

After Action Report

Company: 212 Firearms Training

Class: Handgun Proficiency II

Date(s): Saturday 1 April 2017

Location: Private ranch, Evant, TX

Instructor(s): Jared Seagraves

Targets: VTAC Double-Sided paper targets, M3 Strategies, cardboard 3D silhouettes, steel silhouettes

Gear: Glock 19 MOS with Trijicon RMR (model RM07) and AmeriGlo tritium three-dot suppressor sights; G-CODE INCOG Eclipse Holster and G-CODE IWB Single magazine pouch – both worn appendix and borrowed from Jared; 3 Glock 19 magazines and 3 Magpul PMAG 17 GL9 magazines; 5.11 Tactical Operator Belt, 5.11 Tactical Tac-Lite Pro pants; Oboz Firebrand 2 shoes; Dark Angel Medical DARK LITE kit with CAT Gen 7 and SWAT-T tourniquets

Ammunition: Class requirement was 400+ rounds. 265 rounds Blazer Brass 115 gr FMJ, 15 rounds SPEER Gold Dot 124 gr +P

Reliability: 0 organic malfunctions. Trijicon RMR suffered no malfunctions and maintained zero. The RMR was set on auto for the entire course and was easily visible in full daylight. One drill was run with the RMR off to practice with the suppressor sights. Most of the day was overcast with sporadic drizzle. I have trained under wetter conditions than today; however, I found the Gen 4 frame texture more positive than the texture of my M&P9 that I've used in heavier rain. Rain on the window of the RMR did produce some red glare, but the dot was still clearly visible and I detected no adverse effects on accuracy.

Training Day

Our safety/medical briefing began shortly after 9:00 AM.

As always, anytime a group of people gathers to train, regardless of their level of experience, a brief revisiting of the four primary safety rules of shooting is a must. These rules are generally as follows:

1. Treat all guns as if they were loaded.
2. Never point a firearm at anything you do not wish to destroy.
3. Be sure of your target, its foreground and background.
4. Keep the trigger finger off the trigger until the weapon is presented to the target and the decision is made to fire.

In addition, due to the inherent risk of firearms training, attention must be paid to the topic of medical procedures. In our case today, one student was designated as the 911 caller, while Jared and I were designated medics because of our previous medical training (I have made it a daily habit to carry my DARK LITE kit and CAT and SWAT-T tourniquets, even when not armed). Jared's duellie pick-up was designated as the EVAC vehicle due to its very large bed space. Being that our class was conducted on a large private ranch, it would be necessary to EVAC and meet EMS in order to give an injured victim a better chance of survival.

Every shooter was once a novice with no experience and no knowledge. One can learn a considerable amount of information by doing your own research, but if you have never sought training, you seriously need to ask yourself the following questions:

1. What do I really know?
2. What do I not know?
3. What do I not even realize I don't know?
4. Is my weapon and associated carry/defensive gear adequate and reliable?
5. Has it been tested?
6. If I were faced with a self-defense situation, would my current level of fitness be an asset or a liability?
7. What if...?

Obviously, this list is not exhaustive because every defensive shooting that has ever occurred was a novel event.

Nothing exactly like it has happened before and nothing exactly like it will ever happen again. The variables are infinite. As the training day progressed, all of these questions, and more, hung over the range like a fog. Sometimes the answers were apparent while some questions can't be answered with any degree of certainty. The fundamentals of sight alignment and trigger press are fairly concrete, however, after that there isn't really a right way and a wrong way to do things. As Aaron Cowan of Sage Dynamics often says: "Any safe action can be appropriate" and "Train accordingly." As the day progressed, these two statements made themselves more and more understandable.

Rather than give a play-by-play description of 212 Firearms Handgun Proficiency II, I want to discuss some of the things that become apparent through training that may fail to be revealed when only participating in informal range shooting. To get an idea of what you can learn with 212 Firearms, refer to my AAR of Handgun Proficiency I and sign up for a class! If you come with an open mind and a desire to learn, you won't regret it.

It is my opinion that many gun owners (especially those who own guns for defensive purposes) avoid training, and I believe they avoid training for two primary reasons. First, many gun owners *believe* they are proficient shooters. Why? Well, because they hunt, hold a carry permit, were taught by a family member/friend, know a cop/soldier, were/are a cop/soldier, have never shot themselves, are male, etc. Secondly, and most importantly, I believe most gun owners avoid training because they are afraid. "Afraid of what?" you may ask. I believe it is fear of the unknown. Many people fear engaging in activities in which they've never participated. Many people fear the realization they don't really know as much as they think they do. Many people fear failure, especially in the presence of others. What they *should* be afraid of is the possibility that they may very well be completely unprepared to defend themselves and their loved ones. The gun is a tool, the shooter is the weapon. Violent encounters, regardless of the outcome, have life altering consequences. Life will never be the same following a self-defense shooting and, since the stakes are so high, I want to be

an asset to my loved ones rather than a liability. I do not say these things to offend those who have not yet sought training, but rather, it is my intent to light the fire of discovery in order to encourage more people to step out of the box of modern life and push themselves beyond their comfort level. Not only will you learn many valuable things about shooting and yourself, you'll have a lot of fun.

I'd like to use this AAR to discuss a few of the "elephants on the range" that made their presence known today, and again, my intent is to inform and educate, not offend.

1. **Weapon Selection:** This was my fourth training class, and in each of my classes I've learned that weapon selection is very important. First and foremost, you must purchase a sound weapon from a quality manufacturer. The weapon must possess the utmost reliability with your ammunition. Secondly, the weapon must possess the mechanical accuracy necessary to deliver combat effective hits. Thirdly, it must be chambered for a cartridge (and loaded with ammunition) with a history of success in defensive shootings. Fourthly, its handling characteristics (ie. size, recoil etc.) must be manageable for the shooter. Fifthly, it should have as high of an ammunition capacity as reasonably possible within the confines of the four previously mentioned aspects. To be honest, when reliability is placed at the top, as it should be, the list of suitable defensive pistols shrinks dramatically. In my training and shooting experience, I have witnessed 100% reliability from the following weapons: Glock model 17, 19, 21, 22, 26, 27, 42 and 43; Smith and Wesson M&P9 (including the 2.0) in both full size and compact models and the M&P Shield 9mm; Beretta 92; Sig P226, Heckler and Koch USP .45; and an STI 2011 9mm. During today's HP II, one shooter fought his gun all day. It was consistently unreliable drill after drill and was manufactured by Taurus. My recommendation: Glock 17 or 19 or Smith and Wesson M&P9 full size or compact, including the 2.0.

2. Carry Gear Selection: Buy a quality holster from a reputable manufacturer. There's a joke amongst defensive shooters that, over time, you'll acquire many holsters as you continue to pursue the best available option for you. I prefer kydex to leather and I prefer appendix inside the waistband (AIWB). On that note, always carry at least one spare magazine and use a belt designed for carry.
3. Red Dot Sights: This is my second class running my new Glock 19 Gen4 MOS with Trijicon RMR mini red dot sight. It is a force multiplier. Yes, it's expensive, but it dramatically simplifies and accelerates sight alignment. Assuming the RMR is mounted correctly and properly zeroed, when the dot is on target you will score a hit as long as you don't screw up the trigger pull. It gives you one less thing to worry about and allows you to focus more on the other fundamentals. It also drastically enhances one's ability to shoot on the move, one-handed, from cover and from compromising positions. It will also make you appreciate **high quality** iron sights when not using the red dot sight. I believe it is the future.
4. Trigger Control: I shoot and therefore, sometimes I miss. Even with the RMR, hits are not a guarantee. You have to apply the fundamentals.
5. Reloads: There are two primary types of reloads: the speed reload and the tactical reload. During training, you will learn how to reload properly. You will learn how and when to use both types of reloads. You will learn to become effective at getting the gun back in the fight when it unexpectedly runs dry. Do not fear handling your weapon and do not fear an empty gun. Learning to reload properly will really enhance your ability to safely handle your firearm while maintaining situational awareness.
6. Situational Awareness: In short, know the condition of your weapon and equipment at all times. On the range, a

click instead of a boom is a learning experience. On the street it could become your funeral. Pay attention to your surroundings and be aware of any obstacles that may be in your vicinity. Maintain muzzle discipline and trigger finger discipline at all times. During training you will begin to think about how you must handle your weapon when around others in order to maintain safety - and remember, any safe action may be appropriate. For all intents and purposes, exercising sound trigger finger discipline will make the other three safety rules redundant layers.

7. Malfunction Clearance: All mechanical devices can and will fail eventually. During training, you will learn how to recognize a malfunction and how to, safely, clear it and bring the weapon back into working order.
8. Vehicle Defense: You do not want to have to fight from inside a vehicle, especially without eye and ear protection. The muzzle blast is greatly enhanced and you will be showered with glass fragments. Exiting a vehicle under duress must be practiced if it is to be done quickly, effectively and safely. If possible, drive away rather than fight. The presence or absence of passengers, as well as your position in the vehicle, will dramatically affect tactics.
 - a. Vehicles are not very good cover. We fired rounds out through the windshield as well as rounds into the vehicle through the windshield. We also fired rounds through the door sheet metal. We tested a variety of ammunition to include 9mm, .40 S&W and .45 ACP. We tested full metal jacket ammunition as well as state-of-the-art bonded jacketed hollowpoints. Penetrating the vehicle's exterior is not a challenge, however, bullet behavior after passing through the vehicle's windshield/sheet metal was very erratic. No clear pattern could be established.
9. Target Priority: When confronted by multiple attackers, one must respond to each threat according to their threat

potential. For example, if confronted by two attackers, one armed with a knife and one with a gun, the threat with the gun is your greatest priority, even if the knife-wielding attacker is closest in proximity, unless of course the knife-wielding attacker is already within range to attack. Also, if inside a vehicle, is a knife-wielding attacker outside the vehicle really a threat? Perhaps, it'd be better to simply drive away.

10. Angles of Fire: If innocent bystanders are in the vicinity of an attack, one must try to eliminate the possibility of collateral damage by selecting an appropriate angle of fire.

11. Movement: Gunfights are not likely to be stationary affairs. In fact, they almost always involve movement by the attacker, the defender or both (don't forget about bystanders). Moving and shooting is difficult. You will both move and shoot slower and accuracy will degrade.

The red dot-equipped handgun greatly aids shooting on the move. How you move must also be addressed. Is it okay to cross your feet when moving? Is it bad? How agile are you? How fit are you?

No doubt I've neglected something.

This was not just a “defensive shooting” course, but rather a “thinking while shooting defensively” course. Needless to say, we did a lot of thinking out loud together. As Jared introduced new challenges to the students, the solution(s) were not always readily apparent, forcing us to think our way through the problem. Sometimes we were successful, sometimes not. Sometimes the second or third run satisfied our “tactical curiosity” and we moved on to something else. After each training course that I've attended I've walked away with new options in the toolbox and a smile on my face; after all, shooting really is fun. However, I've also walked away with unanswered questions and new questions I didn't even know needed to be asked. That fact alone keeps me coming back for more.

Jared Segraves has trained with some of the biggest names in the industry. He has incorporated many varied aspects from

those experiences into the curriculum of 212 Firearms. His ability to share this knowledge is sound, true and honest. His enthusiasm is infectious. He will call attention to mistakes and unsafe practices, but does so in a manner conducive to learning. Every action that occurs, whether positive or negative, provides an opportunity for learning and Jared seizes every opportunity. If you have not sought training before, or are thirsty for more, I highly recommend you spend some time with Jared Segraves. I've trained with him twice and am looking forward to the next training day under his tutelage. They say imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but repeat attendance is the sincerest form of endorsement.