

**Rangemaster Firearms Training Services**  
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## **FEB 2023 NEWSLETTER**

### **DRILL OF THE MONTH**

Throughout 2023 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/> .

### **"Interleaving"**

**In the last couple of decades, we have learned a great deal about how the human brain processes information, learns physical skills, and learns to apply those skills to the demands of the environment. For a very long time, we thought the best way to learn a physical skill was to practice it over and over again, building up a high number of repetitions, then work on something else.**

**I am going to over-simplify this, for space considerations. It turns out that once you have learned a skill to a fair degree, you are better off to combine practice of that skill with either similar or related skills. This engages different**

**parts of your brain and enhances learning. This approach to training is sometimes called "interleaving".**

**Here is a drill designed to use this principle. All of the skills involved in this drill are related and could be called upon in a single violent incident.**

## **Cover the Basics Drill**

**IALEFI-Q, IDPA Cardboard, or RFTS-Q target - 10 points for any hit inside the 8 inch circle in the chest, or inside the head ring. 5 points for any hit inside the silhouette but outside the 8" circle or the head ring.**

**Drill- Begin with the weapon holstered and concealed, loaded with only two rounds. On signal, draw, fire 2 rounds to the chest, conduct an empty gun reload, fire 2 more rounds to the chest, then one to the head circle. Record the time for the string.**

**Fire the drill at 5 yards.**

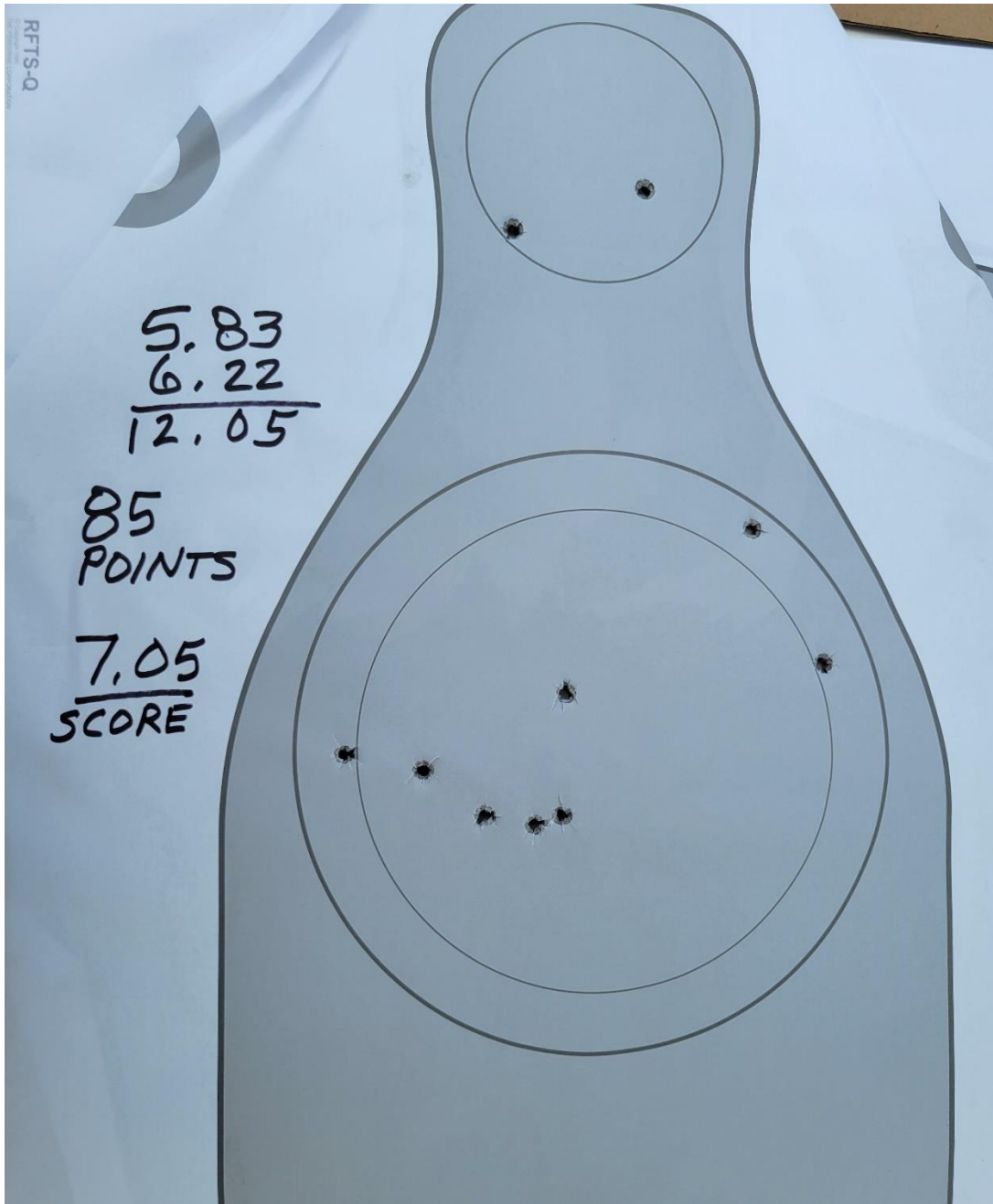
**Fire the drill at 10 yards.**

**10 rounds total. 100 points possible. Add all the times up.**

**Total points divided by total time = score. (Hit factor scoring)**

**Par score = 6 Goal is a score of 6 or higher.**

**This drill covers a concealed presentation from the holster, fast accurate shooting, an empty gun reload, and a transition to a smaller target. It also requires a timing shift when changing from 5 yards to 10 yards. This integrates a number of important skills in one fairly quick, low round count exercise. Give it a try.**



## **New .38 Special load from Federal**

**There are still a lot of .38/.357 revolvers in active use, both in service revolver configuration and as various snubbies such as the S&W j-frame models. For decades, we have struggled with the search for an effective load to carry in these wheelguns.**

**In the 3"-4" barrel service revolver, there are several pretty good choices. The old stand-by 158 grain +P lead semi-wadcutter hollowpoints still work pretty well. Often called "the FBI load" because they issued it for many years, the Winchester and Federal versions are still a viable choice. The 135 grain Speer Gold Dot +P snubby load also seems to perform well in the 3"-4" barrel guns.**

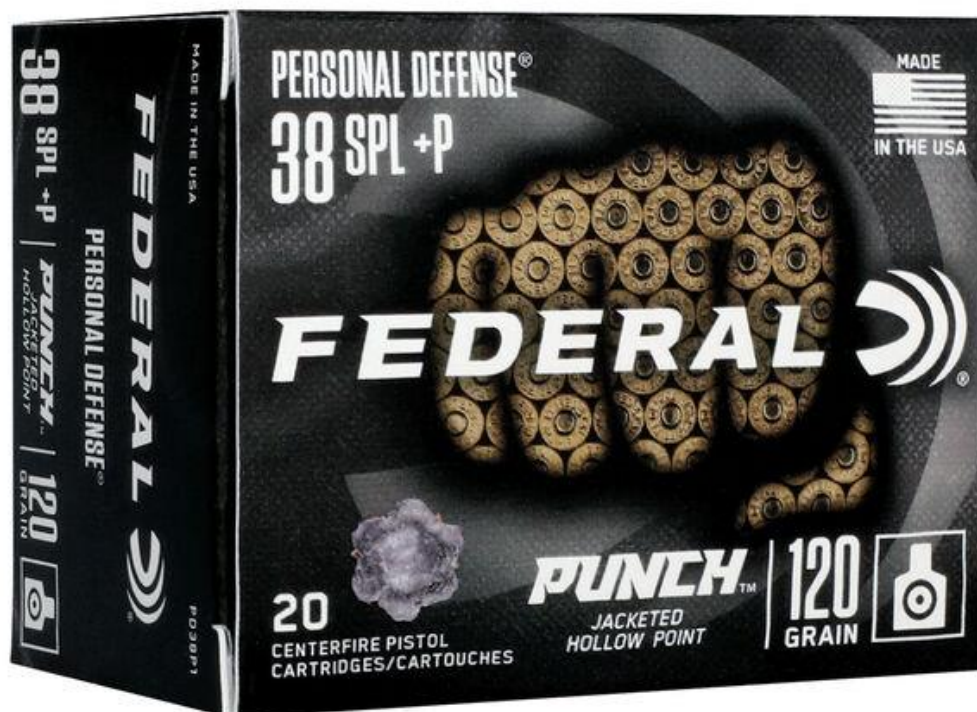
**The 2" barrel snub nosed guns are a different matter. The barrel is so short that most loads don't generate enough velocity to perform really well in flesh. The Speer 135 gr .38 Special +P Gold Dot mentioned above was designed specifically to perform in these short barrels. One does not get something for nothing, so recoil is stout, particularly in aluminum framed guns. For this reason, many of us have stayed with Federal Gold Medal Match 148 grain wadcutters in our pocket rockets. The wadcutter load is quite accurate, penetrates deeply, has a sharp cutting shoulder for tissue damage, and has a lot less recoil to deal with, making follow-up shots faster/easier.**

**Federal recently introduced a new .38 Special load, and I acquired some for testing. It is a 120 grain jacketed hollowpoint, in +P loading. It has sealed primers in brass**

cases and comes in 20 round boxes. The catalog velocity is 1,000 fps in a 4" barrel.

At a recent range trip, I shot some through my chronograph from a vintage Smith & Wesson Model 12 with 2" barrel. This is one of my favorite snubs. Velocity averaged 1,005 feet per second, despite the short barrel. There was no visible flash or smoke in daylight, and accuracy was very good. Extraction was easy. The bullet shape facilitates reloading with a Speed Strip or speedloader. Recoil was fairly sharp in the aluminum framed Model 12.

I think this would be an excellent load in a 3"-4" barrel K-frame, like a Model 64 or 66. If you are recoil sensitive, this might not be your best bet in an aluminum framed j-frame. Federal product stock number is PD38P1 .



## **What Goes Around, Goes Around Again...**

**I have said for a long time that the topics of interest in the firearms training community are stuck in an endless 15 year cycle. Point shooting vs aimed fire; 9mm vs .45; revolver versus autoloader; etc. ad nauseum keep coming up as each new generation of students enters the field. My colleague Bryan Eastridge recently wrote an excellent article on this phenomenon, showing timely examples from multiple 15 year stretches of gun magazine articles. Give it a read, I think you will be a bit surprised that the language changes and the tech stuff evolves, but we're still covering the same crap as in 1976. Here is a link to his piece:**

[https://www.patreon.com/posts/73975204?utm\\_campaign=postshare\\_creator](https://www.patreon.com/posts/73975204?utm_campaign=postshare_creator)

### **IMPROVED TARGETS FOR IMPROVED PERFORMANCE**

**One of the things our training/practice must address is the ability to hit an anatomical feature inside a target without visible scoring rings or other indicators.**

**One way to do this is very simple. Use a die cut cardboard silhouette, like the excellent ones available from Shoot Steel targets. Turn the blank side toward you. Shoot the desired drill or course of fire, aiming where you think you should. When finished, retrieve the target and score the exit holes on the printed side.**

**This simple expedient forces one to learn to shoot for an anatomically vital area under more realistic conditions.**



**Here is another way to enhance the realism of your training/practice.**

**Use a die cut silhouette target, preferably the excellent ones from Shoot Steel targets ([shootsteel.com](http://shootsteel.com)) . Use a worn-out shirt to clothe the target. A printed face completes the picture. We now have a target that looks a lot like a human adversary. In addition, the scoring areas are covered, and cannot be seen. Shoot your desired drill or course of fire, then simply unbutton the shirt to score and paste. This gives**

you a visual representation of a real attacker, while requiring proper shot placement from you.

## **A Custom Snubby .38**

For many years Colt was the world's preeminent manufacturer of handguns. In the early days of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, until after WWII, Colt was the main supplier of handguns to the US military, federal and local law enforcement agencies, and private citizens around the world. In response to demand for a more concealable handgun, in 1927 Colt introduced the Detective Special. This was essentially the very popular Colt Police Positive revolver with a 2" barrel replacing the standard 4", 5", or 6" barrel of the Police Positive. The Police Positive was a very compact revolver, with a smaller frame than that of the Smith & Wesson Military and Police model or the Colt Official Police model. These two service revolvers comprised the vast bulk of the revolvers carried in uniform by American police officers of that day, and both were a bit large for pocket carry. The Detective Special was an instant success. Weighing just 23 ounces, holding 6 rounds of .38 Special ammo, in a sturdy but compact package, the gun was soon in great demand.

As is often the case, Colt introduced the Detective Special to service a market that a few custom gunsmiths had been selling to. Custom shops like King's Gun Works and individuals like J.H. Fitzgerald had been cutting back longer barrels to 2", rounding off the butt, and making a few other modifications to enhance ease of carry. A lot of experienced gunmen of the 1920's carried these "belly guns" as second,



or back-up guns. I decided that a revolver set up in the King's/Fitzgerald tradition was in order.

I recently acquired a custom Colt snub set up by Frank Glenn in Arizona (<http://glenncustom.com/index.html>). Glenn is well known in both competition shooting and custom gunsmithing circles. Back in the day when I carried a 1911, I used a Glenn Custom 1911 in a class taught by Clint Smith. In two days I put 900 rounds through the gun with no malfunctions, no cleaning, and no re-lubing. That is a testament to his craftsmanship.



For this snubby project, Glenn started with a Police Positive. He cut the barrel back to precisely 2 inches, then installed a very nice ramped front sight, which is highly visible, but snag-proof. He bobbed the hammer slightly, understanding that Colt's still have to have adequate hammer mass for reliable primer ignition. The trigger action was honed and smoothed, resulting in a very shootable double-action trigger pull and a target grade single action trigger. By starting with a longer barrel Police Positive, Glenn was able to retain the

full length ejector rod of the longer barrel specimen, giving reliable ejection of fired cases when reloading. The backstrap of the butt was stippled, which keeps the little gun from squirming in the hand under the recoil of +P .38 loads. Finally, he regulated the sights perfectly and re-blued the pistol. I could not be happier with the little blaster.



In a recent range trip, I tried three loads in the little Colt, to see what I would want to use in it for defense. I used a target the same size as a modern playing card, about 2.5" X 3.25", at 7 yards, a reasonable distance for checking out a snub. All three loads hit right to point of aim.



**Federal Gold Medal Match 148 grain wadcutters chronographed at 705 feet per second and were quite accurate (no surprise). The new Federal 120 grain +P jacketed hollow point “Punch” load was right at 1,000 fps and shot very well. The last load was Fiocchi 148 grain wadcutters. This load shot very well and was quite mild. It would be a good practice round for an Airweight aluminum snub, but I would not carry it. Muzzle velocity is only about 550 feet per second in a two inch barrel, about 200 fps faster than a Red Ryder BB gun.**





**The only thing I added to Glenn's work was a set of Secret Service stocks from Eagle Grips. These give an excellent grasp for shooting without adding a lot of bulk to a compact revolver.**

**This one is a keeper.**

## How Many Cops Are There?

The Bureau of Justice Statistics recently released a report on the status of local policing in the US. There are about 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the US, employing about 1.2 million people. The comments below pertain to local police departments and Sheriff's Offices, not State and Federal agencies.

As of December 31, 2020, more than 14,700 general-purpose law enforcement agencies in the United States employed about 708,000 full-time sworn officers and 348,000 full-time civilians. Local police departments accounted for about 80% (11,800) of the general-purpose agencies, employing nearly 67% (473,000) of full-time sworn personnel and 36% (126,000) of full-time civilian personnel. Civilian personnel include officers or deputies with limited or no arrest powers and nonsworn personnel.

Local police departments in the United States employed about 473,000 full-time sworn officers and 126,000 full-time civilian personnel in 2020. Almost half (46%) of all local police departments employed fewer than 10 full-time-equivalent sworn officers. In local police departments serving 250,000 or more residents, about 16% of police chiefs were female.

About 14% of full-time sworn officers and 11% of first-line supervisors across local police departments were female. About 12% of full-time sworn officers in local police departments were black, and 14% were Hispanic.

In local police departments serving 1 million or more residents, about 47% of full-time sworn officers were white and 30% were Hispanic. About 47% of chiefs of local police departments serving 250,000 or more residents were white, 38% were black, and 13% were Hispanic.

Most local police departments serving 100,000 or more residents had specialized units or other designated personnel for sexual assault (94%), child abuse/endangerment (92%), and mental health/crisis intervention (79%).

In cities with a population of half a million or less, there were usually about 1.5 officers per 1,000 residents. In larger cities, this grows to 2-3 officers per 1,000 residents. Bear in mind that it takes 4.2 officers in a 40 hour week to man one one-man patrol car for a week. There are always employees missing due to illness, injury, vacations, etc. Thus, in a department of 1,000 officers, only around 200 are actually on duty at any time.

## **UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS**

**Kansas City area    Feb 24-26, 2023    Instructor    Pistol**

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

**Nashville, TN    Feb 25-26    Combative Pistol (Aqil Qadir)**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/combative-pistol-skills-tickets-467963811357>

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

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

**Tac Con                    March 24-26   Dallas   **sold out****

**Bandera, TX            Mar 31-Apr 2    Master Instructor**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/master-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-291074159647>   **sold out**

**Nampa, Idaho   April 15-16   Combative Pistol   **(Aqil Qadir)****

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/combative-pistol-skills-tickets-468735750247>

**KR Training, TX    Apr 27, Defensive Shotgun one day**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/one-day-defensive-shotgun-course-tickets-291819629367>

**KR Training, TX   Apr 28-30   Instructor, pistol**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/three-day-firearms-instructor-development-course-tickets-291824203047>

## **TAC CON TRAINER PROFILE, Tim Herron**

Tim has been a USPSA Grand Master since 2014, has won numerous single stack titles, and continues to shoot enthusiastically, always pursuing improvement. Tim has been instructing since 2015, and loves working with people of all skill levels. His finely tuned eye for detail and personal "trial and error"

experience gives him the ability to spot inefficiencies that many people overlook.

His teaching style focuses on an individual's strengths and weaknesses, and he teaches classes with the sole goal of making sure no student feels left behind, ignored, or treated differently, regardless of their abilities or equipment. Tim fosters an atmosphere of fun and personal development, making a personal investment in the improvement of every shooter. Tim will be teaching a handgun block at Tac Con.





## **PATREON PAGE**

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**Playing card shot and signed by John Wesley Hardin,  
July 4, 1893.**