

The only commodity more valuable than ammunition on Bill Davison's "jungle run" through

Designed to provide his students an opportunity to apply the lessons learned throughout the course, Davison's mantra of "don't just stand there" takes on a whole new dimension. Shooting on the move is the only way to survive the run. Target identification, use of cover, ammunition management, stress management and all the elements required to shoot effectively while on the move are put to the test. When Davison says, "don't just stand there" he harkens back to personal experience that tells him unequivocally, if you act like an easy target you will be one. For both of my runs through the jungle, I was huffing and puffing like a leaky air compressor, adrenaline coursing through my veins. I was no longer a mid-level manager strapped to a computer desk.

Davison has a way of bringing out the warrior in his students. Perhaps it is his leadership style forged from fourteen years as a British Royal Marine—including time as a certified Counter-Revolutionary Warfare (counterterrorism) instructor for British Special Forces, or perhaps it is the real life (and death) stories he told us to reinforce the lessons he learned under fire. Regardless, he is absolutely convincing when he explains the

fundamentals of armed confrontation.

How is it that a Royal Marine should end up teaching these fundamentals in the cactus and mesquite of rural Texas? The story has its roots in the 1987 Hungerford massacre. As a result of the 1987 shootings, the government he worked for confiscated the brand new AR-15 rifle he had purchased with his military salary. This was even more galling as he had been part of the team who evaluated and assessed the incident and knew firsthand that the semiautomatic rifle used there, which had spurred cries for the ban, had actually run out of ammo early and been mostly ineffective. Davison was told that with only a few semiautomatic owners in the country, they were a politically acceptable group to target. Despite promises of compensation, many people never received payment. When this process threatened to repeat itself after the 1996 Dunblane tragedy, Davison left the country—and England's loss was America's gain.

Drawing on his military experience and years of working in international VIP protection, Bill Davison and his wife, Alice, established Tac Pro Shooting Center in Mingus, Texas. Tac Pro Shooting Center sports some of the best facilities of any public range in the Dal-

las/Ft-Worth Area. It includes a rifle range with 100 and 200-yard berms, numerous shooting bays, racks of steel plates, sporting clays, a classroom, forest lanes for scenario-based shoots and a 1,000 yard range. They offer a wide range of classes for law enforcement and civilians, including courses covering the use of the pistol, shotgun, submachine gun and carbine, in addition to more traditional offerings for concealed carry and hunter safety. Despite a demanding schedule of up to eighty public classes and special events a year, Bill Davison personally oversees all classes and offers both private training and customized training for law enforcement agencies. Not content to merely follow the state mandated criteria for hunter safety, Alice Davison has made use of some of the same forested lanes used for training to give youngsters reality-based scenarios to test their knowledge of Texas game laws and safety. The range has even warranted a firsthand visit from state wildlife officials impressed with their record. In addition to regular classes, Tac Pro Shooting Center hosts two annual three-gun matches and the annual Sniper's Paradise Challenge match. The May and October 3-gun matches offered over \$8,000 in prizes with the prizes be-

Davison coaching one of the students through the "Jungle Run". Davison noted that many reverted to old ingrained habits under stress.



DON'T

STAND

Tac Pro Shooting

the Texas scrub oak is oxygen.

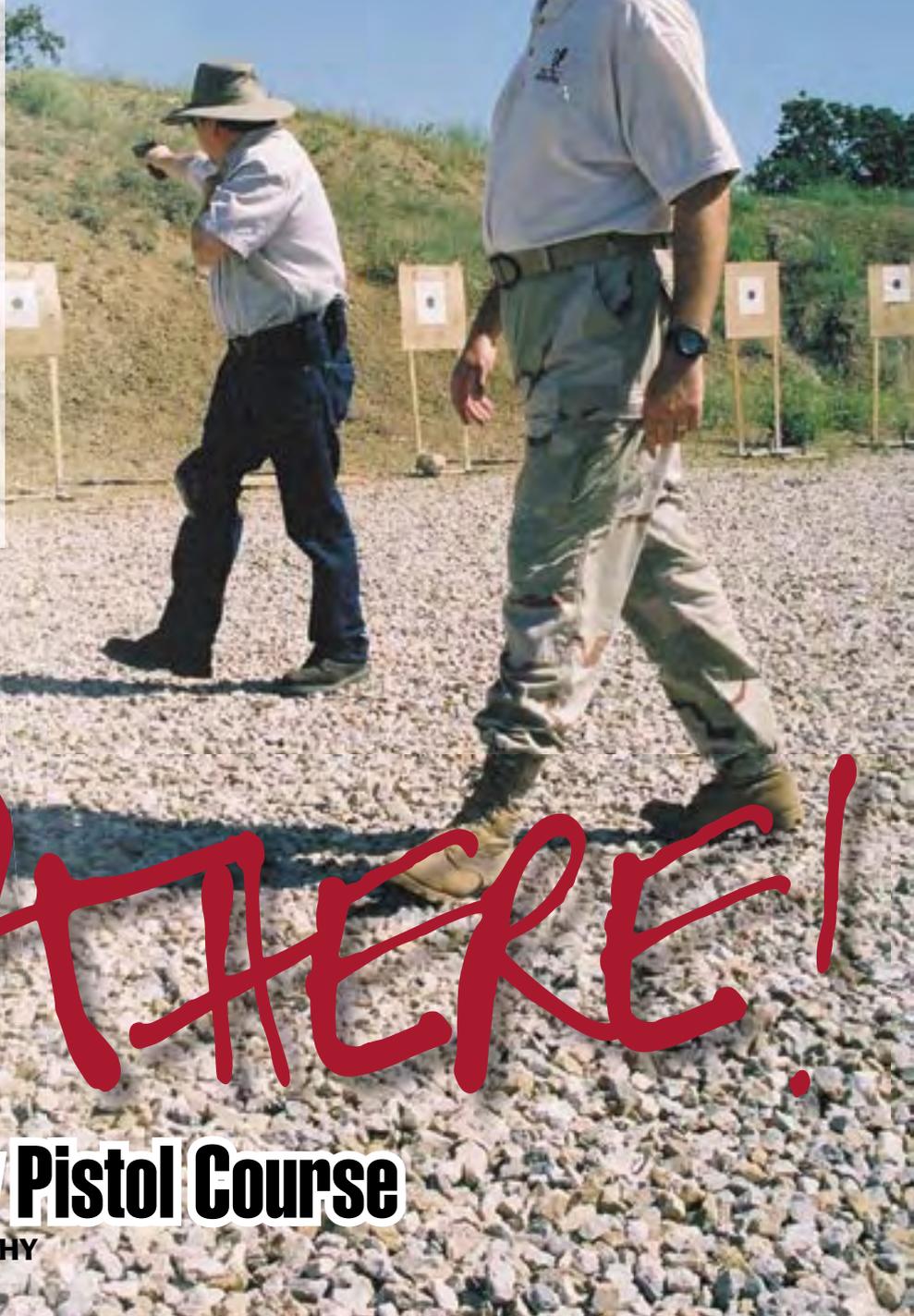
ing drawn by participants regardless of their final finishing rank.

Drawn by the unique opportunity, we signed up for the three-day Primary Pistol course. Unlike some instructors who teach individual elements which a student may use or discard as he pleases, Davison adopts a systemic approach to training. Each element of training is a foundation for later skills and classes and is designed to work together as a system. As a result, Davison asks that you learn things his way for the three days and give the whole system a try before discarding any of it.

The first of the three intense days of training was spent primarily in the classroom where he explained what we would be learning and why he felt that it was important to learn. Davison is an effective advocate of the isosceles stance and several longtime users of the Weaver stance quickly improved both accuracy and speed after brief coaching.

We reviewed the body's response to stress as detailed by Bruce Siddle and Lt. Col. David Grossman in graphic detail. Davison explained how the concepts he was teaching worked in concert with your body's stress response rather than fighting against them. In discussing the stress response of the body, he is quick to point out that not all pistols are created equal and

Davison walks a student through lateral movement while shooting. Students wait until the target is at maximum deflection before firing.



JUST

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that some feature controls that can work against you in this situation. He urged careful consideration of how well controls could be manipulated under stress when choosing a pistol.

Rather than advocate a center of mass approach to aiming, Davison describes the proper point of aim as the cardiovascular triangle. The triangular shaped area lies within imaginary lines drawn across a man's nipples and up to the Adam's apple. He states that a solid hit in this area will reliably incapacitate a human being quickly.

Based on his own training and experience, he states that during an armed encounter you will most likely use all of the ammunition in your weapon. As a result he is a firm believer in high capacity magazines. He makes a compelling case that when placed in the cardiovascular triangle, the 9mm is as effective as the venerable .45. His current personal weapons appear to reflect his beliefs as throughout the entire course, whether he carried a .45 or a 9mm, he never used a magazine that carried less than sixteen rounds.

Davison is also convinced that many (if not most) shooters are carrying unnecessarily powerful weapons that they are incapable of employing effectively in a defensive situation. His acid test to determine if you are carrying the appropriate weapon is both simple and revealing. From the ready position, you must hit the cardiovascular triangle three times in two seconds at ten yards.

While the discussions of stress on the human body and shot placement over caliber are nothing unusual in the world of defensive pistol instruction, Bill Davison likes to emphasize why he teaches these with personal recollections from his own past. Besides being entertaining, the stories are powerful tools in convincing many of the students to rethink their own choices. When he tells you, "This is what will happen in a gunfight", you believe what he tells you.

After finishing up the first day by establishing a good basic platform for marksmanship, students returned the next morning to learn stoppage drills and begin to incorporate movement into their shooting responses. The next day and a half was spent shooting on the move. Advancing, retreating and moving laterally

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both directions are taught and reinforced. Davison's techniques for shooting on the move are remarkably effective, even for the newer shooters among us. Rather than the slow stately walk of an IDPA match, shooters were moving like somebody was shooting at them and still scoring effective hits.

Davison's 550-acre facility provides training opportunities few can duplicate. The jungle run is a perfect example. Set in the rolling hills of north central Texas along an old jeep trail, the jungle run is bordered on both sides by mesquite, hardwoods and thorny underbrush. Lurking in the afternoon shadows are dull gray, steel pepper poppers. The steel reactive targets were set to require near perfect bullet placement and/or multiple hits to fall. They were placed at various distances and levels of concealment along the 200-yard trail. This was the final test of the lessons taught throughout Primary Pistol, and Davison had seen to it that you would need to incorporate all the lessons to pass it successfully.

Davison personally supervised each of us through the run. He provided each of us with feedback on our performances, one on one. More than once he returned with the student announcing, "Her Majesty regrets to inform you that your son is dead." The reasons for our untimely demise varied, but we all managed to learn a great deal from the experience. Bill is a gifted instructor and his passion for the subject is undeniable.

Tac-Pro Shooting Center provides a unique opportunity to learn from a talented and experienced instructor who sometimes challenges the conventional wisdom of defensive firearms instruction taught in America. Whether you agree with his philosophies or not, after three days you will have had an invaluable look at a different training perspective—and one that few outside of select military and law enforcement groups will ever see. ©

SOURCE:

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