

FLAWLESS IN A SHOOT HOUSE: **DANIEL DEFENSE'S M4V7**



# TACTICAL WORLD



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PROPERLY?

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MASTER YOUR TACTICAL SHOOTING WITH SOF VET **KYLE LAMB**

FROM THE EDITORS OF GUN WORLD  
SUMMER 2018 • U.S. \$9.99 • DISPLAY UNTIL: 8/21/18



**8 COMBAT  
KNIVES**  
TOP TACTICAL CHOICES



**IS MCCREE'S Q10 .300 V/M**  
THE ULTIMATE SNIPER RIFLE?



A close-up, low-angle shot of a soldier in full tactical gear, including a helmet with night vision and a microphone. The soldier is holding a rifle, and the focus is on the hands and the weapon. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the textures of the gear and the soldier's features. The word 'REALITY' is overlaid in large, semi-transparent, grey letters across the center of the image.

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# CONTENTS

## COVER STORY

### 52 TACTICAL ENHANCEMENTS

Two words: Kyle Lamb. In this exclusive, the U.S. Army Special Operations vet provides tips on how to improve your shooting with a sling.

By Dave Rhoden

## FEATURES

### 18 SMART AROUND CARS

We've got some critical tips to keep in mind when you are practicing for armed defense with a rifle around a vehicle.

By Rob Pincus

## 22 Special Section: Tactical Armor

### 24 INSPIRED BY TRAGEDY

This inside look at Team Wendy takes you inside their company, product and philosophy.

By Doug Jeffrey

### 32 ALL DAY LONG

We had the opportunity to review one of Team Wendy's latest helmets. Is it as good as they say?

By Mike Searson

### 38 PROTECT & SERVE

As we all know far too well, active shooters seem to be part of society right now. That's one great reason U.S. Armor developed some innovative technology.

By Doug Jeffrey

### 44 THE KEEPER

If you're looking for a pistol that performs like a pro in tactical scenarios, look no further than Daniel Defense's M4V7.

By Richard Schutz

### 62 FORCE-ON-FORCE PRINCIPLES

The message is simple: Train like you fight, and you will fight like you train. We explain how.

By Mike Searson

### 68 THE FIGHTER

We could tell you that Geoff Reeves is an extraordinary man; instead, we'll let you read all about this retired U.S. Navy SEAL so you can see for yourself.

By Doug Jeffrey

### 74 AN OFFICER & A TACTICIAN

To find out if the massive chatter over this flashlight is deserved, we put it in the hands of a LEO.

By Drew Pruhs

### 78 BOLD NEW HEIGHTS

Desert Tech's SRS-A1 Covert makes a believer out of a police sniper.

By Mike Numainville

### 96 WAVE OF THE FUTURE

Optical battle sights are all the rage, but have you considered all the "optic" angles?

By Chuck Taylor

### 102 THE TACTICAL EDGE

Seemingly, there are a million choices out there for tactical knives. Fortunately, we've narrowed it down to the top 8.

By Joshua Swanagon

### 108 BEST OF BREED

The Terrier LT-79 is a new light, multi-role vehicle, and we got up-close and personal with it.

By a Staff Writer

### 112 WEAPONIZED MATH

We reviewed what may be the ultimate SOF sniper rifle.

By Gordon Meehl

38



24



78



### 120 EXTREME TEST

In the real world, you better have a little fitness to go along with your shooting skills. The Cola Warrior provides a test of both.

By Mike Searson

## COLUMNS

- 06 FRONT SIGHTS
- 08 TACTICALLY SET
- 13 WARFIGHTERS
- 14 THREADS
- 122 RANGE TIME

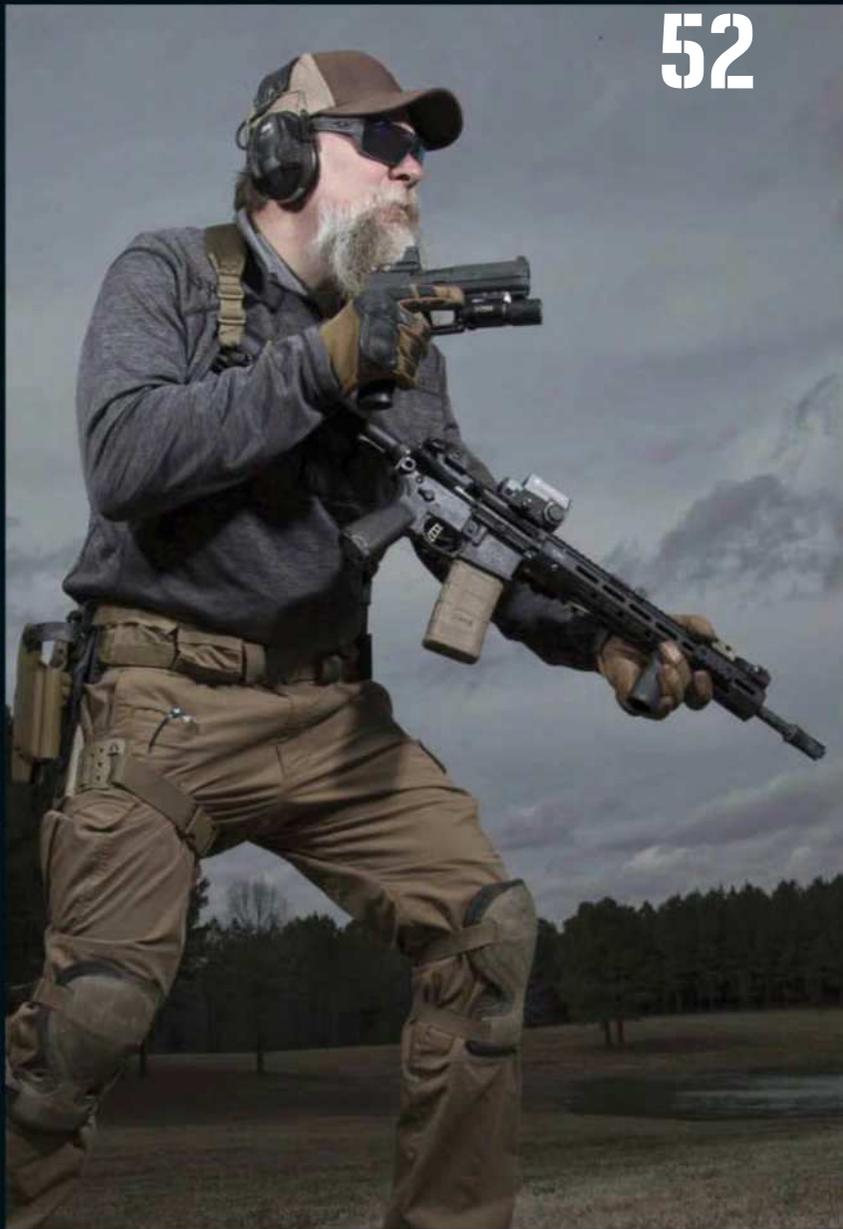
ON THE COVER  
Subject: Kyle Lamb  
Photographer: Lukas Lamb  
Designer: Eric Knagg

## BUYER'S GUIDE

### 86 TRAUMA KITS



62



52



102



44



68



112



108

FRONT SIGHTS

# BACK TO BASICS

It is often said that if someone performs the basics well, they are an expert. We find this to be a true statement, especially when considering all things tactical.

As you read through this issue, you will likely find something that catches your eye in the form of a rifle review, or a flashlight, or even Kyle Lamb's revelations about two-point slings and their use.

These may seem like basic items for anyone who follows our way of life: LEO, security contractor, military, armed citizen—and we may take them for granted. So, if you are a grizzled vet, I urge you to take a second look at what is being presented. You might learn something new or remember something forgotten.

You will find several articles dedicated to armor, shields and helmets—and not in a "Game of Thrones" kind of way. These are realistic, lifesaving solutions dedicated to keeping the good guys safe and making the bad guys less effective. It gets back to the basics of personal protection.

Our buyer's guide on individual first aid

**"... IF YOU ARE A GRIZZLED VET, I URGE YOU TO TAKE A SECOND LOOK AT WHAT IS BEING PRESENTED..."**

kits and blow-out kits may not seem as radical as a buyer's guide on polymer-framed next-gen handguns, but consider that most people will have a greater need for such a kit when disaster strikes, be it a shooting, car accident or some other calamity.

We touch on training with a story about a force-on-force class. Part of the class is a basic primer on interacting with other people while armed. And, if you really want to put your gear to the test, check out what we saw at Cola Warrior West.

Getting back to the basics, we have two excellent pieces about using sights versus not using sights, using a red dot on a handgun and steering clear of them in favor of irons. Both sides have merit, and anyone who wants to become a better shooter needs to make the decision on which route to take.

There is a cornucopia of new gear we have seen recently and a buyer's guide to mankind's most basic tool—the knife.

We always strive to bring you the latest and greatest reviews of new products and training tips. At first glance, these may not appear "basic," yet give them time and put them through their paces. Using a new piece of gear, be it a rifle or trauma kit, will become second-nature as long as you start with the basic instructions. A new skill learned in training can become instinctual through repetition.

When in doubt, go back to the basics.

- Mike Searson

# TACTICAL WORLD

SUMMER 2018

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A woman with long brown hair, wearing a red zip-up jacket over a grey ribbed t-shirt and a tactical belt, is holding a black handgun with both hands. She has a serious expression. The background is dark and filled with smoke and orange sparks, suggesting a chaotic or action-filled scene.

CHAOS

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# GAME CHANGERS

**ACCESSORIES  
DESIGNED TO  
ENHANCE YOUR  
SKILLS, LIFESTYLE**

Story by a Staff Writer, Photos  
Courtesy of the Manufacturers

[01]





PTS736

PTS536

## FEATURED PRODUCT OF THE MONTH

### [01] FLIR THERMOSIGHT PRO PTS536 AND PTS736

August 2017. That's when predator hunters, invasive wildlife control specialists and tactical professionals had the opportunity to first try FLIR's ThermoSight Pro PTS233 thermal-imaging weapon sight. Powered by FLIR's newest, compact, uncooled, high-performance 12-micron Boson thermal camera core, the 19mm ThermoSight Pro PTS233 "set a new standard" in thermal image quality, while offering a "wealth of innovative and intuitive performance features." And the price rolled in at less than \$2,200. But that was last year. This year FLIR introduced two new ThermoSight Pro thermal riflescopes: the 50mm ThermoSight Pro PTS536 and 75mm ThermoSight Pro PTS736.

#### First Look

Both new FLIR ThermoSight Pro models are powered by FLIR's 12-micron pixel pitch FLIR Boson thermal camera core, which delivers smaller, lighter optics with increased image performance and range. Featuring on-chip video processing and an uncompressed video signal fed directly to a bright, high-definition 1280 x 960 FLCOS display, the FLIR ThermoSight Pro Series offers improved object detection and classification in the field and clean thermal imagery in any light—from low contrast daylight to total darkness. And this includes smoke, haze and light fog. Both new ThermoSight Pro models offer 60Hz video refresh rates, 320 x 256 thermal resolution, USB-C connectivity, user-controlled imaging palettes, image enhancement filters, and built-in digital compass and inclinometer.

Shot-activated onboard recording allows for the internal storage of up to two-and-a-half hours of video or 1,000 JPEG images. ThermoSight Pro models also feature multiple reticle and thermal palette options and "crisp" iconology and graphic overlays over virtually all backgrounds.

#### Features

- The new FLIR ThermoSight Pro PTS536 features a 50mm lens, 4x optical magnification, 4x digital zoom and a 4.5°W × 3.5°H FOV.
- The new FLIR ThermoSight Pro PTS736 features a 75mm lens, 6x optical magnification, 4x digital zoom and a 3°W × 2.5°H FOV.

#### The Bottom Line

- The new FLIR ThermoSight Pro PTS536 and PTS736 will be available through established FLIR dealers in the U.S. at MAPs with price tags set to be \$3,795 and \$4,795, respectively.

Web: [FLIR.com](http://FLIR.com)



## [02] FORREST TOOL CO. MAX MULTIPURPOSE TOOL KIT

Endorsements can mean a lot, and that's especially the case when it's the U.S. Army. Officials at Forrest told us that the MAX has become a standard spec component of nearly all of the Army's light and medium tactical vehicles, including AM General's HMMWV, Force Protection's Buffalo, Textron's M1117 Security Vehicle, BAE's Caiman and General Dynamics' LAV-25. Plus, they say it is spec'd for the upcoming JLTV. The MAX Multipurpose Tool Kit, which is made in the United States, is a durable and lightweight hand tool that reduces weight, space and cost on lightweight and medium-weight tactical vehicles in the field. The MAX is a seven-tools-in-one multipurpose "solution" for all long-handle tool needs. The complete tool menu includes an ax/sledge, shovel, mattock, pick, broad pick, and a heavy-duty reversible rake and hoe, all fitting into a compact kit. The entire package weighs in at 12.5 pounds. Forrest Tool is a small, veteran-owned company.

### FAST FACTS

- Tempered tool steel
- 34-inch composite polyglass handle
- 3.5-pound Hudson Bay-style ax head
- Leather ax sheath
- Compact storage in a low-profile Cordura carrying case
- Suggested retail price: \$249.95

Web: [ForrestToolCo.com](http://ForrestToolCo.com)

## [03] LYMAN [TACSTAR] CARBON FIBER AR-15 HANDGUARDS

If you're looking for a handguard that is rugged, light and looks good, you may not have to look further than Lyman's carbon fiber AR-15 handguards that feature an integrated Picatinny rail. These are designed to provide an "unbeatable strength-to-weight ratio, offering durability and toughness to go along with their light weight and good looks." They also stay cool to the touch, even with extensive firing. Trevor Mullen, VP of Global Marketing and Business Development for Lyman Products, said, "Whether you are a competitor, professional or just enjoy a day at the range, this Tacstar carbon fiber handguard will make a difference in your shooting experience. First, you'll notice how lightweight it is at just four ounces. Second, after repeated shooting, the handguard stays cool to the touch. And, the integrated Picatinny rail is one less accessory you have to fool with when accessorizing your rifle. The Tacstar carbon fiber handguard is easy to attach and you'll appreciate its sleek appearance as much as all the other benefits." The fully free-floating octagon handguards are equipped with multiple cooling slots and accessory mounting points, which will accept any M-LOK-style mounting hardware used with accessories, such as slings, bipods, lights or vertical grips. The Tacstar handguard attaches to the rifle with an aluminum mounting sleeve, which simply clamps over the existing barrel nut.

### FAST FACTS

- 10-inch Carbine Length: MSRP \$174.98
- 12-inch Mid-Rifle Length: MSRP \$199.98
- 15-inch Full Rifle Length: MSRP \$224.98

Web: [LymanProducts.com](http://LymanProducts.com)

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[04]



[05]

## [04] RIDGE WALLET THE RIDGE

The Ridge is a modern, slim, front pocket wallet. The main compartment is an expandable card holder equipped with your choice of a money clip or cash strap. Over time, the typical leather bi-fold gets packed with faded receipts and unnecessary cards, resembling something more like a suitcase rather than a wallet. The Ridge re-evaluates your everyday carry and gets rid of the bulk. You might say that it's a new way to carry concealed.

"The Ridge was designed to keep a low profile in your front pocket, as well as alleviate lower back pain, block RFID skimming devices, and expand and contract to hold various amounts of cards," said Connor MacDonald, company executive. "Re-evaluating what you carry everyday ultimately allows you to carry less, but always have what you need."

### FAST FACTS

- Comes in aluminum, titanium, or carbon fiber
- Holds 1-12 cards without stretching out
- Blocks RFID (wireless theft)
- Replaceable elastic
- Backed by our lifetime warranty
- 3k carbon fiber weave, matte finish
- Weight: 1.6 ounces, 86 x 54 x 6mm
- MSRP: Starting at \$65

Web: [RidgeWallet.com](http://RidgeWallet.com)

## [05] SENTRY SENTINEL MULTI-GUN RANGE BAG

It's a good formula. The Sentinel Multi-Gun Range Bag is built *for* shooters *by* shooters. Here's one item that makes it very cool: It offers maximum storage. Just how much is that? How about 2,200 cubic inches? In addition to that, the bag is made from heavy-duty 600 Denier tear-resistant fabric, and the padded main compartment has a dual-zippered panel for easy access to that storage. Feel like a little customization? It has movable dual dividers that allow for easy customization. Three external pockets provide additional storage capacity. To top things off, the main pocket includes a hook-and-loop panel, elastic retention ports and mesh pockets. Among other items, the bag also includes a mounting panel on the front pocket to securely mount pouches, tools or accessories.

### FAST FACTS

- Available in Black or Wolf Gray
- The padded mat on back hides storage for cleaning kits and can be removed for use as a range or cleaning mats.
- MSRP: \$179.99

Web: [HexMag.com](http://HexMag.com) TW

## WARFIGHTERS

# THE FUTURE OF BATTLE

## AN INSIDE LOOK AT NEXT-GEN TECHNOLOGIES

Story by a Staff Writer | Photos by Sgt. Laiqa Hitt, Overwatch Defense

**T**hey are America's heroes. The men and women of our military provide 24/7 protection so we can live in freedom. To do this, they employ the best tactics, cutting-edge technology, and ridiculous skill and talent. In this new column, you're going to get a glimpse into their world. Welcome to Warfighters.



### DRONE KILLER

In this day and age, who would have figured that a net could be part of our arsenal? Well, think again. A U.S. Marine with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, Kilo Company utilizes a weapon that has the capabilities to shoot down drones with a net during Urban Advanced Naval Technology Exercise 2018 (ANTX18) at Camp Pendleton.



### NO DRIVER NEEDED

A Tethered Unmanned Ariel Vehicle (MUTT-T-UAV) is put to the test at ANTX-18. The U.S. Marines who handled this assignment are with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division.



### THE WEAPON THAT WILL CHANGE WARFARE

The value of cover for the enemy will be completely neutralized as Overwatch Defense and Ascent Aerosystems have introduced a simple, yet effective payload-delivering drone that features pinpoint precision. The weapon is called the Pholos, a handheld, man-portable drone bomb that can neutralize any sniper or hidden target, while more importantly removing the need for our soldiers to expose themselves from behind cover. Utilizing a remote-control unit, soldiers can launch these drone bombs, which have thermal imaging capability, right from their backpacks. The 22-inch long drone weighs 5 pounds and has a range of 25 kilometers. Once the coaxial UAV is above its objective and the target is positioned in the thermal reticle of the soldiers' display unit, the bomb is dropped onto the target utilizing gravity. It delivers a deadly payload of explosives, but avoids the type of collateral damage that other weapons may cause, said officials. The Pholos will provide soldiers with an estimated 500% increase in hit probability. Former Commander, Special Operations Command (SOCOM), BG(R) Sean Mullholland said, "The Pholos system finally delivers an intelligent solution to target and destroy the enemy. This system is surgical and reduces collateral damage significantly. It will be a game changer on the battlefield."



### NOT QUITE A VIDEO GAME

These joysticks mean business. This U.S. Marine with 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, Kilo Company tests the weapon attached to the Light Tactical All-Terrain Vehicle (LTATV) through remote control. **TW**



# RAISE YOUR GAME

## TO BE YOUR BEST, HERE'S THE BEST IN CUTTING-EDGE CLOTHES

BY DOUG JEFFREY, PHOTOS BY LUKAS LAMB

**W**e strategically made our way through the crowded hall and headed for the back of floor one. Some insisted that the SHOT Show was a little less crowded this year. On this particular trek, however, it would have been difficult to convince us.

We arrived at the Vertx booth, and Dave Rhoden greeted us warmly. He led us to their small supply room, where Gator was munching on some “fuel” to get himself through the rest of the day. After a brief conversation, we reminded Dave that we wanted to see the new shirts we had heard so much about. His eyes lit up, as he led us to the Weapon Guard shirts by Vertx.

### THE PATH

Rhoden grew up in Florida, where the mugginess was part of everyday life. Eventually, life took him to a Southern California beach community, where the humidity was rare, except when Mexico’s tropical storms invaded the Southland in the summer. Living just a few miles from the Pacific, Rhoden grew accustomed to the cool ocean breeze that popped up virtually every afternoon. But that all changed.

When he moved to Tennessee in 2015, he found himself immersed in overpowering humidity again.

“On hot summer days, nobody wants to wear extra layers,” he said. “Pistols can have aggressive stippling. If you’re not wearing an undershirt, the grip rubs your skin and you’ll get a raspberry. Plus, you don’t want to transfer your sweat to

the firearm. That’s just not a good mix.” That got his wheels turning. When 2016 rolled around, he walked into Vertx with prototypes for the new shirts.

The internal weapon guard has several benefits; it reduces layers while providing 360-degree protection for your skin, regardless of the gear you’re wearing. It also features 37.5 Technology, said Rhoden, which is a permanent application to the fabric that helps manage your temperature, keeping you cool in hot weather while preventing odor from building up. An added benefit is it also controls the fabric interaction, preventing that static-cling effect you sometimes get wearing multiple layers.

“Your skin is protected,” said Rhoden. “There is no chafing, and the shirts keep you cool.”

On top of everything else, the shirts stretch, so there is no restriction of movement. At all. The shirts are also “wired,” so you can wear comms for surveillance, and the button-up shirts appear to have buttons, but they are actually snaps for quick access to your firearm. The shirts are also missing the branding, which is normally a “dead giveaway” that someone is carrying. Therefore, you won’t see any branding on the external portion of any of the shirts.

When Rhoden pitched the concepts to Vertx, they were in. After some end-user vetting and a little refinement, they went way in.

Now you know why Rhoden’s eyes lit up.

## 01 WEAPON GUARD SHIRT ASSESSOR POLO

WEB: [VERTX.COM](http://VERTX.COM)

These shirts are designed to comfortably conceal firearms or gear without the “tell” of an undershirt. The hidden, semi-compression layer prevents gear from chafing skin and includes what Vertx calls VaporCore and 37.5 Technology, which means that it is designed to keep you cool and dry no matter what you’re doing or where you’re going. In other words, it’s ideal for the upcoming summer.

### WEAPON GUARD SHIRT: ASSESSOR POLO SPECS

- Comms loop on the inside of the back collar and wire pass-throughs in front and back of the underlayer
- No-roll collar for consistent, clean look
- Modern, low-profile design for blending into any environment
- Loop on front placket for mic or glasses
- Underarm gusset for freedom of movement
- Wrinkle resistant
- Athletic fit
- Constructed for ease of clearing and drawing a concealed firearm
- Longer, semi-compression layer to remain tucked in
- Colors: Black, Navy
- MSRP: **\$55.95**



## 02 WEAPON GUARD SHIRT GUARDIAN

WEB: [VERTX.COM](http://VERTX.COM)

Long sleeve or short, the Guardians feature a semi-compression underlayer that extends from the lower chest to the waist. It is made out of VaporCore. Like the Assessor, the Guardian is “powered” by 37.5 Technology, which means it is designed to comfortably conceal and allow fluid access to firearms without chafing the skin.

### WEAPON GUARD SHIRT: GUARDIAN SPECS

- Comms loop on the inside of back collar and wire pass-throughs in front and back of underlayer
- No-roll collar for consistent, clean look
- Modern, low-profile design for blending into any environment
- Underarm gusset for freedom of movement
- Pull-over design for easy donning
- Wrinkle resistant
- Low-profile snap button closures
- Constructed for ease of clearing and drawing a concealed firearm
- Hidden body-side front placket pockets for weights or loading E&E tools
- Colors: Guardian Short Sleeve: Steel plaid, Indigo plaid; Long Sleeve: blue plaid, brick plaid, olive, black
- MSRP: **\$64.95** (short sleeve), **\$69.95** (long sleeve)





## 03 BLACKHAWK! EXTREME PURSUIT PANT

WEB: [BLACKHAWK.COM](http://BLACKHAWK.COM)

What do you look for in a pair of pants? If comfort, flexibility and durability are on your list, look at Blackhawk's Extreme Pursuit pants. They call them the next evolution in tactical gear. They are made of 4-way mechanical stretch ripstop fabric, which provides a range of motion that exceeds that of a yoga instructor, and they have seven exterior multi-purpose pockets positioned for optimal comfort. They also feature a gusseted crotch and added action waistband. You could say the Extreme Pursuit Pant—which is available in black, dark stone and fatigue—is “ideal for all-day comfort.”

### QUICK SPECS

- The pockets include a specialized knife pocket and cargo pockets with AR-magazine retention straps
- The Action Waist Band moves and stretches with the wearer
- The Silicone Grip Shirt Keeper keeps shirts tucked inside the waistband
- MSRP: **\$74.99**



## 04 5.11 CASCADIA WINDBREAKER VEST [MEN AND WOMEN]

WEB: [511TACTICAL.COM](http://511TACTICAL.COM)

When you need that extra layer of warmth, the Cascadia Windbreaker Vest is up for the test. It will keep your core warm and your arms free.

### QUICK SPECS

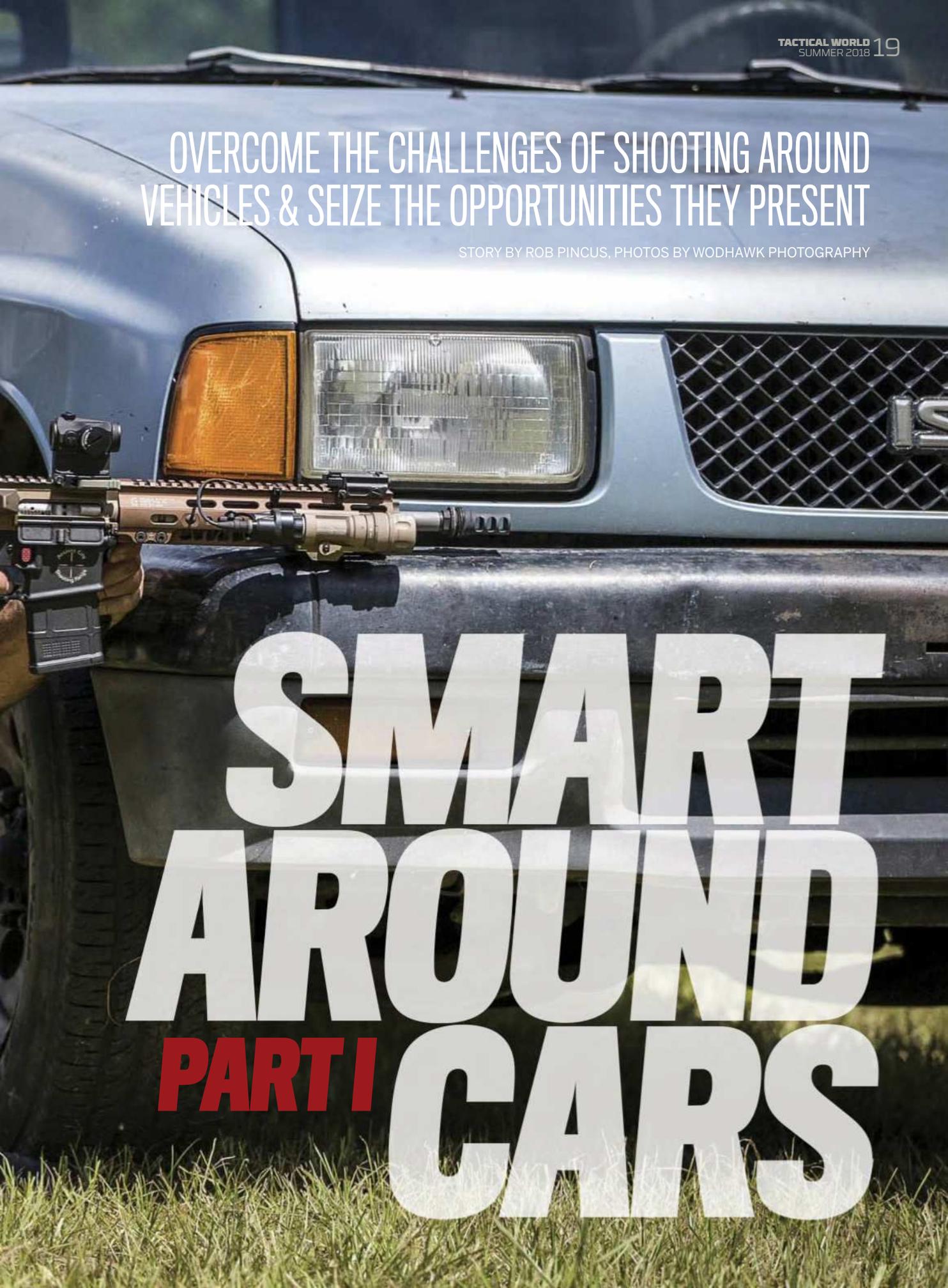
- Brushed tricot lining for collar & hand pockets
- Packable chest pocket with hanger internal loop
- Adjustable hem with shock-cord system
- Two-way center front YKK zipper with internal storm flap
- 100% Polyester lightweight fabric with DWR finish
- Center back elastic-cinched waist
- Hand pockets with YKK branded zip closures & internal pass through
- MSRP: **\$69.99 TW**





OVERCOME THE CHALLENGES OF SHOOTING AROUND  
VEHICLES & SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES THEY PRESENT

STORY BY ROB PINCUS, PHOTOS BY WODHAWK PHOTOGRAPHY



# SMART AROUND *PART I* CARS

**T**he use of the rifle in defense around vehicles is a common theme in law enforcement and urban military training.

For people who regularly carry rifles in their vehicles, learning some concepts specific to using their long gun around that vehicle only makes sense. Some of these concepts apply equally to pistols and long guns.

Vehicles are ubiquitous in our society and they present some specific challenges and opportunities. They can be cover or concealment, depending on a myriad of factors. Here are a few important tips to keep in mind when you are practicing or planning for armed defense with a rifle around a vehicle.



### CONTACT INFO

**Name**

Rob Pincus

**Website**

IceTraining.us

**“NOT ONLY IS THE SPACE INSIDE A VEHICLE GENERALLY SMALL, IT IS ALSO FILLED WITH ALL SORTS OF THINGS THAT CAN IMPEDE, ENTANGLE OR DISRUPT THE FUNCTIONING OF YOUR RIFLE.”**



### 01 SHOOTING THROUGH GLASS

A lot has been said and written about shooting through glass and, in my opinion, much of it over-thinks the problem.

First, much of what has been written and taught about shooting through glass looks at the situation as a one-shot event, and was developed in the context of precision rifle shooting. Specifically, a lot of time and effort has gone into trying to predict the path of a single rifle bullet through glass in hostage rescue or other “sniper” type situations. The deviation caused by glass under those circumstances can be incredibly significant. Rifle bullets are affected more by glass than typical defensive pistol rounds, and the type of people who sit behind sniper rifles tend to (appropriately) obsess about data and (predictability) over exactly where their shot will go.

When it comes to close-quarters defensive pistol shooting from inside or close to a car, especially when multiple rounds are being fired, the glass issue simply isn't as important or relevant. Firing defensive rifle rounds out of or into a car through glass can bring both contexts into play. We can summarize the details by teaching a few basic rules of thumb, which you will find in the sidebar.



## 02 POSITIONING YOURSELF BEHIND TIRES

When you are outside of a vehicle, positioning yourself behind the wheels, especially the front wheels, can be one of the best positions in regard to use of cover. Keeping yourself behind the tire, wheel, brakes, frame and axle while shooting under a vehicle can be accomplished relatively easily, but you should practice the relevant positions ahead of time.

Urban prone offers the largest field of vision and ability to respond in 360 degrees, but you give up significant maneuverability, should you have to leave that position. The shooting position (past your lower body) is also less stable than many others. I recommend this position as the primary defensive staging position when using a car as cover and hoping that you will not have to engage any threats (with a pistol or rifle). You can even place a family member up against the tire between your feet to give them as much cover as possible. The inverted kneeling position (originally taught to me by Kyle Lamb, with a much less PC Name ...) can be surprisingly stable for shooting under a vehicle and provides much better opportunity to move quickly, but you give up a significant amount of awareness in general. This is a preferred position for engaging a known threat while maximizing cover.

Remember that, while not generally cover by themselves, tires can potentially absorb rounds skipped off the ground from the other side of the vehicle.



## 03 SHOOTING OVER COVER

If you've been to any "tactical" schools in the past 20 years, you've probably heard a discussion about "never" shooting over cover and/or "never" crowding your cover. Hopefully, you've been taught the exceptions to those clichéd pieces of conventional wisdom, as well. How you position yourself around any cover or concealment, and especially a vehicle, is important, but there are very few absolutes.

The reason to generally avoid fighting over an object like a vehicle is that the

smooth surfaces of the hood, truck and roof can skip rounds that strike them at a shallow angle instead of absorbing them.

If you are exposing yourself over these areas, you have more exposure to getting hit by incoming rounds than you may think. One way to decrease your risk when you must fight over the top of a surface is to follow the other piece of conventional wisdom and stay back from your cover.

Skipped rounds generally follow a shallow angle from the surface they hit, so the further back you are from them, the more likely you are to be below the path of the deflected round. Of course, the further back you are from cover, the more exposed you are to a flanking attack from a threat. A good baseline here is that you should try to be at least one arm's reach back from any cover, but not more than half the distance your threat is away from any pivot point (such as the center of a vehicle). Of course, that kind of geometry works great on a flat range or open battlefield. In a real defensive event, you may not even know where your threat is.

## FAST FACTS: SHOOTING THROUGH GLASS

**01** Glass will cause deviation. You cannot expect your bullet to track straight through glass.

**02** Your bullet will tend to be pulled toward a perpendicular exit angle from the glass surface. The further away your target is from the glass surface, the more dramatic the effect of the deviation.

**03** Terminal performance of your bullet will be different after passing through glass, especially laminated safety glass. This is particularly true of hollow points and bullets with ballistic tips designed to expand and/or fragment rapidly inside soft tissue. **TW**

**PART II**  
Watch for Part II of this topic in an  
upcoming issue of Tactical World.



# ARMOR ALL

## AN INSIDE LOOK AT CUTTING-EDGE PROTECTION FOR THE MILITARY, LAW ENFORCEMENT

PHOTO COURTESY OF TEAM WENDY

**T**actical armor. The term connotes safety, function and cutting-edge innovation ... all of which are critical for the modern warfighter to do his/her job safely and efficiently.

To create this technology, it requires a diverse group. At Team Wendy, for example, the backgrounds include chemical, mechanical and electrical engineering, as well as industrial design, operations and quality control

management. Staff members include military, U.S. government veterans and outdoor enthusiasts. The "line-up" is very much the same for U.S. Armor.

In essence, both companies have created a "Dream Team." Unlike professional sports' dream teams, however, there is much more on the line than wins and losses. These two companies focus on saving lines.

Welcome to the world of armor. **TW**

### WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Feature:**  
Team Wendy
- **Review:**  
Team Wendy's  
EXFIL Ballistic  
SL Helmet
- **Review:**  
U.S. Armor's  
Rapid Deployable  
Shields



In 2005, Team Wendy turned its attention to the U.S. Army, which released a tender for pad sets to be included in their helmets.

# INSPIRED BY **TRAGEDY**

WHEN A TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY TOOK A  
DAUGHTER'S LIFE, A GRIEVING FATHER CREATED  
**TEAM WENDY**

STORY BY DOUG JEFFREY, PHOTOS COURTESY OF RICHARD KING PHOTOGRAPHY





All Team Wendy helmets undergo "extensive" internal and third-party testing to ensure that they meet the necessary requirements.

It's interesting how some manufacturers become engrained in the consumer's mind for a certain product. Take the fast-food industry. For many people, the connection is probably McDonald's. In the tactical world, Team Wendy may very well be the name that consumers link to helmets. And for good reason. For more than 20 years, the Cleveland, Ohio-based company has been providing unparalleled protection to a variety of customers. It started with the ski industry and has transitioned into military, law enforcement and search and rescue.

To find out more about this company's history and future, we spoke to Jose Rizo-Patron, chief executive officer.

After you read this, you'll understand why many consider Team Wendy the go-to company in the tactical and adventure world.

#### **QUESTION: TELL US WHEN AND HOW TEAM WENDY GOT STARTED.**

**ANSWER:** Jose Rizo-Patron: Team Wendy was founded in 1997 by Dan T. Moore as a memorial to his daughter, Wendy, who passed away from a traumatic brain injury (TBI) following a snow skiing accident that same year. Initially, our focus was on creating the most protective ski helmet on the market—and this at a time when only a small percentage of skiers and snowboarders wore helmets. The market wasn't necessarily ready for a helmet like this, but in the process of designing our first ski helmet, we invented our patented Zorbium foam. We quickly realized the impact that this technology could have to mitigate TBI in more than just alpine sports. In 2005, the U.S. Army released a tender for pad sets to be included in their helmets, and we shifted focus to this new space. Since then, Team Wendy has created innovative, scalable helmet systems for elite military, law enforcement, and search and rescue operators that allow them to scale up or down for the mission requirement, including our latest product release:



As a memorial to his daughter, Wendy, who passed away from a traumatic brain injury (TBI) following a snow skiing accident, Dan T. Moore founded Team Wendy.

the M-216 Ski Search and Rescue Helmet, which has brought us back to the space where it all started—and at a time when the market is finally ready—and we're better than ever at what we do.

#### **Q: DESCRIBE YOUR STAFF. DOES IT INCLUDE RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL?**

**A:** Team Wendy employs a diverse group of talented employees with a broad range of skill sets and experience that drive the company's research and development, operations, marketing and sales success. Capabilities range from chemical, mechanical and

electrical engineering, and industrial design to operations and quality control management with decades of experience in executive management/leadership. The staff includes military and other U.S. government veterans, as well as several outdoor enthusiasts who are in tune to industry requirements and are constantly aiming to improve upon existing systems and address unmet needs.

**Q: YOU'VE BEEN PROVIDING THE ARMY AND MARINES LINER SYSTEMS FOR HELMETS FOR MORE THAN 10 YEARS. DESCRIBE HOW THAT**

**"EACH TEST HELMET IS IMPACTED 14 TIMES; TWO TIMES EACH IN SEVEN LOCATIONS, AT COLD [14°F], AMBIENT [68°F] AND HOT [130°F] CONDITIONS."**

## CONTACT INFO

### WEB

TeamWendy.com

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## ARRANGEMENT COMES ABOUT.

**A:** In 2005, the U.S. military released a tender for pad sets to be included in their standard issue Advanced Combat Helmets (ACH). Prior to this, pad sets were not typically included with military-issued helmets, as the impact helmet pads have in mitigating TBI was not yet fully realized. Using our patented Zorbium foam, we created our Zorbium Action Pad (ZAP) system and were chosen as the supplier of record to the U.S. military, a position that we maintain to this day. To date, our ZAP system has been supplied to more than six million men and

women in uniform.

## Q: DOES OUR MILITARY ALSO WEAR YOUR HELMETS?

**A:** Our helmets—both ballistic and non-ballistic—are worn by various military communities, both domestically and by our allies abroad. Domestic customers include the U.S. Air Force TACP and Pararescue communities, as well as U.S. Navy EOD. Our largest allied country customer is the Australian Defense Force. Additionally, our products are worn by elite federal, law enforcement, intelligence, and search and rescue communities.

## AT TEAM WENDY ... IT'S PERSONAL.

At Team Wendy, business is personal. Decisions are made in part to honor the legacy of Wendy Moore, with an ever-present goal of preventing TBI in the men and women we protect so that their loved ones don't feel the same void as our founder and his family. We have a large banner on our manufacturing floor that says, "The work you do every day saves lives." You can feel that sense of pride and value in the work we do simply by talking to the members of our team. She is always with us, and we know she would be proud of the work her legacy inspired.

— Jose Rizo-Patron



This image shows the EXFIL Ballistic Visor and EXFIL Ballistic Ear covers. The EXFIL Ballistic SL features a lightweight composite shell providing a 15% weight reduction over the original EXFIL Ballistic and keeps the same unique EXFIL shell geometry.





## “TEAM WENDY WAS FOUNDED ... AS A MEMORIAL TO HIS DAUGHTER, WENDY, WHO PASSED AWAY FROM A TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY [TBI].”

### **Q: DESCRIBE THE MODERN BALLISTIC HELMET.**

**A:** Modern ballistic helmets are typically a composite matrix that encapsulates high-strength fibers. The fibers “catch” a projectile similar to the way a baseball mitt catches a ball, but obviously these are dealing with much higher energies.

The specific “recipe” of a helmet is proprietary to each manufacturer, but the fiber utilized in the newest and lightest helmets is primarily ultrahigh molecular weight polyethylene (UHMWPE), due to its high strength-to-weight ratio.

Above: The EXFIL Ballistic SL is available in black, coyote brown, ranger green and multi-cam.

Most law enforcement units require that their ballistic helmets stop projectiles specified as level IIIA according to NIJ STD 0108.01/0101. This means that the helmet will stop a 9mm FMJ RN, a .357 SIG FMJ FN and .44 Magnum SJHP.

In addition, most military helmets are required to stop a variety of fragmentation (different sizes and velocities) and provide blunt impact protection.

### **Q: IN GENERAL, HOW HAVE HELMETS CHANGED THROUGH THE YEARS?**

**A:** Prior to the 1960s, helmets were predominantly made of steel and intended only to stop fragmentation. DuPont later introduced a material called aramid fiber, which would become known by the trademark Kevlar, and is now synonymous with “bulletproof material.” Kevlar helmets became the standard from the mid-1980s until the early 2000s and allowed helmets to stop common handgun bullets, in addition to providing fragmentation protection. More recently, the introduction of polyethylene shells made for a significant reduction in weight while still maintaining ballistic performance.

## KEY NUMBERS: U.S. STATS

**1.7**

In millions, according to the CDC, the number of people who sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) annually

**1.365**

In millions, the number of people who are treated and released from an emergency department for TBI

**275,000**

The number of people who suffer a TBI and are hospitalized

**52,000**

The number of people who suffer a TBI and don't survive

**30**

TBI is a contributing factor to nearly one-third (30.5%) of all injury-related deaths in the U.S.

**75**

3/4 of TBIs that occur each year are concussions or other forms of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI)



Walk onto the manufacturing floor at Team Wendy, and you'll find a banner that says, "The work you do every day saves lives."

to concentrate on the development of new and evolving capabilities that allow our products to better serve that function while offering optimal protection. Further, the industry continues to look at new materials and ways to manufacture them to continue to drive down weight while increasing protection.

**Q: WHAT MAKES TEAM WENDY'S HELMETS DIFFERENT?**

**A:** Rather than focusing on the shell, we begin the design process for our helmets from the inside out, leveraging our vast experience in blunt impact protection. Because we focused exclusively on perfecting our pad set offering and our patented CAM FIT Retention System for a few years, the fit and comfort of our helmets is second to none. Our CAM FIT disperses pressure evenly around the circumference of the head, eliminating pressure points that typically arise when a retention system only locks in at two points.

It's not just the design of the padding and retention, but significant focus is also given to the form of our helmet

shells. By studying the anthropometry of head sizes and ergonomics of comfortable fit, we developed a unique sizing scheme that uses adjustable comfort pads to provide a better, more optimized fit than the traditional four-shell size approach, with the side benefit of making sizing simpler for those procuring the helmet.

Our ballistic helmet also has a unique and distinctive shape that unlike most ballistic helmets is not round, which makes it immediately recognizable as an "EXFIL" and passes the ever important "mirror test."

While optimal protection and fit are always our top priorities, we are constantly thinking about how the helmet platform can be used most effectively to integrate other technology, such as lights, communications systems, NODS, etc. while balancing loads. We pride ourselves on offering scalable helmet systems for elite operators that allow them to scale up or down for the mission requirement. They may not need to utilize every feature of our helmets on a daily basis, but when they do, our systems-based helmets ensure that they are ready.

**Q: DESCRIBE THE TESTING PROCESS.**

**A:** All of our helmets, whether ballistic or non-ballistic, undergo extensive internal and third-party testing to ensure that they meet the necessary requirements we're trying to meet, be it for ballistics, mountaineering, white water, alpine, etc.

Our EXFIL Ballistic helmet meets the third-party NIJ-accreditation at level IIIA according to NIJ STD 0106.01

**Q: HOW WILL HELMETS BE DIFFERENT IN 5 OR 10 YEARS?**

**A:** Historically, the helmet has been worn to serve a single purpose—to provide ballistic protection. These days, we're equally focused on creating systems-based helmets that allow the user more seamless integration of communications systems, NODS, etc. Systems integration will continue to be a focus for helmets serving elite users in the coming years, and we will continue

/ 0108.01, which means that the helmet will stop common handgun threats. In addition to stopping the rounds, we also measure for backface signature/deformation. At 1,400-1,450 ft/sec, a 9mm FMJ RN must produce less than 25mm of backface signature/deformation on an NIJ clay headform to be acceptable to Team Wendy's standards.

Additionally, the helmet is tested for resistance to fragmentation that may be experienced during blast related events. This is simulated using a standardized cylindrical projectile and tested to see at what velocity the projectile is expected to penetrate the shell 50% of the time. This is a standardized armor test method known as the V50 value, and for our helmet is  $\geq 2,400$  ft/sec for the 17gr projectile.

For impact testing we utilize internal instrumented drop towers in accordance with a variety of military, Department of Transportation (DOT) and sport helmet standards. Helmets are placed onto a headform and dropped from a set height onto a variety of different surfaces while the acceleration/deceleration of the headform is measured. For our ballistic and carbon helmets, they meet and exceed the ACH blunt impact protection requirements of  $< 150G$  peak acceleration when impacted at 10 ft/sec—our ballistic averages less than 70G across all temperatures and locations. While a perfect correlation between acceleration and brain injury doesn't exist, this is still below many suggested acceleration levels that could be associated with concussion. Each test helmet is impacted 14 times; two times each in seven locations, at cold (14°F), ambient (68°F) and hot (130°F) conditions.

Additionally, we perform other testing within the MIL-STD-810 test suite, such as UV light exposure, high-altitude exposure, blowing sand exposure, vibration testing, resistance to chemicals and field agents, and salt water immersion.



**“... THE INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO LOOK AT NEW MATERIALS AND WAYS TO MANUFACTURE THEM TO CONTINUE TO DRIVE DOWN WEIGHT WHILE INCREASING PROTECTION.”**

Team Wendy's domestic customers include the U.S. Air Force TACP and Pararescue, as well as U.S. Navy EOD.

Other, less quantitative testing, involves testing our helmets with an ever-changing landscape of accessories and attachments to ensure users have as many options as possible when setting up their helmet.

#### **Q: WHAT ELSE COMES TO MIND?**

**A:** Our mission is to research, design, develop and deliver the most innovative, purpose-built and impact-mitigating products and technologies on the market. We place a strong focus on research, particularly the causes and prevention of TBI. According to the CDC, an estimated 1.7 million people

sustain a traumatic brain injury (TBI) annually. Of them, 1.365 million are treated and released from an emergency department, while 275,000 are hospitalized and 52,000 don't survive. TBI is a contributing factor to nearly one-third (30.5%) of all injury-related deaths in the United States. About 75% of TBIs that occur each year are concussions or other forms of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI).

Team Wendy has joined forces with Brown University, Drexel University and Sandia National Laboratories to conduct comprehensive research on traumatic brain injury.

macroscopic level of helmets and is incredibly unique in that respect. Our team leads work on the macroscopic scale, developing an integrated sensor system within the padding of a helmet that is capable of measuring linear and angular accelerations, as well as force distributions experienced across the skull during impact. The system will be capable of providing measurements in a lab setting, such as when on a test headform, and eventually on a human wearer.

As previously mentioned, there is currently no perfect correlation to determine whether a brain injury will result from a given head impact. The aim of this effort is to develop a detailed brain injury model so data collected via the helmet can be used to predict likelihood of injury following an impact to the head.

With a better understanding of how traumatic brain injuries occur, the study is also working to improve helmet testing methods and develop new materials and designs for the next generation of helmets and protective equipment. **TW**

With a \$4.75-million grant from the Office of Naval Research, the three-year study aims to produce new insights into how traumatic injuries form in the brain and develop new helmet technologies to help prevent them. Accomplishing that will require a comprehensive, multilevel understanding of how forces are transmitted from a helmet to the skull, from the skull through brain tissue, and ultimately to the individual neurons and axons that are damaged leading to TBI.

To achieve this, the effort brings together research spanning from the microscopic level of brain cells to the

The introduction of polyethylene shells has significantly reduced weight while still maintaining ballistic performance.





For illustrative purposes, the EXFIL Ballistic helmet is shown.





# ALL DAY LONG

TEAM WENDY'S EXFIL BALLISTIC SL HELMET  
PROVIDES PROTECTION & COMFORT 24/7

STORY BY MIKE SEARSON, PHOTOS COURTESY OF RICHARD KING PHOTOGRAPHY



**“ ... THIS NEW ONE IS 15 PERCENT LIGHTER IN THE BODY, WHILE STILL PROVIDING ALL THE RAIL SPACE AND VELCRO MOUNTING CAPABILITIES THAT YOU NEED ... ”**

I was never much of a fan of the brain bucket. As a 17-year-old Marine rifleman, I was issued one and hated every second of wearing it. It was heavy, awkward and goofy-looking; I had to wear it because it was part of my issued gear, but I never felt truly “safe” while wearing it.

Made of Kevlar, the helmet was a step or two up from the steel pot helmets issued to grunts a generation or three before me in Vietnam, Korea and World War II. *This* one is different.

The streamlined design of Team Wendy's EXFIL Ballistic SL makes it compatible with multiple hearing protection devices and communications gear.

#### HELMET HISTORY

Back in the day, I never cared much for motorcycle helmets either, and I fondly remember the last of my teenage years in the Marine Corps, coinciding with no-helmet laws when I was stationed at Camp Pendleton and Twentynine Palms, California. That was, until I was 50 yards away from a motorcycle wreck and the first person on scene.

I watched a 24-year-old Marine sergeant die from being thrown off his bike at over 100 miles per hour and flung head-first into a seawall

along the Oceanside pier. I watched his body ricochet across the street. He was still breathing when I got to him, but all I could do was watch as his brain literally poured out through the back of his head and onto the asphalt. My outlook on helmets changed that day.

Now, I did not pick up a sign and march on the California Statehouse to demand helmet law reform, but I made sure I wore one every time I got on a bike after that.

As an author, and now editor for

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a tactical publication for almost a decade and a half, I get to see, test and evaluate a lot of the latest and greatest gear. Most often it's a new rifle flashlight, knife or handgun. This time, it's probably the best helmet since helmets were invented.

### FIRST LOOK: FEATURES

I had heard of Team Wendy's skiing helmets and other gear for several years before I knew they were making police and military helmets. For this issue, they were kind enough to send their latest and greatest version, the EXFIL Ballistic SL.

Team Wendy's CAM FIT distributes pressure evenly around the entire head, eliminating pressure points that arise when a retention system only locks in at two points.

## HELMET SPECS, OVERVIEW

When it comes to high-quality ballistic helmets, Team Wendy's EXFIL receives the highest marks.

This helmet is supremely lightweight, yet battle-proof ready, boasting an array of innovative features, including an advanced hybrid-composite shell, NIJ Level III-A protection, Zorbium foam liner and a head-snugging retention system.

It comes standard with the reliable EXFIL SL Rail mounts for easy attachment of all EXFIL accessories. Combined with the helmet's unique sure-fitting geometry and CAM FIT retention system, the design adjusts easily to every wearer's head shape, offering an unprecedented level of comfort, protection and fit.

## “AN INNOVATIVE, BOLTLESS CAM FIT RETENTION SYSTEM QUICKLY ADJUSTS TO INDIVIDUAL HEAD SHAPES, PROVIDING A COMFORTABLE AND STABLE FIT.”

Team Wendy's EXFIL Ballistic SL helmet has a hybrid composite shell for increased strength with a unique geometry for optimal fit. An innovative, boltless CAM FIT retention system quickly adjusts to individual head shapes, providing a comfortable and stable fit. What this means is that the CAM FIT disperses pressure evenly around the entire head, eliminating pressure points that typically arise when a retention system only locks in at two points.

The tops and sides have Velcro in various places to attach your favorite morale patches, instead of writing on the cloth cover with a felt-tip marker.

Magpul rails can be attached to the helmet, so you can mount lights and other devices. It's also compatible with adding various forms of hearing protection or communication headsets.

### COMFORT ZONE

Back in the day, helmets fit mostly by an interior band that wrapped your head and probably lead to headaches and other discomforts down the line from their constant use. There's none of that nonsense with Team Wendy.

Beyond padding and retention, Team Wendy redesigned the form and shape of their helmet by studying the ergonomics and shapes of the human head. When we first tried it on, we made one or two minor adjustments ... and it fit our melon almost as well as one of our Stetsons. The key

The night vision mount on the EXFIL Ballistic XL is perhaps the strongest and lightest of its type.

difference being the weight. To us, this is the most important aspect of wearing a helmet: the comfort and fit. It is light enough that it is comfortable to wear all day. If you are constantly removing your helmet when it's too heavy, too hot or too uncomfortable, you may not be wearing it when you need it most.

Team Wendy cuts the weight by using an exclusive blend of polyethylene and other fibers in a proprietary composite matrix. If you are familiar with the traditional Team Wendy EXFIL Ballistic helmet, this new one is 15 percent lighter in the body, while still providing all the rail space and Velcro mounting capabilities that you need for your accessories. And, it allows

integration of their new EXFIL Ballistic Visor. Speaking of the visor, one of the main reasons people purchase a helmet on the civilian side these days is to mount their night vision devices. The mount on the EXFIL Ballistic SL is 35 percent lighter than their previous one, while retaining the same



# THE BOTTOM LINE

MSRP: \$1,395



precision and strength, by means of a Wilcox machined aluminum insert and glass-filled polymer body.

## TOUGH ENOUGH

Our biggest question was, even though it is lightweight and comfortable, how will it perform when

it is struck by a projectile? As it turns out, Team Wendy did not slack off in that department, either.

The Team Wendy EXFIL Ballistic SL carries a NIJ (National Institute of Justice) Level III-A rating according to NIJ STD 0106.01/0108.01.

I realize that I just threw a lot of numbers at you, and some of you will know what they mean right off the bat, and others will turn the page at this point.

If you are not completely up to date on what that standard represents, it means that the helmet will stop up to 5 rounds of .44 Magnum lead gas-checked semi-wadcutters or

semi-jacketed soft points.

Additionally, that means it will stop any handgun or rifle cartridge below that threshold on the power spectrum, such as .357 Magnum, .357 SIG, 10mm, 9mm FMJ, etc.

Of equal importance is that Team Wendy's EXFIL Ballistic SL helmet will protect you from other mishaps, collisions, falls or any other form of punishment that life hurls toward your cranium. Or whatever punishment you direct your cranium toward!

## BOTTOM LINE

Even if you are not serving in a military or first responder role, do not think that a helmet is unnecessary or just for wannabes who want to play soldier at the range or at shooting classes.

Like we said earlier, one of the main reasons that folks inquire about purchasing a helmet is for mounting their night vision gear. If you bought your NVGs or NODs just to creep around your backyard or the local campsite outside your RV, you might be able to get away with a headband mount or an airsoft helmet.

However, if you bought your night vision gear to use it on a nighttime predator or hog hunt, or even a tactical training class in low-light or no-light conditions, the cheapskate route will not fly. It may for a little while, but Mr. Murphy and his law will catch up with you eventually.

If there is one thing that all users of NODs or NVGs know—from the \$129 Russian military surplus GEN 1 stuff to the top-of-the-line Navy SEAL issue GEN 4 gear—sooner or later it will throw off your depth perception. When that happens, people can trip, fall, lose their balance and more. This is especially true at night.

Do you want to trust that \$5 leather headband or \$35 airsoft helmet to protect your melon when it does? I would rather trust my noggin with Team Wendy's EXFIL Ballistic SL. **TW**

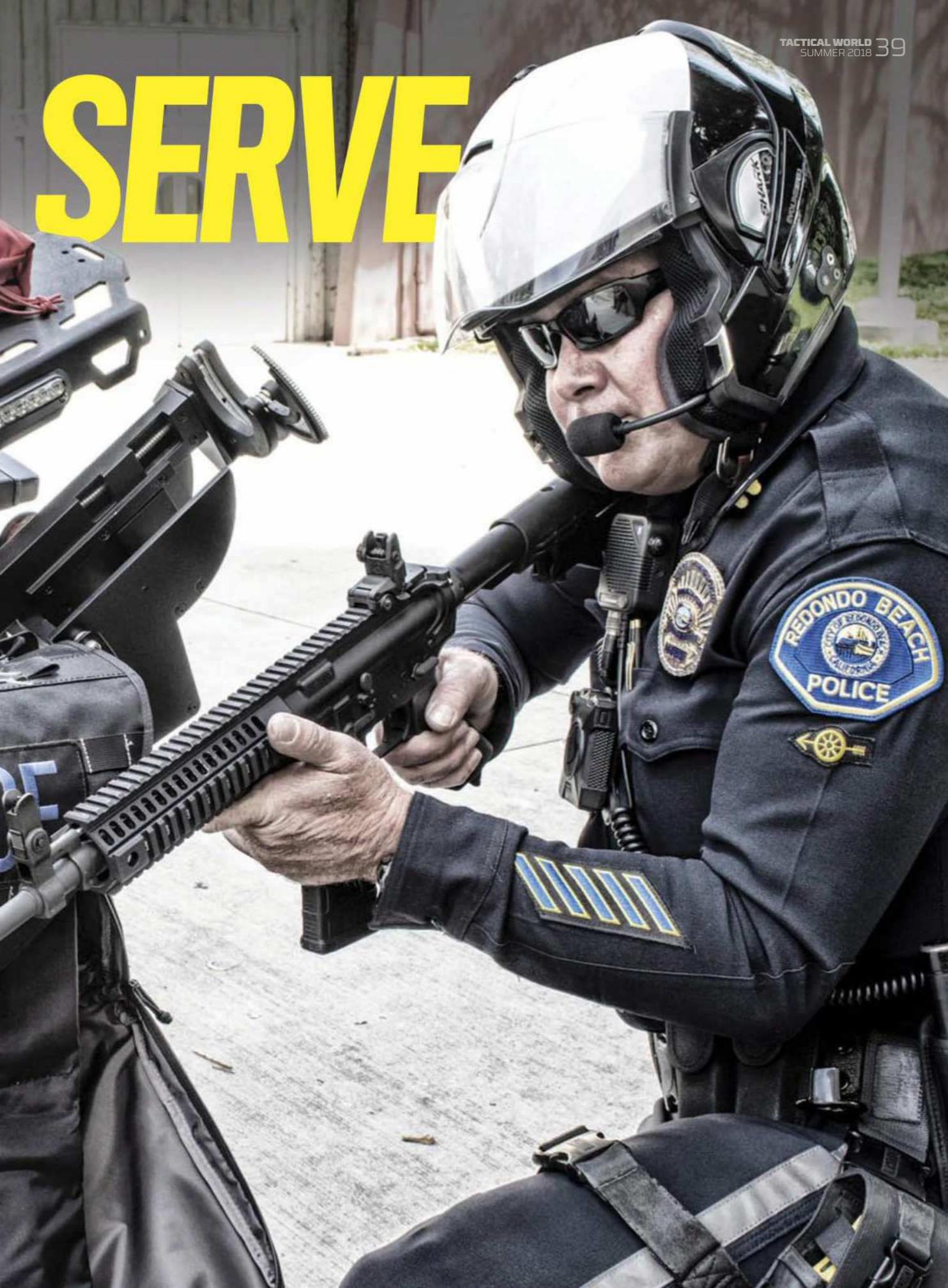
# PROTECT &

TO ENHANCE PUBLIC & MOTOR  
OFFICER SAFETY, A SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA  
AGENCY IS SPORTING NEW RAPID  
**DEPLOYABLE ARMOR**

STORY BY DOUG JEFFREY, PHOTOS BY GUS ALONZO

Officer Bill Turner demonstrates how a  
Rapid Deployable Shield functions in an emergency situation.

# SERVE





Above: Officers store the shields in a motor unit's saddle bags.

Left: The shields can be used in multiple different scenarios/applications, Turner noted, including as a "stretcher" for an injured person.

**"T**o protect and to serve." That familiar slogan is seen on law

enforcement cars in more than one city. Now that U.S. Armor has introduced new Rapid Deployable Shields for a Southern California law enforcement agency, the words take on a whole new meaning, which you're about to read all about. David Miller is the Director of Engineering for U.S. Armor.

Having spent 21 years in law enforcement, the 56-year-old knows the field. Combined with his 12 years in ballistic engineering, Miller was the perfect go-to source when the Redondo Beach Police Department (Southern California) contacted U.S. Armor with an idea to bolster the protection for its motor officers.

In the following story, Miller, who has been with U.S. Armor for four years, describes the process and the product, which protects and serves its officers and the public.





**“ ... WE SAW THEIR POTENTIAL WHERE THEY FILL THE NEEDS OF OTHER OFFICER SAFETY NEEDS IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.”**

**TACTICAL WORLD: WHAT ARE THE NAMES OF THESE NEW SHIELDS?**

**DAVID MILLER:** We are calling them Rapid Deployable Shields, either hard or soft. They can either be purchased together or individually in either a single carry bag or a combo bag.

**TW: ARE THESE STRICTLY FOR LE?**

**MILLER:** We only sell to law enforcement, military, government agencies or security people.

**TW: WHAT MAKES THEM UNIQUE?**

**MILLER:** These shields were designed to be used in emergency situations, where a shield is needed to provide an officer with emergency protection. They store in a smaller space like your vehicle's trunk or a motor unit's

saddle bag. They are not designed to take the place of a tactical entry shield, but they can be deployed in an emergency in which you need emergency protection.

The hard shield folds down into an approximate size of 11 x 14 x 2 inches and opens to 11 x 36 inches.

The soft shield folds down to measure approximately 11 x 14 x 4 inches and opens to 33 x 42 inches. The shield has four carry handles and can be used as an emergency litter.

**TW: HOW LONG WERE THEY IN DEVELOPMENT?**

**MILLER:** Both shields were developed in conjunction with the Redondo

## “WIN-WIN”

### NEW SHIELDS RECEIVE POSITIVE FEEDBACK FROM OFFICERS

Redondo Beach Motor Officer Bill Turner is an enthusiast ... of motorcycles, public safety and officer safety. His 25 years on the force is a testament to all of the above. In the following story, the 46-year-old officer, who is married with two children, discusses the new shields.

**Question: We understand that your agency is the first to use the Rapid Deployable Shields.**

**Answer:** The products we are using on the Africa Twin are so new that we have the first in the field. U.S. Armor will be making them available for production immediately.

**Question: What makes them unique?**

**Answer:** They are the first armor products built specifically for LE and for use on motorcycles. However, the products have multiple applications and can be purchased and carried in the trunk of a vehicle to be deployed as needed.

**Question: What are your initial thoughts and impressions?**

**Answer:** I love the product. You don't notice them when you are riding the motorcycle, and any time you can have an extra level of protection (body armor with a 3A rating) that is deployable and can be used in multiple different scenarios/applications, it's a win-win for all law enforcement and the public.

**Question: When riding, you don't notice any difference?**

**Answer:** Each piece of armor is carried in a separate bag on each side of the bike; therefore, weight is not an issue because they completely balance themselves out. I don't notice the weight when riding the motorcycle.

**Question: How do these impact your service?**

**Answer:** The ultimate goal of the Redondo Beach Police Department (and hopefully all police agencies) is to provide the public a service they cannot live without! This new motorcycle and deployable armor are just two of the many tools that help us do that.

Above: Officer Bill Turner demonstrates how one of the deployable shields offers protection.

Police Department's request and were based on their needs with the Africa Twin Motorcycle project. Afterward, we saw their potential where they fill the needs of other officer safety requirements in emergency situations. Their overall development time was approximately 180 days.



Top: Officer Turner deployed the shield on the bike and got into position very quickly.



Bottom: Officer Turner, who said he "loves the products," mentioned that their weight offsets each other, so they do not impact riding or handling.



## HARD SHIELD SPECS:

- **Weight:** 7.5 pounds
- **Threat Level:** IIIA Stand Alone
- **Special Threats:** 9mm, .45 ACP, .40 S&W, FN 5.7x28mm, .357 Magnum, 7.62x25 Torkrav

## SOFT SHIELD SPECS:

- **Weight:** 12.37 pounds
- **Threat Level:** IIIA Stand Alone
- **Special Threats:** Speer 9mm GDHP, Winchester 127 SXT, .40 S&W, Rem 44 Magnum, 7.62x25 Torkrav

**TW: FROM WHAT MATERIAL ARE THEY MADE?**

**MILLER:** The hard shield is made from pressed Honeywell Advanced Spectra material. The soft shield is made the same design as our XLT3A (ballistic IIIA NIJ 0101.05) vest.

**TW: WHAT TYPE OF [SPECIFIC BALLISTIC] PROTECTION DO THEY PROVIDE?**

**MILLER:** Both shields provide Level IIIA protection.

**TW: IN FIVE YEARS, WILL THERE BE ANOTHER VERSION OF THESE? IF SO, HOW WILL THEY BE DIFFERENT?**

**MILLER:** As with all ballistic products, additional testing and updating will be conducted as needed and or/as requested.

**TW: WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD ANYTHING?**

**MILLER:** These shields were developed for use in an emergency situation and are not designed to take the place of other tactical shields.



## THE AFRICA TWIN FAST FACTS ON THE DEPARTMENT'S NEW WHEELS

**01** When the CRF1000L Africa Twin was introduced in 2016 as an homage to the XRV650 and XRV750, the full-scale adventure motorcycle was “immediately heralded” for being equally capable of crossing rugged continents and highway cruising. Now, the “True Adventure” spirit of the award-winning model expands with the introduction of the CRF1000L2 Africa Twin Adventure Sports, which pushes the platform even further into the long-range off-road-ready territory. In addition, the standard CRF1000L Africa Twin has received updates.

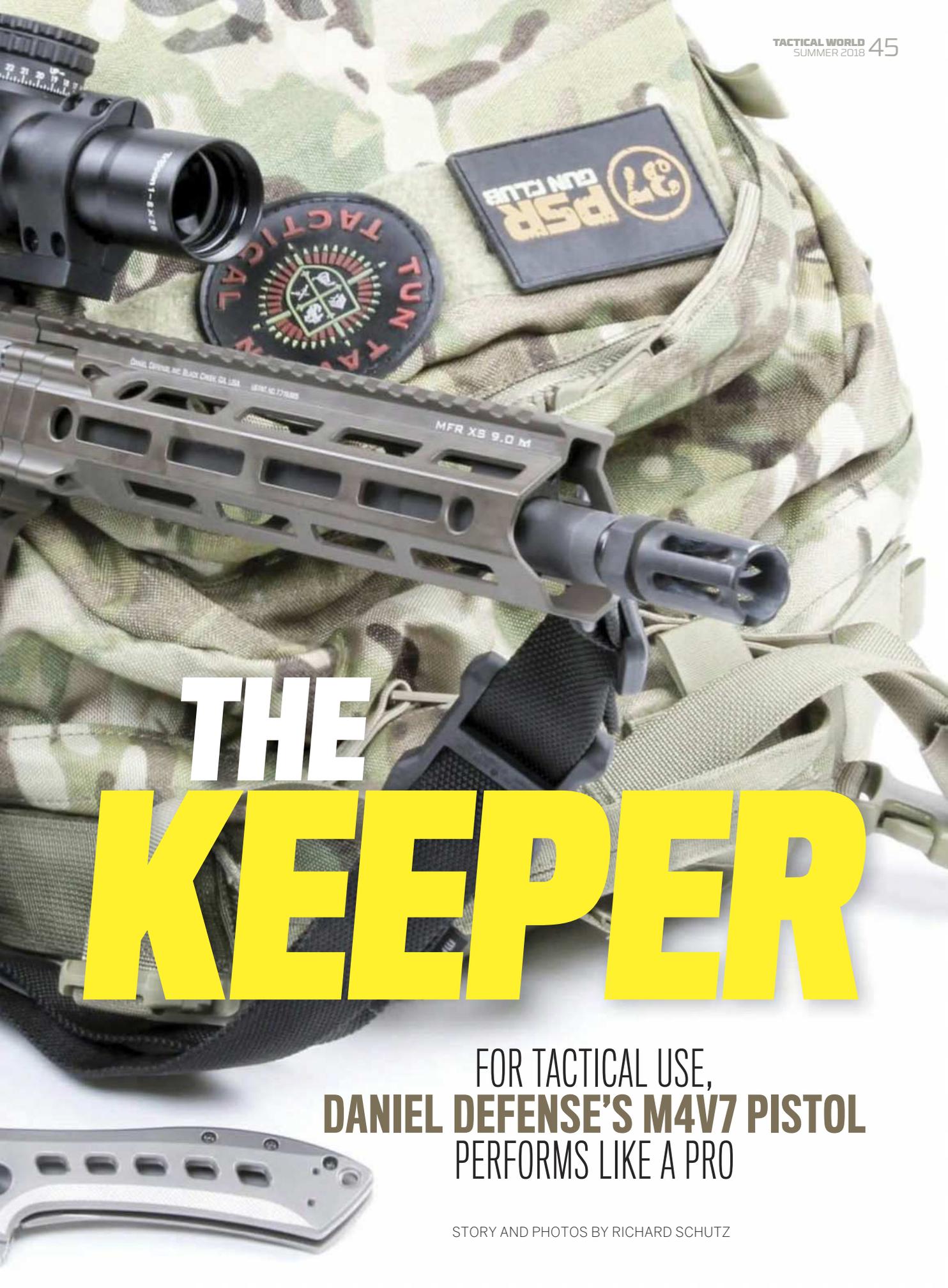
**02** Similar in “overarching” design, both 2018 models offer a balance of power and light weight, a “key component to the platform’s success and user-friendly nature.” They also benefit from added electronic functionality and improved engine performance. To build on this and enhance its adventure-touring capabilities, the Adventure Sports model offers improved range through a larger fuel tank, more creature comforts for longer touring, and added ground clearance through increased suspension travel.

**03** For 2018, the entire Africa Twin platform is updated by way of a Throttle By Wire (TBW) system that opens the door to four individual riding modes and an expanded Honda Selectable Torque Control (HSTC) system. The use of TBW greatly expands the choices available to the rider to manage engine output, feel, and rear-wheel traction. The 2017 Africa Twin had 3 HSTC levels, plus OFF, while the new system features 7 levels—from 1, for aggressive riding off-road on block-pattern tires, to 7, for maximum sense of security on slippery, wet tarmac. It's still possible to turn HSTC completely off, and there are 3 levels of power and engine braking available. **TW**

**“... ANY TIME YOU CAN HAVE AN EXTRA LEVEL OF PROTECTION ... THAT IS DEPLOYABLE ... IT'S WIN-WIN FOR ALL LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE PUBLIC.”**



Ready for action, the Daniel Defense DDM4V7 P is shown with a Magpul MS-4 Dual QD Sling Gen 2, Trijicon AccuPower 1-8x28 F1 riflescope, Daniel Defense 32-round magazines, Hornady #8026 75-grain BTHP Match ammunition, BAE Systems MOLLE II Modular Lightweight Load-Carrying Equipment Rucksack and a KAI/Kershaw ZT 0801T1 flipper titanium 3.5-inch blade folding knife.



# THE KEEPER

FOR TACTICAL USE,  
**DANIEL DEFENSE'S M4V7 PISTOL**  
PERFORMS LIKE A PRO

STORY AND PHOTOS BY RICHARD SCHUTZ



**W**hether you think of it as a truck gun, pistol or just a home defense weapon, the Daniel Defense DDM4V7 P is one mighty handy weapon. Chamber it in .300 Blk and put a suppressor on it, and it would be one mighty handy, quiet weapon.

No matter where you keep it, next to the nightstand, behind the seat of your truck or behind the back door, this “pistol” will bring a lot of firepower to the fight in a hurry.

## OVERVIEW

The DDM4V7 P is classified by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE) as a pistol and can be transferred as such. Since the advent of the pistol arm brace, the BATFE has issued several letters of interpretation regarding how the use of a pistol arm brace affects or changes the design and therefore the legality of the firearm. In the most recent letter, dated March 21, 2017, the BATFE determined that shouldering a pistol with the stabilizing brace did not constitute a “redesign” of the firearm and therefore it was not illegal to do so.

When firing the DDM4V7 P, make sure that you understand the latest letter(s) of interpretation by the BATFE. They have changed their position before, so they certainly could change it again,

The Daniel Defense DDM4V7 P as it came out of the box with “Rock & Lock” sights, soft-touch overmolding pistol grip, LAW Tactical Gen 3-M Folding Stock Adapter and SB Tactical SOB pistol-stabilizing brace. The receiver and handguard are finished in Cerakote Mil-Spec+.

depending upon the party in power on Pennsylvania Avenue.

Other than the pistol-stabilizing arm brace, the DDM4V7 P is very similar to the rest of Daniel Defense’s line of AR-15 rifles.

The DDM4V7 P that was used for this evaluation was chambered in 5.56mm NATO. It accepts virtually any AR-15 style magazine and will fire both 5.56 NATO and .223 Remington ammunition. A version chambered in .300 Blk is also available.

## OPERATION

As a direct impingement (D.I.) style AR-15, Daniel Defense had to jump through a few hoops to come up with a folding stock. Since a D.I. AR-15 requires a buffer tube with a spring and buffer mass, they couldn’t just attach a normal folding stock to the lower receiver as can be done on a gas piston operated AR.

The key to the folding stock is the use

of a LAW Tactical Gen 3-M Folding Stock Adapter. The LAW adapter is installed between the lower receiver and the buffer tube portion of the stock assembly. A LAW Toolless Bolt Carrier Extension is installed in the rear of the stock bolt carrier to make up for the added length of the LAW Tactical adapter. It is extremely important to remember that the DDM4V7 P cannot be fired when the stock is in the folded position. When the stock is folded, the adapter is very plainly marked to this affect.

Another important piece of the puzzle is the SB Tactical SOB pistol stabilizing brace. This takes the place of a traditional stock and, along with other criteria, allows the assembly to be considered a pistol rather than an SBR. As such, no tax stamp and related NFA paperwork is required for the transfer of the DDM4V7 P.

## CONTACT INFO

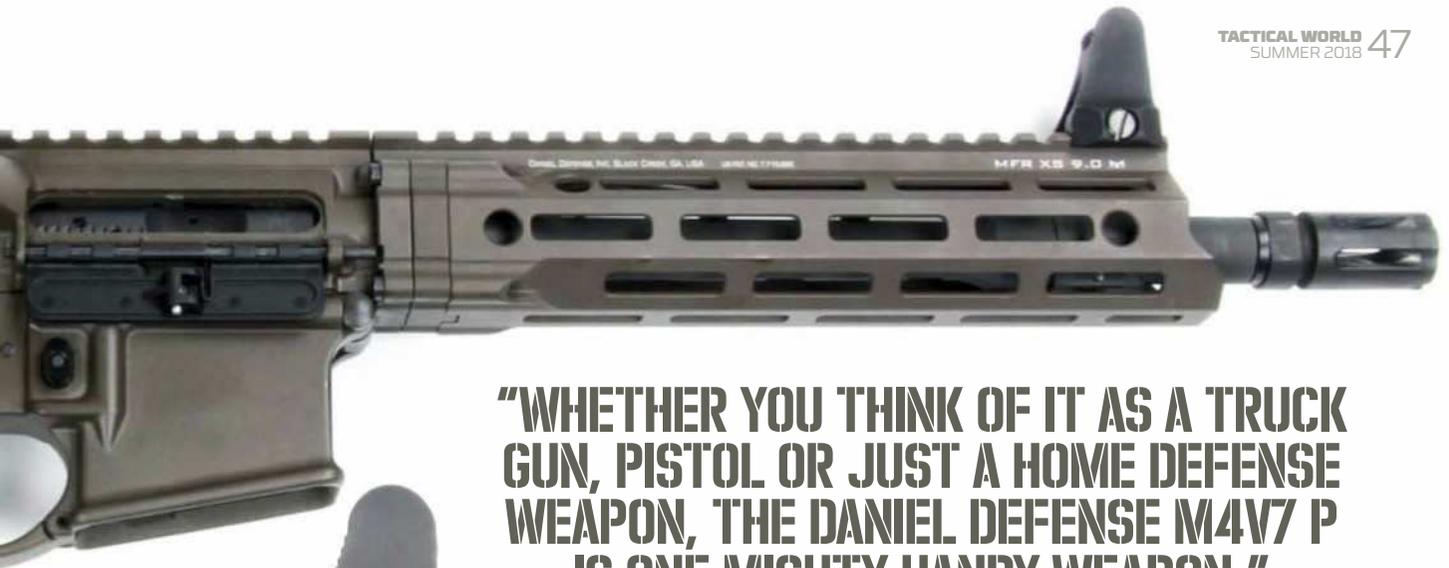
**Daniel Defense**  
DanielDefense.com

**Nightforce**  
NightforceOptics.com

**Black Hills**  
Black-Hills.com

**Defender Ammunition**  
DefenderAmmunition.com

**Cerakote**  
CerakoteGunCoatings.com



## “WHETHER YOU THINK OF IT AS A TRUCK GUN, PISTOL OR JUST A HOME DEFENSE WEAPON, THE DANIEL DEFENSE M4V7 P IS ONE MIGHTY HANDY WEAPON.”



The muzzle device is a Daniel Defense stainless steel flash suppressor with a nitride finish.

SB Tactical offers several versions of the pistol-stabilizing brace. The SOB is a slim adaptation of their SBM4 model. It is made from a stiff, yet pliable rubberized material and uses a hook-and-loop strap to secure the brace to your arm.



Daniel Defense used a LAW Tactical Gen 3-M Folding Stock Adapter to allow the SOB arm brace to fold 180 degrees. The release button is protected by a boss on the receiver half of the adapter so that the stock isn't inadvertently folded while the pistol is in use.

Daniel Defense spares nothing when it comes to building a high-quality firearm. The upper receiver is CNC machined from 7075-T6 aluminum and has M4 feed ramps. The bolt carrier group has a M16 profile, is chrome lined and is magnetic particle inspected for subsurface defects. A 10.3-inch-long chrome-lined cold-hammer-forged barrel made of chromium molybdenum vanadium steel is used. It is turned to government profile and is Mil-Spec heavy-phosphate coated. The rifling twist rate is 1:7 inches. A Daniel Defense 17-4 PH stainless steel flash suppressor is attached using 1/2-28 TPI threads. A polymer dust cover and a forward assist are also provided. Machined from 6061-T6 aluminum, a Daniel Defense MFR 9.0 M-LOK

**Trijicon**  
Trijicon.com

**Aguila**  
AguilaAmmo.com

**PMC**  
PMCAmmo.com

**Law Tactical**  
LawTactical.com

**LaRue Tactical**  
Larue.com

**Lapua**  
Lapua.com

**Magpul**  
Magpul.com

**SB Tactical**  
SB-Tactical.com

**Hornady**  
Hornady.com

**IMI**  
IMISystems.com

**C Products Defense**  
CPD.com



The folded SOB pistol-stabilizing brace rests neatly alongside the receiver. It does not touch the receiver or hit the bolt catch lever.

handguard is attached to the upper receiver, which features Daniel Defense's patented rail mounting system, with four grade-8 Mil-Spec fasteners. At the 12 o'clock position on the handguard is a full-length 1913 Mil-Std rail, which matches up perfectly with the rail on the upper receiver. The gas system is carbine length and uses a low profile 4140 hardened steel gas block.

The lower receiver is also CNC-machined from 7075-T6 aluminum. It features a flared magazine well and a rear QD swivel attachment point. An H buffer is used. The pistol grip, which is Daniel Defense's own design, utilizes glass-filled polymer with soft-touch overmolding.

I did not find it mentioned in the Instructions/Safety/Maintenance Manual, but there is a trick to disassembling the DDM4V7 P for cleaning. When the rear takedown pin is removed, the BCG with the LAW Toolless Bolt Carrier Extension installed will not allow the lower receiver to rotate around the forward pivot pin. Therefore, it is necessary to either fold the stock and remove the bolt carrier extension prior to disassembly, or to remove both the front and rear disassembly pins and separate the upper and lower halves by rotating the front of the upper receiver upwards, and then pulling it forward so that the bolt carrier extension clears the lower receiver. In my mind, this is the preferred method so that you don't forget to reinstall the LAW Toolless Bolt Carrier Extension into the bolt carrier after reassembly.

Other than the items above related to the pistol-stabilizing brace and folding stock adapter, the DDM4V7 P operates just like any other D.I. AR-15.

## AMMUNITION & MAGAZINES

I used several different brands of magazines, including the 32-round DD magazine provided, various generations of Magpul magazines in 10-, 20- and 30-round capacities and C Products Defense 30-round magazines. All performed without so much as a hiccup.

Ammunition functioned just like the magazines, no hiccups. I fed the DDM4V7 P eight different types of ammunition from eight different manufacturers, and it showed no preference as far as function is concerned. It fed, chambered, fired and ejected them all equally well. Bullet weights ranged from 52 to 77 grains. All bullets were FMJ or OTM style.

I compared muzzle velocity for the ammunition used for this evaluation with the muzzle velocities for the same ammunition fired in two AR-15s with 16-inch barrels that I had previously evaluated. The DDM4V7 P, with its 10.3-inch barrel, lost an average of 367 fps, or 63 fps/inch compared to the rifles.

## OPTICS

The pistol comes with rail-mounted Daniel Defense Rock & Lock front and rear sights. The rear sight has large and small apertures, adjustable for windage. The post front sight is adjustable for elevation and features protective wings on each side. Both sights are machined from 6061-T6 aluminum so they are lightweight and rugged.



For accuracy testing at the range, I installed my go-to combination of a Nightforce ATACR 7-35x56 F1 riflescope with a Nightforce 30mm Ultralite Unimount 20 MOA mount. This is a



**“ ... THIS ‘PISTOL’ WILL BRING A LOT OF FIREPOWER TO THE FIGHT IN A HURRY.”**



rock-solid combination that I frequently use for rifle accuracy evaluations.

In preparation for tactical work, I sighted-in the DDM4V7 P with both an EO Tech model 512 and a Trijicon AccuPower 1-8x24 F1 riflescope with an MOA segmented circle crosshair and red LED. The scope mount is a LaRue Tactical SPR QD LT-104. The Trijicon scope with LaRue mount is so versatile that I ditched the EO Tech and ran the Trijicon for all of my tactical work.

### AT THE RANGE

I was very pleasantly surprised at how accurate the DDM4V7 P was at 100 yards. Originally, I thought that I might have to evaluate it at 50 yards, but I was wrong. The overall average for three five-shot groups of the eight loads evaluated was 2.06 inches. The best average for three five-shot groups was 1.73 inches using Hornady #8026 75-grain BTHP Match ammunition. Black Hills 52-grain Match HP came in a close second at 1.89 inches. The smallest individual 5-shot group

was 1.18 inches, also with Hornady 75-grain BTHP Match ammunition.

The SB Tactical SOB pistol-stabilizing brace does not make shooting from the bench easy, but I was still able to obtain good holds for the accuracy evaluation.

Using the SOB brace attached to your forearm also is not easy. I found that the best way to obtain a good sight picture is to rotate the SOB from the 6 o'clock position to the 4- or 5-o'clock position. You can then maintain a steady hold with a normal two-hand pistol hold. SB Tactical and others also recommend locking the pistol out, away from the body, using a fully tensioned single-point sling. Putting the SOB against your cheek is another method of providing a third point of contact.

The single-stage trigger isn't a high dollar aftermarket item, but it broke cleanly at an average of 7 pounds, 4.5 ounces with no over-travel. Folding the stock took a bit of practice. The release button is tucked away in front of a guard so that it isn't operated inadvertently, and it is a bit stiff, but once I got the hang of it, folding the stock was not a problem.

LAW Tactical clearly marks the folding stock adapter with notice that the adapter must be closed before firing.

### THE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

The best part of this evaluation was putting the DDM4V7 P to work during a 3-gun tactical match. The International Infidel Gunfighter League at 37 PSR in Bunnlevel, NC tests the competitor's ability to combine tactics, accuracy and speed to complete eight stages of the course using a handgun, rifle and shotgun.

The stages consist of combat task evaluations, including shooting at 10 to 40 yards from various positions using various types of cover; 10 shots at 100 yards from a fixed position; moving while shooting; man-on-man steel challenge using a pistol; shotgun on steel out to 15 yards; the "dueler" pistol and shotgun on steel; and finally the shoot house. I used the DDM4V7



P with the Trijicon AccuPower 1-8x28 F1 scope for all but the pistol and shotgun stages.

The CTE bay was closed for repairs so the first stage was the medium range bay where we fired over a wall at targets from 20 to 40 yards, then from barricades at targets from 10 to 25 yards. I shot this stage clean and received a 20-second bonus. The DDM4V7 P performed flawlessly and set at 4x, the Trijicon scope was a perfect match for the stage.

At the 100-yard fixed position stage, I shot the best 10-shot group of the day at 2 inches. I had the scope set at 6x because at 8x the first focal plane reticle covered too much of the target. Another shooter with a new (and expensive) full-size AR with scope was not happy that I beat him with my 10.3-inch barrel "pistol."

During shooting, while moving at 7 to 10 yards, I had one miss. It looks easy, but shooting while continuously moving isn't at all easy. It requires good footwork and a steady upper body. At least I didn't hit a non-threat target.

I got beat in the first round of the pistol only (Glock 17, not DDM4V7 P) man-on-man steel stage so I received a 300-point penalty (not the DDM4V7 P's fault).

At the shotgun-on-steel stage, I shot one plate out of sequence so I was

The left side view reveals the standard AR-15 controls used on the M4V7 P and the pivot pin side of the LAW Tactical Gen 3-M Folding Stock Adapter.

tagged with eight misses. Again, this was not the DDM4V7 P's fault.

On the Dueler, pistol (G17) and shotgun-on-steel stage, I was a bit slow because of what happened on the previous stage, but I had no penalties or misses.

Finally, I got to the shoot house. This is by far the most challenging and most fun stage. I turned the Trijicon down to 1x, kept both eyes open and went in on the buzzer. The DDM4V7 P performed flawlessly once again, but I had two misses (only one scoring hit in the kill zone instead of two on each of two threat targets) and two procedurals where the RSO

determined that I was overexposed going into a room.

When the smoke cleared, I came in 16th out of 41 competitors, and the DDM4V7 P had done its job well. Using a new gun in a competition like this is difficult for many reasons, but mostly because everything on it works a little differently than with my go-to AR-15, even if it, too, is a Daniel Defense.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

If you are looking for a truck gun, high-power center-fire semi-auto "pistol" or a home defense weapon, the DDM4V7 P is a darn good option. Adding the Law Adapter for a folding stock like

## FACTORY SPECIFICATIONS

- **Model:** DDM4V7 P (pistol)
- **Caliber:** 5.56 NATO (.300 Blackout available)
- **Magazine Capacity:** 32-round Daniel Defense
- **Action Type:** Semi-automatic, magazine fed
- **Operating System:** Direct impingement carbine length gas operated; low profile gas block
- **Buffer:** H-buffer
- **Barrel:** 10.3-inch, cold-hammer, forged-chrome moly vanadium steel; Mil-Spec, heavy phosphate coated; government profile; 1/2-28 TPI threaded
- **Bolt Carrier Group:** M16 profile, Mil-Spec MP tested, chrome lined
- **Muzzle Device:** Daniel Defense flash suppressor, 17-4 PH stainless steel, nitride finish
- **Handguard:** MFR 9.0-inch M-LOK; 6061-T6 aluminum, Type III hard-coat anodized black
- **Upper Receiver:** 7075-T6 aluminum; Type III hard-coat anodized; M4 feed ramps
- **Lower Receiver:** 7075-T6 aluminum; Type III hard-coat anodized; flared magazine well
- **Finish:** Cerakote Mil Spec +
- **Rifling:** 1:7-inches twist rate
- **Scope Mount:** Full-length, 1913 MIL-STD rail
- **Sights:** Daniel Defense "Rock & Lock" rail mounted fully adjustable
- **Trigger:** 7 pounds, 4.5 ounces as tested (using a digital Lyman Trigger Pull Gauge for 10 consecutive pulls)
- **Stock:** SB Tactical SOB Pistol Stabilizing Brace
- **Stock Adapter:** Law Tactical Gen 3-M AR Folding Stock Adapter
- **Grip:** Daniel Defense; glass-filled polymer with soft-touch overmold
- **Overall Length:** 30-1/8 inches overall; 20-5/8 inches folded (actual)
- **Weight:** 6 pounds, 3 ounces (actual; no sights, no magazine)
- **MSRP:** \$2,110



the pistol I used just makes it that much handier. If you want to go quiet, order it in .300 Blackout and add a suppressor. It just keeps getting better.

Daniel Defense is known for building high quality and durable weapons for both civilian and military use. The words, "Lighter, Stronger, Better ..." are more than a slogan, it is how Daniel Defense designs and manufactures products.

The DDM4V7 P that I used during this evaluation performed flawlessly, just

as I expected it to. I would not hesitate to put it into home defense service or any other for that matter. The real key for my trust is that it performed flawlessly during the first competition using it. Competition, like in battle, is where things that have never gone wrong before, go wrong, and at the worst possible time.

Now all I have to do is to make room in the gun safe for it. This one is a keeper. **TW**

## PERFORMANCE DATA

AMMUNITION	VELOCITY	E.S.	S.D.	SM. GRP.	AVG. GRP.
Hornady #8026 Custom Match 75-grain BTHP	2,193	84	22.8	1.18	1.73
Black Hills 52-grain Match HP	2,455	92	29.1	1.40	1.89
Aguila 55-grain FMJ	2,461	89	34.3	1.59	2.00
Defender 5.56 77-grain SMK	2,145	72	23.4	1.54	2.07
Lapua #4315011 69-grain OTM SCENAR	2,166	63	20.9	1.52	2.20
IMI 5.56 M193 55-grain FMJ	2,615	45	17.1	1.74	2.20
Federal American Eagle AE223BK 55-grain FMJ	2,429	77	21.5	2.10	2.94
PMC #223A 55-grain FMJ	2,204	151	43.5	2.66	3.14

Groups were fired from a foam front rest and rear sandbag at 100 yards. Velocity is in feet per second (fps) calculated at the muzzle using a LabRadar device; E.S. = Extreme Spread; S.D. = Standard Deviation; Sm. Grp. = size of the smallest single group for that ammunition in inches; Avg. Grp. = the average group size in inches for three 5-shot groups.

U.S. ARMY  
SPECIAL OPERATIONS  
**VET KYLE LAMB**  
REVEALS TIPS TO BOLSTER  
YOUR SHOOTING WHILE  
USING A SLING

STORY BY DAVE RHODEN, PHOTOS BY LUKAS LAMB



# TACTICAL



# ENHANCEMENTS

Sergeant Major Kyle E. Lamb (retired), spent more than 20 years with the United States Army. Fifteen of those were with the U.S. Army Special Operations.

It is the issued sling of a lot of the top special operations units out there. When Saddam was rolled up, those guys were wearing VTAC slings. When Osama Bin Laden was killed, the SEALs were wearing VTAC slings. So, let's meet the guy behind the industry's most iconic sling, and maybe learn a few tactical tips along the way. —Dave Rhoden

Below: While in the Army, Lamb said he and a few others worked together to come up with a better mousetrap. Eventually, this path led to VTAC.

The evolution of the battle rifle has given us improved triggers, better barrels and free-float tubes. The latter is the ideal partner with a VTAC sling because a free-float tube allows you to put more sling tension on your weapon when you're in your shooting position, without decreasing your accuracy.

In the old days, if you really tightened down your sling on a non-free-floated rifle, you could move your point of impact (POI) while shooting. Pulling too hard on that sling could move POI as much as three or four inches at 100 yards. With a free-floated barrel, you don't have that issue, and most quality AR's out there are free floated.

In the following story, SGM (Ret.) Lamb provides tips to enhance your tactical game.

### TALKING POSITIONS

When a novice shooter attends a carbine class, the chances they have a free-floated barrel are over 90%. Hopefully we have convinced them to put on a VTAC sling, and all we must teach them now is how to use that sling as a shooting aid.

When they first get in the prone position, they are either going to have the sling too loose or they are going to take it completely off when they assume the prone position. What they should do is have the sling over their



**"I SHOOT WITH MY SLING REALLY TIGHT BECAUSE IT'S LIKE HAVING TWO MORE HANDS ON THE AR WHEN I AM SHOOTING."**



right shoulder and under their left (for a right-handed shooter) and reach up to the pull tab, pulling it tight when they're in that position. If that's not tight enough, then just grab another handful of sling and continue to pull it until it's adjusted as tightly as they need it.

I shoot with my sling really tight because it's like having two more hands on the AR when I am shooting. So right there they've seen, "Okay, wow this improves my position." Now we can move them on to the next position.

The next position I would teach is the sitting position and the same thing

applies there. Use the sling to tighten that position. In a standard sitting position, the sling doesn't get as much use as it does in, say, a rocking chair position, which is one of the positions we teach where you're wrapping the sling around the front of your knee to support the rifle. If you don't have a tight sling there, all of the stress is going to be on your belly versus letting you relax. If you're trying to hold your body in position with muscle for these positions, then you just can't be in that position very long. If you're using the sling and bone structure, man hang on your bones and let them do what they got to do. That's a climbing phrase, by the way, "Climb off your bones." Because if you

climb off your muscle, you're not going to be able to sustain a long route. And if you're climbing without protection, you're screwed because once you run out (of muscle) you're done. And that's basically the same thing for shooting. We want to use our bone structure to support us in that position versus muscle.

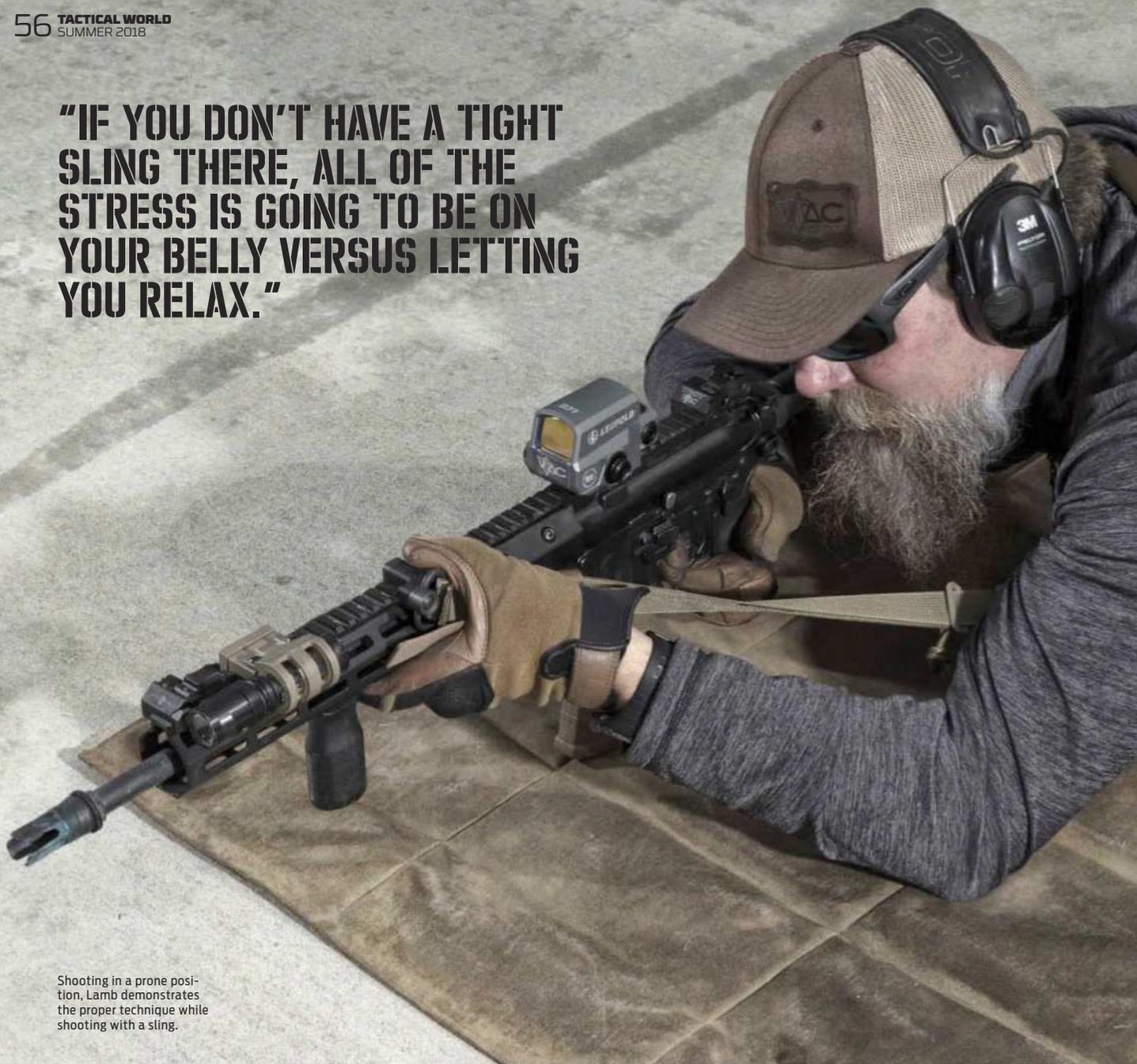
I say that, and we do want to try to put muscle against bone. But when we're doing that we want that bone to provide most of the support.

### SLING OR HOLSTER?

A two-point sling is a carry strap that allows you to have the weapon



**"IF YOU DON'T HAVE A TIGHT SLING THERE, ALL OF THE STRESS IS GOING TO BE ON YOUR BELLY VERSUS LETTING YOU RELAX."**



Shooting in a prone position, Lamb demonstrates the proper technique while shooting with a sling.

## **BUDDY CARRY: TECHNIQUES**

Let's take a buddy carry. A lot of medics say they want to be able to quickly sling their weapon. And a lot of them say, I'm going to throw my weapon over my back, so that the weapon ends up being muzzle up. Now they're down working on somebody and their gun is poking in the nose of every single person that's helping them every time they bend over.

So, what we try to teach the medics is, leave the muzzle, use a muzzle cap on your rifle, let the muzzle hit the dirt. Who cares? You're working on somebody. Let the guys pulling security worry about that.

If you have a muzzle cap or even a simple piece of tape over your muzzle, leave the muzzle down. That way, with our sling, you can either sling the rifle across your back or you can leave it slung across your front. If you're in a crowd, I would leave it slung across the front of my body, even if I was doing medical treatment.

hang in a natural position that you could quickly access if you go hands-free for a minute. But it's a carry strap that provides stability and enhances your accuracy. You've seen old guys wrap their arm through their sling of their hunting rifle. You've seen tactical guys wrap their hand in their sling; wrapping your hand in your sling is not a good idea because if you do have to quickly transition to your sidearm or move, now you have to unwrap your hand first. Whereas with the VTAC sling, you just stand up or transition to your pistol or whatever that next move happens to be.





## TRANSITION TIPS

When transitioning to support side, I take a step forward because I try to teach people to be aggressive. If they're in a situation where they can't step forward, fine, but we don't want them stepping back. Always teach them to be aggressive and that puts your body in the correct attitude to be able to shoot from your support side.

### KNEELING POSITION

The kneeling position always wears people out, so it's one where any little trick that you can use to get in a better position helps. One trick is to tighten the sling. There I show them some different positions where they can use bone structure to support the rifle versus using so much muscle. We do some stretch kneeling positions, which are quicker positions to get into, where having the sling tight will help you take out a little bit of that wobble as well.

If I could have another 10 attaching points from my body to the ground, obviously that's what I would do. That's what guy wires do; they stabilize things and that's how that sling is working. Think of it as guy wires coming off your weapon system to you and they both hold each other. When I am in that kneeling position, I have my front knee up, I turn my front foot 90 degrees off the target line and when I do, that allows me to take stress off my knee. I then put my magazine in front of my knee, my pistol grip behind my knee, and

**Top:** While sitting, Lamb uses the sling to tighten that position. Notice how he uses his bone structure, not muscle, for support.

**Bottom:** When done properly, not only is the kneeling position a stable platform, but notice how compact it is, making you a smaller target.

I truly have a stable position. Now if I add a piece of cover to that, I can drop my opposite knee, use my front hand on the cover (the cover's not going to move if it's good cover like a car, a corner of a building, a tree, or whatever it might be), I put my back knee up, and now have almost the equivalent of a prone position with regard to stability.

### SHOOTING DOWNHILL

To utilize the sling when shooting downhill, from a seated position with my feet stacked and in front, I hook

my thumb on my vertical grip and put my fingers around the bottom of my foot. If I don't have a vertical grip, then I hook my thumb into my sling and then put my fingers over my foot.

What I don't want to do is just lay the gun on top of my foot. Why? If you don't have a long free-float tube you'll normally impact your accuracy (if it is sitting on the barrel); therefore you don't have good control to keep it there. That'll work one-footed as well; you don't have to have both feet stacked. If you're going down a steep hill, one foot works just fine.

### FAST ROPING WITH A SLING

Whether you have the rifle in front of you or behind you when fast roping depends on the person. I prefer to keep it in front of me. If I'm going to slide to the edge of the helicopter, I've got my rifle in a position to shoot ... and the last thing I do is let go of my gun, grab that fast rope and slide down. The sling keeps everything tight.

Like a lot of guys, I've slung the rifle across my back, slid across to go out the door of the helicopter, and what catches? My rifle. Now my rifle goes up, covers everybody, including the helicopter's motor, and then it finally comes down ... and pendulums against me. You don't want that. That's why I prefer to carry it in front.

### TRANSITIONING

You can transition from strong to support side without unslinging, but I generally drop my support arm out of my sling to give me the ability to move easily to the support side. When I return, I just re-sling the weapon. It sounds like it would take some time, but it really doesn't, and it will eliminate choking yourself with your sling.

When I am moving around, doing CQB type stuff, I don't have my sling very tight at that point. And that allows me to quickly transition from strong to support side shoulder and back and forth. I never keep it so loose that if

Lamb instructs Dave Rhoden, owner of Flagrnt Beard, on the finer subtleties of shooting from a stretch-kneeling position.



When doing things like scaling walls, the Viking Tactics 2-point sling allows you to transition the rifle behind you, protecting your rifle and freeing up your workspace.



## RELOADING TIPS

I try to feed the front of the mag in before the back of the mag, which is completely backwards compared to most people. It's completely wrong (to do it that way) according to the "tactical geniuses," but the difference is for years I carried a spare mag that was two mags taped together. So, I had a double mag and as you shot, the top round of the next mag would start to work its way out. In order to feed that second mag into the gun, you had to go nose first, and if that round was too far out, then you could just sweep it, that round would come off, and then you could put the mag in.

That's one reason why I put the front of the mag in. The other reason is because I have carried an AK on the battlefield a good bit. Try going back first with an AK mag. You'll never load that mag, it's impossible. That's just the way that gun is designed. There's no gun on this planet that I know of that's designed mechanically where it's impossible to load the mag front first and then rotate it back. If you feel like it's slowing your speed down, fine, then do it a different way.

I transition to my pistol, my carbine is beating me in the knees, but due to the way I have my sling adjusted, with one pull, it's at the position where I like it. It does take practice.

A lot of the guys that I worked with in the past would just sling the weapon around their neck when they were doing CQB. In this case you just transition back and forth. You don't even have to worry about the sling, because it's just around your neck. I don't mind that either when I'm doing CQB. The only downside of that is, if you get in a fight with somebody, now that weapon can be used to sling you around a little more than if you have your arm through the sling. Another

issue is, if you have to transition to your pistol, you don't want the rifle beating you up or otherwise be in the way.

Be mindful, when I say transition to your pistol, I'm talking about your rifle being out of order and you dynamically have to get to your pistol in a hurry. If you're coming up to a stairwell and you decide that you're going to be the guy that goes up the stairs first, or up into an attic and you want to use your pistol, that's not a transition. That is slinging your rifle, getting your pistol out, and going up to clear with your pistol. That is not a dynamic movement. I'm talking about dynamic: I've got to get my pistol out

SGM Lamb has conducted combat operations in numerous theatres of operation, including Mogadishu, Somalia (Black Hawk Down Incident), and has served numerous tours in Iraq (the current war as well as Operation Desert Storm) and Bosnia.

quickly and into the fight because my rifle quit working.

## PROPER RELOADING

I leave the sling on and just go to my happy mag (pouch) on my side (an AR mag located in a Kydex pouch on a belt, support side). I don't put the buttstock under my arm when I'm doing a speed reload because I'm in a hurry. If I couldn't support the weight of that weapon, then I might do that. I try to keep the muzzle up a little bit. I don't flip the gun, and I don't go up to the right and then down to the left because I'm not looking to see if I have a malfunction. I know what it feels like when I shoot dry, so I immediately drop the mag and have the other mag coming up.

## VEHICLE OPS

If you have your weapon off and have it in a vehicle, one of the problems we ran into while exiting vehicles is that the loop of the sling used to catch on everything. So, another nice feature of a quick-adjust two-point VTAC sling is the ability to tighten it down to the side of your weapon system for vehicle operations. Or you can s-roll it and tape it to your weapon with masking tape or something else that you can rip loose; I normally use rubber bands. When you exit the vehicle, you just grab that, pull it out, and you're ready to go.

Something else guys have told us is that they like the ability to use our sling in an urban environment for sniper or for AR work. They have connected them to light fixtures and then adjusted it to the front of their weapon system by how tight they pull it, or attached them to their belt and to their tripod to add weight when they're shooting in certain situations. Some shooters have said that they could use it as a tourniquet if they had to. I would say that there's probably a better tool for the job, which is a SOF-T tourniquet. But, if you were in a bad way, you could use that quick-adjust portion of the sling and then cinch it down tight.

## OVERALL TAKEAWAYS

The VTAC slings are made in America from the highest quality materials. They quickly adjust, you don't have to unweight the weapon to tighten or loosen it, you can do it one-handed and you can tighten the sling down to the side of your weapon while performing vehicle operations. It's been copied a bunch, so we must be doing something right. **TW**

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Viking Tactics  
VikingTactics.com



Here, Lamb shows how the sling works around a vehicle. Using his technique, he says you don't have to unweight the weapon to tighten or loosen the sling. You can do it one-handed.

## EVOLUTIONS

We started with a non-padded sling called the MK-1. If you are wondering where that name came from, "MK-1" was the Naval nomenclature that Mike Noell at BLACKHAWK! came up with due to his background as a SEAL, and we just stuck with that. We now offer an MK-2, which is the padded version. If you're carrying a heavier rifle for sniper use, it helps with the weight, especially for guys that aren't wearing body armor, because a lot of body armor has big shoulder pads.

We then made a lightweight multi-cam sling, and I told my former cohorts that we had made it for them, just as a joke. A couple of weeks later they ordered a bunch of them. That was when we decided that we had to make that sling.

Since then, we have made the slings out of different materials to make them lighter. We have added rubberized pull tabs, some with bungee that can transition from a two-point to a single-point. I prefer the bungee sling if I am using something like an MP5 or MPX, because the gun is more compact, and the sling typically attaches at the rear of the receiver. The only thing I don't like about a bungee sling is if I use it on my M4 or AR-15, I have a harder time getting it really tight to allow me to shoot more accurately. So, if you're going to do a lot of dynamic stuff, I'd say it's fine. But if you're focusing more on 100- to 300-yard shooting, then you probably want to use one that doesn't have a bungee.





# FORCE- PRINC

Your perspective on shooting changes when there is a firearm pointed at you while doing it.

TRAIN LIKE YOU FIGHT,  
AND YOU WILL FIGHT  
LIKE YOU TRAIN

STORY AND PHOTOS BY MIKE SEARSON

# FORCE-ON-FORCE PRINCIPLES

**Y**ou can shoot three times a week, compete on the local and national circuits and attend all the defensive carbine and tactical handgun classes available. What does that get you? All that training will make you a better shooter, no doubt. But, unless you try a force-on-force type of class, you may not have an idea of how to interact with potential threats while you are armed.

Force-on-force training is probably the best way to augment your defensive handgun and carbine training, particularly if the course is run well. We hold force on force in the same regard as we do physical combat sports, such as boxing and MMA with regard to the sparring element. You can do all the strength training, roadwork and other physical conditioning there is, but until you actually square off on the mat—in the cage or in the ring against another opponent—your skills are not actually being put to the test.

## FORCE-ON-FORCE HISTORY

In the 1960s, the U.S. Navy performed a study on fighter pilots that linked pilot survival rates and combat effectiveness to experience in the air. They discovered that the more experience a pilot had, the better his chances of survival were on a mission. It may seem like a no-brainer to most of us, but it led to the establishment of the TOPGUN program and combat flight simulators. This in turn saved the U.S. government untold millions of dollars by having pilots practice air-to-air combat in simulated conditions, so that they would be ready when they went into combat.

This is the thought process behind force-on-force training.

You may do a ton of flat range training, compete in shooting matches on a regular basis and be one of the top shooters in the world, but surviving a violent encounter means more than being the fastest or most accurate shot.

Sometimes it comes down to not having to shoot at all.

One of the problems with force-on-force training is that until recently it was only available within the realm of law enforcement training. Civilians, smaller police departments and even most military units had to rely on MILES (Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System), paintball or even airsoft.

While they give you the sense of engaging a live target, as well as being fired upon, not one of these can truly impart the realism of firing and being under fire, as shooting Simunitions or UTM (Ultimate Training Munitions), in which shooters use a real firearm with special ammunition to replicate an actual shooting.

Fortunately, training cadres like LMS Defense have been bringing these courses to the masses nationwide, and we were lucky enough to attend one hosted by Daniel Bales at the LMS Training Facility in Fernley, NV.

If you have never taken a force-on-force class and are considering it in the near future, we found a few things that may help you with your goals. Keep in mind that the Sim gun will not be your actual carry gun, but a modified pistol designed to be used safely in these courses.

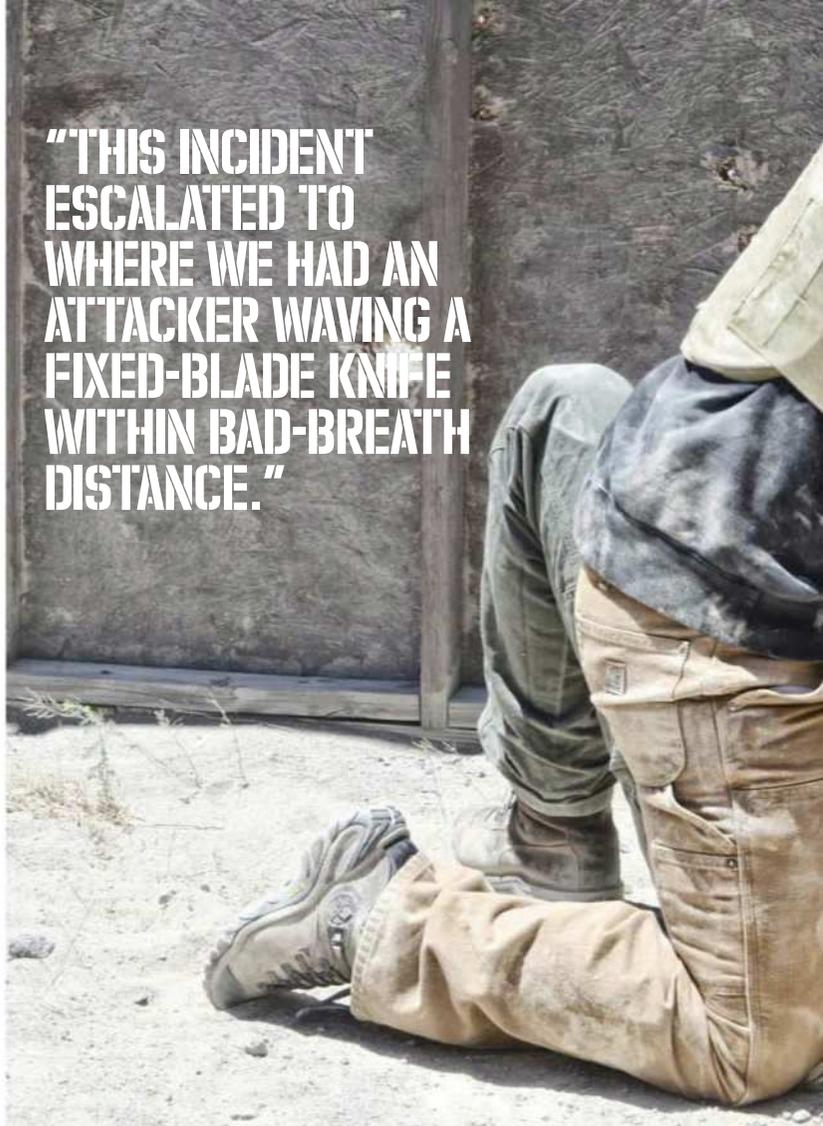
### EMPTY YOUR CUP

One of the most overused expressions in the martial arts, and even some shooting disciplines, is to “empty your cup,” that is, forget everything you have learned to this point and start anew. That may be good advice for training on a new martial art system or even a new weapon system, but it can be a hindrance in force-on-force training.

The goal of force on force is to strengthen your existing skillset, not to start from scratch. In fact, a course like this should only be attempted after you have acquired other types of

Is the guy on top the good guy or the bad guy? You may only have a split-second to make that determination.

**“THIS INCIDENT ESCALATED TO WHERE WE HAD AN ATTACKER WAVING A FIXED-BLADE KNIFE WITHIN BAD-BREATH DISTANCE.”**



Just like the real world, when a potential shooting arises in a force-on-force class, present your weapon and use loud verbal commands.

training with firearms and shooting.

For example, we had a scenario in which an unruly customer stormed into a convenience store, acting belligerently to the clerk and then to us. We went through a few similar real-life incidents like this in the past. On those occasions, and in this one, we covertly drew our pistol, held it discretely, and were ready if things escalated. (Note: this is much easier

to do with a tiny Seecamp 32 or an NAA Mini revolver than with a UTM Beretta 92.) This incident escalated to where we had an attacker waving a fixed-blade knife within bad-breath distance. Not wanting to take the chance on our carotid being severed, we shot him.

In the debriefing session, we pointed out the proximity of the assailant waving a fake Ka-Bar around and





## DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE HARDWARE

Most of these classes use training guns that are modified Berettas because they function well with the ammunition and are relatively inexpensive. They may not be your treasured custom-built competition handgun, or your scaled-down CCW model, but that shouldn't prevent you from applying the principles you have learned with your regular guns and gear. Draw, aim and shoot, regardless of what you typically carry outside the class.

play later in the day as more of a "fun" exercise, but the ultimate goal in this type of training, as in life, is to deescalate the situation without any rounds being fired.

If you hear someone breaking into your "home" during the class, make noise. Inform them loudly that you are armed, and dial 9-1-1. Should you be in a "convenience store" and the bad guy is just being loud and obnoxious, make your escape and call 9-1-1 when it is safe to do so.

Put yourself into the mindset that, despite the face masks and training weapons, this is a real event, and act accordingly.

## WHAT HAT ARE YOU WEARING?

There are times when you have to look at things with a new set of eyes.

In one scenario, we happened upon a fight in progress. The victim was on the receiving end of a ground-and-pound by another person. While trying to determine if the victim was a bad guy and the aggressor was a police officer, the aggressor pulled a knife and prepared to stab the victim. Without seeing a badge or having the attacker respond to my commands



being within 3 feet. In our previous CQC training with instructors, such as Ernest Emerson, we knew what a determined attacker with a knife could do at that distance. Although the shooting was ruled justified, I was the only student to respond in that way out of the rest of the class. Everyone else successfully evacuated the store and called 9-1-1 outside. My personal learning point was to be mindful to create distance when

given the opportunity. However, building upon previous training, that is how I would have acted in a real-life situation. I know better for the next time, whether it is in class or in the real world.

## IT'S NOT THE OK CORRAL

Do not look at force-on-force training as a glorified paintball or capture-the-flag type of contest. At some courses, that type of shooting may come into

Whether the shooting takes place in a shoot house type of range or in your own house, make use of cover whenever possible.

to stop, I thought “Cops don’t stab unarmed people that they have been beating on.” Therefore, I drew and fired, probably at too close of a range.

What happened? Seeing a ground-and-pound triggered my past experience as a sportswriter on the MMA circuit. I got as close as I could to determine what was happening. It was a stupid instinct. This wasn’t in a cage or a ring; this was supposed to be outside the local Walmart.

I found this as something I had to work on, and while it may seem to contradict the first point we made, it really does not. We have to be mindful of what “hats” we are wearing at any given time. If you are former military, it is not your job to “locate, close with and destroy the enemy” in every situation.

### SIMUNITION ROUNDS MAY HURT, BUT DON’T PLAY DEAD

This is not paintball and while that round may only be travelling at less than 400 fps, our first reaction when we were shot was, “That SOB actually shot me.”

Thankfully, though, Daniel Bales of LMS Defense gives an excellent briefing upfront and encourages students to “fight through the pain.” In the past, too many instructors would have their “shot” students play dead.

Maybe on a large-scale law enforcement/first responder class this can make sense to gauge evacuation of injured personnel. In a force-on-force lesson, when it’s your life on the line, think back to how some real-life heroes or even bad guys have survived and fought through a gunfight in some cases, in spite of being riddled with bullets or shot through the heart or the head.

Here we learned to keep on fighting



**Top:** The firearms are marked with blue components and the holsters are safety orange in order to inform everyone that a training gun is being used.

**Bottom:** The protective gear and clothing may change how you carry your firearm, but a good student will adapt quickly.

even when shot in the stomach. That won’t kill you out on the street, so it shouldn’t “kill you” in training. If you train to play dead and are shot in a real-life incident, you may literally give up, lie down and bleed out instead of carrying on the fight. Nobody wants that to happen.

### LOSE YOUR EGO

After talking with hundreds of readers, students, trainers and shooters, in our opinion the number one reason why most people do not train is ego.

Nobody wants to look bad or face their potential shortcomings. Training courses are not insanely expensive outside of perhaps travel, lodging and maybe ammunition costs. Yet, we

hear how courses are filled by less than 20% of the shooting community. Some instructors place this estimate even lower.

You can mess up as much as you want in training, until you eventually get it right. That is the beauty of training. Most of us learn from our mistakes and if you have the mentality that you did something wrong, own it and vow to not do it again.

Perhaps the most humbling scenario was being unarmed in a room full of students where most of us were unarmed, but at least two were carrying and an active shooting broke out. The armed students engaged and neutralized the threat, but my

**DIG DEEPER**  
LMSDefense.com



## 5 W'S

### WHO

Daniel Bales of the LMS Training Facility

### WHAT

Force-On-Force Training

### WHERE

Fernley, NV

### WHEN

Early 2018

### WHY

To enhance skills



**“ ... BY HAVING PILOTS PRACTICE AIR-TO-AIR COMBAT IN SIMULATED CONDITIONS, SO THAT THEY WOULD BE READY WHEN THEY WENT INTO COMBAT.”**

reputation as a writer had made me the target in this scenario.

Unarmed against a gun-toting assailant about 50 feet away, forced me to rely on the protection of someone else. That is not a zone that makes me comfortable at all.

Tactical trainers often talk of developing a “combat mindset,” which is important; but not every armed encounter is one with a

sociopath. Sometimes it is better to seek cover or create distance between you and the threat, other times it may be closing the distance and engaging directly.

### REAL FEEDBACK

Force-on-force training, like the flight simulator we mentioned, gives you real-world feedback through the scenarios. It was not my first time partaking in this type of training and will not be my last. I walk away with

Top: It is not completely a handgun course. Rifles can come into play as well.

Bottom: Not every encounter should end up as a shooting. Walking away and creating distance is as justified in these classes as it is in real life.

more knowledge every time I take one of these classes.

If you have never taken a force-on-force class, you may want to look into what LMS has to offer in your area or make a special trip to spend a weekend at one of their campuses. We find LMS to offer some of the best instruction in the U.S. and even if force on force is not on your immediate radar, take a look at some of the other courses they offer to round out your skillset. **TW**

U.S. NAVY SEAL, ACTOR,  
RACECAR DRIVER, ENTREPRENEUR



Geoff Reeves, above, is a retired Navy SEAL who founded Shadow Works.

# THE FIGHTER

FUELED BY TENACITY, GEOFF REEVES CONQUERS EVERY CHALLENGE, INCLUDING A DEVASTATING INJURY HE SUFFERED AS A SEAL

BY DOUG JEFFREY | PHOTOS BY GUS ALONZO & COURTESY OF GEOFF REEVES

**G**eoff Reeves was enraged. He hated the world, the doctor, you, me and the impossible misfortune that somehow found him. After a Navy physician informed him that if he ever walked again it would be with the aid of a cane, anger and bitterness oozed from every pore.

"I was a Navy SEAL, 26 years old, 6 feet 3, athletic and I did not understand that," recalled Reeves. "I

became angry. Before I told him to get out of my room, I asked him, 'Who the hell are you?'"

Reeves fixed his burning stare on the doctor as he walked out of the room. Alone with his thoughts on that fall morning, Reeves' mind raced. He replayed the incident repeatedly in his head, as well as the conversation he just had with the physician.

"I knew the doctor could be right, but

I could not comprehend what it would be like not to walk or to have to walk with a cane," he said. "I thought, 'Uh, uh. No way.'"

Geoff Reeves, U.S. Navy SEAL, was in for the fight of his life.

## DREAM FULFILLMENT

From a very young age, Reeves had a dream. As a youngster, his dad had taken him and his brother to an air show in Cleveland. While inside one of the buildings, Reeves looked up into the rafters and saw a Navy SEAL flag.

## A SEAL'S MINDSET

Every step of the way through life, Geoff Reeves has been successful, and that's no accident. Regardless of what he is doing, his strategy never wavers.

"I don't let anyone tell me no," he said.

En route to his goals, he is always tenacious.

"I ask questions, and I do not act like I know all the answers," he said. "I am relentless. Within reason, I do whatever it takes to get there."

He also sets goals.

"I figure out where I am headed, and I do what I need to do to get there," he said. "And then I go after it."



**“AS A SEAL, YOU JUMP OUT OF PLANES AND BLOW STUFF UP. IT WAS FANTASTIC. YOU ARE THE BADDEST OF THE BAD. THEY NEVER SLEPT. THEY NEVER ATE. WHO WOULD NOT WANT TO DO THAT?”  
—GEOFF REEVES**

“I thought that was so cool,” said Reeves, who bought a book on the elite warriors the next day. “I read it from cover to cover, and I knew that’s what I wanted to do. As a SEAL, you jump out of planes and blow stuff up. It was fantastic. You are the baddest of the bad. They never slept. They never ate. Who would not want to do that? I wanted to be that guy.”

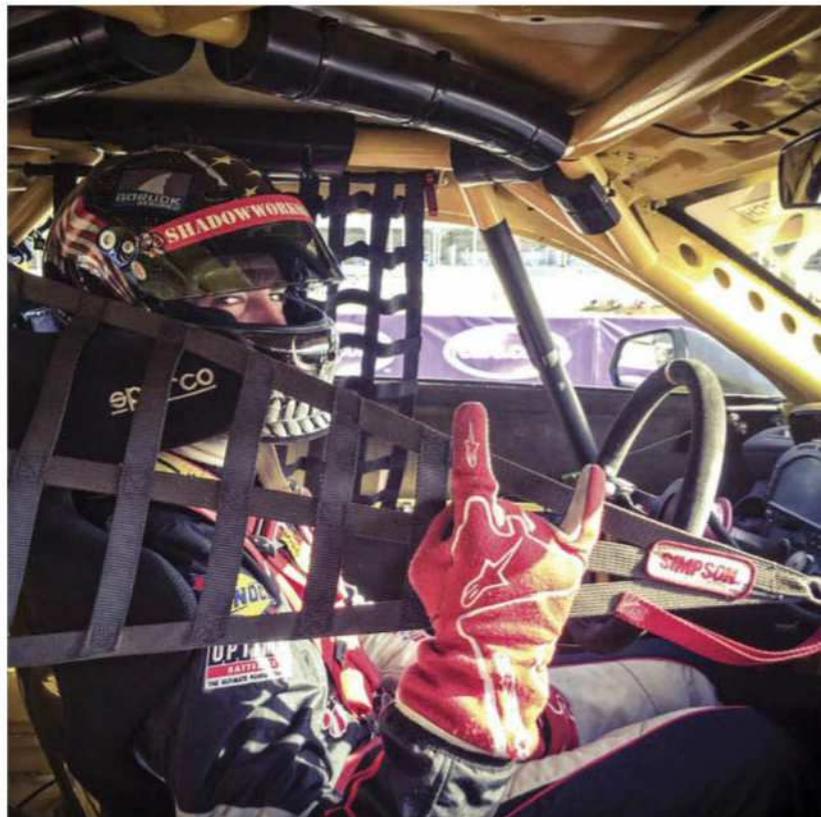
That aspiration burned even hotter when some classmates fueled his fire.

“There were days I did not want to go back to school because kids made fun of me,” said Reeves, 39. “A lot of my desire [to become a SEAL] had to do with being made fun of and my desire to prove that I am better than what they said.”

He ultimately proved that big time, as he became “that guy.”

Above: This is a shot of Reeves when he was in the Navy and Officer in Charge of the Navy Parachute Demonstration Team. While jumping, he is re-enlisting a teammate for another four years in the Navy.

Right: Reeves is shown behind the wheel of the Shadow Works racecar.



## LIFE AS A SEAL

After graduating from Bowling Green State University with a degree in Business, Pre-Law, Reeves attended the Navy OCS (Officer Candidate School), where he earned his commission as a Navy officer. He then reported to BUD/S (Basic Underwater Demolition/SEAL) in California. He completed the intense training program with his original class, in which he was 1 of 29 out of a possible 165. Graduating from BUD/S provided Reeves’ greatest memory of his eight-year military career.

“I will never forget that elated moment,” he said. “I had never touched a trident until they pinned one on me. While looking at it, I just thought. ‘Holy s\*\*t. All I thought about and what I had done ... I made it.”

But it was not time to relax. Reeves is simply not wired that way.

“I planned to earn it [the trident] every single day,” he said.

Reeves reported to SEAL Team 10 and helped commission the new command.

Working as an AOIC (Assistant Officer in Charge) of a platoon, he deployed overseas with 16 men, carrying out missions set forth by the upper echelon.

Looking back on his career as a SEAL, which is now more than a decade ago, Reeves said the entire experience went by "like the blink of an eye."

"It was intense, awesome, grueling and it made me who I am today because of the mentality, drive and attention to detail that was required," he said.

His teammates and their can-do attitude also remain with him.

"It was amazing to work with such incredible assets," he said. "They are incredible, driven men who can do anything they put their minds to."

As expected, the special bond and unparalleled memories made those years hard to get over for the Texas and Los Angeles resident.

"What I miss today is not having that



## FACING DEATH

Realistically, any mission the SEALs were on, due to its inherent danger, could have been the last, so how did that impact Geoff Reeves?

"We are trained by the best to do a mission," said Reeves. "I did not think that any day could be my last day. I just fought as hard as I could for the guy to the left and the right. You do what you're told, and you do what you're trained. It is like muscle memory. The guy behind you is doing his thing, too. When everyone does his job, we're successful."

mission or purpose when I get up, so that is why I do so much now," he said. "I miss it every single day ... the training that allowed us to go after bad guys who want to hurt America."

But that time ended, albeit unexpectedly, and a new chapter unfolded.

## A NEW ENDEAVOR

After separating from the Navy, Reeves took his determination and moved to Los Angeles, where he pursued an acting career.

Geoff Reeves spent eight years in the military, most of which were as a member of the U.S. Navy SEALs.

"While growing up, I was always interested in how they made movies and what goes on behind the scenes," he said. "This career was in the back of my head. I thought, 'Why not give it a shot?' So, I threw my hat into the ring."

The transition was somewhat challenging because Reeves said he had "to find himself without the SEAL teams." Eventually, he worked his way into Hollywood, where he discovered another challenge.

Reeves said he is not an adrenaline junkie, but he says he does like to take risks and push the limits.

"Getting casted is the greatest





## “HE HATED THE WORLD, THE DOCTOR, YOU, ME AND THE IMPOSSIBLE MISFORTUNE THAT SOMEHOW FOUND HIM.”

challenge in acting,” he said. “I have been told I don’t look like a Navy SEAL, I am too tall, too short, too good looking. There are times they do not even know what they want, and they are trying to tell me who I am.”

Reeves, far left, and his Shadow Works team perform parachute demonstrations. Among other locations, they skydive into Major League Baseball and National Football League stadiums.

Not unexpectedly, he overcame the challenges, and he has worked as an actor and host in numerous movies, television programs, commercials, webisodes and video games. Some of his credits include “Iron Man,” “Criminal Minds,” “Days of Our Lives,” “Love That Girl” and “Transformers.”

Wherever he goes, Reeves has earned respect and success. There also seems to be an underlying theme, regardless of what career he tackles.

### MORE SUCCESS

Asked to describe himself, Geoff Reeves laughs.

“I am fortunate for that all the things I do for work,” said Reeves, who founded Shadow Works, a patriotic action sports brand company that has a professional skydiving team and racecar. “I work with amazing people who are friends. While I like new experiences, I am not an adrenaline junkie. Yes, I like to take risks and push

the limits, but they are calculated—yet in the end, still very dangerous.” Some of that danger stems from his professional racecar driving. Reeves, who calls himself “an American living, red-white-and-blue bleeding guy who looks for intellectual debate,” has competed in the Grand Am Continental Tire and Pirelli World Challenge Series.

On that tragic fall morning during a Navy SEAL training session, Reeves encountered danger he never expected, as he came face-to-face with an unknown enemy.

### THE WORLD TURNED

The training was set for the day. After running nine miles, Reeves joined his teammates for the scheduled six to eight skydives. A day that was not unlike 100 others was about to turn out unlike every other.

On the fourth jump, just 30 feet from the ground, things went terribly

## QUICK FACTS: GEOFF REEVES

**01 MILITARY SERVICE**  
2000 to 2008

**02 COLLEGE ATHLETICS**  
He was a member of the Bowling Green State University Division I swim team.

**03 PETS**  
He has a Husky named Taima.





## CONTACT INFO

### Company

Shadow Works

### Web

ShadowWorksGroup.com

wrong. A turbo prop plane kicked up “dirty” air (the prop wash/turbulence that occurs behind the engine) that collapsed his parachute, sending Reeves directly to earth.

“I smacked into the ground hard, and I crushed both feet,” said Reeves, adding the diagnosis was a bilateral calcaneus fracture of his heels, requiring plates and screws in both feet.

After the first physician departed from

Reeves’ hospital room, the SEAL was left alone, except for an occasional visit from a nurse. Fighting off the thoughts of what life could be like drained Reeves.

And then Paul Girard showed up at his door. “Can I come in?” said Girard.

“I don’t care,” responded Reeves.

The physician walked in, sat down and looked Reeves in the eyes. A

moment passed before they began to talk. Through tears, Reeves said, “Please just do your best, and I will take care of the rest.”

Before he locked onto that plan, Reeves gave himself 24 more hours to be angry.

“After that, I realized that this is going to be reality,” he said. “I lived alone, and I knew no one would want to help me if I were a jerk all the time. It was humbling.”

On minute one of day two, he set himself up for success and made a commitment to get better.

“I had a goal to get better, and I was going to prove them [the doctors] wrong,” he said.

For the next 30 days, Reeves was bedridden and in splints. From there, he moved into a wheelchair. While his hopes soared, his weight dropped. At six months, he hit 172, down from 215.

The physical therapy program, spearheaded by Girard, Jason Jadgechew and Kirk Roper, followed.

“Within a year of standing up I had run a marathon,” said Reeves. “And I told the doctor that I had just run the San Diego marathon. He said, ‘What the hell are you doing?’”

While it was difficult for the original doctor to digest what Reeves had just told him, one thing is very clear.

“Don’t tell me I’m broke,” said Reeves. “I’ll prove you wrong.” **TW**

## THE EVOLUTION

While keeping its original mission, Shadow Works recently merged with another company. Now they will push boundaries while providing new protective wearable items for military, law enforcement and soon action sports.

# AN OFFICER & A TACTICIAN

A LEO SAYS THE **NEW SUREFIRE LIGHT**, WHICH PACKS 800 LUMENS, IS AN IDEAL EDC FIGHTING LIGHT

STORY BY DREW PRUHS | PHOTOS BY STEVE BARLOW (LEAD) & SUREFIRE

**S**ureFire has long set the bar when it comes to bombproof, innovative, bright lights that will work when your life depends on it.

When they first wowed the world with the 6P's 60 lumens, SureFire started a revolution in the flashlight world. Since then, SureFire has taken advantage of technology to bring more options to their flashlights, including more lumens, multiple outputs and varied battery options.

Over time, SureFire has further entrenched its name in the world of illumination by continuing to build hard-use lights that offer extreme specialization. They now offer a myriad of lights with notably multi-layered options whose capabilities allow for extremely specific requirements for unique missions.

The Tactician was one of the most talked about items at the SureFire booth at SHOT Show 2018. Taking a page from the old-school lights,

The author, a LEO, said the Tactician is bright enough to be a force option and long enough to be an impromptu impact weapon.

SureFire has created what might be the ultimate, specialized light in the form of a simple, straightforward handheld gunfighting light.

## DESIGN FEATURES

Purpose-built from the ground up, this light was designed from its inception as the ultimate, everyday-carry fighting light by James Yeager. James has spent the last 20 years teaching classes that, at their core, are fighting classes. Therefore, he has been able to determine what is needed in an improvised weapons light. As a result, the Tactician features every attribute that a light for serious use should have.

First and foremost, you get 800 powerful lumens accentuated by SureFire's new MaxVision LED. The MaxVision beam needs to be seen to be believed. While traditional LEDs typically have a bright center hotspot ideal for throw, and thus identifying a specific threat, the surrounding corona has varying utility in checking the surrounding area. The MaxVision LED uses a special faceted reflector

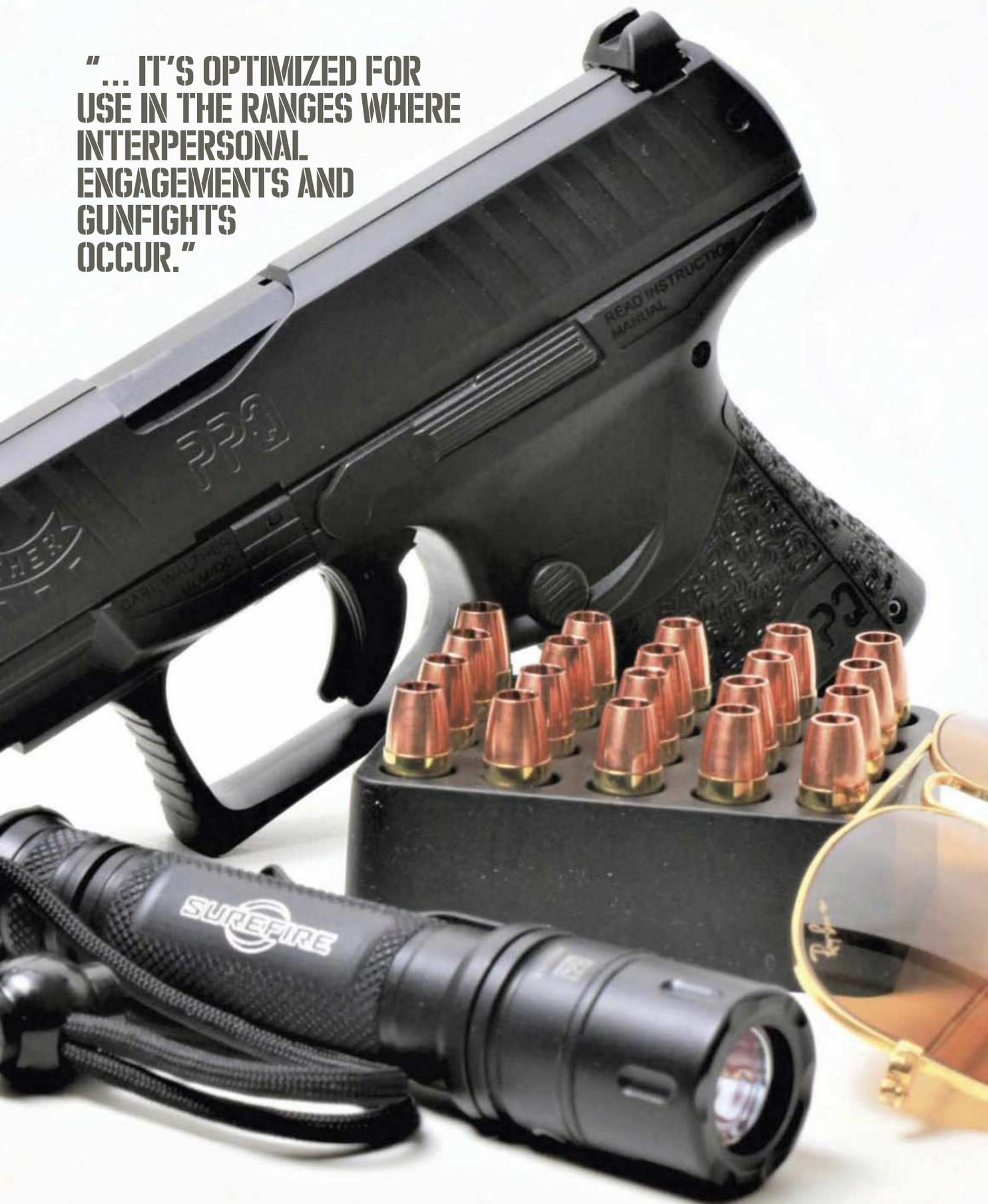
that shapes the LED into a smooth, seamless wall of light ideally suited to maximizing area awareness.

As for application, where the current trend is a "clicky" tailcap switch, the Tactician features a rarity among today's flashlights—a momentary on/off switch (no click) that is ideal for use under stress.

The benefit—one press gives you the maximum light available to identify what type of threat you may have in front of you. "Clicky" tailcaps are great for utility use, but often end up with



**"... IT'S OPTIMIZED FOR  
USE IN THE RANGES WHERE  
INTERPERSONAL  
ENGAGEMENTS AND  
GUNFIGHTS  
OCCUR."**



# “THE MAXVISION BEAM NEEDS TO BE SEEN TO BE BELIEVED.”



During testing, the author said the Tactician lit up his target and those flanking his ... and more.

## CONTACT INFO

**Company:** SureFire  
**Web:** SureFire.com

the user fumbling to turn the light on or off once activated under stress.

Similarly, multifunction or “gas pedal” tailcaps are great when looking for multiple lighting options, but less than ideal when the adrenaline is high.

Two additional lighting options are available. By unscrewing the bezel a quarter turn, you get a 5-lumen utility light, ideal for the more mundane, everyday tasks. Both lighting options benefit from the momentary-on tailcap, or with a quarter turn of the tailcap, you get a constant on.

With an overall length of 5 inches, the Tactician fits well in the hand and can be used as an impromptu impact weapon. The bezel measures 1 inch in diameter, and the barrel itself is slightly smaller, like SureFire’s other “E” series offerings.

The entire body is made of lightweight aerospace aluminum and is knurled to improve grip. The mil-spec hard-anodized finish protects against abrasion and corrosion.

Of interest to SureFire fans is the new, heavy-duty pocket clip. A vast

improvement on previous offerings, it is an ideal length for pocket carry, and it is long enough to sit securely in the pocket and strong enough to stay there. Prior offerings wore out over time or were so long that they often caught on seat belts when worn in the front pocket. The new clip is easily the most robust pocket clip offered by SureFire, and one I hope finds its way to other models.

The Tactician is lanyard capable, a handy feature that is quite noticeable when absent. Like the majority of SureFire’s lights, it runs on two CR-123 batteries.

## TEST TIME

With an understanding of the purpose behind the design of the Tactician, I was eager to get my hands on one. It immediately replaced my prior EDC SureFire franken-light (an old E2C with a KE2 Scout headlamp with a clicky tailcap). Any modern pocket flashlight utility cannot be denied when carried on a day-to-day basis.

What is astounding, every time, is the beam pushed out by the Tactician’s MaxVision LED. It simply fills up the darkness and is able to flood the space in front of you. Similarly, the low-output option comes in handy when you need a light for close tasks and you don’t want to blind yourself.

For a truer test of the Tactician, I was able to use it at a low-light pistol class. The design is simple, straightforward and immediately intuitive. The tailcap ensures that you have light when you need it, and it goes off when you don’t.

What stood out and was noticed by other shooters on the line wasn’t how well the Tactician lit up my target, but how well it lit up their targets flanking mine, as well as the area behind in general. As expected from a SureFire light, the Tactician performed flawlessly and stood up to the minor damage inflicted upon it from training.

## THIS IS THE ONE

SureFire has a light for just about every mission, but the Tactician is the light for when that mission needs an EDC fighting light. Bright enough to be a force option unto itself and long enough to be an impromptu impact weapon, it’s optimized for use in the ranges where interpersonal engagements and gunfights occur.

Weighing in at a mere 3.5 ounces and boasting a truly robust pocket clip, the Tactician can be worn without weighing you down and will aggressively hold onto your pocket until you need it.

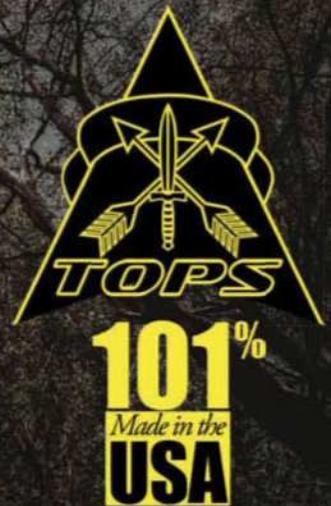
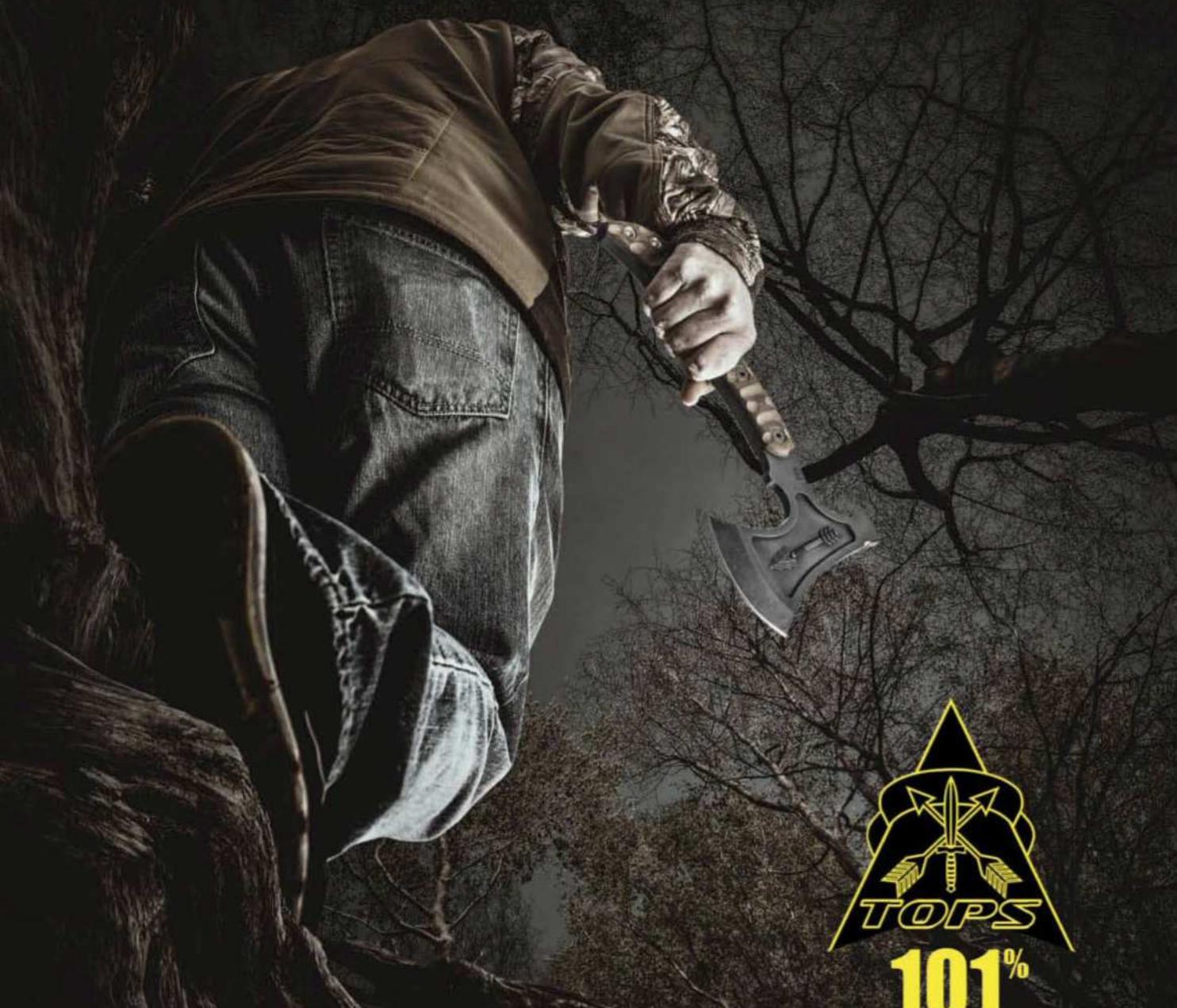
If you only buy one light, this should be the one. If you are more of a collector, the Tactician deserves to be a centerpiece of your functional light collection. **TW**

## SPECS

- **Model:** Tactician
- **Length:** 5 inches
- **Weight:** 3.5 ounces
- **Lumens:** 800 (1.5 hours); 5 (94 hours)
- **Batteries:** 2 CR123A
- **MSRP:** \$149

#TOPSKnives

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DEALER INQUIRIES WELCOME



WHEN IT'S TIME TO SEPARATE  
THE *TALKERS* FROM THE *DOERS*

Ax pictured is the HAMMER HAWK with a Rocky Mountain Tread (optional) handle.

# TOPS KNIVES



**BOLD** **NE**



WITH ITS PERFORMANCE,  
**DESERT TECH'S SRS-A1 COVERT**  
MAKES A BELIEVER  
OUT OF A POLICE SNIPER

STORY BY MIKE NUMAINVILLE, PHOTOS BY LARRY ATIL

# W H E I G H T S



**D**uring my years on my department's precision team, I witnessed the evolution of the American sniper rifle. One of the most prevailing trends has been the shortening of the barrels, as snipers sought after a more maneuverable rifle system. Now having shot the Desert Tech SRS-A1 Covert, the advancement of the modern sniper rifle has indeed risen to a new height.

From the onset of my time on SWAT, we commonly used 24-inch barrels. Those Remington 700s were very

*Not only is it short from front to rear, but this rifle maintains a very narrow profile—fitting for its "Covert" name and greatly aiding in its ability to be stored in a vehicle, ready to deploy into action.*

precise but were very unwieldy at the range, let alone in the field on a stalk. When I left the sniper team (due to my foolishness in taking a promotional test), we were using 18-inch barrels on short-action Remington 700s with an overall length of 36 inches—still a challenge to deploy quickly.

Unfortunately, Desert Tech was not up and running when I left, but the Desert Tech SRS-A1 Covert offers many of the things our team was looking for. Desert Tech offers their standard bullpup design Scout Recon System in a 16-inch barreled Covert model.

The overall length of this rifle is 26.5 inches compared to the 36-inch short-action rifle system commonly used.

The many attempts to solve the overall "length problem" with precision rifles have been largely focused on modular systems that allow the shooter to remove barrels or the simpler method of adding a folding stock, which will get you close to the Desert Tech Covert. However, the Desert Tech lets you keep every part of your rifle intact and ready as soon as you remove it from your pack, case, or vehicle. This makes





**"I WAS IMPRESSED THAT RIGHT OUT OF THE CASE IT WAS SHIPPED IN, I WAS ABLE TO GET SUB-MOA GROUPS AT 100 YARDS."**

the DT SRS-A1 Covert truly portable, concealable, and maneuverable for urban deployments.

### KEY FEATURES

Initial impressions make this look like a "futuristic" compact carbine rifle, until you see the large magazine under the stock and then you realize this is not a 5.56 rifle. Then, looking at the large, oversized, tactical bolt-handle, you know you are shooting a bolt-action rifle.

The layout of most of this rifle is different from the traditional short-

action rifles I have shot over the years. For instance, the bolt handle is under the shooter's cheek rest. At first, this is a little slower and more awkward from the norm. However, I was surprised at how quickly it started to feel comfortable. I have spoken to new shooters who started out on this design and did not know any other way; these shooters had some of the fastest times during bolt manipulation drills on the range. Secondly, the box magazine is behind the trigger assembly, as is the ambidextrous magazine release. The magazines are unique to the Desert

Tech rifle and offer the ability to change calibers without changing to a different magazine each time.

Finally, the safety is above the trigger guard and is accessible on both sides of the rifle. I found this safety easier to manipulate than the traditional style at the rear of the bolt.

Changing the barrel was simple after loosening the barrel nut on the left

### PROS:

- Overall compactness of the bullpup design
- Ability to change calibers quickly if needed
- Maneuverability for tactical situations

### CONS:

- QD mounts stick out on the stock too far; could catch on things such as clothing



**“I WAS SURPRISED AT HOW QUICKLY IT STARTED TO FEEL COMFORTABLE.”**

side of the stock just above the trigger area.

I did notice that the QD sling mounts on the rear of the stock stuck out away from the stock approximately a half-inch on both sides. I could see why this design was necessary, due to the bolt sliding all the way to the rear of the stock, but it does add the

Desert Tech uses a unique muzzle brake on the Covert that serves as a suppressor mount and acts as a sacrificial baffle as far as regulating the initial blast when running the rifle suppressed.

possibility of catching on clothing or other tactical gear in certain situations.

#### **ACCESSORIES**

The newest T&E (testing and evaluation) rifle from Desert Tech arrived nicely equipped with several top-quality accessories.

To start, it came with a Kahles Helia C

3-12x56 Rifle scope. This was a base unit as it did not have an illuminated reticle, but I was impressed with the ultra-bright image and clarity. The 56mm objective provided a great field of view down range.

The scope was equipped with a Horus Vision Reticle that I have not used previously. Having used Duplex



A

**“I SHOT THE DT COVERT IN STANDING, KNEELING, AND PRONE POSITIONS, AND THIS IS WHERE THE DT COVERT’S COMPACTNESS REALLY SHINED.”**



B

A bolt-handle located under the shooter’s cheek may seem odd or even awkward when compared to a traditional bolt-action rifle, but after a few rounds it becomes downright comfortable and easy to manipulate.

.308—both barrels were 16 inches in length in the Covert model. Changing out the barrels takes about 2-3 minutes the first time you do it and about half that every time after that. Although, I have not worked with too many modular barrel systems, this one was very simple and straightforward. All it requires is loosening and re-tightening retention screws on the right side and one locking screw on the left side of the rifle.



C

Despite being a bullpup rifle, the adjustable trigger on the Desert Tech ranks up there with some of the best precision rifle triggers.

I was impressed that right out of the case it was shipped in, I was able to get sub-MOA groups at 100 yards. After a few minor scope adjustments, I was grouping half-inch groups with Desert Tech’s own 140-grain 6.5 Creedmoor Premium Match Grade Ammunition. As I fired more rounds, I became more and more comfortable with the rearward bolt manipulation.

### AT THE RANGE

The DT Covert is not “lightweight,” but I found it very well-balanced. I have had experience shooting from unsupported shooting positions over the years and with traditional rifle systems. With these rifles, you are trying to find the best way to support the rifle without overly counterbalancing your position. I shot the DT Covert in standing, kneeling, and prone positions, and this is where the DT Covert’s compactness really shined.

and TMR reticles through most of my professional career, I am very intrigued by this reticle’s potential. The shot correction capabilities are outstanding due to the finely displayed “Christmas tree” style grid.

A Harris swivel bipod that I was very familiar with, having used one for many years, was included. However, I

will have to admit after a few shoots went downrange, I quietly changed the Harris out for the Atlas Bipod I had on my own precision rifle. I feel the Atlas’ stability and adjustability are unmatched when shooting from a bipod.

The DT Covert SRS A-1 showed up with two barrels—a 6.5 Creedmoor and a

Desert Tech’s sound suppressors are said to improve rifle accuracy by 1/4-MOA or better. The weldless mono-core design uniformly strips away gas from the projectile as it exits the muzzle. This avoids gas disturbance and maximizes projectile stability.

Looking at the bolt design would make you think shooting this rifle

**“CHANGING THE BARREL WAS SIMPLE AFTER LOOSENING THE BARREL NUT ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE STOCK JUST ABOVE THE TRIGGER AREA.”**



from a support side would be slow or awkward, but that was not the case. I had to lift my cheek off the stock completely to run the bolt, after a few shots I was able to get back on target. Although I cannot remember ever having to use the rifle on my support side while deployed, anything is possible.

I have not shot many rifles with an

Caliber changes can happen in a matter of seconds with the Desert Tech Covert, making for a highly efficient tactical rifle.

concerns about excessive creep in the trigger, but I did not notice any excess play or creep. The trigger is adjustable, and I felt it broke cleanly and crisply once you took the initial slack out of the trigger.

## SPECS:

- **Caliber:** .223, .243 Remington, 6.5 mm Creedmoor, .308 Winchester, .300 Win Magnum and .338 Lapua
- **Overall Length:** 26 inches
- **Barrel Length:** 16 inches
- **Rate of Twist:** 1:8 inches
- **Weight:** 9.5 pounds
- **Trigger Pull:** 3 pounds (adjustable)
- **Capacity:** 6-round and 10-round Magazines
- **MSRP:** \$4,995

adjustable monopod built into the stock. I have long been a fan of using small support rear bags for minor elevation changes. However, I liked the micro-adjustments of using the monopod; the fact that it's built into the stock is another big win.

Other shooters have mentioned

The Desert Tech Covert delivers reliable accuracy in a solid compact design. This rifle is purposely built with the urban sniper in mind. It will take some traditional bolt-action rifle shooters a little time to adjust to the rear bolt action, but they will be rewarded with a discrete, maneuverable, and accurate rifle for their tactical missions.



**"HAVING SHOT  
THE DESERT TECH  
SRS-AI COVERT, THE  
ADVANCEMENT OF  
THE MODERN SNIPER  
RIFLE HAS INDEED  
RISEN TO A NEW  
HEIGHT."**

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Numainville is a retired police sergeant with a 30-year law enforcement career in the Northern California Bay area. During this time, he served as Tactical Team Leader and Firearms Instructor. In his 20 years of Tactical Team experience, 12 of those years were spent as a sniper/observer and seven years as Sniper Team Leader.

He still serves as a Firearms and Use of Force Instructor at the local police academy and as Senior Instructor of Rinkor Arms Training Division.

Mike lives in Northern California with his wife and three children. **TW**



# ALWAYS BE PREPARED

IN CASE THINGS GO SIDWAYS, MAKE SURE YOU OWN A **TRAUMA KIT**

Story by Amelia Earl, Photos Courtesy of the Manufacturers

**L**ife is unpredictable ... and that's why it can be so dangerous. Since life doesn't whisper its secrets into a crystal ball, you need to be prepared for the unexpected. Having a trauma kit with you when life gets messy can mean the difference between life and death.

A lot of the trauma kits in the guide below are small enough to fit inside a cargo pocket or car compartment. And, for those looking for something a bit more extensive, there are also a few kits listed that would catch the eyes of some EMS professionals. Take a look for yourself. And always be prepared.



## 01 ADVENTURE MEDICAL KITS TRAUMA PAK WITH QUIKCLOT

Filled with quick-acting materials, the Trauma Pak with QuikClot is designed to help you act fast. This is designed to clot blood up to three times faster using the QuikClot Advanced Clotting Sponge. Packed in a tough, waterproof, pocket-sized pouch, the 4.4-ounce Trauma Pak with QuikClot is easy to use and contains an information pamphlet on treating injuries.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - Bandage, conforming gauze, 3 inches
- 2 - Dressing, gauze, sterile, assorted
- 1 - Gloves, nitrile (pair), hand wipe
- 1 - QuikClot Sport 25 grams
- 1 - Trauma pad, 5 x 9 inches
- +7 more items

MSRP: \$25

Web: [AdventureMedicalKits.com](http://AdventureMedicalKits.com)



## 02 DIXIE USA EMS SUPPLY CO. ON CALL FIRST RESPONDER KIT

Filled with just about everything you could need, the On Call First Responder Kit keeps you ready and supplied for emergencies. The equipment is tucked inside a bag with one main inner compartment with two built-in pockets along the length. The bag also features two outer pockets for quick access and a zippered compartment in the top cover.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - Aluminum wire splint, in unit box
- 6 - Berman oral airway, color coded, assorted
- 1 - CPR mask/protector
- 1 - EMS Emergency Thermal Rescue Blanket, 52 x 84 inches
- 1 - Seatbelt cutter
- +69 more items

MSRP: \$59.99

Web: [DixieEMS.com](http://DixieEMS.com)





## 03 BLUE FORCE GEAR MICRO TRAUMA KIT NOW! (MICRO TKN)

Supplying lifesaving medical supplies that can attach to either your belt or MOLLE, the Micro Trauma Kit NOW! is easy to carry with you anywhere you go. Quickly access critical first aid supplies with just one hand by pulling the BLIP featured pull tabs. The Micro TKN features two main components: an outer pouch and a removable organizational insert.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - QuikClot Combat gauze
- 2 - HyFin vent chest seal
- 1 - Clear medical trauma bandage 4 inches, flat pack
- 1 - Decompression needle
- 6 - 2 x 9-inch frog tape
- +2 more items

MSRP: \$200

Web: [BlueForceGear.com](http://BlueForceGear.com)



## 04 TACTICAL MEDICAL SOLUTIONS TACMED POCKET MEDICAL KIT (PMK)

The TacMed Pocket Medical Kit, or PMK, is designed to fit into your back pocket, trauma plate pouch of a concealed armor carrier, or the chest pocket of a duty shirt. This trauma kit provides you with the necessary medical equipment to treat life-threatening traumatic injuries at the drop of a hat. Choose from compressed gauze (\$53.31) or combat gauze (\$99.99) versions.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - SOF Tactical Tourniquet, wide in rescue orange
- 1 - Esmark bandage
- 1 - Beacon chest seal
- 1 - Black gloves
- 1 - Compressed gauze or Combat gauze

MSRP: \$53.31-\$99.99

Web: [TacMedSolutions.com](http://TacMedSolutions.com)



## 05 ITS TACTICAL ETA TRAUMA KIT (TALLBOY)

Developed by ITS Tactical's 18D Corpsman, the ETA Trauma Kit includes "some of the best products on the market" for treating the three leading preventable causes of death in the field: extremity hemorrhage, tension pneumothorax and airway obstruction. Every item in the ETA Kit is selected to complement the others and serve various purposes. Select between two types of vacuum-sealed configurations (wide or tall). Add the ETA Trauma Kit Pouch for \$40 more.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - QuikClot Combat gauze LE (features X-ray detectable strip)
- 2 - HALO chest seal (1 standard, 1 vented)
- 1 - Decompression needle
- +6 more items

MSRP: \$129

Web: [Store.ITS Tactical.com](http://Store.ITS Tactical.com)



## 06 EVERREADY FIRST AID ULTIMATE O2 OXYGEN TRAUMA KIT

When emergency oxygen delivery is needed, grab this Dixiegear O2 Backpack Kit. It's created for easy transport of an oxygen cylinder and accessories. Designed for long-lasting use, this backpack includes a padded O2 cylinder carrier, double zippered separate side pockets, and a heavy-duty padded shoulder harness. Available in orange or navy blue.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - Aluminum O2 cylinder, D, (empty)
- 1 - Aluminum wire splint, in unit box
- 1 - Ambu Perfit Ace adjustable extrication collar
- 1 - One-handed tourniquet with plastic buckle
- 1 - Resuscitator mask with oxygen inlet, gloves and antiseptic, adult/child
- +97 More items

MSRP: \$399.99

Web: [EverReadyFirstAid.com](http://EverReadyFirstAid.com)



## 07 ADVENTURE MEDICAL KITS TRAUMA PAK PRO WITH QUIKCLOT

Speed up the blood clotting process by using the QuikClot Sport advanced clotting sponge included in the Trauma Pak Pro. Grab the Swat-T Tourniquet to control extremity bleeding without wasting time. Designed for fast deployment, the Trauma Pak Pro is ready to help when disaster strikes.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - QuikClot Sport 25 grams
- 1 - SWAT-T tourniquet
- 1 - Gloves, nitrile (pair), hand wipe and disposal bag
- 1 - Trauma pad, 5 x 9 inches
- 1 - Duct tape, 2 x 26 inches
- 1 - Trauma response Instructions

MSRP: \$50

Web: [AdventureMedicalKits.com](http://AdventureMedicalKits.com)



## 08 NORTH AMERICAN RESCUE RIG SERIES EAGLE IFAK WITH COMBAT GAUZE

The RIG Series Eagle IFAK keeps all of your lifesaving equipment protected and readily accessible through a quick, one-hand-release hood latch. A detachable shock-cord inner panel is adjustable and easy to take out when needed. The attachment system allows both vertical (MOLLE backing) and horizontal (3-inch belt loop) carriage orientations. Also available in Basic or Advanced level configurations at different pricing.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - C-A-T (Combat Application Tourniquet) black
- 1 - 6-inch flat ETD
- 1 - NAR S-rolled gauze
- +3 more items

MSRP: \$179.99

Web: [NARescue.com](http://NARescue.com)



## 09 LIGHTNING X PRODUCTS LXPB25-SKX

The PB25 is an ideal tactical accessory pouch for bulkier items and may be used to treat gunshot wounds and other injuries. Four pockets, two elastic loops and an elastic drawstring panel are found in the main compartment. The dual-zipper, quick-drop front panel features eight elastic loops to help secure smaller items. This pouch includes a limited lifetime warranty from Lightning X.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - NAR C-A-T tourniquet
- 2 - NAR HyFin vent chest seal
- 1 - NPA nasal airway (28fr)
- 1 - QuikClot 25-gram clotting sponge
- 1 - ARS chest decompression kit
- +9 More Items

MSRP: \$99.99

Web: GearBags.com



## 10 BOUND TREE MEDICAL CURAPLEX STOP THE BLEED, BASIC KIT

Have immediate access to lifesaving equipment with the Curaplex Stop The Bleed, Basic Kit. Providing all of the essential products needed to address a traumatic bleeding situation, this kit will help you get things under control until medical help arrives.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - Permanent marker
- 2 - Pair of gloves, latex-free, LG
- 1 - C-A-T tourniquet
- 1 - Emergency bandage
- 1 - Pair of trauma shears, 7.5 inches
- 2 - Rolls of primed, compressed gauze dressing

MSRP: \$61.99

Web: BoundTree.com



## EMERGENCY MEDICAL INTERNATIONAL [EMI] MOLLE-PAC TRAUMA KIT

The EMI Molle-Pac Trauma Kit comes neatly organized in a 7 x 5.5-inch MOLLE pouch. Loaded with all the basic EMS equipment and supplies, this trauma kit can be strapped onto backpacks, belts, gurneys, etc. The MOLLE pouch is small enough to fit in convenient locations, such as cargo pockets and vehicle compartments.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - Burn/Blood Stopper bandage
- 1 - Instant ice pack 4 x 5 inches
- 4 - Triple antibiotic ointment
- 1 - Seatbelt/clothing cutter
- 1 - Thermal rescue blanket
- +35 more Items

MSRP: \$48

Web: [EMInternational.net](http://EMInternational.net)



## 12 NORTH AMERICAN RESCUE TACTICAL OPERATOR RESPONSE KIT (TORK)

North American Rescue designed the Tactical Operator Response Kit (TORK), which weighs 1.5 ounces, to include all the necessary equipment needed to address the leading causes of potentially preventable death in a tactical environment. Sleek and compact, the TORK features a one-pull tab opening for rapid deployment.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - HyFin vent chest seal, twin pack
- 1 - ARS needle decompression kit (14 grams, 3.25 inches)
- 1 - C-A-T tourniquet in black
- 1 - Trauma shears (7.25 inches)
- 1 - Polycarbonate eye shield
- +6 More Items

MSRP: \$225.99

Web: [NARescue.com](http://NARescue.com)



## 13 ADVENTURE MEDICAL KITS TACTICAL FIELD TRAUMA WITH QUIKLOT

Small enough to stash into a daypack, the 1-pound Tactical Field Trauma kit from Adventure Medical Kits is ready to go wherever you go. Quickly stop bleeding with the QuikClot Sport dressing, clean and close wounds with antiseptic wipes and butterfly bandages, and manage pain with an assortment of medication.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - QuikClot Sport 25 grams
- 11 - Moleskin, pre-cut & shaped
- 1 - Splinter picker/tick remover forceps
- 1 - Comp. Guide to Wilderness & Travel Medicine
- 2 - Antihistamine (diphenhydramine 25 mg)
- +38 More Items

MSRP: \$48

Web: [AdventureMedicalKits.com](http://AdventureMedicalKits.com)



## 14 LIGHTNING X PRODUCTS LXPB15-SKH

Easily access a wide assortment of medical equipment with the LXPB15. Attaching to any backpack or vest with the MOLLE platform, the LXPB15 makes organization easy, thanks to eight interior elastic loops, two pockets and a drawstring cording system.

### INCLUDES:

- 1 - QuikClot 1st Response, 25 grams
- 2 - 3 x 3-inch gauze pads (2 packs of 2 pads)
- 1 - QuikClot 4 x 4-inch EMS gauze pad (or equivalent)
- 1 - 7.5-inch trauma shears
- 1 - Black Buckle tourniquet
- +17 more Items

MSRP: \$69.99

Web: [GearBags.com](http://GearBags.com) **TW**



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Also designed for quick target acquisition in close-quarters situations, Aimpoint has also become quite popular.

# WAVE OF THE FUTURE

DESPITE SOME DETRACTORS, OPTICAL BATTLE SIGHTS ARE HUGE ADVANCEMENTS IN WARFARE

STORY BY CHUCK TAYLOR, PHOTOS BY CHUCK TAYLOR AND MANUFACTURERS



**T**he implementation of Operation Desert Shield on January 17, 1991 and Desert Storm on August 7, 1991 heralded many revolutionary advancements in warfare, but there were two in particular that caught my eye.

The first was seeing U.S. troops wearing knee and elbow pads, which was a great shock to me because, as an old infantryman myself, I couldn't help but remember our grizzled old sergeants telling us in training that, "You can get over skinning yer knees and elbows, sonny; but you can't get over being killed!" Just how the two related to one another was—and remains—a mystery to me, but the point is that we never used pads of any kind in either training or actual warfare.

The second surprise—and one that was also a shock to me—was that nearly all the weapons everyone was

Last year, the Marine Corps revealed it would concentrate on training with optical sights. The Army's decision is forthcoming. Military and police Spec Ops teams utilize some form of optical battle sight on their weapons, said the author. Above, an Air Force Staff Sergeant gets in some training time. (USAF photo)



carrying had some kind of optical battle sight on them.

To be sure, I was familiar with red dot and reflex sights, but I never expected to see them in such profusion on military weapons, because I'd always thought of them as being too fragile to withstand the abusive field conditions typical of infantry combat.

In subsequent years, while many thought that such equipment was a passing fancy and good old iron aperture sights would remain the standard, these sights not only continued in service, but actually proliferated. And not surprisingly,

it wasn't long before both law-enforcement SWAT teams and civilian shooters who were interested in self-defense embraced them as well. Let's look deeper into this.

### PROS & CONS

Their advocates said that optical sights allowed faster target acquisition and engagement in the close-quarters encounters that are so typical these days, and that they were quite reliable, even under the harshest of environmental conditions. Their detractors claimed otherwise—that they were too fragile to withstand sustained field abuse, and that since both the Aimpoint and EOTech

were battery-powered, they were susceptible to both heat and cold and good ol' Murphy's Law—that when conditions exist that allow anything negative to happen, it will.

As one with considerable field experience, I'd been personally touched by Murphy's Law more than once and have the scars to prove it, so I admit that this particular criticism rang loudly true. Yet, as the years passed, optical battle sights not only remained in service, but continued to increase in use. How could this happen, I reasoned, if they were as deficient as their detractors claimed? I have always prided myself for the fact that over the years, I have been able to retain my professional objectivity, but I admit that I was puzzled. On the one hand, it was

clear that the optical battle sight was a success, but on the other, its weaknesses seemed both obvious and critical—its fragility, and in the case of both the Aimpoint and EOTech, its dependency upon batteries seemed an open invitation to trouble. I resolved to obtain an example of each of them and test them thoroughly before rendering any definitive verdict and I did so with alacrity, since many of my tactical rifle students were asking me the same questions.

### PHASES OF EXPERIENCE

Both the Aimpoint and EOTech utilize a red-dot type reticle and are intended to eliminate the need for front and rear sight alignment and allow the operator to shoot with both eyes open. Neither device has any magnification, but a separate magnifier designed to mount on the receiver of the weapon behind the sight itself is available. The ACOG

A favorite for use on tactical carbines, the EOTech red dot sight has much to offer. It's relatively compact, reasonably rugged and is quickly acquired by the firing eye.

## UNPARALLELED EXPERIENCE

Founder and director of the American Small Arms Academy, Chuck Taylor's resume is unrivaled. Among many other credentials, Taylor was involved in the training of tactical personnel for three consecutive Olympic games and a number of both well-known and covert military/police units.

### Web:

ChuckTaylorAmericanSmallArmsAcademy.com

(Advanced Combat Optical Gun sight) is a more traditional device, and is available in 2X, 3X, or 4X magnification and utilizes either a fiber-optic or tritium to illuminate the reticle in low light.

I worked with and observed my tactical rifle students with their various Aimpoints, EOTechs and ACOGs, and



**“... OPTICAL SIGHTS ALLOWED FASTER TARGET ACQUISITION AND ENGAGEMENT IN THE CLOSE-QUARTERS ENCOUNTERS ...”**



Many handgunners have also adopted the optical sight, finding it to provide increased engagement speed, particularly on multiple targets.

it quickly became obvious to me that all three allowed faster target acquisition and engagement than iron sights. Even in the 115-degree-plus temperatures of summertime in Phoenix, Arizona, the battery function of the Aimpoint and EOTech was unimpaired.

However, on several occasions, I noted that the EOTech seemed to fade out in bright light, often to the point where it was so faint that it was virtually worthless. Apparently, the problem was fairly widespread, because both military and civilian shooters were complaining about it, but to their

A decorated Vietnam veteran who is also Airborne, Air Assault and Ranger qualified, Chuck Taylor says he agrees that on shoulder weapons optical battle sights are superior to iron sights in normal and low-light conditions.

credit, the folks at EOTech jumped right on it and corrected it.

Yet, during a week-long training session with the SWAT team of a large western city, I noted that the battery life of the Aimpoints and EOTech were noticeably reduced in the rainy, 40-degree weather we experienced, and several units failed because of electrical shorting caused by internal condensation. However, I am told that there are newly designed batteries available that maintain service life at normal levels.

As optical battle sights continued to gain in popularity, it was only natural that they would eventually appear on handguns, and the manufacturers have responded accordingly. Various red-dot type optical sights are now commonplace on many handguns and once again the claim is that target acquisition and engagement is faster than with iron sights, especially in low light.

While I concur that on shoulder weapons, optical battle sights are,

without question, superior to iron sights in both normal and low light, I am not yet convinced that they are better on handguns. Use of the handgun in a tactical environment is a different situation than with rifles, shotguns and submachine guns, and I have yet to see anyone pass the extremely difficult ASAA (American Small Arms Academy) Handgun Master Course utilizing an optically sighted gun. However, 83 have passed it utilizing handguns with conventional sights. In low light, I've found that tritium 3-dot horizontal pattern sights allow me to quickly engage and hit any target I can detect and identify as being hostile and I don't believe it can be done any faster with an optical sight.

I am often asked which of the three types of sight I prefer for a shoulder weapon, and on this subject, I can answer with authority. While both the Aimpoint and EOTech are unquestionably excellent units and allow fast, accurate shooting at ranges under 50 meters, I find their respective reticles (dot) to be too coarse for fast, efficient work against small or partially obscured targets or targets at longer ranges.

The ACOG, on the other hand, is available with a wider variety of reticles, including the standard crosshair type. I like the TAO-1 reticle, which allows the ACOG to



**“DON'T LIMIT YOUR TRAINING TO USING ONLY AN OPTICAL BATTLE SIGHT ... IN THE REAL WORLD WHERE MURPHY'S LAW EXISTS AND IS OFTEN FATAL, IT'S THE SMART THING TO DO.”**



be just as fast up-close as either an Aimpoint or EOTech, but also allows better precision on small or obscured targets and targets at longer range. I also feel the ACOG is more rugged. On the subject of mounting one on a handgun, however, I remain unconvinced that an optical sight is superior.

### HERE TO STAY

Still, there is little question that the optical battle sight is here to stay, and

it appears that it is, indeed, the wave of the future, at least on shoulder weapons and apparently even the military is convinced of it. In 2017, the U.S. Marine Corps announced that it would concentrate on training exclusively with optical sights and would forego any further training with traditional iron sights. The U.S. Army has not yet commented, but it appears that they, too, will follow suit. All of the military and police Spec Ops teams utilize some form of optical battle sight on their weapons and swear by them, so it would appear that the verdict is in.

As for me, I like the ACOG, mounted in the carrying handle of my Stoner-platform rifles to allow the use of the rifle's conventional iron sights as a backup. A proper cheek weld is just as easy to obtain as if the sight were mounted lower on the weapon's receiver. Those who have tried the idea have all concurred. If nothing else, the fact that the optical battle sight eliminates the need for conventional sight alignment for virtually any rifle, shotgun or submachine gun more than vindicates its existence.

Moreover, in the low light conditions typical of most tactical encounters, it's by far the best game in town and likely will be for many years to come. I'm a strong proponent of KISS (Keep

**Top Left:** The U.S. military found the EOTech sight to provide exceptionally fast target acquisition inside 50 meters, thus allowing increased efficiency when shooting on the move.

It Simple, Stupid) when lives are on the line, but it's clear that the optical battle sight is a huge improvement and is well-worthy of its ever-increasing popularity.

One piece of advice, though, from one who has "been there and seen the elephant" many times: Don't limit your training to using only an optical battle sight—train with the conventional iron sights as well. In the real world where Murphy's Law exists and is often fatal, it's the smart thing to do. **TW**



**Top Right:** Offered in many versions, the EOTech is typically mounted low on the receiver to allow a fast cheek weld as the weapon is presented to the shoulder.

## CONTACT INFO OPTICAL BATTLE SIGHTS

**Trijicon, Inc.**  
(800) 338-0563  
Trijicon.com

**EOTech, Inc.**  
(888) 368-4656  
EOTech.com

**Aimpoint, Inc.**  
(877) 246-7646  
Aimpoint.com

**Vortex Optics**  
(800) 426-0048  
VortexOptics.com

# THE TACTICAL EDGE

## 8 TOP KNIVES TO STRENGTHEN YOUR LOADOUT

Story by Joshua Swanagon,  
Photos by Joshua Swanagon and Manufacturers





**G**aining the tactical advantage in any situation often comes down to who is the most prepared and who has the most tools to get the job done.

As the years progress, so does our understanding of metallurgy and the overall knifemaking process, as well as our understanding of different knife profiles for varying needs. From tactical to common day-to-day tasks—the knives of today are starkly

different from the knives of yesteryear. As our understanding of the knifemaking process has evolved, so has our understanding of the use of the knife to gain a tactical advantage—with many knife-based self-defense systems developing and evolving over the centuries.

The world of tactical knives is a very broad spectrum, and everyone's need is different. For this reason, when selecting a tactical knife for your load-out, it is important to consider

the advantage you are trying to gain from your selection, whether you want something strictly focused on combat/self-defense, or you want a knife that can pull double-duty as a combat/self-defense and utility blade.

In this article, we'll look at eight knives that I feel are very good at what they do when it comes to tactical intent. A couple are strictly for combat/self-defense and some will fill both the combative and utilitarian roles.

ALLKNIVES  
SHOWN AT  
ACTUAL SIZE



01



02

SPECIAL  
MENTION



03

"THE 154CM STEEL ALSO  
MAKES IT EASY TO SHARPEN  
AND MAINTAIN IN THE FIELD ..."



## 01 HOGUE KNIVES: HK HADRON OTF

I have been carrying the HK Hadron OTF, made by Hogue Knives, for a while now and it is an outstanding OTF (out-the-front or sliding knife). With a very substantial feel in the hand and a solid lockup, with very little blade play, the action of the HK Hadron instills confidence with every actuation. Although auto knives can be loud and are not ideal in a situation where you need to access your knife in silence, the quick action of the HK Hadron is perfect for last-ditch self-defense when you need to have it out, opened and in play, single handedly, with a moment's notice.

### SPECS:

**Blade Material:** 154CM stainless steel

**Blade Length:** 3.375 inches

**Overall Length:** 8 inches

**Closed Length:** 4.625 inches

**Blade Thickness:** 0.125 inch

**Blade Finish:** Black PVD

**Mechanism:** Double action out-the-front automatic with slide push-pull release

**Handle Material:** Matte black aluminum

**Weight:** 3.2 ounces  
**MSRP:** \$289.95

## 02 TOPS KNIVES: AL MAR MINI SERE OPERATOR

When it comes to tactical knives, I can't help but think of TOPS Knives. I have been using their knives for years and have never had one fail on me. Their heat treating is one of the best in the industry, and their knives function exactly how you expect them to. The Al Mar Mini SERE Operator is no exception.

The Mini SERE Operator is a collaboration between TOPS Knives and Al Mar Knives based on the original design by Al Mar Knives. The original SERE Operator had a 5-inch blade where the Mini SERE Operator has a 4-inch blade, which brings it down to a bit more of a utility blade length, while still maintaining great ergonomics for combat uses, as well. With an overall length of 8.72 inches, the 154cm stainless steel blade is cryo treated to an RC of 58-60, which is perfect for an all-around utility blade. Due to the combination of the thin 0.130-inch stock, the saber grind and the 154cm steel, the Mini SERE Operator is quite sharp right out of the box. The 154cm steel also makes it easy to sharpen and maintain in the field,

while being more corrosion-resistant than a high-carbon steel. The blade has a tumble finish, which aids in the corrosion resistance and provides a smooth surface for less drag through subject matter.

The 4-inch spear point blade has a nicely defined swedge that aids in maximum penetration and piercing capability and can also be sharpened upon request. The jimping on the spine, just forward of the grip, also gives a solid purchase on the blade when using the thumb to bear down on the blade for heavy cutting and shaving tasks.

Its extremely narrow handle makes it perfect for concealment, while the G-10 grip with palm swells is especially comfortable and easy to keep a grip on. In the middle of the handle is a slight ripple between the middle and ring finger, which provides a second point of retention when combined with the dove tail drop at the butt. With a balance point just behind the index finger on the grip, the Mini SERE Operator is very light and nimble in the hand.

There is a subtle drop at the hilt, that the index finger nestles into nicely, acting as a slight guard to prevent your hand from slipping up onto the blade during thrusting actions. Just above and slightly forward of the guard is an equally subtle thumb ramp with light jimping for increased control during general utility tasks. Along the spine of the handle, at the palm, is another spot with some light jimping that grabs the palm nicely and aids in retention.

At the butt of the handle is a lined lanyard hole if you prefer additional retention on your blade when doing heavy tasks. Along the handle itself are three large, lined holes designed to aid in weight reduction and balance, but which can also be used in field utility to lash the Mini SERE Operator to a staff to make a spear. The placement of the holes also helps just a bit more in blade retention.

The sheath is a taco style, form-fitted Kydex rig with a swivel clip on the back for multiple carry angles. The only thing I might have done a little differently would be to make the rivets a bit larger in diameter, so that MOLLE clips, IWB loops, beta loops or a Tek-Lok could be added for more carry

options, but that is a minor thing that is easy to remedy. If you need to carry yours on your loadout vest or plate carrier, it is not hard to find a sheath maker that can accommodate that.

Overall, the Al Mar Mini SERE Operator stands up to both the TOPS Knives' name and the Al Mar Knives' name and is a robust and functional version of this iconic knife. Made right here in the United States, it carries with it the same quality and assurance that come from any knife in the TOPS Knives' family. If you are looking for a solid knife that will stand up to any use and abuse you can put it through, while being designed for any function—from self-defense/combat to general field and EDC tasks—the TOPS Knives Al Mar Mini SERE Operator is the knife for you.

### SPECS:

**Blade Material:** 154cm RC 58-60 cryo treated

**Blade Length:** 4.00 inches

**Overall Length:** 8.75 inches

**Blade Thickness:** 0.130 inch

**Blade Finish:** Tumble finish

**Handle Material:** Black G-10

**Knife Weight:** 4.5 ounces

**MSRP:** \$210

### EXCEPTIONAL MENTIONS:

I called out the TOPS Knives Al Mar Mini SERE Operator for its overall functionality and diversity, but that does not take away from the other seven knives that I feel deserve mention for being exceptionally good at what they do.

## 03 FOX KNIVES MK ULTRA KUKRI FOLDER

With this collaboration between Jason Knight and Doug Marcaida—judges of "Forged in Fire" on the History Channel—you have the history and strength of the Gurkha's iconic weapon in your pocket. With all the combat and utility attributes of a kukri but none of the size, the MK Ultra Kukri Folder is ready for serious use. The flipper opening makes one-handed opening quick and easy, while the blade lands into the sturdy frame lock with an audible snick. The MK Ultra Kukri Folder is available exclusively through Tactical Elements.

### SPECS:

**Blade Material:** N690CO

**Blade Length:** 4.00 inches

**Overall Length:** 9.25 inches

**Blade Style:** Kukri

**Blade Finish:** Black

**Edge Type:** Plain

**Handle Material:** G-10

**MSRP:** \$270.00

## 04 **HARDCORE HARDWARE: MFK03-G MEDIUM FIELD KNIFE**

I first saw the Hardcore Hardware MFK03-G Medium Field Knife at SHOT Show 2018 and was immediately drawn to the substantial feel of it. If you don't like heavy knives, this might not be the one for you. But if you ever get a chance to handle it, you might change your mind. This knife had me looking for a tank to breach as soon as I picked it up. I am confident that it would have done it too. Probably a good thing I did not find one.

### **SPECS:**

Blade Material: D2	Thickness: 0.23 Inch
Blade Length: 4.4 Inches	Handle Material: G-10
Overall Length: 9.3 Inches	Weight: 14.28 ounces
Blade Width: 1.24 inches	MSRP: Starting at \$250

## 05 **SPARTAN BLADES: FORMIDO**

Anybody who has read any of my other work knows that I am a big fan of Spartan Blades; they are a couple of retired SF guys that decided to make knives and get it right. Every Spartan Blade I have ever handled has a very substantial feel in the hand, excellent heat treating and solid purposeful design. What I love about the Formido is the skeletonized grip and extremely narrow, pancake sheath, which makes it virtually disappear when carried IWB. The sheath is also designed in such a way that you can add any carry attachments that may serve you best—your options are only limited by your imagination.

### **SPECS:**

Blade Material: S35VN
Blade Length: 3.875 inches
Overall Length: 8.75 inches
Blade Thickness: 0.187 inch
Blade Finish: SpartaCoat - PVD - Tungsten DLC (Flat Black) or ZrN (Flat Dark Earth)
Handle Style: Skeletonized
Weight: 2.5 ounces
MSRP: \$215.00



**CONTACT INFO**  
**Hogue Knives**  
(800) 438-4747  
HogueInc.com

**TOPS Knives**  
(208) 542-0113  
TOPSKnives.com

**Tactical Elements**  
e@TacticalElements.com  
TacticalElements.com

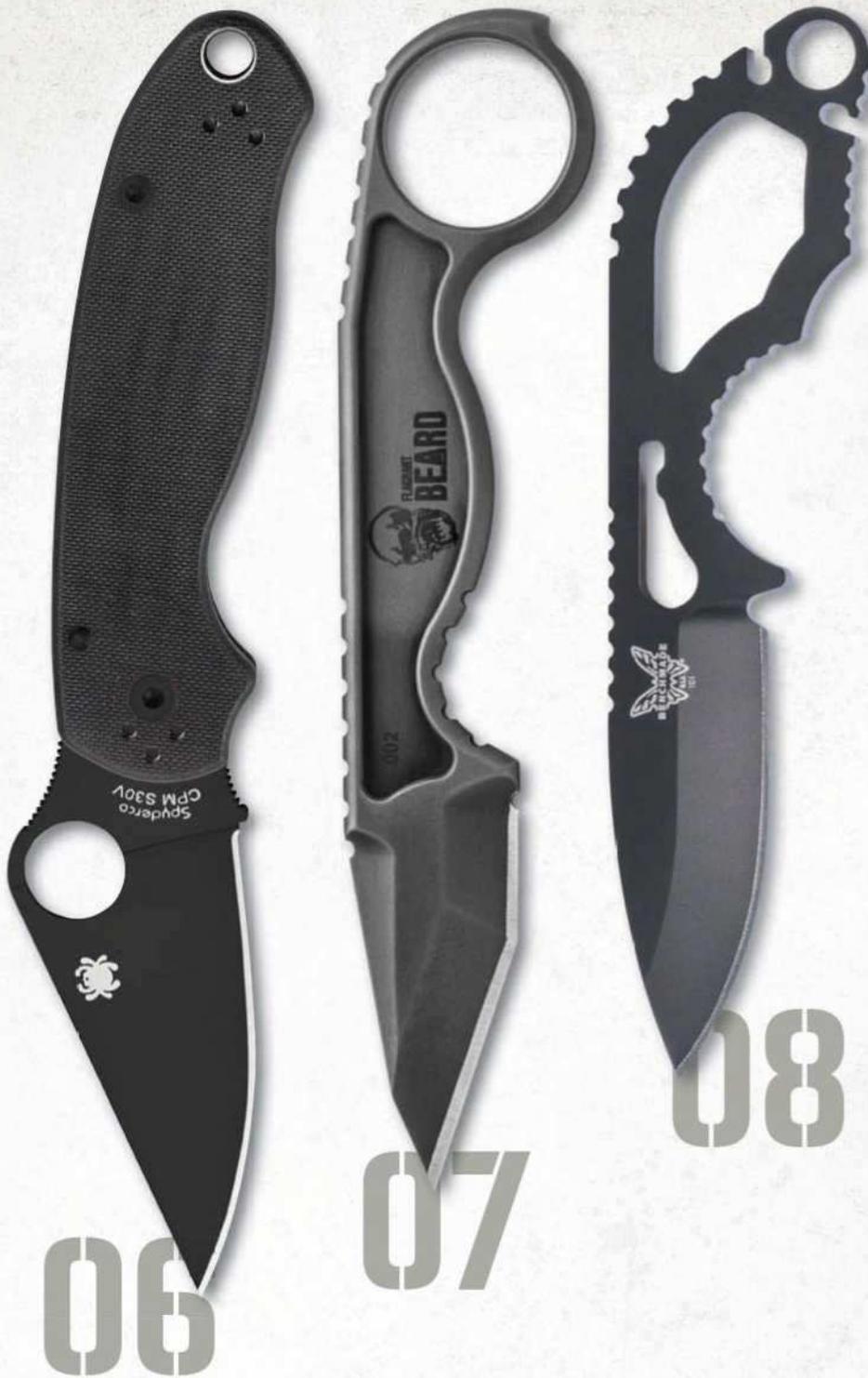
**Hardcore Hardware**  
(USA Distributor)  
(800) 731-1840  
SharperNow.com

**Spartan Blades**  
(910) 757-0035  
SpartanBladesUSA.com

**Spyderco**  
(303) 279-8383  
Spyderco.com

**Flagrant Beard**  
(931) 994-4707  
FlagrantBeard.com

**Benchmade**  
(503) 496-1853  
Benchmade.com



## 06 SPYDERCO: PARA 3 G-10 BLACK

The Spyderco Para 3 G-10 Black builds on the already widely popular Paramilitary line that has been a hit with law enforcement and military for years, due to its robust build, functional design and U.S. construction. The Para 3 G-10 Black utilizes Spyderco's patented Compression Lock, located in the spine, which locks the blade up solidly but easily closes with one-handed operation. The 2.95-inch blade makes it inconspicuous and easily carried most anywhere, even in states that have strict knife laws. The generously sized Spyderco hole allows for easy one-handed opening, which comes in handy in a pinch.

### SPECS:

Blade Material: CPM S30V  
Blade Length: 2.95 inches  
Overall Length: 7.24 inches  
Closed Length: 4.29 inches  
Blade Thickness: 0.145 inch  
Handle Material: G-10  
Weight: 3 ounces  
MSRP: \$199.95

## 07 FLAGRNT BEARD: HAVOC

Designed as a collaboration between Flagrnt Beard and Exit Edgeworks, the Havoc does one thing very well—self-defense. The skeletonized handle makes it extremely easy to carry anywhere on your person, from neck carry to IWB and it disappears when you want it to. The short blade makes it possible to take almost anywhere and is just enough to do any level of damage that may need doing. The ring design offers maximum retention, even when your hands are wet and slippery.

### SPECS:

Blade Material: 1095HC (RC 56-58)  
Blade Length: 2.375 inches  
Overall Length: 6.625 inches  
Blade Thickness: 0.25 inch  
Blade Finish: Black River wash  
Handle Style: Skeletonized and recessed  
Weight: 4 ounces  
MSRP: \$139.99

## 08 BENCHMADE: 101BK FOLLOW-UP

With its thin, skeletonized design the Benchmade 101BK Follow-Up is designed as the perfect last-ditch knife meant to easily stow away behind your gear. Whether you are an officer that needs to be able to fit it behind the gear on your duty belt, a soldier that is looking for that perfect small defensive knife for your loadout vest/plate carrier, or you are just looking for a good IWB EDC, the 101BK Follow-Up is the perfect little hideaway defensive knife.

### SPECS:

Blade Material: CPM-S30V premium stainless steel (58-60HRC)  
Blade Length: 2.60 inches  
Overall Length: 5.99 inches  
Blade Thickness: 0.140 inch  
Blade Finish: Coated  
Knife Weight: 2.03 ounces  
MSRP: \$115.00 **TW**

# BEST OF

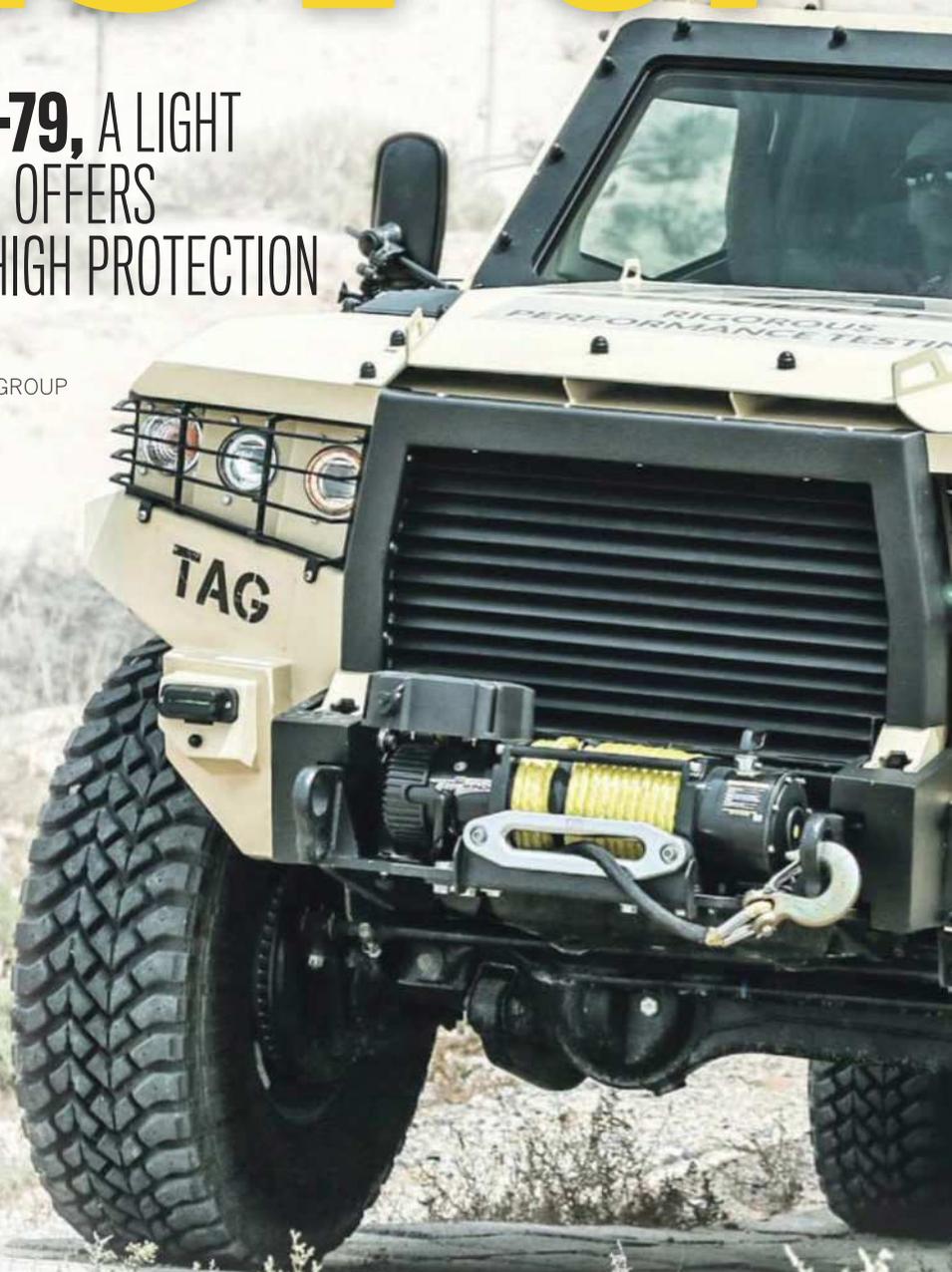
## THE TERRIER LT-79, A LIGHT MULTI-ROLE VEHICLE, OFFERS TACTICAL MOBILITY, HIGH PROTECTION

STORY BY DOUG JEFFREY,  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARMORED GROUP

**A**dmittedly, we're a little like Pavlov's dogs. When someone says tactical, our ears go up. When they tack on vehicle after tactical, we're salivating all over the place. That was the case when we feasted our eyes on the Terrier LT-79.

Just recently, The Armored Group (TAG) introduced its newest law enforcement vehicle. Their Research and Development Team told us this puppy "represents a well-balanced combination of protection, off-road mobility and payload. Most importantly, it offers unparalleled tactical mobility and survivability to armored vehicle end users worldwide, in any climate or setting."

Our desire to get in this APC is unparalleled, too. For now, however, we must wait. In the meantime, we can tell you that the standard Terrier LT-79 holds as many as eight officers (2+6 in individual MIL-STD seats) or alternatively, seating for 10 (2+8) with optional bench seating, depending on the size of the operators and the amount of gear. Of course, this is ideal for SWAT teams, law enforcement and military personnel.



The Terrier LT-79 is a new release from The Armored Group.

# REPRIEVE



Robert Pazderka, president and founder of TAG, said the LT-79 was designed on the Toyota chassis because parts are widely available, enhancing serviceability in many parts of the world.

"It is also an affordable option to end users that need superior protection and fleet longevity while staying within their budget parameters," he said.

And, it's a vehicle that goes a long way, literally and figuratively, he added.

"The Terrier LT-79 is a modern-era hybrid that combines the requirements needed for combat and fire-support situations, as well as mission-specific roles such as transport and logistics," added Pazderka.

While we patiently work out the logistics for that ride, please don't ring any bells. We don't want to get our keyboard soaking wet.

## FEATURES

The Terrier LT-79 model features include, but are not limited to the following:

- Full protection against kinetic energy weapons conforming to STANAG 4569 Level 1
- Heavy-duty suspension and axles
- Upgraded tires and brakes for better off-road capability
- "Category-leading" ground clearance
- UK military-grade locks, heavy-duty hinges
- High-visibility gun ports
- 3 doors, with optional roof turret
- 5-Speed manual transmission
- Diesel 195 HP high sulfur 1VD-FTV Toyota 4.5L V8



## THE TERRIER: AN INSIDE LOOK

To find out more about the Terrier LT-79, we went to one of the company's big dogs—Nick Levin. The 50-year-old project manager has been with the company for close to two years, as well as 10 years in armoring and two decades in military service and training.

### TACTICAL WORLD: GIVE US AN OVERVIEW OF THE TERRIER.

**Levin:** Apart from all traditional law enforcement tasks, the vehicle can be used in military logistics for safe transportation of personnel to the combat scene and medical evacuation (Medevac variant).

### TW: WHAT MAKES THIS VEHICLE UNIQUE?

**Levin:** It exceeds all competitors' specifications in its class. The Terrier LT-79 features a higher protection level, higher ground clearance, better off-road capabilities and a heavier duty driveline.

### TW: DESCRIBE THE FEELING OF SEEING THIS GO FROM AN IDEA TO A FULL-TACTICAL VEHICLE.

**Levin:** It is very gratifying indeed to see the vehicle going through the stages of conceptual design, 3-D drawings, prototype production, numerous design revisions and finally being rolled out for a first test drive. It is also a matter of great responsibility; the ability of the vehicle to protect its occupants does not solely depend on materials used. It also depends on design and engineering solutions implemented.

### TW: WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS THAT YOU FELT THIS NEEDED TO HAVE?

**Levin:** The vehicle was developed with three key points in mind: Better-than-competition protection-level offered as standard, ease of maintenance, and the price equal to or lower than that of competitor's.

## "NO SIMILARLY PRICED APC CAN OFFER AS MUCH AS THE TERRIER LT-79."

### TW: WHAT CREATES THE UNPARALLELED TACTICAL MOBILITY?

**Levin:** Oversized wheels, an upgraded axle, a super heavy-duty clutch and top-rated suspension elements. All these improvements contribute to tactical mobility. No similarly priced armored personnel carrier (APC) can offer as much as the Terrier LT-79.

### TW: WHAT CREATES THE UNPARALLELED SURVIVABILITY?

**Levin:** Better protection level, thanks to the latest rolled homogenous armor used in the vehicle design, a diesel engine with dual independent armored tank, armored protection of the entire engine bay and provision for installation of a turret armed with 7.62/12.7 MG or 40mm AGL. As an alternative, the Terrier can be fitted with a Remote Control Weapon station.

### TW: WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD ANYTHING?

**Levin:** The vehicle has been developed and built to achieve both technical and commercial superiority in its class. Now that road testing is nearing completion, we will put the Terrier to rigorous ballistic testing. Once the testing cycle is over, the vehicle will enter serial production in TAG plants and will be marketed in Asian and African markets. **TW**

## FOR MORE INFO

[ArmoredCars.com](http://ArmoredCars.com)

The Terrier LT-79 is built using a reinforced and militarized Toyota VDJ79 truck chassis and commercial off-the-shelf components.





The leader in precision rifle manufacturing.



**HAVAK™**

REM 700 PATTERNED RECEIVER  
24" SPIRAL FLUTED BARREL | 4 LOCKING LUGS  
FULL DIAMETER FLUTED BOLT BODY | DETACHABLE MAGAZINE  
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**EMBRACE CHANGE**

Find us online for more information  
[seekinsprecision.com](http://seekinsprecision.com)





A chassis rail enables the shooter to mount the G10 to platforms such as the rock-solid CruxOrd tripod.



**MCCREE'S PRECISION G10 .300 WIN MAG**  
IS THE "ULTIMATE" SOF SNIPER RIFLE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY GORDON MEEHL



WEAPONIZED  
**MATH**

# “... THE ULTIMATE LONG-RANGE PRECISION RIFLE IS NOT A THOROUGHbred, BUT A TOUGH-AS-HELL WORKHORSE ...”

The task given was simple enough: Find or build the ultimate sniper rifle. The execution, however, proved mind spinning at times.

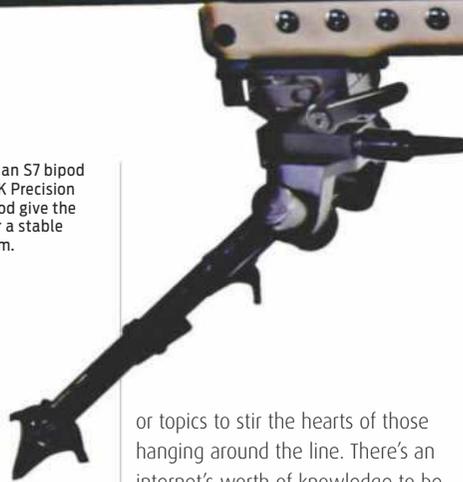
As I saw it, there were two primary criteria that had to be met. The first was very specific: “sniper rifle,” so whatever the product ended up being, it had to be appropriate for tactical long-range use. Therefore, an exotic, blueprinted and delicate “race” gun would probably not fit the bill. With “ultimate” being a nebulous waypoint on this journey, closing the open-ended nature of that descriptor seemed like a good place to start.

Luckily, in my part of the Tar Heel state, I have easy access to arguably two of the best long-range learning facilities in the country, where I can learn from those who earned a living with a magnified view of the world. Both the Tactical Farm in Mooresboro, NC and South Carolina Open Training Ground in Laurens, SC are staffed by military and LE snipers whose lives and the lives of others literally depended on their equipment and their knowledge of that equipment. There was no better place to start than talking to real snipers.

## THE JOURNEY

A lot of names were thrown around; various manufacturers and their pros and cons were discussed with great energy and in great detail. The discussion was never for lack of input

Adding an S7 bipod and CTK Precision monopod give the shooter a stable platform.

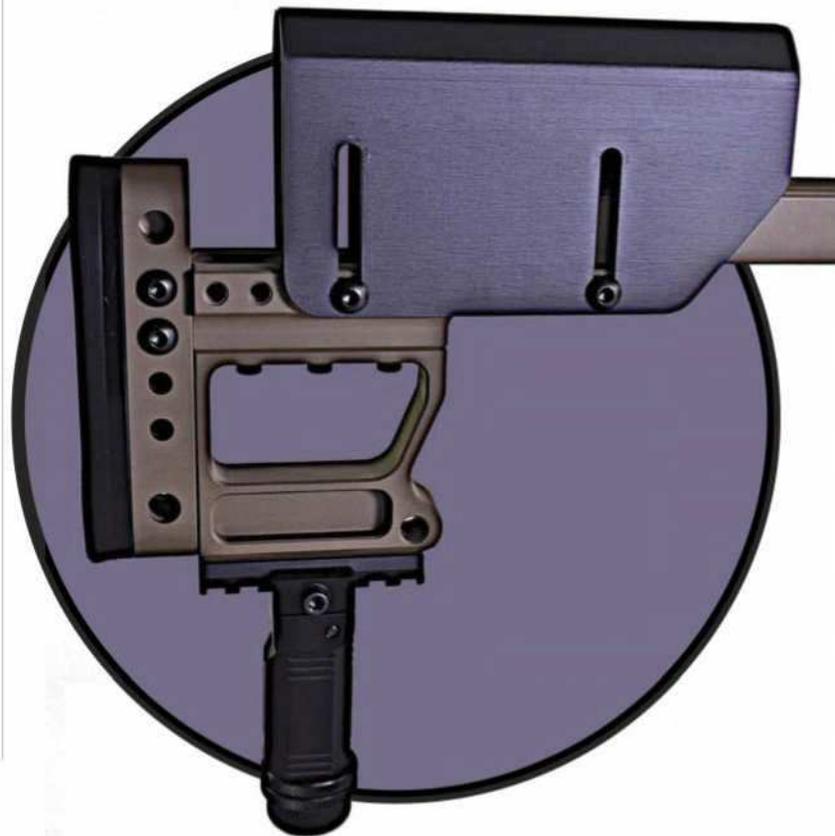


or topics to stir the hearts of those hanging around the line. There’s an internet’s worth of knowledge to be found at each of these ranges. I have seen people with less to say about politics than in our discussion on the finer points of long-range shooting, and I loved every minute.

Out of the fray, one name seemed to keep coming up, and examples of his craftsmanship could be seen on the shoulders of the guys hitting steel at long range, and also on the backs of more than a few elite war fighters. The oft-mentioned name was Scott McRee, owner and namesake of McRee Precision. So, I decided to give him a call. He was quite willing to spend a few hours sharing years of experience and engineering alchemy.

McRee took a different approach to helping me solve the challenge of

The patented 2-piece split cheek piece is probably the most adjustable on the market.





finding the “ultimate sniper rifle.” Rather than going over the decision tree of what I should be looking for, he told me that he had already built the ultimate sniper rifle for a select special operations group. He explained the best way for me to learn why it’s the ultimate is to get hands-on experience and he would let me borrow a rifle he had built for said group.

Three days later, I was driving back

home from my local gun store with a McRee’s Precision G10 .300 Win Mag in the back seat.

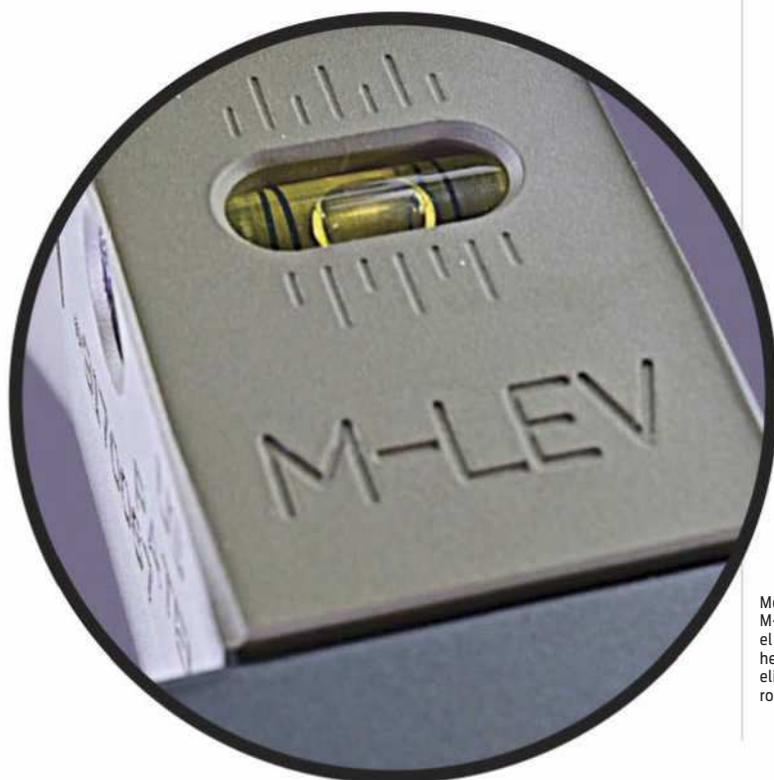
### DIGGING IN

With the rifle in hand and a slack jaw, I called Scott to go over the rifle and why this, of all his ballistic wizardry, is considered the understated pinnacle

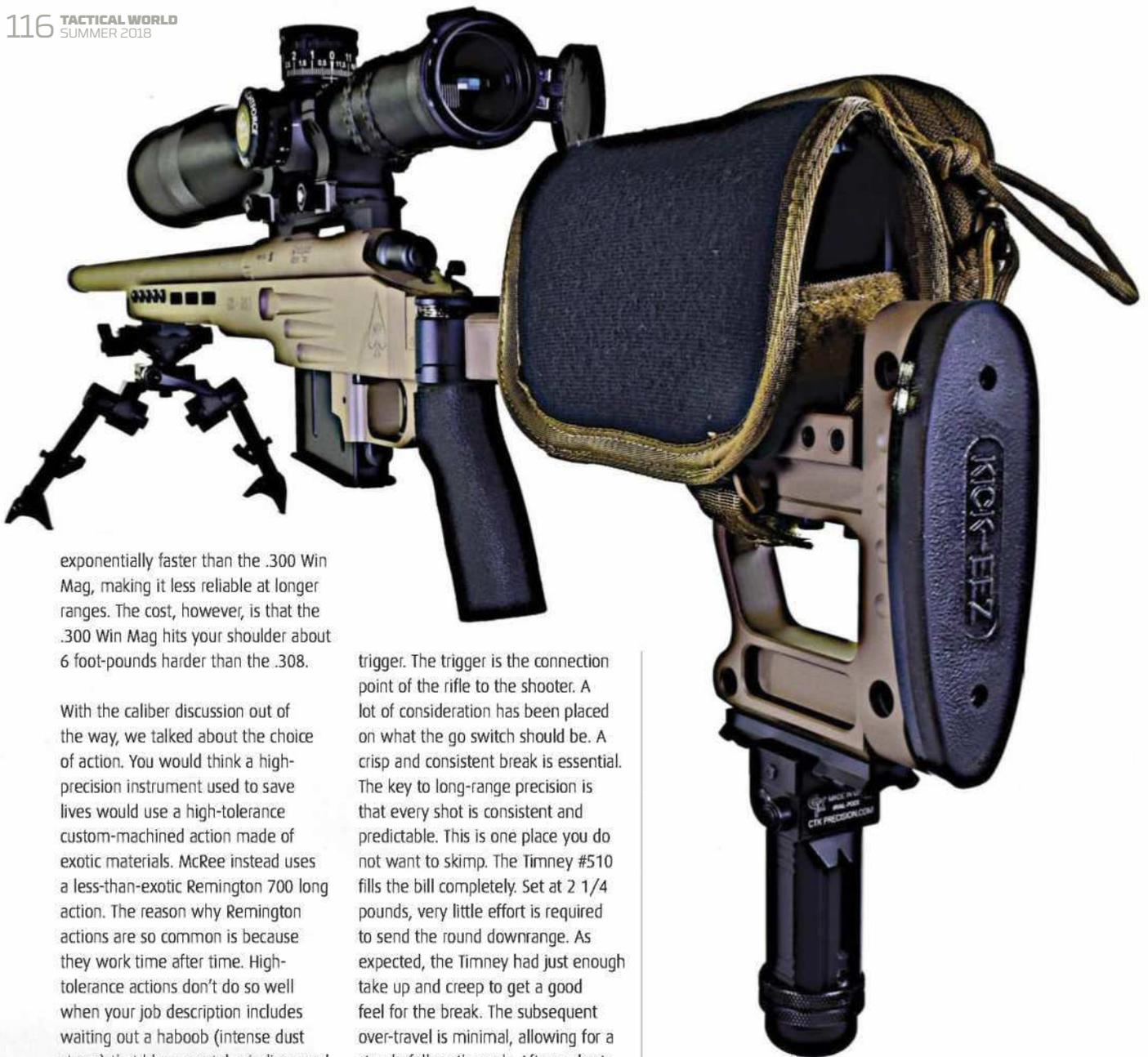
of sniper rifles by more than a couple special operations groups. Talking with Scott about this rifle, you immediately get that this weapon’s design is carefully thought out and purposefully built.

The first and most obvious question is, “Why .300 Win Mag?” Why not move down to a gentler .308 Winchester? The question can be answered with one word—balance.

Although the .308 Winchester and the .300 Win Mag throw the same size .308 round downrange, the .300 Win Mag case carries up to 67% more go-go juice. To oversimplify it, more powder allows you to cheat the wind with increased bullet weight and/or increased bullet speed. The .300 Win Mag, compared to the .308 Win, is a heavier bullet heading downrange at a higher velocity. This means generally the .300 Win Mag will be more accurate and reach farther than a .308. The .300 Win Mag can reliably be used to engage targets to 1,500 yards; after 500 yards the .308 starts to drop



McRee’s patented M-level ensures a level shooting platform; helping the shooter eliminate accuracy-robbing cant.



exponentially faster than the .300 Win Mag, making it less reliable at longer ranges. The cost, however, is that the .300 Win Mag hits your shoulder about 6 foot-pounds harder than the .308.

With the caliber discussion out of the way, we talked about the choice of action. You would think a high-precision instrument used to save lives would use a high-tolerance custom-machined action made of exotic materials. McRee instead uses a less-than-exotic Remington 700 long action. The reason why Remington actions are so common is because they work time after time. High-tolerance actions don't do so well when your job description includes waiting out a haboob (intense dust storm) that blows metal-grinding sand into even the smallest gaps. Even after being buried in Middle Eastern sand, the bolt cycles and rounds go into battery time and time again. When your life depends on it, durability and reliability mean everything.

Arguably the item subject to most personal preferences is the rifle's

trigger. The trigger is the connection point of the rifle to the shooter. A lot of consideration has been placed on what the go switch should be. A crisp and consistent break is essential. The key to long-range precision is that every shot is consistent and predictable. This is one place you do not want to skimp. The Timney #510 fills the bill completely. Set at 2 1/4 pounds, very little effort is required to send the round downrange. As expected, the Timney had just enough take up and creep to get a good feel for the break. The subsequent over-travel is minimal, allowing for a steady follow-through. After a short reset, the shooter is good to go on reengaging the next target.

The business end is 24 inches of proprietary 4 grooved stainless steel. Designed with 10 twists per inch, the barrel is optimized for heavier bullets. Testing bore witness to this with 220-grain Barnes Open Tip Match grouping at about 0.82 inch at 100 yards. Federal TLR 200-grain was next grouping at 0.90 inch at the same 100 yards. To be forthright, accuracy testing at 100 yards, though the standard, does not quite tell the story, as the bullet has not had enough time to fully stabilize.

However, the barrel, action and trigger are only part of what makes this a precision instrument. What makes this a piece of functional art and sets it apart from the fray is that the barrel, action and trigger sit snugly in the masterfully crafted McRee G10 chassis. Though not a simple plain-Jane chassis, it's not crowded with gimmicky bells and whistles. The heart of this rifle is utility and functionality, above all else.

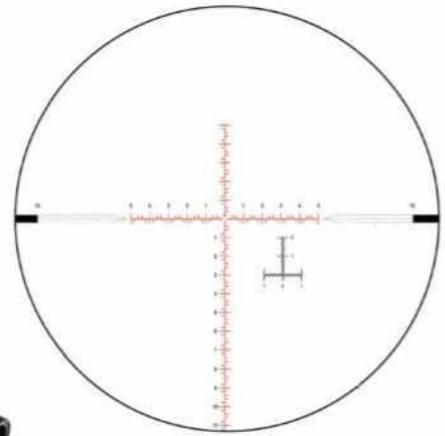
Proper fit is important to consistent shooting. Military snipers spend hours

The G10's folding stock is adjustable for length of pull, comb height and recoil pad positioning.

## FOR MORE INFO

Web  
[www.Shop.McReesPrecision.net](http://www.Shop.McReesPrecision.net)

Phone  
(662) 453-0022



## “THE KEY TO LONG-RANGE PRECISION IS THAT EVERY SHOT IS CONSISTENT AND PREDICTABLE ... THE TIMNEY #510 FILLS THE BILL COMPLETELY.”

mounted on their rifles. If a shooter is not comfortable, he will squirm and readjust to get comfortable. If you cannot shoot from the exact same position every time, you cannot make the same shot every time. Consistency equals precision (i.e. repeatable accuracy). This rifle meets the shoulder via a fully adjustable, folding buttstock. With adjustments to length of pull from 12.5 inches to 14.5

The Nightforce ATACR 7-35x56 F1 is the perfect all-around long-range rifle scope: packed full of features that might make some grown men cry.

inches, buttstock +1 inch, and a split cheek piece adjustable fore and aft as well as up and down, the shooter is assured a personalized fit.

To further help the shooter modify the rifle to his preferences, McRee includes mounting 6 M-LOK slots on either side. Additionally, the stock is pre-drilled and tapped for a monopod rail, tripod mounts and bipod rails.

Choose between a 0-MOA or 20-MOA scope rail and the rifle is almost battle-ready.

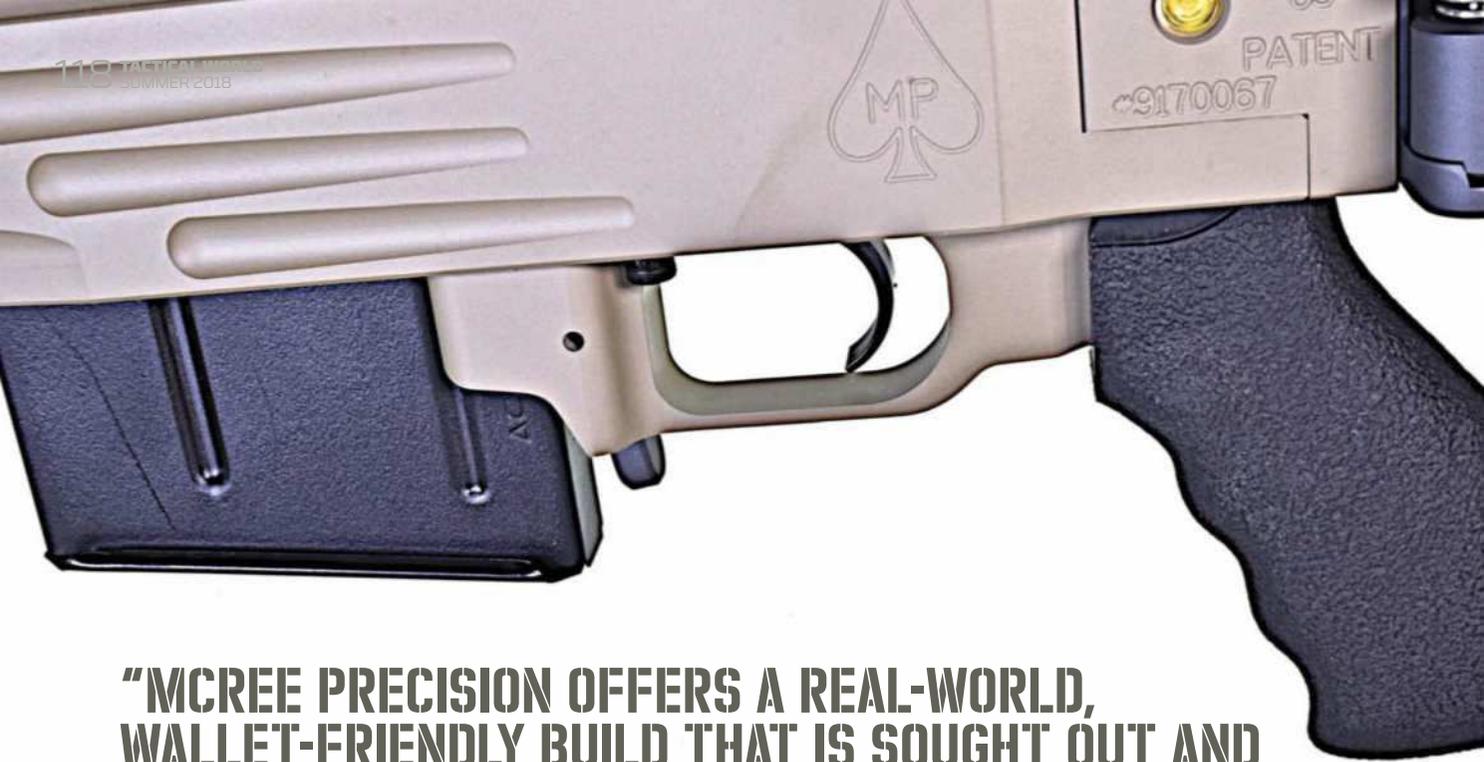
On top of the G10, we mounted a Nightforce ATACR 7-35x56 F1, attached to the rail with Nightforce rings. Though not lightweight, the 40 ounces added to the 11-pound rifle was acceptable. The 35x magnification and super clean glass makes even the

### SPECS:

#### McRee Precision G10 .300WM (Government Issue)

- **Caliber:** .300 Winchester Magnum Match, optimized for bullet weights 190 - 235 grains
- **Chamber:** Match Grade, SAAMI, no neck turn
- **Action:** Rem 700, inspected/reworked
- **Barrel:** 24-inch, SS, 4 groove, 10 twist, proprietary contour
- **Muzzle:** ± .900 dia, 5/8 x 24 TPI, thread protector included
- **Trigger:** Timney #510, set at 2 pounds, 4 ounces
- **Magazine:** AIAW style, 5-round capacity
- **Scope Base:** 0 MOA or 20 MOA, 6061 T6 aluminum billet

- **Stock:** McRee's G10 Folder with M-LEV embedded cant indicator, 7 sling attachment locations (push-button/flush-cup style)
- **Forearm:** Bipod dome stud standard, Harris ready, 6 M-LOK slots
- **Grip:** ERGO "Sure Grip"
- **Adjustment:** Length of Pull ± 12 to 14 inches, buttstock up/down ± 1 inch, cheek piece split fore/aft up/down ± 1 inch
- **Length:** Folded: 31 ¾ inches; Extended: 41 ½ inches at 13 inches LOP
- **Cheek Piece Cover:** McRee, made in the USA,
- **Dry Weight:** 11 pounds 4 ounces with rear stock pack and 5-round magazine (empty)
- **Price:** Starts at \$1,411.00 (DIY kit)



## “MCREE PRECISION OFFERS A REAL-WORLD, WALLET-FRIENDLY BUILD THAT IS SOUGHT OUT AND USED BY THE WORLD’S TOP MILITARY SNIPER TEAMS.”

smallest, most distant targets visible. Being a first focal plane, scope ranging can be done at any magnification; this is a must-have in a target-rich tactical environment. Other features like a Digillum reticle, .1Mil turret adjustments and the fact that the military’s top shooters prefer durable Nightforce scopes made this an obvious choice for our window on the world downrange.

A 2.5-pound Timney trigger is a well-suited bang switch for this battle-proven tack driver.

The inclusion of 6 M-LOK slots (3 on each side) allow the addition of a wide variety of mission-specific accessories.

### ON THE RANGE

At the range, we first steadied the rifle using an S7 bipod from KFS industries. Using the “Raptor Claw” feet to dig into the ground, the S7 pre-loads like a champ. Using the bipod’s unique cant adjustment to confirm that the M-level bubble was center assured us that our shooting position was rock solid, and consistent from location to location.

We mounted the G10 to a CruxOrd carbon fiber tripod. The rifle was quite at home, as this is the same tripod used by SOF teams across all branches of the service. Mounting the CruxOrd truss to the chassis bottom rail is quick and provided a rigid, nearly immovable platform, which is unfettered by the mule kick of a heavy grain .300 Win Mag.

### THE PERFORMER

Some may think the long-range rifle needs to set you back a year’s worth of car payments, but McRee Precision offers a real-world, wallet-friendly build that is sought out and used by the world’s top military sniper teams.

You will find these rifles on the backs of guys who know that the ultimate long-range precision rifle is not a thoroughbred, but a tough-as-hell workhorse that gets the job done every time. **TW**



**GO DEEPER**

For a more in-depth comparison of the two rounds, check out [www.SWGGun.org/300-win-mag-vs-308/](http://www.SWGGun.org/300-win-mag-vs-308/).





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# EXTREME

Chances are, if you routinely frequent firearms- or tactical-related forums or social media groups, you may have heard of Cola Warrior. Getting an exact definition of what Cola Warrior is differs, depending upon whom you ask, however.

*Tactical World* received a complete insider's view to this unique event at Cola Warrior West IV held outside Reno, Nevada recently, and we left with the knowledge that this event is much more than it seems.

## COLA IOI

Cola Warrior was started by a few active-duty Marines who tested each other by seeing how many push-ups they could do after downing a 2-liter

**Asked to describe the event, the editor said, "Cola Warrior is a combination Tough Mudder and 2-gun match."**

bottle of Coca-Cola. It evolved into more rigorous exercises and food challenges, until it became an actual competition outside the Corps.

We can best describe it as a combination Tough Mudder and 2-gun match during which participants must negotiate obstacles, shoot firearms, eat a box of Marshmallow Peeps and chug a six-pack of soda. The overall score is based on time. Each Cola Warrior event is similar, yet unique.

Cola Warrior West IV began with an obstacle course with five obstacles of varying difficulty that tested the participants' strength, speed and stamina.

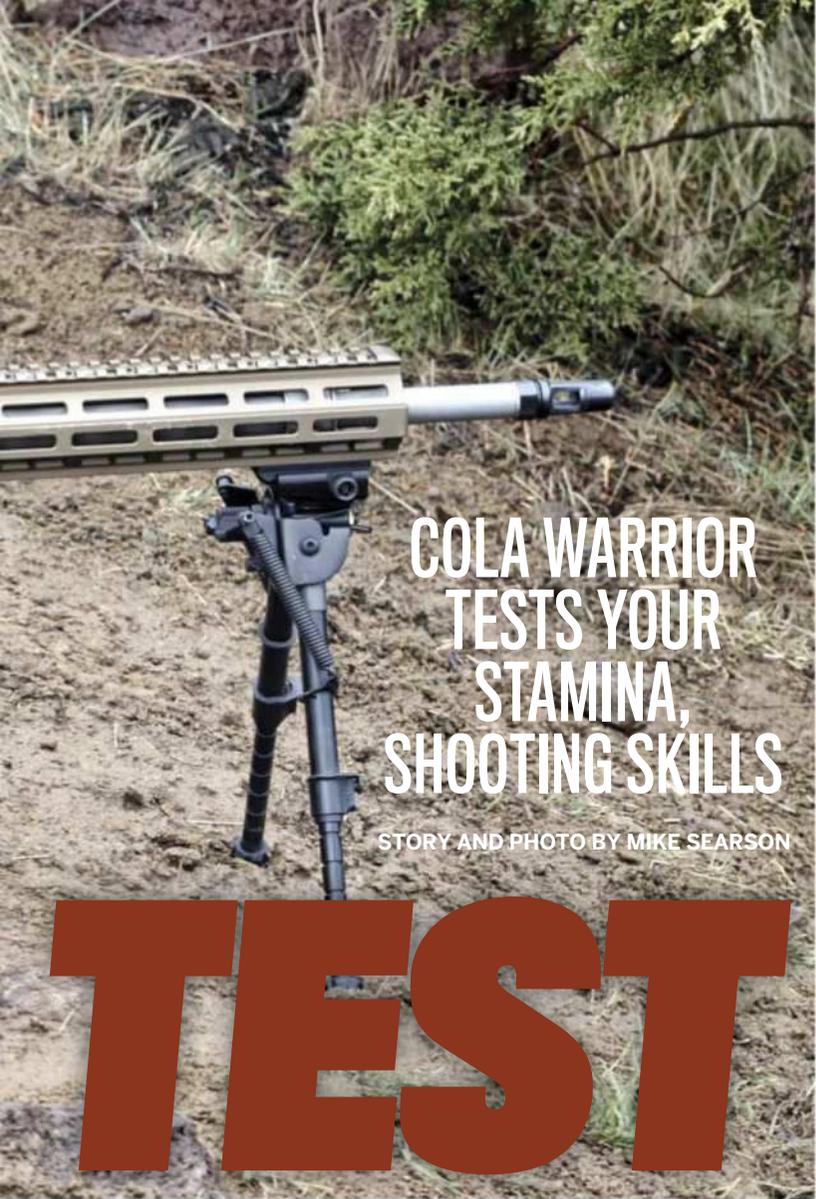
At this event, the first obstacle was the

sled—a 55-gallon drum, about 50 feet from the rear axle of a dump truck. Participants had to sit in the drum and pull themselves to the dump truck by using their upper body strength and a towing strap. After pulling themselves to the end of the truck, participants had to crawl underneath it from the rear to the front, while carrying two weights, and without activating a tripwire beneath the chassis.

Next was picking up what best can be described as an 8-foot-long weighted barbell. Cradling it in their elbows, the Cola Warriors had to run through tires placed on the ground like an old-school military/police obstacle course.

Following, the race was to the next hill, where an oversized tractor tire





# COLA WARRIOR TESTS YOUR STAMINA, SHOOTING SKILLS

STORY AND PHOTO BY MIKE SEARSON

# TEST

had to be rolled, or otherwise moved, up and down four hillsides. With the tire out of the way, contestants were tasked with climbing a 10- to 12-foot-high pole and touching the top of the platform.

Dropping off the pole, the Cola Warrior had to sit in a chair and eat a package of Marshmallow Peeps while field stripping and then reassembling an AK-47 rifle.

When the rifle was back together and dry fired to prove functionality, the race continued.

The next step was to run a little over a half-mile to the shooting range. Some folks fast-walked it, but the run time is a part of the overall score; so, nobody

really wanted to stop and smell the roses, or in the case of Cola Warrior West, the sagebrush.

## SHOOTING TIME

The firearms, safety gear, ammunition and beverage of choice awaited each shooter at the range. Upon arrival, eye and ear protection was donned so each shooter could load and make ready their handguns. Targets were provided by the event's host, Mitch Gerlinger of MOA Targets. The steel targets were placed anywhere from 25 to 500 yards. The first one was a spinning Texas Tree that was much harder than it initially appeared. It was followed by various alien-shaped silhouettes, a standard IPSC-style target, and a small spinner with a hostage taker for the pistol portion.

Once the pistol part was complete, Cola Warriors switched over to their rifle of choice, with several challenging steel targets to test their skills. Again, two magazines were the only limit. Like the handgun course of fire, capacity was whatever the shooter desires.

After the last rifle round was fired, we arrived at how Cola Warrior earned its name. Contestants must perform the "Chug," as in downing 72 ounces of soda or their favorite non-alcoholic carbonated beverage.

## HERE'S WHY

Navigating an obstacle course, shooting at steel targets under extreme conditions, not to mention the eating of Peeps and chugging of soda ... how is that "tactical" or even training-related?

We feel that anytime you get a chance to put yourself or your gear to the test, you are training. People practice rigorously for these events, but with the layout kept secret until the last minute, most of it is a surprise. Contestants need to think on the fly and adjust. Adding to the frustrations of the Cola warriors was an uncharacteristic rainstorm that turned the playing field into mud-like quicksand. Some Cola warriors even ran the course after dark using night vision.

To us, this is the true essence of tactical training, and I experienced it first-hand (minus the soda and Peeps) as a Marine Rifleman back in the day, as a run-up to MEU (SOC) training. You may have a mission and only an hour or two to rehearse it beforehand. You may have not trained specifically for the mission previously, so your overall physical fitness, body mechanics and skill with your weapons and gear need to adapt quickly. **TW**

## TACTICAL WORLD AD INDEX

ADVERTISER	PAGE	ADVERTISER	PAGE
BRAVO COMPANY	2-3	Sig Sauer	11
G-Code Holsters	7	Springfield Armory	123
Midwest Industries	119	The Ridge Wallet	95
MTM Special Opps	124	TOPS Knives	77
Seekins Precision	111		

## RANGE TIME

# TRUTH ABOUT SIGHTS

## WHY IT'S CRITICAL TO TRAIN IN ALTERNATIVE VISUAL FOCAL POINTS

Story by Shoji Hattori, Photo by Jaimee Itagaki



Let's talk about sights—in a traditional sense—*iron* sights. Depending on the difficulty of the shot, the shooter's focal points should shift. Focal point can be described as visual, mental, sensual, or a mixture of all. For our purposes, I'll narrow this down to only the visual.

Sighted shooting is a fundamental of marksmanship. We were all taught first to have front sight focus when shooting. We all need to start somewhere and using this method is proven where it ensures that the weapon is aligned upon the target precisely.

I know, I know ... that's what I teach at the police academy where I work and at TAC-1 weapons training school on the weekends. However, we must not neglect to teach other types of focused shooting.

As you become more advanced and adept at shooting (tactical or competitive), you must also evolve in understanding the availability of other visual focal points while shooting. To do so, we must understand the nature of gun fighting. If you have ever experienced any force-on-force scenario-based training, you will quickly realize that the sights were often left out of the equation when returning fire at close range, regardless of the amount of training the shooter had. Let's take a closer look.

### SLOW NATURE

If you are not the aggressor, you will mostly likely be reacting to a violent situation. Action causes reaction, and reactions are much slower than action. We often can't wait for our focus to go to the front sight when aiming—the trigger must be pressed.

Generally, when aiming, the front sight focus is the standard. This is the only way to learn and cognitively know what the sights should look like, in relation to the target. But the process of front sight focused shooting is slow. Slow in a sense that it would delay you from getting your shots out before the bad guy does in close quarters.

Front sight focused shooting is reserved for difficult shots in combat—long distance, moving targets, alternative shooting positions and small target areas. The shooter usually has some sort of cover ... distance, cover fire or some other resources to increase survivability. However, the slow nature of this sighting system makes it impractical for close-range shooting when speed becomes a dominant factor.

### VISUAL FOCAL POINT

Consider that the average distance of police officer-involved shootings in the United States is a mere 3 to 5 feet. That's within handshaking distance, and it will be blazing fast. Where do you think your focal point would be? Sights? No.

When shooting, your eyes must bounce around to make sure that your shooting is justified and at the same time be accurate and be fast, says Shoji Hattori, above.

The focal point is in the motor skill—getting the gun up fast and pressing fast. So, it's not visual. In this case, the visual focal point will usually be on target and will likely stay on target.

Officers often tell me that they did not see their sights, or they were not aware of the sights; they just aimed and shot. In other words, they had to rely on their body position to shoot.

This body position is acquired through proper body mechanics, such as stance. I often hear instructors negate the importance of stance in shooting, stating that the stance is only transitory and that strict stances are taught only for square range training. True, but they are missing the point here. Proper stance must be taught to teach the concept of proper body position when sighting.

Shooters should learn to use the body to properly aim and use the sights to verify that the weapon is aligned. This can only be developed through lots of training.

### BRANCH OUT

The concept of sights is very complex. Sight alignment can cause you unwanted anxiety when it does not go your way. Know that front sight focus is just one way to ensure sight alignment, but to perform at peak level during all types of shooting conditions, you should consider (and train) alternative visual focal points. **TW**

### CONTACT INFO

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