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May 2018

RANGE • MASTER

Volume 22 • Issue 5

# RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS  
FOR THE REAL WORLD

## Firearms Training Services

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## Measuring Your SKILLS

by Tom Givens

I don't get to practice as often as I'd like, so when I do, I try to maximize the value of the time and ammo I commit to a practice session. Rather than just shoot, every round I fire is burned doing a scored drill or qualification course. This way, not only am I getting practice at the skills I think are important, but I'm giving myself benchmarks of my current skill level and a way to track progress over time.

I almost always begin a practice session with a very simple bulls-eye drill I came up with, which I simply call the "**200-Point Warm Up**." This simple drill involves a B-8 bulls-eye target, or a B-8 repair center, at a distance of ten yards. I fire ten rounds with both hands, five rounds using the right hand only, and five rounds using the left hand only, for a total of 20 shots. The maximum possible score is 200 points. My goal is always a score of 199-200, cold. I can usually shoot my 200, but now and then I throw a shot into the nine-

ring and get a 199. I like to shoot this drill cold, as the first drill, because it is quick and simple, and it gives me an accurate assessment of my current ability to work the sights and trigger correctly. It's also a good confidence builder. When you can fairly consistently hit that little X-ring one-handed, the marksmanship demands of the typical defensive shooting seem easy.

Lately, I've been doing a timed version of this drill. Again, all strings are shot at ten yards, starting with the pistol at the ready. First string is ten rounds in ten seconds, using both hands. (This is essentially what Ken Hackathorn calls "**The Test**".) Then, five rounds using the right hand only, in ten seconds. Finally, five rounds using the left hand only, in ten seconds. This time limit version is obviously more difficult, but more

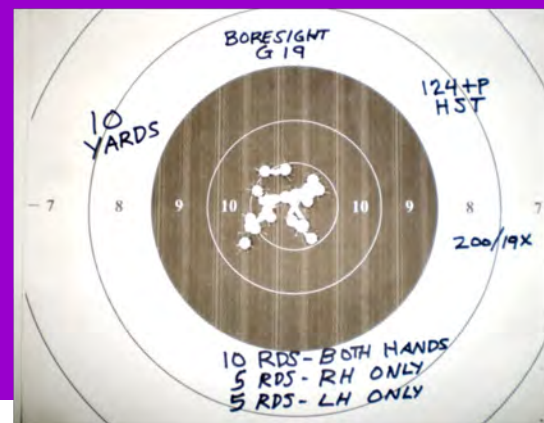
rewarding. My current personal best on this is 196 out of 200.

After one or two runs on the 200-Point Warm Up, I often shoot **Dot Torture**, as made famous by my late friend, Todd Louis Green. Directions for this drill, and a printable target, can be found at <http://pistol-training.com/drills/dot-torture>. This course involves numbered two-inch circles, and includes firing with both hands, one hand, and weak hand, as well as multiple shots, multiple targets,

The Dot Torture target is available online at [pistol-training.com/drills/dot-torture](http://pistol-training.com/drills/dot-torture).

presentation from the holster, and reloads. It's a great drill for learning concentration and perseverance. Once you can get all 50 hits in the

### 200-Point Warm Up

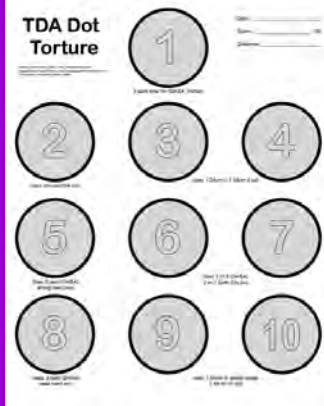


prescribed manner at three yards, move the target to five yards, which is my usual distance for this drill.

I also use a target I made for myself, using a 3x5-inch playing card with the Ace of Spades on it. I shoot this from five yards, firing five rounds either from the ready or from the holster, using an electronic timer to record my time. From the ready, my goal is to get all five hits in around two seconds. From the holster, I'm usually looking for 3 to 3.5 seconds for five good hits. I simply call this "**the Ace Drill**."

After the 200-Point Warm Up and a Dot Torture or a few Ace Drills, I typically shoot a scored course on a silhouette target to get some practice and self-testing working at speed. I always shoot these from concealment, using the same rig and clothing I wear every day. If I'm shooting a time limit course, my goal is always a 100% score. Once in a while, I'll shoot our **Core Skills Test**, to get a more accurate measurement of my skill level. In this course, your target points are divided by the total time (in seconds) that it took to shoot them. Thus, the faster you can get good hits, the better your score. My goal is always to score above 125 with my daily carry gear, concealed. The course is outlined to the right.

Two runs through the 200-Point Warm Up, followed by two iterations of Dot Torture and a 40- to 60-round qualification course brings the total to 180 to 200 rounds. That's a good, solid practice session. Frankly, if you concentrate hard enough to clean (or almost clean) these drills, you will be tired and ready to quit at this point. That's the time to stop and repeat the process on another day. Give this regimen a try and see how you do. ■



Dot Torture



The Ace Drill

## Rangemaster Handgun Core Skills Test

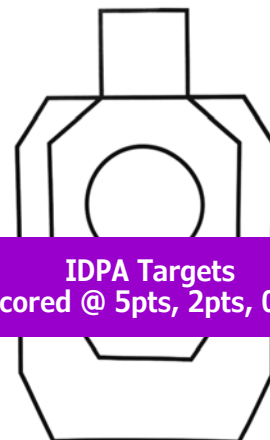
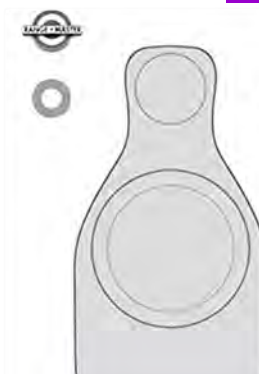
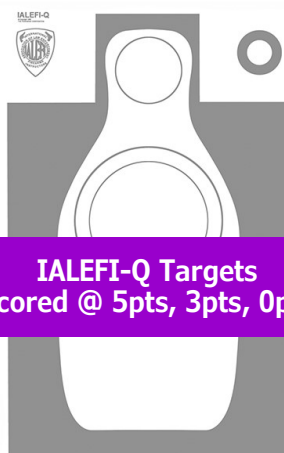
(Comstock Count)

Use an electronic timer and record the time for each stage.

- 3 yds** Sidestep, draw, fire 4 rounds
- 5 yds** Sidestep, draw, fire 3 to chest and 3 to head
- 5 yds** Start in dominant hand only, fire 4 rounds
- 5 yds** Start in non-dominant hand, fire 5 rounds
- 7 yds** Draw and fire 6 rounds
- 7 yds** Draw and fire 3 rounds
- 10 yds** Draw and fire 3 rounds
- 15 yds** Draw and fire 4 rounds
- 25 yds** Draw and fire 3 rounds

Add all times together. Score target (see below). Divide score by total time for Index. Multiply Index by 20 for Final Score. Par Score = 100.

80-100 = Very good  
100-124 = Advanced  
125+ = Master





# **TIPS** for Success in the Rangemaster Firearms Instructor Development Course

by Steve Havey



*Y*ou can read a lot of reviews on this class and descriptions of what folks experienced. I thought it might be helpful to share some observations that will help potential attendees understand what to expect and my thoughts on how to get the most from the class and put yourself in a better position to pass it.

## **Study the book.**

I do not know of anyone in our class who failed the shooting test but there were several who failed the written test. In the very beginning of the class Tom tells you to study the book at night and has a page in there that lists the areas where most of the misses in his exam are. Like everything else he does there is a darn good reason for it. You must pass two shooting tests and one written test to get your certificate.

For each of the shooting tests you have one practice run and then two scored runs with the better one used for your score. You only get one shot at the written test and at the end of three long days. After each day you will be tired, and studying will be the last thing on your mind. But skip the drinks and yuks with your buddies and study the book.

## **Bring enough mags to hold at least 60 rounds.**

I brought seven 15-round magazines, and a couple more would have been useful. You will be told to throw 30 or so loose rounds in your pocket so you can reload between strings. But remember that you are also coaching your partner when you're not shooting, so you do not have a lot of time to reload your magazines, even from rounds in your pocket. Shooting is frequently paused when Tom is demonstrating a point, and if you can watch him and load rounds at the same time, you should. Saturday is more demanding than Friday and several folks with only three mags got frustrated and had to really step it up to keep up.

## **Bring electronic ears.**

In the equipment list you will see electronic hearing protection mentioned as "strongly recommended" but I would say it is mandatory. Turn it up so you can hear Tom when he moves toward the other end of the line. There was an older gentleman at the end of the line and his pair crapped out on him. He struggled for two days until he found his old pair for day three. Tom does not speak softly but he is not loud either so do yourself a favor and have electronic hearing protection.

## **Bring a second pistol.**

Same model is ideal. If not then a model similar in size and operation with its own holster, magazines and mag holder is also a good idea. Think your pistol will not break on you? I have seen it happen to someone in each class I have taken.

## **Keep your comments and opinions to yourself.**

Or at least be very selective about your commentary. As my mother always said, "son, if you are talking, you are not learning anything new." There is absolutely no wasted time either in the classroom or on the range. You really are drinking from a firehose. Tom has been doing this for over 40 years and has seen and heard it all numerous times. At the start of the class Tom states that there are different ways to do things, which is true. But Tom has his way, so please do not chew up valuable time trying to debate it. We are all there to hear him, not you. There will be a few quips from folks now and then and serious questions are OK, but this is Tom's class, not yours.

## **Be prepared to FOCUS.**

On the range you are either shooting, coaching, listening to Tom or taking a quick break. There are frequent breaks, but they are short, 5 to 10 minutes and 30 minutes for lunch. There is very little down time. You are expected to give coaching to your partner on the range but keep an ear out for Tom. When he says "Listen



up” it is time for you to shut up. You must pay attention always. It may seem demanding but If you cannot do that then how do you expect to supervise multiple students on the range when you are instructing? Simply give him the same attention and respect you would expect from your own students.

Also keep in mind that Tom really does see everything. He told a shooter and his coach four positions away that a round was not in the chamber. They debated it and lost the debate. (The ejection port faced away from Tom and he still saw it.)

### Help your partner load mags.

In our class, each relay ran shooting tests back to back. That meant you shot 60 rounds, scored your target, and ran 60 rounds again. That does leave much time to load mags. If you are not shooting, help your partner load mags. They just hand them to you as needed and you have some of their ammo in one of your pockets. This lets them focus on the task at hand yet still be ready for each string and for the next scored run. And of course, they do the same for you when the roles are reversed.

### Listen to your coach/partner.

You will have several partners over the three days and you take turns coaching each other. Be receptive and have an open mind. They are there to help you as you are to help them. They helped me and I think I helped them. A little encouragement and support for each other goes a long way.

### Final Thoughts

This is a great class that demands three full days of dedication from the students. Be prepared for that and you should do fine. I did not mention anything about the shooting test. If you are truly a good enough shooter to be an instructor then there is enough instruction, coaching, and practice that you should be able to pass those tests. Practicing the FBI course of fire is good preparation for the class and there are lots of reviews on the shooting portion of the class out there. You paid good money and probably drove a few hundred miles to take this class so get the most out of it. ■



**WARNING!** The video links below include graphic content, but they provide good, clear footage of deer being shot with 00 Buck. Both videos are from YouTuber “Brobee223,” an avid deer hunter. In one video, the shooter is using an 18-inch 870; in the other, a 14-inch Shockwave. Ammo is Flite Control 00 in the 870, Remington Low Recoil 00 in the Shockwave.

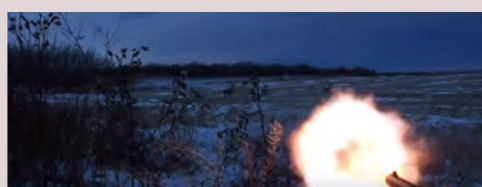
The deer are later field dressed and butchered to show the internal damage. Lots of good info. You can clearly see the deer’s reaction to the shot and then see exactly what damage was done to internal organs. You also get a good, close-up view of the recovered buckshot pellets.

Deer may not be people, but these are large does and the results are instructive.

Please note—in some cases the deer’s reaction to being shot, although hit solidly with several pellets, was to run off. They dropped dead a short distance away. This is extremely common, even when shot with powerful, major caliber rifles, right through the heart and lungs. ■

**Video 1:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=41wBr7-QQII](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41wBr7-QQII)

**Video 2:** [www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7shQkL8F04](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7shQkL8F04)



# Upcoming Classes

## June 9-10

Instructor Reunion & Conference  
Athens, GA

## June 28-30

Pistol Instructor Course  
Xenia, OH

## July 13-15

Combative Pistol  
Philadelphia, PA

## July 27-29

Northwest Tac Con  
Firearms Academy of Seattle

## August 6-8

Pistol Instructor Course  
Ripon, WI

## August 9-10

Advanced Firearms Instructor  
Ripon, WI

The 2018 Tactical Conference was a huge success. Participants came from literally all over the US, and we had 38 well-known trainers conducting two-hour and four-hour blocks of instruction on a wide array of skills.



Next year's event will be held right outside New Orleans at a fine new facility, the NOLATAC Training Center, in Avondale, Louisiana. The regular trainers will be there, plus some exciting new talent. We have a variety of new topics to present plus a challenging pistol match. If you want to attend, don't delay! The 2019 event is already 30% full. See <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-tactical-conference-2019-new-orleans-tickets-44537121730> to register.

Eventbrite



New Orleans

Be the first to post the correct answer  
in Tom's newsletter thread on the  
Rangemaster Facebook page, and you WIN!

QUIZ  
TIME!

How much  
does a single pellet  
of double-aught  
buckshot weigh?

- A. 90 grains
- B. 29 grains
- C. 66 grains
- D. 54 grains

