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September 2020 Newsletter

DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2020 we will be running a Drill of the Month in each edition of the newsletter. The goal is help motivate folks to get to the range and actually shoot their defensive weapons, and to have some fun in the process. Each month we'll post a drill or a short course of fire. You are encouraged to go to the range, shoot the drill, and then post your thoughts and a photo of your target on the Rangemaster Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/rangemaster/> .

Gunsite Pistol Standards

15 round standard skill drills, any handgun. Use RFTS-Q target, or IDPA target. Score hits inside chest ring and head ring only. Anything outside the 8" chest ring or the head ring are misses. All strings begin from the holster, except reload stage. All shots go to the chest ring except the designated head shot. Must have 100% hits to pass. Shot from open carry, not concealed.

3 yds	1 rd	Head Shot	1.5 sec
3 yds	2 rds	to body	1.5 sec
7 yds	2 rds	"	1.5 sec
10 yds	2 rds	"	2.0 sec
10 yds	2, reload, 2	from Ready	5.0 sec

15 yds 2 rds to body 3.5 sec

25 yds 2 rds to body 7.0 sec

Should have 14 hits in the chest circle and 1 hit in the head ring.
This is harder than it looks, as it requires 100% accuracy to pass.



Range Practice, and Checking Your Skill by Tom Givens

I don't get to practice nearly 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 session. During 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 often 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 10 yards. I fire 10 rounds with both hands, 5 rounds using the right hand only, and 5 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 9 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 10 yards, starting with the pistol at The Ready. First string is 10 rounds in 10 seconds, using both hands. (This is essentially what Ken Hackathorn calls "The Test".) Then, 5 rounds using the right hand only, in 10 seconds. Finally, 5 rounds using the left hand only, in 10 seconds. This time limit version is obviously more difficult, but more rewarding. My current personal best on this is 196 out of 200. On other sessions, I will use the 5 Yard Round-Up or the 5 Seconds Standards as my benchmark.

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, 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 prescribed manner at 3 yards, move the target to 5 yards, which is my usual distance for this drill.

I also use a target I made for myself, with a 3" X 5" playing card with the Ace of Spades on it. I shoot this from 5 yards, firing 5 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 2 to 2.5 seconds. From the holster, I'm usually looking for 3-3.5 seconds for 5 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 below.

Two runs through the 200 Point Warm-Up, followed by two iterations of Dot Torture, and finished up with 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.



Rangemaster Handgun Core Skills Test, Comstock Count

Use electronic timer and record the time for each stage.

3 yds Sidestep, draw, and fire 4 rds. _____

5 yds Sidestep, draw and fire 5 rds total , 4 to the chest,
1 to the head. _____

5 yds Start gun in dominant hand only, fire 4 rds. _____

5 yds Start gun in non-dominant hand, fire 5 rds. _____

7 yds Draw and fire 6 rds. _____

7 yds Start at Ready, 3 rds only in gun. Fire 3 rds, reload, and
fire 3 more rds. _____

10 yds Draw and fire 3 rds. _____

15 yds Draw and fire 4 rds. _____

25 yds Draw and fire 3 rds. _____

40 rds total. Total time _____ Target points _____

Score_____ divided by _____X 20= _____

IALEFI-QP scored 5,3,0/RFTS-Q scored 5,3,0/IDPA scored 5/2/0

Score targets. Divide points by total time, for Index. Multiply Index X 20 for Final Score. Par Score = 100.

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

“The Highwaymen”, and Ranger Captain B.M. Gault

The 2019 theatrical movie, The Highwaymen, is a stylized account of the hunt for Bonnie & Clyde, undertaken in 1934 by former Texas Ranger Captain Frank Hamer and Ranger B.M. “Maney” Gault.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Highwaymen_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Highwaymen_(film))) . If you have an interest in Depression era law enforcement techniques and equipment, I highly recommend the movie.

In addition to robbing banks and killing people, the criminal couple murdered several peace officers, incurring the wrath of the Texas law enforcement establishment. The Governor authorized the head of the Texas Department of Corrections to hire former Texas Ranger Captain Frank Hamer, a famous manhunter, to track them down. Upon accepting the job, Hamer requested Ranger B.M. Gault, who went by “Maney” to be his partner on this intensive and highly dangerous manhunt. Hamer knew Gault well from years spent together in the Texas Rangers and he knew Gault as a capable detective and a very dangerous man in perilous situations.

In the movie, Kevin Costner portrays Frank Hamer, and does a fairly good job of presenting Hamer’s quiet, dogged determination. During his lifetime, Hamer shunned publicity, and refused to talk about his 50+ gunfights in the Tex/Mex border area during the turbulent first 30 years of the 20th century.

Woody Harrelson played Gault, and this is my only real criticism of the movie. Although they appear to have made an attempt to portray Hamer fairly accurately, the character of Manny Gault in the movie is an unshaven, rumpled, drunk who is well past his prime. When asked about this in an interview, Harrelson said the Gault character was a composite of several historic Ranger personalities. That's fine, except they used Gault's name.

I feel this does Captain Gault a real dis-service, so I decided to set the record straight. On one of my frequent forays into Texas, I stopped by the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum in Waco to do some research. Attached to the museum is the Tobin and Anne Armstrong Research Center, library and archives of the Texas Rangers. There, I was able to look through Captain Gault's personnel file and get a better picture of the real B.M. Gault.



B.M. Gault joined the Texas Rangers in 1929. He was a neighbor of Frank Hamer in Austin and Hamer persuaded him to join the Texas Rangers there. In 1937 he was promoted to Sergeant and in 1938 to Captain. Captain is the highest rank in the Rangers, under their chief, called a Senior Captain. Each Captain heads up a Ranger office for a geographic area of the state of Texas. On his death in 1947, Gault was the Captain in charge of the Lubbock, Texas, district. Company C in Lubbock is responsible for 94 counties in West Texas. This is an impressive record. During the 1930's, Texas Rangers typically worked alone, sometimes with a partner, and without mobile telephones, two-way radios, and other communication devices. Once on the trail, they were completely on their own, handling investigations involving murders, kidnappings, organized



gambling and liquor operations, and other major crimes. Gault made the rank of Captain in just nine years, which indicates a dedicated, honest, and courageous lawman. I'd like to see him get the credit he deserves.

Gault died in 1947, while working on a complex murder case. Frank Hamer eulogized him as "a 23 carat man", and said there could be no truer friend.

Captain B.M. Gault (second from right, below) at Ranger Headquarters, Austin, Texas, with other Ranger leaders.



Skill Retention

One of the goals of practice is to deeply ingrain correct responses, so they can be called upon in an emergency. It takes a lot of repetition, over many months, to automate the skills we need with the handgun.

Last September, Lynn took a nasty fall and broke her right wrist very badly (she is right handed). She now has two metal plates and nine screws in her right wrist, and had to undergo months of healing and therapy to get back to normal. She was unable to shoot from last September, until this June, a lay-off of ten months.

In June, she was finally able to join me for a training trip to KR Training in Texas. Lynn helped me teach a Combative Pistol Course, and although her wrist is not yet up to taking a full class, she jumped on the line and shot about 200 rounds on day one and another 60 or so on day two, before she had to quit. On day two, we shot the 5 Yard Round-Up drill. Lynn shot a score of 99 out of 100 on this difficult, demanding drill, cold. That is a testament to the amount of time, ammo, and effort she had previously put into building and cementing her pistol skills. Make time to practice, both in dry practice and live-fire sessions. Thousands of repetitions build skill that can be retained at a useful level when circumstances force us to drop out of training for some length of time.



My Favorite Snub, by Tom Givens

I own a number of revolvers, including hunting guns, service revolvers in 4", 5", and 6" barrel lengths, and several snubs. My favorite is a well worn Model 12 "Airweight" K frame .38 Special with a few personal touches. This, to me, is the ultimate snub.

Right after World War II, the US military was briefly interested in lighter weight handguns. This led Colt to come up with the Lightweight Commander, an aluminum framed, slightly more compact version of the Government Model. This gun, along with several others, were submitted for trials, but the Army decided that 3.5 million 1911's in inventory made a handgun switch undesirable. Colt went commercial with the gun, and it is still in production today.

As part of this project, Colt introduced the Cobra in 1950. This was an aluminum framed version of the old faithful Detective Special, and it immediately became a success commercially. The Air Force, looking for ever lighter equipment for crews of the newfangled jet aircraft, asked for a super lightweight revolver. Colt responded with the "Aircrewman" revolver, essentially a Cobra with an aluminum cylinder, dropping the gun's weight to a mere 11 ounces. Smith & Wesson countered with an all aluminum version of the M&P. Both the Colt and the S&W were scrapped, due to problems with the aluminum cylinders. Even with very low powered ammo, the aluminum cylinders were subject to cracking and failure, so most of these guns were recalled and destroyed.

Smith and Wesson decided to offer the gun with an aluminum frame but steel cylinder to the public in 1954, and it instantly became a hit with detectives and others who wanted a lighter weight revolver that still held six shots and had a grip frame large enough to get a proper grip on. The new gun was called the Military & Police Airweight. In 1957, the model numbering system came on board, and the revolver was designated the Model 12.

The Model 12 has been offered in several variations, including 2" and 4" barrels, and either round butt or square butt configuration. I own several, and I really like them. One of my favorites is a 4" barrel, round butt model. The action has been slicked up, and a red ramp front sight insert installed.

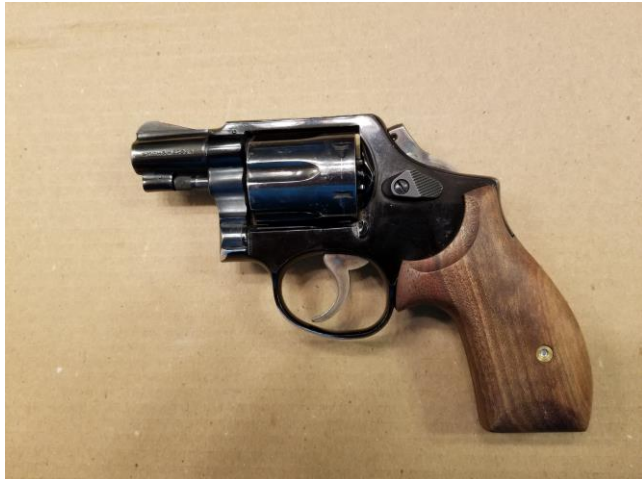
There is also a bright horizontal line beneath the red ramp insert, for longer range. This gun sports an old Pachmayr grip adaptor and factory stocks, and is a great carry gun for someone who prefers a revolver.

My real favorite, though, is a slightly customized 2" round butt specimen. It sports Grashorn American elk antler stocks and a Tyler grip adaptor. The action has been slicked up, and converted to double-action only. The chamber mouths are slightly chamfered, to ease reloading, and the cylinder latch has been replaced with one that clears speedloaders. At 19 ounces, this little gem weighs less than a steel frame Chief's Special, but holds 6 shots and has sights I can see. It actually shoots like a service revolver, but with a very compact, lightweight, handy sidearm. Mine shoots Federal Gold Match wadcutters extremely well, right to the sights, so that is what I feed it.

The Model 12 has gone through some evolution during its long production history. A couple of the changes were very beneficial, so if you find a later production sample you'll have the very best in this type of revolver. In 1962, the front sight was changed from the old, narrow 1/10th inch width to 1/8th inch, which made it much more visible. Early Model 12's have a slightly narrower grip frame than other K frame guns, so standard stocks won't fit. In 1984, the grip frame was changed to match all other K frames, making a much wider selection of stock designs available. The photos show several stock design options for the later model guns.

Good, solid Model 12's can be found on the used market with just a little effort. I think you'll find obtaining one worth the time.





UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct 9-11 Firearms Instructor Development, Pistol, Nashville, TN, Royal Range indoor center

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-90267248771>

Oct 16-17 Intensive Pistol Skills, Florence, SC

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/intensive-pistol-skills-south-carolina-tickets-65074432379>

Oct 18 Defensive Shotgun, one day format, Florence, SC

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/rangemaster-defensive-shotgun-one-day-south-carolina-tickets-65073901792>

Oct 23-25 Instructor Development Course, Pistol, Red Hill Range, Martin, GA

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-69907841235>

Nov 13-15 Instructor Development Course, pistol, Casa Grande, AZ

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-84653690467>

Rangemaster Tactical Conference, March 26-28, 2021, Dallas, Texas, Dallas Pistol Club

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tactical-conference-2021-dallas-tickets-100629329032>

The annual Tactical Conference is the premiere training event of the year. Over 40 well known trainers will conduct tracks on handgun, shotgun, edged and impact weapons, empty hands skills, emergency medicine, personal tactics, legal issues, and more. There are as many as nine or ten concurrent tracks, with three days packed with training and networking. This event fills several months in advance every year, so don't procrastinate.

Trainers for 2021 include Tom & Lynn Givens, Massad Ayoob, Southnarc, William Aprill, John Hearne, John Farnam, Chris Cerino, Gabe White, Karl Rehn, John Holschen, Cecil Burch, Paul Sharp, Scott Jedlinski, Wayne Dobbs, Darryl Bolke, Caleb Causey, and many, many more.

For videos from past conferences, see

<https://taccon.info/videos/>



Tactical Conference Ladies' Shoot-Off, 2018 (above)



Tatiana Whitlock teaching in classroom, Tac Con 2019



Dallas Pistol Club, host location, Tac Con 2021