

# Hill Country Dog Center

## Decoy and Aggression Seminar

### INTRODUCTION

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Your patrol K9 is only as good as the K9 decoys you have to work with. In order to train and maintain hard-biting patrol K9's, you need skilled decoys, and you need as many of them as you can get. This means every police K9 handler should receive dedicated training to develop the skills of "reading" K9 behavior, using body language to increase K9 aggression and confidence, developing the power and commitment of the K9's bite, and taking bites safely on every surface of the arms, legs, and body. In addition, any experienced K9 handler knows that the decoy plays a critical role in training the K9 for control, by providing a good "platform" for the release on command, and providing the right kind of bite at the right time to support learning. Finally, evaluation and selection of candidate K9's, and accurately "read" their responses to testing. This Course is an intensive 5-day immersion in all of these skills, with the flexibility to advance the abilities of students at different levels of experience: Beginning agitators will acquire the basic level of proficiency needed to maintain a police K9's training, and experienced decoys can learn the advanced skills necessary to test and train beginning K9's, make established K9's better, and solve problems.

### INSTRUCTORS

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#### **Mr. Michael Clemenson**

Michael Clemenson, company founder, has 26 years' experience working in the field of service canine. He started his career in the United States Air Force as a working dog trainer and handler. He advanced to the position "supervisor of Procurement Team" to select and evaluate dogs for training. After completing his tour of duty, Mr. Clemenson joined the team at Global Training Academy as a trainer for search, detection, security and land mine detection canines. In 1994, he opened Hill Country Dog Center, and where he continues to this date providing training and services to multiple state police and sheriff departments and also facilitates numerous seminars and workshops both domestic and internationally. In support of ongoing training for departments, handler, and companies.

#### **Dr. Stewart Hilliard**

Stewart Hilliard began training working dogs in 1980 in Denver, Colorado, when he became involved in German-style sport training and joined the Rocky Mountain Schutzhund Club, where he soon became the Training Director. Shortly thereafter he established a reputation as an authority on agitation and man-work for both sport dogs and police service dogs. In the mid-1980's he was one of the first Americans to import working-bred Belgian Malinois to the United States, and he traveled widely in Western Europe studying Malinois breeding and the training disciplines of French Ring, Belgian Ring, and KNPV. He was the founder and first president of the American Ring Federation, the first F.C.I.-sanctioned organization for French Ring Sport in the U.S., and he was the first American to receive his Selection (certification) in France as a French Ring Trial Decoy. He has taught working dog training seminars for sport clubs and law

enforcement agencies all over the United States, and also been invited to teach in Melbourne and Brisbane, Australia, Sao Paulo, Brazil, Montreal, Canada, and Beijing, China. He is the co-author, with Susan Barwig, of the very successful training manual **Schutzhund: Theory and Methods of Training**, and has also written and directed many well-received videotapes about sport and service dog training produced by Canine Training Systems, of Littleton, Colorado. In 1983, Stewart Hilliard received his B.A. in psychology, and in 1990 he moved to Austin, Texas to enter Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin, where he studied animal behavior and learning. He is the author of a number of scientific papers in reputable psychological journals, and in 1997 he received his Ph.D in Behavioral Neuroscience. Dr. Stewart Hilliard is now Chief of the Military Working Dog Course at the 341<sup>st</sup> Training Squadron, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. In this capacity, he directs the basic training of most of the patrol and substance detector dogs supplied to all branches of the U. S. armed forces; he consults on Military Working dog training and behavioral problems; and he carries out original research on substance detector dog performance and aptitude testing of working dogs.

### **Mr. Arturo Terrazas**

Arturo Terrazas, has 15 years, experience working in the field of service canine. He began his career with The McConnel Group in San Antonio, Texas as a kennel caretaker and rapidly advanced to dog trainer. During this time, Mr. Terrazas, attended several narcotic seminars at Canine Headquarters and he became a certified Decoy from K9 Prosports. He is also involved in USA Mondioring, as a competitor and certified decoy. In 2010, Mr. Terrazas joined Hill Country Dog Center as a canine trainer and decoy. Later he became an instructor and procurement specialist.

## OBJECTIVES

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The DECOY and AGGRESSION Course teaches the skills necessary to be a safe and proficient K9 decoy/agitator. The course is an intensive 5-day immersion in:

- The fundamentals of K9 behavior, beginning with a solid grounding in theory, and then putting this theory into practice by accurately ‘reading’ the behavior of patrol K9’s under agitation
- How to develop prey and aggression “drives,” and teach the dog to “channel” from one to the other
- K9 evaluation, including assessment of drive, bite quality, nerve strength, and stability
- How to prepare the K9 to cope with stress, and teach it to engage passive suspects dressed “in civil” (plain clothing/no bite equipment showing)
- Civil agitation techniques, teaching students to increase K9 aggressiveness, sharpness, and confidence through threat and counter-threat
- Hidden sleeve and bite suit techniques, including leg-, back-, and body-bites
- The decoy’s role in training the “out’ and other control skills.

## EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

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1. Bite suit
2. Bite sleeve
3. Hidden sleeve
4. Agitation muzzle

## SCHEDULE

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Begin 0800, end about 1600, depending upon the progress made and the level of fatigue of participants' and K9s'

### DAY 1

**Morning:** *First-time students*-Lecture and theory on canine aggression and agitation –Classroom.  
*Repeat students*-Practical work on K9 evaluation and bite building- Indoor/Outdoor training area

**Afternoon:** Student demonstration of technique/knowledge of police K9 civil agitation. Instructor critique, followed by more practical work on civil agitation. Application of prey/aggression concepts learned in lecture, and building the dog's aggression by using threat and counter-threat and stress-relief techniques-Emphasis on "reading" the dog, evaluating its behavior, and selecting the correct technique

### DAY 2

**Morning:** Further practical work using civil agitation techniques-Emphasis on teaching the dog to exhibit cued aggression to passive, civil decoys.

**Afternoon:** Instructor demonstration of decoy techniques using exposed bite bar sleeves and hidden sleeves, followed by student practice with K9's-Emphasis on bite-building, teaching the dog active fighting, and relieving stress. Recap days' activities, question and answer opportunity and overview of the next day objectives.

### DAY 3

**Morning:** Discuss prey/kill characteristics to include building-controlled aggressiveness behavior and not over building "raw" aggressiveness behavior.

**Afternoon:** Demonstration of leg-, back-, and body-biting techniques by instructors using bite suits, followed by student practice. Recap days' activities, opportunity for questions and overview of the next day objectives.

### DAY 4

**Morning:** Further practical work using civil agitation techniques- Emphasis on realistic K9-suspect encounters, and best use of selected hidden sleeve bites to reward civil aggression.

**Afternoon:** The role of the agitator in control training-Emphasis on teamwork between handler and decoy, how to promote calmness and obedience, and how to use bites to reward correct behaviors. Recap days' activities, opportunity for questions and overview of the next day objectives.

### DAY 5

**Morning:** Discuss canine stress both known and unknown. Explain a canine's learning acquisition, psychological and physical state in the concept of bite work. The cause of temporary changes in behavior and what adjustments to make. Understand cause and effect and action and reaction.

**Afternoon:** Student practice using selected combinations of civil agitation, hidden sleeves, and bite suits to maximize the K9's cued aggression to active and passive suspects. Recap days' activities, opportunity for questions.