-and-low hits for a right-handed shooter, and/or an erratic oversized group. The same thing will happen with a 25-yard torso shot. (In other words, any progressively smaller or finite target.)

The solution is to pick an aiming point on which you can optically key in—such as the area between someone's eyes—then make the target behind the key-in point as large as possible, and shoot center of mass of the larger target. To clarify: why shoot for a one-inch target between the parasite's eyeballs when you realize that the one-inch target is located in the center of a six-by-six-inch head? A lot less brain drain and violation of basic mechanical shooting principles will be your reward if you merely shoot center of mass of the entire head.

That's why the bowling pin example cited above works like it does. Mechanically, the shootist is capable of shooting a six-inch group from 25 yards distance. Ergo, if he "keys in" on the bowling pin and calmly shoots quickly, he will either hit it or impact extremely close to it. If he tries to actually hit it, he will often talk himself out of a decent shot.

Don't believe it? Here's your homework, kids. From the holster, one round, 25 yards, eight-inch target, two-and-a-half second time limit. Repeat 24 times (total 25 rounds). You'll find out in a hurry that your two-pound pistol has a higher IQ than you do.

The sooner you "think large, shoot small," the quicker your mechanical shooting will improve. ☺

[This column first appeared in the March 2007 issue of S.W.A.T.]

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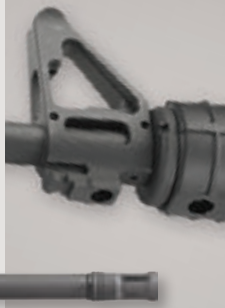
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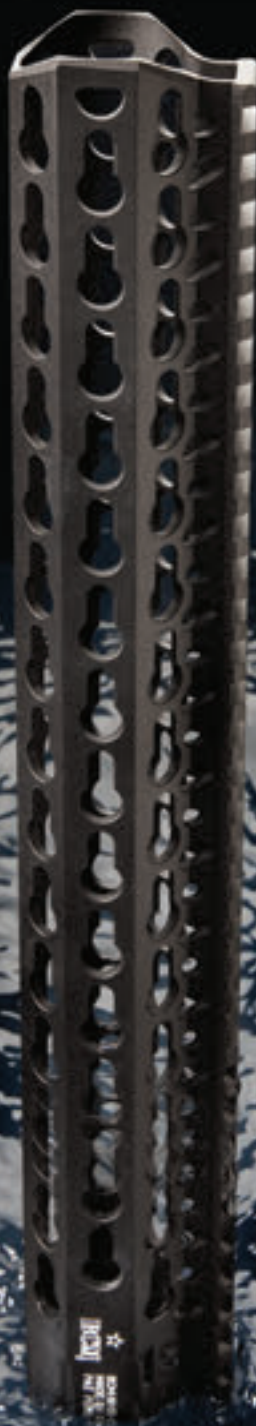




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