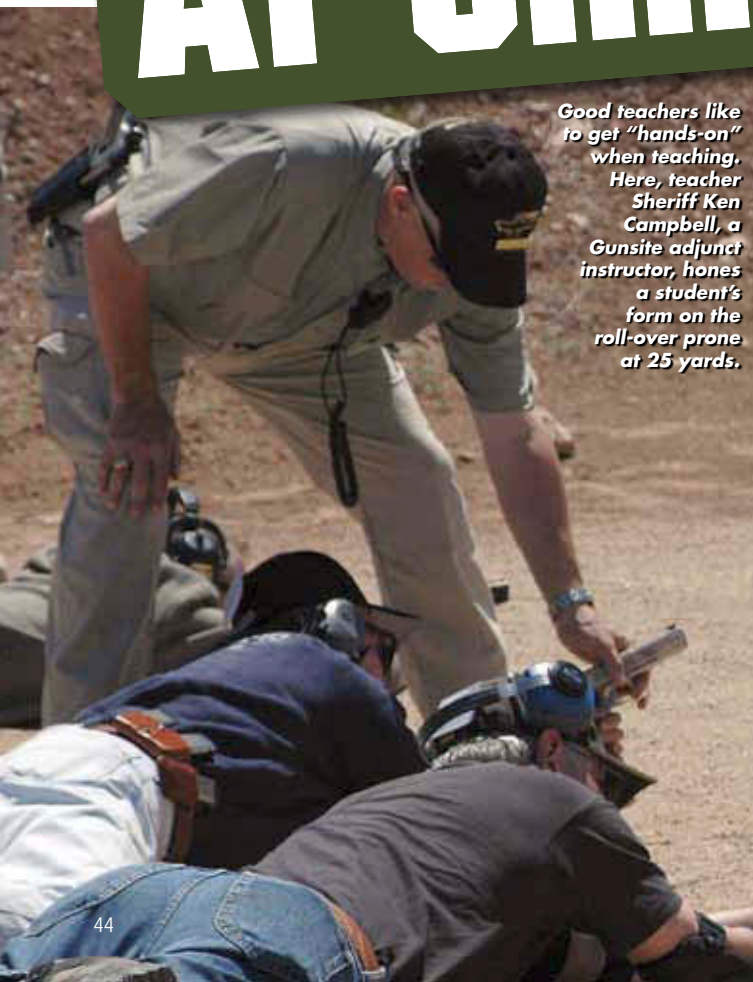




Here, Jeremy takes part in a final day "Man-On-Man" shoot-off. This kind of pressure shows how well (or not) you operate under stress.



COMING HOME AT SHIFT'S END



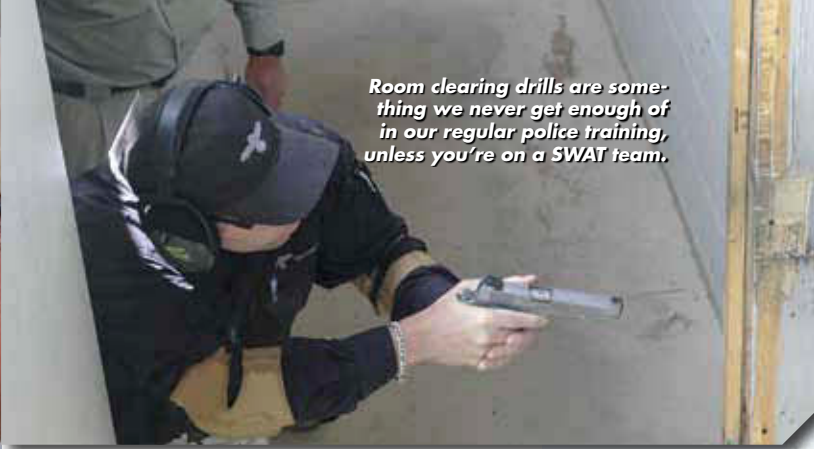
Good teachers like to get "hands-on" when teaching. Here, teacher Sheriff Ken Campbell, a Gunsite adjunct instructor, hones a student's form on the roll-over prone at 25 yards.

THE GUNSITE 250 DEFENSIVE PISTOL CLASS


JEREMY D. CLOUGH

Academy and semi-annual qualification simply aren't enough training and practice for you to develop the skills required to survive a shooting. In real-world shootings cops hit their intended target somewhere around 20 percent of the time; that's four misses for every five rounds fired. That's also four little lawsuits finding some target you didn't intend, or four rounds worth of time during which the bad guy is shooting at you — and maybe not missing.

Consider also pistol bullets are lousy stoppers. While most of us carry hollow points, only 50 percent of those actually expand according to the FBI. But self-defense isn't a math problem, it's a time problem, and whoever gets rounds on-target first, lives.



Room clearing drills are something we never get enough of in our regular police training, unless you're on a SWAT team.




In the "Donga" outdoor simulator at Gunsite, students "clear" a trail of bad guys, learning how to shoot, move, be accurate and monitor distance and threats. Kind of like clearing an alley, isn't it?

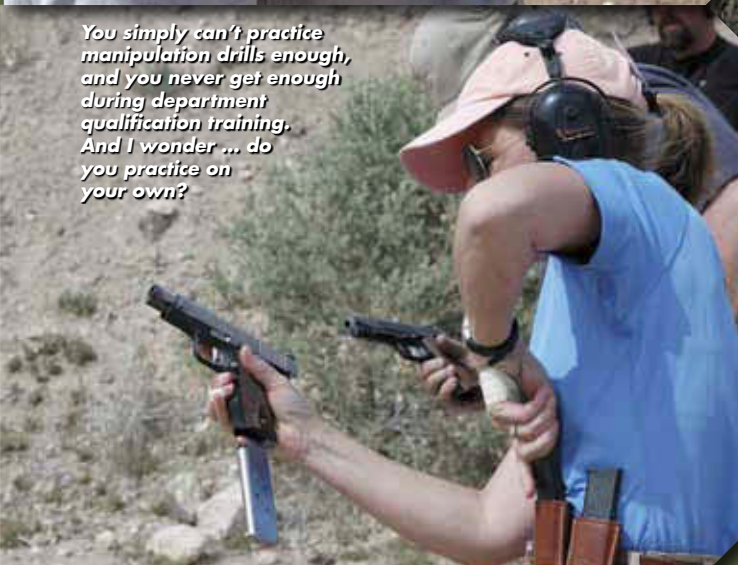
This is deadly serious business, and while you may not be able to change the weapon or ammunition you're issued, you're responsible for how well you use it. So let's just agree you can never have enough training, and while the minimal requirements may be a starting point, they cannot be the end.

Gunsite

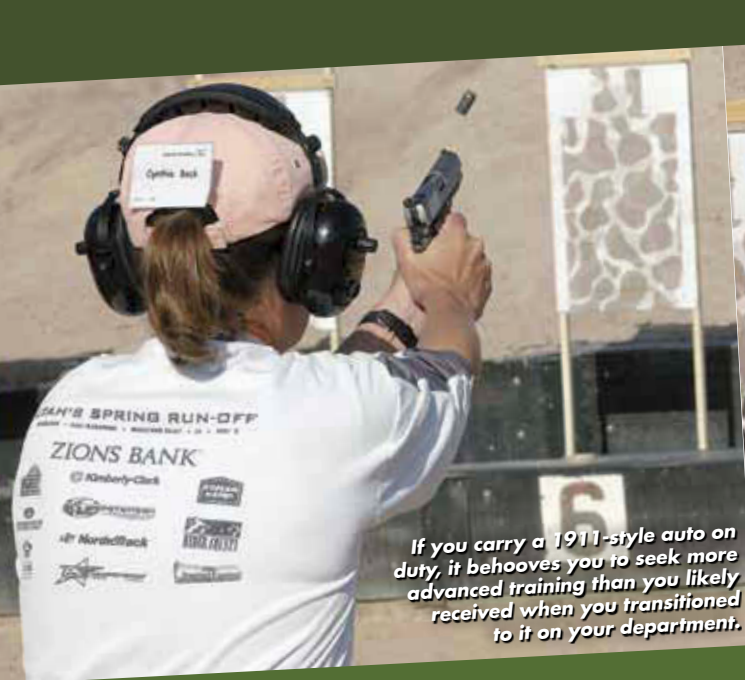
Training at any reputable school is worthwhile. I had an opportunity to attend Gunsite, and jumped at the chance. Of all the shooting schools, Gunsite Academy is one of the largest and is well established. Founded by Colonel Jeff Cooper over 30 years ago, and with a campus of over 2,000 acres, Gunsite



Here, students practice helping one another learn trigger press by actually applying pressure over their partner's trigger finger. This kind of hands-on training is almost non-existent in police work.



You simply can't practice manipulation drills enough, and you never get enough during department qualification training. And I wonder ... do you practice on your own?



If you carry a 1911-style auto on duty, it behooves you to seek more advanced training than you likely received when you transitioned to it on your department.



Non-specific targets mirror real-world stressors. Sometimes nothing is clear and this lack of centered aiming point makes students think harder.

teaches everything from pistolcraft to classes on rifle, shotgun, subgun and specialty topics such as breaching. The basics are taught in the 250 Defensive Pistol class, which is a prerequisite for most of the other classes.

Having previously been to a shortened, 3-day version of the 250, I had some idea of what to expect when I met Charlie Pulit at the Phoenix airport and headed north to Paulden, Ariz. Charlie, a friend and pistolsmith at Novak's .45

Shop, was a veteran of Gulf War I, but had received no formal handgun training. Other than the earlier Gunsite class and a state-mandated private investigator course I'd taken, neither had I. Both of us, however, were longtime shooters and had bought copies of the Gregory Morrison book *Modern Technique of the Pistol*, which lays down many of the Gunsite fundamentals.

Pack For Packin'

Bearing in mind Gunsite is a fighting school, I packed two M1911 .45s, since that's what I carry on a daily basis. One of the guns was a full-size stainless Colt M1911 built at Novak's, which I'd been

carrying on the job for several months. The other was a Heinie PDP Commander built by Nighthawk Custom. Although diametrically different in style, both guns had proven themselves. I had 800 rounds though the Novak Colt, and 500 through the Nighthawk. Neither had been cleaned or oiled yet, and both shot under 2" at 25 yards. Along with them came six Wilson Series 47 magazines, provided by Brownells; and a gun belt complete with holster and double mag pouch, from Matt Del Fatti. I mention this equipment because it's important to use top quality gear — all the time, even in training.

Although a tactical rig seems like the obvious choice for shooting out in the Arizona desert, I decided to use a concealment rig because that's what I usually wear. Del Fatti is a former cop and a top-notch craftsman; I had previously used one of his rigs to successfully conceal an STI-style hi-cap .45 (no mean feat, on a guy with a 32" waist), and simply fell in love with his work. Made in rough-side-out, black leather, the rig I wore at Gunsite (and now wear daily) looks businesslike, fits like a glove, and hides a big .45 beautifully. When

it arrived a few weeks before the class, I made a point of wearing it for long hours and constantly working the gun in and out to make sure it was broken-in. A shooting school is no place to learn your gear doesn't work; proven tools are best.

The other equipment I packed was fairly straightforward: Pro Ears electronic muffs (also from Brownells), Oakley shooting glasses, knee and elbow pads, SureFire

Continued on page 52



Left: Any full-sized "holster" gun, like these models (top to bottom): S&W M&P, Novak Modified Colt 5" M1911 and the Nighthawk Heinie Commander (all in .45 ACP) work well in training like this. High quality ammo, like this Black Hills .45 load, is a critical part of your training. Bottom: Eye and ear protection are always a must — such as these from Pro Ears and Oakley.



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