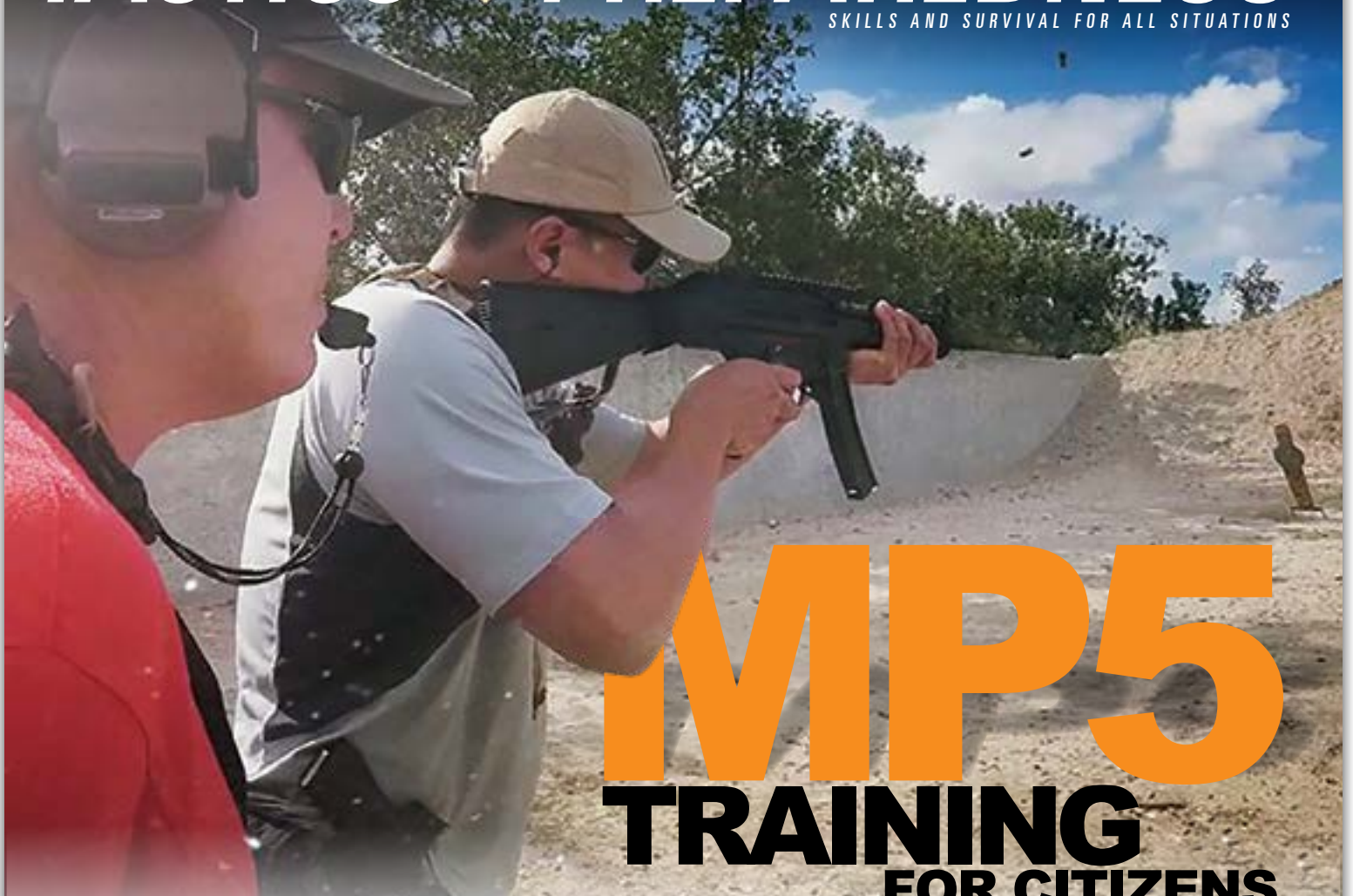


TACTICS AND PREPAREDNESS

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MP5 TRAINING FOR CITIZENS

In 1994, I had the opportunity to purchase my first MP5 for \$2500 when it was still relatively affordable for an average person.

BY: ANDREW BLASCHIK

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I was able to secure the firearm through the National Firearms Act of 1934. It was an HK MP5k PDW. Excited about my new investment, I tried to find someplace that would allow me to shoot it and only found one range that permitted submachineguns to be used. That range allowed the shooter to stand on a firing line and shoot bowling pins, milk jugs and other artifacts. It seemed the ammo fun dump was as good as it was going to get, but I wanted to learn more. I wanted to learn how to

shoot an MP5k PDW as it was intended to be shot, but almost all training available was for law enforcement and military personnel. After some intense research, I ran across a company call Tactical Firearms Academy (TFA), Inc. The school was owned and operated by a Fort Lauderdale Police firearms trainer/SWAT Team leader, Dave Sanders. There was nothing listed on the training curriculum regarding submachine gun use, so I reluctantly asked him if he would be willing to show me the proper techniques

to shooting an SMG. To my surprise, he said "yes." Dave taught me the techniques he had learned at Phil Singleton's HK operator and instructor course.

After learning and practicing the techniques that I learned from Mr. Sanders, I found myself shooting the HK MP5 more and more. I sought out local SMG competition shooting at a range in Palm Bay, Florida and started to compete in their monthly events after I discovered them in a Machine Gun News article. I shot *continued on next page*

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“Magic tools” are tempting, but the bottom line is always the quality of training on the tool that you have.

the MP5 at weekly local combat shoots before IDPA existed. The Palm Bay monthly match began sponsoring a bi-annual national match: the “Knob Creek Sub Gun Nationals” competition taking place in West Point, Kentucky. That is where I won my first Top Gun Trophy in 2010, and my latest one in the spring of 2017.

I have tried various types of closed bolt SMGs and the HK MP5 is the leader of the closed bolt submachine guns. The ability to manipulate the round count by trigger manipulation still has the others beat, even newer SMGs such as the CZ Scorpion EVO A1 and the Sig Sauer MPX. Most law enforcement agencies are phasing out the 9mm MP5 and transitioning to the 5.56mm M4 platform, but if I remember correctly, the FBI returned 9mm pistols to favor after trying various other calibers not too long ago. Fads seem to apply to firearms as much as anything else.

“Magic tools” are tempting, but the bottom line is always the quality of training on the tool that you have. Like shotguns, the forgotten workhorse of the firearms world, I believe the MP5 SMG still has its place for tactical use and it is a mistake to let it go.

Many years have passed since that first day I met Dave Sanders. He and I still work

together at the Institute of Public Safety in south Florida and in late 2001, he asked me to take over TFA and that is where I still teach to this day. My passion has always been the submachine gun. The HK MP5 market has risen from the \$2500 mark, when I purchased mine, to the 2017 mark of around \$40K. Unless laws on manufacturing, ownership and transfer of SMGs change significantly, those in existence will continue to rise in price as time marches on. Many individuals understand the value of SMGs and collect them for investment purposes.

When I took the lead at TFA, I saw an untapped market. As a manufacturer, I am able to sell the student firearms and ammunition at a reduced cost, getting students shooting quicker and spending more time at the range for less money, but the other advantage of being a weapons manufacturer is that you can legally acquire several NFA items that are very inexpensive as a “dealer sample.” These are called post sample NFA items. So I acquired ten MP5 A2 (fixed stock) 9mm SMG post dealer samples. What I also noticed is that there are still few places to go to shoot an SMG and fewer still that accommodate real training. So, in 2014 TFA added an HK MP5 operators course to our offerings. We

A student runs through the MP5 course at TFA.



supply the student with an HK MP5 and nine hours of instruction on how to use it properly. We also offer a refresher program that allows students to repeat the class for one year at half price and we sponsor monthly events such as the “Steel Challenge” and “Sub gun Sunday” to give students the opportunity to hone their skills as sharp as they care to make them. Graduates can attend any of our events and even travel to the SubGun Nationals in Kentucky to compete and they don’t need to spend the \$40K price tag to do so. As long as I am able to travel and compete, my

HKMP5 collection is open to students. After taking the SMG class, many students want an SMG of their own and they begin the purchase process.

We try to make the best use of the time we have in the SMG course and I work hard to share the most beneficial lessons I have learned in training and competition. First, we conduct a safety briefing and then dive into the A2 SMG version that the student is using; the full, hard stock version with iron sights. The trigger pack is set up to the “navy” configuration which is safe/semi/full with an

ambidextrous selector. We do a quick breakdown of the main parts and move right into dry manipulations. All of our classes start with dry drills so we can address any issues up front. Next, we discuss fundamentals of combat marksmanship, load and make ready, then unload and show clear procedures followed by malfunction clearing, magazine changes and ready positions. Then, we transition to live ammunition.

Over the next several hours, the students will learn burst control right down to one round shots in the full auto mode, up to three to four round bursts in specific target zones and how to manipulate the MP5 the way it was designed to be used. Operation of the trigger on the submachine gun goes against the principle that you were taught in semi-automatic firearm classes. To successfully get the “one round” in full auto mode, one must learn to bounce, or slap, the trigger. The one-round and the three-round burst seem to be the hardest to achieve for the average shooter. One must learn the cadence or rhythm of the 800 rounds per minute the HK MP5 spits out.

The second issue is keeping all rounds in the target zone. Doing a burst on target, whether it is two, three or four rounds and

Students learn how to manipulate the MP5 the way it was designed to be used.



having only one round hit and the rest of the rounds miss is definitely a problem. The principle of squaring to the target and wrapping yourself around (like a bear hug) the SMG platform is an unnatural pose for some. Many shooters want to stand upright, relaxed, and bladed to the target, but this type of non-aggressive position gives the SMG the ability to recoil off to the side and immediately rise off the target in an oblique fashion. The key is to lock the torso or stomach muscles so that the SMG does not pivot the body at the trunk/hips. New students tend to get early back fatigue because the pose is unnatural. Over the years, I have changed and refined some manipulations as well. One of the drawbacks on the HK MP5 has been the lack of locking the bolt to the rear after the last round is fired. This was remedied on later MP5 40 caliber platforms, but on the 9mm version you will get a click or hammer drop after the last round fired. Are you out of ammunition or is it a malfunction? Locking the bolt to the rear before the magazine comes out covers a few things: 1) It allows the operator to see if a casing comes out of the ejection port. If it does, then most likely you are deal-

ing with a malfunction and if not, you most likely need an emergency reload. 2) It allows you to insert a fully loaded magazine of 30 rounds much easier than doing it with the bolt closed. We see time and time again when the bolt is not locked to the rear, the operator does not fully seat the magazine, and then the magazine falls out. The transition to handgun is of course the fastest means to get rounds back on target if this does happen, but I have seen results in my favor using the system: "bolt back, mag out, mag in, bolt down". The shooter will run through a modest 600+ rounds including three-inch dot drills at five yards, just as we would with the handgun, performing burst control and all other basics, magazine changes, malfunction clearing, transitions to the handgun and support side shoulder engagement.

Shooting on the move comes later on in the day, after the student has developed confidence "working" the MP5. The last drill we cover is a hostage rescue style drill with steel targets and paper bystanders which everybody wants to do again and again. The drill lines paper targets in a row front to back and the shooter must weave their way from side

to side while engaging a steel target at the end of the paper line. Videoing performance for improvement or fun is common. We conclude the training day with a qualification course of fire.

Whether the MP5 or another submachinegun is the tool of your trade or you just want to enjoy the experience of learning this firearm and building skills, it always pays to continue raising the performance bar. ✓

BIO

Andrew Blaschik has been the owner and operator of Tactical Firearms Academy (www.tacticalacademy.us) since 2001. He started KGB Armament (KGBarms.com) in 2006. Andrew's certifications include Master Instructor with the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors (IALEFI), licensure as a firearms instructor for law enforcement and Criminal Justice Standards & Training Commission (CJSTC) Florida Department of Law Enforcement and he serves as an instructor for the police academies for Broward College, Institute for Public Safety and Miami Dade College School of Justice.



Lock the torso or stomach muscles and keep the weapon from sliding off the shoulder.