

TACTICS AND PREPAREDNESS

SKILLS AND SURVIVAL FOR ALL SITUATIONS

STASHING
CRITICAL
SUPPLIES

CONTINGENCY CACHES

BY KALIN WOLF

I flew into Kabul on a commercial flight from the states. I was on a low-profile protective detail and was unable to bring much in the way of kit or weapons.

I had a U.S. military friend in country at Jalalabad whom I called before departing Chicago. I let him know I would need to hit a cache upon arrival in country. Dozer had assets in place all over, from rat lines to safe houses to caches and I needed to raid one to plus up my gear. I had told him over the phone what I would

need when I hit the ground and he was Johnny On the Spot with supplies. One was even a dead drop on the outside of a checkpoint coming into the city.

A cache is a hiding place, a safe location, to stash items that you may need at some future point. What items go into a cache is completely dependent upon your mission

or situation. You may travel frequently to a certain city for business and want to cache a backup set of ID and credit card in the event you lose those while out of town. Many people have cached an entire bug out bag not many miles from their home in case they are away from home when a situation demands *continued next page*



TWO DAY **RED DOT** TRAINING **WITH SCOTT JEDLINSKI**

BY **ADAM SCHOLL** PHOTOS COURTESY OF **BUCK HOLLY, CHPWS.COM**

The advantage of a red dot pistol is that it allows the shooter to use one focal plane and remain threat focused while super imposing the dot over the target.

This involves fewer actions than your typical iron sight pistol where the front and rear sights must be reconciled with the target in real time, while ensuring equal height and equal light on your sights, tracking the target and remaining focused on your pistol's front sight thus making your target blurry. Another advantage of the red dot equipped pistol is for shooters with vision challenges. Many find the red dot much easier to see in less than ideal lighting conditions, and most red dots can be adjusted for brightness.

I built my first red dot pistol about two years ago. Like many shooters who have con-

verted from iron sights to a red dot, I noticed that there seems to be a fairly steep learning curve. I was still significantly faster shooting with my irons than with my dot and I wanted to work on improving my capabilities. Specifically, I occasionally had some issues finding the dot on the draw, and I had trouble tracking the dot during strings of fire. My friend Scott Jedlinski invited me to his two day red dot pistol course in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. Scott is a masterclass USPSA shooter and is the owner of Modern Samurai Project (modernsamuraiproject.com).

Day one of the course started with Scott walking us through how to zero our op-

tics. Scott went through the differences between a ten meter zero and a more common twenty-five meter zero for a pistol mounted optic. The difference in the point of impact was about an inch at twenty-five meters. For those looking for a more precise zero, you may want to consider the 25 meter zero.

After zeroing our weapons, we discussed techniques that Scott doesn't care for, like pinning the trigger and finding the reset each time you fire a round. Scott explained that this technique is actually slowing you down rather than just letting the trigger come all the way out (with your finger still on it) and then pressing it again and again.

Scott also showed us his preferred grip; a slight adjustment from my previous grip. He stresses not using your thumbs to put any pressure on the gun. He also encourages shooters to use their support hand to put pressure upwards and inwards to what would be one o'clock. If you were looking at the left side of your pistol, this pressure is on what he calls the drumstick of your thumb, and for me is just behind the slide stop/release on a Glock pistol.

Previously, I had extended and locked the wrist of my support hand, thus putting my thumb parallel to the barrel and allowed my thumb to push into the base of the frame just a bit. With Scott's grip my thumb rests on the slide of the weapon and isn't pointed forward quite as dramatically. Scott demonstrated shooting the gun while applying pressure to the slide to show how even if you push into the slide (which is not what he is advocating) you will not induce a malfunction. Ultimately Scott's grip is a bit higher than a traditional "thumbs forward" grip and I've been playing around with it since the class and I like it a lot. Another detail that Scott gave us that made a big difference in finding the dot was applying pinky pressure with the support hand just as you are about to reach full extension. This method allows the dot to consistently drop in from twelve o'clock every time, thus making finding the dot easier and more predictable. That trick alone was worth the price of admission for struggling dot shooters.

Scott is a BJJ purple belt and a lifelong martial artist. He uses his knowledge of the human body to help shooters become more proficient. Through a series of drills conducted without a pistol, Scott demonstrated how a traditional "isosceles" stance was not as stable as his modified isosceles stance where the shooter's strong side foot is slightly staggered to the rear. This stance is not unlike a fighting stance. Hips and shoulders are square to the target, the feet are staggered slightly. The shooter's weight should (when permissible) be distributed evenly and they should make an effort to sink into the ground a bit to provide an optimally stable shooting platform. The forward lean combined with turtling the shooter's head are both unnecessary. Scott shoots as relaxed as possible with his head up, bringing the gun to his eyeline and not his eyeline to the gun.

The next topic that was discussed in great detail was the concept of locking the

shooter's elbows. Scott uses an analogy of a car's shocks to demonstrate his position on locked elbows. Would you want to replace your car's shocks with two by fours? No. They are incapable of absorbing shock. The same is true about your wrists and elbows. Scott's grip does not call for locked wrists, and he instructs shooters to present to full extension and then back off a little to find a comfortable position that allows the elbows to be slightly bent. The bend in the elbows and wrists is not only more comfortable and less fatiguing, it also allows for better recoil management so your dot can get back on the target more quickly, thus allowing you to take faster follow up shots.

Once we dialed in our grip and stance we began to shoot more rapidly. The course called for one thousand rounds split over two days, and we shot just about that. As we began to shoot faster Scott explained his theory on splits. Splits are the time between each shot you fire. Scott believes that your splits should be legal (.18 or older to be exact). The reason for this isn't that you can't shoot faster, but rather that you can't process faster. Our cue to fire the gun should be our dot on target and the target is still a threat. If we get into the habit of shooting too fast, we are just

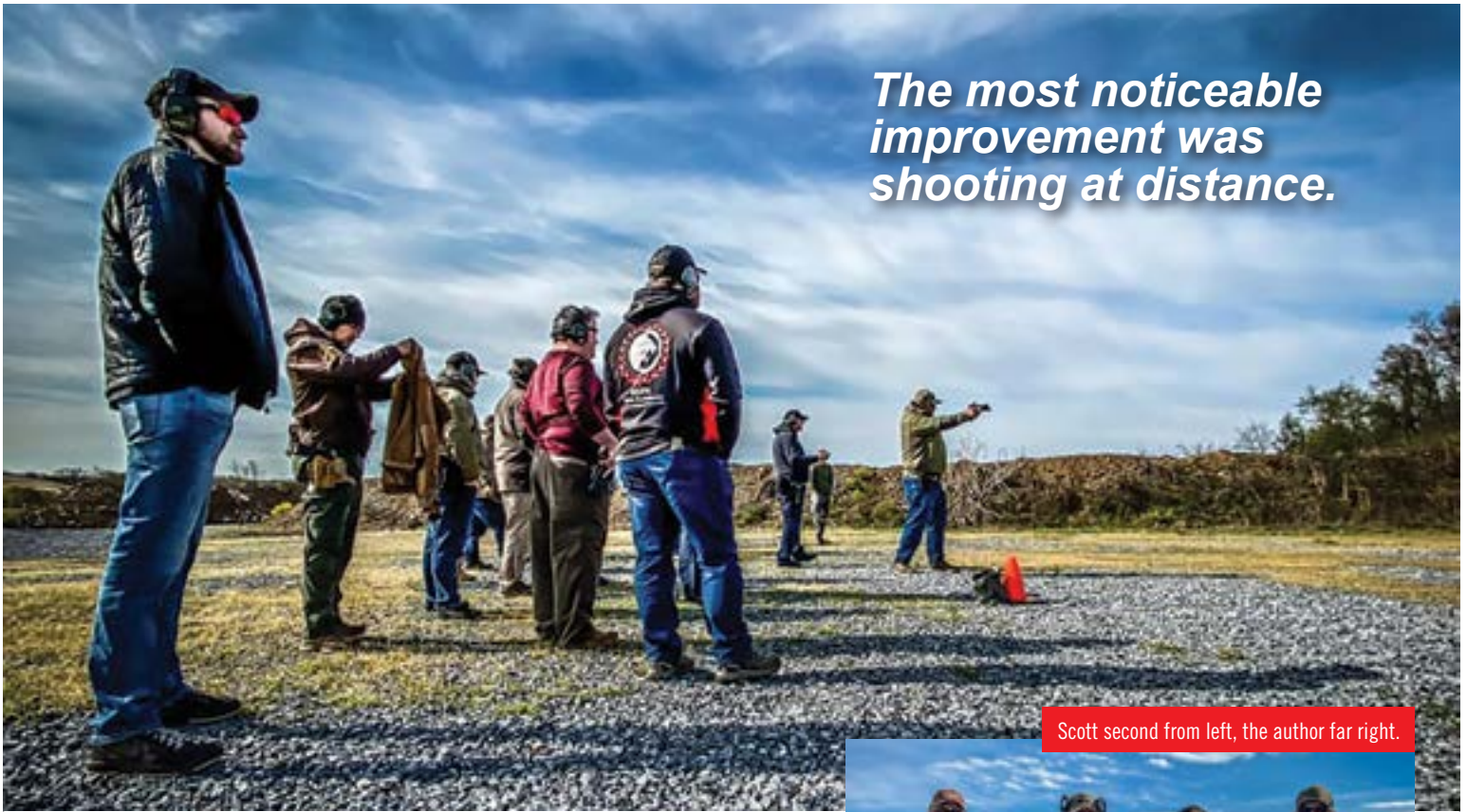
deciding ahead of time how many rounds we want to fire, rather than being able to truly assess the situation and determine if more shots are needed. This concept is important for shooters who carry for self-defense in addition to competition. Shooting fast is important, but we also need to account for every round fired. When a shooter is tasked with firing five rounds, they often are not seeing their sights each round.

After some shooting and body mechanics work, we began to discuss the draw. Scott carries concealed from appendix in a Philster Spotlight, but also used a Safariland ALS duty rig for day two of training to show some of the LEO students how to maximize their speed with that setup. From concealment, Scott advocates that the support hand moves to the belly button with the fingers pointed towards the ground and grab a chunk of shirt and pull it up to about the sternum. At the same time the strong hand is moving to the weapon getting a "claw" grip on the pistol. The claw grip is where the three fingers wrap on the front of the pistol grip while the thumb indexes just over the top left side of the rear sight (for a right-handed shooter). It is very fast, and as the gun clears the holster, the thumb slides right into position high

Scott prefers to not use the thumbs to put any pressure on the grip.



The most noticeable improvement was shooting at distance.



Scott second from left, the author far right.



in the backstrap of the pistol. As the pistol comes up the support hand then chops under the trigger guard with the support hand index finger grinding against the trigger guard in a wave-like motion, building the full firing grip as the pistol is moving toward the target. Scott discusses in great detail his 80-20, 90-10 and 95-5 modules, referring to how fast you get the first part of the draw out of the way and how you slow down at the end of presentation to ensure sights are aligned properly before pressing the trigger. The 80-20 means that the first part of the draw and presentation is done quickly while the last 20 percent of the presentation is where we begin to slow down slightly and ensure everything is properly aligned before breaking the shot. The 95-5 module just means that only during the last 5 percent of the presentation are you ensuring everything is properly aligned, thus making the 95-5 module your fastest option, with the most possibility for error. Throughout the course shooters found what worked best for them with most ending up in the 90-10 area to ensure a compromise between speed and accuracy without dramatically sacrificing either.

The last takeaway I want to highlight from the class was how Scott taught us to engage multiple targets with the red dot pistol. Tracking the dot from target to target was something I struggled with before attending

this class. Previously I had been taught to drive the gun from one target to the next. Scott however preferred a method he described as floating the gun from one target to the next. Essentially this method involved letting the gun's natural recoil take place and as the sights came back down, we would move the gun to the next target. While hard to describe in words, think of the letter "m" or a series of small rounded mountains. If I begin shooting the target on the left and work my way left to right, each movement would arc like the rounded top of the lowercase letter m and I would ride that movement to the next target. This method proved to be very reliable and we were able to shoot multiple targets very quickly with the red dot pistol, without having to hunt for the dot.

Each day of the two-day class was filled with a lot of shooting and sharing of knowledge. There are only a handful of instructors who are teaching exclusively red dot pistol courses and I believe among them, Scott is the most accomplished shooter. He performs live demonstrations of each exercise and is able to diagnose issues with each shooter individually, ensuring that everyone walks away from his class a better shooter than

they arrived. Where I see the most noticeable improvement with a red dot is at distance. During the class I hit an 8x10" piece of steel at 25 meters from concealment in under 1.3 seconds. I would be very surprised if I could achieve the same hit in the same time with iron sights. Scott is also one of the hosts of the Primary and Secondary Podcast and hosts his own Modern Samurai Project Podcast as well. ✓

BIO

Adam Scholl (www.schollsecuritygroup.com) is a former LEO. He worked as an FBI and USMS Task Force Officer. Adam has worked for the US DoD as a fieldcraft instructor and currently works in the private security sector. He is also a Renzo Gracie BJJ Black Belt and a Krav Maga Black belt.