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RANGE • MASTER

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RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS
FOR THE REAL WORLD

Firearms Training Services

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Check Your AMMO

A couple of times in this newsletter I have written about the need to visually and physically inspect your carry/defensive ammunition for defects before loading it into your carry handgun. Ammunition manufacturers turn out millions of rounds each day, and even those with high quality control standards ship out ammunition that is out of spec and faulty. Even if you make something as simple as a steel washer, you'll make some bad ones. A centerfire cartridge actually has six component parts, much more complex than a washer.

You need to be certain each cartridge has a primer and that the primer is not damaged. Bullets should be firmly seated in the case. Cases should be without burrs on the rim, torn mouths, or bulges. This is critical. Many handgun malfunctions are caused by faulty

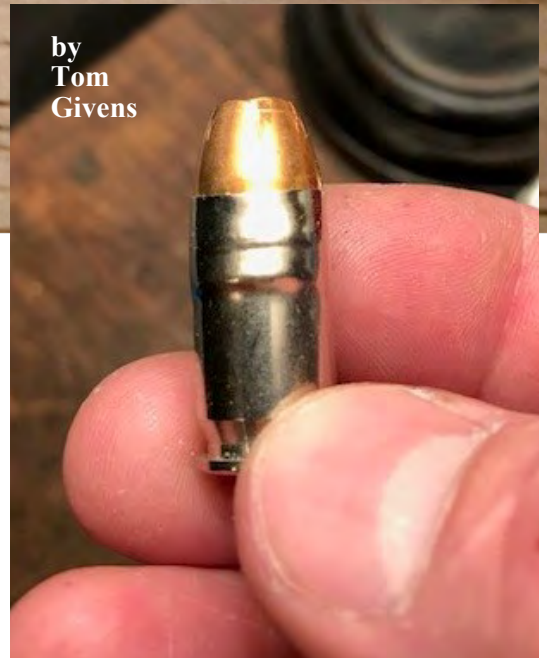
ammunition, and a quick inspection might save you a lot of pain later.

To the right is a photo of a Winchester Ranger factory .45ACP round. One of our students discovered this while loading his carry magazines. The case is badly mis-shaped just below the base of the bullet. This would likely cause a feedway stoppage if someone attempted to fire it.

Just beneath that is a photo of two .38 Special jacketed hollow point cartridges. Both have a significant burr on the rim. This is enough to keep the rounds from seating fully in the chamber, tying up a revolver completely.

Did you notice the steel washer pictured above? It, too, is out-of-spec. I don't care what you're making, when you make millions of them there will be bad specimens. ■

by
Tom
Givens



I recently attended the Rangemaster Instructor Development and Certification course held at the Xenia Police range in Xenia, Ohio. On Day 2 of the class, we did some drills focused on shooting to a cadence that helped me resolve an issue I've been dealing with personally over the past few years. Before I mention the "ah-ha moment" I had, let me clarify that the reason I carry a handgun is for personal protection or as Tom likes to say – "because I may have to shoot someone."

Shooting at the **SPEED** *of* **DECISION MAKING**

*by Bob Jewell
Rangemaster-
Certified
Instructor*

One of my struggles as a shooter focused on personal defense, has been in the area of shooting faster. A couple of training courses I've attended had tests at the end of the course that put an emphasis on shooting fast. Most of the time, I'd watch myself and other students shoot fast and miss. Misses aren't acceptable in a gunfight not only because they waste time, but because they can cause additional legal issues. When I shoot an occasional IDPA or steel match, my mindset is always to shoot the stages with no misses. You would think that might make me one of the slowest shooters, but I usually place in the top five and I'm fine with that.

My professional career involves teaching university executive education programs and one of the programs I put together and teach is on the topic of decision making. If you find yourself in the real-life situation of managing an active threat, there's going to be a lot of decision making going on in a very short amount of time - the kind of decisions that most of us aren't familiar with making. Over the past few years, I've been working to bring these two processes (making decisions and shooting faster) together in my approach to shooting.

The drill (Tom calls it the Parrot Drill) we did on cadence in the Instructors Course helped pull these two processes together for me and became my "ah-ha" moment.

Here are two terms that can get confused in shooting – cadence and split time. Though they both essentially mean the same thing (time between shots), the mental picture created by the two terms can be quite different. Cadence refers to shooting at a speed appropriate for the threat. The key elements that should determine the appropriate cadence are sight picture, size of target, distance to target, and I'm going to add - the time it takes to take in situational information and make appropriate decisions. Adding decision making to the mix is difficult to simulate on a flat range with paper/steel targets, so therefore it's often forgotten. I notice that when people talk split times, they are often talking about pure trigger speed. A drill I created for adding some decision making into a range session is a modification of the El Presidente drill. When the shooters back is turned at the start of the drill, I make one of the targets a no-shoot target or place a hostage partially over one of the targets or tighten up one of the hit zones on one of the targets. The goal is to force the shooter to make some decisions

when they turn around to shoot. I can guarantee you won't be shooting sub four second times with these modifications. Courses that involve shoot houses with shoot/no-shoot targets are another great way to add decision making into the mix.

Consider the time involved in reacting to a stimulus such as those you might encounter in an active threat situation. Reaction time involves several components; the time it takes to gather information, the time it takes to process that information, and then the time it takes to formulate and carry out an actual response. Because, as I mentioned earlier, much of that incoming information will be unfamiliar and coming in under duress this will add time to react. There have been a lot of studies done on human reaction times, including reaction times under simulated stress. The general consensus is that it takes about 0.25 – 0.35 seconds for humans to react impulsively. The key word is impulsively. Psychologists use the terms System 1 and System 2 to identify the two key parts of the brain involved in decision making. System 1 operates quickly and impulsively, while System 2 operates deliberately and analytically. System 1 isn't capable of handling complex things,

that's the responsibility of System 2. But here's the problem, System 2 requires an invitation to get involved in a decision and that invitation doesn't come from System 1 because System 1 always has an answer even if it's incorrect. I would suggest that if a gun is in your hand you don't want System 1 running the decision-making process unless you're an individual who has had a lot of experience in managing active threats and have thus built up a reliable database for System 1 to work from. Incorrect answers in a life or death situation don't sound like a good idea. When System 2 gets involved so does time. The 0.25 – 0.35 seconds will increase to up to 0.50 seconds. Shouldn't that time be considered when discussing shooting cadence. If you're shooting is focused on fast split times (and I've seen drills/tests that would required split times less than 0.20 seconds to pass), you're practicing to shoot faster than the speed of decision making. A well-respected national instructor who has been in a number of gunfights told me "anything faster

than 0.20 is likely a waste of time. A skilled shooter should be able to do 0.30, but realistically, 0.50 is a likely solid working speed when delivering solid surgical hits and solid assessment."

So, what are some things you're going to need to make decisions about in an active threat situation? Well, how the first big one – Do I need to shoot this person? Or, Do I need to continue shooting this person? What if the bad guy turns to run away or goes down after your first two shots? If you're shooting faster than you can make decisions, you'll be sending rounds downrange to a non-existent target or into the back of a fleeing target. The faster you pull the trigger, the longer it will take you to decide to stop pulling the trigger.

Though I use a timer in my practice sessions, I don't use it to measure split times. I also avoid too much emphasis on measuring draw-to-first shot times because there may be a circumstance when I might want to

draw my handgun fast, but not fire a round. If all you do is practice fast draw-to-first shot, then you're programming System 1 to repeat that impulsively in a real-life situation. It's possible that we just saw this occur in the recent convenience store parking lot shooting in Florida. When it comes to measuring time between shots, I prefer the term "cadence." Cadence should be based on the circumstances of the situation you're in and the time needed to make the appropriate decisions based on what you see happening through your eyes or through the front sight picture of your handgun. What you see and your decision making should work together to control your trigger finger. Hitting the threat should be the first requirement and doing it "as fast as possible" should be the second. You should only be pulling the trigger when you're going to get a hit. Cadence trains you to adjust your shooting based on the circumstances of the active threat and your time to think, not just your ability to pull a trigger as fast as possible. Thanks Tom for this insight! ■

YOU



**...having a total meltdown when you realize
you waited too long and Tac-Con is sold out.**



**Only a few spots left!
Last chance to register before it's too late!**
rangemaster.com/2019-tactical-conference

UPCOMING CLASSES

RANGE•MASTER

Eventbrite

OCT 12-14

Instructor Development
Course (Pistol)
Okeechobee, FL

OCT 20-21

Advanced Firearms
Instructor Course
Dallas, TX

OCT 27

Intensive Pistol (1-Day)
Beaumont, TX

OCT 28

Defensive Shotgun
(1-Day)
Beaumont, TX

NOV 2-4

Instructor Development
Course (Pistol)
Jackson, MS

DEC 1

Ed Mireles Lecture
Tampa, FL

JAN 11-13

Establishing a
Dominance Paradigm
Shawnee, OK

FEB 22-24

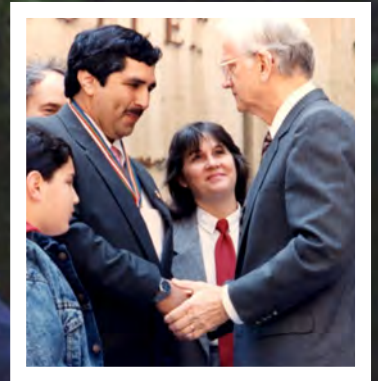
Instructor Development
Course (Pistol)
Lakeland, FL

MAR 15-17

Tactical Conference
New Orleans, LA

December 1, 2018 • Tampa, FL

Ed Mireles Lecture & Book Signing



In the past 50 years, a few incidents have caused the firearms training community to stop, re-evaluate, and revamp longstanding doctrine. The Newhall Incident (1970), the Bank of America hold-up in North Hollywood (1997), and Columbine (1999) prompted huge changes in equipment, tactics, and procedures; but many those lessons are more relevant to police than to armed private citizens.

However, the FBI firefight on April 11, 1986 in Miami offered valuable lessons for anyone who goes armed. The FBI Special Agents in this incident were in civilian clothing, riding in unmarked cars, wearing concealed handguns. Many facets of this furious gun battle parallel elements of a private citizen shooting in response to an armed robbery or car-jacking. In fact, this is the single incident with the most pertinent lessons for the armed citizen that I have ever found.

Retired Special Agent Ed Mireles was one of the FBI agents involved in that gun battle, and he was the agent who wound up killing both of the suspects, despite having been shot twice with a rifle. Ed recently published a book, *FBI Miami Firefight: Five Minutes That Changed the Bureau*. Over the years, Mireles has many times delivered an intensive lecture on this event at law enforcement academies and conferences. We are proud to announce that Ed will be conducting this exhaustive examination of this fight for an open enrollment audience on Saturday, December 1, 2018, at the Double Tree Hotel on W. Cypress Street in Tampa, Florida (just a few minutes from Tampa International Airport).

This event will begin at 11:30am with a social hour. Ed's lecture will run from 12:30pm to 5:30pm, followed by a book signing. Registration is only \$125.00 per person. To register, please see our Eventbrite page (click the logo). ■



Eventbrite

Skills Check

As I have mentioned before, I never go the range and “just shoot.” I always shoot timed/scored drills, so I can accomplish several goals. They are:

- Check to see exactly where I am, this day, on my own personal skill curve;
- Measure specific skill sets and compare to a personal baseline;
- Look for any skill subset that needs remediation; and
- Compare gun/ammo/accessory combinations to others in a measured, meaningful way.

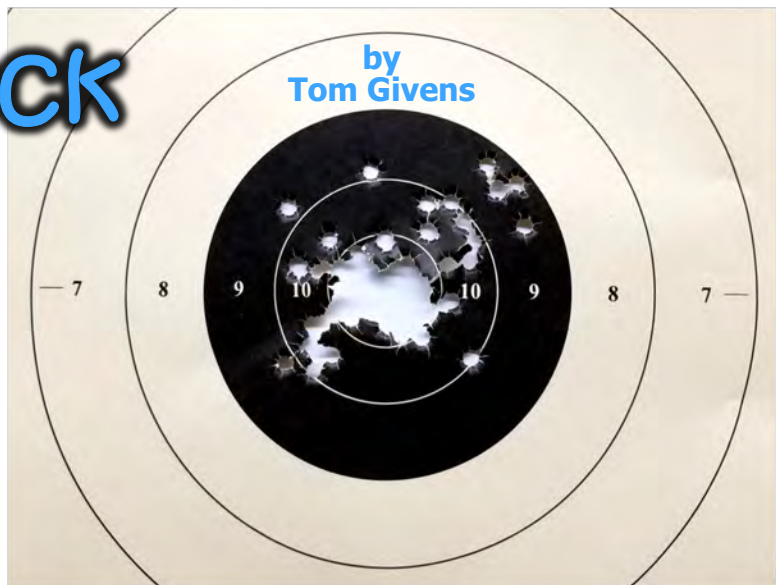
Recently I had time to go to the range for about an hour, so I shot some specific drills on B-8 bullseye targets with my EDC Glock 17, worked over by Boresight Solutions. First thing: a cold skill check. The first ten rounds were fired on the excellent Five Yard Round-Up drill. My cold run earned a score of 99 out of a possible 100. I then shot five iterations of this ten-shot drill on the same target, for 50 rounds, and a possible score of 500. My composite score was 494 (98.8%), all under the time limits.

I then moved a B-8 to 10 yards and shot “The Test” four times on the same target. “The Test” is 10 rounds, at 10 yards, in 10 seconds. My times were running in the 7.0 to 8.5 second range, with my best time being 6.72 seconds. My composite score was 395 out of 400 (98.8% again).

I then fired some rounds on a silhouette target at 7 yards, working on Failure Drills and a few shoot/reload/shoot drills. In a bit over an hour I fired 200 rounds and accomplished my training goals for the day.

Next time you go to the range try this approach. Before you go, plan what to work on and pick some drills to measure your skill, including a scored drill shot cold, no warm-up, for score. This will give you a more accurate assessment of your on-demand performance and maximize the benefit of your range trip. ■

by
Tom Givens



POP QUIZ

Be the first to post the correct answer in Tom's newsletter thread on the Rangemaster Facebook page, and you'll be this month's WINNER!

In the News...

In August of 2018, what Canada-based eCommerce platform changed its policies to forbid nearly all firearms sales on the platform?

- A) Shopify
- B) WooCommerce
- C) PayPal
- D) Square

