

# After Action Report

**Company:** 212 Firearms Training

**Class:** Handgun Proficiency 1

**Date(s):** Saturday 25 March 2017

**Location:** Gatesville, TX

**Instructors:** Jared (Lead Instructor); Kenny and Pat (Associate Instructors)

**Targets:** VTAC Double-Sided paper targets, black 2” circles from Haley Strategic, steel silhouettes, hostage taker silhouettes

**Gear:** Glock 19 MOS with Trijicon RMR (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; MSA Sordin electric ear pro (borrowed from Jared); 5.11 Tactical Operator Belt, 5.11 Tactical Tac-Lite Pro pants and 5.11 Tactical Covert Shirt; Oboz Firebrand 2 shoes; Dark Angel Medical DARK LITE kit with CAT Gen 7 and SWAT-T tourniquets

**Ammunition:** Class requirement was 200+ rounds. 269 actual rounds fired: Blazer Brass 115 gr FMJ

**Reliability:** 0 organic malfunctions. I did experience 2 instances of the slide failing to lock open on an empty magazine due to my support hand riding the slide stop during fast strings of fire. 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.

## Training Day

The class was to begin at 10:30. Since this was the first time my Glock 19 MOS with RMR had ever been fired, I showed up early to zero the sight. This early arrival also gave

me extra time to get to know Jared and Kenny and I also helped set up the range. I had slaved the RMR to the iron sights (AmeriGlo tritium suppressor sights) and confirmed POA at 5 yards, 10 and 15. The sight only required minimal adjustment.

Class officially began at 10:30 AM. There were 11 students. All but one had some shooting experience to one degree or another, and he improved dramatically. A few students, including myself, had previous professional training. The lone female student was a current law enforcement officer. The most common firearms were Glocks, notably the 19, but also a 17 MOS with Leupold Delta Point Pro, a 21 (duty weapon) and a 43. There was also one Smith & Wesson M&P 2.0 and two M&P Shields. The Shields and Glock 43 ran perfectly to my knowledge, however, their small size proved that subcompact guns are difficult to shoot well and their low magazine capacity proved inadequate for some drills. If I were in the market for a subcompact Glock, I would chose the 26 over the 43 simply because of greater initial magazine capacity as well as the capability to carry Glock 17 magazines for reloads.

We began the day with a brief introduction of the instructors followed by the students. A thorough safety briefing covered the well-known four rules of firearms safety. It was also noted that students were to repeat certain range commands such as “line is hot/cold”, “eyes and ears” and so on to ensure that everyone had heard the command. On a side note, this was the first time I’d ever used electronic ear pro and, while I wouldn’t consider it a must have, it sure is nice to have. Not having to remove my ear pro to hear commands or discussion was quite nice. Jared also pointed out that anyone experiencing a problem could call “cease fire!” We also had a brief medical discussion. Two of our students were Army medics and were the designated medics for our class while Pat was the designated caller for 911. I’ve taken medical training from Dark Angel Medical and feel that everyone, gun owner or not, should receive training in treating life threatening injuries and illness. I’ve also made it a habit to carry my Dark Angel Medical DARK LITE kit and CAT Gen7 and SWAT-T tourniquets on my

person everyday.

We then proceeded to the 7-yard line for 10 slow fire rounds to establish our baseline accuracy capability. At the end of the day, we would return with the same target and fire another 10 rounds to look for any improvement.

We then left the line to hear a very detailed discussion of shooting fundamentals by Jared. Jared is a natural teacher and he has excellent command of the information he was sharing.

His words were clear and concise and right on point with everything I have learned before.

To begin, Jared stated that there are four basic fundamentals of shooting a handgun: stance, grip, sight alignment/picture and trigger press.

**Stance:** Jared taught us to use an athletic style stance that involved squaring the shoulders and hips to the target. For LEO and military, a squared stance takes maximum advantage of body armor. I also learned from Dark Angel Medical, that even without body armor, it is better to take incoming rounds square in the torso because transverse torso shots do not have high survivability rates. Jared asked us to incorporate a forward lean with, most likely, the weak side foot slightly out front with shoulders in front of hips and weight on the balls of the feet. Lastly, Isosceles is preferred over Weaver.

**Grip:** From the Isosceles position, the arms are locked out, providing the weight and strength of both arms to mitigate recoil. We were also instructed to get as high on the grip frame as possible with the strong hand while the support hand filled in the space on the grip frame not covered by the strong hand and with both thumbs pointed toward the target.

**Sight Alignment:** Jared drew a picture of what proper iron sight alignment should look like: top of the front sight even with the top of the rear sight, as well as with equal daylight on both sides of the front sight. He also pointed out that the expected point of impact should be just at the top of the front sight and not over the front dot on sights that use dots. We also discussed the difficulty in managing the three focal planes required in the use of irons sights, and that the last focal point should be on the

front sight. At this point, Jared took a moment to discuss the advantage of red dot sights, being that two students (including myself) were carrying weapons with red dot sights. Jared also explained the difference between a precision sight alignment and a stress sight alignment.

**Trigger Press:** The last fundamental happens to be the most difficult. A bad trigger press can ruin a shot even if the previous three fundamentals are executed perfectly. Jared discussed the fine points of take-up (or creep), the break and reset. He values the idea that the finger must be married to the trigger and that they should not break contact until the decision to stop shooting had been made. He also drove home the idea that, after the break, the finger should pin the trigger to the rear in order to feel the reset of the trigger and that we should only let the trigger out enough to reset. He also pointed out that upgraded triggers could do a lot to cleanup the take-up and reset. Trigger finger placement is often determined by the shooter's own anatomy and the type of trigger they are shooting.

To conclude this discussion, we covered loading and unloading procedures as well as speed reloads and tactical reloads. Jared believes that all these procedures should be conducted in the shooter's "work space" because it allows the shooter to maintain situational awareness as well as visually confirm the weapon's condition if need be.

It was time to return to the line! We began at five yards. Being that there was a large discrepancy in magazine capacity amongst the shooters, we were instructed to reload accordingly.

The first series of drills were conducted from the high compressed ready and we were to fire slow controlled shots, thinking our way through each of the fundamentals. During this course of fire, we fired anywhere from one to five rounds, depending on command. As the drills proceeded, the instructors would move up and down the line evaluating each student, and correcting where need be. The lack of clean gun handling amongst some students was apparent, but at no time did I feel like the line was unsafe. The instructors were professional when tending to any problems shooters were having. Throughout the

class, the instructors would always demonstrate drills, which is always beneficial to the students. Sometimes, instructions are better followed after demonstration and, in my opinion, demonstration adds to the credibility of the instructor.

We took breaks to allow students to reload magazines, hydrate, enjoy a snack and use the restroom whenever necessary.

As the class proceeded to become comfortable with applying the fundamentals, we moved on to a cadence drill. For this drill we used a Haley Strategic target. They were printed on standard white paper and had four black 2” circles in a square pattern with the Haley Strategic logo in the center. We moved up to the three-yard line. The first run on this drill was to be shot at our own pace, but with our eyes closed! To start this drill, we took a proper stance, applied grip and sight alignment over the logo. When we were ready to fire, we would close our eyes and fire five rounds at our own pace concentrating on feeling the gun return to its starting point prior to firing again. I don’t think any of us really expected this to go well. When I opened my eyes, I was surprised by what I saw. My first two rounds were very close together, with the next three stringing vertically over 6” or so. We shot the blind run two more times. The groups fired on my second and third runs could be covered by the palm of my hand! Needless to say, I was quite pleased. As Jared walked down the line inspecting our targets, he commented, “Nathan, I don’t believe you closed your eyes” to which I replied, “I don’t believe it either!”

The next four stages of the drill involved shooting on cadence. We would shoot individually, on count, with the next shooter picking up where the previous shooter left off. We were strongly encouraged to count out loud even when we weren’t the designated shooter. Each stage was shot two or three times and each stage’s timing was approximately twice as fast as the previous. The count for stage one was “one thousand one, one thousand two... etc.” to five. The stage two cadence was “one and two and... etc.” to five. Stage three was “one, two, three, four, five”, with the last stage going “one two three four five.” My shots stayed in or within 1” inch of the circles on each run.

Prior to the last stage, Jared noted that everyone struggles while Kenny commented that, “you probably won’t see your sights on this one.” I don’t believe I shot quite fast enough, however, being that I was using an RMR, I could clearly see and follow the red dot for each of those shots.

I’m a big fan of Ballistic Radio and the host, John Johnston, frequently says, “Technology doesn’t matter until it does.” With the RMR, I think I’m beginning to understand what he means by that.

After a break, it was time to move onto the draw. From this point on, all drills would be run from the draw, with one exception. After proper instruction and demonstration of technique, the instructors were adamant that we should never rush reholstering and that we should look the gun into the holster. Muzzle discipline and trigger finger discipline must be maintained at all times while reholstering. We began by working the draw in reverse, going slow, deliberate and methodical. When it became time to begin drawing, we used a shot timer. With a five second par time, drew and pressed the trigger with an empty weapon (showing clear to both our neighbors). We were instructed to use the entire par time to complete the draw with extension and trigger press occurring just as the timer went off. After several of these dry runs, we went hot, again using the entire five-second par time and the VTAC anatomical target. After several runs, Jared reduced the par time to four seconds, then three, then two, then 1.5 and, eventually one second. I know for certain I never beat the one-second par time and I’m not sure I ever beat the 1.5 par time either. I was clearly under two seconds with drawing from AIWB and concealment (the only one on the line doing either).

At the completion of this drill, Kenny spoke to me about my technique and commented that I was doing a good job of clearing my cover garment. Appendix carry is relatively new to me and so I was pleased with my progress. I’ve found it much more comfortable, more concealable and faster than strong side carry whether IWB or OWB. Kenny encouraged me to practice clearing my cover garment one handed whenever I felt ready. I

will save that for dry fire practice and work accordingly. Oddly, on the runs with three second par times, my accuracy fell off but came right back as I got faster. Being that I follow the writings of Gabe Suarez, I'm a believer in shooting terrorists/active killers in the face and so I practiced headshots the vast majority of the time on the VTAC anatomical target.

The next evolution was Kenny's "Greatest Drill Ever" using the VTAC anatomical target. We did not run this from the draw, but from high compressed ready. We set up our guns with a hot chamber and an empty magazine in the gun. With a six second par time, we were to fire one round, reload from slide lock and fire two more rounds center mass. Being that I was also retrieving my magazine from concealment, six seconds was tight for me. I clearly need to work on this.

After another short break, it was time to start running drills on steel. We ran several different courses of fire that included hostage taker targets as well as steel silhouettes. Some runs had a specified course of fire, while the instructors called others out as the shooter negotiated the course. Then we began to incorporate movement into these drills. We began by shooting a hostage taker from a standing position, engaging a silhouette and then running to cover behind barrels and then engaging silhouettes from both sides of cover. We also shot a course that involved retreating from cover as well as a course that involved shooting while moving serpentine around four barrels, forward and reverse.

On one run, Jared gave me his Glock 19 with an Apex Tactical trigger to try since I'm interested in upgrading mine. Prior to acquiring my Glock 19 MOS, I've been shooting a Smith and Wesson M&P 9 with Apex Tactical DCAEK trigger with stock three-dot sights. Jared's Glock had a red fiber optic front sight with U-notch rear. While shooting this gun, more so than ever before, the iron sights were clearly visible, very vivid and more easily tracked and aligned. Prior to shooting with an RMR, I've always had to slightly squint my non-dominant eye in order to put the front sight in focus. When I obtained the RMR, during dry fire practice, I struggled to keep both eyes

fully open at first. But as I began to force my self to keep both eyes open and focus on the target through the RMR's window, the red dot became easier and easier to track and align. I believe its become natural to me now just in one day of working with the system. I honestly believe that learning the RMR has allowed me to better see iron sights. I don't recall squinting at all while shooting Jared's gun. It was the most rewarding use of iron sights on a pistol I've ever experienced. Once again, I quote John Johnston: "Technology doesn't matter until it does."

It was now approaching 5:00 PM and many of the shooters needed to leave due to other obligations. To close, we retrieved our first targets and shot another 10 rounds to check our improvement. My group did tighten by about 25% over the first run. Every shooter appeared to improve over their first runs as well.

I was very pleased with my first experience training with 212 Firearms. Jared, Kenny and Pat are professional men, sound shooters and fine teachers. Their curriculum is the culmination of many hours of training with some of the biggest names in the business. The curriculum is current and reality based. I was very familiar with everything that they taught and I found nothing with which to disagree. I would have liked a more formal debrief at the end of the day, but like I said, several students needed to leave as soon as the shooting was over. I feel anyone, regardless of previous experience, would benefit by spending a day training with 212 Firearms. I will train with them again and again, which is the highest form of recommendation I can give.