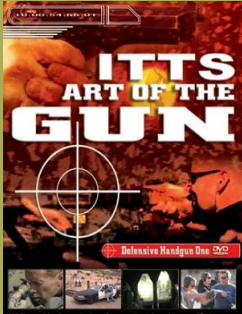


February 15, 2007  
Volume 1, Issue 2



**MONTHLY UPDATE**

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**Highlights:**

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**ISSUE 2 – FOCUS ON SWAT**

**SOLVING THE PROBLEM**

Most classes give you drills and through repetition, you know what to expect. After a few runs you get better and better at it. There are no surprises. What if you had to deal with the unknown? What if you had to go into a house not knowing if there was an armed suspect (or suspects) inside and maybe even a hostage or two? What if you had to drive up to a site and suddenly everything went sideways with gunfire coming from nowhere? For years Scott trained Metro in this manner – giving his guys scenarios they didn't expect. In the real world that's how it works...no warning, no time to prepare; it is fast and furious.

Welcome to the new **Problem-Solving Tactics class on March 17-18** where you are forced to make decisions quickly and without notice. In this course you will work alone and with other teammates to solve problems. These problems will become more complex as the class progresses and both live fire and airsoft will be used. Every scenario will be different and will cause you to think through a problem and effectively solve it, while keeping a cool head. At the end of each scenario there will be a briefing on the class's overall performance and suggestions on what other options might have been available. At the end of the day, you will learn to think on your feet and problem solve. After all, suspects don't hold up targets in the real world!

We expect this to be one of our most popular classes as there is no end to Scott's ability to think of complicated scenarios that will trip you up!!! Call us at 310-471-2029 or better yet, email us at [itts@gte.net](mailto:itts@gte.net) to sign up. You will be challenged!

**New Courses Coming up Soon:**

March 2-4

**Awerbuck-Reitz Shotgun**

April 25-29

**5 Day Ultimate Tactical Course**



*To Scott Reitz,  
With best wishes,  
Ronald Reagan*

Scott with Ronald Reagan during a Presidential detail. He presented the President with an LAPD S.W.A.T. belt buckle and got this signed photo from the Commander in Chief. During his SWAT days he guarded four Presidents and even managed to bump Clinton's car on his last detail!! Nice going!

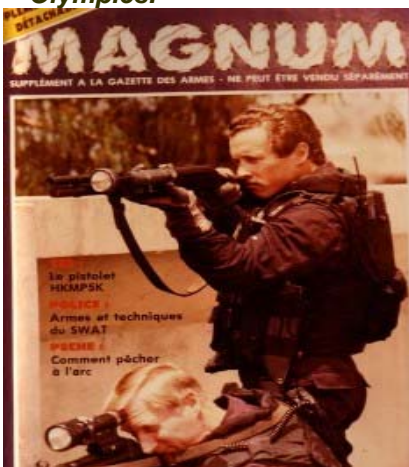
**February – August 2007 Course Schedule**



*Scott is his bella clava along with the other SWAT guys prior to a warrant.*



*Scott with his partner, Bob Guzman, during a SWAT training day. Circa the 1984 Olympics.*



*Someone sent this to us from France. Unbeknownst to us, it was on the cover of a French SWAT magazine.*

February 23-25	Intermediate Handgun
March 2-4	Advanced Handgun Series
March 2-4	Shotgun I (Fort Angeles Range)
March 17-18	Problem-Solving Tactics
March 17-18	Defensive Handgun I
March 30-April 1	Tactical Carbine II
April 14-15	Defensive Handgun II
April 20-22	Intermediate Handgun Series
April 25-29	5 Day Ultimate Tactical Course
May 5-6	Defensive Handgun I
May 18-20	Tactical Sniper/Counter Sniper Course
May 25-27	Tactical Carbine I
June 1-2	Vehicle Assaults/Stops
June 2-3	Defensive Handgun II
June 2-4	Subgun/Carbine Course
June 8-10	Advanced Handgun Series
June 8	Advanced Handgun III A
June 9	Advanced Handgun III B
June 10	Advanced Handgun III C
June 13-15	Dynamic Shotgun/Handgun
June 20 – July 10	Training in Europe
July 13	Intermediate Handgun IIA
July 13-15	Intermediate Handgun Series
July 14	Intermediate Handgun II B
July 15	Intermediate Handgun II C
July 21	Private Instruction
July 21-22	Defensive Handgun I
July 27-29	Concealed Carry – off duty
August 3	Private Instruction
August 4-5	Defensive Handgun II
August 10	Advanced Handgun III A
August 10-12	Advanced Handgun Series
August 11	Advanced Handgun III B
August 12	Advanced Handgun III C

# Training to Instant Response

By Scott Reitz

How does one go from zero to sixty in an instant? More importantly is how does one train to this? A shooter has to have accomplished a certain level of proficiency before attempting to react at speed to a situation. The best way to develop this skill is to treat even the most mundane of drills as if they were real live events. For instance, if you are on the line with other shooters you should attempt to fire the first shot of any given string of fire yet still maintain your accuracy. You should be the first to draw the pistol and with this goal in mind you should react to the range command instantaneously

The draw must be practiced dry again and again and again. It is the only way to hone it to such a degree that it becomes one smooth rapid motion either to the low ready or directly onto the target. Count one of the draw is everything so work hard towards getting both hands moving at the same time such that they are set in the proper position time after time; firing hand to the pistol, support hand to the belt buckle area with the fingers together and the thumb upright vertical towards the bottom of the chin. Work towards making this a jerk response with fast twitch muscles and the rest

of the draw will follow in its speed. You should be the first to complete a reload on the line yet still maintain accuracy. These may seem rather simple and straightforward thought processes yet they prepare you for the field. Too often students and officers will use every second of a timed drill to complete the evolution. What you should do is quite the opposite. Always make the draw as fast as is possible yet maintain control of the pistol or the rifle or shotgun from the low ready position. Sometimes shooters will respond slowly in order to check themselves from shooting too fast.

The better response is to get on target rapidly and then...take your time. This works. The thought process is quite a different aspect of the gunfighter. One observes the problem and then mentally processes how one is going to accomplish a solution. This is done in an instant, faster than one could ever articulate it. The physicality of carrying out what the mind just processed is simple a matter of training. Treat each problem you are given as if it were real, decide on the course of action and then slowly begin to push your speed relative to solving the problem.

## New Equipment and Facilities!

*We now have a working shoot house with multiple rooms and hallways. We also have new armor, reactive targets and the knife attack system that will enable you, the student, to get more benefit out of the evolutions we run on the range. We look forward to this year as a continual progression forward in keeping all of you safe and effective when it really counts.*

***Below is a firing run from a moving vehicle on steel.***



**Next Issue:**

**Should you re-work your pistol?**

**\* If you know someone who wants to receive the ITTS newsletter, please send us their email and they will be put on the list**

## LAPD S.W.A.T. QUALIFICATIONS by Scott Reitz

*“The candidates then run the obstacle course in full tactical gear which includes two fast ropes, balance beam, 180 lb dummy drag, stokes litter carry with weight, (4) 6 - foot walls interspersed through the course, a handheld battering ram carry and traverse cargo nets.”*



*“The Officers now proceed to live fire evolutions in ‘Hogans Alley’ where tactics, hits and judgment calls in shoot/no shoot and hostage scenarios are thrown at the candidate. (Remember that tenured ‘D’ Platoon members are watching your every move at every moment - no pressure right?) If you hit a no shoot or a hostage you’re out right then and there!”*

Throughout the years, I am constantly asked what it takes to make it into LAPD SWAT. This is a fair question as the LAPD SWAT team was the first of its kind in the world. Since our team is constantly depicted in TV and the movies there are naturally a lot of misconceptions as to the true nature of what we do, how we do it, and the individuals we allow into our ranks. So, for what its worth, this is what it takes to make it into the fabled, ‘D’ platoon of Metropolitan Division otherwise known as, ‘SWAT.’ The following is by no means an exact, detailed recital of the rather comprehensive program, but it will give you, the reader, a good overall perspective of what it takes to be an LA, ‘SWAT Dog.’

The first step is that one must be a full time sworn and fully field certified, Los Angeles Police Officer. One must then attain the rank of P-III referred to as, ‘P-Three’ or a training officer. This in itself entails a written exam and an oral and then selection from all the other candidates within the department. Then one must have been on the streets with field experience and expertise in various areas for a period of not less than four years until one can even consider applying for entry into the elite Metropolitan Division. While the four year minimum is on paper, the truth of the matter is time on the job prior to

acceptance into is approximately 6-8 years. This alone, entails a physical fitness test, stress oral, personnel package review and past field performance. Considering that in an average year when Metro advertises for personnel, there are about 130 – 150 candidates from a force of 9400 and only 15 are selected it is not an easy feat by any stretch of the imagination. On average, the selection process into Metro is in place about once every two years. An officer must then serve in Metro in one of the Platoons for at least one year prior to applying for the, ‘D’ platoon selection process. During this time, the officer will have established a work ethic, tactical knowledge, mission concepts and partner relationships that are examined by the division. Essentially, one must establish a positive reputation for reliability, a hard work ethic and officer safety among other attributes that qualify you to remain in the Division. On average, the time on the job prior to an individual gaining admittance into, ‘D’ platoon is 7-9 years maybe a bit more. The SWAT, ‘tryouts’ as they are referred to, used to occur once every two years, but that policy has recently been changed to how many spots open or don’t open up. When you go through the following selection process, keep in mind that an average pool

of highly qualified candidates from within Metro is about 30-35 officers and from that only about 3-5 will enter SWAT on any given year. The Metro Officer must complete an oral in front of no less than three Sergeants from SWAT and have a current qualification slip from the LAPD bonus course of fire. (Expert rating is advisable although not mandatory) He must then complete the 3 mile Academy run in less than 25 minutes and do as many push-ups, pull-ups and sit ups as is possible in a given period of time. The candidates then run the obstacle course in full tactical gear which includes two fast ropes, balance beam, 180 lb dummy drag, stokes litter carry with weight, (4) 6 foot walls interspersed through the course, a handheld battering ram carry and traverse cargo nets. If any of these preceding procedures result in injury, disqualification or failure to meet the minimum standards, then the candidate is dropped and must wait to try out again in the future (Not a fun evolution).

Candidates who successfully negotiate the first steps now move forward in the process. There will be 18 different tests over the period of 5-6 days. (This is a long time to be totally switched on by the way) They will include some of the following; interactive role

**CONTD NEXT PAGE**

## CONTD PREV PAGE

playing on an advanced simulator where hits are shown, misses are shown and shoot/no shoot scenarios and hostage situations are engaged in by the officer. These simulations also incorporate pepper spray scenarios, taser evolutions and verbalization to judge the Officer's competency and knowledge regarding the use of force continuum. (If you screw this up, you're out and sent packing back to the Division to whichever Platoon you are assigned to.) The Officer's now proceed to live fire evolutions in, 'Hogans Alley' where tactics, hits, and judgment calls in shoot/no shoot and hostage scenarios are thrown at the candidate. (Remember that tenured, 'D' Platoon members are watching your every move at every moment...no pressure right?) If you hit a no shoot or a hostage you're out right then and there. Those who remain in the candidate pool, now move on down to Camp Pendleton California, home of the First Marine Division, for further testing for 3 days and 2 nights. Candidates must qualify on the pistol, shotgun and M-4 carbine and score 90% on all three of the SWAT qualification courses of fire. If you're off only one point or screw up the sequence of fire or of these manipulation drills is scrutinized by multiple instructor's, who are inches away from you and who score on each and

every manipulation and again, if you prang it up...you're out! The next step is the live fire obstacle course which is a real tail dragger. For instance, at the end of the course when you're out of breath, trembling and everything hurts, you must score hits on a 50 yard target with the pistol. Any weapons violation, safety violation or breach of the course rules or sequence of events in the course results in immediate disqualification and you're back to LA. The next evolution is the shooting house in conjunction with a tenured member of, 'D' Platoon. Shoot/no shoot hostage and multiple target engagement scenarios are thrown at the candidate. Other, 'D' team members watch the proceedings from the catwalks above. Any no-shoot or hostage engagement substandard marksmanship, weapons violations, or the smallest breach of safety protocols will send you back to...yep, LA! Then the shooting house is re-configured and the candidate goes through with flash bangs and tenured members with the same expectations of performance. Those candidates remaining, now move on to the climbing and rappel towers, climbing walls, caving ladders, helicopter skid rappels, and fast roping to judge their ability to deal with heights. Officers remaining, now conduct a land navigation

course over five hours. During these days the candidates will be put on a team run with fresh, 'D' platoon members pushing them all the way. (Not fun!) Candidates remaining now go back to Los Angeles for the team obstacle course at Camp Snoopy on Dodger Stadium property in full tactical gear carrying a weighted stokes litter through the entire course. (Really not fun!) Then they move on to a downtown LA City facility called Piper Tech, where they must negotiate a climbing obstacle course topped roped by climbing cadre members. There are other tests interspersed throughout all of this but by this time those candidates remaining must now endure what I consider to be a fairly difficult evolution. They must submit in writing, five candidates other than themselves, who are still remaining and state why these five should be admitted into, 'D' Platoon and the reasons for this. (Talk about peer pressure and the character of a man!) During the entire selection process, the candidates are broken up into five man teams with alternating team leaders each day, who are responsible for conveying information to all the other team members about times, gear, responsibilities and expectations of the men during any given evolution of the day. (Read leadership skills.) Each

candidate's personnel package is reviewed for complaints, commendations, injury on duty time accrued, total sick days used in their careers and any special expertise as well.

Whew! Once all this is finished, the candidates are numerically rated and brought into the Platoon as spots open up. On average only 3-5 spots open up on any given year. If you don't make the cut, you start all over again the next year. One injury, one mistake, one bad call during any of these weeks means you are back to square one. Other than that admittance into LAPD SWAT is a cakewalk! **Please send me any comments or questions you have.**

***“Any weapons violation, safety violation, or breach of the course rules or sequence of events in the course, results in immediate disqualification and you're back to L.A.”***

**“ASK UNCLE SCOTTY” COLUMN****Real answers to real questions from you!**

“Two guys were trying to steal the tire off my car and as I came upon the scene, one decided to come at me with the tire iron. He didn't understand low ready, but he and his partner clearly understood up on target and slack off the trigger. They decided to live and steal another day. It was a very interesting experience, as I felt as if I was being "pulled" through all my reactions versus making step by step decisions. I'd be interesting to know if that is a common sensation among officers involved in shootings.”

Jack P.

**Dear Jack,**  
**Excellent question!** With proper training an individual will experience precisely what you did. This is why fighter pilots, astronauts and surgeons all practice in situations that prepare them for real world evolutions. In critical stress scenarios the most important factor is thinking through the problem and allowing your training to take over your decisions. The use of restraint is equally, if not more so, important in tactical decision-making skills. You cannot put a price tag on this. I have had many people that I have trained, relate the same emotional response that you did. Great job!

“I am taking your sniper course in May but do not own a sniper rifle. What do you recommend? And why do you require match ammo?”  
 Derrick J.

**Dear Derrick,**

**If you're just starting out I would keep it very basic. Buy an off the shelf Remington 700 rifle in .308 caliber and mount a 3x10 Leupold scope with mil dots. It is solid and accurate and will serve you well. Match ammo is suggested as it takes much of the questions as to whether it is you or the ammo out of the equation. However, you can use regular ammo with fairly close results under most shooting conditions. Should you decide to really get in the game then you step up to custom rifles built on the rifle you have already purchased. A Chandler hardened rifle with a Unertl Scope will set you back about 7,500!!**

“In your Defensive Handgun I class you had us shoot out to 50 yards on steel with our pistols. Would that technique be used in the “real world?”

Bryan M.

**Dear Bryan,**

**Two answers to this one. We do it in Handgun I to show you that you can in fact, with proper instruction, hit at fifty yards. This instills confidence and lets us, the instructors, know that you understand the basics well enough to accomplish this. As to being real world; we have many documented shootings in excess of fifty yards on LAPD alone to justify learning such a skill. It is far better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it. With practice you can take this well past three hundred yards as some Navy personnel did after we showed them how to accomplish this. Yes, it is a viable skill.**

“Is it worth it to have a pistol custom made?” Chris R.

**Dear Chris,**

**I'm glad you asked because I will be writing about customizing a pistol in the next issue of this newsletter. The short answer is yes, it is worth it. But you must know where to send the pistol and what work to have done on it. If sent to the wrong place, you could spend a lot of money on junk you don't need which will only hinder your ability to shoot quickly and effectively. I'm not a proponent of a lot of useless mud flaps and whip antennas! I like a real “working” gun.**

**Send your questions to [brett@internationaltactical.com](mailto:brett@internationaltactical.com) and we will try to answer them as soon as possible here!**