



BULWARK'S CASTLE DEFENSE COURSE AT HILLTOP FIREARMS TRAINING CENTER DOVER, TN

Bulwarks Bugle DEC2017

IN ISSUE #2

The Boss's Box

by Eric Dean

Thanks again for stopping by and allowing us to have a moment or two of your time. We sure do appreciate you taking the time to look at this edition and just as importantly, hope that you find it enjoyable and informative.

The Holidays

We have all figured out by now that Christmas time is nearing. Family's gather, friends get a chance to visit, and it certainly makes for one of my favorite times of the year. Be mindful of those that take advantage of good cheer and these welcomed distractions. Keep valuables out of easy view, if you carry pepper spray, hold that and not your keys. Keep a flashlight accessible. God Bless and Happy Holidays!

Looking at 2018

So as The Bulwarks starts its 3rd year, we are really having a great time. We are adding to our Alumni list and courses are beginning to fill already. Guess we must be doing something right. We hope that we can continue to articulate the proven doctrines from some of the greatest minds in this

industry so that you, the end user, can benefit from it greatly without all the leg-work. We will continue to strive to preach the good work from Jeff Cooper and others, and attend seminars across the nation so that you do not have to. I promise, as the helmsman of The Bulwarks that everything that becomes doctrine is relevant, tested, and proven to work or we will not waste your time with it. We will do the work, you do the practice.

Staci, my bride of near 20 years now, is coming on full time as The Bulwark's "Empress of All Things". I will let her jump in and introduce herself to everyone. She has some awesome ideas and really is jumping in and doing great and wonderful things.

Looking forward to seeing many of you in 2018. See you on the range!

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UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES

Check out page 6 for more stuff!

Our List of 2018 Events.

Our lists are posted and you can sign up now!
Most courses still have a few spots remaining.

Contact us at training@thebulwarks.com for more information.

Calendar through the end of April 2018



- Jan 13 **Defensive Mindset**
(Murray, KY)
- Feb 3 **Unarmed Self-Defense**
(Murray, KY)
- Feb 10-11 **KY CDWL and ISDP**
(Murray, KY)
- Feb 24 **Bulwarks TACMED**
(Murray, KY)
- Mar 3-4 **KY CDWL and ISDP**
(Mt. Sterling, KY)
- Mar 24-25 **FSDP**
(Murray, KY)
- April 7-8 **FSDC**
(Bowling Green, KY)
- April 14-15 **KY CDWL and ISDP**
(Murray, KY and MT. Sterling, KY)



A FULL DESCRIPTION OF THESE COURSES
CAN BE FOUND BY

<http://www.thebulwarks.com/courses.html>

Thought O' The Month

Stay safe on the road

1. Don't make it a habit of getting a hotel room on a floor higher than what the fire department ladder will reach.
2. What are the self-defense laws where I am traveling?
3. Switching clothes, or putting on a jacket; time to do dry practice with the change.
4. What to have on you. 1) a handgun that is attached to you and not "off-body" 2) A back-up or at least a knife. Best is a back-up gun AND a knife. 3) A flashlight. 4) A first-aid kit. I have one on my ankle as we spe...err umm type. Blankets in the car? The power WILL go out. Plan that way.

BUSINESS OF THE MONTH
FIRST CHOICE FIREARMS in MURRAY, KY
www.firstchoicefirearms.net
 Sales, 1st Class Service, and Knowledge!




Eric's Rules to Live By #2

by Eric Dean



Jim Higginbotham

FAST FACTS

50 to 60%

"Most people will perform under stress at about 50 to 60% as well as they do on the range...and that is they practice a lot!.." Jim Higginbotham "The "Center Mass" Myth and Ending a Gungfight-Triggernometry" via Gunsamerica

Can you?

Go to the range, right now, and engage a target at 20 yards with 2 rounds, in 2 seconds and hit both rounds in a 3"x5" index card? That is a good place to be your life.

The sage continues. I had these thoughts come to me to simplify the processes safely and effectively using self-defense. I would ask that you do not confuse "simple" with easy. My rules are not in any particular order beyond when they come to me. One rule may not be any more important than another.

My second rule *"The mindset should always be to resist the use of force at all costs. Learning when that is your only recourse is the hard part. When using lethal force legally (and in my humble opinion probably mandatory) your force should be ruthless, and more than the criminal can possibly enjoy.*

Resist- Do whatever you can to prevent using lethal force. When it is your only recourse, use it, be willing to use it and perhaps realize that this force may be the only thing between you and someone else being endangered. Just remember to just do what you can, up to your abilities!

"Learning" An endeavor that creates a phenomenon that the more that you learn the less one realizes that they knew. We have a pretty big brain and some say our brains have a memory capacity, if it was like a computer hard drive, somewhere near 2.5 petabytes, or in my case, dial-up would slow me down just loading Google. But I digress; keep learning what you can do, what you should do, and what you will do. The only way to discover what each of your limitations are is by testing and retesting and running scenarios.

"Lethal Force" Stop and pause for a moment, using force has the possibility to end another's life. Big deal! It ain't easy. Again, learning is important. Listen to those important minds that have really done the work and see where it leads you. The Bible, folks like Andrew Branca, Walt Sholar, and many many others have done the work, we just have to discover it, and understand it.

RUTHLESS "I'll just drag him back in the door" is not practical. Even "CSI Middleburg" can figure out that stuff. When you are justified in your actions, and there is no recourse, are not we the ones having said "I would do anything for my kids"... I believe that to be a true statement. I WILL do anything for my Q, and though never excessive, I will do whatever is needed to end that problem.

We see lots of books and media about revenge and the good guy turning bad to redeem whatever fault has become of them. It is not really up to us to seek revenge, just stop that which was illegally placed upon us. There is nothing to gain once fear changes to anger. Yes, here it comes..... Confucius says *"Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves."*

“Avoiding Christmas Criminals”

by Jesse Ordunez

As we get closer to Christmas, I'm sure many of you are still shopping. Or, if you're like me, you haven't even started yet. I'm not one for getting out amongst the large crowds, but I do, and I do so with a plan in mind. I ask and hope that you do so as well. If you don't have a plan, I hope that this will change your mind and that you will follow these tips.

So, we have decided it's time to get out amongst the crowds and hit the mall. You have avoided all the crazies on the highway and now it's time to find a parking spot at your favorite mall. Do you take the first one that you come to, or do you look for one that will enhance your personal security? I know that we tend to get in a hurry, but I hope that you look for a parking spot with your security in mind. As you look for that spot, keep in mind the time of day you are getting there. Will it be dark when you leave? Try to find a spot that is in a well-lit area. You may have to circle a few times, but it will be worth it. If you can get a spot on an end of an aisle, that is great. This will allow you to see more of your vehicle as you approach it when it's time to go home. It will also give the criminals less of a place to hide and wait. Another thing I recommend is trying to back in or pull all the way through the spot if you can. This will make your exit a lot faster and keep you from having to back out. The faster you can get moving forward, the better off you will be.

You have parked and now it's time to get the big shopping trip started. Before exiting the vehicle, take the extra time to scan and assess what's going on before you exit. Make sure that nobody is hanging around that shouldn't. And if you haven't put your cellphone away, now is the time. People who walk around with their heads stuck in their phones become easy targets. As you reach the doors to enter the mall, take a good look inside before doing so. Remember, situational awareness is the key to your safety. As you make your way through the mall keep your eyes open and pay attention to what's going on around you. Watch what's going on two or three stores ahead of you. As you pass an exit, take a mental note. As you move through the mall, be cognizant to what can be used as cover in the event something

does happen. If you see or hear something that doesn't feel right, turn around and go the other way. Let your eyes and ears be your guide. You can always go back at a later date as long as you don't get yourself into trouble because you decided not to turn around. Your safety is more important than getting the newest and greatest gift out this year.

<https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2016/12/27/us/mall-disturbances-after-christmas/index.html>

Congratulations, you were able to get your shopping done and everyone on your shopping list has been taken care of. Now you have an arm full of expensive gifts and you still need to make it back to your car. Now is not the time to let our awareness slip. Criminals like parking lots and they know you are packing nice gifts and probably a good amount of cash. I hope you are also packing something else. This is most likely where they will try to pull something. As you exit your car, I hope you have your keys out and a flashlight if it's dark. If it looks like you are paying attention, then you will be less likely to be messed with. Remember, we don't want to be that wounded gazelle out in the open. Make sure you make yourself a hard target. So, your keys are out, and flashlight is on, and you have made it to your vehicle. Know who's around you and look for people who are just standing around as you walk through the lot. If it doesn't feel right, go back inside. This is important. Please, don't just go and jump in your car when you get to it. Look around your vehicle from a distance. Make sure nobody is waiting for you. Once you are sure you can approach your vehicle, look inside before getting in. Nobody wants to take home any unwanted guests. Once you are inside your vehicle, lock your doors, start your car, and leave. Don't sit around in the parking lot too long. The sooner you can get on the road the better you will be.

<http://www.wsmv.com/story/33763867/3-suspects-charged-in-opry-mills-parking-lot-robbery>

Jeff Cooper gave us the Color Codes for a reason and this is a perfect time to use them. We can't stay in Yellow one hundred percent of the time, but when we are out and about, we certainly need to be in Yellow as much as we possibly can. Shopping centers and parking lots are cesspools for crime and being able to spot it before it gets to you will put you ahead of the game. This isn't written to scare you, but to open your eyes if you haven't thought about this yet. The Bulwarks wants each of you to have a safe and enjoyable holiday season.

Go forth and do good things. Have a wonderful Christmas and enjoy every second with your family. We will see you again in 2018. Remember, situational awareness is key, and you can follow this for any shopping trip. It doesn't just go for Christmas time.

JESSE ORDUNEZ, THE BULWARKS DIRECTOR



Jesse protecting “the castle”

Pistolcillian *by Eric Dean*

S.E.E.

So this month's edition, I am launching my "Pistolcillian" commentary again. I have a few articles I have hidden around in my many stored locations full of "zero's and one's" but I wanted to start off with something that hopefully we can use right off the bat. This time of year, we are inundated with new and unique items that we wish to add to our self-defense toolbox, but I wanted to give some things to consider.

S.E.E. stands for "SAFE, EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE". Basically, some things to consider after an item catches our eye. I do like this time in the self-defense development. New ideas, awesome approaches, and a new-found awareness to our everyday lives. All the many minds that are dedicated to solving this unending problem of evil must be for the better, BUT we must be aware. When that new items pops on your screen or in your email, a clever thing to remember is this; the first and foremost goal of many developers is this: to make the manufacture money. That is not to say that something is not useful or needed, but what it does say is this, a famous quote we have all heard, "*Caveat emptor*", or buyer beware.

SAFE. Is the item safe? Well how do we know? If you have been around myself or some of the other Bulwarks, or folks we have developed our doctrine from, safe goes way beyond our everyday range safety brief.

When employing our lovely piece of gear is it safe to not only ourselves, buy a couple of other aspects as well, safe to those that need not be affected by its use, AND also safe from losing it to someone that may not have our best interest at heart. So "tactically" safe, and also "practically" safe. A holster that does not hold a firearm correctly, does not allow for a smooth presentation of a firearm from said holster, and perhaps allows the muzzle to point at things consistently that maybe the firearm need not point at, CONSISTENTLY. These are just some examples of one item that may not pass my smell-check for a new item I am considering

purchasing. Now, this is one item, there obviously a plethora of stuff out there. (Which is pretty darn cool! We have much to test!)

EFFICIENT Let us beat up that "Aunt Ric's Holster" a bit more. We are considering this holster and at this point we ask ourselves "Can I use it?" Having a few levels of retention is not a reason to discount a holster as being efficient. I have seen an M12 U.S. Army holster deploy and fire at less than 2 seconds, I have even done it myself so retention just means more practice (perfectly, of course). Can I get it out safely and quickly, are the questions that I ask myself.

EFFECTIVE How effective is it? Can I use it? Can I train myself to use it? Probably. We talk ourselves into things all the time, and

sometimes that stuff even happens! Oh joy! On this portion of S.E.E. we really have two good options, 1) I know I can use this (maybe because you have seen the author of this article do it, giving confidence that if he can, anyone can) or 2) I would like to learn this. This selection is okay too. Just keep in mind that mmmmaaayyyyyybbbeeee not best to employ a new item, or even a new technique when your personal safety is on the line. Remember to get those perfect repetitions in first.

So that is about that for this article. Hopfully it makes some sense to ya and as the new year kicks in we will visit some other items our readers may have questions about.

GOD Bless each of you in the new year and I hope your 2017 Christmas and joyful and remember the reason for the season: we have a Savior!

Matt Best: "tacticool" deployment. I know a guy like that....



The Bulwarks Alumni is your neighbor, your family, or that person down the street that is a reliable, and a person with integrity. Fear of God, to the man or woman that believes, is the only thing to be fearful of. Once you are here, no evil upon this earth can displace you.

Deuteronomy 20-20b

www.thebulwarks.com

BOOK OF THE MONTH!

Selecting the Handgun for Concealed Carry by Jim Higginbotham

[Kindle Version Available!](#)

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

Luke 2 King James Version

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS STORY

2 And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

A Discussion on Bullet Testing by Jim Higginbotham

First, why should one conduct his own bullet testing when there are many people out there both professionals and serious amateurs who make public their own bullet tests? Well, it isn't because they don't offer good information, they do. However, they are not testing **your** ammunition.

You see, unless you are shooting non-expanding bullets, like FMJ or hard cast bullets, ammunition companies are notorious for changing up their loads without notifying the end user. I have in my possession 4 different configurations of a popular brand of .45 caliber 230 gr expanding bullet that I have purchased over the years and have seen 3 more variations of that same design. While other designs have fewer variations they do indeed vary from lot to lot. Not only do the designs vary but the loads vary. One lot of .357 Magnum ammo I shoot chronographs 1450 feet per second (fps) and another of the same brand and same bullet design chronographs 1270 fps – and that is from the same gun on the same day!

So, if you depend on, or at least desire, expansion you will never know if you do not test your lot of ammunition. This is perhaps more important in handguns than in rifles since those higher velocity loads are not on the lower threshold of what it takes to get a bullet to expand.

Even more importantly, you need to know how your bullet will penetrate if it does expand. Placement may be of prime importance but it is placement inside the target that counts, no placement on the surface. The perfectly placed bullet that penetrates just an inch, and I have seen exactly that from a 4" .357 Magnum no less, isn't worth much. Now true most bullets will penetrate on a normal human or game animal enough to do some internal damage but if you follow the philosophy that the only bullets likely to produce instant incapacitation are those that reach the Central Nervous System (CNS) or, in other words a hit to the brain or the upper spine then your bullets have to the ability to penetrate heavy bone or the entire upper torso.

Right at the get-go let us dispose of the notion that a bullet that will penetrate 12-18" of 10% ordnance gel will always be adequate. There is no way to predict exactly how deep your bullet will penetrate in a living being, either a human attacker or a game animal. 10% gel is not a bad test medium but it does not replicate flesh and bone and quite often a bullet, especially a handgun bullet will penetrate less if it is a well-placed shot. A well-placed shot is very likely, even something like 90% likely to strike bone at entrance which can gravely affect both the bullets penetration and its expansion.

So, if you accept that due to the variance in lot to lot and that you need to have a decent idea of how your bullet will penetrate in various paths you really need to test your own ammo. For this reason, it makes a bit of sense to not buy your serious self-defense or hunting ammo a box at a time since you are likely to get different lots. If you buy your self-defense ammo in 20 round boxes and you use up 5 rounds in testing that only leaves 15 to load – in some cases that won't even fill a magazine.

The question then becomes what does one use as test medium. Personally, I have tested bullets in a wide variety of materials, including the aforementioned 10% ordnance gel, over a long career in shooting. Along the way I have eliminated quite a few materials.

In the early days modeling clay, laundry soap, and a brand of duct sealant by the name of Duxeal were popular among bullet testers. The trouble is that they gave totally unrealistic results.

Just as an example, I purchased 50 lbs of Duxeal and formed it into a block. It gave really nicely expanded bullets until one day I decided to compare some non-expanding bullets in it. I fired a 9mm 115 gr FMJ bullet into the block and it penetrated about 3" and expanded to .65"! I do not care how much you shoot that bullet into flesh and blood – it is very unlikely to expand! To prove the point, I fired a hand loaded .458 Winchester Magnum which was loaded by a friend for Elephant hunting. It shot a steel jacketed 500 gr. Hornady solid (this is a 1/8" thick steel casing over a small lead core covered with gilding metal so it won't ruin the rifling – it never deforms in large dangerous game – which is the point. In my Duxeal the thing expanded to nearly an inch in diameter! It also only penetrated about 5" into the block – it will go lengthwise through a Cape Buffalo!

I have used uncured rubber for testing. A 30-06 will sink a 150 gr. Bullet into a big block of that only about 3" – turned out to be not such a good idea but it makes a heck of a bullet trap for the shop.

Ballistic gel has been around for a good long time. Up until about 30 years ago the military used the 20% formula and in fact some military installations still use that formula. Other however have gone to 10% gel as a more relevant test medium. I would caution however that it is not perfect. Nothing is.

Ballistic gel is an isotropic material. This means it has the same stress characteristics in all directions. Flesh and bone are not – you can test a non-expanding projectile (in this case I used a BB at 590 fps – the very thing one uses to "calibrate" his 10% gel test material to penetrate approximately 4") in pig muscle (not many know but 10% gel is meant to produce similar penetration to porcine muscle not human muscle but the two are similar), it will go about 4" if you shoot along the grain of the meat but it will go only 3" if you fire it across the grain.

I tried the same thing recently in some deer meat and the BB was stopped just 2" in but it was stopped by a layer of fat – deer fat is **tough!** Some human fat can be tough as well while other fat is almost liquid.

The point here is that 10% gel, and about any other materials do not "simulate" flesh – they offer a material that you can shoot into that will compare one bullet to another in that material. There can be some similarities between the penetration and expansion but that is about all.

It is not warranted to conclude that the bullets will damage flesh and blood and bone to the same degree as the test medium – you can take a 1" thick slab of 10% gel and easily tear it in two – try doing that with a raw steak across the grain!

Still, if we don't go too far, it is fairly good to know if a bullet will expand in a reasonable test medium as compared to another one in the same medium and it is also good to know how it penetrates. We might not be able to conclude how deep the bullet is likely to go in the real world but we can probably be safe in saying that if bullet A penetrates more than Bullet B in our material then it is a better penetrator. The same may be safe to conclude in expansion though that is not nearly as sure a bet – due to the likelihood of hitting bone on the way in.

In the illustrations on the right these were both rounds fired from the same gun and same box of ammo. One round hit the material with nothing in front of it and the other hit the same test material after passing through a 3/8" thick bone. You have to test more than one material!



the
test

While I find testing in simple 10% gel to be informative, especially if you cover it with clothing, it still does not tell us what happens if you hit bone. And, frankly it doesn't tell me anything more than if I shoot some water. While water does not offer resistance to "shear force" (if you lay a bullet on top of a block of gel it sits there, if you lay it on the surface of water it sinks) it never the less will give us reasonable expansion and penetration figures if we stick to comparing one bullet to another – it will not give us a precise prediction of just how much your bullet will penetrate but it might tell you how bullet A compares to Bullet B – or, more practically how your current lot of ammo compares to the old lot of ammo (if you tested that lot).

With limited space let us put of the discussion on the various other, more available and more useable material for another time.

Thank you for your time.

Jim Higginbotham



FUTURE OPERATIONS



- UPCOMING! The Bulwarks Winter Series continues. Come visit us in Murray, KY. for "A DEFENSIVE MINDSET"
- DID YOU NOTICE? We have updated the website AGAIN! We are heading toward a big announcement in March. The new NEW website gives us the ability to head toward that goal.
- Looks like the 2018 Bulwarks Alumni meet will be in Central Kentucky at a really nice venue. Keep an eye on the website for those updates!
- 2018 Veteran's Weekend in November. We need your help in finding worthy Veteran's that wish to attend. It's a scholarship program with the help of The Raven 42 Legacy Group. Contact us at raven42@thebulwarks.com if you or you know someone that would like to attend.

THANKS FOR STOPPING BY, AND SEE YOU ON THE RANGE!

