



Tactical Talk

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Lt. Lowell Duckett: "Gun control has not worked in D.C. The only people who have guns are criminals. We have the strictest gun laws in the nation and one of the highest murder rates. It's quicker to pull your Smith & Wesson than to dial 911 if you're being robbed."

Special Assistant to DC Police Chief; President, Black Police Caucus, The Washington Post, March 22, 1996.

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U.S. Law Enforcement Officers Killed in the U.S. — January-November 2013

THESE STATISTICS REPRESENT PRELIMINARY INFORMATION RECEIVED BY THE FBI DURING JANUARY THROUGH NOVEMBER 2013:



Twenty-three law enforcement officers have been killed due to criminal actions. During the same time period in 2012, 42 officers were slain.

Circumstances involving the 23 officers slain in 2013 are as follows: 6 were ambushed; 5 were answering disturbance calls (2 being domestic-related); 4 were involved in tactical situations; 4 were investigating suspicious persons or circumstances; 3 were involved in traffic pursuits/stops; and 1 officer was handling, transporting, or maintaining custody of prisoner(s). Twelve of the 23 victim officers were employed by law enforcement agencies in the south, 6 in the west, 3 in the Midwest, and 2 in the northeast.

Of the 23 felonious killings, 22 victim officers were killed by subjects using firearms as their weapons (16 handguns, 3 rifles, 2 shotguns, and 1 firearm type not reported), and 1 officer was slain by subjects using vehicles as weapons.

Thirteen of the 23 victim officers were wearing body armor at the time of incident, 6 were not wearing body armor, and body armor usage has not been reported for 4 victim officers.

There have been 22 separate incidents in which these 23 victim officers have been slain. All 22 incidents have been cleared by arrest or exceptional means.

Thirty-seven law enforcement officers have been accidentally killed. During same time period in 2012, 43 officers were accidentally killed. Circumstances involving the 37 officers accidentally killed in 2013 are as follows: 16 were involved in automobile accidents, 8 were struck by vehicles, 3 were involved in motorcycle accidents, 3 officers deaths resulted from falls, 2 officers drowned, 2 deaths resulted from an accident occurring during a training exercise, 1 officer was accidentally shot, 1 was fatally injured in aircraft accident, and 1 officer's death was due to smoke inhalation. Twenty-six of the 37 victim officers were employed by law enforcement agencies in the south, 6 in the west, 3 in the Midwest, and 2 in the northeast.

Data Points from LAPD Officer Involved Shootings, 2009

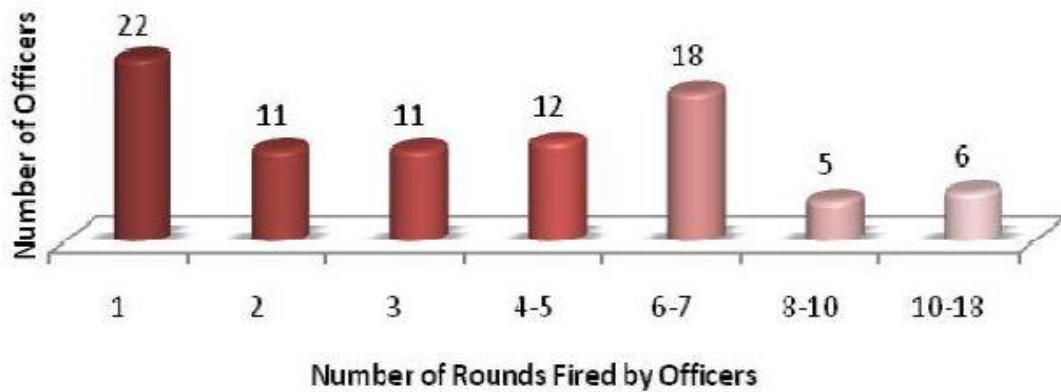


Figure 26, Source: UOFRD System



Figure 27, Source: UOFRD System

In 2009 the Los Angeles Police Department had officers involved in 85 shooting incidents. This is an average of one shooting every 4.3 days. Here are some interesting tid-bits of information from their annual report.

In those 85 incidents, the average number of shots fired was 4.4 rounds. However, in 29 incidents (34% of the total) the number of shots fired by the officer was 6 to 18 shots! Since a full third of the shootings involved 6 or more shots, it stands to reason you need a handgun that holds more than 5 or 6 rounds.

Of these 85 shootings, 60% occurred at less than 21 feet, with the remaining 40% involving distances from 7 yards to 15 yards and beyond. Fifteen of the incidents occurred at beyond 50 feet. Almost half of the shootings (48%) occurred at less than 16 feet, which is the length of the average American automobile. In simple terms, roughly half of the shootings occurred inside one car length, and half beyond that distance. Marksmanship ability beyond a car length is clearly a necessity.



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Back-Up Guns for Civilians. . . Good Idea?

by Tom Givens

For the over ten years, Craig Harper has been a staff instructor at Rangemaster. He is highly trained, having taken courses from a number of the best firearms instructors in the US. He also has experience as a Military Policeman in the US Army. A few days ago, Craig and I were discussing a recent incident in which a police officer was killed. The officer was shot in his dominant arm (right handed officer, shot in right arm). Although conscious and trying to fight back, he was unable to reload his empty handgun with his non-dominant hand only, and was executed by his assailant. Craig and I both felt that if this officer had been wearing a back-up gun (BUG), he might have been able to access it and continue the fight. Unfortunately, he did not have a second gun.

To quote Craig's comments, *"For a long time, I was of the mind that I didn't need to carry a BUG. After all, I had a very good primary gun that was well-maintained. It ALWAYS ran. In a class we both participated in – I think it was with Farnam – your 1911 failed. Remember that; your slide flying down range to about the 7-yard line? I saw that and thought, "I KNOW Tom takes very good care of his guns, and it still failed. If it can happen to him, it can happen to me." That is what convinced me that I needed a BUG. I've carried one ever since."*

Craig continued, *"During one year's Tactical Conference in Tulsa my thinking was reinforced. I was shooting my "practice" Kimber during the scenarios and it malfunctioned. I cleared it, continued on, until it failed to feed again. At that point I discarded it, ducked behind cover and retrieved my Kahr PM 9 out of the ankle holster and finished the stage. My time for the stage sucked; but I was still in the fight! Without a BUG, I would have needed my knife to make a bayonet charge; not a good idea when the bad guy is shooting at you.*

So you can carry a BUG or be Bugged - Being Un-Gunned."

Craig is so right, and that is why I carry a lightweight .38 revolver on my ankle, every day, in addition to the Glock 35 in the IWB holster on my belt. My G35 is accurate and reliable, and holds lots of .40 S&W ammo. But if the striker, or some other vital part breaks, the G35 isn't even a good club. That's what the Colt Cobra on my ankle is for.

For many years, while working in law enforcement, I carried a small .38 revolver as a BUG, sometimes in an ankle rig, sometimes in a pocket holster. After I became a full-time trainer, I was no longer involved in law enforcement and carried on a state issued handgun carry permit, like any other armed "civilian". At that point, I confess that I began to be a bit lax about carrying a BUG, relying on my holstered full size sidearm. After a short period of time, while traveling around the country teaching defensive shooting classes, I went back to religiously wearing my BUG, every day. Why?

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The answer is simple. In class after class after class, everywhere I went, I saw well maintained, expensive, quality pistols break during high round count classes. By "break", I don't mean "malfunction". I mean, they suffered a parts breakage that rendered the gun out of action until a replacement part could be procured and installed. Bummer! This happened, and continues to happen now, with unsettling frequency. This phenomenon is not limited to one make or model, either.

When working extensively with military units after 9/11, I saw one M9 after another suffer parts breakages, usually locking blocks or firing pins. At one point, I actually had a three pound sack of broken M9 locking blocks and firing pins. With SIG pistols, I've seen the trigger return spring break on all models, and I've seen several slide stops break on P220's, rendering the guns inoperable. With Glocks (Yes, even Glocks!), I've seen several trigger return springs break, more than one locking block disintegrate, strikers break, extractors chip or break, take down latches fall out, and six slides fail structurally, with chunks breaking off.

The 1911 is a chapter all to itself. In the incident on the range that Craig mentioned, he and I were attending another instructor's course, something we both try to do at least once a year. I was shooting a 1911 customized and tuned by one of the best pistolsmiths in the US. I kept the gun cleaned and properly lubricated, and used only quality ammunition in it. During a drill, the slide stop broke into two pieces, putting the gun out of action. At the end of the drill, I put that one in my range bag and got out my spare, which I loaded and continued the class. I wouldn't have had that luxury during a fight! I have seen 1911's in class break extractors and ejectors, seen barrel bushings come apart (3 occasions), seen the thumb piece break off the thumb safety, and even seen the lower barrel lugs shear off, turning the gun into a very nice paperweight.

Revolvers are certainly not immune. In fact, when a revolver malfunctions, it is usually a problem that will require time and tools to fix. I've seen firing pins break, particularly the hammer mounted firing pins on Smith & Wessons. I've seen ejector rods back out or get bent, strain screws back out from vibrations, and bullets jump forward under recoil, locking the cylinder so that it won't rotate and cannot be opened. If any of these events occur in a gunfight, you darn well better have another gun to continue fighting with.

Since Murphy has a habit of showing up when he's least welcome, I recognize that a well made, well maintained sidearm may break at a critical point in a gunfight. Given that, I carry a second gun, so if this happens, I can transition to the second gun and continue the fight. We carry a sidearm every day because we recognize that although a gunfight is a low probability today, it is a possibility for which we can be prepared and which we will deal with if we have to. Also, although that gunfight is a low probability event, the cost of losing is simply too high to take the risk of not being armed. To me, the logical progression of this train of thought is that my sidearm is not likely to break during a fight, but if it does, the potential penalty is too great, unless I have a BUG. So, every day, I carry my sidearm, and as life insurance, I carry my BUG.

Flashlight Techniques for Home Defense

by Tom Givens

When private citizen students are attacked away from home, the typical scenario involves an armed robbery on the parking lot of some business, a carjacking, or some similar crime. In these incidents, there is neither an opportunity nor a need for the deployment of a flashlight. The action tends to be close and fast, and the ambient light is sufficient to identify the participants and hit those who need it. As the title suggests, the only likely use of a flashlight in defensive mode for a private citizen is while investigating the “bump in the night”, or suspected prowler. This is the environment in which the flashlight and skill in its use can be invaluable.

Unless one lives alone, the largest opportunity for tragedy in a home intrusion is shooting a family member mistaken for a prowler. Target identification becomes critical, as other family members may be on the move in the house, and most of these incidents occur during the hours of darkness. The home defender needs the ability to positively identify the shadowy figure at the far end of the hall, without pointing a deadly weapon at him until he makes a decision to engage. This is why I am not a fan of weapon mounted lights on home defense guns: to see your potential target, you must point your gun at someone under highly stressful conditions, without knowing whether that is family member or intruder. This is a recipe for disaster! Thus, the homeowner needs to have a flashlight technique that allows target identification and discrimination prior to pointing in with a firearm.

The two most commonly taught flashlight techniques are the Harries Technique and the Rogers Technique, both named after their originators. Both allow good shooting, with the flashlight beam and bore line of the pistol coaxial and some two handed control on the pistol. However, like all flashlight assisted shooting techniques that have both hands together, holding the flashlight and pistol in a combined grip, these techniques have serious drawbacks for the home defender. We need to remember that range techniques that allow better shooting in a range environment may not be the best choice in a tactical environment, for reasons that have nothing to do with shooting. These include:

The user has to point the flashlight, and by necessity the gun, at everything he wishes to illuminate. See my earlier comments about pointing in prior to target identification.

The user must “lead with the gun”. The one environment in which an adversary could get within arm’s reach before you know it is in low light or darkness. Any technique that leads with the gun creates the danger of being disarmed.

Users of Harries and Rogers tend to point the gun at their own body parts during manipulations like getting into/out of the position, opening doors with the support hand, and similar activities, again under stress.

With the hands held against each other, recoil causes the flashlight beam to bounce during firing. This is distracting, as your eye will tend to try to follow the bouncing light beam.

For many years now, I have been using and teaching a very simple technique that eliminates all of the objections listed here. It is simply called “Neck Index”, and it has a lot go-

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ing for it in the case of a home defender. As far as I can tell, the current version of this technique was first taught by Ken Good and Brian Puckett, who arrived at it independently at about the same time. It is a simple, easily taught technique that does not depend on large hands (like the Rogers Technique does) or on complicated body mechanics (like properly executed Harries Technique does). All one needs is a compact flashlight with a tail-cap switch, such as a Surefire 6X or similar, and a handgun.

The handgun is held at pectoral level, thumb of gun hand touching the pectoral muscle, trigger finger straight, muzzle depressed and pointing at the ground in front of the user. The flashlight is held in the support hand, thumb on switch, lens of flashlight protruding from the base of the palm. The thumb of the hand holding the flashlight is indexed on a readily repeatable spot, such as the cheekbone, the ear lobe, or the corner of the jawbone. The body is swiveled at the waist, so that the eyes, the flashlight, and the handgun are always oriented in the same direction. This makes it very easy to get the light beam to shine where you are looking when you turn on the light, and if shooting is warranted, simply thrusting the gun out into the line of sight gets it on target quickly. The advantages of this system are several:

The gun is not pointed at a potential target until a decision to engage has been made. You can illuminate an object without pointing a gun at it.

This technique does not lead with the gun. In fact, the gun position is often described as a retention position when used in daylight conditions, and it works well for that purpose in low light. The support hand with the flashlight is already "cocked", allowing the flashlight to be used as an impact weapon to help defend the pistol in an attempted gun grab.

The hands are far enough apart to avoid confusion under stress. There are documented instances of unintentional discharges involving flashlight/pistol techniques that have the hands together, firing the gun when turning on the light was the desired action.

If shooting is needed, the gun is thrust into the eye/target line. At this point, the light beam will illuminate both the target and the pistol's sights. The shooter will have a bright, clear sight picture, regardless of ambient lighting conditions.

The technique is easy to get into/out of without endangering one's self. Actions that put the support hand out front, like opening a door, don't result in pointing the gun at the user's support hand.

To me, the advantages of this technique are obvious. Give them a try and I think you will agree.



Effective Dry Practice

by Tom Givens

“Dry firing” or “dry practice” consists of practicing firearms manipulations without the presence of any live ammunition. There are a couple of excellent reasons for engaging in this practice. For one thing, the rising cost of ammunition and the time burden of traveling to and from a live fire range often limits the amount of practice we can get. More practice equals more skill. Dry work can be accomplished in your own home and with no expenditure of ammunition, so there is zero cost.

Second, dry work is actually a better way to ingrain many skills. Without live fire, the shooter does not have the noise of a weapon's discharge, the noise of other shooters' guns firing, flying brass, reciprocating slides and the myriad other distractions on a typical firing range. Quiet, mentally focused dry work is an excellent way to learn the feel of your trigger, for instance, or to perfect your presentation from the holster. During the 1970's, the old apartheid government of South Africa was under a UN arms embargo and could not import ammunition. Their domestic production could not keep up with demand. As an experiment, the South African Army had one group of new recruits go through the normal handgun training program, while another group went through doing only dry practice. The “dry” group did not fire a single shot until qualification day. When the scores were tallied, the dry group slightly outperformed the group which had done all the usual live fire practice. In my view, you go to training to learn new skills, but you perfect and ingrain those skills through thousands of correct repetitions. It is easier and quicker to amass 5,000 repetitions if you engage in dry work between range sessions.

Since you will be handling a real gun in your home there are certain precautions you will need to observe. Here is a checklist for you. Make a ritual out of going down this checklist every time, and before long these will be habits.

Dry practice should only be conducted in one designated, established area, and nowhere else in your home. That area should have a “safe wall”, that is a wall that will actually stop bullets in the event of an unintended discharge. A brick exterior wall or a stone fireplace can work, or you can use a body-armor vest as a back-stop. Do not dry fire toward an interior drywall.

When you enter the dry fire area, clear the gun and remove ALL live ammunition from the area. This includes loaded magazines or speedloaders, rounds in your pocket, or rounds in the desk drawer. Take all live ammunition to another room, then come back and clear your gun again.

You will need a target, which is simply an object to aim at while you dry fire. You can use an actual commercial target, a hand drawn reduced scale target, or something similar. Don't use an expensive or important item or the house pet! Remember to place the target on the safe wall or body armor backstop.

A session of mentally focused practice should probably not last more than ten to fifteen minutes. If you try to stretch the session out, you will tend to get bored and sloppy. Sloppy practice is worse than no practice. Remember our goal is to rack up a huge number of correct repetitions over time, to build reflexive skills. "Muscle memory", kinesthetic programming, conditioned reflexive responses, and habit all actually mean the same thing. All are born of consistent repetition.

If you get interrupted during the session by a phone call or other distraction, start all over again, back at step 1. Failure to do this is an invitation to disaster, unintentionally using a loaded gun for dry work.

There are two points in this process where there is actually a danger of an unintended discharge. Those two points are the very beginning and the very end of the session. Failure to clear the gun, move all ammo out of the room, and then clear the gun again can result in an unwanted discharge. The most common error seems to be finishing the session, loading the gun, and then saying, "Just one more rep." When the session is over, say out loud to yourself, "This session is over. No more practice." Leave the dry fire area for a while. Later, go back, load the gun and say out loud to yourself, "This gun is now loaded." At that point, it can be safely put back in the holster, or wherever you keep it.

There are certain skills that lend themselves well to dry practice. Here are some that I suggest you practice frequently. By the way, these should be practiced dressed exactly as you are when going armed, including using a cover garment for concealment.

Work on your presentation from the holster. In the real world, whether you wind up drawing to ready to challenge someone, or draw to shoot, you will have to produce your pistol before you can do anything else with it. Both options should be practiced until they are second nature.

Work on trigger control. In dry practice you can more easily feel the slack take up, the trigger break, and re-set. If you press the trigger and the gun goes "click" with the sights still sitting on your point of aim, that would be a hit in live fire. If the sights move off the point of aim as the gun goes "click", that would be a miss. Keep working.

Empty gun reloads can be easily practiced with a couple of dummy rounds (again **NO** live ammo). Start with the gun in hand, slide locked open, empty magazine in the gun. Have a spare magazine with one or two dummy rounds in it. Punch out the empty magazine, insert the magazine with dummies, and close the slide. Get your hands back on the gun and get a sight picture. The dummy rounds allow the slide to go forward, simulating an actual reloading sequence.

Those are some of the obvious skills you can polish in dry work. Use your imagination as your skills progress. Recoil recovery and building a tolerance to the noise and concussion of gunfire are really about the only skills we cannot improve by dry practice, so get to work!

The Rangemaster Bullseye Course

by **Tom Givens**

This drill serves three separate but related functions. Use it occasionally to test yourself, as well as to build your fundamental pistol marksmanship skills. It can also be used to compare one handgun to another to see which one shoots better in your hands.

Over my several decade long shooting career I have been privileged to shoot with many of the finest shots in the country. Whether the discipline involved was small bore rifle, PPC, IPSC, or IDPA all of the very top shots in that field shared one thing in common. To a man (or woman) they all relentlessly practiced the fundamental elements of marksmanship, and worked very hard to perfect the most basic skills. Then, no matter what challenge a match presented to them, they could focus on solving the problem, rather than on how to shoot. The same thing applied to several very experienced gunmen I have known, including the late, great Jim Cirillo. Cirillo spent thousands of rounds working on very basic skills, which he told me allowed him to concentrate and get hits even under fire in his many on the job shootings. This course of fire will aid greatly in polishing and perfecting these basic skills.

The second purpose of this course is to help those who have a lot of restrictions placed on their live fire practice by the range rules where they shoot. Many ranges don't allow work from the holster, or even silhouette targets. Fortunately, if you are stuck with such a training venue, you can perfect your presentation from the holster during dry practice at home. You can use a silhouette target at home with your dry practice, to ingrain getting a proper sight picture on a humanoid figure. You use this course of fire at the range to perfect your actual shooting skill—the ability to hit what you wish to, on demand.

For this course, we use the NRA B-8 bullseye target. This target is available at just about any range in the US, or from numerous target vendors. It has been a standard NRA bullseye pistol competition target for decades. It is scored as printed. The course is divided into five stages, fired at 25, 15, 7 and 5 yards, in five round strings. Since all strings are five rounds each, you can even use this with a five-shot revolver. All strings begin with the pistol loaded, in both hands, at the low ready. Use a shot timer, or have a shooting partner time you with a stop-watch.

The first string is fired at 25 yards, and it is designed to test your maximum precision with the gun and am-

munition you are using. On signal, fire 5 rounds in one minute. It is best to fire these one at a time, coming back down to ready to take a couple of breaths and get ready to go again. Think of these as five individual, precisely aimed shots.

Next, move the target to 15 yards. Here we will fire 2 strings, as follows. First, on signal fire 5 rounds in 15 seconds. This is adequate time per shot to allow you to concentrate on getting a good sight picture and a smooth trigger press. For the next string, on signal fire 5 rounds in 10 seconds. Cutting the time limit forces you to work on immediate follow through and an appropriate cadence.

Now, move the target to 7 yards. Start with only 5 rounds in the pistol, and have a spare magazine, speedloader, speed strip or whatever you use for fast reloading on your person. On signal, fire 5 rounds, reload, and fire 5 more rounds, all in 15 seconds. This drill works on trigger control, follow through, proper cadence, and reloading skill, all in one string.

For the last string, move to 5 yards. On signal, fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds.

That's it. You have fired 30 rounds total, for a maximum possible score of 300 points. If you can consistently shoot 285 or better on this, under the time limits, you are a pretty darn good shot. You have also had a good work-out that covered sight alignment/sight picture, trigger control, follow through, recoil control/recovery, reloading under time pressure and appropriate cadences for different distances, all in less than one box of ammunition. If you wish to compare the "shootability" of a couple of handguns, this will make it readily apparent if one shoots better for you than the other. Work on this drill periodically, even if your range does allow drawing from the holster, silhouette targets and so forth. Regardless of your current skill level this will make you a better all around handgun shooter.

25 yards	5 rounds	one minute	
15 yards	5 rounds	15 seconds	
15 yards	5 rounds	10 seconds	
7 yards	10 rounds	15 seconds	Fire 5, reload, fire 5
5 yards	5 rounds	5 seconds	

Target sources:

Law Enforcement Targets www.letargets.com

Qualification Targets targets.net



TWO-DAY DEFENSIVE SHOTGUN

at Rangemaster

JANUARY 25-26, 2014

Many people keep a shotgun at home in case of home invasion, or in their business in case of a hold-up. Many shotgun owners have some experience with the weapon in its bird hunting or clay bird sports context, but few understand its true potential and limitations as a defensive weapon. Properly set up and properly used, the shotgun is a truly formidable weapon. In its defensive role it is set up and operated quite differently than in its sporting role.

This course includes topics such as:

- * Shotgun Selection
- * Types & Mechanical Operation
- * Loading and Reloading Techniques
- * Modifications and Accessories
- * Ammunition Selection and Capabilities
- * Defensive Shooting Techniques

This course consists of two full days of training, from 9:00 am to 6:00pm both days. This allows us to alternate between range sessions and classroom sessions, and gives us an opportunity for enough repetitions to in-grain proper gun handling skills. All training is in our classroom and heated indoor range.

Students will need a shotgun with a barrel length of 22 inches or less, pump or semi-automatic. A sling and an on-board ammunition carrier (butt cuff or side-saddle) are optional. We will have some loaner guns available for those who do not yet own a suitable shotgun.

You will need 150 rounds of birdshot, 50 rounds of buckshot, and 10 slugs.

Cost is \$249 and advance registration is required. Call 901-370-5600 to register.

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