

Combat: Comparisons & Conflicts

This article is about the similarities between combat (practical) pistol shooting and practical martial arts, but also the contentious issues and conflicts within each discipline which have dominated their development over many years. We have, within each realm, conflicts of speed, impact, accuracy, plus relevance to real world defensive scenarios and, last but not least, the highly contentious introduction of competitions. So, the conflicts and issues addressed in this article aren't about martial arts set against combat pistol shooting, rather the fascinating comparisons that run through both disciplines which within them have created dissent, disagreement, controversy (all of which still exist today), but also progress.

The Key Factors

The first parallel I want to make is the challenge of **speed v accuracy v power** in the combat pistol realm, with **speed v impact** in the combat martial arts arena. I've left accuracy out of the martial arts side of the equation as, whilst it's obviously important, accuracy doesn't hold the same challenge when set against the other two factors (speed and power) in the martial arts arena, as accuracy certainly does within the practical pistol arena - where it has to be the principal issue. However, this is most challenged by the need for speed and power; as we'll see when we dive into the detail.

One very simple conflict in the pistol world centres around accuracy, especially where multiple shots are required, probably at speed, together with the power of the cartridge being shot. The bigger the calibre, the more power but, equally, more potential recoil and therefore the more 'recoil management' needed to bring the muzzle of the pistol back on target after the first, or subsequent accurate shots. Obviously, speed may also be compromised with more time-consuming recoil management of larger calibre pistols.

In martial arts, accuracy of strikes and kicks isn't nearly as compromised by speed or impact as it is within the world of competitive, or defensive pistol shooting.

It's interesting that when I'm teaching the thing that I often see which will challenge impact will be an over-concentration on accuracy; i.e. an unnecessary over-focus on the target, say a focus mitt, negating the necessary concentration on the more vital inclusion of the whole body in the dynamic development of the strike, without which it becomes an

isolated arm strike. It's hard to break this habit and allow ourselves to rely more on our natural 'hand/eye' coordination which will subconsciously sort out the accuracy. This challenge is no different in the combat pistol world where, for many years, marksmanship teaching placed all the emphasis on the need for a clear and steady alignment of the weapon's front and rear sights and target (albeit that our eyes can't make a clear focus of these three items).

However, in an armed confrontation, speed of action will be almost as major a factor as accuracy and one can't be sacrificed for the other; having said that, a 'fast miss' will be of no value, but when pistol work is truly combative then speed, accepting it's likely affect on accuracy, has to be factored into training. Enter the introduction of the instinctive, 'flash-sight' picture which utilises a person's innate hand/eye coordination - and the work of the early and mid 20th century combat pistol pioneers who we'll visit later in the story.

On the martial arts side of the coin, and where the outcome of a confrontation is not just a medal or title then, from my perspective, impact is the only thing that matters. I quote this line repeatedly which is that **"speed steals impact."** What I mean by that is that we can strike very fast but in a such a way that the speed has been simply the innervation of white twitch muscle fibres giving the arm speed but not involving body mass, the delivery of which into the other person's mass is what real impact is about - and what puts assailants down. In my case this is by means of the 'double hip' and other kinetic body dynamics. The challenge, therefore is how to maximise both speed and impact through the transmission of bodyweight - but where one 'challenges' the other.



Impact from the 'Double Hip' technique. Transfer of body mass.

The Lorry and the 'Mini'

I often use the analogy of a wall at the bottom of a steep hill. The wall is three tiers of bricks and as solid as a bomb shelter. In the first instance we send a mini car down the hill at 100 miles per hour, but when it hits the wall the mini disintegrates into its constituent parts, with the wall having barely a scratch. In the second scenario we roll a 12 ton truck down the hill at 15 miles per hour but this time when it hits the wall the truck travels on as if nothing has happened leaving the wall behind as a pile of bricks. It's mass that counts.

Fast arms and hands are all well and good, but if the body weight isn't within the strike then it's the 'mini' scenario. That's fine if we need speed solely to be 'tactical,' or aesthetic - the classic example being a traditional points, non-contact, Karate kumite competition, or Kata comp.

In practical pistol shooting it's the same; how to be fast in all the areas where speed matters and can be improved, set against the challenge of accuracy during what is often, in competitive pistol shooting, a complex 'course of fire,' with a variety of 'shoot' targets (those we shoot at) and 'no-shoot' targets (those we are not to shoot and for which, if we do, we'll incur penalties).

These latter targets may be what we would term 'hostage,' or non-threat targets and may be set behind or in front of a shoot target with only a portion of it showing, demanding excellent accuracy. As you can see from the article's photos, a practical pistol 'course of fire' is physically (and also mentally) demanding to a high degree, and adrenaline, producing, all of which contribute to the deterioration of 'fine motor skills.' Skills, unfortunately, that are exactly what's needed to be accurate in pistol handling. Also the faster we sprint between designated barriers the hardest it is to stop and shoot accurately and the more exhausted we get, and sooner.

Just a quick point, which is that when I refer to a pistol I'm talking about a semi-automatic handgun as distinct from a revolver. It may not be totally common usage but I was brought up with that terminology distinction.



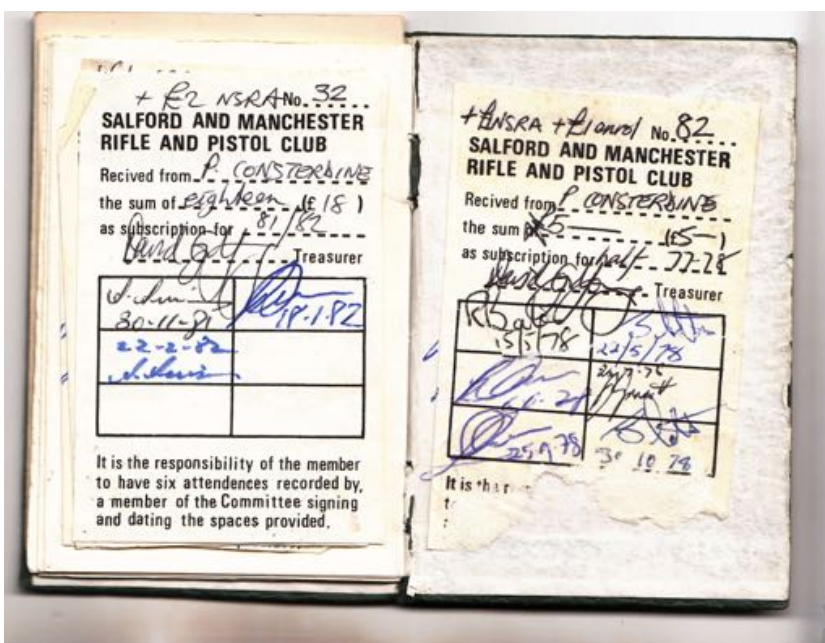
A no-shoot target, identified with the 'hands,' angled in front of a shoot target.

My Shooting Story

Up to a few years ago I'd been shooting nearly as long as I'd been involved in the martial arts up until, in the UK, we legally lost the right to own handguns (without 12" barrels). At the time that happened my shooting had been confined to those occasions when I was running Close Protection (CP) courses which we held at ranges in Shropshire called the 'Bog,' run by some friends of mine. I'd been teaching combat pistol for a good number of years by then, all centred around the CP training environment.

However, go back a good few years before that and, for many years, I'd been a competitive pistol shooter, but within what was termed 'practical pistol' competition and you may now, even at this early stage in the article, be sniffing out the first of the combat comparisons between handgun work and martial arts. Growing up in Manchester I'd

joined the Salford and Manchester Rifle and Pistol Club where, during my first stint it had all been indoor .22 pistol and .38 revolver competitive, 'postal' shooting, completely non-practical - shooting with one-hand, marksmanship style with slow fire, carefully aimed shots.



I left the club for a few years but when I joined again a new section of the club had been formed around the latest iteration of pistol competition, that of 'practical pistol', and a whole new world of combat oriented competition opened up for me. In context, time-wise, I was heavily into traditional Karate competition and a regular member of the English and British All-Styles National Teams, but the pistol competition added a new dimension to the physical and mental skills I'd acquired through martial arts, and high level Karate competition.

Copy of my Firearms certificate from the 1970s which included the 9mm Browning Hi-Power I shot for many years in practical competitions

Signature of holder: [Signature]
 To be kept in safe custody

I Firearms

i Possessed
 One .22 Britarms pistol No.2040.
 One 9mm Browning pistol No.72056987.
 One .357 Smith & Wesson revolver No.742000-6419800.

GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE

ii Authorized to be purchased or acquired
 None

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One 9mm pistol
GREATER MANCHESTER POLICE

2 Ammunition

	Quantity	Calibre	Quantity	Calibre
i Possessed	100	.22RF	None	
	200	9mm		
	50	.357		
ii Maximum amount authorised to be possessed at any one time	500	.22RF		
	600	9mm		
	400	.357		
iii Maximum amount authorised to be purchased or acquired at any one time	400	.22RF		
	400	9mm		
	200	.357		

The governing body for this discipline was the **United Kingdom Practical Shooters Association (UKPSA)** established in 1977 and still going to this day. This was one of a number of national bodies around the world (in the States it was the **USPSA**) and all part of the original organisation started in the States in 1976 called the **International Practical Shooters Confederation (IPSC)**.

IPSC shooting is dynamic, challenging, and one of the fastest growing shooting sports in the world today. Courses of fire utilise many aspects not found in the more traditional shooting disciplines such as movement by the shooter, moving targets, multiple targets, and the freedom for the shooter to solve the shooting challenges presented in the courses of fire. More later on the genesis of this organisation and it's somewhat troubled development (martial arts parallels again!).

Early days, the combat element of IPSC competition was foundational and only for handgun competition where the weapon, 'loaded and locked' (a round in the chamber, the hammer or striker cocked and safety on) was ready to be drawn from a holster, which itself had to be concealed under a jacket and placed behind the hip, so that if the jacket was held open the weapon would not be visible. Further, the holster had to be capable of

being tightened so that, ideally, someone doing a forward roll would not have the pistol come out of the holster; this prevented people having the pistol too slack in the leather so as to facilitate a faster draw, however impractical. This was as close to combat conditions as it could safely get on a 'one way range', but it wasn't to last.



A competitor running through a course of fire and we can see the magazine being dropped during a 'mag change' on the move. The shooter is followed by the range officer holding his timer and ensuring there are no safety breaches.

The scoring requirement for being successful at an IPSC practical pistol 'Course of Fire' or stage, (which has no time limit) is very simply the relationship between speed and accuracy; speed across the ground and over, around or under obstacles and speed of weapon handling from drawing from a concealed holster (at the sound of a buzzer from a timer that stops the clock as the last round is fired) to target acquisition, recoil management and magazine changes - pretty much all of it whilst on the move, or about to move and also stopping suddenly. However, and I'll come back to this in more detail later but, "speed challenges accuracy" and it should be obvious that where more speed equals less accuracy then the gain in speed becomes pointless, irrespective as to whether the target is a paper one or a human one. There is a third element in the mix, however, and that's '**power**' a topic we'll tackle further on.



Taking out targets whilst on the move

Too Much Speed..?

Personally, and although I shot on a very successful team (we won the UKPSA Southern Area Championships one year), my problem was speed and not too little of it, rather too much. I was fast across the ground and fast in weapon handling, most of which I put down to many years of martial arts and good physical control, fitness and aggression to complete the drills but, as expected, the price I paid was in accuracy. I needed both to be optimal, as the other issue I had was that I shot what was termed '*minor factor*' pistol ammunition, specifically from a 9mm Browning Hi-Power, whereas the competition scoring rules were based on, in those days, the stopping power of a .45 ACP round, typically from a Colt Model 1911; the handgun that **Col. Jeff Cooper** (see below) believed was the only calibre pistol that was guaranteed to stop a person; here we've now introduced the '**power**' part of the equation. In IPSC competition this .45 ACP round was treated for scoring purposes as a '*major factor*' and any lesser, minor factor round (e.g. 9mm), was penalised in the scoring system.

In pistol shooting the more powerful the ammunition, either in load or weight of bullet will have a negative impact on other requirements of combat shooting, not least speed. In simple terms, the heavier the calibre the greater the recoil so control of the weapon where fast, multiple shots are required will be more demanding and potentially slower than a lighter calibre round. Additionally, a larger calibre handgun will, with a standard, 'out of the box' magazine hold less rounds than a smaller calibre gun and if we use the two pistols I've mentioned above as examples, and in the days I was competing where the weapons were pretty much as they came out of the box with no modifications, I would have a magazine for the Browning Hi-Power holding 13 rounds, plus one in the chamber (if we could top-up the mag after chambering a round). By contrast, the bog standard 1911 in .45 ACP holds only 7-8 rounds in the standard magazine.

The overall affect of the limited capacity of the 1911 would mean, over a long course of fire, that more 'mag' changes could be needed than would be for the Browning. So, in exchange for increased stopping power, we have more difficult and potentially slower weapon control due to heavier recoil and more weapon management in terms of magazine changes. Personally, I made the decision to sacrifice the increased stopping power by shooting 9mm in exchange for easier and faster weapon control, due to lighter recoil, and greater ammunition capacity.

However, under IPSC rules, and to even the playing field, as explained above, 9mm pistols, although considered 'full power' handguns were penalised by means of what was termed the Comstock scoring system. The 'Hit Factor' for a particular course of fire, or stage, accounted not only for speed and accuracy but also factored in bullet weight and bullet velocity and the base line for what was considered to have the necessary stopping power was the .45 ACP round - not the 9mm - for which one paid a scoring penalty; as I did, but my compensating scoring factor was speed.

I was happy to exchange power for speed in pistol competitions, but I'm definitely not when it comes to striking and kicking and here we have the first 'combat comparison' and the challenge that has dogged shooters should certainly challenge and trouble martial artists. When I'm working with my training group, the emphasis all the time is trying to manage the challenge of **speed** set against **impact**.

When we talk about impacting as a human being we should simply be referring to our body mass and how much and how quickly we can get that mass into an opponent via the 'tool' of an arm, leg, elbow, head, etc., irrespective of the technique. And whilst we might be able to punch at x miles per hour, our body mass can only travel at -x mph. So, we are, or should be, for ever working to produce impact through organising the body mass to effectively precede the impact of the 'tool'.

The parallel with combat shooting is a perfect equation and Col. Cooper would only ever hold the belief that .45 APC was the minimum calibre needed to stop a human assailant. These days there are a proliferation of bullet weights and power load for every calibre but for example, in .45 ACP we would in the old days have a typical weight of 230-grain in standard military load, as against a typical 9mm round of 115-grains. Factor in speed and another similarity emerges in that the average velocity of the 230-grain bullet will be roughly 830 feet per second, contrasted with some 1250 fps of the 9mm 115 -grain. From a foot/pounds perspective of impact the .45 would have around 30% more impact.



The 9mm 'Mini' on the left and .45ACP 'Lorry' on the right.

The difference in the weight of the round and amount of powder available to propel the larger calibre round is obvious. Slower, but more impactful as a consequence of the mass.

So, slower but heavier and more stopping power, but compromised by dint of all the factors we highlighted earlier. This is the truck and the mini analogy and parallels the concept of bodyweight for impact in martial arts.

I now can't remember where the following quote came from but I'd put my money on Col. Cooper - ***"You don't kill a large calibre man with a small calibre bullet."*** Nor, I'd submit, *"can you put a large calibre man down with a small calibre strike."*

Practical Pistol - Competition History

I'll backtrack here to try and summarise the rise of practical pistol competition for which we have to travel Stateside and, importantly, make the distinction between combat pistol and practical (competition) pistol. There can't be many people involved in the world of practical martial arts who haven't heard of **Col. Jeff Cooper**, famous, not the least for his **'Colour Codes,'** but equally so for his development of combat shooting and, although his work wasn't restricted to just handguns, I just want to concentrate on this aspect of his combat firearms development work.

Col. Jeff Cooper shooting from a Weaver position



A former Marine Colonel and police officer, Col. Jeff Cooper (1920 - 2006) opened one of the first commercial combat firearms training centre in 1976 called the **American Pistol Institute (API)** becoming eventually, as everyone came to know it, as the **Gunsite Academy**. It wasn't just the opening of the centre that was important, rather Cooper's approach to pistol handling and specifically the semi-automatic, in his case the Colt 1911. This and other semi-auto pistols had been around for many years but they had been utilised as simply a personal defensive weapon in the military and shot as one would shoot a revolver, - one armed, slow fire and aimed on the basis of decades old 'marksmanship' principles, but with a much bigger ammunition capacity.

At this point I'd like to shout out to an old martial arts and combat colleague of mine - Dennis Martin. As many of you know, who've read my articles and books over the years, I credit Dennis in the UK for 'tramping down' for us a very bumpy path many of us later took to extract practical, self protection elements from traditional martial arts; he led that journey in the U.K and he was certainly one of the first who studied what was happening in the US with such people as Marcus Wynne, Massad Ayoob and others.

But, equally as important as the unarmed issues were to Dennis's research it was in the field of firearms that he also led the rest of us. He was a graduate of Gunsite and has been in many, less that compliant parts of the world, furthering that practical, combat firearms knowledge. Dennis probably won't remember but my team from Manchester competed in a UKPSA style comp at a club on the Wirral against Dennis's team, one very cold winter's day. The courses of fire were superb; exciting and challenging, but I'll leave it to history as to which team won...

Later I attended Dennis's **CQB Services**, Close Protection course, the first of its kind in the UK. The course was held at the then premises of Delta Training at the old, re-purposed naval shore-based facility - HMS Ganges. Latterly Dennis, myself and other martial artists and combat shooters attended Delta's Combat Firearms courses (see photo below), which I have to say, whilst pushing the envelope of safety, ran the most effective combat pistol/firearms courses I've ever attended - and survived.



Dennis on the far right, me on the far left and, holding the target, our late, but very dear friend and one of the BCA's earliest Instructors, Peter Robins,. Knowing Delta Training in those days this could have been a 'no-shoot' target but equally a 'shoot' one....

Col. Cooper and a small handful of other former marines such as Jack Weaver, Ray Chapman and others had been experimenting with concepts of 'practical pistol' post the Korean conflict and it was around the late 1950s that the first man-on-man competitions began, but shot with single action revolvers in a 'quick draw', firing from the hip 'gunfighter' style, or in Police Pistol comps more inclined to revolvers. However, Jack Weaver was appalled by the miss rate of people firing large calibre handguns, one handed and over relatively short ranges..

He was determined to find a way of achieving reliable accuracy even over longer distances, while maintaining maximum recoil/muzzle flip control in rapid bursts of fire. His efforts culminated in the introduction of a two-handed shooting position at eye level with the shooting hand extended and the supporting arm bent (see photo), and with the feet in a 'bladed' stance - one foot in front of the other; which eventually went down in history as the "Weaver Stance".



Isosceles on the left and Weaver on the right. It was simply natural for me to shoot in a Weaver stance as it was a perfect approximation of an unarmed fighting stance. One was in a position for weapon retention by withdrawing the pistol to the hip with the strong hand and fending off or striking with the left. The Isosceles takes no account of any required stability in a physical confrontation at very close ranges nor, if one were running and had to stop how one's feet would end up - it wouldn't be as per the photo on the left but in Weaver when one stops quickly it doesn't even matter if the other foot is forward.

But today this is considered very outdated according to modern insight, and most of today's top-level IPSC shooters practice a pure form or modified variants of the "Isosceles Stance", a two-handed shooting position in which both arms are held straight but with the feet parallel, thereby forming a triangle - hence isosceles.... I shot 'Weaver' as it perfectly duplicated a 'social' combative stance from my martial arts and 'door-work'. Weaver is a stance which one can fall into naturally if stopping suddenly, unlike the triangular 'isosceles.' If I was shooting now I still would shoot Weaver.

So, the world of combat pistol shooting changed by developing two handed weapon control, speed draw from a 'concealed' position, fast re-loading, a combat specific stance and fire and movement. Along with Jack Weaver and despite what others may say, Cooper was the first to decry the one-handed, aimed shoot from an almost completely side-on stance, or the 'combat crouch, again one-handed, as the best way to handle the

circumstances of being on what's termed a 'two-way' range ; in other words where someone may be shooting back at you. All these innovations were to be enshrined in Col. Cooper's '**Modern Techniques of the Pistol**'.

Jeff Cooper's - 'Modern Techniques of the Pistol'

Cooper's Modern Techniques (and few remember that it was Cooper who was responsible for these innovations) since he developed them, have become the basis for all modern combat/practical pistol handling; if not exactly; then a very close version of it.

There were 4 constituent parts to the system:

1. The Big-Bore Semi-Autoloader Pistol
2. The Weaver Stance
3. The Flash Site Picture (putting the focus just on the front sight): At close ranges you don't have to carefully line up the front and rear sight and certainly not in a gunfight.
4. The Surprise Break: this was truly innovative and involved a shooter pressing a trigger, not jerking it, to the degree that the shot when it happened would almost be a surprise to the shooter.

One of the key elements of the Modern Pistol Techniques is the **Combat Triad** and a triad that we employ in an unarmed context within the self protection environment. The pistol triad was represented as an equilateral triangle with on one side **Marksmanship**, on the other **Weapon Manipulation** (gun handling) and, at the base of the triangle, **Mindset**

Modern Techniques of Personal Combat

Similarly, I've been trying to make the case for many years that whilst traditional martial arts systems have some core, key skill assets, without serious modification they are not adaptable to today's violence. My concept is that **Self Protection** is the 'brass plate' over the door of what practical personal combat should be, supported by **Personal Security** and **Physical Defence**. The definition is; ***"Self Protection is a set of awareness, assertiveness, verbal confrontation skills with safety strategies and physical skills that enable someone to successfully avoid, escape, resist and survive violent attacks."***

The Earlier Pioneers

It behoves on me at this point to make mention of the earlier work on the development of combat pistol work and that's the massive input that we can thank **William E. Fairbairn** for and his partner in crime, so to speak, **Eric A. Sykes**. This was in Shanghai, China in the 1920s and the days when it was an international settlement, where W. E. Fairbairn was in charge of the Shanghai Riot Squad, part of the Shanghai Municipal Police. It was here he created the first ever 'killing house' for close quarter combat (CQC) training for his officers, who found themselves fighting highly organised criminal gangs in and around tightly packed dwellings; and at close range with well armed, multiple opponents.

However, as innovative as all this training was, the weapon handling was still strong-hand only in a combat crouch, but based on instinctive, 'point' shooting. The other issue was that his men carried their pistols with magazine inserted but without a round chambered, or weapon cocked and safety on ('locked') ready for immediate action. This meant that in a close range, surprise engagement an officer had to 'rack a round into the chamber, taking vital time. Fairbairn's methodologies of combat pistol shooting and training were eventually adopted by WW2 specialist military units here as well as in the U.S, and Canada.

In Fairbairn and Sykes book;

'Shooting to Live - With The One-Hand Gun'

The following comment is made in Chapter 1 'Purposes of the Pistol' - ***"There will probably be a quarrel, however, when we go on to say that beyond helping teach care in the handling of firearms, target shooting is of no value whatever in learning the use of the pistol as a weapon of combat. The two things are as different from each other as chalk from cheese, and what has been learned from target shooting is best unlearned if proficiency is desired in the use of the pistol under actual fighting conditions."*** That's telling them...!!!!

From analysis of armed confrontations by Fairbairn's officers, the following was concluded as to the three essential points required for combat handgun;

1. Extreme speed, both in drawing and firing.
2. Instinctive, as opposed to deliberate aim.

3. Practise under circumstances which approximate as nearly as possible to actual fighting conditions

Astounding assessment and guidance for those times, and as applicable now as they ever were in the nineteen twenties and thirties in far away China.



FIG. 11.—Recruits' Target.

From **Shooting to Live** - this was an image of the 'Recruits' target, which would be a life size image on the range. This does somewhat illustrate the ethnic nature of the foe, but doesn't quite convey the image of some homicidal gang member...

This radically changed with Jeff Cooper's technique innovations as he really brought in the practice of having a pistol holstered but in what he termed 'Condition One,' that is with a round in the chamber, hammer cocked and the safety on, so that on drawing the weapon from the holster, and as the target is acquired, the thumb of the strong hand would be flicking the safety off, fractionally before the shot is taken. Gunsite was run as 'hot' range meaning everyone, as instructed when to, would all be in 'condition one.' Training, especially attending to Cooper's 'safety rules' meant people were safe.

We can also credit Fairbairn and Sykes with the invention of the 'Double Tap' where a pair of shots are fired in quick succession with an almost instinctive and continuous sight picture, as distinct from firing a shot and the carefully re-acquiring the target for the second. They developed this methodology to compensate for the over- penetration of the full metal jacket rounds that did not have the stopping power required in one shot.

I'm not going to get into the controversy of the double tap compared with what's termed the 'controlled pair' which is where a more deliberate second shot follows the first. It's easier to understand the difference when we introduce longer ranges to the task of

getting two shots off quickly. At closer ranges a double tap can almost sound like one shot, but move further back and there needs to be a more deliberate focus on a sight picture and at some point as we move further back from the target we can say the double tap has become a controlled pair, where speed starts to take a back seat more.

The Russians

It's somewhere between 15 to 20 times that I worked in Russia on Executive Protection (EP) details (as well as jobs in Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan), working alongside our Russian support security operatives. These were a mix of former Alpha and Vypel personnel - all 'card carrying' KGB people, as well as others from different parts of that organisation. What I found interesting, though, was their handgun training and if the clock had been turned back we could have been in Shanghai with Fairbairn's officers.

They drove pistols exactly the same which was to carry a loaded weapon (that is a pistol with a magazine inserted) but without a chambered round or the weapon cocked and safety on. It was clear that pistol training, even for the specialist end of the Russian military, or security services, had not progressed the way it was in the West. I think this was down to the attitude of the powers that be to handguns in general and their place in the pantheon of available firepower. The analogy is a bit like "*who'd take a knife to a gun fight,*" or, more appropriately for them, "*Who'd take a pistol to an AK74 fight.*"

The Latest Innovation

Since Cooper's Modern Techniques, there have been huge leaps in pistol shooting abilities, be that in IPSC/IPDA/USPSA style competitions, or within the practical combat arena. That being said, the skill development has been incremental, but not innovative, simply step by step improvement in human and technical performance. The principal controversy still is, probably, the argument around the two stances - Weaver or Isosceles but then, for me, we have the greatest leap in pistol handling since the early 70s - **Centre Axis Relock (CAR)** developed by the late **Paul Castle**, a former British police officer, who died in 2011.

If you've seen the John Wick films you'll see copied elements of this unique system in use, but just that, a copy. Paul Castle developed CAR for close range combatives, featuring, at very close ranges, target acquisition by means of body alignment, even

transitioning from body to head shots. Space prevents a deep dive into the system but on YouTube you can find a range of videos with both Paul Castle demonstrating CAR, as well as his protege and now curator of the system - Jeff Johnsgaard of Natural Tactical. Jeff is a serving police officer, but when asked about the use of CAR by Keanu Reeves - ***“That’s not really Centre Axis Relock in those movies,”*** he said. ***“I don’t know who trained Keanu on the system, but it wasn’t us.”***

The combative concepts behind the CAR system truly reflect close quarter combat reality and pay no lip service to any competitive demands - it’s pure CQC; and fascinating to watch.



Paul Castle in the top picture and Jeff Johnsgaard below demonstrating two of the CAR tactical holds. In the lower photo you can see the range we’re talking about for which the CAR system was devised. However, it has an extended arm position as the range opens up.



Competition v Combat

At a meeting organised by Col. Cooper with many of the US top competitive shooters and early Gunsite Instructors who were attending the International Combat Pistol Conference, he proposed the setting up of the IPSC as a means of testing the evolving methodologies

of modern combat pistol shooting by means of competition. He got his way and the race was on, a race that became unstoppable in eventually emphasising the importance in many people's minds of competition for its own sake, even over combat practicality; and herein lies the main parallel with combat/practical pistol and martial arts competition.

The original 40 founding IPSC members were soon split into 'camps' of differing views with even early on the majority of members mainly interested in winning competitions, rankings, prizes such as a free pistol and trophies. Ray Chapman, who won the first IPSC World Shoot in Switzerland together with his followers and students were soon dubbed 'Gamesmen.' Col. Cooper, by contrast and his Instructors at Gunsite in Arizona took a hard line on the need to maintain a combat emphasis and interestingly they were nicknamed the "**martial artists;**" - how spooky is that...

Cooper and his self defence, combat oriented shooters who were teaching military, police, security officers as well as civilians held out as long as possible, but the sport's athletes such as US legends Rob Leatham and Brian Enos not only triumphed at competitions due to their dedication to training, modern concepts and meticulous upgrading of firearms and competition equipment, but also steered the IPSC association structure and organisation in the direction of sport shooting.

The supporters of highly realistic combat shooting increasingly surrendered their former dominance, which, among other things, led to the establishment of the **International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA)** in 1996 (more later).

IPSC Motto

The Latin words **Diligentia, Vis, Celeritas (DVC)** meaning **Accuracy, Power, and Speed** are IPSC's motto and form the foundation for competition. IPSC also emphasises procedures for safe gun handling and strict adherence to the rules governing the sport.

So, if martial arts could have the ideal motto it would be this of the IPSC. Power, Speed and Accuracy would perfectly define what every martial artist requires to be effective but, by the same token all three of these requirements 'shout' at each other.

Competition Targets

IPSC targets have a 15-centimetre centre representing the "A Zone" or bullseye. Most



shooting takes place at relatively close distances, with rare shots out to 50 meters. Hitting a 15-centimetre zone might seem easy to an experienced pistol shooter, but in IPSC only full power handguns are used (9mm or larger). Mastering a full power handgun is considerably more difficult than shooting a light recoiling target pistol, especially when the competitor is trying to go as fast as possible. Time is a key factor. Target points are divided by the time taken to achieve them, adding to the challenge.

A typical IPSC Target

Interestingly on the IPSC website the following statement is made: ***“Although the roots of IPSC are martial in origin, IPSC shooting matured from those beginnings, just as karate, fencing, and archery developed from their origins.”***

I touched on speed and accuracy earlier and the new IPSC competition scoring was through what was called the ‘Comstock Method’ - essentially a way of rewarding speed and accuracy through a particular course of fire. Effectively, it’s the ratio of points per second, with a typical IPSC target having an A, C, and D Zones each with a different points count. So far so good. However, the foundation of the scoring was based on Col. Cooper’s base standard combat pistol training drill - the ‘El Presidente’ (I’ve described the ‘El-Prez’ in more detail in the appendix at the end of the article) The issue with this being that it favoured speed over accuracy, so from then on the combat element would be further eroded with both technology and people’s innate, competitive drive.

One of the sports top shooters is a Rob Leatham, someone with an unparalleled success in all forms of IPSC style competitions, but someone with a long history of teaching ‘combat’ pistol to numerous US police forces and the military and a person who recognises the dichotomy between practical pistol competition and real world combat pistol work. He is unashamedly, a driven competitive shooter, quoted as saying he’d do anything within the rules to win a competition but who, in doing so, readily acknowledges

that many of the combat requirements are thrown out of the window and that window is speed. He knows that speed is the key to scoring well.

However, he recognises that speed on its own is a pointless goal and says - ***“Speed is always good once accuracy is there.”*** In one of his many videos (very well worth watching) he quotes another combat handgun legend, Larry Vickers who said - ***“Speed is fine - Accuracy is final.”*** However, Vickers said that even if you’re super accurate and never miss a shot, if you’re too slow you’ll never win a competition. And whilst we’re on the subject of quotations Larry Vickers summed up the dilemma - ***“Shooting accurately enough, faster, is better than shooting extremely accurate, slow.”*** He also said that even if you’re super accurate and never miss a shot, if you’re too slow you’ll never win a comp. ***“You have to be fast enough for it to matter...”***

It was watching a Rob Leatham video that it became clear how, in the early days of IPSC development of competitive ‘courses of fire’ how much Cooper’s El Presidente (see above) set the standard for scoring. Without going into the fine detail what it meant was that speed was favoured over accuracy which has dogged the reality of true combat which demands accuracy (or, ‘accurate enough’) but with speed - e.g. ***“Accurate enough and fast enough.”***

Are there comparisons with the challenge between Martial arts competition and actual combat?

The simple answer is broadly, yes. Any combat system that has ‘competitised’ (no such word I know) itself will have also compromised itself in terms of its combat effectiveness. If I take Karate as an example, it was early on at the beginning of the twentieth century that, probably inevitably it was proposed that the then Japanese version of Okinawan-Te be developed into a competitive sport with the very honest aim of trying to establish the effectiveness of this combat system under a ‘two-way range.’ in other words, unlike many of the training practices there would now be controlled fighting; that is, fighting with rules to establish success through scoring and, relatively safe engagements, but along the way the original emphasis would be lost and, as with practical pistol competition, karate competition became an end in itself.

IPSC and the Competition Movement

As with IPSC practical pistol competitions, Karate competitions evolved to the point of a self-fulfilling prophecy where the controlled, rules based competition itself, and winning, became the aim; irrespective of the challenge this gave to a non-controlled combative encounter. From having at the start the Shobu-Ippon (one point) winning score to now, in major all-styles international competitions, in excess of 8 points available per fight. As we are well aware a fight in the street is not accompanied with a referee, scoring judges and a plethora of rules, or an accumulation of points - it's simply last one standing - no flags or whistles.

For scholars of the martial arts, they are, I should think, well aware that over the past 60 plus years there have been numerous attempts to try and develop martial arts competitions to be as close to the requirements of true combat as possible. Kudo, developed from Kyukoshinkai by the late Azuma Sensei is such an example of competitive rules that, as close as possible, duplicate a fight without rules, but still with safety of competitors at the forefront.

Personally, from many years of 'door work' in Manchester through the 70s and 80s, any emphasis on fighting skills as relevant to self protection is flawed, but that's a tale I and others have been telling for decades and is for another time. But, having said that, whether it's a points or full contact engagement there is something combative to gain from competition.

The same can definitely be said for IPSC style pistol competitions and Rob Leatham unashamedly, as I've alluded to earlier, a pistol competition star who, whilst recognising the divergence between practical and combat shooting also recognises the similarities and overlaps.

Accuracy v Speed (and safety)

I well remember many years ago my practical pistol team were invited to shoot against the then SAS's fledgling practical pistol shooters team, being eminently taught by one of the UK's foremost competition shooters. We were on a range at the Regiment's training facility at Pontrilas, originally a pre WW2 ammunitions dump. The invite had been through a late friend of mine, Len Dixon, a leather expert who was making custom holsters, mag pouches and belts as well as other leatherwork for the Regiment. (I still have one of Len's

holsters and other kit of his that saw me through all my competitions). The range we shot on was almost 360 degrees of available fire in what had been a round, high walled ammunition storage facility. It was a drive-on range so there was the ability to have a vehicle involved in the course of fire that the guys down there had set up for us.

So we ran the comp based of the UKPSA scoring system and we won, but what to me was striking was that the Regiment guys lost, not because they were poor shooters rather they had ingrained combat imperatives, so when we got to a barrier that we had to shoot from we'd shoot and be off with little or no thought to the proper use of the cover; we'd be 'mag changing' and shooting on the run, whereas they'd be using the cover to tactically reload and take out targets. Also, they were more accurate than we were and we were good but they knew the real life value of a hit, or more critically, the consequence of a miss; so we won because the rules favoured speed and we had that, however unrealistic that would have been in the real world.

Another shooter I watch and listen to on his, and the **Wilson Combat (WC)** channel, is **Ken Hackathorn** who, like Rob Leatham is a hugely successful pistol and 'Three Gun' (Rifle, Pistol and Shotgun) competitor, as well as a professional combat firearms instructor to police and military and one of Col. Cooper's first API Instructors (Range Officers). In fact he was responsible for the very first three gun match at a Soldier of Fortune magazine annual show and which has now become a world-wide shooting discipline. In one of the WC videos Ken Hackathorn makes the very telling comment that whenever he's running a police or FBI course the best shooters are the competition guys. However, he made the comment that ***"comps can sound fun - they are not practical."***



A stage where the shooter will be penalised for stepping outside the marked, yellow 'fault lines,' so as to make the shooting as practical as possible by forcing the competitor to make tactical use of cover.

Rob Leatham opined, though, that despite his emphasis on competition, ***“no one would want a gun fight with me...”*** If you watch his videos it would not be too hard to agree with this comment.

Competition, hopefully, when it can be as close to practical as possible will hone key skills of weapon handling, shooting under pressure, speed of movement, accuracy and all being said IPSC and its rules improved shooting. The same, I believe, can be said of martial arts competitions and from my own perspective there were certainly elements of both points Karate and full contact Kickboxing (a very careful few) that resonate with confrontations in the street, so to speak. Even the very simple thing of facing an opponent across the mat or ring is a challenge to have to deal with as is the motivation to win, or in my case, not to lose...!

In the intervening years since the founding of the IPSC and the technical developments of weapons, kit and equipment that fed into practical shooting, its competitions moved further and further away from its combat pistol origins, such as the development of what became known as ‘race’ guns - like the ever developing and faster F1 racing car. This was to such an extent that these guns could never be utilised in the real world and combine this with ever more complicated IPSC/USPSA courses of fire and pretty much all combat practicality was lost; With the ever growing world of the Concealed Carry Weapon (CCW) there arose an even greater need to have competitions reflecting real world, practical requirements; enter the **International Defensive Pistol Association (IDPA)**.

IDPA and the BCA

Started in 1996, with founder members such as Ken Hackathorn, Bill Wilson and others, the IDPA began with the goal to bring practical pistol back to its combat roots originally requiring the use of what’s termed a ‘stock service pistol.’ All shooting was from concealed requiring the wearing of a jacket and barred ‘race’ guns with optical sights and recoil compensators.

Unlike IPSC/USPSA rules, IDPA shooters are not allowed to pass in front of a target before they shoot it; in other words there has to be use of cover made (remember shooting against the SAS guys who sacrificed speed to stay safe in cover). Scoring in

IDPA is based on the number of seconds needed to shoot a stage. Then, seconds are added on based on hits on the target, with the lower the score the better. Hits on the centre section of the target adds no time, whereas hits on the next section add one second, hits further out add three seconds with misses adding five.

This system places an emphasis on accuracy, so if you rocket through a stage in a record time but have poor hits, or missed, you could double or triple your time. Whilst IDPA is a sport it is more closely a sport which can be applied to 'real world' situations, whereas, IPSC places a higher emphasis on sport for sport's sake. Unfortunately, even the IDPA fell foul to the 'competitive mindset' and the heavy penalty for misses was eventually modified to being less penal and magazine changes were allowed on the move between targets, but then both issues changed back again.

It's interesting in that from the beginnings of the IDPA comps no one was given details of the courses of fire, so no 'walk-through,' which levelled the playing field - the hotshots had to slow down and if they didn't they failed miserably. To quote Ken Hackathorn - ***"In the real world we don't get to do a walkthrough."*** He also said that in the real world you don't have to be a great shooter, just a good shooter and in the field of unarmed combat I'd submit it's no different. One has to be competent and capable, but be first and hit hard...



An IDPA competition stage where the shooter starts from a seated position, typically with the pistol on the table, but with the magazine out of the gun, so requiring the shooter to load and chamber a round as the buzzer goes.

IDPA Self Defence Matches

Most courses of fire in IDPA matches fall into this format.

IDPA is based on defensive

shooting and therefore the match designers try to simulate scenarios where you would be forced into using your gun to defend your life or others. Common stages found in

matches involve you being caught in a convenience store robbery, a home invasion, car jacking, ATM/bank robbery and more.

Many scenarios are drawn from newspaper and TV reports. Others are drawn from the stage designer's imagination in which worst case scenarios are encountered while performing ordinary, everyday tasks or errands.

Self defence stages will find you having to engage targets from awkward or difficult positions. You might find yourself having to engage targets from inside a car or from beside it, having to move from point to point while shooting, jumping up from a recliner or bed during a home invasion or shooting while seated.

The possibilities change with every match. You might not even draw from a holster although that comprises the majority of the stages you will see. You could draw your gun from a glove box, a nightstand drawer, under a counter or from a bag or case. All of this combines to keep these stages unique and challenging for each match.

The BCA Comparison

In 1993, three years before the start of the IDPA (designed to bring practicality back to competitive pistol shooting) I, along with my partner Geoff Thompson, formed the British Combat Association (BCA), itself designed to bring a sense of 'real world' practicality to traditional martial arts. I'd had the idea for some time to provide a 'home' for traditional martial artists who were trying to get onto the path of introducing practicality to their systems, as well as get the message out that self defence/self protection was not simply 'martial arts in jeans.'

I'd seen the very same issues develop with martial arts competitions especially in the striking and kicking arenas and, from many years of door work in Manchester, I'd come to truly understand the need for simplicity not complexity aligned with 'one shot' impact capability. I won my first full contact competition taking the middleweight British title with two knockouts in that event. Whatever challenges impact, be that speed or flow of combinations this is now what we train for every week. I moved from traditional 'tick your on' Karate comps to full contact to test the 'impact is king' concept.

Proxemics

The definition of **Proxemics** is - *“the branch of knowledge that deals with the amount of space that people feel it necessary to set between themselves and others.”*

The comparisons with armed and unarmed CQC are closer than we think and whilst that statement was somewhat of a pun I'm actually referring to the proximity of an opponent. For example, the FBI has quietly broken with its long-standing firearms training regimen, putting a new emphasis on close-quarters combat to reflect the overwhelming number of incidents in which suspects are confronting their targets at point-blank range.

The new training protocols were formally implemented in recent times after a review of nearly 200 shootings involving FBI agents during a 17-year period. The analysis found that 75% of the incidents involved suspects who were within 3 yards of agents when shots were exchanged.

The move represents a dramatic shift for the agency, which for more than three decades had relied on long-range marksmanship training. *"The thing that jumps out at you from the (shooting incident) research is that if we're not preparing agents to get off three to four rounds at a target between 0 and 3 yards, then we're not preparing them for what is likely to happen in the real world,"* says FBI training instructor Larry "Pogo" Akin, who helps supervise trainees on the live shooting range.

The FBI's research predates more recent fatal shootings of local law enforcement officers, many of whom were victims of close-range ambush attacks while answering calls for service or serving warrants. A Justice Department analysis of 63 killings of local police in 2011 found that 73% were ambushes or execution-style assaults.

Until recently, the pistol-qualification course required agents to participate in quarterly exercises in which they fired 50 rounds, more than half of them from between 15 and 25 yards. The new course involves 60 rounds, with 40 of those fired from between 3 and 7 yards. The new exercise also requires that agents draw their weapons from concealed positions, usually from holsters shielded by jackets or blazers, to mimic their traditional plainclothes dress in the field (see photo).



The new FBI qualification shoot from concealed and now at realistically closer ranges

'Drilling'

All martial skills are ***“perishable.”*** Not one of us, either a shooter or a martial artist can afford to rest on our laurels, as our skills will deteriorate. I quote Ken Hackathorn, who said that ***“when you finish a shooting session you should come away with two things; one, something you’ve learned and; two, something you’ve programmed into your actions.”*** But for either of those to apply we have to train, we have to drill.....

There are a profusion of what we can term ‘tactical drills’ in pistol work, just as we have them in the Karate/martial arts world. Some drills with pistol may be purely about accuracy, but some accuracy drills could be tested against different distances, or combining movement, or against the clock and combining simple or complex target scenarios - with more, or fewer, tactical considerations taken into account. Some drills may be for ‘official qualification’ for police, SWAT, military and special forces and FBI and others; these are pass or fail drills. Drills can stray from reality, such as the FBI’s original qualification shoot which, for many years, was carried out at unrealistic distances (see above).

Martial arts or combat pistol, both involve drills. When I was shooting competitively I drilled by means of what’s called ‘dry firing,’ in other words, practising weapon manipulation, the draw stroke from concealed, target acquisition, grip and trigger control and simulating a range of likely, mechanical stoppages (malfunction drills), but with no live rounds - no different than practising Karate in ‘fresh air’. The best shooters spend more

time dry firing than they do putting rounds down range and for me the ratio of dry firing training to live shooting would have been at least 10 to 1.

The martial arts similarity with pistol dry firing would be practising strikes, kicks and combinations in fresh air (singly or in combinations), before moving on to more practical, impact-testing use of focus mitts and shields. Drilling combinations with a partner brings in a range of outcomes from improving fitness, speed, impact and overlapping transitions; drills may be for purely anaerobic development, skill improvement as well as tactical development. Add on to this sparring (of whatever nature) and you're covering most bases.

These days and for very many years, however, I have done no 'dry fire' fresh air kicking or striking. The damage to the joints is unacceptable but, more critically, impacting in fresh air is of little value when one has to impact with something. *"Hitting something improves hitting something".....!!*

The Dozier Drill

Pistol drills are no different, from skill testing ones such as the El Prez, to ones taken from real life combat scenarios; a classic being the **Dozier Drill** (also invented as a drill by Col. Jeff Cooper) inspired from the opening stages of the kidnap in Italy of the unarmed U.S. Army Brigadier General by Marxist Red Brigade terrorists. Four terrorists entered Dozier's apartment dressed as plumbers and whilst one read out a revolutionary tract another took a submachine gun from a bag of tools. General Dozier was released over a month later unharmed.

The drill Cooper invented from this was having four targets downrange but with an assistant at the side of the shooter who, at the start signal, has to retrieve a pistol from a tool bag, load a magazine and make ready, during which time the shooter has to draw, engage and shoot two rounds into each target. The drill can be made harder by having the shooter's gun on a table, not on his person.

Failure Drills

These drills, more specifically termed, **Failure-To-Stop** are designed to mimic a situation where a shooting sequence has not had the desired effect and one of the classic failure drills came from a real world experience, specifically that of a Rhodesian mercenary

named Rousseau who was fighting in Mozambique during its war of independence 1964 - 1974. Whilst a firefight was going on he turned a corner to be faced with a fighter armed with an AK 47 at about 7 yards. Armed with a Browning Hi-Power 9mm he was quickest off the mark and put two rounds centre of mass which, however, did not put the man down so, as a reflex, Rousseau put a third shot to the head, actually hitting the throat, but finishing the engagement.

This over a number of years became a very well known drill known as **The Mozambique Drill**, named as such by Jeff Cooper who on being told the story by Rousseau incorporated this

into his Modern Technique of Pistol Shooting methodology. It's also more commonly known as *"two in the body one in the head."*



"Two in the body one in the head" - the Mozambique Drill

This was even taken up by U.S. SWAT teams and other military and security groups and given the rise in the increase of bad guys wearing of body armour this drill took on even more relevance. Today the drill is still practised with the shooter at 7 yards, typically facing an IPSC/IDPA type target with a holstered weapon and on the buzzer engages the target with a 'double tap' (hammered pair) to the centre A box (hopefully) and then a more considered, aimed shot to the head box. As a typical time guide a beginner should be making a perfect score drill in 4/5 seconds, and a skilled shooter in 2 seconds.

As the drill, now known as the 'Failure Drill' to avoid racial overtones, was taught to LAPD SWAT officers it became a 'judgemental' style drill with the introduction of a point of assessment after the first two shots before the third was fired.

'Strike To Buy Time' Drill

The genesis of this drill is now hard to determine, but it's clear that we have a difference of interpretation now between the approach in the UK and the US as to the purpose of the . I'd always understood that the drills origin, from real life situations of undercover operatives in places like N. Ireland during the troubles, was predicated on the need to draw a concealed pistol at touching distance to someone who was in the process of drawing their own weapon.

The received wisdom was that in such a situation the wrong course of action would be to try and 'outdraw' the assailant, rather getting a strike in so as to disrupt the person's draw, whilst at the same time drawing one's own pistol and, effectively shooting from the hip the second the pistol clears the holster. In stress mode it's too easy to grab a handful of pullover rather than the pistol, so the strike buys time to draw smoothly.

When working the doors, I applied the same principal but with trapping a hand if someone was reaching to anywhere on their front, waistband area; followed by a strike, but predicated on the possible presence of a knife.



IDPA World Champion and combat martial artist, Mike Seeklander at the start of what I call the 'strike to buy time' drill. After this position you see here, Mike will place his left hand behind his head so that this arm is well out of the way and shoot from the position his pistol is shown in.

In the U.K., as the target is hit the left hand comes back to the left side of the chest and the body is rocked back with the pistol being fired immediately it clears the holster.

A Complex Course of Fire

In Appendix 2 I've put a photocopy of a course of fire. One stage of 11 stages overall that I received prior to the particular competition (this could have been the British Practical Pistol Championships held at Mattersey ranges). All competitors would have receive this

in the post so we could familiarise ourselves with the 11 courses of fire. This is in some way where pistol drills equate to Kata, as you could mentally, time after time 'walk through' the requirements of the drill and plan one's route through the stage and any mag changes. This is classic 'imagery' training.

It's interesting, though, that however many times I'd mentally walk through a stage, the moment I stood on the firing line looking at all the targets that it bore absolutely no resemblance to the description I'd read, supporting the old phrase I was used to from hill navigation - ***"The map is not the territory.."*** This was, in terms of brain fog, exactly the same as having my toes on the line on a mat waiting for the referee to say 'Hajime and trying to remember what my tactics were going to be, or which Kata I was actually going to do.

Below are two Appendices to conclude what's turned out to be a bit of a mammoth article, but in summary, the parallels between the intrinsic requirements of combat pistol shooting and the practical application of martial arts is quite remarkable. Equally so, are the challenges both disciplines experience not only with the conflicts of managing the key critical issues of power, speed and accuracy, where each may well negatively affect the others, but to the contentious emergence of their respective competitions.

One would think that since the early part of the 20th century, some 100 plus years, that we'd have found the perfect answer to all the challenges and question marks inherent in these practices - but no, we haven't. However, I'd submit that of the two, the worlds of combat pistol and practical pistol competition shooting, understand themselves better and have resolved the challenges better; accepting that the complexities of the discipline are small by comparison with the martial arts per se. They box off each discipline well, understand the crossovers, good and bad, unlike the arena of traditional martial arts which is often still hamstrung by the territorial and political dogma of 'styles' and, I hate to say it, by an arrogance as to the absolute efficacy of any particular art.

But, in response to the general ignorance within the martial arts world as to true nature of personal combat, I'll leave you with the following quotation - ***"The balloon of theory should be anchored by the great weight of reality."***

Appendices

Appendix 1.

Col Jeff Cooper's 'El Presidente'

As mentioned earlier, the 'El Prez' combat pistol training drill became the standard from which the IPSC scoring system evolved - i.e. time and accuracy.

The story goes that Cooper was contracted to train a South American presidential security detail (hence the name) and needed a handgun training drill through which he could evaluate people's skill and use it to improve a number of key areas in combat pistol operation. So, this is a drill aimed not at a specific scenario that people would learn to apply in a real life situations, rather it's a drill that contains a wide range of key skills that in whole or in part could at any time be called on in the real world, certainly in the profession of those it was originally intended for; unlike the Dozier drill which is a facsimile of a real life scenario.

My own martial arts drill are no different, from drills containing skills applicable across a wide range of applications and drills that specifically emulate real life encounters.

The drill has gone through a number of changes over the years but, essentially, it required three IPSC type targets at 10 yards distance from the shooter and about 1 yard apart. The shooter would be facing away from the targets ('uprange') with a holstered and (ideally concealed) pistol and the hands raised above the head. On the command (beep of a shot-timer) the shooter turns to face the targets, draws and on each target puts two rounds and then executes a magazine change and puts a further two rounds into the targets for a total of 12 shots (total score 60 points). The scoring is based, however, on 10 seconds for the drill, with 5 points for hits in the centre A Box and 2 points for hits outside this, and 5 points added for every second under 10 seconds, or 5 points deducted for 1 second over 10 seconds.

As a training drill it's excellent, as once accuracy is good then more speed can be factored in until accuracy drops off, at which point all the key, skill ingredients can be addressed and improved to accommodate more speed - and so on and so forth.

Over the years, and even with standard production guns people are able to complete the drill in around 5/6 seconds. The drill tests a wide range of skills from initial target acquisition on the turn, efficient weapon handling from the initial grip of the weapon on the draw stroke, continuing grip to manage recoil, trigger control, good target acquisition and transition from one target to another, and slick mag changes.

On the **Combat Group** 'portal' website www.thecombatgroup.com and specifically the site for the **World Combat Association**, the intro video has some footage of me on a BG course shooting a very modified El Prez., excluding the turn to target and concealed carry, but at around 4 seconds, or so, with a H & K P7 M13, my last 9mm pistol before the ban in the UK.



Shooting the 'El Prez.'

This illustrates the draw from concealed after the shooter has turned from facing 'uprange', with hands usually in the 'surrender' position over the head. It would seem unsafe to turn through 180 degrees to engage the targets but all shooters conclude the turn before drawing the weapon as illustrated here. At the position the weapon is in the shooter's finger is off the trigger until the sight picture is obtained.

Appendix 2

Stage 11- UKPSA Practical Pistol Competition (2 pages)

Page 1... Description

Stage 11

Targets: 6 Item - T1, T2, T3, T7, T8, T9 as per diagram.
4 IPSC Steel Silhouettes - T4, T5, T6, T10 as per diagram.

Number of Rounds Required: Minimum 16.

Start Position: Standing at X with hands in surrender position. Note that each Competitor will load and make ready under the supervision of a Range Officer whilst the previous Competitor is shooting. Once he has stated that he is ready then he may not touch his equipment again until he has commenced the Stage.

Procedure: On the audible command the Competitor engages T1, T2, T3 through their respective windows for a minimum of 2 hits each. He will then engage T4, T5, T6 from the cover of the building at Y - no part of the Competitors torso or head (except for arms and hands) may cross line A until T4, T5, T6 are knocked down. These targets will be full-size steel silhouettes with portions showing as per diagram, and all three must be knocked down before the Competitor crosses line A and/or moves forward to the second building. The Competitor then enters the second building through the double doors and engages T7, T8, T9, T10. Note that T7, T8, T9 which may be engaged in any order require a minimum of 2 hits each and that T10 must be engaged last since, when hit, the clock will be stopped. T10 will have a yellow stripe around its outer edge. Line B must not be crossed.

Penalties: Misses on T1, T2, T3, T7, T8, T9 -10 per miss.
T4, T5, T6 not knocked down - zero for Stage.
Procedural Errors -20 per shot fired in error.

Scoring: The 2 highest scoring hits on T1, T2, T3, T7, T8, T9 will be scored.
T4, T5, T6 each score 10 points when knocked down.
T10 scores 10 points when hit.
Comstock - the highest hit-factor will be match-factored to 100 points.

General Notes Applying to All Stages

Unless otherwise stated, all targets will be placed at a height of 1.5m from the top of the head to Ground level.

Shoot Targets: Green/brown camo pattern Item targets.

No-Shoot Targets: Yellow/brown camo pattern Item targets.

Turning Targets: All turning targets will start facing the Competitor and turn away after the predetermined time.

Target Scoring: Major 5, 4, 4, 2, Minor 5, 4, 3, 1.

Stop-Plates: 25cm square placed at Ground level - Each plate scores 5 points when knocked down. It is recommended that eye protection be worn throughout the Competition.

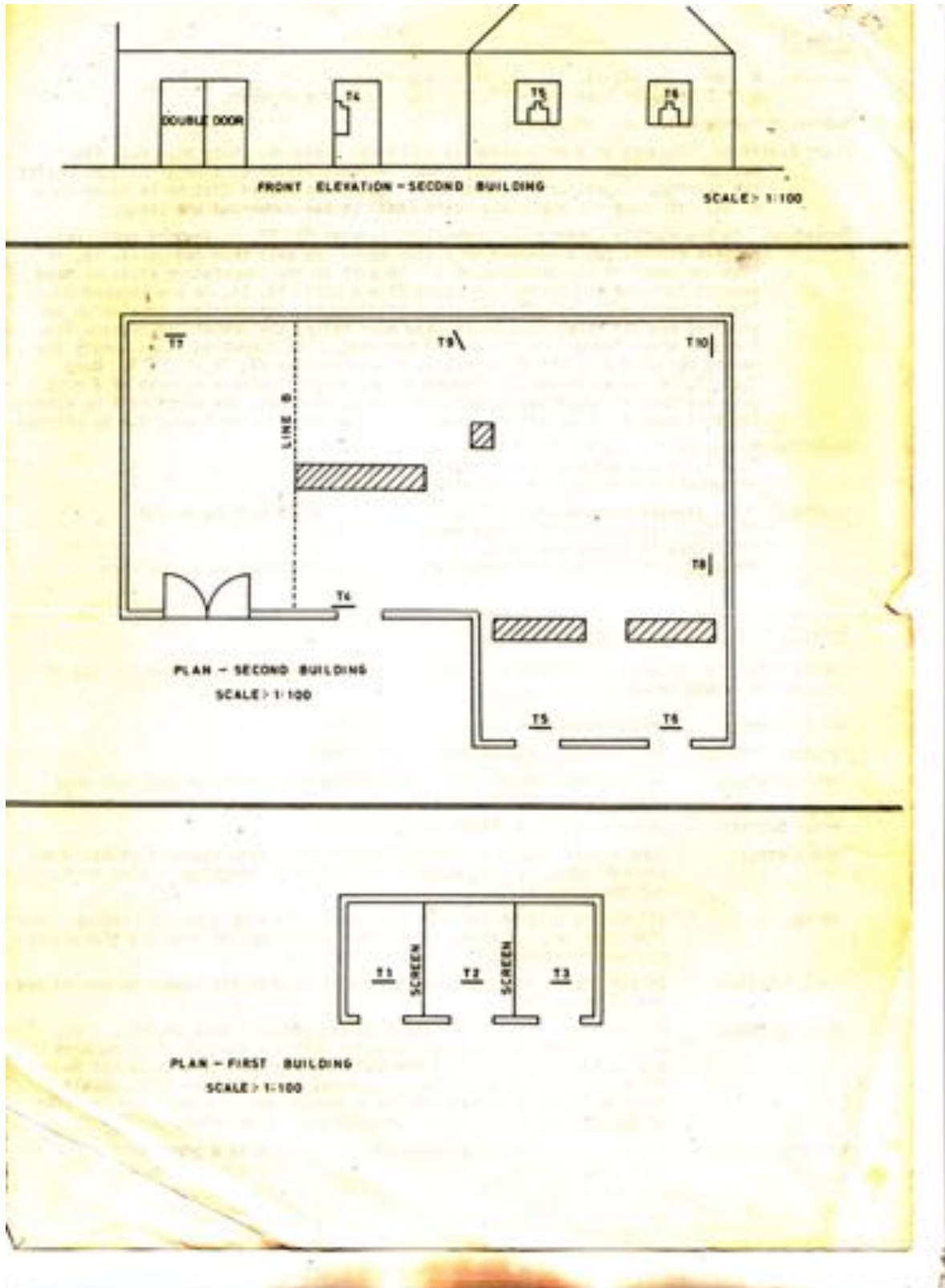
Timing: All timing will be recorded electronically with a manual back-up. Re-runs will only be given in the case of failure of both the electronic and manual devices.

Start Position: In all Stages the start position will be with the weapon holstered and in Condition One.

Shooting Boxes: Made of wood 5cm x 2.5cm fixed to the ground. Note that the foul lines of shooting boxes are only to define a general shooting area i.e. a toe or heel out of the shooting box that is clearly not deliberate or gives the shooter an unfair advantage is not a penalty. Also it is not a penalty if the shooters' body extends over the rear of the box e.g. should the shooter wish to go prone.

Charging Targets: This is strictly not allowed and will result in a procedural error for each shot so fired.

Page 2 - Diagram



'End Ex..'

Peter Consterdine