

GUN WORLD

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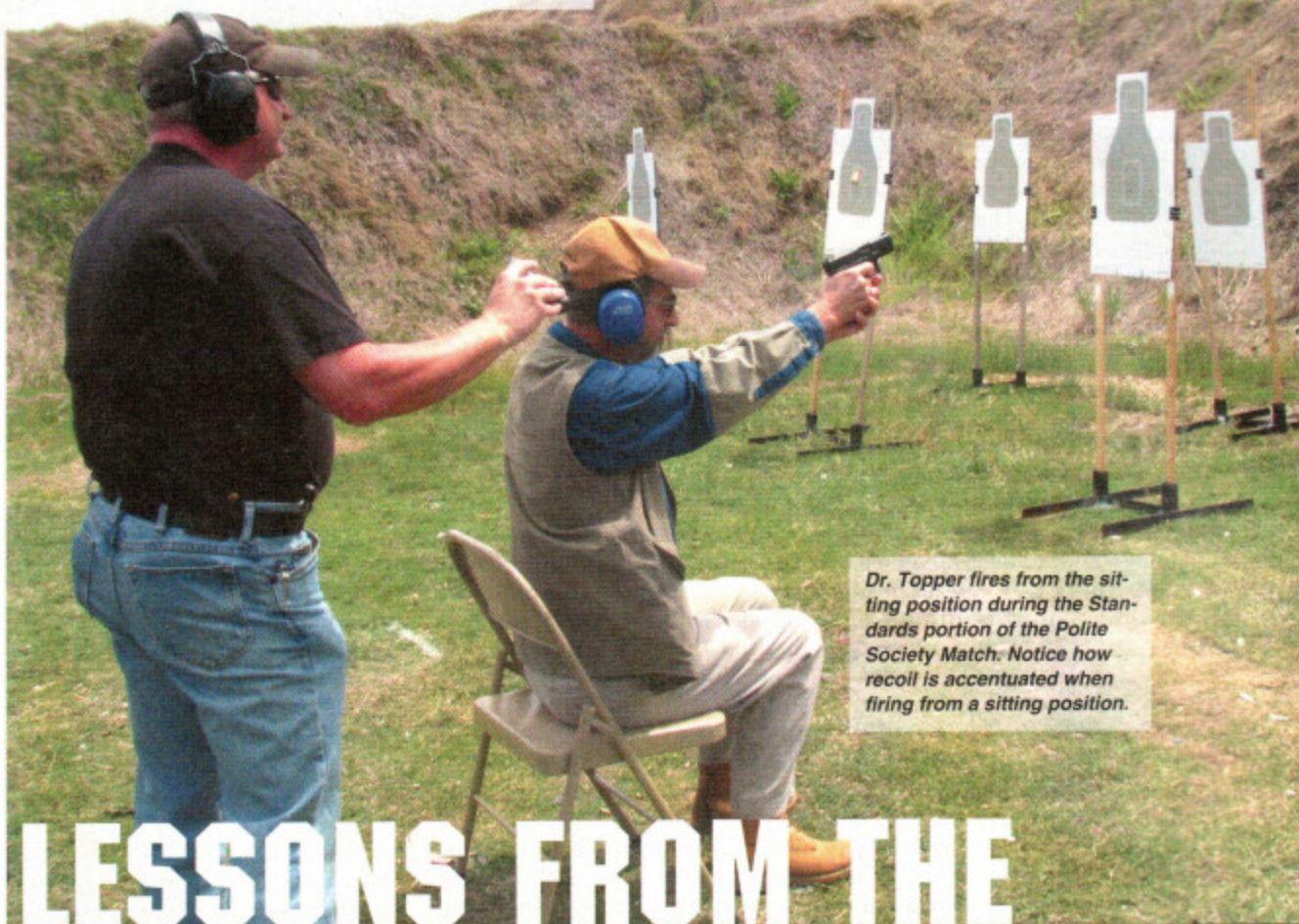
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Dr. Topper fires from the sitting position during the Standards portion of the Polite Society Match. Notice how recoil is accentuated when firing from a sitting position.

LESSONS FROM THE POLITE SOCIETY TAG

A Glock 30 SF Gives Great Service at This Informative Event

For the last several years Range-master, Inc. of Memphis has hosted a "Polite Society Pistol Match" and training conference. The conference name comes from a quote by Robert A. Heinlein who said that, "An armed society is a polite society. Manners are good when one may have to back up his acts with his life." The Polite Society conference takes place over a weekend and combines classroom presentations by noted authorities on tactics and firearms training with a variety of live fire exercises, force-on-force ses-

sions and an open competition between the conference's attendees, presenters and staff. This year's conference took place on April 24 and 25 at the United States Shooting Academy in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

It was a very busy two days, and with so many good sessions scheduled, my only regret was that I could not attend them all. The presentation topics included such diverse topics as Massad Ayoob speaking about critical incident stress, a discussion on terrorism by Hany Mahmoud, Tom Givens talking about shooting incidents in Memphis,

an after-action briefing on the Newhall Incident by John Hearne, Bill Aprill discussing how violent criminals select their victims and Skip Gochenour's presentation on home invasions. In addition, I gave a two-hour talk on how to train to achieve unconscious competence. The workshops included a SureFire Certification course by Andy Stanford, a force-on-force workshop by Karl Rehn, sessions in physical techniques by Southnarc and Paul Gomez and live-fire sessions by Rob Pincus, Wayne Dobbs, Will Andrews, Shawn Thompson and Marty Hayes. There



The Glock 30 SF that Dr. Topper used as his primary sidearm at the Polite Society Match is a compact polymer-framed .45 automatic pistol that carries comfortably on the belt. It conceals well when used with an inside-the-waistband holster and carried under a vest, a jacket or a shirt that is not tucked in.

TICAL CONFERENCE



Although Dr. Topper's Glock 30 SF was somewhat ammunition sensitive, these seven loads all functioned well in it. They represent a good selection of the ammunition currently available for .45 autos.

were two matches: The first one involved a test of basic shooting skills and then required each shooter to solve three live-fire scenarios. The second match was a shoothouse clearing exercise in which each competitor had to neutralize the threat and perform a rescue in under a minute. By the time of the awards ceremony on Sunday afternoon everyone who attended left with new insights about shooting incidents, their effects and the psychological and tactical skills needed to resolve them.

A Gun Test

Whenever I attend a training session I use the experience to try to learn



The Glock 30 SF worked well with both the standard 10-round magazine (right) and the 13-round magazine designed for the Glock 21. This increased firepower gives the 30 SF a distinct tactical advantage over more traditional .45 autos which use single-column magazines.



All six hollow points tested in the Glock 30 SF expanded to at least .65 inch in water. They are (left to right) the Black Hills 230-grain XTP, Speer's 230-grain Gold Dot, Winchester's 230-grain PDX-1, Remington's 230-grain Golden Saber, Hornady's 200-grain +P XTP and Speer's 185-grain Gold Dot.



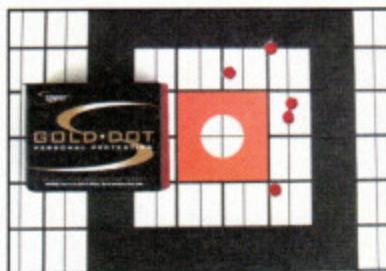
An MTM Case Guard Front Rifle/Pistol rest was used to test accuracy at 15 yards. Dr. Topper found it quite comfortable to use during long sessions at the bench.

something beyond what's being presented in the various blocks of training that I'm attending. Usually this involves testing various firearms, ammunition and accessories under the stress of live-fire exercises and shooting competitions. This year I took two semi-auto pistols that I'd not used

in previous training sessions. My main pistol was a Glock 30SF .45-caliber semi-auto that I'd purchased a few months prior to the conference. It's a gun that I've been carrying and using in IDPA matches, and I thought that using it at the Polite Society Conference would give me an opportunity to train with it further and to use it in scenarios designed by some of the best trainers in the country. The other pistol was a Taurus PT 738 TCP .380 semi-auto. I carried it in a pocket holster and used it as a back-up gun. The TCP will be the subject of a separate article in *Gun World*, so for the present let me just say that I was pleased that I was able to solve all of the live-fire scenarios

without needing a backup. Therefore, my use of the Taurus at the conference was limited to a single stage in one of the live-fire workshops.

The Glock 30 SF had interested me quite a bit ever since I first saw it at the 2009 SHOT Show. A friend of mine who contracts for the Defense Department had carried a standard Glock 30 overseas for several years. I trained with him on occasion, and he'd allowed me to shoot his pistol on

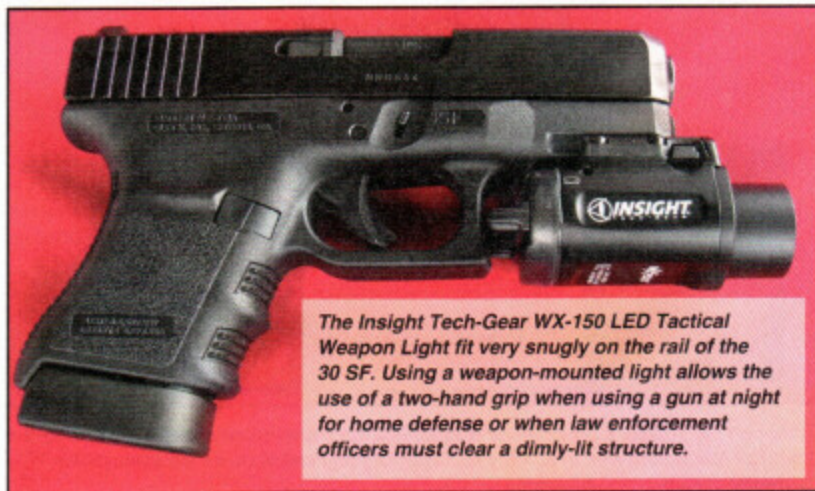


Speer's 230-grain Gold Dot produced this 2.59-inch group at 15 yards from the Glock 30 SF.



Federal's American Eagle 230-grain JRN round produced this 1.26-inch group at 15 yards. It also had rather mild recoil in the 30 SF and would be a good load to use at IDPA matches.

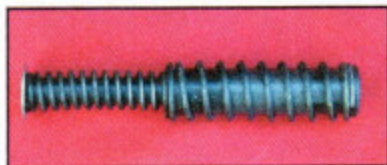
one occasion. I'm a fan of the .45 ACP cartridge, and his Model 30 seemed just about the right size for personal defense gun. The fact that it held 11 rounds with the standard magazine and could also use the 13-round magazines intended for the Glock 21 made the 30 an attractive option. Unfortunately, I found that the grip of the Glock 30 was very uncomfortable when I fired it, so I originally scratched it off my list. A few months



The Insight Tech-Gear WX-150 LED Tactical Weapon Light fit very snugly on the rail of the 30 SF. Using a weapon-mounted light allows the use of a two-hand grip when using a gun at night for home defense or when law enforcement officers must clear a dimly-lit structure.



The Glaser Blue Safety Slug functioned well in the Glock 30 SF and shot to the point of aim. Recoil was light and very controllable.



The Glock 30 SF uses two recoil springs of different diameters. This setup was quite effective in controlling muzzle flip and reducing felt recoil.

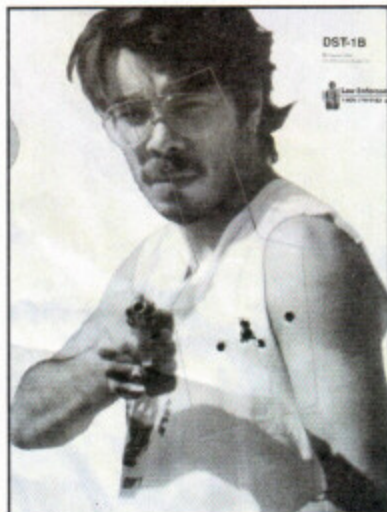
ago, I finally decided to part with my Colt Gold Cup and went to the Florida Gun Exchange where they had a 30 SF with Night Sights. The gun was very comfortable, and the Florida Gun Exchange gave me a good price, so I decided to give it a try.

Over the next few months I gave my new sidearm a thorough examination and tested it with several brands of ammunition at the Flagler Gun Club and at the Robert L. Strickland range in Volusia County. Before I used the gun for personal defense I wanted to ensure that it was well made, accurate enough for self-defense and functioned smoothly with tactical ammunition. In the process, I learned a few things that are worth sharing. First, the gun was very well made, which is what I've come to expect from Glock. There were no tool marks or signs of manufacturing defects, and all of the safeties functioned as intended. The trigger

pull was a little heavy at just under 8 pounds. I've been trained as a Glock Armorer, and in the future I may install a 3.5-pound connector.

My main interest, however, was how the short 3.8-inch barrel and shorter slide would affect performance. Those of you who shoot 1911s probably realize that as the barrel of a 1911 is shortened from the standard 5-inch length, reliability problems sometimes appear. This is especially true of guns that have barrels shorter than 4 inches. I'm not sure why this is, I've simply been told by a pistolsmith whose work I regard very highly that even when double recoil springs are used, it is very difficult to make the 1911 action reliable when the barrel length is reduced. Would the short Glock .45 exhibit reliability problems? A good friend of mine who carries one told me his functions with any type of ammo. I wondered if mine would be the same. As it turned out, my particular 30 SF clearly functioned better with some brands of ammunition than others. I tried several +P loads that had wide hollow-points and found that they did not feed smoothly and that they would occasionally jam against the bottom of the feed ramp. At first I thought that the problem might be due to a weak recoil spring, so I changed springs, but the problem did not go away. Then I tried extra-power magazine springs, thinking that the slide might be cycling a bit on the fast side, but this didn't solve the problem either. I simply fired a lot of different loads and found a number that functioned without problems. Interestingly two of these were +P loads with lightweight bullets. The Hornady 200-grain +P TAP load with the tapered XTP bullet worked very well, and the 145-grain +P Cor-Bon Glaser Blue Safety Slug functioned smoothly, although I only had enough Glasers to do a brief test. Interestingly, it shot right to the point of aim at 7 yards. In fact, all of the loads that I tried with this gun shot quite near to the point of aim, regardless of the weight of their bullets or the velocities they produced.

The other concern that many have about short barrels comes from the



This target was fired using Glaser Safety Slugs at 7 yards. All six shots fell within the high-value area of the target, even though the scoring area was reduced because the target was not directly facing the shooter.

fact that they produce less velocity than barrels that are of standard length for their caliber. I chronographed seven loads that functioned well in the 30 SF and found that they produced roughly 10-percent less velocity than the velocities published by their man-



A two-hand flash sight retention position was used to fire two three-shot strings with the Glock 30 SF while moving rapidly "off the X" from a distance of 3 yards. The 30 SF points very naturally and is highly effective when shooting on the move.



The Lodge at the U.S. Shooting Academy is a comfortable setting that contains state-of-the-art instruction rooms and a store that provides a variety of tactical gear and ammunition. Its large atrium was a good place to visit with other participants and catch a quick snack between sessions.

ufacturers for a 5-inch barrel. The chronograph results are listed in the accompanying table along with muzzle energy calculations developed using Sierra's Infinity Ballistic Software. The hollowpoint loads produced velocities between 788 and 921 fps and muzzle energy levels between 317 and 359 foot-pounds. Theoretically, this should be sufficient to allow modern hollowpoint bullets to expand, but I conducted a water jug test with each of the six hollow points just to be sure. I taped two 2.5-gallon jugs that were 9 inches wide together and fired each bullet into the first jug. All of the loads,

except for the Speer 185-grain Gold Dot made it into the second jug. The Winchester 230-grain PDX-1 penetrated the deepest, breaking through the back of the second jug and bouncing off a backstop made of newspapers and telephone books. The smallest expanded bullet was the 200-grain XTP that measured .65-inch. Two slugs tied for the most expansion at .72-inch; they were the 230-grain Remington Golden Saber and the Speer 185-grain Gold Dot. Clearly, expansion was not a concern.

To test accuracy I used an MTM Case Guard Front Rifle/Pistol rest to



The Glock 30 SF does a very good job of ejecting the spent case, as Dr. Topper fires using a two-hand isosceles stance during the Standards segment.

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The Glock 30 SF produced mostly dead center hits during the Standards segment. The hits outside the center box in the torso came when Dr. Topper was shooting weak-hand only from a kneeling position.

shoot three five-shot groups with each of the seven loads at 15 yards. Four of the loads shot average groups that were smaller than 3.3 inches. Three were hollowpoints, and depending upon conditions, one of these would probably be my first choice for personal defense. In addition, I'd have no problem using the Glaser in environments like apartments, motel rooms and small retail establishments where a close-range frontal shot is likely and over-penetration is a high priority concern. In general, the 30 SF with its 8-pound trigger and short sight radius wasn't a tack-driver, but it was clearly accurate enough to do the job at any reasonable tactical distance. So given this, I ran some tactical drills at 1, 3, 5, 7, 10 and 15 yards. All of the drills involved three-shot strings, one to the strong side and one to the weak side. At 1 yard, I fired from close retention while moving, at 3 yards I used a flash sight picture and fired while moving. For the rest of the drills, I moved laterally "off the X" and used sighted fire with a rapid cadence. The results at all distances were hits in the "five" zone, with groups being tighter at the closer distances. The gun also proved to be quite accurate at IDPA matches. I generally don't shoot for low times at matches. Instead, I concentrate on practicing use of cover and accurate shot delivery. Generally, I focus on the front sight and trigger press in order to

keep my "points down" as low as possible and to avoid hitting "no-shoot" targets because I believe that this will give me the most real-world benefit.



Dr. Topper takes a break outside the shoot house as another participant is briefed prior to entering. This was Dr. Topper's best event during the match.



The U.S. Shooting Academy range is divided into a number of bays that have 270-degree berms. This bay is set up for shooting steel targets.

Polite Society Lessons

Given that I'd gotten to know the 30 SF before I took it to Tulsa, I was eager to see how well it would perform for me at the Polite Society matches. Going in I knew I don't have the youth to match the speed of some of the best competitors like my friend Todd Louis Green, who won the match, but I felt that I could reasonably acquit myself and shoot some decent targets. The first event was the Standards test. We shot targets that were placed at about 5 and 7 yards from a variety of positions including standing and kneeling. We also shot while sitting in a chair, and I was glad that I'd gained a bit of experience in this exercise in a Gabe Suarez class and in several IDPA matches. What I hadn't practiced enough was shooting with my weak hand, and I hadn't practiced it at all from kneeling. This caused me to put several rounds into the right-center three-point zone on the far target. The lesson here was clear: Just because you practice weak handed when standing doesn't mean you can shoot precisely with your weak hand from less comfortable positions!

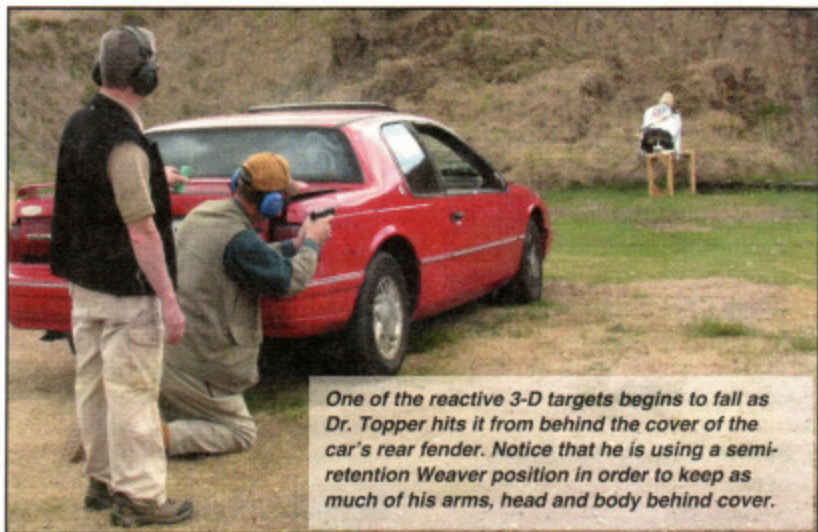
A second lesson came during the live-fire scenarios. I did fairly well in the first two scenarios, which involved situations that might be encountered in a car-jacking. I shot the targets in the proper order and I neutralized them all fairly quickly. The targets were reactive and required solid upper-chest hits to drop them out of sight. I dropped a number of the targets with the first shot, and none required more than two hits. I also was complimented for my use of cover while moving, a skill I attribute to using IDPA matches to train rather than to compete. However, during the third scenario I went a bit fast and shot the last target from the wrong side of cover, resulting in a five-second procedural penalty. Next time, I'll visualize the course of fire step-by-step before I let the judges know I'm ready.

The shoot-house provided yet a third lesson. I remembered to carry my Insights Tech-Gear Typhoon illuminator, and I did have it set on "strobe." However, I put it in the right outside pocket of my Concealed Carry



Dr. Topper fires using a car door for cover during the first carjacking scenario of the Polite Society Match. The Glock 30 SF was sufficiently short that it handled well in such close quarters.

Clothiers vest instead of the right inside pocket. When I went to grasp my light with my weak hand, I had to reach around the outside of my vest!



One of the reactive 3-D targets begins to fall as Dr. Topper hits it from behind the cover of the car's rear fender. Notice that he is using a semi-retention Weaver position in order to keep as much of his arms, head and body behind cover.

When I came to a darkened hallway it took an extra couple of seconds to grab my light, but I did get it out without exposing myself and I neutralized the hostile and saved the hostage in a little over 47 seconds which was well within the one minute time limit. I might have shaved a few seconds off my time by using a weapon-mounted tactical light like the Insights Tech-Gear WX-150. But in any case, I felt very good about clearing a multi-room structure that quickly, and for me this was the high point of the weekend.

The low point came shortly thereafter during a force-on-force exercise in the shoot house. The scenario involved

GLOCK 30 SF AMMUNITION PERFORMANCE

Load	Velocity (fps)	Extreme Spread (fps)	Muzzle Energy (ft-lbs)	Average 15 yards Group (Inches)	Expansion (Inches)
Speer 185-gr. Gold Dot	921	15	348	3.30	.72
Hornady 200-gr. XTP	899	32	359	2.84	.65
Rem. 230-gr. Golden Saber	804	36	330	3.94	.72
Win. 230-gr. PDX-1 HP	814	36	338	4.57	.71
Speer. 230-gr. Gold Dot	805	13	331	3.03	.71
Black Hills 230-gr. XTP	788	10	317	4.53	.70
Fed. Amer. Eagle 230-gr. JRN	798	19	321	2.57	NA

using an airsoft rifle to take a headshot on a hostage-taker with a knife. I made sure the rifle was loaded before it was handed to me, because I'd learned to do this at the National Tactical Invitational (NTI). However, I did not adjust the rifle's stock or shoulder the weapon before the exercise began. When I

raised the rifle to take the shot the sights hit my protective mask before the stock hit my shoulder. The gun just plain didn't fit, and I couldn't save the hostage. I instituted Plan B and tried for a leg shot to shoot the attacker away from the hostage, but even with the muzzle pointed downward I still couldn't acquire a sight picture. This was a very valuable lesson. Whenever I pick up an unfamiliar firearm, I'll check to see how it fits before I turn the corner and engage.

There were many other valuable lessons from both the lectures and the workshops. I really do wish I could have attended them all, but time just wouldn't allow it. Each of the sessions I went to left me with something I found to be very valuable. Mas Ayoob's lecture on critical incident stress was an excellent review of the current state of knowledge on the subject. Southnarc's session on the close-quarters management of unknown contacts presented a different approach to both physical and verbal tactics than I've seen offered by other trainers, and he also presented a very clear and simple approach to reading the pre-attack cues of violent offenders. My training partner for this session was Todd Green, and trying to keep up with him made me glad that I exercise on a regular basis. Finally, the live-fire fundamentals drills presented by Wayne Dobbs and Marty Hayes gave me an opportunity to hone in on and sharpen some of my basic techniques. Training by one's self and competing in IDPA can be valuable, but one needs to work under the supervision of a qualified instructor on fundamentals from time to time to ensure that you're not allowing yourself to stray from the basics as you try to build new skills.



Dr. Topper drops one target on the move as he moves to cover during the fourth and final stage of the Polite Society match. Shooting on the move is an important skill to practice, especially when the targets are at close range.



Wayne Dobbs of Tiger Valley Training (center tan hat) emphasizes a technical point with Polite Society conference attendees during his workshop on critical fundamentals of the combative pistol.

Next Year?

My friend Tom Givens from Rangemaster invited me back to present again next year. While it's hard to know what's coming down the road 12 months from now, I'm certainly going to think about his offer. I haven't been to any other training where I've been exposed to so many diverse and high-quality instructors in so short a time. Clearly, attending this conference at a facility that offers as much opportunity for training in different tactical and instructional settings as the U.S. Shooting Academy is an opportunity that's worth serious consideration. As for my Glock 30 SF, it's not reliable with all types of .45 ACP ammunition. That clearly separates it from the 9mm Glock that I've owned. They functioned with just about every load I tried in them. However, the 30 SF is well made and it is sufficiently accurate and reliable with enough different loads to make it a useful defensive tool. **GW**

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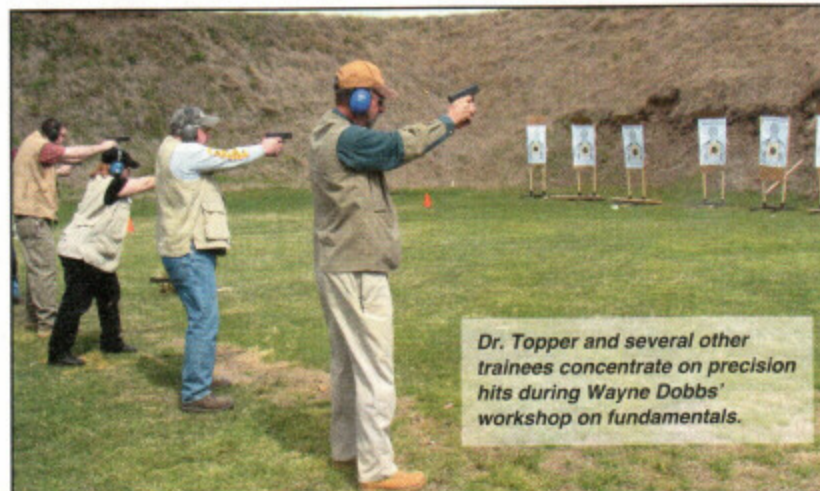
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Dr. Topper and several other trainees concentrate on precision hits during Wayne Dobbs' workshop on fundamentals.



Tom Givens presents the top Lawman Award to Mike Cywus during the Awards presentation on Sunday afternoon. Tom is the owner of Rangemaster and the developer of the Polite Society Tactical Conference.