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# RANGEMASTER

DEFENSIVE TACTICS  
FOR THE REAL WORLD

*Firearms Training Services*

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The Force Science Institute recently reported on a study conducted by several researchers who used the Dallas Police Department as an example of a modern, big city police department's firearms training and field performance. The researchers were shocked at how poorly the DPD officers did in actual shootings in the field, a reaction generally shared by members of the public at large when they find out how dismal typical police

number of these involved multiple officers, so to get a better picture of individual performance, the researchers discarded those and looked only at incidents in which a single officer fired at a single suspect. They found 149 OIS's that met that criterion.

They looked at hit rates in two ways, "incident level" and "bullet level." On an "incident level" basis, they found that officers got at least one hit, regardless of the number of rounds fired, in about 54% of

the shootings, just barely over half of the time.

However, on a "bullet level" basis, they found that out of 354 shots fired, there was only a 35% hit rate. One half of all officers missed with every shot they fired, including one officer who fired 23 misses and no hits. This means that six out of every ten shots fired was a miss. How does this happen?

Let's look at this "amount — and quality — of firearms training" in Dallas, which is actually a very representative sample. Officers qualify with their firearms once per year. That's right, once. The course of fire they "qualify" on is a joke,



## Modern POLICE TRAINING:

performance with firearms really is, as opposed to the Hollywood movie/TV version of how cops shoot.

The mindset of the researchers can be summed up by this quote from their study: "although the amount- and quality- of firearms training received by officers over the last century has improved considerably, there appears to have been little improvement in shooting accuracy." Implicit in that quote is an assumption that today's officers get a lot of firearms training, and that the training received effectively prepares them for armed conflict. Wrong!

First, their findings. From 2003-2017 the Dallas Police Department had 231 Officer Involved Shootings (OIS). A

## Unrealistic Expectations

by Tom Givens

essentially a sobriety test for anyone with any skill at all with a gun. I, or any other competent private sector trainer, could take a brand new shooter, with no prior training or experience, and have them pass this course of fire at the end of one day of range training. DPD officers receive “firearms training” once every two years, consisting of 50-100 rounds of firing in exercises and scenarios. That’s it.

Now, let’s take someone who does not know how to drive a car. We’ll give them a few days of driving instruction, but only at very low speed in the empty parking lot, with no traffic. They will then not drive at all for a year. After a year, we’ll have them drive the car from Point A to

Point B on the parking lot, again with no traffic. Then, again no more driving once they leave the lot. Some nine months after that, they will be directed to respond to a life threatening crisis by jumping in a car and roaring off at 120 miles per hour on an expressway filled with traffic. Think they would do well? That’s exactly what DPD does with their officers when it comes to firearms.

The bottom line is, most police departments don’t care if their officers can shoot well. They don’t care about the officers’ welfare nor about the public’s safety. “Qualification” once per year has been consistently held to be inadequate by U.S. courts, yet it is still the standard in many areas.

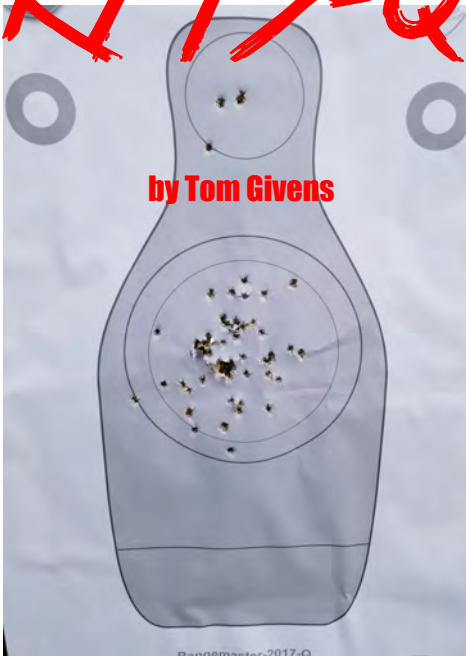
“Training” every two years is criminally negligent, but that’s “good enough” for these agencies.

Learn from this example. Whether you are a law enforcement officer, or Joe Citizen with a carry permit, the agency you work for or who issued your license is NOT responsible for your life. You are! Seek out competent training. Make time for relevant practice. Handle your emergency life saving equipment often enough to obtain and maintain proficiency with it. Remember that recency trumps almost everything in retention of motor skills, so get to the range more than once a year. One day you may be very glad you “exceeded the mandated standard.” ■



## Rangemaster Silhouette Target:

The RFTS-Q



I am often asked about the target we use in our training courses. The RFTS-Q silhouette is printed by Action Target and is available directly from them. Go to <https://shop.actiontarget.com>, then in the search bar enter RFTS-Q. In quantities of 100-499, they cost 29 cents apiece.

I designed this target to accomplish a number of specific tasks. First, the target is a light gray, neutral color. We need to avoid stark black or white silhouettes. The scoring rings are subdued, making them hard to see at distance, or once you shift visual focus to the front sight. We want you to learn to hit the upper chest without glaring scoring rings, which are often absent on real adversaries. There is a belt line across the lower torso. This helps train the students to keep the gun low enough at The Ready to be able to see a suspect’s waistline, where weapons normally come from.

In the upper chest of the target, there is an eight-inch circle that is located to correspond to the vital area of a man, from the collarbone to the diaphragm and inside the nipples. There is a secondary, ten-inch circle. In the head is a 4-inch circle approximating the ocular window, the area behind the eyes and nose that a pistol bullet can reliably penetrate. Above both shoulders of the silhouette are smaller zero circles.

This target allows us to use one silhouette for a multitude of drills. If you don’t count hits below the belt, the silhouette matches the FBI QIT target used for their qualification course. Thus, we can use the same target for the FBI qualification

course and our various qualification courses. Having the chest ring, head ring and zero circles, we can use this target for the “Parrot Drill” and other variations of timing/cadence work. By simply adding the DT-2A target for the Casino Drill and B-8 bullseyes for precision work, we can carry a manageable number of targets to road classes.

If you want to check your own skill level by shooting the Rangemaster Instructor Qualification Course or The Core Skills Test, you need these targets. Firing those courses on other targets do not really give you an “apples to apples” comparison. Order a few and check them out. ■

The beginning of a new year is a good time to remind ourselves of the responsibility that goes with being armed. Please review these safety rules and insist that those around you follow them religiously.

# UNIVERSAL FIREARMS SAFETY RULES

- 1 TREAT EVERY GUN AS IF IT IS FULLY LOADED.** Before you can clean it, tinker with it, or show it to a buddy, you must clear it first. If you want to shoot it, shoot it. If you want to do anything else with it, clear it first.
- 2 NEVER POINT A GUN AT ANYTHING YOU ARE NOT WILLING TO DESTROY.** Keep up with where your gun is pointed, at all times. If the firearm is in your hands, you must be constantly and acutely aware of the muzzle. If you don't need the gun in your hands, sling it (long gun) or holster it (pistol).
- 3 KEEP YOUR FINGER OFF THE TRIGGER AND IN REGISTER UNTIL YOUR SIGHTS ARE ON THE TARGET.** Pressure on the trigger is what causes the gun to fire. Keep your finger indexed well away from the trigger, in a consistent location, as far from the trigger as you can manage comfortably, unless you want the gun to fire. Gun on target = finger on trigger. Gun off target = finger off trigger.
- 4 ALWAYS BE CERTAIN OF YOUR TARGET AND WHAT IS BEYOND IT AND AROUND IT.** Know what you are shooting at and why. You must also be aware of what is around and beyond your target. This is doubly critical when using multiple projectile ammunition (buckshot).

The pistol is worn in a secure holster with a covered trigger guard. The shotgun is not worn in this manner. Therefore, on the range, when not in use the shotgun will be unloaded, action open, and if laid down, ejection port facing upward. When moving the shotgun to/from the firing line, the action will be open, fingers inside the ejection port, muzzle high and straight up. Handguns will simply remain holstered at all times they are not actively in use.

Safety is your personal responsibility. These are real guns and real ammunition, so keep your head in the game and be switched on. Your first screw-up could cost someone his life, so screw-ups are not acceptable. The two most common causes of unintentional shootings are **IGNORANCE** and **CARELESSNESS**. You must learn safe and proper gun-handling and then follow the rules, religiously. ■

# UPCOMING CLASSES

Sign up today at [www.eventbrite.com/o/tom-givens-6762296023](http://www.eventbrite.com/o/tom-givens-6762296023)

## January 11-13

Establishing a  
Dominance Paradigm  
Shawnee, OK  
(SOLD OUT)

## January 25-27

Firearms Instructor  
Development Course (Pistol)  
Homestead, FL

## February 22-25

Firearms Instructor  
Development Course  
Lakeland, FL

## March 15-17

Tactical Conference  
New Orleans, LA  
(SOLD OUT)

## April 12

Defensive Revolver  
Athens, GA

## April 13-14

Advanced Instructor  
Course  
Athens, GA

## April 26

Defensive Shotgun  
Lincoln, TX

## April 27-28

Intensive Pistol Skills  
Lincoln, TX

## May 4-5

Rangemaster Instructor Reunion, Lincoln, TX

Eventbrite



SAVE  
THE  
DATE



Introducing...

## DRILL of the MONTH

by Tom Givens

Starting this month, throughout 2019 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, then post your thoughts and a photo of your target on the Rangemaster Facebook page. Each month, I will randomly select one of the posts and award the shooter a

**\$25.00 discount certificate** to use toward the purchase of a Rangemaster book, DVD, or training course.

The January version is as follows. We're going to combine two drills from vetted trainers, to cover a broad

spectrum of baseline handgun skills. You will need one B-8 repair center for a target. You will need 20 rounds of ammunition. Your handgun is to be worn concealed. This will be shot in two phases, at 5 yards and at 10 yards.

### Phase One:

#### Justin Dyal's

### 5-Yard Round-Up

All strings are at 5 yards, and the time limit every time is 2.5 seconds. Hits outside the 7-ring count as misses. Deduct 10 points for any shot fired over time. Use an electronic timer or have someone time you with a stopwatch.

**1** Draw and fire 1 round, both hands, from concealed carry.

**2** From the Ready: Fire 4 rounds, using both hands

**3** From the Ready: Fire 3 rounds using the dominant hand only

**4** From the Ready: Fire 2 rounds using the non-dominant hand only

### Phase Two:

#### Ken Hackathorn's

### The Test

Move to 10 yards. Start at The Ready. On signal, fire 10 rounds in 10 seconds.

This makes a total of 20 rounds, for a maximum possible score of 200. This simple 20-shot course measures an accurate shot from a concealed draw; shooting quickly, but accurately; and

shooting with one hand, with either hand. The 10-yard stage measures your ability to follow through quickly and get solid hits at two car lengths under time pressure. This is a pretty good all around skill check, with just 20 rounds of ammunition.

I would prefer this drill be shot cold, for the most accurate assessment of your current skill level. I tried it recently, and shot 198 out of 200, for a 99% score. Let's see your target!

By the way, all of my dropped points were earned while shooting with my dominant hand only. I have nerve damage in my right hand (I'm right handed), and I'm struggling to shoot well with that hand. How do we know where our weaknesses lie and what we need to do to work around them? We test, by shooting standardized, relevant drills, like this one. Good shooting! ■



Over the past 50 years there have been a number of incidents that caused the firearms training community to stop, re-evaluate and revamp training doctrine, weapons and tactics. The Newhall Incident (1970), the Bank of America hold-up in North Hollywood (1997), and Columbine (1999) caused huge changes in law enforcement equipment, tactics and procedures. However, many of those lessons are most relevant to law enforcement officers, not the armed private citizen.

On April 11, 1986, however, the FBI firefight in Miami contained numerous lessons for anyone who goes armed. The FBI Special Agents in this incident were in plain civilian clothing, riding in unmarked cars, wearing concealed handguns. Most of the shooting took place with anywhere from 6-8 feet to two car lengths separating the combatants. 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 found.

Retired Special Agent Ed Mireles was one of the FBI agents involved in that gun battle, and was the agent who, despite being shot twice with a rifle himself, wound up killing both of the suspects. 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. On December 1, Rangemaster was honored to host Mireles for an intensive five hour presentation on this gunfight in a classroom in Tampa. We had attendees from as far away as Wisconsin and California, and Ed gave a signed copy of his book to each member of the audience. Mireles is an engaging speaker, and his presentation included numerous crime scene photos and other evidence. If you get a chance to attend one of Ed's lectures, I highly recommend going.

Ed's book contains many of the same photos, plus a blow-by-blow account of the fight, in first person, by one of the main participants. Highly recommended! His book can be purchased at <https://edmireles.com>. ■

Happy New Year!

POP QUIZ

WHO SAID IT?

"I would like to see every woman know how to handle guns as naturally as they know how to handle babies."

- A) Ronna McDaniel
- B) Eleanor Roosevelt
- C) Dana Loesch
- D) Annie Oakley

Do you know who said these words? Be the first to post the correct answer in Tom's newsletter thread on the Rangemaster Facebook page, and

YOU WIN!

facebook

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