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DEFENSIVE TACTICS
FOR THE **REAL** WORLD

Firearms Training Services
MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

the tactical conference is going

DARC



March 17-19, 2017

Little Rock, AR

The year 2017 marks a milestone in the nearly 20-year history of the Rangemaster Tactical Conference. We have partnered with the Direct Action Resource Center (DARC) just outside of Little Rock, Arkansas, for this major event. DARC is a huge training complex with a 20-year history of training military Spec Ops and police SWAT personnel. There are multiple ranges and other features that will make this a unique training event. There are many hotels nearby in Little Rock and North Little Rock and the Little Rock Airport is near.

All of the usual trainers will be presenting various topics, along with a couple of new faces. We will have live-fire training with handgun, shotgun, and carbine, plus knife

work, medical training, and much more. We will also have the Polite Society Defensive Pistol Match running concurrently with the training.

To register online or with a check by mail, go to www.rangemaster.com and click on the 2017 Tactical Conference banner. Be sure to register early to avoid disappointment. The 2016 event was in March, but was sold out by late October, five months in advance. We had to turn away dozens of participants who waited too late to register. And as of April 28th, over 60% of the 2017 slots have already been filled! Space is strictly limited, and once we're full, that's it. —Tom Givens ■

Eventbrite

In a recent gun magazine, there was an article proposing that drawing a handgun to a one-handed shooting position was “instinctive,” and therefore we should be training students to do so as a default technique. Ordinarily, I resist the temptation to respond to this type of article, but this one really irked me.

First, I checked my trusty dictionary. It gives the primary definition of “instinct” as “an inborn pattern of activity and response common to a given biological stock.” Since handguns have only been around 500 years (the blink of an eye in geologic or biologic terms), there is obviously no instinctive way to handle a gun, or any other mechanical device. We have to teach people to drive cars, because there is no instinctive mental model for that activity. We have to teach them how to operate a computer, as there is no instinctive mental model for that activity. The same applies to firearms.



Rangemaster teaches a large number of private citizens each year. Most have little or no prior experience with handguns before we get them. Each year we have several students involved in defensive gunplay, and they always win. At the National Tactical Invitational a few years ago, I presented a power point presentation on ten shootings involving civilian students. These were simply a representative sampling, showing certain trends. Among other items of interest was the fact that in these ten self-defense shootings against armed criminal attackers, the students fired a total of 38 shots and scored a total of 36 hits. That is a 95% hit ratio. This astonishingly high hit ratio came from two-handed, eye-level, accurate fire.

One of those shootings is extremely instructional. It occurred inside a convenience store, with the surveillance cameras rolling. The

entire fight was captured in good quality color video, from two angles, so there is no guess work involved in seeing what happened and how it happened. In brief, an armed robber entered the store and walked toward the clerk. As he got near, he drew a large handgun from underneath the waistband of a hoodie. The clerk quickly sidestepped to the left, presented a 9mm handgun, in both hands, to eye level, and fired one shot, which struck the suspect in the upper chest. The suspect bent over and hobbled out of the store to a waiting getaway car, again seen on the outside cameras. The thug never got off a shot.

The most interesting thing about this episode to me is the fact that the student involved was a 53-year-old Thai immigrant female who had never touched a gun prior to receiving training at Rangemaster, less than two months prior to this shooting. There is no gun culture in

Thailand, and this lady was a blank slate when we trained her. This was a classic, close range, reactive, surprise gunfight, and she did as she was trained.

I suspect that the “stick it out in one hand” form of shooting is not instinctive, but rather cultural in origin. The Thai lady had not spent her formative years watching people shoot that way on TV, so we had no ingrained mental image to overcome. The other nine students in this ten-shooting sample were all American males. And yet, most of them also went to two hands and eye level, with the exception of two involved in contact distance shootings.

We teach two default responses: two-handed, eye-level sighted fire if the target is beyond arm’s reach; and retention position firing if it is not. One-handed shooting is taught strictly as the choice when one hand is disabled or otherwise unavailable.

If we have both hands, we put them on the gun. This simplified training works.

Now, as to the “test” in the original article, I have some real heartburn with the methodology. I have two major gripes. First, the goal was “a hit anywhere on the IALEFI silhouette target.” By now, everyone should be well aware that peripheral hits with handgun cartridges are ineffective. The second was limiting the firing to one shot. See the last statement. Since handgun rounds are so anemic compared to rifles and shotguns, several fast hits are often required to incapacitate a suspect. One of the main advantages of firing with two hands is the increase in ability to accurately place follow-up shots on target.

With these thoughts in mind, I arranged the same range set-up as the one in the article: one IALEFI target at 5 yards. I then put twelve of our staff members through this test. On the first stage, each shooter was to draw and fire 3 rounds, with the dominant hand only, keeping all hits inside the 10” chest circle of the target as quickly as possible. On the second run, each shooter would draw and fire 3 rounds into the chest circle, using both hands. Each shooter went through the one-handed firing first, then after everyone had fired, each shooter used both hands. This made a cooling off period between strings, to avoid skewing the results. Each shooter performed the drill three times with one hand, and three times using both hands.

When the test was complete, I had 36 iterations of one-handed firing, and 36 of two-handed firing. I felt this would be a representative sample. I then averaged the times.

Firing with one hand, the average time was 2.91 seconds, for three good hits. Firing with two hands, the average time was 2.23 seconds for three good hits. Thus, two handed firing was .68 seconds faster (an almost 25% advantage). This group of twelve shooters represented a broad range of skill development, with some of the shooters more highly trained and experienced than

REVOLVER



SCIENCE

Sherman House, DDS

There is a God-awful lot of tripe about defensive shooting technique and equipment on the internet. I have warned readers in the past to be careful about information sources, since this arena literally involves life and death.

When I do find a good source for solid information, I like to make it known to others. One such source is a blog known as “Revolver Science” at www.revolverscience.com. This is written by our old friend and perennial student, Dr. Sherman House (the real Dr. House). Don’t let the name of the blog fool you. Sherman writes about revolvers, pistols, shotguns, training philosophy, and lots of other topics. Always insightful and well written, I recommend it highly. ■

—Tom Givens

INSTRUCTOR COURSES

The best way to master any subject is to learn to teach it. Rangemaster specializes in training instructors to teach new gun owners how to safely, efficiently, and effectively use a handgun in self defense. With the tens of millions of new handgun owners each year, the demand for entry level training is at its highest. Even if you have no desire to train others, this course will make you a better shooter.

In April we conducted one of these Instructor Development Courses in Florence, South Carolina. We had twenty students from all over, with some coming from as far away as Minnesota, Florida, and Oregon!

This is an intensive, immersion-level three-day class. On the range you will fire about 1,000 rounds of ammunition while coaching others and being coached, along with classroom work on teaching methodologies, adult learning, training aids, personal tactics, and more. We supply a 200+ page training manual. The next iterations of this class are listed to the right. Please visit our website for details or to register. ■

May 13-15
Athens, GA

May 27-29
Culpeper, VA

July 8-10
Ottawa, KS

September 13-15
Austin, TX

September 16-17
Austin TX
(2-Day Advanced Instructor Course)

October 28-30
Phoenix, AZ

Eventbrite

others. To see if the same spread held true for a highly trained shooter, I repeated the test myself.

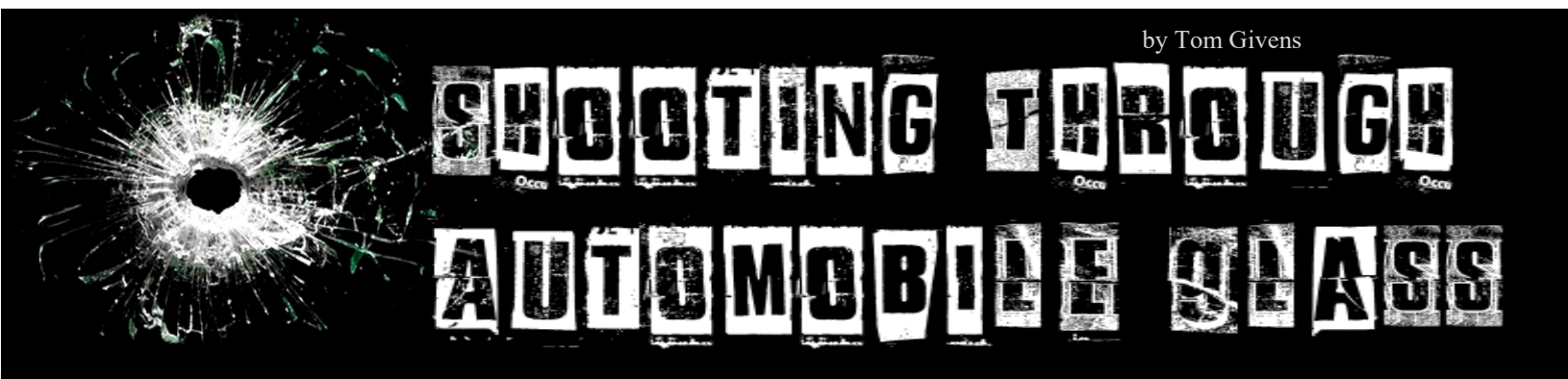
In my case, I fired five three-shot strings, drawing and firing with the dominant hand only, plus five three-shot strings drawing and firing with both hands. Again, the requirement was to keep all hits inside the IALEFI-Q chest circle. The results are shown on the chart to the right.

Thus, with two hands, I was almost 19% faster than with one hand. As I suspected, with a highly experienced

	One-Handed	Two-Handed
String 1	2.39 secs	1.59 secs
String 2	1.97 secs	1.70 secs
String 3	1.86 secs	1.58 secs
String 4	1.82 secs	1.58 secs
String 5	1.85 secs	1.60 secs
Average	1.98 secs	1.61 secs

shooter, the difference was less, but still significant.

Two handed fire allows better recoil management, faster follow up shots, and fewer blown shots (misses). Proper training includes explanation of the situation, presentation of proper technique, dry practice of proper technique, and repetitive practice in live fire. Our cultural predisposition to poor technique certainly can be overcome, as our students illustrate year after year. As Instructors, it is our responsibility to have them do so. ■



Unfortunately, lethal assaults by criminals in automobiles are quite common. If you are forced to return fire at an armed criminal who is inside a vehicle, you may have to shoot through glass surfaces. You need to know how this will affect the trajectory of your bullets.

SIDE & REAR WINDOWS...

These are made of tempered glass. During manufacture, tempered glass is heated to very high temperatures, then cooled rapidly. This process hardens the glass and makes it far stronger than similar un-tempered glass. This allows the glass to withstand common impacts like tire-thrown pebbles, hail stones, etc. This type of glass is also commonly called “safety glass.” When broken, it shatters into thousands of tiny, usually rectangular pieces, rather than sharp shards.

When hit by a bullet, tempered glass side windows normally break into tiny pieces and fall from the window frame on the first shot. This applies to rounds fired into, or from inside the vehicle. An exception occurs when windows have been tinted. The tint is a plastic film covering the glass. This plastic film will sometimes prevent the shattered glass from falling out of the frame. Be prepared for that.

Rear windows are much larger and stronger. A single hit will often result in a hole, with “spider web” fractures around it. It may take several handgun bullets to knock out a rear window.

FRONT WINDSHIELD...

The windshield of a car presents a very different circumstance. Windshields are laminated glass. During manufacture, a thin sheet of plastic is placed between two sheets of glass, then laminated under high heat and pressure. Pistol bullets make holes in windshields, if they are powerful enough to penetrate them and the angle is not too great.

Laminated glass is very tough, and the windshield is “raked” or angled sharply. This creates some problems for your handgun bullets. Pistol fire can be deflected by laminated glass, causing anything from a slightly off course flight path to ricochet completely off target.

FROM THE OUTSIDE, SHOOTING IN...

If firing into windshield glass at pretty much a 90-degree angle, from outside the vehicle, your bullet will typically deflect downward. In the distance from the windshield to the front seat, the bullet will generally strike 4” to 6” lower than your aiming point. The “rake” of the glass causes more drag on the lower part of the bullet, causing it to deflect downward. If you aim at the upper chest of a person sitting in the front seat, odds are the bullet will be deflected downward enough to strike the steering wheel and the dash and be further deflected or stopped. Thus, to achieve an upper chest hit, your aiming point should be the attacker’s face or neck area.

FROM THE INSIDE, SHOOTING OUT...

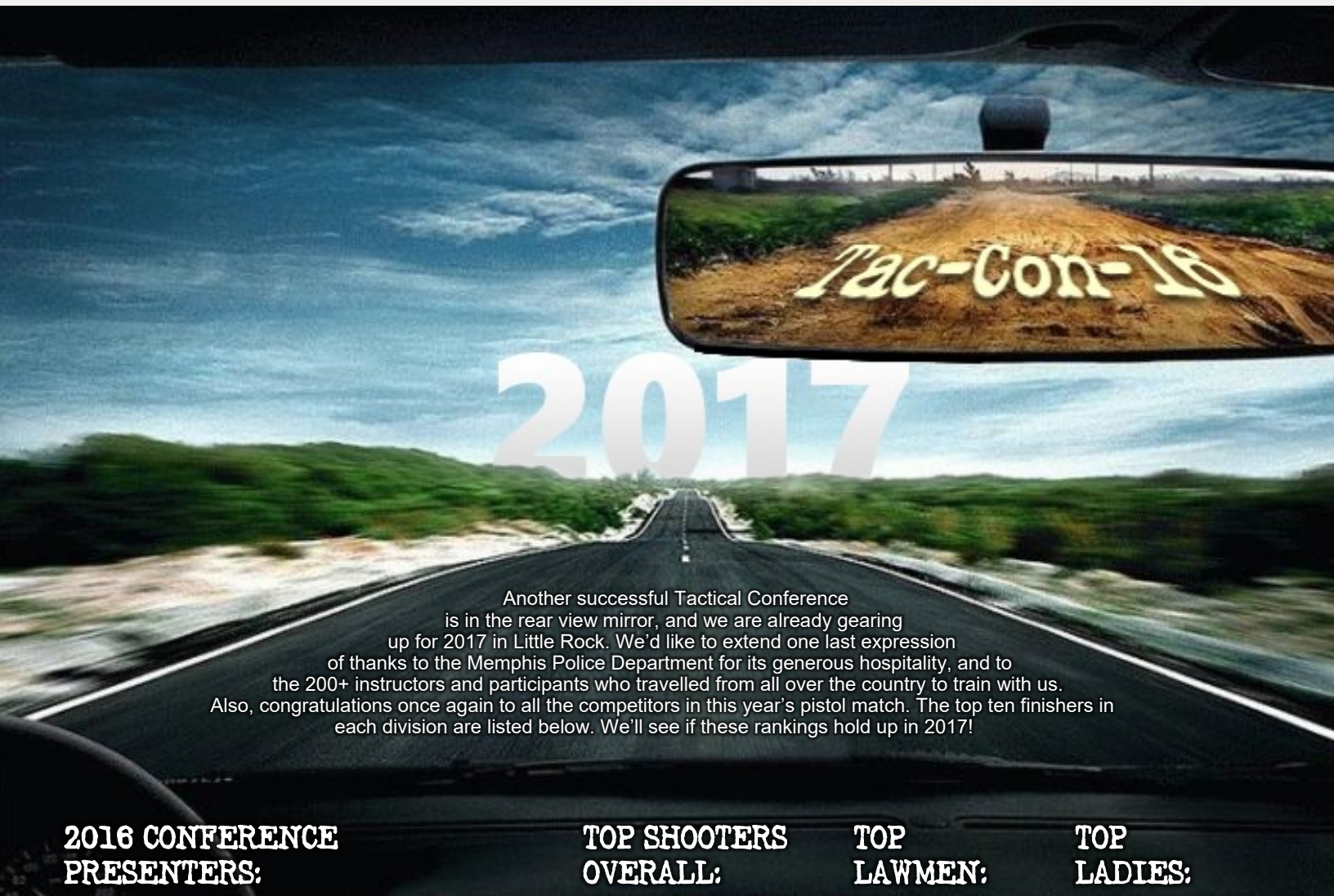
If you must fire at an assailant in front of your car, firing from inside the vehicle, remember that your rounds will be deflected by the drag of the glass, but in the opposite direction. The further back from the glass your gun is, the more deflection will occur. Also, the further back your muzzle is from the glass, the more tiny fragments of glass will be blown back into the passenger compartment. This is a serious issue, as this high velocity glass can blind you or a passenger.

To remedy this, place the muzzle of your gun right up to the glass. Be careful not to push your slide back out of battery, preventing the gun from firing. Light muzzle

contact is ideal. This prevents deflection of the bullet, and prevents blow-back of glass particles into the passenger compartment. After a couple of shots, you will have an aperture in the glass you can extend the muzzle through, if more shooting is required.

RICOCHETS...

Laminated glass is very resistant to gunfire that impacts from any angle greater than about 25 degrees from straight on. Bullets fired at greater angles will quite often skip off the glass without entering the vehicle at all. These ricochets will still have a lot of velocity and are stray rounds. If you cannot get a fairly straight shot into a windshield, you would be well advised to hold your fire. ■



Another successful Tactical Conference is in the rear view mirror, and we are already gearing up for 2017 in Little Rock. We'd like to extend one last expression of thanks to the Memphis Police Department for its generous hospitality, and to the 200+ instructors and participants who travelled from all over the country to train with us. Also, congratulations once again to all the competitors in this year's pistol match. The top ten finishers in each division are listed below. We'll see if these rankings hold up in 2017!

2016 CONFERENCE PRESENTERS:

Dr. William Aprill, Massad Ayoob, Lori Bigley, Darryl Bolke, Cecil Burch, Caleb Causey, Greg Ellifritz, John Farnam, Fletch Fuller, Lynn Givens, Tom Givens, Gary Greco, Chuck Haggard, Marty Hayes, John Hearne, John Holschen, Tiffany Johnson, Spencer Keepers, Eve Kulcsar, Larry Lindenman, John Murphy, Karl Rehn, Paul Sharp, Southnarc, Julie Thomas, Dr. Martin Topper, Lee Weems, and Claude Werner

TOP SHOOTERS OVERALL:

- 1 Kirk Clark
- 2 Spencer Keepers
- 3 John Johnston
- 4 John Hearne
- 5 Dave Reichek
- 6 Kirin Kachroo-Levine
- 7 Karl Rehn
- 8 Chuck Haggard
- 9 Ron Mebane
- 10 Massad Ayoob

TOP LAWMEN:

- 1 John Hearne
- 2 Chuck Haggard
- 3 Ron Mebane
- 4 Massad Ayoob
- 5 Paul Sharp
- 6 Lee Weems
- 7 Greg Ellifritz
- 8 John Jayne
- 9 Darryl Bolke
- 10 David Hicks

TOP LADIES:

- 1 Cindy Bowser
- 2 Eve Kulcsar
- 3 Gail Pepin
- 4 Lori Bigley
- 5 Tameka Johnson
- 6 Elizabeth Saunders
- 7 Teresa Roddy
- 8 Lynn Givens
- 9 Tammy Smith
- 10 Kanda Keepers



Darryl Bolke
Hardwired,
Tactical
Shooting

YOU ARE THE FIRST RESPONDER

To borrow a phrase from trainer Darryl Bolke, when someone breaks into your home or pulls a gun on you in a street robbery, YOU are the first responder. The police are secondary responders, who will arrive long after the event is over.

According to a recent article in the Atlanta Journal Constitution, Atlanta police were the slowest to answer high priority, life-threatening situations, such as armed robberies, assaults, shootings in progress, and similar emergency calls among police departments from seven similar-sized cities. The results were part of a survey of police response times. In Atlanta last year it took, on average, 11 minutes and 12 seconds from the time a high-priority 911 call was received until an Atlanta police officer showed up at the scene. The response times reported by the El Paso (Texas) Police Department were only one second quicker than Atlanta's, with an average of 11 minutes and 11 seconds. This is sadly typical in just about all large cities.

However dedicated, skillful, and brave an officer may be, there is absolutely nothing he can do to help you eleven minutes after a 911 call. According to the US Justice Department, the average violent crime involves about 90 seconds of interaction between the offender and the victim. That means the attacker has been gone for nine-and-a-half minutes when the police arrive.

You must understand that your personal safety and your family's security are YOUR responsibility, not someone else's. You're on your own. ■

—Tom Givens

THE RANGEMASTER BULLSEYE COURSE

As a full time traveling trainer, I don't get to practice often. The majority of the time, I'm either driving to/from a class or teaching one. Some months, my only practice consists of shooting demos in classes. So whenever I do get to have a practice session, I focus intently on specific skills. I usually shoot between 200-250 rounds in a session, with a hard focus on quality, rather than quantity. Recently, I got a rare chance to practice; and as I often do, I began my session with shooting the Rangemaster Bullseye Course completely cold, the first shots of the session. By shooting this course without a warm-up or practice, I get a pretty accurate picture of my current skill level.

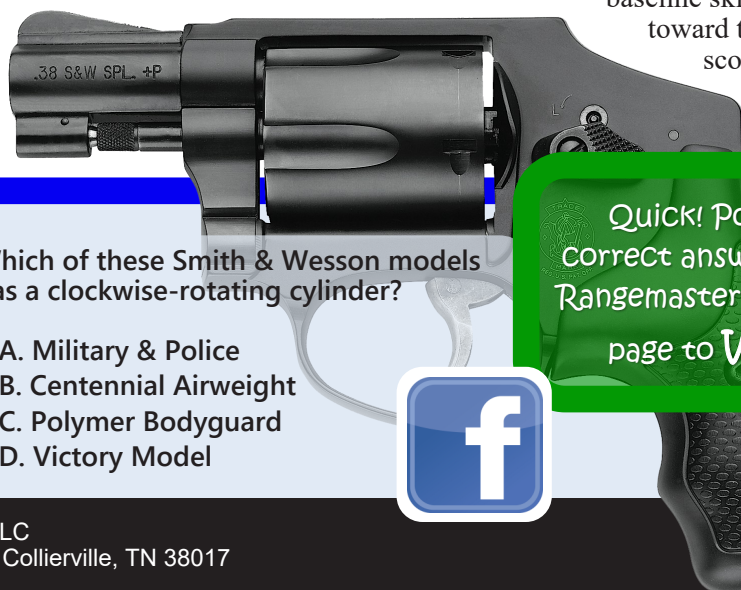
I managed a score of 294 out of a possible 300. Not bad for an old guy. I then spent the rest of the session working on silhouette targets, pushing for speed/accuracy at 5, 7, 10, 15 and 25 yards. I did some one-handed shooting (both right hand and left hand) and worked some drills that required empty gun reloads. At 250 rounds, I was still performing well, so I quit. It's important to quit while you are doing well, rather than get fatigued and sloppy. We don't want sloppy

1. 25 yds 5 rds 60 secs
2. 15 yds 5 rds 15 secs
3. 15 yds 5 rds 10 secs
4. 7 yds 10 rds* 15 secs
- * Start w/5 rounds in gun.
Fire 5, emergency reload,
fire 5 more (all in 15 secs)
5. 5 yds 5 rds 5 seconds

shooting to be the last thing we leave the range with.

Listed above are the particulars of the Rangemaster Bullseye Course. Use the FBI-IP1 bullseye or NRA B-8 target. If using the B-8, hits outside the 7 ring are misses (zero points). Use this as your baseline skill check, and work toward that elusive perfect score of 300, cold. ■

—Tom Givens



Which of these Smith & Wesson models has a clockwise-rotating cylinder?

- A. Military & Police
- B. Centennial Airweight
- C. Polymer Bodyguard
- D. Victory Model

Quick! Post the correct answer on the Rangemaster Facebook page to **WIN!!!**



Pop Quiz