



NOVEMBER 2026 NEWSLETTER

DRILL OF THE MONTH

Throughout 2026 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/> .

SCAT, the Short Combat Accuracy Test

Lots of shooters would like to know how their current skill level compares to an established standard. The best way to do this is with a hit factor (Comstock Count) scored test that covers a variety of useful skills.

The problem with a time limit course or drill is that it does not reward performance above the expected baseline. Let's say two shooters have their own target at 6 yards, and the target has an 8" vital zone delineated in the chest. The shooters are told to draw and fire 3 rounds in 3 seconds. On signal, they do just that. Both have all 3 rounds in the circle, and both beat the 3 second time limit, so they both get exactly the same score. However, one of them did the task in 1.4 seconds, the other in 2.8 seconds. The

second shooter took *twice as long* to perform the task, so he is nowhere near as skillful as the guy who did the task in half the time.

This drill is meant to be shot on a Rangemaster Q-5 or Q-6 silhouette, scoring the chest circle and head box as 5 points, the rest of the silhouette 3 points. If you must use an IDPA target, score the A and B zones as 5 points, the C zone as 3 points, no points for the D zone.

The score sheet follows, so you can print it and use it for your run. Total target points, divided by total time, X 20 gives you your final score. At the bottom of the page you will see a score range with a skill level shown for each. These ratings are based on literally decades of watching police patrol officers, SWAT cops, military Spec Ops guys, and trained private citizens perform the listed tasks.

For the score ratings to be relevant, please:

Shoot this cold, no warm-up.

Street gear, fully concealed. No open carry or USPSA race rigs.

Shoot as fast as you feel you can get good hits.

Note: DHO-Dominant Hand Only/ NDHO-Non-dominant hand only

A blank score sheet follows. Print it and use it to record your run.

SCAT Score Sheet

Name _____ Date _____

	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>Rds</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Time</u>
1	5 yds	Holster	4	Chest	
2A	5 yds	Ready	1	Head	
2B	5 yds	Ready	1	Head	
3	5 yds	Ready DHO	3	Chest	
4	5 yds	Ready NDHO	3	Chest	
5	7 yds	Holster	4	Chest	
6	10 yds	Holster	4	Chest	
Total Points (100)				Total Time	
Total Points <i>divided by</i> Total Time					
(Total Points / Total Time) x 20				Final Score	

RFTS-Q5 or Q-6 Target = Scoring is 5, 3

80-100 Competent

101-125 Advanced

126+ Highly Skilled

SCAT Score Sheet

Name T. GIVENS Date 9/2/26

	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>Rds</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Time</u>
1	5 yds	Holster	4	Chest	2.91
2A	5 yds	Ready	1	Head	1.82
2B	5 yds	Ready	1	Head	1.72
3	5 yds	Ready DHO	3	Chest	1.56
4	5 yds	Ready NDHO	3	Chest	1.41
5	7 yds	Holster	4	Chest	3.24
6	10 yds	Holster	4	Chest	3.64
Total Points (100)			98	Total Time	44.3
Total Points <i>divided by</i> Total Time					6.85
(Total Points / Total Time) x 20				Final Score	137.06

RFTS-Q5 or Q-6 Target = Scoring is 5, 3

80-100 Competent

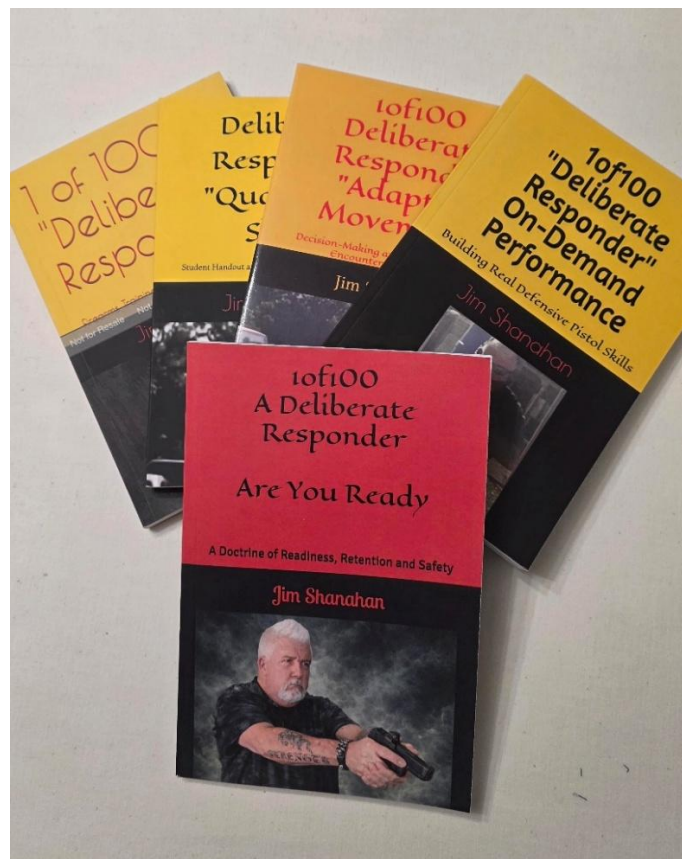
101-125 Advanced

126+ Highly Skilled

Are You Ready?

Jim Shanahan is a gifted trainer and a very articulate writer. An IPSC Grand Master, IDPA Master in multiple divisions, US Army veteran, etc Jim is also a keen observer of firearms training. He has written a series of five short books, each one covering a different aspect of defensive handgun use. His latest offering is Are You Ready? .

In this book Jim takes a very detailed look at the various ready positions currently being taught, with clear instructions on how to assume that ready position. He also looks at the tactical, legal and safety implications of each ready position and counsels against a “one size fits all” approach. Available from Amazon and highly recommended.



Good Days and Bad Days

I'm 74 now, and both hands have arthritis and nerve damage. Some days they work OK, some they do not. I like to keep up with an accurate assessment of my on-demand skills, so I worked up a little spread-sheet type form in which I record the results of every range practice session. That way, I can track progress, and get a better over-view of my skills. I have included a blank sheet here that you can print and use for your own skill tracking.

For instance, I looked at three standard skill tests that I frequently shoot. These stretch back over the past ten range sessions. Rather than only remember my best performance, averaging ten scores gives me a better idea of how I can perform that particular test. Here are examples from my score sheet:

Baseline Assessment Drill, lowest score- 184- highest score- 198. Average of ten scores- 192.1, 96.05%

Pistol Master Award, Bullseye portion- lowest score- 93.3% highest score- 98.0% Average of ten scores- 95.28%

SCAT, lowest score- 125.08 highest score- 156.0 average of ten scores- 137.97

SCAT is a good example. I could say I shoot in the 150's, because I had 2 scores of 153.8 and 156.0, but the ten range trip average is lower than that.

Using this approach will help you see where you are holding strong, and what areas you might want to work on. It also gives you a much better idea of your on-demand level of performance, which is what really matters.

Firearms Instructor Lucas Silveira wrote the following, continuing this discussion of skill measurement. It includes a handy form you can use in evaluating specific skills.

Why Your Fastest Draw Is Not Your Baseline

By Lucas Silveira

A shooter performs five draws from concealment. The recorded times are 1.41, 1.36, 1.89, 1.52, and 1.47 seconds. Which number will he remember? Usually, 1.36. Which number best describes what he can repeat? Certainly not 1.36 by itself.

The fastest run is real, but it is an extreme observation. It tells us what happened once under those conditions. It does not tell us what the shooter normally produces, how consistent the performance is, or whether the shot met the required accuracy standard.

This matters because defensive handgun training should develop performance that can be delivered on demand. A single highlight-reel draw may be encouraging, but it is a poor diagnostic tool. The shooter cannot choose which repetition will be required in an emergency.

A Simple Five-Draw Baseline

A useful field baseline does not need to be complicated. It does need to be standardized. Use the same handgun, holster, concealment garment, target, distance, scoring area, start position, and timer settings for all five repetitions. Decide in advance whether the test will be performed cold or after a warm-up, and record that choice.

Next, define a valid repetition before the first signal. A practical standard might require one hit inside a clearly identified scoring area, a properly recorded time, and no safety or procedural error. An invalid run remains in the record. Do not erase it and shoot another. Otherwise, the test quickly becomes a search for five favorable attempts rather than an honest sample of performance. Perform five draws and record every result. Then calculate three simple measures:

- **Average valid time:** Add the times of the valid repetitions and divide by the number of valid repetitions.
- **Spread:** Subtract the fastest valid time from the slowest valid time. A smaller spread indicates greater consistency under the tested conditions.
- **Valid rate:** Divide the number of valid repetitions by five. Four valid runs produce an 80 percent valid rate; five produce 100 percent.

Reading the Numbers

Return to the opening example. The average time is 1.53 seconds, the spread is 0.53 seconds, and the valid rate is 100 percent, assuming all five shots met the standard. That description is less exciting than saying, “I have a 1.36-second draw,” but it is much more useful.

The three measures also reveal different training problems. A fast average with a wide spread may indicate speed that is not yet stable. A respectable average with a poor valid rate may show that the shooter is exceeding the speed at which he can reliably confirm an acceptable sight picture and control the trigger. A

slightly slower average with a narrow spread and a 100 percent valid rate may represent a much stronger foundation.

Five repetitions are not enough to describe every aspect of a shooter's ability, and the results should not be confused with a laboratory-grade measurement. They are a brief field snapshot. Even so, a standardized five-run sample is far more informative than reporting only the best attempt.

Once the baseline is recorded, change one thing at a time. The next training block might address garment clearance, initial hand movement, grip establishment, visual confirmation, or trigger control. Retest under the same conditions. If several variables change at once, it becomes difficult to know what produced the result.

Your best run shows what may be possible. Your average, spread, and valid rate show what you actually delivered across the test. Train the first, but make decisions from the second. In defensive shooting, repeatable performance is the standard that matters.

Free worksheet: TMM Draw Baseline Scorecard —

<https://www.abaintl.us/draw-baseline/>

Author bio: *Lucas Silveira is Chief Instructor at ABA Intl — Evidence-Led Combat Shooting. He has more than 15 years of instructional experience, including work as a private military contractor in Baghdad. He is currently based in Brazil.*



TRAINING RECORD

DATE

Bullseye

SCAT

IDC-Q

AIC-Q

OTHER

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

How to Have More Violent Crime

Chicago has some of the harshest gun control laws in the US. Illinois does not recognize any other state's permits, and there are numerous restrictions on where Illinois residents with permits can carry. Chicago has no cost bail, and violent criminals are arrested, set free, arrested, set free, ad nauseum. Many violent felons have been arrested 30-40 times convicted of 5-10 serious offenses, but still spend no real time in lock-up. As a result, the murder rate in Chicago is 21.5 per 100,000 residents.

Contrast the state of Florida. Anyone who can legally buy a gun may carry it, openly or concealed, including handguns and long guns. There are over 2 million Florida residents with gun permits, mostly for travel out of state, and Florida recognizes all states' permits. There are very few restrictions on where a citizen may carry. Violent criminals get real prison sentences and serve them. As a result, Florida's homicide rate is 5.5 per 100,000 residents, about 1/4 of Chicago's rate.

LEGAL CHANGES

Laws governing carrying a pistol for self defense have been changing rapidly around the country for several years now. There are now 29 states that do not require a permit in order to go armed. On the other hand, a few of the Democrat run states have added restrictions on where permit holders may legally possess a firearm. The best source for up to date, state by state information still appears to be Handgunlaw.us . Their website has a map of the US. Just click on the desired state and all of the relevant statutory information about that state will appear. When traveling, for instance, it's a really good idea to prevent unpleasant surprises by checking this site first.

New Benelli Auto Shotgun

Sherman House is a Rangemaster certified handgun and shotgun instructor with a great deal of training and experience. He has written a very thorough and detailed review of the new Benelli auto shotgun, with lots of pics. It's too long to include here, so here is a link:

<https://civiliandefender.com/2026/09/28/the-italian-invasion-benellis-newest-semi-auto-shotgun-the-m2-g1/>

UPCOMING TRAINING EVENTS

JAN 22-24 Instructor Development Course

Homestead, FL (Miami)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/6a0626df609670070cd5479c>

FEB 6-7 Intensive Pistol Skills

Williston, FL (Gainesville/Ocala/Orlando area)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/6a1242acf9af4d8caac9e1ed>

FEB 19-21 Master Instructor Development

Lakeland, FL (halfway between Tampa and Orlando)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/6a0f8e693cd47574af51d1a3>

MAR 20-21 Combative Pistol

Lakeland, FL (halfway between Tampa and Orlando)

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/6a0f90953cd47574af52101e>

APR 2-4 Tactical Conference 2027

Carrollton, Texas (Dallas)

<https://taccon.info/>

April 10-11 Advanced Instructor Course, Beaumont, Texas

<https://rangemaster.corsizio.com/event/6abab3ce58bc4d93572467>

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THE MAN WHO WOULDN'T DIE: WHAT THE 1986 MIAMI SHOOTOUT STILL TEACHES US

By Jeff Boren, Rangemaster certified Professional Pistolcraft Instructor.

Originally published in 2025. Revised September 2026.

It's a detail that doesn't get much attention, but it's impossible to ignore once you see it.

Michael Platt killed Special Agent Jerry Dove, and Dove killed Platt. Platt just killed Dove a whole lot faster.

That fact alone opens up a lesson hiding in plain sight. In the deadliest gunfight in FBI history, two men were locked in a brutal exchange, both inflicted fatal wounds, and yet one continued to fight and kill long after the other had dropped. This is more than an eerie footnote. It's a mirror held up to our assumptions about combative shooting, stopping power, and what it really means to be ready.

Historical Context: What Happened in Miami

On the morning of April 11, 1986, eight FBI agents attempted to apprehend two armed robbery suspects, Michael Platt and William Matix, in Miami, Florida. Platt and Matix had committed a string of violent bank robberies and murders in the area, and the FBI's C-1 Surveillance Team set up along South Dixie Highway to catch them. What followed was a brutal four-minute gunfight in a tight suburban space that left two FBI agents dead, five more wounded, and both suspects killed.

Platt, a former Army Ranger, proved to be the dominant force in the fight. Despite receiving multiple gunshot wounds early on, including what would later be deemed a fatal shot from

Agent Dove, he remained mobile, aggressive, and effective for several more minutes, ultimately killing both Dove and Ben Grogan before being stopped by Agent Ed Mireles.

The Anatomy of the Kill

By all accounts, the one solid hit Agent Dove landed on Michael Platt was a good one. His 9mm Silvertip round entered the upper arm, tore through the brachial artery, passed into Platt's chest, and collapsed a lung. The wound was later determined to be non-survivable.

But it was one hit. Dove fired roughly twenty rounds at Platt from about ten yards to get it. That wasn't an ammunition failure. The round that connected did exactly what it was designed to do.

A few more of them, and Platt almost certainly goes down sooner, before he ever gets around that car.

But Platt wasn't finished.

Far from it.

Despite being mortally wounded, Platt fought his way around a car and launched an aggressive and precise assault that killed both Agent Dove and Agent Grogan. Dove's shot would kill him, but not in time to stop him from doing more damage. Platt, in contrast, fired two point-blank rounds into Agent Dove's head and moved on. Final. Immediate. Irreversible.

This is the switch versus timer effect. Central nervous system shots are a light switch: immediate shutdown. Shots to the vital organs, like the heart or lungs, are a timer. They're deadly, but not always fast enough. Agent Dove hit the timer. Platt hit the switch.

Physiological Resilience: Why Platt Didn't Drop

One of the most haunting realities of the Miami shootout is how long Michael Platt remained a lethal threat after sustaining non-survivable injuries. His ability to continue fighting wasn't mystical. It was physiological. The body under duress, flooded with adrenaline, running on trained motor patterns and the psychological drive to win, can accomplish astonishing things.

Platt had a military background, was familiar with violence, and likely had the mental and physical conditioning that made him difficult to stop. The result was terrifying: a mortally wounded man operating with shocking clarity and aggression for several minutes.

The Lethality Gap

The takeaway is stark. We can win the medical outcome and still lose the fight.

The human body, especially when paired with violent resolve, can absorb massive trauma and continue functioning. Platt, carrying what amounted to a mortal wound, kept pressing forward with discipline, aggression, and mechanical skill. He moved. He shot. He killed. He only stopped when Agent Ed Mireles delivered multiple rounds from a revolver into his face and chest, and even then it was not instant.

This gap between dying and being stopped is where the danger lives. In that space, lives are lost, sometimes in seconds the clock won't give back. This is why the idea of one shot, one stop has done more harm than good. It assumes a fragility that history has shown just doesn't exist.

Platt was proof.

Train for Platt

We train to face Michael Platt. Anything less leaves us underprepared for the fight that matters.

Yes, there are times when a gun comes out and the threat stops. Yes, sometimes a single round drops an attacker. And yes, psychological stops are real. But those are the easy fights, the ones where the threat wants to quit. We cannot afford to train for the easiest fight and expect to survive the worst one.

Michael Platt didn't want to quit. He didn't care about pain. He didn't panic. He didn't stop.

When we train, we're not preparing for a nervous teenager or an addict with a revolver. We're preparing for someone who won't stop until their last breath. That's the standard. Anything less, and we're planning to be surprised.

As William Aprill once said, "You must believe that there are people who are truly committed to hurting you. Not just willing but committed." Platt wasn't willing. He was committed. And if our training doesn't account for that kind of adversary, it isn't training for real life. It's training for a comfortable illusion.

Tactical Shifts Born from Blood

The aftermath of the Miami shootout reshaped how law enforcement trained, armed, and equipped its agents. The FBI moved away from the 9mm Silvertip, opting for larger calibers and deeper penetration, first with a brief run of 10mm pistols and ultimately the .40 S&W, then back to 9mm with vastly improved ammunition. Whether the ammunition deserved the blame is another question. The round that hit Platt worked. The nineteen that missed are the harder lesson. Just as important, the emphasis shifted from scoring hits to stopping the threat, with a new priority on hits that actually end fights. Training followed suit. Static range drills gave way to scenarios that were more dynamic and more violent, closer to what the agents on South Dixie Highway had actually faced.

Many of these changes filtered into civilian combative training as well, reinforcing the reality that not all gunfights look like square range practice.

The Will to Win Isn't Just for the Good Guys

One of the greatest mistakes we can make is believing the will to win is reserved for the righteous. Platt had it in spades. Evil can be incredibly determined. It can press forward through unimaginable injuries, especially when the attacker is experienced, committed, and without moral hesitation.

I have no doubt that while Platt lay there intubated, had he been able to reach a trigger, he would still have been trying to kill. That's the level of commitment we're talking about. It's a mindset we have

to acknowledge and be prepared to defeat, not just with gear or technique, but with will of our own.

Contextual Balance: Yes, Platt Was Rare

To be fair, most violent encounters don't involve adversaries like Michael Platt. Many attackers are opportunists, not warriors. Some will flee when faced with resistance. Others are psychologically unprepared to be shot at, much less shot.

But that cannot be our benchmark. We don't train for most fights. We train for the worst one we could realistically face. The rare but ruinous kind. The one where the attacker is willing to crawl through broken glass, soaked in blood, just to get one more shot off.

The Miami shootout led to sweeping changes in FBI policy, firearms training, and mindset. Those changes likely saved countless lives. But beyond the calibers and tactics, Platt left behind one last lesson, maybe the most important one.

Not every threat stops when it should.

Some won't stop at all.

Train accordingly.



TACTICAL CONFERENCE 2027

Dallas Pistol Club, Carrollton, Texas (Dallas suburb)

April 2-4, 2027

We still have a few tickets remaining. See <https://taccon.info/> for more information and to register. We have a number of new classes and new trainers this year. Don't miss out, register today.

