

# TACTICAL MILSIM

MAGAZINE

SPRING 2011

# HUGH DALY

The Man Who Made "Wall Street" Cool

Bill Davis  
Tactical Edge Group

RAMP Up Your Gear  
Rapid Access Magazine Pod

MIL-SIM - The Air Force Way  
The Air Force Academy Mil-Sim Team

## REVIEWS



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## FEATURES

**MIL-SIM - The Air Force Way** by C2C Julian Gluck  
Air Force Academy Mil-Sim Team.

**Hugh Daly** by Mark Anderson  
The guy who made "Wall Street" cool!.

**Tony Blauer - S.P.E.A.R. Training** by Paul Pawela  
Instructor Certification Course.

**Bill Davis** by James Sherrill  
Tactical Edge Group.

## REVIEWS

**MAGPUL PTS MASADA** by Zane Parker Lapham  
Magpul is a name one can't help but come across.

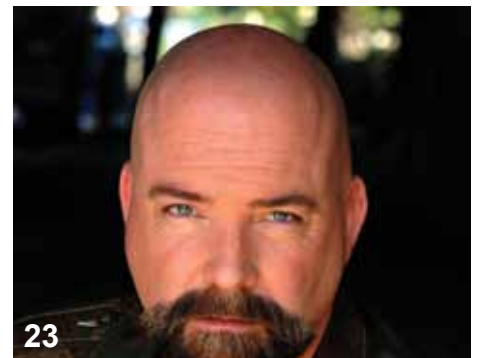
**RAMP Up Your Gear!** by James Sherrill  
Rapid Access Magazine Pod.

**Escort MP-A Tactical Shotgun** by John Mirocky  
Aiming squarely at the home defense market.

## COLUMNS

**The Uber Group** by Dalton Fury  
Specialist in high end outdoor adventure gear for everyone

**The Chronicles of Mad Max** by MSG (Ret.) Mad Max Mullen  
Team Rapter 1



17

23

38

43

11

29

33

6

48

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## SIT REP

### Training is a lifestyle.

As a pilot, I was told by my instructor that most mistakes had in flying are simple mistakes made by those who are qualified to fly many different types of aircraft. These seemingly basic yet deadly mistakes happen because the pilot makes the correct adjustment for a given situation, just not for the correct aircraft he is flying.

The same can be said for our own skills. Just because we attended a training course does not mean that we have created the muscle memory necessary for the newly acquired skill to become second nature. Only through ongoing training will we be able to maintain the muscle memory. Unfortunately this issue is not just related to the civilian contractor or CCW carrying home defender, but to a greater extent the military and law enforcement community. Because of the wider range of required skill sets, it becomes harder and harder to maintain the muscle memory all while continuing to reevaluate the skills for ways to improve them.

This is where a units training officer comes in and lays out the dreaded monthly training schedule. However, this is often a one size fits all approach that is subject to the budget monster. Here in lies the problem, as many military and law enforcement personnel are not taught how to train themselves by creating their own personal training schedule that will focus on enforcing their muscle memory.

Due to the lack of an expiration date on a course completion certificate, many tend to think they are as good now as they were back when they graduated. All of the certs and badges in the world will not save them if they do not continually practice all of their skills. Even the most basic of skills need to be revisited often.

Recently, I was training in open hand combatives and came to this revelation. Although I had been trained before, I had not been practicing in several years. I expected that I would not perform at my best but I started to wonder what other skills I was letting slip since I did not have my own personal training schedule.

My mentor once told me that fitness is a lifestyle and training is how you stay in the lifestyle.

*-Train Up & Stay Safe*





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# ÜBERGROUP

## The Delta Force of the Gear World

By Dalton Fury

Life has a way of introducing you to folks who humbly remind you what hard work, passion, risk, and the American dream is all about. For Mad Max and I, that jolt came during a recent visit to some special folks in the heart of Atlanta, Georgia. And even though we were out killing time as retired Army Rangers often do, we likely killed a productive business day for the folks at Uber Group LLC.

I had been there before, but I failed to mark the way point. They weren't easy to find the second time around either. In fact, that's the way they like it. Nestled deep in the Midtown – Atlantic Station area is a nondescript 19th century era brick-and-mortar building. Outside, there are no flashing marquee signs tempting a passerby to browse the showroom. In fact, to get to the front door, you have to walk around a half dozen other overt businesses. But, we learn, that the trouble is by design, and well worth it. And once we found the joint it didn't take long for Max to notice the uncanny similarities between the fellas at UG and the special operators in today's military. Which is exactly why I wanted to return for a second look.

Inside Uber Group, high ceilings expose the decades old piping, as heavy oak sliding doors and rusted hardware make it as interesting as the outside. In fact, the

aura makes you wonder if General Sherman hadn't used the place to house beleaguered Rebel troops while the rest of Atlanta burned so many years ago. It's hard to tell if the dark red stains on the old brick are natural or from something more sinister.

Uber Group LLC specializes in high end outdoor adventure gear for everyone from elite ice climbers to the weekend recreationalists. That's the party line. But the real deal is that they sell in volume, almost covertly, and with a special clientele, which forces them to shy away from opening the old

Confederate stockade to the individual walk-in.

But, Mad Max and I were just after a cup of hot Joe. We weren't window shopping. Inside though, besides the donuts, we were served a crash course in the laser-fast and ultra-competitive world of small business. It was a whirlwind discussion with the guys that have put Uber Group on the map. Even if the place is hard to find.

These guys are the special operators of the outdoor gear industry. They don't advertise that, but if you are a hard core outdoor adventurer or novice gear junk-



L to R Standing: Steve Carvalho, Michael Lumpkin, Ben James, and David Kramer. Sitting: Howard "Mad Max" Mullen. Not pictured: Ditta Hamby, Chip Parker, Jody Hale, Lee Means, and Brad Christian.

ie, you figure it out pretty quickly. Uber Group serves as one of nine regional representatives for Arc'teryx clothing and handle unique Petzl climbing gear, Salomon shoes, and Suunto watches, among other brands. But you can't just pick up any item made by these giant companies from Uber Group – just the items the world's elite choose to run and play with.

The boys of Uber have been together for practically twenty years – another unique similarity Uber shares with our nation's elite special missions units. That's a long time to spend your career with the same small group of guys. Like a Delta Force assault team, David Kramer, Steven Carvalho, Michael Lumpkin, and Ben James know each other better than they know their own spouses. A characteristic which is as important in the labyrinth and shifty business world as it is in the back alleys of Fallujah. In both places, surviving and thriving often rests on understanding a teammate's instincts, nuances, and sharing an uncanny ability to communicate in silence. Co-owner David Kramer and his partners have it knocked.

Max and I could feel the energy from these guys as we jaw jacked. They smile a lot. If life wasn't good, you wouldn't know it. They lean forward in their seats and maintain eye contact when they share the team's humble beginnings. As Michael bolted from the lounge area to the Special Missions Unit cave – more on that in a second – to crush more coffee beans in the Cuisinart and custom brew the next round in the Bosch the others joined right in. They have all been there, and done that.

They speak with genuine pride when they talk numbers. They also walk the walk. All four of them dress to serve as human showroom mannequins – smart enough to



David Kramer of Uber Group inside the SMU Cave

pimp their brands whenever they are out and about. Over 65% of their business is civilian recreation generated while 35% caters to the military. In fact, over the past few years, Uber's military wing has increased exponentially. At least as fast as the US special ops community has grown since 9/11. It's a fact that David's partners quickly credit him with while the boss was topping off his own mug with Samatra.

In the southwest corner of the warehouse, through one of those heavy wooden doors, a special operations look-a-like team room showcases glossy 8x10s of some of America's unsung and classified heroes. They are bearded, brawny guys with guns and gear. Some of the pics were certainly taken after a classified mission overseas, others on the range back in the states. David's office is the SMU cave (pronounced smew, and rhymes with two). Near the entrance, a genuine dark green nylon fast rope hangs from the rafters - a gift from his Navy special ops contacts and proof enough that David has been knighted with insider status by the

best-of-the-bet.

I could see the 100 mph tape residue still present at the bottom of the rope where the infrared chem-lights were once secured. Surrounding the rope, life-size pictures hang high along the walls. One is of a special operator in freefall flying flat and stable, his identity shielded by an O2 mask. A SCAR rifle is strapped to his left side.

Looming large in more ways than one on the opposite wall, a SEAL Team operator stands at the ready. The SEAL is decked out in the desert Multicam pattern, the current rage of the special ops community. The blended pattern of tans, browns, and greens cover everything from his boots to his rifle to his assault vest to his helmet. But these pictures aren't just up there because they look cool. If you look close, they both are sporting David's shoes – tan and brown Salomons. It's something David takes obvious pride in.

Who is the ST operator? That's a matter of professional secrecy. Moreover, the SEAL's name is not the least bit important in Uber's

eyes. Sure, Kramer respects the heck out of the guy and they are buds, but that's not the issue. David is quick to tell us that Uber is equipped and ready to provide the best gear on the planet to every SEAL in the Navy. And it's that unwavering, steadfast discretion and trustworthiness that attracts not only the SEALs, but other units within the shadowy world of Joint Special Operations. In fact, in just a few short years, David Kramer has become well known within the ranks of every colored task force on the artist's pallet - Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard. If a joint special operator is wearing a Suunto watch or a pair of

Salomons, you know he got it from David Kramer.

Max and I move away from the pics to the life-size torsos covered with the latest tactical cold weather clothing that front one wall. A large American flag covers the brick behind them and unique call-sign patches and unit insignia are velcroed to the shoulders. On the other wall is a rolling rack holding dozens of unique rain and winter tops and bottoms – uniquely made for that elite community. In the corner between them, several Airsoft rifles lean on the bricks behind a display tray of military unit challenge coins. One AR has a set of dog tags and a tan two-point Sheriff of Baghdad rifle sling while

a genuine Afghan wool pakool tops the other.

But why would the nation's elite go to a quiet guy like David Kramer for their gear? Because David is unique in the military gear market as he is the sole representative for Arc'teryx to the US Military. But in the tight knit special ops community, it takes a lot more than a simple title to be accepted. A special operator can determine your character in the first fifteen seconds of the conversation. You are either politely dismissed or allowed closer to the circle of trust. Secondly, David has a proven business model that has raised a lot of eyebrows in the last few



years. David's belief? Impress the elite, and the masses will follow.

"Uber's portfolio of brands is premium level/high-end gear and we cater our military business to that same premium level, the Special Ops user," David says. "Brands like Arc'teryx, Icebreaker, Salomon, and Suunto resonate with the SOF community and obviously help us get some doors opened that wouldn't be open to us if we were selling mid level or low level gear and clothing."

In 2006 David turned some of the hard-to-impress ST operators on to a special assault boot made by Salomon. David recognized the market was light and convinced Salomon to produce enough assault boots to keep the SEALs happy in Iraq or Afghanistan. And, as they say, the rest is history.

But David's precious ties to the elite special operations forces isn't something he can afford to take for granted. Elite guys want elite things. But they want more than

the latest shade of camouflage. They want something proven: It has to survive the first drop-test in the team room to the next 25k foot HALO drop over Kandahar. It better not unravel at the seams after a few weeks in Mosul. Lastly, a special operator wants something that comes from a trusted subject matter expert.

At the recent pre-SHOT Show event in Vegas, David was on hand to unveil probably the sexiest assaulter's belt ever designed.



Formally known as the LEAF H150 Rigger's Belt, the sweet piece of kit is several years in the making. Special Operators have been butchering the X350 Arc'teryx climbing harness by cutting the leg straps off for years. The H150 gives them a field expedient, lightweight, and form-fitting shooter's belt.

David listened and learned, and since has been the conduit from Arc'teryx to the end user. "Operators saw the Warp Strength Harnesses and instantly saw the opportunity to move that same technology into a shooters belt. The credit for the technology goes to Ian Martin at Arc'teryx- the idea of a belt using Warp Strength Technology goes to SOCOM units." Again, history.

David is short final on launching two new products with a former Delta Operator, code-named Shrek. After extensive testing in combat in both Iraq and Afghanistan, Shrek developed the Sheriff of Baghdad Combat B-Sling. Specifically not over-engineered, the sling is crazy lightweight and durable. And when you need to bug out of your hide site quickly, Shrek's custom made Boot Ties allow slicky-boy fast and reliable boot lacing.

But what impressed Max and I the most was the unexpected. David's passion for the special operator goes beyond just outfitting him with the best tactical gear, clothing and shoes. Just over a mile from Uber Group sits the Shepherd Center - one of the top spinal cord and brain injury rehabilitation hospitals in the country. David has been instrumental in helping some of our nation's most dedicated special operators receive state of the art medical care for combat wounds incurred down range. But when asked about his involvement, David downplays his efforts.

"Bernie Marcus, who started Home Depot, created a program called Shepherd Share where any



military service member with a spinal cord or traumatic brain injury can go to the Center and what TRICARE doesn't cover, his program will," David tells us. "All that I have done is helping foster that relationship a bit with a few folks."

David has also sought out military authors who have shared inspiring war stories to donate autographed copies of their work. David presents the books to influential and big hearted folks who in turn support other special operations foundations like the Special Operations Warrior Foundation, a SMU Scholarship Fund, and the Naval Special Warfare Foundation.

Self-described as the "bridge" between outdoor and the military markets David and his mates recognized a unique trend as they canvassed military bases around the country. "When you go to so many bases and see so many guys wearing "outdoor" products from the usual outdoor brands, it tells me that the end users get it, that the commercial outdoor business understands how to keep a mom comfortable on the slopes, or dad comfy on the winter scouting trip," David says as he blows lightly on his third cup of Samatra.

In fact, every member of David's team is an active climber, backpacker, and mountaineer.

The experience is invaluable when trying to impress a Green Beret or Navy SEAL. "It helps us to understand experientially what it's like to go from comfortably warm while hiking to freezing your ass off ten minutes after you stop moving- and how that corresponds over to a guy on patrol high in Konar Province or Tora Bora," David says with obvious passion. There is that subject matter expertise I mentioned.

As Mad Max and I kicked back like two old frat brothers on Uber's sweet leather couch David added, "Having outfitted so many people to go to blistering cold places like Denali, Aconcagua, St. Elias, etc, over twenty-plus years, I think we can be viewed as SME's on cold weather kit." After spending the day with the Uber Group team, Max and I are believers. See for yourself at <http://www.ubergroup.net>

Dalton Fury, a pseudonym, retired from the US Army after twenty years of service. Fifteen of those years were spent with some of the finest Special Operations Forces in existence. He is the author of the New York Times best-seller KILL BIN LADEN: A Delta Force Commander's Account of the Hunt For the World's Most Wanted Man (St. Martin's Press, 2008) and currently writing a new thriller series about a disgraced former Delta operator with Book 1 available Christmas 2011.





**MAGPUL** *PTS*  
Professional Training & Simulation Division

# MASADA

*By Zane Parker Lapham*

In the world of modern military gear, Magpul is a name one can't help but come across. A decade ago Magpul came on the scene to sell small rubber attachments for magazines which helped in removing them more quickly from a magazine pouch. With a now voluminous catalog of tactical equipment and weapon accessories Magpul has become a mainstay amongst tactical and military gear providers. Several years ago Magpul released a rifle prototype which incorporated many positive attributes from existing rifles in the hope of creating a more perfect combat rifle. This prototype was dubbed the Masada and instantly started gaining attention from the various Magpul fanatics and tactical / i.e. consumers alike.

After a few years on the drawing board the Masada was given several minor updates and began production through a partnership with Magpul and Bushmaster. In the end, Bushmaster was to produce the military versions of this rifle now named the Adaptive Combat Rifle or ACR for short, and Remington would produce the semi-automatic version marketed towards the civilian market. However, before the real steal weapon ever hit the shelves multiple airsoft versions were already in the works. As a hot topic amongst real steal shooters it was just as big of a hit with the mil-sim community. Airsoft Players knew that

they wanted this beautiful rifle in their arsenals, and that they wouldn't have to wait long to get it. A&K, a well known Chinese company, produced a version of the Masada based on the prototype. Avoiding discussion of Airsoft politics - the weapon was well received and gained generally positive reviews. However, the A&K was only one of the replicas based on this model to be produced. Shortly after the release of the A&K Masada Magpul, PTS (the company responsible for producing licensed replicas of Magpul gear for the airsoft community) announced they had an ACR in the works which they promised to be as close to the real thing as one could get without shelling out the three grand for a Remington ACR. Upon reading the details regarding the lovingly replicated features of the Real Steal ACR, I knew that I had to have the Magpul PTS ACR as soon as I possibly could. More than a year after initially reading about the mythic beast I was able to stay true to my word, placing a pre-order on the first website to list the ACR in Foliage Green.

First Impressions are an interesting thing. After spending months waiting for the ACR to start appearing on websites I trusted and finally getting to order it, I then spent the remaining weeks between the pre-order and the product shipping nervously hoping the ACR would live up to my expectations, or more importantly, that the ACR wouldn't arrive



PTS Masada/ACR packaged neatly inside. The ACR was simply gorgeous, and a joy to hold. I counted my lucky stars that all the engraved trademarks were still present (being licensed they are perfectly legal, I had however read accounts of them being dremelled off anyway).

with its licensed trademarks brutally dremelled off. The day finally came; I was at work when my roommate sent me a message telling me I'd gotten a big package in the mail as he was leaving for class. The remaining hours I spent at work were the slowest I'd had in years! I did my best not to speed on the way home and sliced the box open with my Leatherman the moment I entered my bedroom to find a large blank package waiting for me. Interestingly enough the Magpul PTS box was shipped inside out with the Magpul

The overall feel and quality of the gun was unmatched by any of the other AEG's which I had accumulated through my seven odd years of playing airsoft as a hobby. In its stock configuration the ACR is shipped with a fixed stock and a polymer hand guard. The stock has an adjustable cheek rest with two settings for user comfort. However, at just over six feet tall, I found the fixed stock to be uncomfortably short; a sentiment other large framed friends have echoed. Even with the stock feeling a bit too short the weapon is incredibly comfortable, and as a fully ambidextrous weapon it is excellent for highly ambidextrous users such as myself. In tight urban fighting the ability to switch from my strong side to my weak side (or technically my weak side to my





strong side) for adequate cornering was keeping me behind more cover and further away from enemy fire. The polymer hand guard provides more than enough room for several 9.6 volt NiMH style batteries. I personally prefer the 9.6v stick type battery as it removes the slight wobble present in the hand guard. While I prefer NiMH batteries it is mostly because they are what I own, and anyone using a LiPo will find the hand guard to be quite spacious as well. I cannot comment on how a LiPo will affect the gun in its stock form as I've read accounts with both negative and positive reactions to 11.1v batteries. Personally I would stick to the 7.4 volt LiPo's until I was sure the weapon could withstand sustained fire at a higher voltage.

When I finally got a chance to shoot the ACR I remained quite impressed. The micro switch trigger mechanism provides a very snappy response making semi-automatic shooting considerably more enjoyable than with a standard AEG. Some other users may prefer to install a MOSFET; however I'll wait to see how the micro switch fares before outright replacing it. The AEG shot a solid 350fps stock, which is enough to be

a contender in woodland but still be able to play CQC matches without sending anyone home with bb's in their skin. With the mostly outdoor games played in my primary area of operations I chose to up the spring power to an m110 just to put me on a more level plain with local players.

The topic of shooting brings up the biggest problem I have yet to face with my personal ACR. In order to accommodate the quick change barrel system present on the real steel firearm the PTS ACR has been fitted with a somewhat odd hop-up system. The arm which places the



pressure on the bucking is housed in the body of the ACR while the bucking itself is removed with the barrel. To ensure one never harms their hop-up it is paramount to turn the hop-up to its minimum setting before removing the barrel. This has also led to the hop-up sometimes seeming somewhat weak, my ACR has had nothing but .25 gram bb's shot through it and while I am getting excellent accuracy, it sometimes seems that the bb's are dropping off slightly sooner than with guns using more traditional hop-up systems. Before anyone decides to jump on this problem (as many online are prone to do) it must be mentioned that most users have been able to remedy this with a simple change of bucking, and if

that is not enough multiple mods exists as well which claim to completely remedy the problem.

Modularity is the name of the game. Being modular is incredibly important on either the modern battlefield or the local skirmish field. If an operator is capable of adapting to their mission as well as environment they will have one more advantage over their opponent force. With the PTS ACR modularity is the whole point, the weapon is an excellent AEG with great upgrade potential. I purchased it for its modularity. I have already replaced the stock, added an MVG, and installed a single point sling mount. While these changes are not necessarily innovative this is just



the beginning. CQB length barrels are already available as well as tri-railed hand guards. An 18' SPR barrel and precision stock have also just been announced at this year's Shot Show. With enough of an investment my ACR won't just be a good AEG; it will be a good AEG for every scenario I could possibly encounter. With the quick change barrel system, quick change spring, and full takedown only requiring a 5.56 round as the tool kit the ACR can be numerous different weapons throughout the course of a single day. I could arrive at a field with a 14.5' carbine shooting 400fps for an outdoor game, with a five minute switch of the barrel and spring I could be ready for room to room fighting in a CQB setting, and

finally I could finish the day out with a long range sniping mission. The true worth of the ACR is that I could be fully prepared for each of these encounters yet only carry a single rifle to the field. By using a single rifle for all of one's potential missions the operator could become incredibly comfortable with a single platform increasing individual effectiveness of the operator. When I look at my ACR I don't see an expensive toy used in an eccentric hobby, I see a precision instrument designed from the ground up for the discriminating Operator who demands the absolute most from his weapon platform.

Photography by: James Sherrill





# **MIL-SIM!**

## **The Air Force way.**

By Cadet Second Class Julian Gluck  
Squadron "Viking" Nine, USAF Academy





**W**e were dashing through the forest with our magazines loaded and barrels pointed downrange, moving cautiously yet feverously to locate our captured troop and avoid ambush by the opposing forces. After the enemy began firing from the roads, I hurdled into a foxhole, hugged the ground, and sprayed suppression fire in their direction.

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occurrences for the cadets from the Air Force Academy Airsoft Club and Team that introduced me to the sport for the weekend.

The Air Force Academy is a four-year university that produces second lieutenants with Bachelor of Science degrees and a unique military experience. Beginning with Basic Cadet Training and well into doolie (freshman) year, young men and women are inundated with intense coursework, military and physical training, and stiff regulations. Bound by an enforced honor code and steeped in the traditions of the most powerful aerial service in the world, cadets train in a variety of majors for careers ranging from pilot or special tactics officer to doctor or computer scientist. Although cadets are often hard-pressed for time--the most valuable resource on "The Hill"—members of the Wing often find time away from academics, military training, and athletics to engage in a multitude of extra-curricular clubs and activities suited to their



interests. One of the most popular and action-packed of these is the Air Force Academy Airsoft Club.

Among the pillars of USAFA Airsoft are competitive spirit, unconventional flexibility, and gusto for domination; all of which I experienced firsthand as a guest and participant over the weekend. After we all met at the defunct astrological observatory, the couple dozen freshmen through seniors loaded up in personal vehicles to Jack's Valley, home to a myriad of activities from Basic Cadet Training to simulated battles for weekend airsoft warriors. There are over one hundred cadets in the club, which has competitive and more casual elements. Many came out to play dressed in unique camouflage patterns and toting a profusion of simulated firearms. Along with weekend exercises and team training "Tactical Thursdays" with close quarter maneuvering, the club lends its talents to squadron training sessions, helping training staff to create realistic combat scenarios.

The members that showed up at the camp ready to play represented an array of different experience levels and backgrounds. Leading the charge were the cadets in charge of the club, C2C Andrew Durkee and C2C Dan Rule. Both heavily armed and very experienced, the seasoned players gave me a brief rundown of the sport, some tactics, and familiarization with the weapon I would be using. Although I had undergone training in shooting and movement over Basic Cadet Training, Global Engagement, and Combat Survival Training--along with time on the range with my father, a Ranger on the Tactical MilSim Team--this was my first time with an airsoft weapon. I found it extraordinarily easy to adjust to, and after suiting up with a vest, magazines, and a protective mask, I was ready to spend some rounds.

Weekend sessions normally begin with a "Team Deathmatch" style game where two teams split up and warm-up to eliminate each other. On



this run, I tagged around with C2C Durkee who has been playing airsoft for more than five years. After enjoying the realism brought by a former Special Forces soldier with his team back home, he and the team adopted many of the tactics from hand signals to small squad movements from the Ranger Handbook and the US Army Ranger Field Manual, along with some healthy improvisation. Luckily, a warm, sunny day in the midst of a Colorado winter blessed us, and the firefight

were exciting and fast paced. Although the multiplicity of fatigues from Airman Battle Uniform to Multicam was rather confusing at first, I began to catch on to the dynamics and style of the game.

Later we played “Capture the Flag” with timed respawns, where the teams guarded their flags from all angles and positions; at points it even seemed like the trees were alive with sniper wielding defenders. I spent much of the game hidden in a bush waiting for the opposing team to assault the base, although my untimely end came with a well placed round to the back. Apparently, I had concealment but not proper cover. The rogue and adept C2C Dan Rule appeared out of nowhere to bring the flag back to his base, while the rest escaped on a cadet’s truck.

“Football” is a USAFA creation consisting of one flag between two opposing teams, where the object is to move the flag across to the other team’s “endzone.” This was one of the fastest and busiest games I played. Much of the time was spent dodging for cover behind trees and bushes, often with my “Viking Nine” squadron mate, C2C Thomas Pitcher, an aficionado of weaponry and combat shooting. Following many rounds, a scenario apropos to the Air Force began; involving a “downed pilot” with “VIP protection”; this match placed players outside of their normal comfort zones and gave a taste of real-world training that could be experienced operationally. I accompanied C4C Ahmad Muhammad, a prior enlisted international cadet from the Nation of Brunei, on the lookout for our captured comrade behind enemy lines. One of the



many freshmen at the exercise, C4C Muhammad went the distance with the others to accomplish the objective. We have many cadets from allied countries, and C4C Muhammad represented well with his tactics on his first time with the group.

To burn off extra magazines and shoot your buddies, the team assembled for the traditional ending of "World War One." A small offensive squad charged a huge defensive team in a trench, and when any defenders were shot, they ran to join the offensive team. From turkey shoot to mad dash at Thermopylae, the day ended in high spirits as we all gathered for pictures and the captains presented photographer C2C Stephen Yoshimura and me with official club patches.

training up for OP Bulldog VI, a MOUT operation at Fort Hood, Texas. These proficient cadets mentioned the desire to compete with the other service academies to show off their skills as a ground combat team and to learn a trick or two from the others. Most of all, the team plays airsoft to pay homage to those deployed who use these tactics and training to save lives. They play hard and never quit, because the operators in the field give their all and never back down. This weekend was one of the best I have had at the Academy this year, and perhaps I will be giving it another go with more ammo with some great brothers-in-arms at another airsoft event in the future.

Pictures by Stephen Yoshimura.

Currently 18 members of the team are



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# HUGH DALY

The Man Who Made “Wall Street” Cool

By Mark Anderson

When the commercial came out for Call of Duty: Black Ops “There’s a soldier in all of us”, we all immediately recognized Kobe Bryant and Jimmy Kimmel. However, there was another face that many of us recognized but just couldn’t quite place. Hugh Daly who plays “Wall Street” in the commercial had already had his face scanned as a character in Call of Duty: Modern Warfare. You will also see him in Black Ops as a rather nasty Russian Spetsnaz Interrogator in a chapter called “Payback” where he beats “Bowman” played by Ice Cube to death with an iron pipe.

Through just a few degrees of separation, it turned out that we knew Hugh, and so I had the opportunity to talk with him and find out how his face made it into the Call of Duty series. Hugh went on to elaborate, “I first met Max at an action figure show in California. That was also year that Max’s action figure



came out. I was working on the History Channel series *Mail Call* and with R. Lee Ermey, who was doing a personal appearance, he's as funny and cool in real life as you see in the TV series. Well at the show everyone at one point or another gravitates to the Gunny, so that's how I met 'Mad' Max, he's a larger than life character just like the Gunny".

Oddly enough, I'd attended the show with Max and also talked briefly with Hugh as the Gunny presented a History Channel *Mail Call* challenge coin to my daughters for their

work in the Young Marines. This prompted a funny story of the power of the challenge coin. "I was directing a *Mail Call* location shoot about ROTC in Ohio, we were doing a hot LZ Blackhawk extraction from a large field at the end of the exercise. The camera crew and I were going to be the last people on the last helicopter. So I just ran up to the crew chief, it was incredibly loud, and he's giving us hand signals to 'get on the bird you dumb ass, get on the bird'. So I'm shouting at him that we want to fly over the Ohio State horse shoe Stadium, because we never got a chance to talk to the crews beforehand.

The crew chief is shaking his head, "No Can Do, No Can Do, get on the bird!" he's telling the pilot what we wanted. So I pulled out the Gunny's History Channel Challenge Coin and showed it to the crew chief and he literally stopped and declared over the radio to the pilot, "THEY'VE GOT COINS!" and he starts nodding his head, "OK we can do it!", and sure enough they did it. I don't know how many FAA regulations were broken that day, but we got the shot".

I knew from a quick search in the Internet that Hugh was born in England and attended the Hereford College of Art & Design. But I didn't know that he'd also joined The Light Infantry., Territorial Army volunteer reserve (The British Army equivalent of The National Guard), while in Hereford. So I asked what prompted him to join the military. Reflecting on his heritage he responded, "My grandfather was a member of the Machine Gun Corps in WWI. My father also joined in 1944 during WWII and served until 1946. So as a child I grew up hearing great stories, which started me collecting all sorts of military hats and uniforms". But I also wanted to know what actually prompted him to join during college so he continued, "My friend joined the local reserve unit in Hereford, which was also the home of the Special Air Service. He would come back from training exercises and tell us all sorts of amazing stories. I went to the range with him one Saturday,



they let me fire a 9mm Sterling SMG and Browning hi-power. "Okay, I'm in!" I said."

As a Light Infantry recruit, Hugh and his mates got to some training on SAS facilities that other reservists did not because Iain 'Jock' Thomson their unconventional Scottish recruit NCO, was a highly decorated SAS hero. "He taught me situational awareness, how to 'double tap', and set up brilliant ambushes. Regardless of the weather, no matter how cold or wet it got in Wales, Sergeant Thomson always wore his summer DPM tropical uniform. He was hard as nails. He would look at you and you would just start doing push-

ups." Hugh laughed. "It was quite a shaping moment for me, I will never forget that training".

Max had mentioned that Hugh was also into reenacting, so we talked about how he got started. Hugh met a reenactor in 1981 at an antique show where Hugh was buying a military helmet. He invited Hugh out to a WWII event, which started his passion for living History reenacting. As Hugh became more deeply involved, he began reproducing hard to find items such as a PPN1A Eureka set, which was used by the Allied Airborne Pathfinders to signal the drop zone location to the main airborne assault force which



followed. As it turned out, Hugh's passion for Pathfinders actually is what got him started towards his future in Hollywood. "I met Bob Secret, a real WWII 101st D-Day pathfinder who came by the display. He kept wandering off to his wife and coming back, eventually spending most of the day talking with us about dumping his set on the DZ and being wounded on D-Day night, almost losing his arm. It was an amazing story. Two years later, Bob was working on a Mail call segment about the D-Day Pathfinders. The producer heard I had a reproduction Eureka and wanted me to send the set and bag to California. I wasn't too keen on the idea, so after two





weeks they agreed to come to my location in Dayton Ohio just to film the 'England' scene with my Eureka. The producer was so pleased with my work on the episode he left with the words, 'If you're ever come to Hollywood look me up', ringing in my ears".

In 2005, Hugh's wife had a job offer which relocated them to Burbank, California and within two weeks he was working on *Mail Call*. Because he had previously owned two Willys Jeeps, he ended up as the unofficial prop man and would drive the Gunny's Jeep around, once photo doubling him in a commercial. After *Mail Call*, Hugh went to work for a military consulting and movie prop company called Sacred Sword Inc. which at the time was contracted to make hundreds of Japanese and Marine Corps equipment sets for The

Pacific HBO TV series. Hugh said "This is where my years of prop making, sign painting and sewing 'rigger' stuff for reenactments came in handy. We spent a year in pre-production working with some of the best military prop-masters in the world, painstakingly recreating packs, pouches, straps and all sorts of rare 782 Marine gear for the show. We often had to make multiples copies of the same item for specific characters, so they could be bloodied and aged as the episodes progressed." Sacred Sword Inc. also works closely with the Western Costume company from time to time on shows. In early 2010 Western called looking for a Vietnam Helicopter Pilots "Chicken Vest" which was the body armor worn by the pilots and door gunners. Hugh went over to drop off the vest.

"So I talked with this fella who was very cagy about why he wanted to rent the vest. Eventually he said it was for a video game. Oh alright," I replied. "I didn't know much about making video games at the time. I was playing *Call of Duty: Modern Warfare* a lot but that was it. So I gave him my card and about two months later he called and told me (after I'd signed a non-disclosure agreement), that he was working on a game called *Black Ops* and the rest is history."

Hugh, Jared from Sacred Sword, and Owen Thornton spent the rest of last year working on *Black Ops* tracking down pieces of original Vietnam SOG gear and uniforms, boonie hats, and rare Randall SOG knives including a \$3000.00 set of gold Tiger Stripes to add authenticity to the look and feel of the game. "Most game





developers just pull images from the internet but Activision and Treyarch wanted the real stuff, including live weapons in the hands of their game designers. They even recorded all of the sounds that each weapon made, being loaded, cocked and fired". One of the perks was that we got our heads 3D scanned and I got to play a rather nasty Russian soldier in the game chapter called "Payback". So that was my claim to fame there. Also, while working on *Black Ops* we all got to audition for the first ever live action Call of Duty video game commercial. I was lucky enough to be cast playing a character called "Wall Street". Hugh went on to talk about the gamer tags seen on the

weapons in the commercial. "When you see Kobe Bryant firing, well it was one of those Hollywood moments. When Kobe came in he's the star, the director wants to get the shot and we're running out of light. Kobe had never held or fired a M16 before, so Jared worked with him for about 15 minutes and I asked Kobe, "What can we put on your weapon to personalize it? Can I use your number?" Kobe replied "No, no, no, the NBA won't allow that but my nickname's 'Mamba', so that's what you see on his M203, he really looked like a pro".

Hugh mentioned another magic moment. "The now iconic 'sitting bull' poster image was created by my creative partner Owen Thornton and myself (modeled by our

good friend Joe Anderson), right at the end of a long day shooting promo stills in LA. It was just one of those rare moments when everything clicked. The ad agency art director said he wanted more, go crazy. So we loaded Joe up with extra ammo, two long arms, an M16 A1 and a CAR-15, and I handed him two replica .45 pistols. We added authentic details like the three original Montagnard bracelets, Randall bowie knife, STABO harness and cleaning rod taped to the CAR-15. Owen adjusted the visual symmetry and the rest is advertising history. We knew it was golden when we saw the image."

I'm sure we'll be seeing more of Hugh in the future. Anyone who can wear a pink shirt and a polka-dot tie and still kick ass making the term "Wall Street" cool, will definitely be back!



The painted "Huey" panel is a 20 x 23 piece of aircraft paneling which Hugh designed and painted for the guys at Treyarch. It's hanging in their lobby now.

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# RAMP

*Up Your Gear!*

## Rapid Access Magazine Pod

By James Sherrill

**T**actical Innovation. Simply put, it is what keeps our special operations soldiers at the tip of the spear in the global war on terror. Just as training; tactics and procedures ever evolve to stay one step ahead of the enemy, the tactical gear that these Spec Ops warriors utilize in the field should also evolve. Professionals that have trained countless hours and can with no doubt perform at maximum efficiency could only hope to enhance their skills by improving the tools they might need to utilize to complete the mission.

Doug Mullen, a former U.S. Army Ranger and founder of Gear4Grunts.com, has developed a revolutionary device that facilitates hyper fast reloads for magazine fed weapons called the "RAMP" or Rapid Access Magazine Pod™. The RAMP can reduce reload times by half while providing the wearer the ability to maintain eyes on target at all times. With its quick release capabilities and versatility it can easily be mounted on any modular plate carrier or battle belt and is very compact in size covering just the upper 3rd of the magazine. The magazine is kept securely in place using a high grade, stainless steel, wear bar which provides for an easy release of magazine when needed. Simply index the magazine and with a little downward force it is almost effortlessly released from the magazine pod. The

Ramp can be mounted ammo facing up or down depending on user preference. Although, it should be mentioned, it is intended to hold the magazine ammo side up, in the same way it is held by the assault rifle, this goes back to eliminating excessive movement when reloading.

There are absolutely ZERO easily breakable parts or rubber pieces to snap off and impede the functionality of the RAMP. The Pod itself is the same shape and design as the inner magazine well of the weapon system and production versions are made of proven, highly durable, yet light weight, mil spec compliant materials which are able to withstand the rigors of combat.

The design concept is focused on ease of use, versatility and speed of motion. Another key concept is that the RAMP's closed top keeps liquid, debris, and dirt out of your magazine and off of your ammunition - reducing the potential for weapon malfunctions. Now you have the ability to effectively hold your ammunition in a manner that facilitates rapid reloading literally twice as fast with a clean debris free magazine in one fluid motion without having to take your eyes off of your target in the process. Force multiplication pushed to the next evolution with one overall mission goal, to save the lives of our service men and women.

I had the opportunity to use the RAMP prototypes in both a static shooting environment and a force on force scenario. While I, like everyone, enjoy range time I find I get a lot of valuable knowledge on tactics from running force on force scenarios with non lethal training weapons such as the airsoft BB guns offered from manufacturers such as KWA USA and G&G Armament. In a close quarters force against opposition force battle seconds count and being able to have any advantage in a combat situation can be invaluable.

At the Range using the RAMP's were great, I could see how they would definitely assist in faster reloading. They seemed sturdy and very versatile. I had mounted them on my chest rig in various positions, I even piggy backed one on top of an open top magazine pouch I had. The RAMP's also worked well mounted to an ATS Tactical Warbelt, making it easy to not only carry extra magazines securely but also have quick, easy reloading capabilities when having a chest rig or

plate carrier isn't an option.

Now earlier I said that I could see how they would assist in faster reloading, well now I was about to find out. It was time for a good old fashion simulated firefight. On a static range, reloading using the Rapid Access Magazine Pod™ felt smooth, fluid, and well, it just felt right. When the enemy knows you're there and the fight is on; seconds can mean either victory or complete failure. This is when the RAMP shows how truly innovative it is. The RAMP was not only extremely user friendly but also very effective in its design. I made it a point to put myself in situations where I might need to be the quick, or find myself the dead, where my ability to effectively put a fresh magazine into my weapon system and put rounds onto a target before it could do the same to me could help me truly test this new system. I have to say it did not disappoint, not to say that I didn't take a few close hits however that I can relate more to a tactical error than a gear problem.



But let's get real for a second shall we, we all know that if a problem can occur it will and at the most inopportune times. Let's assume through some catastrophic series of events that the RAMP is damaged, what now? Does it still retain its functionality or is it now rendered completely useless. If you haven't guessed it already, I hope for the best and prepare for the worst. The way I see, it if something can break I will be the one to break it. Now please keep in mind what I am testing is a prototype model, not the full strength production models so I don't want to get the wrong idea across to our readers. When we test a product we have to test its functionality should a worst case possibility come to fruition, so testing the RAMP after damage to the pod itself was without question.

I would be testing this with one side of a RAMP prototype completely cracked from the bottom to the top, under the rigors of stress and repeated movement such as jumping, running, etc. The RAMP retained full functionality. Despite having damage that from a visual inspection one might think "there is no way this thing still works" it did, and perfectly I might add. There wasn't even a noticeable difference in the amount of tension needed to release the magazine from the RAMP. The chances of any damage occurring to the full strength polymer productions models isn't likely, the material is said to be of an equal if not more durable polymer than that used for products currently being used in combat overseas.

The bottom line is the Rapid Access Magazine Pod is the next evolution of highspeed tactical gear and this is just the beginning. Doug Mullen and the team at Gear 4 Grunts are still in the design phases of other new and innovative products that will one day help save the lives of those who put themselves in harm's way to protect the United States and its citizens every day.

For more information on the Rapid Access Magazine Pod™ visit [www.Gear4Grunts.com](http://www.Gear4Grunts.com)





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# Escort MP-A Tactical Shotgun

By John Mirocky

With the average price of a quality semi-auto home defense shotgun running into the high \$800 range and beyond, many buyers are priced out of the market. That has changed with the introduction of the Escort MP-A Tactical shotgun, which is aimed squarely at the home defense market. It incorporates many of the best features at an affordable price.

I learned of the Escort MP-A during a recent visit to my favorite gun store. I was there to purchase a Walther P22 for my son to use at the range, when I noticed the MP-A displayed on the wall. The price tag on it read \$459.99 so I asked to hold it. I knew that Escort had been building low cost, high quality, semi-auto field guns for several years so I was intrigued by the MP-A Tactical and its list of standard features:



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- Picatinny rail fitted on aircraft alloy receiver, 7.2 lbs. unloaded (5+1 model).
- 2-Shotshells holder insert on stock for emergency.
- 5+1 standard magazine U.S. civilian model, 7+1 law enforcement model
- Strong and durable advanced polymer compound synthetic stock with integrated pistol grip.
- Elastic material covered pistol grip for better feel and grip.
- Integrated picatinny rail on forend.
- Ergonomic design long forend for fast and easy action.
- Barrel is made of nickel-chromium-molybdenum steel with hard chrome lined bore and chamber

My first impression upon holding the gun was that it was a light and had a solid feel. The fit and finish were not as good as a Bennelli M series, but better than that of Remington Police model 870's. The action was on par with both the Bennelli and Remington semi- autos that I own. At this point, that was all I needed to see for the price, so I picked one up. At the very least, I would be able to use it as a range loaner during one of my classes.

Once I got the MP-A home, I gave it a detailed inspection and cleaning; the last it would see during its upcoming test. The MP-A disassembles easily, with no tools needed for the basic cleaning and maintenance. When reassembling it, I found the parts fit solidly with a positive locking feel when installed correctly.

I took the MP-A to the range for the first of four planned test days to encompass the firing of 1000 rounds of ammunition. I planned on firing 500 light field/skeet loads (problematic in many semi auto tactical shotguns), 300 various 00 buck reduced recoil tactical loads (also problematic in semi auto

tactical shotguns), and 00 magnum loads along with 150 reduced recoil slugs, and 50 full power 3 inch magnum slugs.

The range testing went very well with the gun running 100% during the first two days of firing where 250 Federal 2 ¾ 1oz game loads, 150 Federal HH132 Tactical 00 loads and 60 (12 year old) Remington reduced recoil 1 oz slugs were fired. The next two range test days did not go so well. Although the gun ran 100% on the remaining field/skeet and 00 buck loads, it would only feed



Half way through day one.



6 out of 10 slugs reliably regardless of manufacture. (Interestingly the old Remington slugs ran perfectly the first two days but the new Remington slugs did not.)

The feeding issue with the slugs was due, in part, to an extra power feed tube spring which is meant for a seven round magazine tube, not the five round tube as equipped. It is too strong in my opinion. The slugs are forced out of the tube with too much force, and due to the weight of the slug being more forward in the casing (nose heavy) would cause the rear of the shell to turn upward and be caught by the extractor. When lifted by the shell carrier, the slug is now in the wrong geometry for loading (simply put: level instead of nose

up) and would catch breach face. These feed issues were easily cleared with a slight pull to the rear of the choking handle which allowed the clearance needed for the round to be loaded and the bolt to go into battery.

The use of multiple slugs being fired in rapid succession during testing was done to find the limits of the MP-A. It is clear the MP-A is based off of the Escort field guns. It eats light loads, which are cost effective for training purposes and at the same time retains 100% reliability with 00 buck loads both reduced and magnum (which are preferred by most as a defensive round). When put into context of a home defense shotgun, it is not often I can see the use of a slug being prudent. During my law enforcement classes, I usually instruct slugs to be loaded as needed for extended range targets beyond 35 yards and then one at a time. My line of thinking is, if you need to fire multiple slugs in rapid succession then you should have grabbed a rifle.

Slug loading issues aside, the MP-A is accurate with slugs and 00 buck, easily out shooting my Wilson Combat 870 and very fast firing with all 00 buck and field / skeet loads tested. So much so that it can be emptied of all 6 rounds (5+1) before the first round hits the ground.

The recoil throughout the testing was very



Three rounds have been fired and the fourth is loading.



mild and well within the comfort zone of those with a small stature. The recoil is far less pronounced than the inertia driven systems like those found in the Benneli M1/M3 tactical shotguns. This due, in part, to the MP-A's "Smart Valve Piston" operating system which uses only enough gas pressure to cycle the action; the remaining gas is then vented through the front hand guard.

Considering the factors of price, build quality, light weight, mild recoil, standard features, and overall reliability, I would have to say that I was impressed with the Escort MP-A Tactical shotgun. It's not perfect and has limitations, but used within the limitations it would make for a fine home defense shotgun capable of repelling any intruder or zombie hoard.

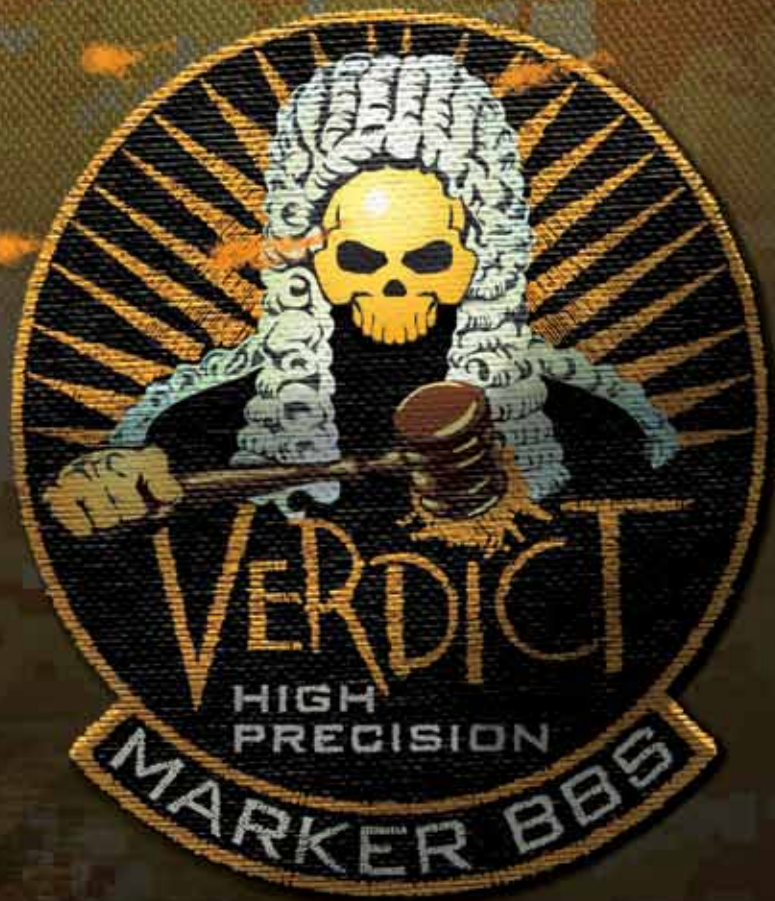
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A photograph of Tony Blauer, a man with a tattoo on his left arm, wearing a green t-shirt with 'COMBAT' and a logo on it. He is demonstrating a technique to a student in a brown jacket. Other people are visible in the background, some in uniform. The text 'Tony Blauer's S.P.E.A.R. Instructor Certification Program' is overlaid on the image in large white font.

# Tony Blauer's S.P.E.A.R. Instructor Certification Program

By Paul Pawela

In the over 30 years of my combined experience in Martial Arts, Military, Law Enforcement and private security I have been blessed to have been trained by the world's most elite warriors. Few of these men can say that they've changed the thinking process of tactical training, and even fewer men can say they have made a difference to the way others are trained in saving lives. However, one man can lay claim to both of those incredible accomplishments. That man is Tony Blauer.

attended Tony Blauer's S.P.E.A.R. Instructor Certification Program that I attended held at the state of the art facilities of Indian River State College. This class was directed by one of Tony's top trainers: Jeff Engelbrecht. Jeff is a 15 year seasoned Police Officer from Green Bay. He is a SWAT team member, a Lieutenant and a Field Training supervisor. Assisting Jeff was Jason Knowles, a Florida Division Law Enforcement Instructor trainer and SWAT team operator.

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The S.P.E.A.R. System: Spontaneous Protection Enabling Accelerated Response.

The S.P.E.A.R. System™ is the product of Tony Blauer's exhaustive, lifelong, and scientifically proven research. Tony's studies what happens during a startled flinch during the most stressed induced moments of life and how to best deal with that stress.

As Tony's research indicates, flinches are triggered when a stimulus is introduced too quickly. Flinches are affected by the level of awareness; which is again affected by speed, aggression and proximity. The Three Classifications of Flinches are: From the front at relative distance, from the front within arm's reach, and from oblique angles.

Tony is quick to point out that the S.P.E.A.R. system is the study of human movement as it relates to violence, fear and aggression. It is not a style or martial art; the S.P.E.A.R. system is based on a genetic survival reflex and has been turned into a combative science.

Tony realized years ago that a person needs to understand four things if he were to have to defend himself:

- 1) What did he fear?
- 2) How does one conquer those fears?
- 3) How do "Real" attacks occur?
- 4) How would one defend against those "Real" attacks?

Tony discovered the way we are trained to respond to violent encounters was never about bigger muscles or accumulating techniques, it's simply understanding behavior, psychology, biomechanics and violence.

As trainers or instructors, we must realize that it is during our class that the student is supposed to learn how to protect themselves and control a hostile subject. If that process fails, someone may die. If half of the techniques taught don't really work, then half the training time is wasted.

Tony lays the responsibility of preparation on the shoulders of the person who is directly responsible for their own safety, the warrior them-

selves. It all boils down to individual's preparation for the encounter and how much time and effort they're willing to invest for a positive out come.

The biggest enemy to our selves is Presumed Compliance. What this means is that if we are in a position of authority such as security, police, or military we assume that the suspect is going to comply with our commands. This brings a false sense of security, especially when the suspect starts off responding in a positive way to your commands and then at the last second gives you the fight of your life.

In a fight Tony points out there are really three fights going on.

### **1) Fight One – You vs. You:**

Do you perceive yourself as Barney Fife or as a Dirty Harry type? According to Tony, this fight addresses one's personal inner conflict when faced with danger and develops Officer Presence. How one gets through this internal fight will determine whether the individual will fight, flee, or freeze during the actual encounter. This requires both confidence and competence not just one or the other.

### **2) Fight Two – You vs. the bad guy:**

The actual physical confrontation where the





tactics that you have learned and practiced are now tested. Tony discusses Sudden Aggressive Resistance in depth; this is where statistically more officers are injured or killed every year. The S. P.E.A. R. system prepares the student for the fight by developing Tactical Competence through repetitions of realistic, scenario driven drills where they will sharpen their close quarter tactics.

### **3) Fight Three- You vs. Administration/ Legal system:**

The S.P.E.A.R. system addresses this fight by developing a deeper knowledge of the tactical arena, as opposed to mass producing and certifying instructors - substance vs. subject experts. This training enables you to explain why you found it necessary and responsible to use a given tactic vs. only knowing the mechanics of the technique. S.P.E.A.R. also helps to create a policy for the street, based on realistic force options that are justified and trained along the standard control tactics curriculum as well as

drills that reflect your policy. This policy is based on sound behavioral research and drills are designed to accurately replicate real scenario problems, scenarios for which conventional control tactics are inappropriate.

One of the training points brought out in the class was that until you are physically and emotionally in control and dominating your opponent, all other skills will be negated.

S.P.E.A.R. focuses on the 3 percenter – This means that 97 % of people that Officers/Military come into contact with are going to comply or at most be reluctant to act resistant. The other 3% are our true opponents. These people will do anything within their power to prevent being arrested, up to and including seriously injuring or killing the officer and members of the general public. Tony classifies these people as Predator Subjects.

How many ways can an officer be attacked and how many counters are there? Tony's research



has identified four primary initiation attacks which are: the shove, the sucker punch, the tackle, and the gun grab.

“In the fight you’re on the point.” is a saying in Tony’s system which means having the proper fighting stance. In a proper fighting stance: you are crouched, your hands are up protecting your face, and as a rule of thumb you are looking at the threat through the windows provided by your thumbs, the pressure is on the balls of the feet, your axis is forward and front towards the enemy.

As the class progressed into training, many different types of close quarter attacks were addressed from Bear Hugs, Tackles, and Duck drills to combat. The instructors went into the proper counters by demonstrating the proper close quarter combat stance and providing a series of malfunction drills to ensure once the fight has started once can always regroup, get balance, and control the fight.

To give an entire overview of the entire S.P.E.A.R. system class is just not possible as time and space do not permit. However, one of the key elements in the training was having the High Gear® suits, which Tony invented, on hand for force on force impact training. The ability of the students to train in those suits adds as much realism to the training as possible. Such realism is essential for dealing with real world deadly encounters.

The S.P.E.A.R. training is about recognizing the danger signs of the bad guy and dealing with him before he knows what hit him. Through scenario based training using quality props like the High Gear, officers become more aware of potential threats and can better safely deal them.

Is Tony on to something here? One look at his clientele should provide the answer. The short list includes: US Navy SEALs, US Special Forces, US Air Force, Federal Air Marshals Service US Coast Guard, Department of Energy and the FBI.

As previously stated, I have literally trained

with countless warriors in my life and I learned so much from all of them but I do not think anyone has influenced the way we train and fight for our lives more than Tony Blauer, and that is the best testimony that I can ever give.

For more information on Mr. Blauer's classes go to [tony@blauertactical.com](mailto:tony@blauertactical.com).



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# Bill Davis

## Tactical Edge Group

By James Sherrill

A convoy of Humvees comes into view from out of nowhere speeding through what appears to be nothing more than a barren wasteland. Inside the vehicles, soldiers nervously clench their weapons, sweating from the desert heat beating down from the mid day sun. Though it seems almost like an endless ocean of desert surrounding them in every direction careful attention must be paid or the consequences could be severe.

Through his rifle scope, one soldier in the lead Humvee spots something out of the ordinary in the distance. He calls for an immediate halt but before the transmission can be completed concussion waves from a nearby explosion ripple the sand like an ocean and leaves in its path pure carnage. Vehicles are destroyed and soldiers are dazed and devastated, but alive. The rear Humvee, virtually unscathed

sets off a barrage of tracer rounds from the mounted M2 Browning .50 caliber machine gun into the distant scurrying enemy forces as nearby mortar rounds rain earth from above as they touch down. The shaken but alive soldiers sound off to check for wounded as they regroup into a battle formation and set up overlapping fields of fire onto the enemy's position. Taliban

fighters now funneling out of desert caves like red ants on the swarm make haste bringing the fight to our all but defeated convoy. Just when it seems all hope is lost,,, CUT!

No, it isn't Afghanistan; it is the city of Mission Hills in sunny southern California, where anything is possible with the right set of skills mixed with just the right camera angle. This is where the good guys always win and where professional prop master and weapon specialist Bill Davis works with his team at Tactical Edge Group to effectively and safely bring intense action filled realistic scenes from the battlefield to the big screen.

For thirty years Bill Davis





has had a rewarding career in Hollywood working in film and television. Bill first got started in this business in his spare time while working as a police officer. He began renting firearms to various prop masters in the motion picture industry but before long he found that he was interested in other areas of the industry so he began interning with some of the very prop masters he had worked lending weapons to previously. After 9 years of learning the industry and after retiring from the police force, Bill was qualified to be a property master and has been busy ever since.

Hollywood, as anyone knows, is no easy business. When talking about such a lucrative, multi-billion dollar industry with very few open areas for induction I had to ask Bill “How, in such

a tough and unforgiving business, does one stay ahead of the competition?” Bill explains that he attributes his success to being reliable, dedicated, and honest. These are the same characteristics that he displayed on the job day in and day out as a police officer.

So what is a Prop Master exactly? Well the Prop Master is basically the head honcho for everything involving any property and on set duties that take place during production. He or she delegates on-set and other duties to subordinates and generally acts in a supervisory capacity during production. In addition they provide all of the props and supervise their usage.

In 30 years of working ex-

perience, actually to be more precise the Tactical Edge Group has over 235 years of experience combined between them and ZERO injuries to report in the process. As a matter of fact, some protocols that are now standards in the industry were originally implemented by Bill Davis. Bill states “No one pays attention to firearms in movies until someone gets hurt, whether it was Brandon Lee or Jon-Erik Hexum. Famous people, young guys who shouldn’t have, died, it just shouldn’t have happened. Ultimately, in the end, it is the weapon owner and handler who is responsible or who will get the blame. Following specific protocols could have prevented any such incident.”

I asked Bill, “What if you have the stereotypical “actor”



on set? You know, the sun rises and sets on them sort of talent. Who, even though has been told and trained specifically on how to hold the weapon and where to point it, gets what we will call “caught in the moment” and starts sweeping the room with their muzzle like it was



a Swiffer that sprays lead instead of cleaning solvent? Bill replied with a laugh, “Now sometimes you will get an overzealous actor who will start waving a fire arm around uncontrollably. So I always tell the director while weapons are on set there are two of us with the power to yell cut.”

“Most people, and actors especially, don’t understand



that these are real weapons. They are real firearms that have been modified to fire blank rounds of ammunition. Blanks are often thought of as completely harmless. However, blanks use paper or plastic wadding to seal gun powder into the shell. The wadding is

propelled from the barrel of the gun with enough force to cause severe injury or death if the weapon is fired within a few inches of the body, especially if pointed at a particularly vulnerable spot on the body.” Bill explained that Blank rounds can be deadly at distances of up to 20 feet and can blind someone even farther out.

“There has been the occasional time that I’ve had to take a weapon away from an actor and give them a rubber gun” Bill says laughingly. “Some of these actors and actress’s have never held a weapon or firearm before so it is a completely new experience to them, however, most adapt and learn very





of realistic battles, weapons and explosives usage in film and television!

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well; after all these are professionals.”

Bill and the Tactical Edge Group also provide specialty consulting for any type of law enforcement or military roles. Whether it is a movie based around NAVY SEALs and the Bosnian conflict or about Army Rangers in the jungles of South America, Bill will provide that production with the individuals needed to consult in a realistic, boots on the ground fashion. “If you need a SEAL I can head out to Coronado and find someone retired from the teams; it’s all about finding the right consultant for the production and we can do it.”

Can you imagine for a second what film or T.V. without professionals like Bill Davis? How mundane the

programming would be? I don’t even know that it could hold my attention. Every channel would be the “Rock of Love” and re-runs of “Hanging with Mr. Cooper”, every movie in theaters would be “The Lakehouse” Redeux. So, it is for these reasons that I think we all owe a great deal of gratitude to Mr. Davis for everything he has done for the progression



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# CHRONICLES OF MAD MAX

By MSG (Ret.) "Mad Max" Mullen

*"The law is coming! You tell them I'm coming . . . and Hell's coming with me! You hear?! Hell's coming with me!"*  
~Wyatt Earp, Tombstone

Since I have been participating in mil-sim events over the last 10 years I have had the opportunity to fight along and observe some of the finest mil-sim teams in the United States. One team that stood out and caused me to personally request them to fight under me at the last Lion Claws event, Operation Irene VIII, was Team Raptor 1 hailing out of Jacksonville, North Carolina. The team is led by the team's founder, the charismatic Doug Reynolds. Also known by the call sign "Lil Evil", he is aggressive, hard-charging, and tactically sound. Doug is the heart and soul of Raptor 1; with men like Johnny Birch, the co-founder and team logistical expert, Ashley Hernandez, a technically and tactically proficient 100% pure

hard-charging Marine, and Juan Salvo, One look at this guy and you know you don't want to get on his bad side. I told Salvo to his face that if I got into a fight I would want him to cover my "Six". Mind you, this is just to name a few of Raptor 1's mil-sim Operators, and not to exclude the rest as these four were the ones I interacted with the most. I said with Marines like this defending our country I know we can all sleep safe at night. I'm not trying to blow sun shine up any ones butt when I say this. Team Raptor 1 walks the walk and talks the talk with a little swagger. After observing them in action in past Irene's I said to myself..."Damn these guys are good! They move like real operators, aggressive and very fluid on the mil-sim battle field". Soon, I was to learn they are made up of a unique blend of active duty, retired, and former Marines, Navy, Army, Coast Guard and civilians.

Some of the members are veterans of multiple combat tours in Iraq and Afghanistan. A few of their members even fall under U.S. Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command (MARSOC). Team Raptor 1 is the future of mil-sim and would qualify as a professional mil-sim team. Recently, I had the opportunity to talk to Doug about Team Raptor 1.

**Q: Doug, how did you get involved with mil-sim and how long have been playing?**

A: I initially became involved in mil-sim around 2002. While in High school, I stumbled across a website that was promoting Tokyo Mauri AEGs and that's when my research started. As far as playing this sport in a hardcore manner, we officially started RAPTOR 1 in the beginning of 2008 and have been hitting it hard ever since.

**Q: What is the history of the Raptor-1 name and what is its meaning?**

A: As much as I would like to give you a dynamic and adventurous story as to how we became known as RAPTOR 1, I'll give you the simple truth. As I sat with my father (one of the main co-founders and XO of the team) in his living room, we decided it was time to think of a team name. After countless hours of drawing a blank, we had almost resigned ourselves to remaining nameless - at least for the time being. Taking a break, we turned on T.V. and there was our answer staring us in the face in high-definition.





Jurassic Park happened to be on and we had cut in on the now famous Velociraptor scene. Jokingly, we laughed that our name should be RAPTOR 1... the rest, as they say, is history.

**Q: What skills do some of the team's active duty members bring to the game to give them the tactical advantage?**

A: Having a team with over 75% active duty or former active duty Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, and even a Coast Guardsmen, proves extremely successful for us both in training and in mil-sim events. It has especially helped our civilian teammates. Relying on the mantra, "You're only as fast as your slowest man," ensures that every member of Raptor 1, regardless of status, is trained equally in all tactical and strategic aspects. The real-world knowledge that some of our players bring to the

table greatly increases our odds of victory on the playing field.

**Q: Are there any lessons from mil-sim that can be translated over to the real world?**

A: ABSOLUTELY! Having a majority of the team being active duty Marines, mil-sim is an outstanding training tool for

some of the members who might not receive as much "Combat" training to sustain that Warrior mentality. It keeps us from becoming stale in our "white space" between deployments. Another lesson learned from mil-sim is teamwork. It's something I can't emphasize enough. There are no lone wolves amongst our ranks.



**Q: What is the training like for Raptor-1 and how often do you train?**

A: We have team practices at least once a month, but a lot of us also play every Saturday at our local field in Jacksonville, NC. Our training covers everything from CQB and field play, to reaction drills and small unit leadership classes. We utilize the crawl, walk, and run method, teaching the basics first and progressing to more advanced tactics once everyone has caught on. We have an extremely aggressive playing style that revolves around the basics and fundamentals.

**Q: What is the teams command structure?**

A: Our command structure is very basic, for logistical purposes we have a CO, XO, Secretary, and other smaller billets like the team FAG-O (Fun

and games officer). On the field of play, prior to each game, we assign positions of leadership, giving everyone a hand at the role. We consider every player on RAPTOR 1 to be equal and therefore do not wear rank. That avoids the potential hazard of power trips and stepping on each other's toes. It's worked for us thus far.

**Q: Do the teams practice any type of combatives and, if so, what type?**

A: We like to keep it simple. Our Teams focus is primarily on MOUT/CQB and field operations. We tend to move in small groups of 4-6 and train to what fits us best. We changed our style up slightly for events such as Operation Irene as we were moving in full squads of 12. Adapt and overcome.

**Q: What type of mil-sim weapons system, kit, and special equipment does the team use?**

A: Our two team uniforms are Woodland Tri-colors and Crye Precision Multicam. Each mil-sim Operators kit is both unique and different from the next. Every member of our team has his own taste in weapons and loadbearing equipment. Our weapons range from Systema M4 PTWs to Echo 1 AK-47 CPWs. It's not about the weapon used as much as it is about the hands that use it.

**Q: What are your thoughts on a Pro-mil-sim league and what would you like to see in the pro-league?**

A: RAPTOR 1 thinks the Pro-Mil-Sim League is an enormous step forward in the growth of this sport and look forward to seeing what comes of it. We would like to see well organized





events utilizing mil-sim as both a means of training and a way to kick back enjoy time with good friends. Another key factor we as a team would like to see in any future pro-league is... RAPTOR 1 of course.

**Q: I notice you dropped the name Airsoft and now call your team mil-sim why did you make this transition?**

A: Initially we had the title of an Airsoft team behind our name by default. It has changed because we realized that we play far more mil-sim and Realmil games than we do your typical weekend warrior, plastic slinging BB fests.. Also the word Airsoft somewhat carries the baggage of the word “toy” behind it. We tend not to treat our mil-sim weapons as toys, but rather as real steel firearms. Safety is key. Not to mention,

there isn't one thing “soft” about RAPTOR 1...Honor. Integrity. Debauchery.

Q: Thanks for sharing a little insight on Team Raptor 1

**A: No problem Master Sergeant we hope to roll with you in the future.**

Team Raptor 1 is the future of Professional mil-sim and there is no doubt in my mind that future is bright for this hard-charging team. With chapters in the state of Wisconsin and North Carolina they have a selection process for those who feel they have what it takes to be a part this dynamic team. Team Raptor 1 doesn't just take any Joe off the street. He must first be recommended by a Raptor 1 team member at which time they are placed on a seven month probationary

period. They then have three months to acquire all team gear and be familiar with the team's internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's). They also must participate in three mil-sim games, after which time they are fully integrated into the team upon a member vote. What's also unique about Raptor 1 is their team training weekends where all the teams' chapters attend. Some of the training covered include battle drills, hand and arm signals, Close Quarter Combat (CQB), and weapons proficiency.

If you would like to learn more about team Raptor 1, visit their web site at [www.raptor1mil-sim.com](http://www.raptor1mil-sim.com).....This is the Mad Max until next time...”Roger Out...”

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