

**FEATURE
STORY**

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RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS FOR THE REAL WORLD

Firearms Training Services

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Earlier this fall a deranged 26-year-old loser shot nine people to death and then killed himself at a community college in Oregon. Of course, the campus was a gun free zone. Predictably, those opposed to the right to self defense immediately starting screaming for more restrictions on guns, missing the point entirely.



ACTIVE KILLERS



and GUN FREE zones

By Tom Givens

When James Holmes shot up the theater in Aurora, Colorado, he killed nine people. That night, there were a total of seven theaters showing The Dark Knight Rises within a 20 minute drive of his apartment. Holmes did not choose the closest theater or the one with the biggest audience. He chose the only one posted as a No Gun zone! I consider that a clue.

The Southeast Area Regional Law Enforcement Training Academy reached this conclusion: "Significantly and overwhelmingly, active killers typically select sites where their innocent victims will be defenseless. Sites that forbid legally armed citizens to carry their handguns on the premises are virtual magnets for these copycat active shooter incidents."

Gun free zones actually attract (rather than deter) criminals, terrorists and insane people bent on killing innocents. Where better to attack than in a place where your victims are required to be defenseless? On the other hand, the "No Guns" signs apparently didn't keep the shooter out. What a shock.

The Southeast Area Regional Law Enforcement Academy in Ohio has done extensive research on active shooters.

According to their research, when armed citizens are present and the active shooter event breaks out, the body count is kept so low that the incident doesn't qualify as a mass shooting. Isn't that the goal? In fact, when armed private citizens intervene, the average number of fatalities is 2.33. When the police intervene, the average number of fatalities is 14.29! In fact, the killing is usually over by the time police arrive on the scene. The armed citizens are already on the scene and therefore can act in time.

Is anyone really so naïve as to believe that a "No Guns" sign would keep out a deranged person or a terrorist who plans to slaughter innocent people? Why then, do they persist? ■



by Tom Givens

THE 3M TEST

Marksmanship ■ Movement ■ Manipulations

For many years, Larry Nichols was the Rangemaster of the Burbank, California, police department. He devised the original, simpler version of this drill. He showed it to John Farnam probably 30 years ago, and John modified it to fit his curriculum. John showed his version to me 20 years ago, and I made changes to fit my curriculum. This is the version we currently use.

One silhouette target, at 5 yards. For our purposes, we will use an RM-Q (scored 5/3), or a VSRT (scored 5/4/3), or an IDPA target (scored 5/3/0) for the Comstock Count version. If pass/fail scoring, only the highest value hit zone counts.

Shooter starts with handgun loaded with six live rounds (one in chamber, five in magazine) and one dummy round in the magazine. Dummy is not the top round nor the bottom round in the magazine. Someone else should load the magazine so the shooter does not know where in the magazine the dummy round lies.

Shooter starts holstered, hands in interview stance. On signal, side step, draw, and fire until a malfunction occurs. On the malfunction, side step, fix it, and continue to fire. When the gun runs empty, side step, perform an emergency reload, and fire 3 additional shots.

Comstock Count Scoring:

Total Points Possible = 45 points
Points Divided by Time = Index
Index Multiplied by 30 = Score

Example:

42 points, fired in 12.15 seconds

$42 \div 12.15 = 3.46$ (Index)
 $3.46 \times 30 = 103.8$ (Score)
Par Score = 100

Any score over 100 (par) is very good work. Anything over 125 is extremely high skill.

The shooter must move on the draw, move on the malfunction, and move on the reload. There is a ten-point penalty for any shot that misses the target on Comstock scoring. For pass/fail scoring, any round outside the highest value zone is a failure.

This drill tests movement off the line of force, rapid presentation from concealment, accurate placement of multiple fast shots, a malfunction remedy, and an empty gun reload, all under time pressure. It only requires nine rounds, one target, and a timer or stopwatch to test/measure all of these skills.

This drill is not intended to be shot over and over, trying to get an impressive score. I use this drill as a skill check, shot totally cold, at the beginning of a practice session. If you can pass this, or score above 125 on Comstock, on demand, you are probably an adequate defensive shooter. ■

Pass/Fail Scoring:

The shooter fails if he/she:

- Does not move on the draw, the malfunction, and the reload
- Does not tap the magazine before running the slide on the malfunction
- Places a single hit outside the highest scoring zone on the target.

Time limit is 15 seconds for a Combative Pistol student and 12 seconds for instructors.

Rangemaster Q

Pop Quiz



YOUR MISSION...
should you choose to accept it...
is to answer this question:

If a shooter completes the 3M test in 14.78 seconds with 38 points, what is that shooter's Comstock score?

If **YOU** are the first to post the correct answer on Rangemaster's Facebook page, then (1) you can expect a very cool prize in the mail, and more importantly (2) you'll be officially crowned **Undisputed Badass of the Month**. Get on it.

facebook

what is your

TRAINING



by Tom Givens

When setting up our own training and practice program we are all faced with trying to determine how to prioritize the various skills we could work to improve. Which skills should have priority? Which skills are more secondary? It is my belief that when many shooters and a lot of trainers look at this issue they tend to be guided by the wrong information.

In this country law enforcement officers are involved in a lot of shooting incidents which are well documented. The FBI has been gathering and collating information on these incidents since the 1930s, and each year they put out a report referred to as LEOKA. That is the Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted Summary. Each year in the US, typically somewhere between 50 and 75 police officers are killed feloniously in the line of duty. The LEOKA report has a brief, several paragraph summary of each incident in which a police officer was killed in the previous year. For many this serves as the basis for setting up their firearms training program.

I have a couple of problems with this approach. First, we're studying the officers who, to put it bluntly, lost the fight. Second, the vast majority of these officers were working uniform patrol. The duties of

a uniformed police patrol officer lead them to be involved in many, many dangerous incidents which frankly have nothing to do with the life of the typical private citizen. The majority of shootings involving police patrol personnel generally fall into one of three categories. The first is traffic stops. Often an officer stopped the car for a minor traffic violation without knowing the occupant is a dangerous and wanted felon. The second general area is bar enforcement. Officers go into seedy bars to enforce liquor laws, drug laws, gambling laws, prostitution laws, to break up fights, and to look for parole violators. The third dangerous area consists of responding to domestic violence calls. The cops go into the trailers, apartments, and houses of people who are already drunk and fighting. As you can see these three types of activity carry significant risk of being involved in violence. However, they have no crossover to the typical private citizen.

The problem is, this is about the only place most people know to look for information on gunfights. Although the information is not terribly relevant to the law-abiding

citizen it's all they have access to. I have done a lot of research over the past several years trying to find out exactly what is commonly involved in private citizen self-defense incidents and I have found a number of recurring themes. I prefer to structure my personal practice and what I teach to private citizens on these issues that I see coming up over and over again in private citizen self-defense shootings.

Before getting into my own students' experiences I'd like to touch on two law enforcement agencies whose experiences pretty much mirror those of the private citizen. The first is the FBI. The FBI's special agents are required by policy to keep their weapons concealed when they're in business clothing and outside of their office. Thus when out in public they are dressed like private citizens and carry concealed handguns. FBI agents do not make traffic stops, they don't do bar enforcement, and they don't answer domestic violence calls. It surprises lot of people to find out that around half of all FBI agent involved shootings occur because some thug does not realize they

DEFENSIVE REVOLVER

Saturday, November 7, 2015
Franklin, TN

Some people choose to carry a revolver as their primary sidearm. Many, many more (myself included) carry a small revolver daily as a back-up gun (BUG). There are a lot of tricks to using a revolver well, and that information is becoming less commonly known as the semi-auto now dominates the self-defense arena. If you carry a revolver, you need this course. Topics include:

- Fast, but accurate double-action shooting
- Rapid reloading techniques, with various reloading devices
- Carry methods for fast concealed carry applications
- Malfunctions clearance
- Transition to BUGs



DEFENSIVE SHOTGUN

Sunday, November 8, 2015
Franklin, TN

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 for personal defense. Properly set up and properly used, the shotgun is a truly formidable defensive weapon, but in this context it is set up and operated quite differently than in its sporting application. This course covers those distinctions in depth. Topics include:

- Shotgun History and Development
- Shotgun Selection
- Types & Mechanical Operation
- Loading and Reloading Techniques
- Modifications and Accessories
- Ammunition Selection and Capabilities
- Defensive Shooting Techniques
 - Safe Storage for Immediate Use

Eventbrite



TRAINING PRIORITY

Cont'd

The Internet has a staggering amount and array of information available, but in the realm of self defense and defensive firearms, the reader had better beware. There is a metric buttload of really bad information out there, in an endless stream. Here are some sources I have found to offer reliable, proven advice and commentary, from actually knowledgeable people.

SOURCE CODE

BY TOM GIVENS

are law enforcement and tries to hold them up or carjack them. Therefore, their incidents closely reflect those of the private citizen carrying a concealed handgun. From 1989 to 1994 FBI agents were involved in an average of 20 to 30 shootings per year and here is how the data from those shootings broke down: 92% occurred at a distance of 6 to 10 feet; the average number rounds fired was 3.2. You will notice a striking similarity between these figures and those involving my private citizen students.



The Drug Enforcement Administration's agents also get into a lot of plain clothes shootings because of the nature of undercover narcotics work. In 2007 the DEA had 44 defensive shootings. The average distance involved was 14.6 feet and the average number shots fired was five.



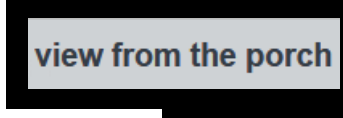
Over the past 20 or so years 65 non-military students of mine that I know about have been involved in defensive gunplay against criminals.



These are the ones that I know of, who have reported back to the school or that I learned of through law enforcement contacts. Of those 65 incidents the record is 62 wins/zero losses/three forfeits. Of the 62 students who were armed at the time of their encounter they all won and only three were injured. We have, unfortunately, had three students that I know of who lost their encounter and died. All three were killed in separate street robberies and all three were unarmed at the time of the incident, hence the term "forfeit". It's hard to win a gunfight if you did not bring your gun! Since 62 out of 62 students who were armed won their fights we must be doing something right.



So, let's look at some of the circumstances and conditions involving those fights, see how they compare to the FBI and DEA experience, and see if this information can help us structure our training programs correctly. First, the single most common type of crime resulting in defensive gun use seems to be some form of armed robbery. Whether someone is robbing your business, sticking you up on the parking lot, trying to take your car at gunpoint, or it's an armed home invasion



Modern Service Weapons

Put out by a collection of active law enforcement officers and high level shooters. Good information on a variety of topics. URL: ModernServiceWeapons.com

Gun Nuts Media

This blog is run by accomplished competitive shooters who have amassed a loyal following of well-informed firearms enthusiasts. URL: www.GunNuts.net.

Pistol Training

Articles by our friend and colleague, Todd Louis Green. Todd knows a thing or two about high level pistol shooting and related topics. URL: Pistol-Training.com.

Tactical Professor

The thoughts of Claude Werner: trainer, high end shooter and philosopher. Claude often thinks well outside the box. I don't always agree with him, but I always find him thought provoking. URL: TacticalProfessor.wordpress.com.

Front Sight Press

Our own Rangemaster webmistress, newsletter editor, and instructor (also a lawyer and university professor), Tiffany Johnson, offering her unique insights on self defense issues. URL: FrontSightPress.com.

Active Response Training

Police officer, trainer and great guy, Greg Ellifritz writes very thoughtful and informative articles on various self defense subjects. URL: ActiveResponseTraining.net.

Agile Training & Consulting

Chuck Haggard recently retired as a Lieutenant with the Topeka, Kansas, police department. He has been a trainer of note for many years, doing the training gig full time now. URL: AgileTactical.com/blog.

View from the Porch

Tamara Keel has been around the gun writing business for several years. She always has something interesting to say, and an amusing way to say it. URL: booksbikesboomsticks.blogspot.com.

Pistol Forum

This interactive discussion forum is a regular online stop for students and teachers of personal defense. Its members are serious shooters and well-known trainers, and the moderators are true subject matter experts. URL: www.Pistol-Forum.com

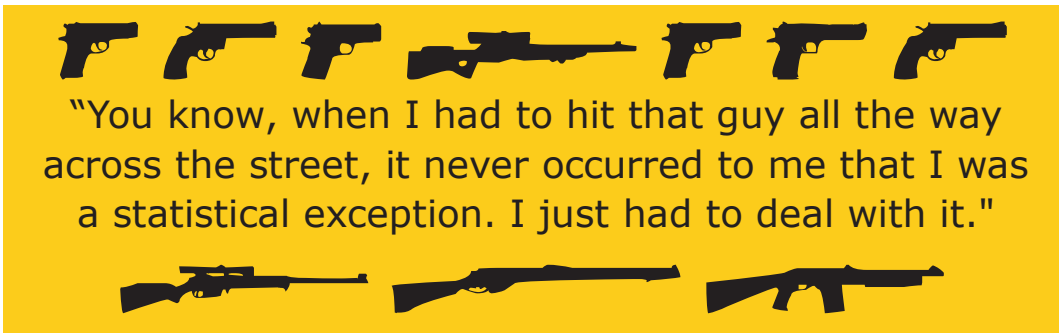
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these are all simply variations of armed robbery. There are a lot of common misconceptions about armed robbery. For one thing, armed robberies do not normally commence at arm's length. The whole purpose of the robber's gun or knife is to terrorize the victim into compliance from a safe distance. Once the victim is compliant, the robber moves in to take the wallet, purse, car keys, bank bag, cell phone, iPad, or whatever it is he's after. I often say that in our context confrontational distances are the same as conversational distances. In our culture we speak to people, especially strangers, from two or three steps away initially. That is also the distance from which armed robberies are most often initiated.

Another common misconception is that bad guys beam down from the Mothership and suddenly appear next to you. Of course, this is nonsense. An awful lot of victims will try earnestly to convince you of this. "Jeez it all happened so fast! He materialized right next to me! I never saw him!" I wish I had a hundred dollars for every time I've heard that exact quote from a surviving violent crime victim. What

distracted and preoccupied and completely failed to see obvious warning signs all around them. We stress this to our students and encourage them to get their head up, open their eyes, and pay attention to their environment. This is the key to dealing with the problem before it is right on top of you.

With that background information in mind, let's look at the 60+ incidents involving our students. First let's look at the distances involved. Only two incidents occurred at contact distance. In one of those cases physical contact between the attacker and the defender was deliberate, in the other that contact



they are admitting is that they were walking along with their head completely up their butt, totally unaware of their surroundings, and oblivious to the people and activities around them. They were walking through the parking lot texting or yakking on a cell phone or were otherwise

was purely accidental. This goes back to what I said about initiating conversations from outside of contact distance, and of the advantage of being aware of your surroundings and being able to challenge someone before they are within arm's reach.

Distances beyond 7 yards were only involved in 5.2% of the incidents. Keep in mind though that that's about one incident in each 20. We have had private citizen students who were forced to fire in defense of themselves or a family member at distances of 15, 17, and 22 yards. Thus, our practice regimen should include some shooting beyond 7 yards. As I was debriefing the student involved in the shooting at 22 yards he said to me, "You know, when I had to hit that guy all the way across the street it never occurred to me that I was a statistical exception. I just had to deal with it." Truer words were never spoken. You may be the individual faced with that somewhat rare longer distance shot so you should be prepared for it.

The rest of the shootings, 93.1% of them, occurred at between three yards and seven yards with over 80% occurring between three and five yards. The typical American sedan is 16 feet long, so one car length is about five yards. It would be safe to say then, that the majority of private citizen self-defense shootings occur between a couple of steps away and the length of a typical car. Based on that, we do the majority of our training and practice in that three-to-five-yard range.

Continued from page 4

SOURCE CODE

Total Protection Interactive (TPI)

TPI is another interactive discussion forum where contributors tend to be more thoughtful and knowledgeable. The site features sub-forums on firearms, contact weapons, unarmed combat, equipment and gear, medical management, and lots of other subjects relevant to personal defense.
URL: www.TotalProtectionInteractive.com

Sharp Defense

Paul Sharp is an experienced LEO and martial artist who stresses the importance of proficiency across various different defensive platforms. The videos that Paul posts for his Multidisciplinary Tip of the Week are useful tools for serious students to continually expand their knowledge base.
URL: sharpdefense.me



MDOE Sharp Defense Tip of the week

TRAINING

PRIORITY

Cont'd

Our shooting incidents typically involve a fairly small number of shots, say three to four rounds. We have, however had a number of shootings that required more rounds. Right off I can recall student's shootings involving eight, eleven, and twelve rounds. None of our students have had to reload during a fight, although I can think of three who went to slide lock. Fortunately, no further firing was necessary at that point. In our training we heavily stress firing with two hands at eye level. We only shoot with one hand if we only have one hand available. As a result the vast majority of our students' shootings have involved two-handed eye level shooting and as a result the hit ratio is running around 95%.

No student has used nor felt the need for a flashlight in any of our shootings. This is another topic in which there is a lot of misunderstanding among the shooting population.

There is an often quoted statistic that says 80% of pistol fights occur in the dark. This is nonsense. A more accurate statement would be that 80% of pistol fights occur during the hours of darkness. For statistical purposes the hours of darkness are from 6 PM until 6 AM. Obviously, in much of the country it is not dark during that entire period. Secondly, criminal encounters do not occur in a vacuum. There is no more reason for a Bad Guy to be in the dark than there is for you to be in the dark. Just because it's 3 AM on the Stop 'n Rob parking lot does not mean it's dark. In fact, with modern commercial lighting I have actually seen my sights more clearly late at night on one of these parking lots than in the afternoon on an overcast day. Law enforcement officers often have to go into very dark places to search out hiding suspects. Again, it is matter of context. That is completely different than a thug approaching you on a lighted parking lot at night.

To summarize, our students' experience and those of the FBI and DEA seem to be quite similar. Shootings involve a defender in civilian clothing with a concealed handgun. The majority of the FBI's shootings occurred at 6 to 10 feet; the DEA's at an average of 14.6 feet; and the vast majority of ours at 3 to 5 yards. Typically, the number of shots fired is fairly low but there are

numerous exceptions. Shootings at 15 to 25 yards occur far less frequently but often enough to be of concern. With this in mind, listed below are the five skills that I believe private citizens should prioritize when working towards competency for personal defense purposes:

- 1 The Draw**
Fast, efficient, reliable presentation of the handgun from concealment
- 2 Marksmanship**
The ability to accurately place several quick shots into an anatomically important area of the target at a distance of 3 to 5 yards
- 3 Speed**
The ability to place an anatomically important hit in a reasonable amount of time beyond 7 yards out to at least 25 yards
- 4 Reloading**
The ability to reload the handgun quickly and efficiently, especially if it holds less than 10 rounds
- 5 Movement**
The ability to rapidly move off the line of force (sidestep) without hindering the presentation of the pistol from concealment.

Other skills such as malfunction remedies; alternate shooting positions, such as kneeling; the use of cover; and flashlight-assisted shooting techniques could be useful skills once mastery of the basic skills listed above has been accomplished. Early in your training I would prefer to see all effort directed toward competency in the core skills that I listed. I think the best approach is to model our training to match what we see occurring over and over again in the field, rather than hope what happens in the real world mirrors what we like to do on the range. ■

-Tom Givens

