

TACTICS PREPAREDNESS

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CCW SPEED AND ACCURACY SET A STANDARD

BY FRANCIS M. DUFFY

Every shot you ever take, regardless of the situation, requires a balance of speed and accuracy. What is your most accurate shot?

What is your fastest shot? You cannot have all speed or all accuracy. You will need solutions in the moment for balancing your need for speed and accuracy, for each shot, to win your match or save your life. For that reason, setting personal training standards that exceed minimum expectations is important.

I will be using a Generation 5 Glock 19 and a JW Custom Kydex appendix inside the waistband (AIWB) holster and the standard will be: 1) two rounds in six seconds into the five point zone (center mass) of a DS-Q1A “Izzy” target at 25 yards; and, 2) two rounds

in two seconds into the five point zone (center mass) of same target at three yards; both from concealment. (Before training for this standard, you must be able to safely and legally handle a handgun. If you need safety training, you can get that from a local NRA instructor).

Use a shot timer and set a par time on the timer. You will get a “beep” to start the drill and then a “beep” at the pre-set par time. Set progressively faster par times; for example, start at a 4 second par time. Once you are getting all your hits in that time frame move to 3.75, then 3.5, and so on until you reach your

performance goal time. There is a common phrase among shooters that slow is smooth, and smooth is fast. Essentially, by practicing perfect repetitions slowly and building efficient mechanics you will minimize wasted motion and ultimately become “faster” while presenting your gun to the target and breaking an accurate shot.

PHASE 1

Load your handgun with five rounds. Set an Izzy target at 25 yards. Grip the gun with two hands while resting the gun on a bench-rest. Grip the gun harder than you *continued >*

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right: Notice the support hand rotated forward to lock the wrist. Notice the first knuckle of the support hand pointer touching the bottom of the trigger guard.

below: Two-hand grip for a right-handed shooter. Notice positioning of the left thumb in relation to the trigger finger.



think you should with your support hand (do not over grip with your strong-side hand) while rotating your support hand forward to lock the support hand wrist. The first joint on the support hand pointer finger should be touching the bottom of the trigger guard. Use the heel of your support hand to apply pressure to the grip.

The front post should be aligned with the rear sight by visually ensuring that the top edge of the front post is even with the top edges of the rear sight and that the front post has about an equal amount of light on each side of the post. Visually identify a specific spot inside the Izzy's center mass zone. That spot could be centered 6 to 8 inches below Izzy's shirt collar. That is your point-of-aim (POA). Put the aligned sights on that spot. That is your sight picture. Now, focus on the tip of the front sight using your dominant eye, but with both eyes open. Aim small—miss small.

"Prep the trigger" by taking the slack out of the trigger. When the trigger arrives at the "trigger wall" smoothly press the trigger straight to the rear without disturbing the sight picture. Be careful not to over-prep your trigger (taking the slack too quickly) because that can result in an unexpected discharge. Shoot five, slow-fire shots while aiming at the POA on Izzy's center-mass. After each shot keep the trigger pressed to the rear and slowly release the trigger until it resets (you will hear and feel a click) then smoothly press the trigger for the next shot. Repeat the trigger press and reset until all shots are taken.

You need to do some diagnostic troubleshooting if you were unable to stay inside the five ring and this is most easily accomplished with an experienced

coach who personally meets these training standards. Head hits, when you are shooting for the chest, should be considered misses (and vice versa). Likely causes of misses are sloppy trigger press and recoil anticipation. Another cause of missing is having a wrong or inconsistent sight picture. Glock 19s tend to require a center-focused sight picture which means that once the sights are aligned the front sight is visually placed on the center of your POA in such a way that the top edge of the front sight post bisects the target. Once successful, move on to the next phase.

PHASE 2

This phase starts with dry-fire drills. Confirm the handgun is unloaded and that you have a backstop that will safely contain a fired round. Rack the slide—as you would to execute immediate action—to activate the trigger. Starting with the handgun in a ready position at chest level oriented toward the target, grip the gun firmly with two hands. Keep your finger off the trigger until you have made the decision to fire and start to press the gun toward its apex. While aligning your sights with your dominant eye and both eyes open, acquire an acceptable sight picture (front sight post bisecting the POA you identified), focus on the front sight, and press the trigger as described in Phase 1. Your sight picture must remain stable. Execute immediate action to reset the trigger. Repeat this drill 10 times.

Now, safely follow the above dry-fire instructions with live rounds. Load a magazine with five rounds, then load your handgun. Tap the bottom of the magazine firmly to ensure it is seated. Safely conduct a press-check to ensure you have a round in the chamber.



Grab the bottom of the garment and rip it up and across the midline. Make a strong purchase on the handgun before drawing and keep the finger off the trigger.



Get the mechanics down so your brain can be free for good decision making.

Aligning sights requires the front sight being visually positioned inside the rear sights as shown. You create a sight picture when the aligned sights are placed on the target.

From the ready position (near the center of your chest, oriented to the target), using a two-handed grip, smoothly press the gun to its apex while aligning the sights, acquire a sight picture (focusing on the specific POA), focusing on the front sight using your dominant eye with both eyes open, press the trigger to the “wall” (the point where the trigger stops before breaking), then break five slow shots allowing the gun to reset the trigger as described above.

PHASE 3

Load a magazine with five rounds. Load the gun. From the ready position, shoot a string of five shots as quickly as you can while staying on the POA on Izzy’s center mass. Use a shot-timer with a par time to gauge your speed. Remember, shooting too slow can also affect your accuracy. The longer you try to maintain the sight picture the more likely it is that you will start to feel the effects of muscle fatigue which can cause you to lose your sight picture or front sight focus. Once you are delivering all five hits in the five ring move on to the next phase.

PHASE 4

You will engage in dry-fire and live-fire drills for this phase using an appendix inside the waistband (AIWB) holster. The holster with the gun in it should be positioned off-center, either right or left of your navel, depending on your

should not have more than one layer of loose clothing concealing your handgun.

Start slowly and pay attention to consistency. The ultimate goal is to draw quickly, press the gun smoothly toward the target, and break the shot as the gun reaches its apex. Complete the four dry fire steps described below:

Your (confirmed) unloaded gun is in your AIWB holster but you will not draw it from the holster. Wearing a loose-fitting pull-over shirt or sweater, come across your midline with your support hand and get a strong purchase on the bottom edge of the garment. Quickly rip the garment up and away from the gun and across your midline. Do not draw the gun from the holster at this point—just practice clearing the garment. Do this for 10 repetitions.

With both hands moving at the same time, clear the garment and take control of your unloaded firearm while it is in the holster. Get a solid purchase on the grip by pressing the gun into the holster. Ensure that your strong hand is as high as possible on the grip without covering the slide’s endplate. Do not draw the gun from the holster. Getting a strong grip on the gun while in the holster is absolutely necessary for controlling the firearm as it is drawn from the holster and pressed toward its apex. If you don’t have firm control of the handgun as it reaches its apex you will find yourself making time consuming adjustments. Do 10 repetitions.

While keeping the garment clear of your

gun and with a solid grip on the gun “rip” the unloaded gun out of the holster by pulling it straight up and out of the holster while making sure your finger is not on the trigger and that the muzzle never orients toward you or a bystander. Then rock the gun forward with the muzzle pointing toward the target and horizontal with the ground. Bring your elbow into your rib cage (in a close-in, fast moving self-defense event you could shoot from this retention position). Now, bring your support hand to the gun to secure a strong two-handed grip with your finger off the trigger. Do not let your support hand move in front of the muzzle. Do 10 repetitions and do not point the gun at yourself when re-holstering.

From the retention position, start pressing the unloaded gun smoothly and quickly toward the target with both hands. Once you start to pick up the front sight in your line of vision and you have made the decision to shoot you can prep the trigger as you are pressing the gun toward the target.

You press the gun toward the target with the muzzle horizontal with the ground. Do not present the gun toward the target as if you were casting a fishing line (“fishing”) or as if you were “bowling.” Take the slack out of the trigger (prep the trigger). Press the gun toward the target at about 80% speed. Don’t press the gun toward the target at 100% speed; at the apex of your presentation your elbows lock and can cause the gun to “bounce” slowing an accurate shot. Focus on a fast, smooth, and precise presentation.

As the unloaded gun reaches its full apex

(toward the Izzy target with a safe back stop) press the trigger without disturbing the sight picture. Reset the trigger. Repeat this drill 10 times. Move on to step four only after your execution is safe and smooth.

Now, repeat Phases 2-3 using a five round magazine. Use a shot-timer to track your speed.

PHASE 5

All of the above steps apply to shooting from three yards except this time you are focusing heavily on speed. Hitting Izzy at center mass from three yards should happen very fast. At three yards, the threat is close and you need to react very quickly.

Dry practice clearing the garment while drawing your confirmed unloaded gun from the AIWB holster as fast as you can following the advice presented earlier. Press the gun toward the target at 80% speed while taking slack out of the trigger. Press the trigger at the apex of the presentation (remember, at this point you are still engaging in dry practice—no ammunition). Execute immediate action to reactivate the trigger. Repeat this drill 10 times. When you are meeting a 1.5 second par time on your shot timer, continue.

Load a magazine with 5 rounds of live ammunition. Safely, load, press check and reholster your gun.

Clear the concealment garment, draw from the AIWB holster, and press the gun toward the target. Place your trigger finger on the trigger as you press the gun toward the target (if you have

made the decision to shoot). Break a fast hit.

Repeat step 2 with a shot timer. Shoot a rapid 5 shot string. Let the trigger reset quickly and efficiently after each shot. Check your time. For each subsequent repetition you should aim for two hits on center mass in two seconds.

PHASE 6: PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Draw from concealment. Using a two-handed grip, place two rounds into the center mass (5 point zone) of a DS-Q1A “Izzy” target at 25 yards in under six seconds. This is a standard for accuracy. With the same pistol, holster and concealment garment—using a two-handed grip—place two rounds into the center mass of the DS-Q1A target at three yards in under two seconds (per shot timer). This is a standard for speed. If you are unable to meet the training standards for the 25 yard and 3 yard courses of fire, keep practicing the skills needed for any sticking points. When you are meeting these standards, you are far exceeding the speed and accuracy pistol qualification standards of all branches of the U.S. military and law enforcement agencies. You have set your own higher standard. What is your next challenge? Greater range or faster par times?

CONCLUSION

I believe that firearm owners have a moral obligation to train regularly to achieve a high level of firearms proficiency. We also have a powerful self-interest need to train for survival when facing a deadly threat. The

drills described above can help improve your accuracy and speed. It is important to hold yourself to a high standard.

You don't need ammunition to conduct effective training. Dry-fire practice is one of the most effective ways to develop firearms handling and marksmanship proficiency. Competition and special operations shooters frequently conduct dry-fire practice. It doesn't cost you a penny. After dry-fire practice, safely take those skills live and continue both dry and live practice over time.

Shooting quickly and accurately are important, but there are other important skills you must also master: clearing all types of malfunctions, “emergency” and tactical reloads, and shooting while moving are examples. As my son and business partner often says, the ultimate goal of firearms training is to have the capability to use your firearms handling and marksmanship skills without thinking “What do I do?” Get the mechanics down so your brain can be free for good decision making.

BIO

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GEAR REVIEW



SPETSNAZ SHOVEL

Cold Steel's Spetsnaz shovel is an inexpensive entrenching tool with a broad flat steel blade with three sharp edges. It has more rigidity than a GI “E tool” and is designed for digging, chopping branches, cutting and fighting. It has been used as an improvised paddle and can be conveniently stashed in a daypack or car trunk. Its' head-heavy balance and multiple sharp edges make it a popular alternative to a Tomahawk for sport throwing. www.coldsteel.com