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RANGE • MASTER

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RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS FOR THE REAL WORLD

Firearms Training Services

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

As a general purpose military long gun, the shotgun is not as suitable as a carbine for reasons that include limited range and ammo capacity. Bulk and weight of the ammunition is also a consideration in the mil context, but not in the home defense or business hold-up context.

We need to define the context the shotgun will actually be used in for civilian self defense. The 200-meter shot is not a real consideration in the home defense or business hold-up arena. Rather, what we need is the ability to rapidly put down assailants at close range, in a hurry. Multiple armed home invaders, for instance, or a trio of armed robbers in your business might require a lot of power applied quickly. Nothing beats the shotgun for this.

I have been investigating shootings for decades. I VERY rarely find a shotgun shooting that requires more than one solid hit to terminate the festivities. Rarely, I see a case that requires two hits with a shotgun, but only because the first hit was peripheral. As noted trainer, Paul Howe says, "You can't sew up hamburger."

At CQB distances, the standard response with a carbine is five to seven rounds to ensure putting the target down

quickly. There are only four 7-round servings in a 28-round carbine magazine. My shotgun holds six rounds, and each round is a serving. I have also never found a home defense incident or business hold-up that required reloading a shotgun. Never. So that argument is moot. With my six rounds plus five more on the gun, I am perfectly comfortable.

THE DEFENSIVE SHOTGUN

By Tom Givens

The shotgun is also not that hard to learn, with PROPER training. Rangemaster offers a one-day shotgun class that has people running them quite well after eight hours. You just have to concentrate on what's important and not

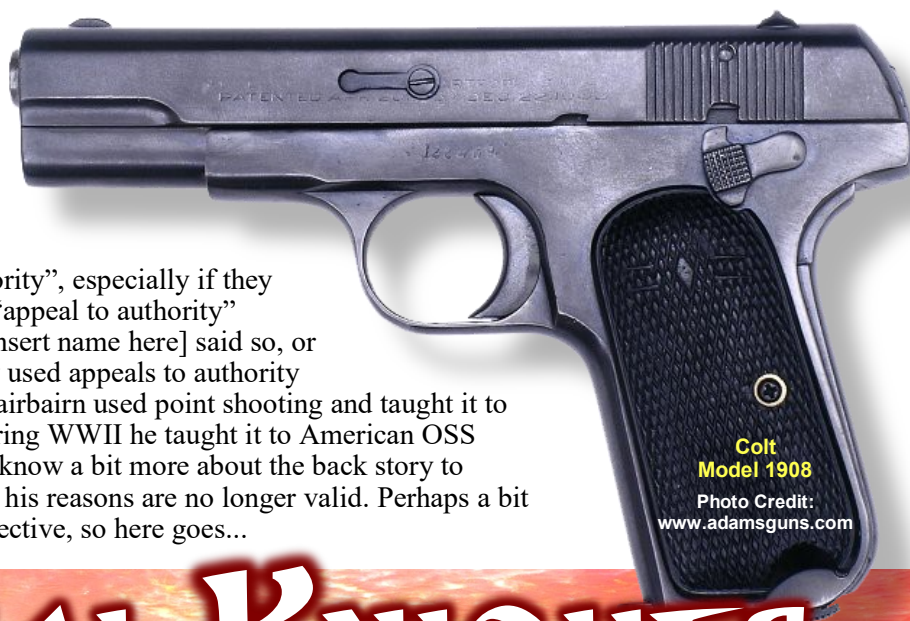
the irrelevant stuff. Our next shotgun class is April 3, 2016, near Dallas, Texas.

There's one other important consideration. In much of the country shooting someone five to seven times with an evil assault rifle may complicate your post-incident life needlessly. You'll have enough headaches without deliberately adding to them.

Shotguns are useless at 200 meters, they don't penetrate hard cover well, and 300 rounds would be a P.I.T.A. to carry. Who cares? None of that matters in the self defense context. For quickly stopping un-armored assailants at close range, nothing beats a load of buckshot delivered accurately. ■



Among those who train in the defensive use of the handgun several debates have raged on for years. These include the “9mm vs .45” arguments, the “revolver vs autopistol” debate, and the “point shooting vs sighted fire” disagreement. In debates on any subject, one side often resorts to what is known as an “appeal to authority”, especially if they don’t have any factual basis for their argument. An “appeal to authority” typically goes like this, “My side is right, because [insert name here] said so, or that’s the way he did it.” One of the most commonly used appeals to authority among point shooting proponents is that “William Fairbairn used point shooting and taught it to his men in Shanghai in the 1920s and 1930s, and during WWII he taught it to American OSS operatives.” All that is true. However, one needs to know a bit more about the back story to understand why Fairbairn used this method and why his reasons are no longer valid. Perhaps a bit of history will help put matters into the proper perspective, so here goes...



SHANGHAI KNIGHTS

Examining the Point of Aim



Adapted from
Point Shooting vs. Sighted Fire, A Historical Perspective,
by Tom Givens. Originally
published in SWAT Magazine.
Reprinted with permission.

2015



1930

Shanghai is a port city on the eastern coast of China. At the turn of the 20th century, European powers forced the government of China to give them control over certain ports, including Shanghai, where the Europeans built modern enclaves for their personnel, who oversaw vast trade empires with the Chinese. In addition to legitimate trade, these ports became centers for the opium trade and human trafficking. In 1936, Shanghai was one of the largest cities in the world, with a total population in excess of 3 million. Of those, only about 35,000 were European, but they controlled the city and lived in a modern settlement with a race track, schools, and all the cultural amenities they desired. To keep order and protect the Europeans (mostly British, French, and German), the Shanghai Municipal Police were organized and run by the British. During the period of the 1920s and 1930s, there was a great deal of criminal violence, fueled by opium gangs and other smugglers, gangs that

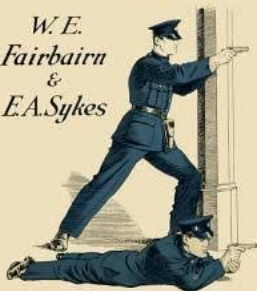
specialized in prostitution and gambling, communist party organizers, and regular criminal thugs. These groups were in constant combat with the members of the Shanghai Municipal Police (SMP).

William E. Fairbairn joined the Royal Marines Light Infantry in 1901. A few years later he joined the Shanghai Municipal Police, where he eventually rose to the rank of Assistant Commissioner. For many years during the '20s and '30s, he was in charge of all firearms training for the SMP and also routinely went on dangerous raids and other operations. This resulted in his personal involvement in literally scores of gunfights during his career. Working with his associate,

Eric Sykes, Fairbairn devised a hand-to-hand system known as “Defendu,” as well as a firearms training program for all SMP personnel. As World War II loomed in the immediate future, both Fairbairn and Sykes left Shanghai and returned to England. For the duration of the war, Sykes remained in England, teaching British Commandoes and members of the Special Operations Executive (SOE), the British equivalent of our OSS. Fairbairn was sent here to train US and Canadian Commando forces and operatives from the Office of Strategic

SHOOTING TO LIVE

W.E. Fairbairn & E.A. Sykes



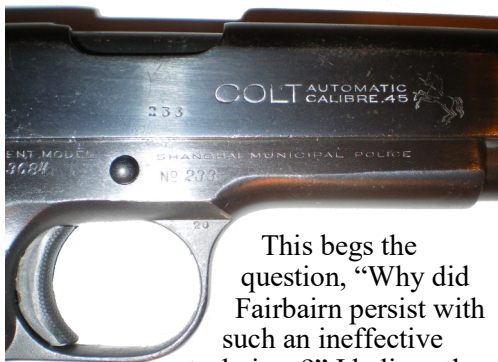
Services (OSS), the forebear of the modern CIA.

Together, Fairbairn and Sykes wrote a book called *Shooting to Live*, first published in 1942. Paladin Press now

offers a re-print of this excellent book, and it should be in the library of every history conscious gunman. One of Fairbairn's students in the OSS was Colonel Rex Applegate, who wrote extensively about Fairbairn's methods and was largely responsible for propagating Fairbairn's teachings in the United States. Usually, if a point shooting proponent uses an appeal to authority, he will be referencing either Fairbairn or Applegate.

When one delves a bit deeper into Fairbairn's experience in Shanghai, including reading *Shooting to Live* with a more critical eye, a number of disturbing tidbits of information emerge. First, Fairbairn had a very large force of officers who were unfamiliar with handguns when they joined the SMP and for whom he had an extremely limited amount of time and ammunition for training. Initial training was very brief, and by today's standards completely and utterly inadequate. After initial training, each officer was allotted 36 rounds of ammunition per year for training and requalification, a pitiful amount by any modern standard. Initial recruit training was conducted at two yards and four yards, and the "qualification" standard was 50% or more hits anywhere on a life-size silhouette target! Not too impressive. So, how did this training regimen work on the mean streets of Shanghai?

During the period 1929 through 1938, SMP officers fired a total of 3,329 pistol rounds in actual engagements with criminals. These 3,329 rounds accounted for 159 suspects killed and an additional 149 suspects wounded. Thus, the SMP officers fired 10.8 rounds for every criminal casualty they produced. During the exact same period, the completely untrained Chinese bandits fired 789 rounds at SMP officers, resulting in 19 officers killed and an additional 67 officers wounded. Thus, the thugs fired 9.2 rounds for every casualty produced. So, the officers trained in Fairbairn's point shooting methods were actually less effective than their untrained criminal foes.



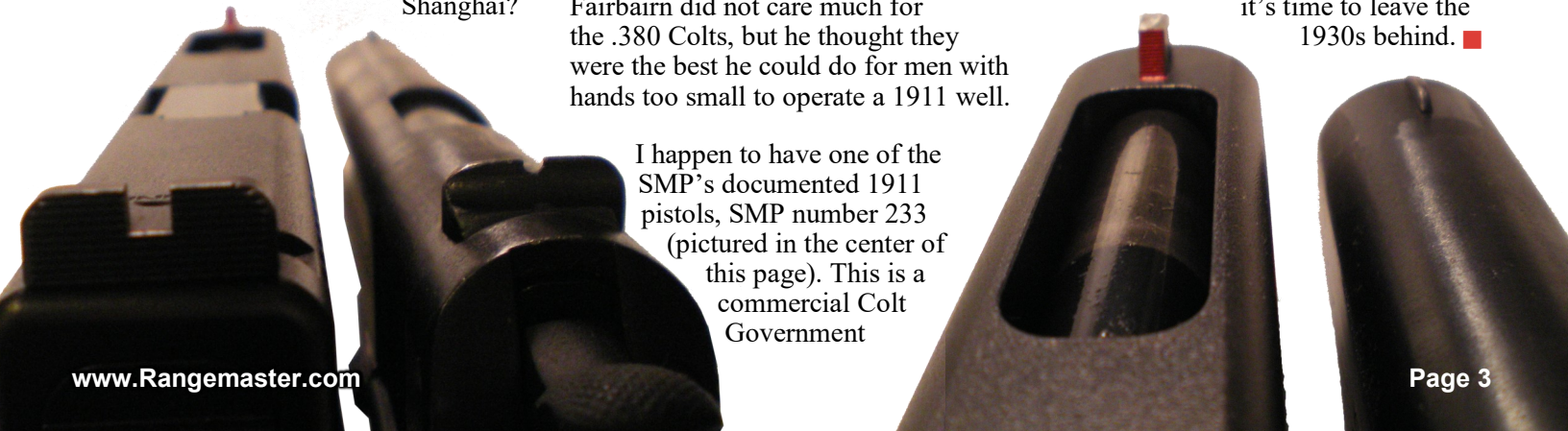
This begs the question, "Why did Fairbairn persist with such an ineffective technique?" I believe the

answer is simple. The SMP issued all sidearms used by its officers, and because they had both European (mostly British) officers and smaller-statured Oriental officers, they issued two types of handguns. European officers got Colt 1911s in .45; and the Oriental officers, most of whom were much smaller, were typically issued Colt 1908 Pocket Autos in .380. Fairbairn did not care much for the .380 Colts, but he thought they were the best he could do for men with hands too small to operate a 1911 well.

Model, manufactured in 1927. It has the "Shanghai Municipal Police" roll mark on the frame, and the Number 233 mark on the frame, slide and barrel. This is a "transitional model" 1911, with some features of the 1911 and some of the 1911-A1. The changes from 1911 to 1911-A1 configuration started in 1927, but many guns built in the next couple of years were assembled from parts on hand at the factory, and these transitional models are seen from time to time. I also have a Colt 1908 Pocket Model like the ones issued by the SMP, although this one did not belong to them. Both pistols have sights that are abysmal from a shooting point of view. The front sight is tiny — low and very narrow. The rear sight has a very small notch, on both the 1911 and 1908 pistols. These sights are all but impossible to see in anything other than perfect lighting, and it is very difficult to line them up at any kind of speed.

Contrast the sights on the 1911 and the 1908 with those on my current carry handgun, a Glock 35 (pictured below). Fairbairn taught point shooting *because the sights on his guns were useless*. No further explanation is needed. If you have sights you can't see, you learn to point the gun. Now that modern high-visibility sights are industry standard, it's time to leave the 1930s behind. ■

I happen to have one of the SMP's documented 1911 pistols, SMP number 233 (pictured in the center of this page). This is a commercial Colt Government



PISTOL & SHOTGUN

FOR First Responders

I am always leery of firearms trainers who have not taken a course from someone else in years, or even decades. I have been teaching firearms use professionally for over thirty-five years, and I still try to take at least two classes each year from someone outside my own organization. This keeps me current, exposes me to new ideas and equipment, and lets me steal ... er, audit ... the techniques and tactics devised by other trainers with different backgrounds and life experiences. Thus, I do not teach today what I taught twenty-five years ago, or even fifteen years ago. Failure to engage in continual training leads to stagnation and obsolescence.

I first met Wayne Dobbs several years ago when he attended a course I was teaching in Texas. He was already a seasoned instructor and an outstanding shooter at that time, and I was very impressed. Since then, I have seen him work at several annual

Tactical Conferences and other events. More recently, I met Wayne's training partner, Darryl Bolke, at one of our conferences and I immediately decided that I needed to attend a course put on by these gentlemen, who do business as Hardwired Tactical Shooting, or "HiTS." My road training schedule and theirs finally coincided in June and I was able to attend a one-day First Responder Pistol and one-day First Responder Shotgun course at the

Dallas Pistol Club. I was not disappointed.

Both Wayne and Darryl are recently retired law enforcement officers, with extensive operational and training experience. Both have trained widely in both law enforcement and private sector schools, and both are very good shooters.

As I noted in the opening paragraph, I am a firm believer in continuing education for firearms trainers, and this extends to my staff of instructors. For this trip, I was accompanied by three of Rangemaster's staff instructors, and we were joined in class by a Federal Air Marshal and a couple of dedicated private citizen students. Class size was small and every student received direct coaching and attention from both instructors. Throughout the weekend, either Darryl or Wayne would be the primary instructor and describe the drills, demo, and run the line while the other moved up and down the line observing and coaching the shooters. Both instructors demonstrated any new drill or exercise to standard, something I really like to see in class.

Saturday was pistol day, and Wayne was the primary instructor for the day. We began in the classroom with the usual admin stuff, then Wayne gave a very detailed and eloquent safety briefing, something glossed over in too many classes. "Every time you handle a gun, you are making life and death

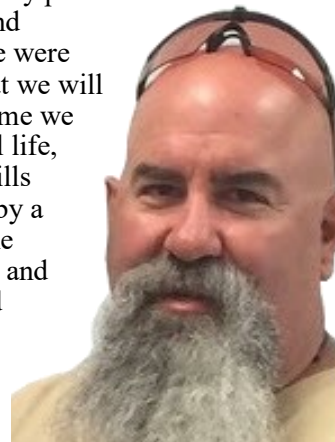
decisions." Wayne used the general Four Safety Rules we all know and teach, but added real world examples and anecdotes that made the

material more relevant and real to the students. He encouraged students to start looking at the environment around their homes and work places, and start looking at backgrounds and surroundings in terms of safe directions and backstops. We were advised that all shooting on this day would be from a low ready position, a contact ready position, or from the holster and the ready positions were explained and demonstrated. We were also reminded that we will not shoot every time we draw a gun in real life, so all shooting drills would be started by a timer's beep or the command "Fire!" and that the command "Threat!" was to result in a challenge from an appropriate ready position. This forced the students to think and respond appropriately as the day progressed.

On the range, the majority of the shooting was conducted on B-8 bullseye targets stapled onto a cardboard IDPA target. The 9 and 10 rings of the B-8 comprise a 5.5 inch diameter "black" that is significantly smaller and more demanding than the 8 inch "zero down" ring of the IDPA target. Wayne's philosophy is that if you can hit the 5.5 inch black reliably,



Wayne Dobbs
Hardwired Tactical
Shooting (HiTS)



Darryl Bolke
Hardwired Tactical
Shooting (HiTS)



whether under stress, while shooting very quickly, or at extended distances, you should be able to get anatomically useful hits on a real adversary under combat conditions. We engaged these bullseyes with two hands; with one hand, both dominant and support side; out to 25 yards for precision; and at high speed up close. Every shot fired, all day, was accounted for and critiqued. This level of concentration is demanding. At the end of the day, I had fired 392 rounds through my Glock 35 and I was ready for a break.

We started with several drills to give Wayne and Darryl a baseline of the students' skill level. The "Test" and the "Half Test" are drills originated by legendary trainer Ken Hackathorn, and these were among the first drills we shot to establish where the class stood. We also shot drills devised by Wayne and Darryl, which I thought were very thought provoking. Their premise is that the first two seconds of a fight typically dictate the outcome, so we shot various exercises that sought to learn exactly what we could do in that two second window of opportunity, both from the ready and from the holster. Good stuff.

As the day progressed we worked on one handed shooting,



HITS

Wayne and Darryl will be conducting

two 2-day First Responder Pistol courses in Dallas this year. Highly recommended! Click the dates below for more details, or visit Hardwired Tactical's website at hardwiredtacticalshooting.com.

APRIL 9-10, 2016

<https://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1805358>

AUGUST 20-21, 2016

<https://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1805382>



pivots and turns, multiple targets and shooting while moving. Silhouette targets were used some later in the day. There was a heavy emphasis on failure drills, with two fast shots to the body immediately followed by a single precise head shot, out to ten yards. Darryl discussed how his former police agency had adopted that drill as a standard response and how it had worked very well for them in numerous line of duty shootings. We shot the LAPD SWAT qualification course toward the end of the day, and all the students passed. This is a testament to the quality of the instruction and to the skill level of the student group.

Day two was devoted to the 12 gauge pump shotgun, the mainstay shoulder arm of American law enforcement for many decades. Although the carbine is making inroads in US law enforcement, the shotgun still has a viable role as a close range weapon for LE and a politically acceptable home and business defense weapon for the private citizen. Like me, Darryl is a big fan of the shotgun and he has put a lot of thought into his teaching approach with it.

The day began in the classroom with another safety briefing, then on to the peculiar characteristics of the shotgun. Darryl frankly discussed the shotgun's drawbacks as well as its strong points, and went over the tactical situations in which the shotgun would be most intelligently deployed. He also discussed technical issues such as ammunition selection; modifications; accessories; and ready positions and shooting technique. Once everyone had been fully briefed, we headed out to the range.

We started out by patterning the students' guns with buckshot at 5,7,10, 15 and 25 yards, both to establish a point of aim/point of impact reference and to acquaint the newer shotgunners with the advantages and limitations of buckshot. Maximum effective range with buckshot varied

greatly among the students' guns. My Vang barreled 870 will put all Flite Control 00 pellets well inside the vital zone of a silhouette target at 25 yards, while some students' guns had begun to throw unacceptable patterns by the time we reached the 15 yard line. It is critical that shotgunners pattern their gun with their ammunition, in order to accurately assess that gun and ammo's capabilities. We then fired slugs from 15 and 25 yards, again to establish a point of aim/point of impact reference and to check for accuracy. Once patterning and slug zeroing was completed, we worked on drills to establish consistency in the gun mount, reliable weapon manipulation and reloading skills.

As the day progressed, we worked on pivots and turns with the long gun, box drills, and shooting on the move with the shotgun. The old stand-by "Rolling Thunder Drill" was used to introduce time pressure to the loading process. Since the tubular magazine capacity of the shotgun is limited, emphasis was placed on quickly and reliably getting



the tube topped up under duress. As a final test, we shot the LAPD SWAT shotgun qualification course, with buckshot and slugs.

At the end of the day, I had fired a bit over 150 rounds of birdshot, about 70 rounds of buckshot, and about 15 slugs. Most of us work primarily with the handgun, so I really appreciated an opportunity to get a full day work-out with the shotgun.

Wayne and Darryl have put together an impressive program that imparts solid skills to students in a fairly short time frame. As Darryl and Wayne say, “when somebody kicks down your door at 3:00am, YOU are the first responder!” This program gives students the skills and mental conditioning needed to respond effectively. ■

INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMENT

April 8-10
Florence, SC

May 13-15
Athens, GA

May 27-29
Culpeper, VA

- Modern adult learning theory
- Preparation, delivery, and documentation of training
 - Development of training aids (PowerPoints, etc.)
 - Coaching methodologies & diagnostic tools
 - Modern, effective, stress-tested gun-handling
 - Operation of a variety of handgun types
 - Effective, efficient combat marksmanship
 - Visit www.Rangemaster.com or click the Eventbrite logo for details on these and other classes!

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Eventbrite

BAND OF DRUTHERS

by Tiffany Johnson

After my committee meeting ran long and a three-car pile-up slowed traffic to a crawl, I was over 20 minutes late to last month's Rangemaster Instructor Night. I raced into the range and scrambled for ear plugs, hoping Tom Givens would show mercy and let me join the firing line. I was still in office attire: a long skirt with an elastic waistband and a knit sweater (as opposed to everyone else's jeans and cargo pants). Despite being completely rattled by the rush, I somehow managed to shoot the drill clean on the first try. Thank goodness! I would hate to be late *and* suck all in the same session. As we packed up to leave, another instructor tapped me on the arm and asked, “Hey, what kind of holster are you using?” He had barely finished the question before I started gushing besotted rhapsodies about my prized new carry rig.

But first, let's back up. In a perfect world, we'd all be donning whatever bulky batman belt and super-sturdy contraption best secured our gear. But of course, not everyone works at a military surplus outlet or a hunting and fishing store. If I tried to conceal that system in my

committee meeting, my colleagues might wonder if I was harboring a conjoined twin on my hip. That's why I'm a huge fan of the belly band.

I've been double-carrying in a four-inch band for several years. The upsides are numerous, especially for women. The relatively soft material is extremely comfortable. Compression holds the firearm snugly, so it conforms to the body's shape instead of leaning outward (which causes tenting, particularly on people with curvier hips). The band allows for unobstructed, hands-free, on-body carry (yes, even while using the restroom). It can be worn either IWB or OWB. It's far less expensive than most leather or kydex, it's lightweight, it breathes, and it's washable. It goes on and comes off like a breeze — work the Velcro, done (no threading a bunch of loops one at a time). It can be easily, quickly, and cheaply customized by your local tailor or seamstress. This includes anything from reinforcing the trigger protection, to changing the holster cant, to adding more pockets (mine has several and holds a knife, a spare mag, and my phone).

The belly band has its fair share of downsides, too. But perhaps the biggest single disadvantage to the belly band is holster collapse. Folks who wear a belly band have to use their non-gun hand to open it, which precludes one-handed holster work and greatly heightens the risk of self-muzzling. Therefore, even though I wore one every day, it was practically impossible for me to train with my belly band. That was unacceptable.

Enter the one and only Spencer Keepers! Spencer and his company (Keepers Concealment) are known for the now-patented “Keeper” holster and several other popular AIWB designs. Several months ago, I reached out to him in hopes of finding a solution to my collapsing belly band. Thus began a weeks-long odyssey of Facebook chats, emails, crude drawings, annotated snapshots, and evolving design iterations that we passed back and forth by priority mail. Finally, it was ready. Spencer had fashioned a pair of modest, minimalist, removable kydex inserts that I secured within the belly band holsters using industrial-strength Velcro. The inserts are molded to my particular guns, they shield the triggers with something more substantial than cloth, and they don’t collapse when empty. Eureka!

The final product came together just in time for Establishing a Dominance Paradigm, the flagship course that Tom Givens, Craig Douglas, and William Aprill taught back in January. I was there to help with the class, but Tom let me shoot all the range blocks just so we could test out this new holster. It passed with flying colors. Anyone who has ever trained with Tom knows that his range drills suffer no shortage of presentation reps. As I un-holstered and re-holstered my firearm dozens and dozens — possibly hundreds — of times over three days, I had precisely zero issues

with the belly band whatsoever. It stayed in place, it secured both guns, it didn’t slide up, I didn’t have to adjust it, and every time I drew my firearm, I was able to return it right back to its happy place with only one hand, while keeping my eyes up and focused on the threat. Even Tom was impressed. If it weren’t for me getting sloppy and throwing a few shots on the drills, I might have thought I had ascended to concealed carry heaven.

I’ve worn this rig every single day since then, and my gear has never felt more secure. It’s also never accommodated so many different styles of dress and variations of movement. And last month at

Tom’s Instructor Night, I trained with it yet again — only that time I managed not to toss any bad shots.

I don’t often pepper the internet with my subjective musings on gear (unless someone asks). But in this case, I had to publicly thank Spencer Keepers for so meticulously fine-tuning this design to meet my needs. He understood my somewhat obscure vision and committed himself to realizing it. And now I have a weapon system that allows me to sit comfortably through an extended meeting, run down two flights of stairs to my car, zip across town, hustle into the range, and shoot a perfect 100% on the FBI qualification course, cold, without having to make the slightest adjustments to my business attire or my equipment. Nary a cargo pocket in sight.

To those who train seriously and often: when you prepare for a firearms class, do you swap out your everyday apparel for that favorite training holster or preferred pair of pants with the belt loops in exactly the right spot? If so, you might be gaming yourself out of the whole point of taking classes. Do whatever you can to enable yourself to practice using the gear you actually carry — disadvantages and all. If your number ever gets called, I doubt the bad guy will wait for you to dip into the phone booth and re-emerge in the superman costume that always made you two-tenths of a second faster than the guy next to you on the range.

To those who teach in the firearms community: please encourage your students to think outside the box. Belly band carry isn’t for everyone, and I’m the first to admit it’s not perfect. But if the alternative is loathing your own gear (which leads to not wearing it at all), a belly band is a viable option for anyone who takes the time to understand its nuances. When your students doubt the feasibility of toting a few extra pounds of clunky metal and plastic every day, don’t condescend. Don’t tell them to just suck it up. And don’t expect them to abandon the lifestyle they’ve known for decades and start dressing like a longshoreman. Instead, assure them that with a little effort, anyone who wants to safely carry a firearm can find an effective, reliable, concealable way to do so. ■



This issue features lots of information about the famed combatives pioneer, William E. Fairbairn. What was Fairbairn’s nickname?

- A. Gutter Fighter
- B. Bootstrap Bill
- C. The Bulldog
- D. Dangerous Dan

Quick! Post the correct answer on the Rangemaster Facebook page to **WIN!!!**



Spencer Keepers
www.KeepersConcealment.com



Tiffany Johnson
www.FrontSightPress.com

