

Student Involved Incident #51



Monday evening, at 10:40 p.m., we had the 51st self defense incident involving a Rangemaster student that we know of. This one occurred in an upscale area in the Southeast part of the county, just outside the Memphis city limits.

The male resident had just arrived home, exited his car, and was walking up the sidewalk to his home when he was accosted by two armed robbery suspects. A struggle ensued, during which the homeowner was shot in the thigh by one of the suspects. The homeowner's wife was at the front door to greet her husband, and saw the attack. She ran upstairs, got her handgun, opened the bedroom window and engaged the suspects with several shots from the window. She hit one suspect, and both fled.

The homeowner was taken to a local hospital and treated. About 1:00am, police received a call from Delta Medical Hospital on Getwell about a male with a gunshot wound. He was positively identified by the victim as one of the robbers, and was arrested and transferred to the jail unit at the Med. The second suspect was still at large at the time of the police report.

Comments:

1. Both the homeowner and his wife have been through training here. The wife's ability to engage the suspects likely saved her husband's life. Had she not intervened he probably would have been shot more.
2. The victim owns several businesses, including a couple of convenience stores in Hickory Hill. It appears he was followed home, and possibly deliberately targeted on the theory that he would be carrying the store's cash. Be alert, and as you draw near your home or other destination, check your rear view mirrors! If you have made some turns and the same vehicle is right behind you, don't go home.
3. Practice! Not all defensive shootings involve a suspect a few feet away. In this instance, the wife had to shoot past her husband from the second floor window, without hitting him.



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The Evolution of FBI Firearms Training/Qualification Courses

by Tom Givens

As the de facto “National Police Force” that J. Edgar Hoover visualized 75 years ago, the FBI often sets trends that echo throughout law enforcement in the United States. One area, in particular, where the Bureau tends to set trends is the realm of firearms training. Historically, local US police agencies have often copied whatever the FBI was currently doing in terms of issued weapons and qualification courses of fire. For instance, a couple of state police organizations had converted from revolvers to autopistols by the mid-1980’s, but it took the FBI’s switch in the late 80’s to cause a wholesale change over to autos, in a very few years, throughout American policing.

The FBI has had a similar impact on handgun qualification courses of fire. In 1949, the Bureau adopted the Practical Pistol Course (PPC) for combat handgun training and qualification for Special Agents. This was a distinct step forward from the bullseye shooting normally done up until that time. The word “practical” was used to denote that the new course involved the actual shooting skills agents needed in gunfights, such as drawing from the holster, shooting rapidly, reloading under time pressure, and shooting from positions other than standing upright. The original PPC included prone firing from 60 yards, and had shooters advancing downrange on their own, while other, slower, shooters were still firing from the longer distances. Most existing police pistol ranges were set up for bullseye shooting, with fixed firing lines at 25 and 50 yards, and they were not set up for individual movement downrange safely, so by the early 1950’s, the PPC was modified to meet these needs. For the Bureau, and many, many US police agencies, the new PPC became the standard for the next 35 years.

This trend was accelerated by the fact that the National Rifle Association (NRA) adopted the new PPC as the basis for law enforcement shooting competition, calling it by the same PPC initials, but giving it the name Police Pistol, Combat. Since the NRA trains and certifies most of the law enforcement firearms instructors in the US, the PPC quickly became the standard for police handgun training. The course of fire was originally shot on the old Colt silhouette, but later the B-27 was designed and adopted, as shooting techniques and equipment improved, making too many perfect scores on the old Colt target. The basic 60 round PPC from the 1950’s through the 1980’s was as follows:

7 yards Draw and fire 6 rounds, reload, and fire 6 more rounds, all in 25 seconds.

25 yards Draw and fire 6 rounds Standing, no support, in 12 seconds.

50 yards Draw and fire 6 rounds from Prone, reload and fire 6 rounds from Kneeling, reload, stand and fire 6 rounds from the left side of a barricade, reload, and fire 6 rounds from the right side of a barricade, all in 2 minutes and 45 seconds.

25 yards Draw and fire 6 rounds from Kneeling, reload, fire 6 rounds from standing, left side barricade, reload, fire 6 rounds right side barricade, all in 90 seconds.

In the late 1980’s, the FBI made a strong push to modernize its firearms practices, starting with the switch from revolvers to semiautomatic pistols. Along with this change came a new target, the “Q” simplified silhouette target, and a new course of fire, the PQC (Pistol Qualification Course). The 50 yard stage of the PPC was eliminated, and shooting at 5 yards was substituted. In simple terms, the 50 round PQC looked like this:

25 yards On signal, draw and fire 3 rds standing right side barricade, drop to kneeling and fire 6 rds, drop to prone and fire 6 rds, come up to standing and fire 3 rds standing left side barricade, all in 75 seconds.

15 yards On signal, run from the 25 yard line to the 15 yard line, stop, draw and fire 2 rounds in 6 seconds. From the ready, fire 2 rounds in 3 seconds on command, 4 times.

7 yards On signal, run from the 15 yard line to the 7 yard line, stop, draw, fire 6 rounds, reload, and fire 6 more rounds, all in 15 seconds.

5 yards On signal, step forward from the 7 yard line to the 5 yard line, draw, fire 5 rounds dominant hand only, reload, and fire 5 rounds using the non-dominant hand only, in 15 seconds.

A hit anywhere on the Q target counts as 2 points, so the possible score was 100. A score of 80 or better was required to qualify for field agents, 90% for firearms instructors.

The PQC remained the standard from the late 1980's until this year. Agents were supposed to re-qualify on this course four times per year (once each 90 days), in order to maintain their skills. This is a good bit more skill maintenance shooting practice than most law enforcement officers receive, with shooting once or twice per year far more common among local and state police agencies.

In 2009, the FBI undertook once again to modernize and upgrade the pistol qualification, to make the shooting skills that are reinforced be more in line with the type of shootings plain clothes investigators are likely to face. One improvement was the change from the Q target to a modified version that cuts off at the diaphragm, instead of extending down into the pelvic region. Also, the QIT-99TCA target has the new hit zone shaded into a graphic target, that is a photo illustration of a man pointing a gun at the agent. The new target is a vast improvement over the Q target. Also, the new course has to be shot from concealment, since that is how agents are armed 90% of the time. The new course was designated the PQC-09 (Pistol Qualification Course, 2009) and is being phased into field training for FBI agents all over the country. The new course is as follows:

3 yards Draw and fire 3 rounds using the dominant hand only, switch the gun to the non-dominant hand and fire 3 rds with that hand only, all in 8 seconds.

5 yards Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds. This is done 3 times.

7 yards Draw and fire 4 rounds in 4 seconds. Do this 2 times.

7 yards Start with 1 round in the gun. Draw and fire 1 round, perform an empty gun reload, and fire 5 more rounds, all in 8 seconds.

15 yards Start at the Ready. On signal, fire 3 rounds in 5 seconds. This is done 3 times.

25 yards Draw and fire 4 rounds Standing, drop to Kneeling and fire 4 rounds, drop to Prone and fire 4 rounds, all in 50 seconds. Shooter must reload during the string.

This again makes a 50 round course, with 2 points per hit in the QIT vital area, with an 80% minimum passing score. This is a fairly relevant test of defensive shooting skills. Rangemaster adopted this course, with a 90% minimum score for candidates in our Instructor Courses, starting in October, 2009.



The following After Action Report (AAR) was written by a student in the Three Day Firearms Instructor Development & Certification Course we conducted in Oklahoma City, OK, in October, 2009.

AAR on Tom Givens 3-Day Instructor Course

I have had a few classes with Tom now and can say that he is without a doubt the best handgun instructor that I've trained under! With that said, I was anxiously awaiting this class.

The class was held at H&H Gun Range (www.hhgunrange.com) in Oklahoma City, OK and this would be the first time that Tom had held this class outside of his home range in Memphis, TN (www.rangemaster.com). The instructors were Tom Givens, Lynn Givens (Tom's lovely bride), and John Hearne.

Day One

The class was to begin at 0900, however, we all showed up around 0830 and went in to get our seats in the classroom. Tom assigned seats and three man teams for all 18 of us. Tom then started the class with an intro of instructors, material, guidelines for the class, and his expectations for each student. It was then that it really hit me that this class was going to be tough and much different than any other class I've attended.



We were supplied a 170 page workbook (that is worth the price of class in itself) and advised that all of the questions on the written test could be found in the workbook and we would need to study the book during homework hours. Tom then lectured for a few hours and to say that he knows his stuff is an understatement!! It is best summed up by a comment said by the instructor I assist at H&H while we were on our first break, "Two hours ago I thought I was an instructor, now I know what one is!". I believe this was the sentiment shared by the entire class.

From the classroom we went to the range, as the shooting part of the class was to prove tough as well. There were very different skill levels from the students. We stayed in our three man teams; one shooting, while one coached the shooter, and the other coached the coach. We would cycle through this quite a bit that day.

The shooting part of the class was very fun for me as that is the part I do well. Some of the students were struggling, but everyone's skills rose that day. However, with two coach's looking on, you could not help but improve.

So back to the classroom for more lecture and Power Point presentations. Tom then gave each team their presentation assignments to be performed on the last day. Each team would have to present an hour's worth of material, with each member using a visual training aid and doing part of the presentation.

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We were dismissed for the evening about 6:30 p.m. or so and my team went to a spare classroom to discuss our presentation. There would be very little socializing this weekend. My wife went to get us dinner and we worked until they ran us out of the range at 9:00 p.m., then off to the house to do homework.

Day Two

This day was much of the same, spending more time in the classroom with great lectures from Tom and incredible Power Point displays from John. We went over the workbook and received our reading assignments for that night. Then off to the range where Tom continued to coach the class. One thing Tom has done in every class I've had with him is admonish us to do non-shooting tasks quickly and shoot carefully!!!!



We shot Tom's qualifications course of fire, along with the FBI Instructor qualification course of fire. They were both very tough with Tom's target being the harder of the two, in my opinion. We also shot some of Tom's "odd" guns, which included everything from Lorcins, to old Colts, and one pink grip 25 ACP that Eric traded his CZ 75 for!! LOL All of the students did much better this day, but a few were still struggling with the 25 yard part of the shooting.

Back to the classroom for more lecture and Power Point and class let out about 5:30 p.m. that day. My team settled on our training aids and what each of us would cover, so we went to dinner and then back to H&H to work on our presentation.

A good friend of mine attending the class was struggling with the 25 yard shooting with his Glock 34. So I left dinner a bit early and helped him with his shooting. We made a good breakthrough on his trigger finger placement. He had to move it out to the tip, as his hands are a bit small for the Glock and the result was good center hits at 25 yards.

On to join my team and get our Instructor and Student Handout finished (thanks to our wives for making it look presentable). At this point, I would like to recommend that you have a laptop for the handouts, taking notes - whatever. We did several demo presentations and critiqued each other, until they ran us out of the range at 9:00 p.m. Then off to the house or hotel for our homework..

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Day 3

This is it! The last day and all three tests lay ahead.. However, my Strep Throat infection was back with a vengeance and I felt horrible!! Just my luck!!

An early stop for supplies for our training aids and

then off to the H&H. My team met early in the classroom to set up our training aids.

Tom gave us some final coaching and then two teams (including mine) were off to the range to shoot the qualifications drills - cold. We did the FBI qualification drill twice and Tom's course once.

My shooting took a nose dive that day, probably the combination of feeling awful, the stress of shooting with your peers, and the fact that this one was for the record books. The stress of those situations is something I'll have to continue to work on, as it turned out to be my worst performance of the weekend.

Over 50% of the class shot the FBI test clean, but no one shot Tom's qualification course clean!!

While the other teams were shooting, we took this time to drill on the written test and review the work book.

After all the teams had shot, we did our presentations team by team. This was very stressful for some, while others were right at home. We had several instructors from not only TDSA, but the Oklahoma Highway Patrol and these guy's really showed the class that they are consummate professionals!

I was the first to get to do the presentation (thanks Tom!). My throat was so sore I could hardly swallow and talking was painful. Of all times to be sick, this would be it!! However, no luck for me today and there's no place to hide while you're in front of the class. After each team finished their presentation, Tom would ask the class for positive and negative comments and there would be a short discussion on each.

John then did a very good Power Point presentation on the criminal element and the parallels of their lives and ours. This was very scary stuff and some of the statistics were very startling. The one thing that stood out to me was the gang members' understanding that they would end up in



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prison and the worse stuff they do to get there, the higher their status would be once incarcerated. John had several other Power Points, which were worth the price of admission.

Then the worst part of the class, the written test. For the last three days, Tom had told us that only two people have ever scored 100 on the test and that all the answers are in the workbook. Well, I so wish I would have spent more time in the workbook!! My test score reflected this even though I passed, but by my standards I did a poor job.

Tom then did a presentation on the history of firearms and ammo that I found very interesting!! The Power Point quiz on the firearms was very good and I knew a few, but not that many of the old ones. This was very good stuff and Tom said, from a customer point of view, we are "experts", thus we should know how all the "odd" guns work. This definitely reinforced the point he had made before when we were shooting the "odd" guns.

Tom had the scores for the class and gave each of us our certificates. He then gave away the "Top Gun" award to Eric Stacy. Way to go man..., this was a combination of all the test scores and they had to add in an extra qualification course score to get a winner, the class was that tight!!

This was by far the hardest class I've ever attended! If you decide to come to this class expect to work hard and shoot harder!

I highly recommend this class, if you have any desire to teach or if you just want a better understanding of how to teach.

Needless to say, I've now got my spot reserved for Tom's advanced instructor class.

Hope to see you on the range soon!!

Spencer Keepers

Oklahoma City

We will be conducting this course several times in 2010, in various locations. For more information, or to register, contact Lynn Givens at rangemaster.lynn@gmail.com or call her at 901-370-5600.

April 9-11, 2010- Woodbury, GA, about an hour and a half south of Atlanta

April 30-May 2, 2010- Culpeper, VA, an hour south of Washington, DC

August 6-8, 2010- Rangemaster, Memphis, TN

Fall, 2010 (date TBA later)- Oklahoma City, OK



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"To ban guns because criminals use them is to tell the innocent and law-abiding that their rights and liberties depend not on their own conduct, but on the conduct of the guilty and the lawless, and that the law will permit them to have only such rights and liberties as the lawless will allow... For society does not control crime, ever, by forcing the law-abiding to accommodate themselves to the expected behavior of criminals. Society controls crime by forcing the criminals to accommodate themselves to the expected behavior of the law-abiding."

-Jeff Snyder, author