



# **NOVEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER**

## **DRILL OF THE MONTH**

Throughout 2022 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/> .

### **AMBIDEXTROUS SKILLS DRILL**

**Target-** Rangemaster Q, IDPA cardboard, or other target with an 8" circle in the chest . If you use a B-8, the 8 ring is 8" in diameter, so it works fine. 10 points for every hit inside the circle- Zero points for any hits outside the circle

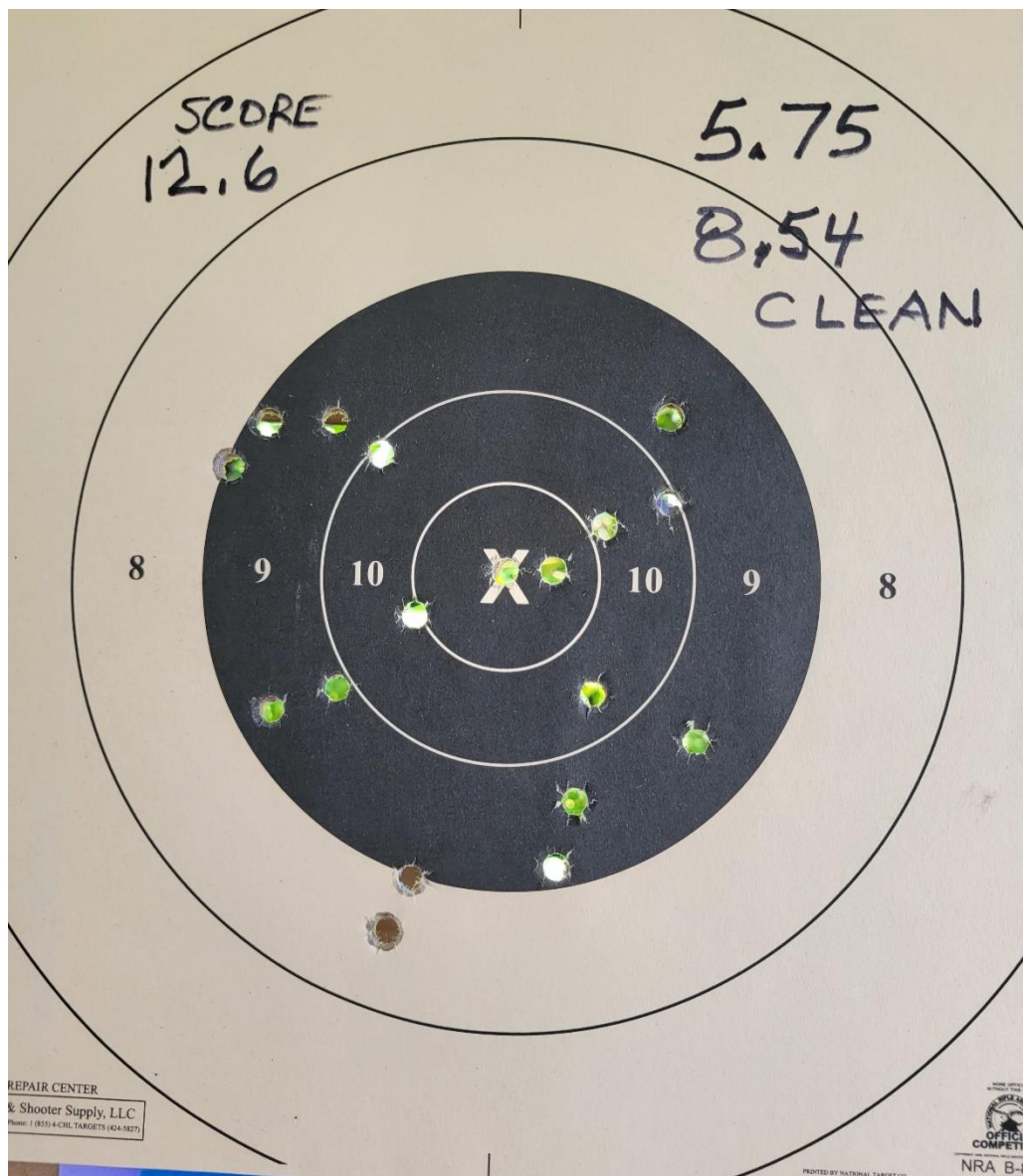
**Distance-** 5 yards and 10 yards

**Total rounds fired** 18

**Start with gun fully loaded and concealed. On signal, draw and fire 3 rounds using both hands, drop the support hand off and fire 3 rounds using the dominant hand only, switch hands, and fire 3 rounds using the non-dominant hand only, all in one continuous string. Record the time for the string.**

Shoot this at 5 yards, then repeat at 10 yards. Count up the score on the target. Add the two times together. Divide total points by total time.

The first time I shot this I got all 18 in the 8" circle, for 180 points. My times for the two runs were 5.75 and 8.54 seconds, for a total time of 14.29 seconds. 180 points divided by 14.29 seconds makes my final score 12.6 . A par score is 10, so your goal is a score of 10 or above, the higher the better.



## **Engineering Resilience through your ready position? By Erick Gelhaus, Rangemaster certified instructor**



**Does your ready position make a difference in your decision-making process?**

**Can it create a better outcome for you?**

**Can it give you better visual information for making decisions?**

**In putting together my 2022 TacCon presentation, I read through several studies on decision-making in deadly force encounters. One, by Paul L Taylor, focused on ready positions to engineer resilience into the process. He described resilience as the "ability to avert disaster." Another described resilience engineering as preventing a loss of control instead of trying to recover from it.**

**What if your choice of ready positions could help with that?**



**These give you enough time to stop bad things from happening.**

**The research paper uses highway rumble strips as an example. They won't stop you from going off the road and crashing, but they will let you know that you are about to wreck, giving you time to fix it.**

**Taylor and crew started their work by contacting several police agencies about "mistake of fact" shootings. The Los Angeles Police Department had 211 "perception-only" shootings between 2013 and 2017. Los Angeles Sheriff's Department has five to fifteen cell phone-driven shootings yearly. Finally, Philadelphia's Police Department said about 10% of their shootings were "mistake of fact" events.**

**With that foundation, they look at how they could engineer resilience (avoid and prevent errors) into the decision-making process, specifically around ready positions.**

**They started with three hypotheses:**

**#1: Muzzle position will not significantly impact the likelihood of false (negative) shooting errors.**

**#2: The lower the starting muzzle position, the less likely police officers will be to make false-positive shooting errors.**

**#3: The lower the starting muzzle position, the slower police officers will respond to a legitimate deadly threat (i.e., a gun pointed at them).**

### **Study**

**Three hundred thirteen officers went through the scenario testing. The majority were street cops, and just under seventy were administrators, investigators, or tactical officers.**

**They used a Ti Training firearms training simulator with pre-recorded video – consistent with Tom Aveni's previous work on ambiguous shootings. Pre-recorded radio traffic primed the participants. The video showed a white male wearing a black beanie, sunglasses, and a black hoodie. About six seconds into the video encounter, the man would rapidly remove either a cell phone or handgun from the hoodie's pocket and point it at the officers.**

**Aveni's prior research shows that a subject acting or moving aggressively is more likely to be viewed as a threat than one who is not.**

### **Outcome**

**Every time the suspect pulled a handgun, he was shot. But how did things turn out when the cell phone came out?**



**The pistol is too high to see anything in the waistband or the hands. Nowhere near enough time to make good decisions.**

**If officers had a sight picture, 64% shot the role player pulling the cell phone, and 36% did not. Those shots were fired within 0.51 seconds of the subject's action.**



**If you lowered the muzzle to the sternum, the cell phone draw led to a shooting 57% of the time. Those shots were fired in 0.55 seconds. No shots were fired 43% of the time.**



**You can see a bit more here, but still not enough information is coming for good decisions.**



**At least here, you are able to see the hand and what it is holding.  
Better, but still not enough.**

**At the lowest ready position, only 30% of the officers encountering the cell phone fired - 70% did not. Those shots took 0.62 seconds.**

**The lower the ready position, the better the incoming information, which leads to better decision-making.**

**So, what about the researcher's hypothesis?**

**H1: Muzzle position does matter; it both led to and diminished mistake of facts shootings;**

**H2: Lower-ready positions decreased mistake of fact shootings. The lower the starting muzzle position, the less likely police officers were to make shooting errors.**

**H3: The lowest ready position resulted in a 100% reduction in mistake of fact shootings. It also added ten one-hundredths of a second to the**

**time for those who shot. The lower position benefits officers giving them more time to make good decisions.**



**A legitimate low ready position, the muzzle is low enough that it is not covering any part of the threat.**

### **Application?**

**These studies are about cops doing cop stuff – being sent to look for armed people – great. Now does this apply to a decent, normal human being? This October, as an evaluator, I ran several students in a Gunsite advanced pistol class (#499) through multiple force-on-force scenarios. When drawing their handgun, those who stayed at a legit low ready (rather than allowing it to rise into their eye line) seemed to make better decisions during their interactions with role players. Additionally, there seems to be greater scrutiny by the criminal justice system about covering bad guys with the muzzle of one's firearm. Depending on state law and the prosecutors' philosophy, you could face anything from brandishing to an assault with a deadly weapon charge. Adopting the use of a legitimate low-ready position may well mitigate that.**

If you must deal with another human being with a firearm in your hands, I'd suggest a ready position that gives you the least obstructed view and the most visual input to make your decisions.

Erick Gelhaus

[www.cougarmountainsolutions.com/blog](http://www.cougarmountainsolutions.com/blog) -or- [cmsolutions@sonic.net](mailto:cmsolutions@sonic.net)

Note: Taylor's research paper is "Engineering Resilience" into Split-Second Shoot/No Shoot Decisions: The effect of muzzle position. Taylor, Paul L., Police Quarterly 0(0) 1-20, 2020;

## **Patreon Page**

Just a reminder—we have a Patreon page at [Patreon.com/tomgivens](https://Patreon.com/tomgivens) . A subscription only costs a few dollars a month. In return, we post from 4 to 10 informative articles, videos, and updates every month. Subscribers get our monthly newsletter a couple of days before everyone else, along with earlier notice of classes and special events. Please subscribe and join us.

### **Bureau of Justice Statistics, Workplace Violence Stat's**

Over a 27-year period from 1992 to 2019, nearly 18,000 persons were killed at work, on duty, or in violence that was work-related. From 2014 to 2019, workplace homicides increased 11%.

**Nonfatal workplace violence:** An annual average of 1.3 million nonfatal workplace violent victimizations occurred during the combined 5 years from 2015 to 2019. Violent victimizations include rape or sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, and simple assault. This was a rate of 8.0 nonfatal violent crimes per 1,000 workers age 16 or older.

**During 2015–19, male offenders committed the majority of nonfatal workplace violence (64%). Strangers committed about half (47%) of nonfatal workplace violence, with male victims less likely than female victims to know the offender. The offender was unarmed in 78% of nonfatal workplace violence, and the victim sustained an injury in 12%. Fifteen percent of victims of nonfatal workplace violence reported severe emotional distress due to the crime.**

**Emergency department treatment: About 529,000 nonfatal injuries from workplace violence were treated in hospital emergency departments (EDs) for the combined 2015-19 period. This was a rate of 7.1 ED-treated injuries per 10,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) workers. Physical assaults (hitting, kicking, or beating) accounted for 83% of such injuries, which were most often contusions and abrasions (33%), followed by sprains and strains (12%) and traumatic brain injuries (12%).**

## **First Thunderstick Summit**

**The first Thunderstick Summit was held in Dallas, Texas, in September. The five senior professors of the serious social shotgun came together to teach the proper use of the defensive shotgun to motivated students from all over the US. This three day event featured training in all aspects of the combative use of the shotgun for home defense or defense against business hold-ups. Much learning occurred.**

**The next such event is tentatively scheduled for the first weekend in December, 2023, near Las Vegas, NV. Stay tuned for an announcement.**



**The training cadre for the inaugural Thunderstick Summit in Dallas- left to right- Steve Fisher, Erick Gelhaus, Darryl Bolke, Rob Haught, Tom Givens.**

# Shotgun Training, Preparing for Success

**In 2022 and 2023 we have several shotgun courses, both for end users and for instructor candidates. There are some things you can do before class to maximize your learning opportunities, make things more comfortable for you, and generally allow you to have a better training experience.**

**The social or defensive use of the shotgun is radically different than its use in bird hunting or clay pigeon sports. To get the most out of these classes, please follow these directions.**



Unless you have already had it shortened, the butt stock of your shotgun is too long. When we say the "length of pull" (LOP) that means the straight line distance from the trigger to the butt plate. For smaller stature persons, most females, and men under about 5'7" a 12 inch LOP is about right. If you are between 5'8" and 6' tall, a 12 1/2 to 13 inch LOP will probably work fine. The factory length of pull on most shotguns runs from 13 7/8" to 14 1/4", which is just too long. You can replace a butt stock that is too long with a shorter aftermarket stock from Hogue, Mag Pul or Speedfeed, or a gunsmith can shorten your existing stock for a small fee. I recommend the MagPul, which is easily adjustable for LOP.

Your magazine needs to hold at least four rounds. If your shotgun has a plug in the magazine to limit capacity to two rounds please remove the plug before class.

You should have some means of carrying spare ammunition on the gun. A side saddle or a butt cuff are both fine, whichever you prefer. Strongly recommended, not required. A sling is optional, your choice.

Either a pump action or semiautomatic shotgun are fine for this class. The gold standard is the 870 Remington Police pump, or the Beretta 1301 Tactical for autoloaders.

Your barrel length should be between 18 and 22 inches. Barrels longer than 22 inches will be cumbersome and awkward in our context. A shotgun with a barrel less than 18 inches long is a Class III weapon. If you legally possess a short barrel shotgun feel free to use it in class. Have a copy of your ATF paperwork for the short barrel shotgun with you.

**You will need birdshot for a lot of the manipulation practice. Please be aware that some really cheap birdshot has zinc or steel shell heads instead of brass and may cause extraction problems in your shotgun. Spending a little more money on quality shot shells is something you will be glad you did. Larger birdshot sizes, like #4 will pattern more like buckshot than will smaller shot like #7 ½.**

**You will need a certain amount of buckshot, how much depends on the type of class. We prefer standard load eight or nine pellet 00 Buck. Magnum loads only increase recoil and will beat you up with no advantage. Standard velocity or reduced recoil 00 Buck will do just fine. Again, cheaper shells will not pattern as well as premium loads. If you want absolute maximum performance I suggest Federal Premium 8 pellet 00 Buck with the Flite Control wad, or the equivalent Hornady load with their Versa-Tite wad.**

**You will need a cooler with lunch, snacks, and plenty to drink. We will break for lunch at the range. Be sure you have what you need to sustain you through the day.**

**We look forward to working with you in class. The shotgun is a wonderful instrument, it can be devastatingly effective in trained hands, and shotgun classes are a lot of fun. See you there.**

---

## **UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS**

**Nov 18-20    Instructor Development, Reevesville, SC**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-162124521809>

**Dec 3-4      Advanced Instructor Development, Buford, GA (Atlanta)**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/advanced-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-275270550627>    **sold out**

**Homestead, FL      Jan 20-22    Instructor (pistol)**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-291780472247>

**Terre Haute, IN    Jan 20-22, Instructor (pistol),  
Lee Weems will be teaching this one**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-393789002507>

**Nashville, TN    Jan 27-29    Defensive Shotgun Instructor**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/defensive-shotgun-instructor-development-course-tickets-328467022707>

**Ruskin, FL    Feb 3-4    Fri-Sat    Combative Pistol**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/combative-pistol-skills-tickets-290915816037>

**KCMO area      Feb 24-26, 2023    Instructor    Pistol**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-196233117537>

**Ruskin, FL     Mar 9-11   Thur-Sat Instructor(pistol)**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-290920429837>

Note- Our 2023 schedule is going to be significantly reduced from 2022 levels, and 2024 will be scaled back even further.

## **TAC CON Trainer Profile, Erick Gelhaus**

**Erick is a long-time student with military, law enforcement, training, and academic experience.**

**After the police academy, he received firearms and tactics training from LAPD, LASD, the NRA- LEAD, CalPOST, the FBI, and DEA. With Gunsite as a foundation, he has also studied under Bill Jeans, Louis Awerbuck, the Surefire Institute, Pat Rogers, Scott Reitz, Larry Vickers, John Chapman, Pat McNamara, the Force Science Institute, Paul Howe, Rangemaster (Instructor certified), Dave Spaulding, Will Petty, Scott Jedlinski, & Craig Douglas and numerous armorer classes.**

**After twenty-nine years, he recently retired from a large northern California sheriff's office as a patrol sergeant. As a deputy, he worked patrol, gang violence suppression, and narcotics investigations as well as being the lead firearms instructor and a field training officer. While a sergeant, he supervised a patrol shift, plus the firearms and field training programs. He has evaluated numerous uses of force and**

**pursuits as well as supervising multiple OIS and critical incident scenes. He has been decorated by the State of California and his agency for service, lifesaving, and valor.**

**His military service includes being an infantry heavy weapons squad leader in ground combat in Iraq.**

**Erick has taught at Gunsite since 2001 and with other companies, including Aimpoint. Having been through the gamut of post-use of force experiences, he brings those perspectives to his classes.**

**He has a Master's degree in public administration, with his papers focusing on use of force issues. He has given presentations on police procedures, use of force, criminal street gangs, and critical incident issues to a wide variety of organizations throughout his career. He is the author of published articles in SWAT, Modern Service Weapons, Soldier of Fortune, and TTPOA's Command magazines.**

