

A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the People to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

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Random Shots

Disclaimer

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Edited and Published by
Gary Evens, Rangemaster and
NRA Certified Firearms Instructor &
Range Safety Officer

WHAT'S NEW FOR 2019?

With the Democrats now in control of the U.S. House of Representatives, we can expect the anti-gun rhetoric to ramp up considerably. Nancy Pelosi and her minions will undoubtedly try to pass new restrictions on the possession and ownership of guns. Indeed, a bill was introduced in the Senate that would ban the manufacturer of over 200 specifically named firearms—i.e. “assault rifles”. It would also limit ammunition capacity in all firearms to just 10 rounds or less, outlaw collapsible stocks and arm braces, etc., because those features make the guns easier to “conceal”, and ban any handgun weighing over 50 ounces—this provision specifically targets AR-style and any other pistols based on rifle actions. Owners of existing guns (and magazines) that fall under the ban would be allowed to keep them, but could not sell, transfer, or give them to anyone, including family members.

I suspect they will be unsuccessful since the U.S. Senate and the White House are still controlled by the Republicans, but the liberal news media will be loudly proclaiming the need for stricter gun laws to try to shame Republicans and Independents into supporting the liberal position.

The National Sports Shooting Foundation (NSSF) annual Shooting, Hunting, Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show was held in Las Vegas in late January. About 2,500 vendors were represented, selling various firearms-related products and services. No one can hope to cover everything, but I'll touch on a few of the more notable announcements:

- **Glock:** New versions of their now classic polymer framed semi-automatic pistols were introduced. (Actually rumors of these new guns leaked out a



few weeks before the SHOT Show.) New models were the Gen5 G43X and the G48, both 9mm single-stack (actually staggered single-stack) guns with 10-round magazines and a two-tone finish with a silver-colored slide. Both also have forward cocking serrations on the slide. The G43X is basically a G43 with an extended grip—about the same length as the grip on a G19—to accommodate more rounds (10 vs. 6). Magazines are not interchangeable between the G43 and the 43X. The original G43 is a sub-compact G26-size gun, but with a single-stack instead of a double-stack magazine, making it narrower. The G43X with its extended grip, now has the same ammunition capacity as the G26. On the other hand, the G48 is basically a single-stack G19. It has the same grip length as the new G43X but with the barrel/slide length of a G19. The G48 (and G43X) may appeal to those that live in jurisdictions that limit handgun magazine capacities to 10 rounds. But, you are giving up 5 rounds of ammunition capacity compared to the G19 for just a slightly reduced width of the pistol. Also remember, that single-stack guns have more felt recoil than their double-stack counterparts because all of the recoil forces come back into a narrower portion of the hand.

From their recent introductions, it ap-

pears that Glock may be evolving their Gen5 designs. In mid-2017, they brought out the 9mm G19X, a G19-size barrel and slide mated to a G17-size frame. It was produced in flat dark earth/coyote color. A few months later, they introduced the G45, which was basically a G19X but in black. They also made some changes that were not on the G19X or on other Gen5 guns up to that point. They eliminated the cut-out at the bottom front of the grip, added forward cocking serrations to the slide, and contoured the front of the frame near the muzzle to match the contour on the front of the slide. Initially introduced in the G17 and G19, the Gen5 line now includes the G26 and other 9mm pistols. Interestingly, there are no Gen5 guns yet chambered in any caliber except the 9mm Luger.

- **Mossberg:** Another pre-show release involved a new gun from O.F. Mossberg. Primarily known for their shotguns, Mossberg has recently expanded to producing rifles, including an AR-15-style gun. Now they have introduced a semi-automatic 9mm pistol, the first handgun the company has made in 100 years. The MC1sc is a sub-compact-size, polymer frame pistol intended for



“A fighter does not spend valuable time looking for an excuse to lose. He spends his time finding a way to win!” — John S. Farnam

the concealed carry market. It comes with two magazines, one holding six rounds and the other holding seven. The magazines are made of a “smokey-grey” plastic that you can see through to count the rounds of ammunition remaining in them. In profile, the new Mossberg pistol somewhat resembles the Ruger SR9c. The unique feature of the MC1sc is how you disassemble the gun. You do this by pressing in on the rear of the slide and pulling the striker assembly out. You can then remove the slide and barrel from the frame. Another unique feature, on some models, is the cross-bolt safety. This style of safety is usually found on shotguns and some rifles, but not on pistols. The gun also has the now-traditional, blade-in-the-trigger safety that Glock introduced many years ago. I handled one of the new MC1sc (without the cross-bolt safety) at a local gun store and it feels very much like an S&W M&P Shield.

- **Colt:** Continuing their re-entry into the double-action revolver market, Colt announced their new “King Cobra”. This is basically a version of the new six-shot snubnose Cobra revolver they brought out in 2017, but with a slightly longer barrel (3 inches) and chambered in .357 Magnum. There is a full-length underlug on the bottom of the barrel and the gun has fixed sights, with the front sight being replaceable. [NOTE: Colt firearms have been a little scarce on shelves of many local gun shops. I talked to one sales clerk about this and he said it was a result of Colt’s new requirements to become a “stocking dealer”. Basically the gun shop has to agree to display some specific Colt guns and pay about \$14,000 up front for those guns. Some of the guns they are required to display are priced at \$1,600+ and there are very few buyers willing to pay this much for a firearm. Thus the dealers cannot expect to get an immediate return on their investment because those expensive guns may sit on their shelves for months before they are sold. Meanwhile, Colt, which has been struggling financially, gets the cash up-front.]
- **Remington:** Continuing the trend of shotguns that are not shotguns, Remington brought out a new shorty ver-

sion of their semi-automatic V3, the V3 Tac 13—Remington actually announced this new gun in October 2018. It looks very similar to the Mossberg “Shockwave” or Remington’s own Model 870 Tac 14, but with a semi-automatic action rather than a pump-action. (Several other companies also brought out their own versions of “Shockwave-like” guns.)



- **Walther:** Brought out their striker-fired Q5 Match SF pistol, a steel frame version of their polymer frame PPQ semi-automatic pistol. The Q5 Match SF is specifically designed for competitive shooters and is configured to accept one of several mini red-dot optics. It has a 5-inch barrel and a ammunition capacity of 15+1 rounds in 9mm Luger.



In addition, Walther announced the return of the PPK and PPK/S pistols in .380 ACP caliber to the U.S. market. Originally the PP and PPK models were made in Germany. The 1968 Gun Control Act made importation of the PPK impossible, but they did import the PPK/S (a version of the PPK with the longer grip frame of the PP to meet U.S. import restrictions) but the growing concealed carry market wanted the smaller PPK model. Starting in 2002, the PPK (6-shot) and PPK/S (7-shot) were manufactured under license from Walther by Smith & Wesson. That agreement ended a couple of years ago. Now Walther is assembling the guns here with a combination of parts made in the U.S. and in Germany.

- **Sig-Sauer:** A new, smaller version of Sig’s MPX was introduced. Called the “Copperhead”, this new version is an ultra-compact personal defense weapon. It features a 3.5-inch barrel, a collapsing pistol stabilizing brace, and is just 14.5 inches in length. It has an

integrated muzzle break that can easily accept a suppressor.

- **Ruger:** Announced a new version of the LCRx double-action revolver. This one is chambered in .357 Magnum, has a 3-inch barrel, and an external hammer. Ruger also announced a magnum version (.17 HMR and .22 WMR) of the Ruger Precision Rimfire rifle that they introduced last year, and a version of their AR-556 carbine without iron sights.

- **Kimber:** Announced the introduction of a new striker-fired mini-9mm pistol, the EVO SP. They are about the same size as the S&W M&P Shield, but have aluminum frames rather than the polymer that is found on most striker-fired guns. This gun seems to be a replacement for Kimber’s Solo mini-9mm pistol.



Kimber also announced an expansion of their line of K-6 revolvers. The new ones will have exposed hammers.

- **Corbon:** Rumors have swirled around this maker of premium self-defense ammunition. The original owner of the company is apparently out and forming another ammunition company. The latest rumor that seems credible is that the new owners of Corbon are moving manufacturing from Sturgis, South Dakota to Grafton, Ohio. We’ll have to see if the “new Corbon” is able to regain the reputation that the old company had with their excellent line of DPX self-defense ammunition.

Several manufacturers have introduced new colors to their existing line of polymer-frame pistols. While the colored guns do not offer any functional advantages, they do probably appeal to those looking for something different than the traditional black or flat-dark earth colored guns. New calibers of ammunition, firearms accessories, etc. were also part of the show.

-- G.R. Evens



LATE-BREAKING NEWS

As 2018 drew to a close, a couple of news items of interest to our readers occurred—too late to make it into the last edition of *Random Shots*.

Ohio Gun Law Update

Governor Kasich decided to veto H.B. 228, that made several improvement to Ohio's gun laws. He had threatened to do this over the bill's "stand your ground" provisions. However, the Ohio Senate removed those provisions in its version of the bill and the Ohio House agreed to those changes, so the Governor's objections should have been satisfied. He went ahead and vetoed it anyway—along with some other bills passed by the legislature and that were supported by conservatives. I get the feeling the Governor Kasich was "thumbing his nose" at Ohio conservatives during his last days in office for failing to support him during his unsuccessful 2016 Presidential Primary campaign, over his opposition to President Trump following his election, and perhaps setting the stage for a run as a "moderate" in the 2020 Presidential campaign.

Buckeye Firearms Association (BFA) President, Jim Irvine, apparently agrees with my assessment and has written an excellent editorial that you can read on the BFA website (<https://www.buckeyefirearms.org/kasich-veto-statement-hb-228-rings-hollow-his-word>).

But, the good news is that the Ohio General Assembly overrode the Governor's veto on December 27th, giving Ohio gun owners and citizens a late Christmas present. The vote in the Ohio House was 67 to 22, and in the Ohio Senate it was 21 to 11. As a result, the changes approved in H.B. 228 will go into effect by the end of March, 2019.

Bump-Stock Ban

At his direction, President Trump's Justice Department issued new ATF rules banning the ownership and possession of "bump stocks". Anyone having one has 90 days (until March 21, 2019) to either destroy them or turn them into the ATF. Failure to do so could result in a \$250,000 fine and/or 10 years in prison.

Bump stocks gained notoriety following the October 2017 Las Vegas massacre in which 58 people were killed and 851 injured—400 from gunfire. Gun control groups had been calling for them to be outlawed.

While I am not a fan of bump stocks and I

will feel no personal loss over them being banned, I do object to the idea that the government is not going to provide any compensation to bump-stock owners who bought them when it was perfectly legal to do so.

Parkland School Shooting Update

[*Editor's Note: I can't believe that I didn't write about this event in the pages of Random Shots, when it originally happened, but a review of the archives reveals I did not specifically address it.*] "Unprepared and Overwhelmed" reads the title of an article from the *South Florida Sun Sentinel Newspaper* on December 28, 2018. It goes on to state, "Two decades after Columbine and five years after Sandy Hook, educators and police still weren't ready for Parkland...Failures by the Broward County Sheriff's Office and school district cost children their lives at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School...A gunman with an AR-15 fired the bullets, but a series of blunders, bad policies, sketchy training and poor leadership helped him succeed. Information reported over 10 months by the South Florida Sun Sentinel reveals 58 minutes of chaos on campus marked by no one taking charge, deputies dawdling, false information spreading, communications paralyzed and children stranded with nowhere to hide...To be sure, a number of teachers and police officers performed heroically. But an examination of the day's events reveals that the Sheriff's Office and school district were unprepared for the crisis." Of course you won't see this reported by the mainstream liberal media because it conflicts with their narrative—government can protect us from all evil so citizens don't need to protect themselves, especially with guns.

The tragic shooting in February, 2018, at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida left 17 students and staff members dead and an equal number injured. Fifteen students brought a lawsuit against the sheriff's department and the school district, claiming they had failed to properly protect the students from harm and that they had suffered trauma as a result.

In late December (2018) a federal judge ruled that Broward County law enforcement and school officials had no Constitutional responsibility to protect the lives of the students attending the school when a gunman opened fire, and dismissed the lawsuit brought by the students. In his ruling, he stated that the only individuals that law en-

forcement officers have an obligation to protect are those in police custody. Since the students attending the school were not in custody, they had no guarantee of police protection.

On the same day this ruling was made, a county judge in Broward County ruled that the school resource officer that failed to take action to protect the students could be sued. It will be interesting to see how these conflicting rulings are resolved, but I suspect the federal judge's position will be upheld as the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled in *Castle Rock v. Gonzales* in 2005 (and in other cases) that the police do not have a specific duty to protect individual citizens from harm.

In related news, in late December a Florida state commission tasked with reviewing the Parkland school shooting and making recommendations, issued their report. It lists a series of failures on the part of Broward County law enforcement and suggested that school security improvements, such as arming teachers and staff, were needed. The report did not recommend that any new gun laws should be enacted—something anti-gun advocates are sure to object to, along with the idea of arming teachers. In order for teachers to be armed, the Florida legislature will have to modify existing state firearms laws.

(See the following article for more on the aftermath of the Parkland School shooting.)

-- G.R. Evens



The Quality of Training

I recently read an article that summaries a report on the investigation into the law enforcement response to the active killer attack on the Marjory Stoneman-Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida in February, 2018. It had some interesting conclusions that I will expand upon.

One finding was that many of the Broward County officers seemed to think it was more important to go home to their families at the end of the day than it was to save the lives of the students at the school. Some appeared to just be “marking time” until they could retire and were not interested in putting themselves at risk. The School Resource Officer at Stoneman-Douglas was a retired police officer and simply lied about his response in an effort to justify why he took no effective action to confront the killer. Yes, there are cowards, even in law enforcement.

Perhaps the most important finding in the report was that most of the Broward County officers that responded could not remember what they had learned or when they had last received mass shooter training! (By contrast, responding officers from nearby Coral Springs praised their training in enabling them to rapidly deal with the event.) This caused me to give some thought to the quality of training.

I can remember taking a lot of classes in college where I was just too tired—from partying the night before?—to pay attention to some of the lectures that I had to attend. It was even worse if the topic being presented held no interest for me. I’ve also taken “mandatory annual training” classes that bored the heck out of me. Many of them were on-line PowerPoint presentations that I had to read through and then pass a “test”. I’m sure many of you have experienced the same thing. In such situations, little or no learning takes place. Yes, the “square” has been filled that the training was conducted and perhaps that you were present, but it does not mean that you learned anything.

How much you learn in any class is dependent on many factors. Among them are:

- Your interest in the subject matter being presented.
- The manner in which the instruction is conducted.
- Your mental and physical condition at the time the training is presented—are you distracted by other things, tired, or sick?

In the case of Broward County’s active killer training, it appears that supervisors were more interested in “filling the square” than they were in ensuring their officers learned something vital to their day-to-day duties. Indeed, that may have been the very prob-

lem—they viewed active killer events as so rare that there wasn’t any need to pay attention to the training. After all, law enforcement officers such as those assigned to the sheriff’s department spend the vast majority of their time enforcing traffic laws and investigating minor criminal offenses. Many law enforcement supervisors and managers view training as a distraction from the regular duties of their officers. Every hour spent in training is an hour they are not on the streets enforcing laws or in their offices completing reports. In some cases, the officers are required to attend the training on their days off or after completing a regular shift. It is no wonder that they often could care less about the training, especially if they do not see any benefit to them for taking it.

I’ve seen much the same attitude among students that take concealed carry classes from me and other instructors. The students are there because it is necessary for them to obtain their concealed carry license, not because they expect to learn anything new or important. You can always tell who these students are by their lack of engagement in the class. They fail to ask questions and typically just “go through the motions” during practical exercises such as those conducted on the firing range.

Because of this, some instructors also just “go through the motions”, with a few taking shortcuts and even giving out course completion certificates without ever requiring students to attend the class. (Several instructors around the country have been caught doing this and have lost their certifications as a result. Also, all of their students have been required to retake their concealed carry training.)

When you take a training class, especially one that you are paying money to attend, you need to be motivated enough to pay attention and learn from the instructors. You have an obligation to be healthy and well-rested on the day(s) of the class so you are ready to learn. You need to have read any “read-ahead” materials, and bring the items needed to complete the course.

At the same time, your instructors have an obligation to be at their best when conducting the class. They need to be prepared ahead of time. Visual aids should have a professional look to them. The instructor needs to be healthy and well-rested. He/she needs to have good presentation and communications skills. Being able to shoot well

is not enough if they cannot effectively transfer their knowledge to their students.

As a student, if you find your instructor just “droning on” or seeming to be just going through the motions, you may want to leave the class and find a different instructor. Instructor attitude is infectious—if they are bored you soon will be too. If they are excited, hopefully they will transfer that excitement to you and you will learn a lot from what they have to offer.

Unfortunately, most people that have firearms feel there is little to learn from taking a training class and only do so when it is a requirement to get a license. Rarely do they seek additional training beyond the minimum required by law. I find this to be a strange attitude to have when it comes to learning a skill that could literally save your life. Some complain about the time and expense of firearms training. Well, what is your life worth?

-- G.R. Evens

My Ruger Obsession



Part III: The Ruger Mark IV Target Pistol

I started looking at replacing my Ruger Mark III Hunter .22-caliber semi-automatic pistol after the frustrations I experienced in getting that gun put back together after installing a Volquartsen accuracy kit in it to lighten the trigger pull. Ruger’s latest versions of their classic semi-auto pistols—the Mark IV’s—have a much-improved takedown process. After looking around I settled on either the Mark IV Target Model or the Mark IV Competition Model. It finally came down to price and since the Target Model was almost \$100 cheaper than the Competition Model, that is what I got.

Ruger’s Mark IV Target Model .22-caliber semi-automatic pistol is available in either blued steel or stainless-steel finishes. I chose the stainless-steel version. It comes equipped with a 5.5-inch heavy bull barrel and adjustable target sights. Black plastic grips are standard. Its overall length is 9.75-

inches, the height is 5.50-inches, the width is 1.20-inches, and it weighs 42.8 ounces (empty). The barrel rifling has 6 grooves with a 1:16 right-hand twist. It comes with two 10-round magazines. The MSRP is \$689, but I was able to get mine for about \$150 less than that.

At the range I was somewhat optimistic after firing the first six shots as you can see from the accompanying photo. My point of aim from the benchrest 25 yards away was the bottom of the “NRA” symbol in the center of the target. I shot the gun off of a pistol rest, using a two-handed hold. (Normally I would do the initial sight-in of a new gun at a shorter distance like 7 yards, but the shorter ranges at my gun club were being used so I had to go to the 25-yard range.) The grid-squares on this target are 1-inch in size. For sighting-in purposes I like to fire 5-shot groups. Five of my first shots hit the target about 1.5 inches above my point of aim and were basically centered. A sixth round hit the target way out to the left—I’m not sure just which shot out of the six this one was. A little elevation adjustment should bring them right in to where I wanted them to hit.



It was at this point that I started to struggle. I had forgotten to bring the user manual with me and the Ruger’s adjustable rear sight was not marked to indicate which direction the screws needed to be turned to obtain the desired movement of the sight. I “guessed” at the proper adjustment and while it did result in my hits occurring lower on the target, they were also pushed a couple of inches to the right.

More fiddling with the windage and elevation adjustment screws on the rear sight and I eventually got the rounds hitting the center of the bullseye when using a 6 o’clock hold on a target placed 25 yards downrange. I

placed the top of my front sight on the bottom edge of the 10-ring when shooting from the rest. I also tried a few off-hand shots at this distance, standing using a two-hand grip, and I was not happy with the results—they were all over the place. I attributed this to the fact I was shooting a new pistol and to the heavy trigger pull weight on the Target Model. The trigger pull was noticeably heavier than on my Mark III Hunter model, but it broke crisply with little or no take-up. Also, the reset was very noticeable, both tactilely and audibly—an improvement over previous Ruger pistols.



Overall, I fired about 100 rounds through the Mark IV Target pistol during this first range session, most of them getting the gun sighted in. I did experience a few “stovepipe” jams while using the Federal American Eagle 40 grain solid lead high velocity ammunition. I’ll need to try some other brands of ammunition to see how they affect reliability and accuracy in my new Ruger. I may put a red-dot optic on this pistol for use in my NDR League competition, or I might just use it with iron sights. I’ll have to ponder that some.

When I got home I measured the trigger pull weights on my three Ruger pistols using a Lyman digital trigger pull gauge. On the Mark IV Target model, the average trigger pull weight was 4 lbs., 5.8 oz.; on my Mark III Hunter it was 1 lb., 7.2 oz. (I had previously installed a Volquartsen accuracy kit in this pistol to improve the trigger pull); and on my Mark II it was 2 lbs., 2.9 oz. That is quite a bit of difference between the three pistols, especially when you consider that the Mark II is in the basic configuration designed for hunting and plinking while the Hunter and Target models are more expensive and designed for target shooting. While the heavier trigger pull weight is not a problem for a self-defense handgun, it is a little heavy for a precision target pistol which usually have their triggers set for about a 2.5 -lb. pull. In effect, the trigger pull weight on the Mark IV was about 1.7 lbs. more than the pistol weighed. The result is going to be movement of the gun whenever the trigger is pulled. While the goal is to keep this

movement straight back into the hand, that takes some practice to achieve, especially with a new gun while it is getting broken in.

I decided to deal with the heavy trigger pull by installing a Volquartsen Accuracy Kit like I had done on my Mark III Hunter Model. The kit for the Mark IV was not quite the same as the one Volquartsen makes for the Mark III. It does not include a bolt release lever, but they do sell one for the Mark IV separately, so I ordered one and installed it along with the Accuracy Kit. The kit did contain a different hammer bushing that allowed me to do away with Ruger’s magazine disconnect safety feature, so I also installed that. Unlike I did when I installed the Accuracy Kit on my Mark III, this time I decided to use the Volquartsen-supplied trigger. After making the modifications, the trigger pull weight measured an average of 1 lb., 5.2 oz.

I also decided to replace the grip panels on the Mark IV Target Model as the ones that came on the pistol are the same plastic ones, except black in color, as came on my Mark II pistol. Those grip panels developed small cracks around the holes where the screws hold them to the grip frame. I had installed a set of Hogue G10 laminated grips on my Mark II pistol earlier so decided to put a set on the Mark IV pistol as well. However, for some reason they were not as aggressively checkered as the set I put on my Mark II, so I replaced them with a set of G10 “Slash & Burn” Competition grips in laminated blue and black color from Stoner CNC (based in Archbold, Ohio). The Stoner grips have much more aggressive texturing.



On my next trip to the shooting range, my accuracy shooting the pistol improved considerably. I attribute most of the improvement to the lighter trigger pull weight. The accuracy improvement was significant to me, so I consider the time and expense in modifying the pistol to be well worth it. The accuracy kit cost about \$115, the new bolt release about \$25, and the Stoner CNC grips about \$60. It only took me about an hour to make all of the modifications and I

didn't have to struggle to get the pistol put back together again.

I decided to try shooting this pistol with a red-dot optic installed on it. Since I had removed the Burris Fastfire III from my Mark III, it was available for use. However, unlike the Mark III, Ruger does not provide an accessory rail with their Mark IV Target Model pistols. Ruger does make accessory rails for the Mark IV that they sell through their website, but none were available from Ruger or any of the other suppliers that normally provide Ruger factory parts. Instead I ordered an accessory rail from Volquartsen and installed it to hold my red-dot optic. I had to modify the Volquartsen rail as it was too long and would have required removing the rear adjustable sight from my pistol for the rail to fit. Instead I just cut about 1¼ inches off the rail with a hacksaw and fitted it to the pistol ahead of the rear sight. After a range session with this set-up I decided to remove the accessory rail and red-dot optic. I found that the Volquartsen rail sits up higher above the receiver than the ones made by Ruger do. It blocks the iron sights, so they cannot be used even if the optic is taken off the pistol.

The Ruger Mark-series pistols are among the most popular recreational .22-caliber pistols you can get today. They are quality, reliable firearms sold at reasonable prices. The improvements Ruger has made with the introduction of their Mark IV versions are certainly welcomed. If you are interested in getting involved in smallbore target shooting, you certainly won't go wrong by selecting a Ruger Mark IV Target Model.

Next time, I'll be writing more about the Ruger Mark-series pistols.

-- G.R. Evens

Starting Over Again

As I get older I find that I can no longer do some of the things that I used to be able to do easily when I was younger. Because of this, I am faced with making choices. Either I must stop doing the thing I can no longer do, or I must find a different way to do it! One of those things I am having to deal with is my handgun shooting grip and stance.

When I first began shooting a handgun, I used a one-handed grip and a bladed stance. This was what bullseye shooters used and since that was my primary handgun shooting activity at the time, that is what I gravitated to. I didn't pay any attention to—indeed I don't recall even hearing about—the “modern technique of the pistol” as taught by Col. Jeff Cooper and his instructors at Gunsite Academy. I think the first time I was taught to use a two-handed grip was during one of my Air Force handgun qualification classes that I had to take periodically.

I first got used to using a two-handed grip when I got involved in Cowboy Action Shooting some twenty years ago, and only later when I got involved in firearms instruction and self-defense training that I paid any real attention to all of the details associated with a proper stance and grip when shooting a handgun. It was then that I learned about the two basic stances—Weaver and Isosceles—and the benefits of the two-handed grip over the one-handed grip. I also focused on using semi-automatic pistols rather than the revolvers that had been my previous handgun preference.



Isosceles Shooting Stance



Weaver Shooting Stance

I never felt comfortable using the Weaver stance and associated grip so I naturally adopted the Isosceles (or a variation of it) as my standard handgun stance and grip. With this you stand with your shoulders squared to the target, your feet shoulder-width apart and slightly staggered, and your arms pressed out at full length holding the handgun in a firm grip. For the grip itself, the shooting hand held the gun as high as possible on the pistol's grip and applied pressure by the fingers pulling the gun back into the heel of the palm. The support hand then

wrapped around the fingers of the shooting hand and squeezed to create 360° of pressure on the pistol's grip.

In shooting using this grip and stance, my accuracy was much improved over what I was able to previously attain, but my shots tended to drift low and to the left—a common problem among right-handed shooters. Most of my shots stayed within the designated target area, but as the accuracy requirements increased, especially when I started practicing Hojutsu, I needed to keep my hits centered.

At first I thought the solution was to use pistols with smaller grips so I could squeeze tighter with my support hand. Various version of the Colt Model 1911 with their excellent triggers were my preferred handgun choices, but they were a little large and heavy for everyday concealed carry use. For that I used a Ruger SR9c pistol chambered in 9mm Luger. It had a very narrow grip yet had a 10+1 round capacity. However, the low-left drift continued to plague me.

Next I tried Glock pistols, but the finger grooves on the front grip strap never seemed to fit my fingers. So I moved on to the S&W M&P in both 9mm Luger and .40 S&W with the small palm-swell installed. I didn't like the triggers on those M&P pistols and blamed my shooting problems on them. I decided to try out the Sig Sauer P-series of pistols to see if that would help. The larger grip circumference on the Sigs felt good in my hands and the aggressive stippling helped me maintain a solid grip when shooting them. My shooting accuracy improved despite the fact that more than one firearms instructor told me the P-series grips were too large for my hands.

I decided that extended shooting of pistols chambered in .40 S&W and .45 ACP were contributing to my accuracy problems so I switched to almost exclusively using pistols chambered in 9mm Luger. I went back to the 1911 platform, but in 9mm, and that seemed to help—for a while. One instructor that I greatly respect suggested that I might be gripping the gun too hard and that I should try relaxing my grip. That felt better, but it didn't really improve my shooting accuracy so I continued my search for a solution.

Then S&W came out with their compact M2.0 model and I found that gun, equipped with their new Medium-Large palm-swell, to be just the thing. My accuracy really im-

proved, but I still had problems when shooting at the longer distances—20 yards and beyond. I started to think my problem was a result of jerking the trigger.

In mid-2018, my local Hojutsu instructor decided to have us switch from using our centerfire pistols to .22-caliber pistols for our bi-weekly range sessions. (That did not bother me at all since I had been shooting such pistols for a few years during summer .22-caliber pistol leagues.) His thought process was that doing so would allow us, and him, to focus on the fundamentals of shooting more and not be worried about recoil management. It was after several weeks of doing this that I discovered my real problem.

I was working with my instructor to determine if my problem was with my grip or if it was a result of jerking the trigger. I was shooting a .22-caliber pistol for this series of drills and focusing on grip and trigger press. For one drill the task was to fire a series of shots at the target while trying to keep the tightest group possible and with no time limited. I assumed a tight squeeze with my support hand, but found with each subsequent shot my squeeze got less and less until by the last round my support hand was just loosely holding onto the grip. It was this discovery that led me to the conclusion that I needed to change my grip.

A couple of months earlier our instructor asked us to try an experiment. He asked us all to try shooting with a Weaver stance and grip to see if it tightened up our groups when shooting. It did, but it still felt awkward to me. Now I decided it was time to try it again.

I started out practicing the Weaver grip and stance during dry fire sessions. The position of my feet changed so that they were further apart, front to back. My shoulders were turned more, with my support side shoulder further forward toward the target. My shooting hand pressed forward on the grip of the pistol, pushing it towards the target. At the same time my support hand pulled back resisting the forward push, creating isometric tension. Instead of being pointed out to the side, my support arm elbow is pointed downward and the thumbs on both hands point upward (at about a 45° angle for me) instead of being pushed forward towards the target. During the draw and presentation of the pistol to the target, I begin applying the forward and backward

pressure from the moment my support hand joins my shooting hand on the grip. I allow the pistol to be extended towards the target but keep the rearward pressure with my support hand. I keep my eyes focused on the spot on the target that I want to hit, only shifting it to the front sight when it starts to come into my peripheral vision as it approaches my eye-target line.

The result is a much smoother and direct presentation of the pistol to the target. The sights come up naturally and once my arms reach full extension my front sight is right on the target where I want to shoot it.

Of course, switching techniques means that I have undo years of habit and learn new ways of doing it. To do so, I have to concentrate on the changes and that means I need to slow down to make sure I make every movement correctly. Only after hundreds of presentations and shots will I once again have the muscle memory ingrained to the point that I can make my draw, presentation to the target, and shots as quickly as I was able to before I made the change. Hopefully the result will be improved accuracy.

-- G.R. Evens



The Smith & Wesson SW22 Victory & A Surprise

[Editor's Note: As you know, I normally limit my "First Impressions" to just five shots—because it is usually someone else's gun and ammo. However, when I write about a gun I own, I do a more thorough evaluation. What follows is a case of the latter.] The Smith & Wesson (S&W) SW22 Victory® is a single-action, blowback-operated, semi-automatic pistol with an internal hammer and chambered to fire the .22 Long Rifle cartridge. It replaces S&W's earlier Model 22A and was brought it out to directly compete with Ruger's Mark-series of pistols (and to a lesser extent, Browning's Buckmark pistol) in 2016. It is the least

expensive .22 in S&W's line of products, with an MSRP of \$409. I got mine for considerably less than that. Most firearms retailers seem to be selling them in the \$325-\$375 price range for the basic model.

The SW22 Victory is mainly constructed of satin-finished stainless steel, with some polymer plastic parts (grips, grip frame, trigger, sights, accessory rail, thumb safety, bolt latch, etc.). It comes with a 5.5-inch bull barrel with a recessed crown at the muzzle to improve accuracy, a trigger adjustable for overtravel, and adjustable three-dot fiber-optic target sights. Rifling in the barrel consists of six grooves with a 1:15-inch right-hand twist. The gun's overall length is 9.2 inches, the height is 5.6 inches, and it is 1.1 inches in width. The front and rear of the polymer grip frame are textured—as are the removable polymer grip panels—to make it easier to get a secure hold on the gun, and it is angled like those found on the P08 Luger and Ruger Mark-series of pistol. Unlike most grips that are either straight or flared outward at the bottom, the SW22 grips are narrower at the bottom, making it much easier for the little finger to grasp it firmly. It weighs in at 36 ounces and has a capacity of 10+1 rounds. Two 10-round magazines are supplied with the gun when it ships from the factory. There is a manual thumb safety, bolt release latch, and magazine release button, all well-positioned on the left side of the pistol, and an internal magazine disconnect safety that prevents the gun from firing with the magazine removed. (This magazine disconnect safety can be easily removed if desired.) Unfortunately, the gun's external controls are not ambidextrous. The factory specifications indicate the trigger pull weight is 5 pounds, 2 ounces, but as measured by my Lyman digital trigger pull gauge my SW22 trigger pull weight is at 2 pounds, 12 ounces. The rear sight assembly can be removed from the gun so a section of Picatinny rail (with integrated fixed rear sight) can be installed for use with various optics.



The SW22 does not have a traditional slide as found on most semi-automatic pistols. Instead it has a reciprocating bolt that moves inside of a receiver attached to the barrel and grip frame, like the way Ruger's Mark-series of pistols are configured. Serrations at the rear of the bolt are grasped to help pull the bolt to the rear and cock the gun. The entire upper assembly can be easily removed from the grip frame by using the supplied Allen wrench to take out a screw located just forward of the trigger guard. The bolt can then be pulled out of the rear of the receiver. The barrel can be removed from the receiver by taking out another screw.



There are other versions of the SW22, including one with a threaded barrel to accept a sound suppressor or compensator (\$429 MSRP), and a version that comes in a camouflage finish for use in hunting (\$459 MSRP). S&W's Performance Center also makes four versions of the SW22 with upgraded features—at a higher price of course (\$672-\$868 MSRP).

When it comes to customizing the gun, there are almost as many third-party parts for the SW22 as there are for the Ruger Mark-series of pistols. Aftermarket barrels are being made by Tactical Solutions, Volquartsen, and others to improve the gun's accuracy, and replacing the barrel can easily be accomplished by the owner. Other companies such as Tandemkross, Volquartsen, etc., offer replacement triggers, springs, grips, etc.

The gun feels very good in my hands with the factory grips installed. It has a heavy feel—no doubt the result of the stainless-steel barrel and receiver assembly—that makes the gun feel firmly settled in my hand. The trigger pull is short and crisp and while the trigger can be adjusted for over-travel, mine came from the factory just as I like it.

The adjustable target sights contain a "U"-shaped bright green fiber optic lite pipe in the rear—giving the appearance of a two-dot



sight—and a straight bright green one in the front sight. The reason I was able to get my SW22 so cheaply was that the front fiber optic insert was missing and being the display model, it was the last SW22 the store had in stock. I got a good discount off the price as a result. Concerned about customer satisfaction, one of the salesmen in the store found a bright orange fiber optic lite pipe that would work so he installed it for me at no charge. I like the contrast it provides—two bright green dots on either side of a bright orange one.

Before I headed to the range, I cleaned and lubed the gun. Since the weather was uncooperative, I decided to do my initial shooting at an indoor range. I placed my target five yards downrange and assumed a standing stance with a two-handed grip, aiming at the center of the bullseye target. My first five shots went into a group about 1½ inches high by about ½ inch wide, and about ½ inch to the right of my point of aim, with one shot right in my point of aim (see accompanying photo). I then moved the target to 3, 7, 10, and 15 yards. Except at three yards, group sizes were larger, as expected, but still reasonable. They tended to be a little to the right of my point of aim, so a little windage adjustment to the sights is called for. I'll need to wait until I can shoot this pistol from my MTM pistol rest to get them tweaked just right.



My range session was not error-free. I encountered a few double-feeds and one instance where a round failed to fire. I also discovered it is important to make sure each round is seated properly in the magazine. In one situation where a round hung-up in the magazine and the follower could not push rounds up to the top feed lips to be chambered. I had to remove all the remaining rounds in this magazine and reinsert them to resolve the issue. I suspect most of the problems were a result of the ammunition I was using—high velocity Federal American Eagle with 38-grain copper-plated hollow-point bullets. This ammunition has caused reliability problems in some of the other .22-caliber semi-automatic pistol that I have, but since I have a lot of it to use up, I'll keep using it when precision accuracy is not a major concern. Altogether I fired 80 rounds through the gun during this first range ses-

sion.

I had previously handled S&W SW22 Victory pistols in gun stores but had never had an opportunity to shoot one. Now I have, and I am impressed with its performance. It seems to be a great general-purpose recreational handgun, suitable for plinking, target shooting, hunting, and training new shooters. It is easy to disassemble for cleaning, and perhaps most importantly, it is relatively inexpensive to purchase. If you are looking for a general-purpose recreational firearm, you certainly won't go wrong if you choose a S&W SW22 Victory pistol.

Now for the surprise. At the beginning of this edition of *Random Shots*, I wrote about the new Glock G43X and G48 that were introduced at this year's SHOT Show. It seems that many of the major firearms manufacturers are following Ruger's lead from a few years ago and now have products on dealer shelves at the time they announce new guns. So, when I saw advertisements from some local gun shops that they had G43X's and G48's in stock, I decided to take a look. I was mildly interested in the G48 and wanted to handle one and possibly shoot one to see if I liked it.

I stopped by Fox Shooter's Loft, the closest gun shop to my home, and they had a G48 on display, so I asked to handle it. It felt very comfortable in my hands so I asked how much it cost. Their price was just under \$450 (+tax), but I got it for just under \$420 (including tax) because they give a discount to active and retired military members.



The G48 is a slim 1.10 inches in width (just 0.16 inch narrower than the G19), 5.04 inches in height (same as the G19), and weighs just under 20.8 ounces empty with the magazine installed (just 2.68 ounces lighter than the G19). The slide is 6.85 inches long, but because of the grip angle, the gun's overall length extends to 7.28 inches (same as the G19). The barrel is Glock's new Marksman version with a length of 4.17 inches, the

capacity is 10+1 rounds of 9mm Luger (5 rounds less than the G19), and the gun comes with two 10-round magazines. (It appears that the barrels are not interchangeable between the G48 and the G19, even though they are the same length and chamber in 9mm. The “hood” is contoured differently and the barrel “walls” on the one in the G48 are slightly thinner than on my Gen4 G19.)

The factory specification on the trigger pull weight is 5.4 pounds. (The trigger pull weight on mine averaged 5 pounds, 0.5 ounces on my Lyman digital trigger pull gauge.) The slide has a matte silver nPVD finish and has both front and rear cocking serrations. The magazine release button is large and reversible, but the gun comes with it set up for right-handed shooters. The slide latch is on the left side of the gun only, again for right-handed shooters.

The frame is Glock’s standard polymer with the Gen5 texturing—but not as aggressive as on the full-size Glocks—and *does not* come with replaceable backstraps to adjust the grip size. It appears that Glock is using the same grip frame for the G48 and G43X but it sets flush with the end of the slide on the G43X while on the G48 the slide extends past the end of the grip frame. Magazines are interchangeable between the G48 and G43X, but not with any other Glock pistols. There is no accessory rail for mounting lights or lasers to this gun. (I suspect Crimson Trace will have one of their lasers that mounts to the trigger guard available for the G48 soon.) The grip length is long enough that I can get all of my fingers on it, and since there are no finger grooves to contend with, my fingers do not feel cramped when gripping the gun. It doesn’t feel nearly as “chunky” in my hands as my Gen4 G19 or G26 do.

The trigger is serrated in the front—a feature I do not particularly like so I’ll be looking at other trigger options—and includes the Glock standard “Safe-Action” blade-in-trigger safety. Standard Glock plastic sights came on my gun, but there are other models of the G48 available with steel sights and night sights.

Since Fox Shooter’s Loft has an on-site indoor range and I got a free range pass with the gun, I picked up a couple of boxes of 115 grain Blaser Brass FMJ ammunition and headed to the range to see how my new Glock would shoot. Not unexpectedly, my



first five shots, fired at five yards using a standing, two-handed grip, were a little low. All but one of the hits were about 2 inches below my point of aim. (See the accompanying photo.) I expect the accuracy will improve with use, and it did during just this short range session.

At ten yards, three out of my five shots were on the same level as my point of aim and stretching from right on target to about 1½ inches right. I also tried a little one hand shooting at this distance but most of my hits were way to the right of the bullseye. Back at five yards, I fired another 15 rounds, in three 5-shot strings, and they grouped both low and to the left of my point of aim and right of my point of aim. (See the following photo.)



I found that while they are comfortable, the slim grips are borderline too small for my hand and the lighter texturing didn’t help with getting a firm grip. I solved that problem by installing a Pachmayr Tactical Grip Glove on my G48. It increased the width of the grip—it is now about the same as the grip-width of my G19, but only over about 1½ inches where the Grip Glove has built-in

palm-swells on each side. It provides a more spongy surface to grip down on.

Felt recoil wasn’t bad, I expected it to be more than with my G19 because of its narrower grip-width, but I don’t think there was enough difference to be noticeable. It was certainly manageable. The Grip Glove will probably make it even easier to control recoil.

I do like the forward cocking serrations on the G48 and we’ll probably see them become common on more Glock models in the future, as they already have on the G45 introduced in the later part of 2018.

I do hope Glock will make an extended slide release latch for the G48, like they do for their other pistols. I find the extended versions much easier to use to both engage and disengage the latch and have installed them on all of my other Glocks.

I dug around in my holster bin to see if I could find one to fit the G48. As expected, most of the plastic/kydex ones were a little too wide. I found a pancake-style kydex OWB holster—the Operator Model from Phalanx Defense Systems—that was designed for the Glock 19/23 that works. It was too tight for my G19 but holds the G48 firmly. I also found one leather IWB clip-on holster—a Don Hume Leathergoods Model H715M No. 36-4”—that seems to work, although it was a little loose since I’d been carrying my G19 in it for the past few years. I’ll take my G48 up to Defensive Training Solutions so they can make a holster for me.

Overall, I found the new G48 to be nimble and fast-handling, no doubt as a result of its thin profile and light weight. With the Pachmayr Tactical Grip Glove installed, the grip circumference is just right for my hand and it provides a “tacky” surface to hold onto. I think the G48 (and G43X) will probably be a hit among concealed carry holders, especially women and men with smaller hands. It will probably be a few weeks before the holster-makers can get holsters into the hands of retailers for these guns and after-market accessories like replacement triggers, extended slide latches, etc., will be available.

Will the G48 replace my G19 or S&W M&P9 M2.0 Compact pistols? Probably not, except for those occasions when I need a very narrow gun. It may replace my M&P Shield in that capacity however, but proba-

bly not on those rare occasions when I try appendix carry. The longer slide on the G48 would work against that.

-- G.R. Evens

CONFROTING AN ASSAILANT INSIDE A STRUCTURE



Part II: Using Portable Light Sources

In the previous article in this series, I wrote about the choices of weapons you might want to consider if you are faced with having to search a structure where an intruder is located that may or may not be armed and intending to use lethal force against you. In this article I will address the topic of searching a structure in less-than-optimal lighting conditions.

Searching through a structure where the lighting conditions are poor is certainly a high-stress situation. Ideally you would want as much light as possible so you are able to identify potential threats and obstacles that may be present. Light sources include either interior lights or an abundance of windows letting light from the outside in. While having a lot of light makes it easier to see farther, it also means that potential intruders might be able to see you sooner as well. If you are attempting to hide from the intruder(s), it will be harder for you (or an intruder) to hide. Whoever sees the other first has a distinct advantage going forward.

Criminals like to use “stealth” to get close to their victims or to avoid detection. Using darkness helps them do this. If you are at home, to ensure this “stealth” an intruder might cut the electrical powerline so you are unable to turn on the lights and so your home security system becomes inoperable. If it is dark and you cannot turn on the lights, you will probably want/need a portable light source to help you avoid obstacles (i.e. furniture, walls, stairs, etc.) and to help you identify the source of the sound you

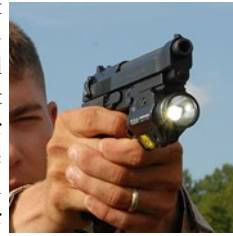
heard.

Portable light sources might include a hand-held flashlight, a light mounted on your firearm, or one mounted on a band around your wrist or head. Each have their advantages and disadvantages as you move through your home (or other structure) searching out an intruder, while trying to reach other individuals you want to protect, or while attempting to escape to the outside.

Keeping a light on all the time while you search the area can alert an intruder to your presence and give them time to hide. As a result, it might be tactically better to turn the light on and off frequently, leaving it on only long enough to give you a quick view of what is in front of you before you move any farther. In such situations, a portable light that has a momentary “on” switch is preferable. Where this switch is located may be important. It should be located where it can easily be activated with one hand while also pointing the light in the desired direction.

Another desirable feature you may want is a portable light that produces enough lumens to temporarily blind anyone that you shine it at. The minimum threshold for this is 80 lumens, but modern “tactical” lights are readily available that produce 100-500 lumens (or more) of output.

You should be cautious in selecting a light with too much power. Too much light may make it difficult for you to see the sights on your gun in relation to the target. In addition to temporarily blinding someone you point it at, a high-lumens light can also cause you to lose your night vision temporarily as your eyes need to adjust between an extreme amount of light and no light. Some “tactical” lights come with a feature that allows the color of the light to be changed from bright white to green, blue, and/or red. These colored lights, especially in the red mode, are more difficult to see by someone else and they have less effect on your night vision. Some portable lights also come with a “strobe” feature that allows the light to cycle between off and on very rapidly and can be disorienting to someone if the light is shined in their face.



Hand-held flashlights are widely available and provide the most flexibility, but using one also means that you will have to dedicate one of your two hands to operating and pointing the flashlight. Common household flashlights are more difficult to use in a search-mode than currently available “tactical” flashlights designed specifically for that purpose are because of the location of the controls and because of the amount of lumens they emit.

A light mounted on your firearm enables you to keep both hands on it and to operate the light. The light will point wherever you point the muzzle of your gun, and that can be a bad thing as it forces you to violate the fundamental gun safety rule of never pointing your gun at something you do not intend to destroy. This can be somewhat mitigated by pointing the light at the floor or wall so the light reflects into the area you want to see rather than using the light to directly illuminate the area. You can also momentarily turn the light on and off as needed to reduce the chances an intruder might be able to determine where you are and “ambush” you once you get close to them.

A light mounted to a band around your wrist tends to work very similar to a weapons-mounted light but has a further disadvantage because it is more difficult to operate it in a momentary mode. A head-mounted light eliminates the disadvantage of pointing it in the same direction as the muzzle of your gun—instead it is pointed in whatever direction your head is looking—but it is also difficult to operate in a momentary mode and it can provide so much illumination to the back of your gun that it is difficult to see the sights and the target you are aiming at.

A good compromise might be to use a hand-held flashlight to search and have a weapons-mounted light to engage threats if necessary. The light on the firearm would only be turned on once the target is identified. At the same time, the flashlight could be dropped, or it could be retained if a lanyard is attached to it and your wrist.

There is not universal agreement on how much illumination you need to have to be able to adequately identify an intruder. Circumstances will dictate this to a large degree.



If you know where the other occupants of your house are, you could assume that anyone that is found elsewhere in your house is a “bad guy” even if you cannot clearly identify them. Gabe Suarez (a prominent national-level firearms trainer) feels that anytime someone is attempting to use “stealth” to maneuver against you, you can assume that their intentions are bad, and you should act accordingly. The following images depict two potential ways to show how much light is needed to identify the target. In the image on the top, you can clearly see the silhouette of someone. Depending on the kind of sights you have on your gun, you may or may not be able to get a good sight picture without any additional light being available. In a situation like this, night sights or a laser sight on your gun would be a good aid in obtaining a proper sight picture. However, do you have enough information from the image to determine whether you are facing a lethal threat or not? Contrast this with the image on the bottom where the target has been fully illuminated and you can clearly see the gun in their hand.



As I indicated above, circumstances will dictate what the best course of action is for you to take. Should you “challenge” the intruder by instructing them to stop where they are and put their hands up or should you just assume they have evil intentions and shoot them? Tough choices aren’t they.

In the next article I’ll deal with the tactics involved in maneuvering around corners when searching and clearing a structure. Until then, be safe!

-- G.R. Evens



RANDOM SHOTS

READER QUESTIONS

[Editor’s Note: The author of this article is not qualified or authorized to give legal advice. You should always consult with an attorney knowledgeable about your local firearms laws if you have legal questions.] Occasionally a reader of this newsletter will send me some questions. Here are the latest.

Q1: *How often do we need to take a refresher course for CCW?*

A1: Ohio state law no longer requires you to take any refresher course to renew your Concealed Handgun License (CHL). This change to Ohio’s concealed carry law was enacted in late 2012, and went into effect in early 2013. While you no longer are *required* to take a refresher course, I encourage anyone that feels the need to get some additional training to do so, even if it is to just polish up on skills you already have, but may not have practiced for a while.

Q2: *What is the requirement for transporting “non-firearm weapons”? I teach people to throw axes, knives, and such. These things are usually carried in a bag or bucket in the car or truck. Does this meet the requirements of the law?*

A2: I am certainly no expert on Ohio’s knife laws—which I suspect would also apply to other “edged weapons”. Ohio’s concealed carry law only applies to handguns. State laws covering knives allow them to be carried openly—except for ballistic knives. Carrying a knife (or other edged weapon) concealed is illegal *if that knife is being carried as a weapon*. However, if it is being carried as a tool to help you open boxes, cut string, etc., then it is legal to carry it in your pocket, etc. It all depends on your intent for carrying it and on the interpretation of your actions by prosecutors, judges, and juries. Unlike Ohio’s firearms law, there is no preemption law in Ohio regarding knives and other edged weapons. Each jurisdiction—i.e. city, town, village, township, county, etc.—can set their own laws regarding knives. A better source than me for answering questions regarding knives and other edged weapons would be Ohio Knife Law (<https://knifeup.com/ohio-knife-laws/>). You might also want to read Greg Ellifritz’s article posted on the Buckeye Firearms Association website (<https://>

www.buckeyefirearms.org/clearing-confusion-about-ohio-knife-laws).

-- G.R. Evens



A Contradiction?

Some of you more astute readers may have notice a seeming contradiction that I made in a couple of articles. In the November/December 2018 edition of *Random Shots*, in an article titled “What is the Best Brand of Handgun to Buy?”, I mentioned that if I could only have one recreational handgun, it would be a .22-caliber Ruger Mark IV (Hunter, Competition, or Target Model). Then in the January/February 2019 edition, in an article entitled “My Favorite Ammunition Caliber”, I indicated that if I could have only one .22-caliber firearm it would be either my High Standard Supermatic Military Citation or my custom Ruger 10/22 rifle. Did I contradict myself in these two articles?

Well, yes and no. In the first article, where I was limiting the discussion to handguns, I was basically making a recommendation as if I were getting a .22-caliber pistol today. In that case, I’d certainly recommend the Ruger Mark IV pistol. However, despite liking them a lot, my personal favorite is the High Standard.

Out of the box, the High Standard target guns have better triggers and better sights than I’ve found the Ruger pistols to have. The issue is that the High Standard pistols are no longer in production—and haven’t been since the mid-to-late 1980’s—so finding parts to repair one, including additional magazines, is much more difficult than it is for Rugers. Additionally, the cost for these High Standard target guns on the used market keep going up and you can easily find new-production Rugers for a much lower price.

So, did I contradict myself when I made a recommendation on what you should consider if you could only have one .22-caliber pistol vs. what I’d keep from my own collection? I’ll leave it up to you to decide.

-- G.R. Evens



EDITORIAL OPINION

IS IT TIME TO ABANDON “NO GUN ZONES”?

Obviously, our school systems have failed



miserably in their mission of teaching reading, writing, and arithmetic. Or perhaps they have stopped teaching civics. Whatever the reason, it seems like a lot of individuals cannot read signs and obey what they say. The vast majority of active killer events are occurring in places where no guns are allowed. The signs posted at these locations are failing to dissuade criminals and terrorists from bring guns into them. Even the presence of security guards (armed or unarmed) in the vicinity is no guarantee that something bad won't happen. Just consider what happened in Parkland, Florida when an armed school resource officer failed to take action to protect the students and staff from harm and the Thousand Oaks, California attack at the Borderline Bar where several unarmed security guards and police officers were present but unable to stop the killer from gaining access to the bar and killing patrons.

Inevitably when such events occur, the liberal politicians and their media cohorts call for more gun control laws, ignoring the fact that existing laws were broken and thus had no effect in deterring evil-doers. (What they really want is for the possession and ownership of firearms by private citizens to be outlawed, but that pesky Second Amendment keeps getting in the way.)

More and more jurisdictions are implementing or at least considering improved school security by arming staff and teachers as the solution to ending active killer attacks on schools. Such actions call into question whether school "no gun zones" are still valid.

I think it is time to reconsider "no gun zones". Except in a very few situations, I think "no gun zones" have been a failure and the signs should be taken down. What are the "exceptions"?

- Police stations, prisons, and courtrooms where felons and suspected felons are in custody.
- Airport security areas—once past TSA

security checkpoints.

- Mental hospitals and treatment facilities.

An that is about it. Notice that all of the places I've included either have criminals or mentally-unstable individuals present in large numbers and/or have metal detectors and armed security guards present to protect individuals. Criminals fear failure more than anything else and the idea that they may face an armed individual when they try to commit their evil deeds can dissuade them from attacking.

What about schools where children are present? The signs have failed to provide any protection and in at least one case, armed school resource officers have failed to do their duty. I am not advocating that children should be allowed to bring weapons into school buildings, but any properly trained adult should be able to be armed if they chose to be on school property.

What about government buildings where workers are present? No. Why should government workers have any more "protection" from criminals when they are at their worksite than when they are "off-duty". Afterall, government workers are nothing more than private citizens "hired" by us to work for our common interests and therefore entitled to no more or less protection than the rest of us are.

What about private property? Only if the owner of that property provides armed security immediately available to protect anyone that is on their property. Failing to protect people on their property would make the property owner subject to lawsuits.

So, there you have my opinion. What do you think?

-- G.R. Evens

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Shooting in Cold Weather



What Effect Does Temperature Have on Ammunition Performance?

You probably haven't thought about this, much if at all, but temperature does affect how ammunition performs. The question is to what degree does this have?

Basically, the higher the temperature is the higher the velocity your bullets will have as they travel downrange. So, cold ammunition will not perform as well as warm ammunition does. But, with increased velocity also comes higher chamber pressures because the gunpowder in the case at a faster rate the warmer it is. When ammunition is exposed to direct sunlight for a few hours, the cartridge and the powder inside of it can heat up to the point that when it is fired the chamber pressure exceeds the manufacturers specifications and can cause the firearm to malfunction. (This is why it is recommended that you store your ammunition in a cool, dry place.)

However, if ammunition is stored in a place that is too cold, the powder will ignite slower and not as much pressure and velocity will be generated. Since the air is denser when it is colder, it will also offer increased resistance to the bullet as it travels from your firearm's muzzle to the target. As a result, the bullet will likely have its range reduced. For instance, if you sight in your hunting rifle at a certain range with a specific load of ammunition during the summertime, and then go hunting in sub-zero temperatures in the winter, your bullets will not impact the same as when you sighted in the rifle. It will likely hit the target much lower than you anticipate. In one test conducted by the U.S. Army on 7.62mm NATO/.308 Winchester ammunition several years ago; the specifications indicated a standard velocity of 2,600 feet per second (fps) and a bullet drop at 600 yards (with a 200-yard zero) of 91 inches—i.e. the bullet would hit the target 91 inches lower than it would at 200 yards. If the temperature was raised by 40°, the velocity increased to 2,700 fps and the bullet would strike the target 84 inches low. If the temperature was reduced by about 40° below the standard, the velocity was now reduced as well by over 100 fps and the bullet hit the target about 100 inches low. Manufacturers' specifications for ammunition performance are typically based on the temperature being approximately 60° F. The study found that the velocity increased

by about 1.7 fps for every 1° increase in temperature for the ammunition and gunpowder used in this particular test. Of course, for those shooting handguns at normal handgun distances, the affects of temperature change on bullet impact will be minimal.

Fortunately, modern gunpowder is less susceptible to temperature swings and thus there is less variation in newer ammunition than there is in older ammunition. For handguns, unless the temperatures drop below -35°F, there is little to worry about if your gun is exposed to cold temperatures.

Years ago, *Guns & Ammo TV* used to conduct a series of torture tests on various firearms as part of their weekly television show. Some of those tests included freezing guns and their ammunition in blocks of ice, then shooting them to see if they would function. In most cases they worked just fine—much to the surprise of the evaluators involved in the testing.



Of course, there are other temperature-related factors that can affect how well you can shoot in cold weather. For instance, in very cold conditions the lubrication used on your firearm, especially revolvers, bolt-action, and semi-automatic rifles, may get stiff to the point that parts won't move like they should, and your gun won't fire. Ammunition that is exposed to cold temperatures may have condensation on them and when this freezes it could make it difficult to chamber the round. Also, you will likely be wearing bulky clothes in cold weather that inhibit your ability to shoot your gun as well as you can in warm weather. The lenses on optic sights may become foggy or frosted over in sub-zero weather.

So, there you have it. If you keep your ammunition and your gun in a dry place, it should continue to function even if the temperatures are cold (or hot). Your bullet's point of impact may change, but it is not likely to be significant enough at handgun shooting distances. The only times you

should become concerned is if you are experiencing temperature extremes over an extended period of time.

-- G.R. Evens



RANDOM THOUGHTS

In the e-mail that I send out last time when I forward *Random Shots* to subscribers, I mentioned my disappointment when I attended a recent Bill Goodman's Gun & Knife Show in Dayton. It certainly was nothing like what I remember them being. About a week later, I went to the C&E Gun Show at the Springfield, Ohio fairgrounds. It had the traditional "look and feel" of the gun shows that I was used to, and I think it was bigger than Bill Goodman's was—surprising since it used to be the other way around. The C&E show did not have that "flea market" feel that I got from the Dayton show. Plenty of vendors selling new and used guns and parts. It is worth spending time at.

G.R. Evens



RANDOM SHOTS

Reading List

"A mind needs a book like a sword needs a whetstone." — Tyrion Lannister, in George R.R. Martin's *Game of Thrones*.

Most of you that read *Random Shots* are primarily interested in protecting yourself from harm by criminals. The next book on my list provides some basic information on what you need to do to prepare yourself from such an occurrence.

Grant Cunningham is a noted firearms trainer and author. He believes that "most of what passes for personal security, self protection, and family security information doesn't really prepare you for the threats you may face—and you can bet there are a lot of people in the defensive training business who are mad at me for saying so". One of the books that he has written that "says so" is *Defensive Pistol Fundamentals*. In this book he lays out what he believes are the real things you should be concerned about when learning to use a semi-automatic pistol for self



defense. While it is absolutely essential to first learn the basics, he finds fault with many of the advanced handgun courses that are being taught today. He bases this belief on the types of attacks most of these courses claim they are preparing their students to face—an attack that they can anticipate and prepare for. Instead of spending a lot of time on "situational awareness" and Cooper's color code to help individuals recognize the signs of an impending attack, Cunningham believes we should be teaching our students to be prepared for the "worst case scenario", a surprise attack or ambush where there is no warning it is about to happen. In such situations, your body is going to initially react instinctively in ways that run counter to how many firearms instructors say you should respond to an attack by assuming a proper stance, grip, and getting a good sight picture. His belief is that doing this is fine if you know an attack is coming, but in a surprise attack, you won't have the time to do these things before your assailant begins inflicting damage on you.

In *Defensive Pistol Fundamentals*, Cunningham lays out what he believes are the fundamentals you need to focus on when learning to defend yourself. For the most part, I believe he is correct. You do need to learn the basics of shooting and of avoiding conflicts, but once you get beyond those, Cunningham's advice is right on.

Topics that he covers in this book include:

- How to defend yourself from a surprise attack.
- How to defend yourself from multiple attackers.
- How to use your body's natural reactions to a sudden surprise as part of your defensive response.
- How your brain makes decisions subconsciously.
- What the effects of stress are on your performance.
- Etc.

This book is not full of technical jargon and complex concepts. Instead it contains the basic information you need to know to save yourself should you be ambushed. The chapters are fairly short and there are a lot of photographs throughout the book to better illustrate the points he is trying to make.

Reading List:

1. *Deadly Force: Understanding Your Right to Self Defense*, by Massad Ayoob, ISBN-13: 978-1-4402-4061-2, ©2014
2. *The Law of Self Defense: The Indispensable Guide for the Armed Citizen*, 3rd Ed., by Andrew Branca, ISBN-13: 978-1943809141, ©2016
3. *gunFIGHT!: An Integrated Approach to Shooting and Fighting in Close Quarters*, by Richard Nance, ISBN-13: 978-1-6088-5140-9, ©2016
4. *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society*, by Lt Col (Retired) Dave Grossman, ISBN 0-316-33000-0, ©1996
5. *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and Peace*, 3rd Edition, by Lt Col (Retired) Dave Grossman with Loren Christensen, ISBN 978 -0-9649205-4-5, ©2004, 2007, & 2008
6. *Left of Bang: How the Marine Corp's Combat Hunter Program Can Save Your Life*, by Patrick Van Horne and Jason A. Riley, ISBN 978-1-936891-30-6, ©2014
7. *Facing Violence: Preparing for the Unexpected*, by Rory Miller, ISBN 978-1-59439-213-9, ©2011
8. *Counter Ambush: The Science of Training for the Unexpected Defensive Shooting*, by Rob Pincus, ISBN 978-0-9791508-8-3, ©2012
9. *Handgun Combatives*, 2nd Ed., by Dave Spaulding, ISBN 978-1-60885-024-2, ©2011
10. *The Gift of Fear: And Other Survival Signals that Protect Us From Violence*, by Gavin de Becker, ISBN: 978-0-440-50883-0, ©1997
11. *The Tactical Shotgun: The Best Techniques and Tactics for Employing the Shotgun in Personal Combat*, by Gabriel Suarez, ISBN: 978-0-87364-898-1, ©1996
12. *Defensive Pistol Fundamentals*, by Grant Cunningham, ISBN-13: 978-1-4402-4280-9, © 2014

-- G.R. Evens



Upcoming Classes

LongMeadows Shooting School

Dave is still teaching the Ohio Concealed Carry Course, but it is *by appointment only*. Contact LongMeadows Shooting School if you want to schedule a time to attend.

Defensive Training Solutions

DTS is all settled into their new location and it offers a lot more space and flexibility to meet their training mission. They continue to offer a full range of firearms and self-defense instruction. Hojutsu classes are held at 6:30 PM on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month in the “dojo” (hand-to-hand skills) and the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays at the range (shooting skills). No previous martial arts experience is required to participate in Hojutsu classes.

A complete schedule of 2019 classes is still being developed. Upcoming classes that are currently scheduled include:

- ♦ **16 Feb**—Ohio CCW
- ♦ **16 Feb**—NRA Basic Pistol
- ♦ **17 Feb**—NRA Range Safety Officer
- ♦ **24 Feb** (afternoon)—Pepper Spray
- ♦ **16 Mar**—Ohio CCW
- ♦ **23 Mar** (afternoon)—Pepper Spray
- ♦ **31 Mar**—Hojutsu One Day Seminar with Norm Hood (held at Premier Shooting & Training Center in West Chester, OH)
- ♦ **13 Apr**—Ohio CCW (Ladies Only)
- ♦ **27 Apr**—Ohio CCW
- ♦ **11 May**—Ohio CCW (Ladies Only)
- ♦ **18 May**—Ohio CCW

NOTE: DTS classes are taught at either DTS's training facility in Troy or at Olde English Outfitters in Tipp City. See the DTS website for details (i.e. times, location, costs, course requirements, etc.) and to sign-up.

Featured Course—SAFTD Pepper Spray

Those that are concerned about their personal protection, but not yet ready to take the plunge by carrying a firearm or who may be unable to carry a firearm in all of the places they must go, may want to consider carrying some form of non-lethal self-defense weapon. The SAFTD Pepper Spray (Oleoresin Capsicum) course is set up to

teach you how to improve your situational awareness mindset and how to defend yourself using Pepper Spray and some limited hand-to-hand skills.

Skills covered in this course include:

- ♦ Understanding situational alertness
- ♦ Attacker distraction tactics
- ♦ Verbal and physical escape techniques
- ♦ Training drills for preventing attacks
- ♦ Your options for protection
- ♦ Personal safety spray information
- ♦ Training drills for protection

During this class you will get hands-on practice using inert (water-filled) pepper spray dispensers to give you a better sense of where to aim the pepper spray, distances at which it can be used, etc.

There are no prerequisites for this course. For this class you should bring the following items:

- ♦ Comfortable clothes and shoes
- ♦ A desire to learn new skills

Course duration is approximately 3 hours.

Course cost is **\$75** per student.

Upon successful completion of this course you will be awarded a certificate of completion.

SAFTD Pepper Spray classes are held each month.



LONGMEADOWS SHOOTING SCHOOL
 4910 State Route 201
 Tipp City, Ohio 45371
 (937) 478-8201

2826 Stone Circle Drive
 Troy, OH 45373
 (937) 335-2998
<https://defensivetrainingsolutions.com>