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MARCH 2020 NEWSLETTER

Drill of The Month

By Tom Givens

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. This month's drill is the new (2019) FBI Pistol Qualification Course, but with a twist. I want you to shoot this course using the Rangemaster RFTS-Q target or the IALEFI-QP target. Score hits in the 8" chest circle as 5 points, in the secondary circle as 4 points, and anything else on the silhouette as 3 points, except hits below the belt line count zero. This changes the difficulty level of this course a good bit. It's a 50-round course, so your maximum score would be 250 points, which is your goal. Should be fired from concealed carry, using your everyday carry gear.

FBI PISTOL QUALIFICATION COURSE (revised Jan 2019)

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 3 yards | Draw and fire 3 rounds strong hand only; then switch hands and fire 3 rounds support hand only, all in 6 seconds |
| 5 yards | Draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds
From the Ready, fire 3 rounds in 2 seconds
From the Ready, fire 6 rounds in 4 seconds |
| 7 yards | Draw and fire 5 rounds in 5 seconds
From the Ready, start with 4 rounds in the gun, fire 4 rounds, conduct an empty gun reload, and fire 4 more rounds, all in 8 seconds
From the Ready, fire 5 rounds in 4 seconds |
| 15 yards | Draw and fire 3 rounds in 6 seconds
From the Ready, fire 3 rounds in 5 seconds |
| 25 yards | Draw and fire 4 rounds from Standing, drop to a kneeling position and fire 4 more rounds from Kneeling, all in 20 seconds. |

You are encouraged to go to the range, shoot the drill, and then post your thoughts and a photo of your target in the Rangemaster Facebook group: facebook.com/groups/rangemaster. Good luck! ■

The FLETC Saga

By Chief Deputy Lee Weems
First Person Safety



I recently (finally) completed the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers' (FLETC) Firearms Instructor Training Program (FITP), and Tom asked me to write a review. Before I get into the review, I'll regale you with the tale of woe that took place over the span of years prior to my finally attending the program.

The first time I was accepted, I was granted a fully funded spot (tuition, lodging, meals, ammo) at FLETC's campus in Brunswick, GA, better known as "Glynco." Those of you who are properly educated (meaning you have watched every episode of Justified at least six times) will recognize the reference. Brunswick is in coastal Georgia south of Savannah. As luck would have it, a hurricane hit the area on Thursday of the week immediately prior to the report date. Class canceled.

I was then accepted into a fully funded spot in a class at FLETC's campus in Artesia, NM. *Great!* thought I, as New Mexico is not likely to get hit by a hurricane. It hadn't occurred to me that New Mexico, while presumably safe from weather-related gridlock, was not safe from Congressional gridlock. As I was making my way to Artesia, I was stopped for gas at a Buc-ee's outside of Dallas, TX when I received an email that the class was canceled due to a government shutdown. Rather than turn around and drive straight back to Georgia, I detoured to Waco to visit the Texas Ranger Museum.

Next up was a spot in an export class being held at the Clayton County (GA) Police Range. Export classes do not include lodging/meals. Congress struck again with another government shutdown the week prior to the class.

But the fourth castle... (You know who you are.)

Next up was a spot in an export class being held at the Auburn (AL) Police Range. There were no shutdowns on the horizon. I thought I was good as Auburn is unlikely to be in the path of a hurricane. I was wrong, sort of. A hurricane hit Brunswick the week prior to class. The instructors assigned to teach the class were based at Glynco and were ordered to evacuate. Class canceled, again.

Fortunately, the Auburn class was eventually rescheduled, and I received a spot. No hurricanes. No shutdowns.

At this point, I want to make a distinction. I will refer to this class and similar classes such as the FBI's and the GA Public Safety Training Center's (GPSTC) firearms instructor courses as "institutional courses" to contrast them from private sector courses such as Rangemaster's. I previously completed both of the aforementioned institutional programs.

In both the GPSTC and FBI programs, there was a "shoot-in" — meaning that candidates must shoot a passing score(s) on a qualification course(s) in order to attend. At GPSTC, the shoot-in was conducted on the first morning of the class. Those who didn't achieve the required score were sent home. For the FBI course, there was a "pre-qual" day held prior to the class requiring the candidate to shoot numerous courses of fire to earn a spot in the class. Of the 18 that attempted admittance on the pre-qual day I attended, only 12 of us shot the passing scores. We lost several on the first morning of the GPSTC class. The GPSTC class also had a graduation course of fire, and we lost four on it.

For the FLETC class, we had a shoot-in on day one. A score of 255 out of a possible 300 on the FLETC Practical Pistol Course was required. Of note, students received the course of fire well in advance of the class. Two candidates failed it and were sent home. Eighteen made it. I shot a 298.

Later in the first week, we shot both a rifle and a shotgun qualification. These scores counted toward an aggregate score. The rifle course was four 15-round strings shot in various positions and all from the 50-yard line. The kicker here was that iron sights were mandated; no optics allowed. Manny Mansfield would approve as iron sights don't need batteries. The target was a miniaturized Transtar, and I regret to inform you that I shanked two shots for a 290. Both misses were high, and I think they were on the standing/unsupported string.

The shotgun qual required the combat loading of five rounds into a pump shotgun and then knocking over five poppers all in 20 seconds. That's not hard. However, the same people who brought you the iron sight rule also mandated that the shells must be in a pocket or a pouch. For each second over the par time, points were deducted. In practice, I was making it in 14 seconds easily, but on the test run, I decided to be very deliberate and shot it in 17 seconds.

My aggregate score was 688 out of 700 for 98.29%. Candidates with an aggregate score of 95% or higher received a "Distinguished Weapons Expert" rating. I henceforth expect to be addressed as such by Cecil Burch, but the rest of y'all can just ignore it.

The remainder of the time in week one was spent in various classes, including a use of force block, a block on shooting errors, and a "weapons description" class in which we got to shoot a variety of weapons such as AK47s, MP5s, Uzis, and a S&W 686 to baffle anyone who has never driven a stick shift.

Week two was primarily focused on practical exercises. The class was divided into groups. Each group taught three "practice" lessons. For example, my group did classes on "downed and disabled shooting" and ran the rest of the class through the ATF's qualification course. Our graded group exercise was to run the rest of the class through the U.S. Marshal Service's qualification course. Raylan and Art would be proud.

Individually, we each had to do a 20-minute presentation. I did a new spin on the traditional fundamentals of marksmanship. I'll expand on that in future writings unless Tiffany completely loses her cool over all the allusions in this piece. We each had a knowledge-based interview type test with an instructor who asked various questions about each of the weapons systems and other class materials. Also of note in week two was a block on "non-lethal" training ammunition and its use in training as well as a hands-on session with UTM gear.

The experience was typical of an institutional class in that it focused more on class management and running a line of shooters rather than individual coaching. As for class management, students came away with actual experience in having run large groups of shooters through courses of fire. Furthermore, the supplied lesson plans (used for the group practicals) allow a new instructor to at least have a plug-and-play template to take back to their agency. The weakness of institutional classes is the lack of information on teaching individual weapon craft. Such is life in a world where training equates to passing a qualification course. In the staff's defense, they did actively promote a follow-on course offered through FLETC that is geared specifically towards individual coaching. ■

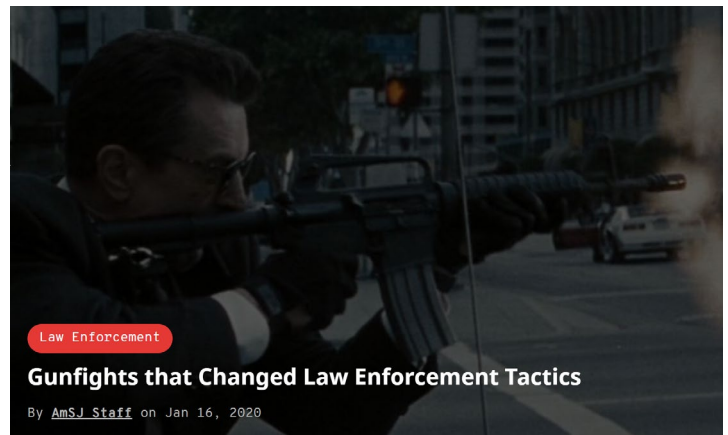
Recommended Reading

By Tom Givens

(1) ASJ Article on Transformative Gunfights

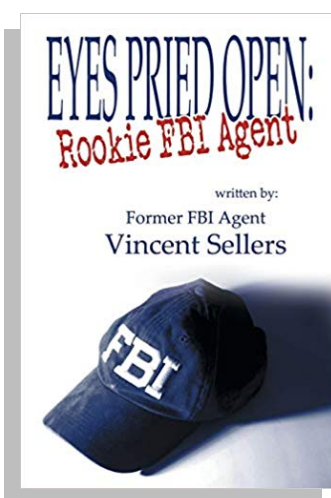
Here is an interesting article on five law enforcement gunfights that led to significant changes in ammo, weapons, training, or all of the above.

<http://americanshootingjournal.com/gunfights-that-changed-le-tactics/amp/>



(2) Eyes Pried Open, by Vincent Sellers

If you have ever wondered exactly what goes on in a new agent trainee class at the FBI Academy, or what the actual, real field work of FBI Special Agents entails, you'll find this book very interesting. Vincent Sellers decided his life's goal was to become an FBI Special Agent, and he went about making that dream come true. He persevered through a grueling academy experience and then spent two years working near the Mexican border in the San Diego area. To say he became disillusioned is a massive understatement, and he resigned after two years on the job. Available from Amazon for \$3.99 in Kindle format and \$13.95 in paperback. It's an interesting quick read. Here's the link: <https://www.amazon.com/Eyes-Pried-Open-Rookie-Agent/dp/1612964400/> ■



Complacency Kills

By Tom Givens

I live in a small town on the eastern fringe of the Tampa metropolitan area. The population is only about 36,000 and it's a working community mostly involved in agriculture. Most of the country's winter strawberries come from here, and most of the orange juice originates within a 100-mile radius.

The town's police force has right at 100 officers. In January, there were officer-involved shootings on two consecutive days, about 24 hours apart. Both shootings occurred about 11:30am, in broad daylight. In one, the suspect involved shot at several people at random, killing one. He then exchanged gunfire with responding police, who killed him. There were two other officer-involved shootings last year in town.

A couple of nights ago, there was an attempted home invasion in the subdivision adjacent to mine, with three suspects who fired shots at a resident who confronted them. Also this month, a young woman disappeared. Her car was found at an intersection, phone and purse inside, but she was nowhere to be found.

Any place there are people, there is a potential for violence. Every community, no matter how small or peaceful appearing, has violent criminals and mentally disturbed individuals. Accept that fact. Once you accept that fact, it becomes easier to put up with carrying your gear, religiously, every day. You don't get to pick the day you need your gun. Someone else gets to pick that day, and they will typically only inform you at the last minute. ■

Hillsborough Deputies Continue Search for Missing Woman

📍 Tampa, FL | Bay News 9 | 15d



TAMPA, Fla. — The Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office is continuing to search for a 28-year-old woman last seen over a week ago. Taylor's car, purse, cell phone found on February 9.

Upcoming Events

April 3

[Defensive Shotgun \(One-Day Format\)](#)

KR Training, Austin, TX

April 4-5 [SOLD OUT]

[Combative Pistol](#)

KR Training, Austin, TX

April 24-25

[Combative Pistol](#)

Dahlonega, GA

April 26

[Defensive Shotgun \(One-Day Format\)](#)

Dahlonega, GA

May 11-12

[Advanced Firearms Instructor Development](#)

Xenia, Ohio

May 13

[Defensive Shotgun \(One-Day Format\)](#)

Xenia, Ohio

May 15-16

[Combative Pistol](#)

Garrettsville, Ohio

May 17

[Defensive Shotgun \(On-Day Format\)](#)

Garrettsville, Ohio

May 29-31 [SOLD OUT]

[Master Instructor Development Course](#)

Jackson, MS

June 5-7

[Firearms Instructor Development Course](#)

Fossil Point; Decatur, TX

