

# After Action Report - Combat Focus Shooting Course

Instructor- Rob Pincus, I.C.E .Training

Date - January 30+31, 2010

Location- Oneida, N.Y.

Review by- Chris Fry

On January 30+31 MDTs had the good fortune to co-host a Combat Focus Shooting course from I.C.E. Training taught by Rob Pincus. Rob is the developer of the Combat Focus Shooting system. For those who don't know who Rob is, he is former Military, former Law Enforcement and the former director of operations for Valhalla Shooting Center in Colorado. Rob is currently the host of the NRA's Personal Firearm Defense DVD series, host of the "The Best Defense" and "SWAT Magazine TV" shows on the outdoor channel and current director of [I.C.E. Training](http://www.ice-training.com).

The Combat Focus Shooting course is the first of several training classes M.D.T.S., AR15.com and the New York State Rifle & Pistol Association have teamed up to bring to NY in 2010 and 2011. This "Tactical and Practical" training series is an effort to introduce New York state shooters to some of the best and most progressive training available on the market today at an affordable price.

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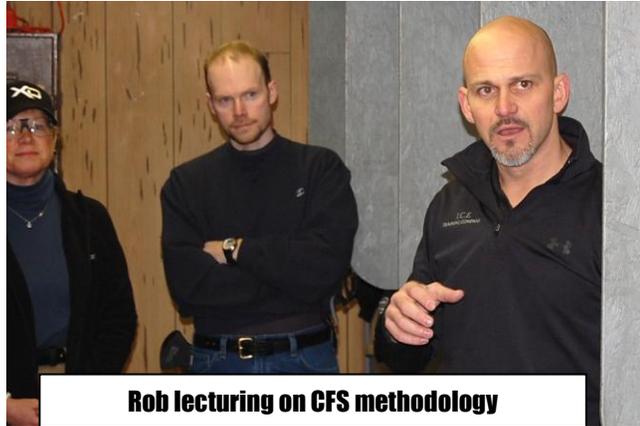
NEW YORK STATE RIFLE AND PISTOL ASSOCIATION, MODERN  
DEFENSIVE TRAINING SYSTEMS AND AR15.COM ARE PROUD TO  
PRESENT "TACTICAL AND PRACTICAL" A SERIES OF NY BASED  
TRAINING EVENTS DEDICATED TO DEVELOPING YOUR PERSONAL  
PROTECTION MINDSET, SKILLS AND TACTICS TO THEIR HIGHEST  
POTENTIAL.

IF YOU EVER HAVE TO FIGHT TO DEFEND YOUR LIFE OR THE LIVES  
OF OTHERS, DON'T JUST FIGHT... "RUN THE FIGHT!"

## **Training Day 1**

### **8:30am-9:30am**

Saturday morning started off with some administrative paperwork and a short introduction. There were ten shooters in attendance comprised of armed citizens, State Police Officers, SWAT Operators and a Paramedic. Over the weekend everyone got to know each other on and off the range as we teamed up and



**Rob lecturing on CFS methodology**

formed shooter/observer teams. Rob began with a very thorough safety brief consisting of his explanation of Safety, Comfort and Competency, a review of the MEDEVAC plan and placement of his travel blow out kit. After safety was covered Rob got into the How, What and Why of Combat Focus Shooting (CFS) and defined for us what he considers a dynamic critical incident.

In a nutshell CFS is a combination of instinctive reactions to threat stimuli and intuitive learned responses that work well with the natural body alarm reaction. It is a counter-ambush based system to surprising, chaotic and threatening attack. Rob stressed to us that some threats will be seen, some heard, some felt and that the CFS system course focuses on shooting beyond two arms reach.

### **9:45-11:00**

After a short break we headed out to the range and shot our first drill; Extend, Touch, Press and the examined the importance of biomechanical lock out. This information is right from Rob's Combat Focus Shooting book and we spent a good deal of time getting combat accurate hits from 5 yards with this drill. All shooting was done from the compressed ready position or the #3 of the draw stroke for those who number the combative draw presentation. Utilizing the compressed ready the gun was closer to the visual plane and extended directly out to target. This position is far more efficient than starting at low ready and swinging the gun up and usually through the visual plane and past the target area we want to engage with accurate fire.

Rob lectured on the range about platform, combat accuracy and combat efficiency or any action that significantly affects the targets ability to pose a lethal threat. This lecture provided some interesting perspectives on what exactly a defensive shooter may or may not need to do in order to stop a threat during a dynamic critical incident. An explanation of instinctive movement patterns and intuitive or learned movement patterns followed along with the concept of moving and extending the handgun to target congruently. At around 10:45 we began a series of live fire lateral movement drills and then took a quick break to top off magazines and get some water.

### 11:15-11:30

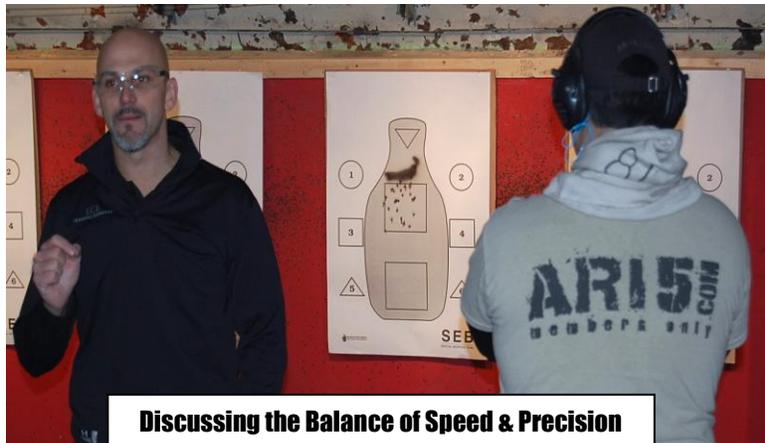
Reloading the handgun was next; don't look at the handgun during reload, keep it close to the body, importance of proper magazine placement and the biomechanics involved. Rob stressed the importance of not looking at the handgun during the reload due to the effects of stress and how our eyes will be focused intently on the threat. Taking our eyes off the threat can limit important information about what the threat is doing such as moving or if there are other threats approaching. Keeping the handgun close to the body allows physical index and provides the operator with the ability to travel along the side of the torso to find the magazine well and seat the new mag. This was different for me since I have utilized the high control position or "workspace/workstation" position for reloading for quite some time.

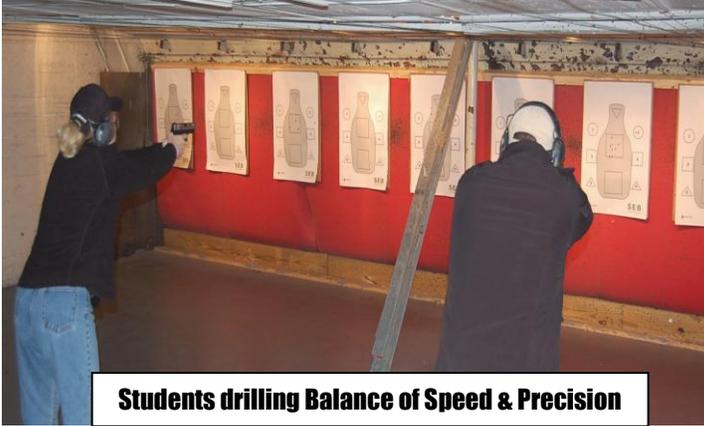
### 12:15-1:00

After the reloading live fire drills were concluded Rob launched right into a lecture on the Balance of Speed and Precision. The difference between probable skill training and plausible skill training and how these two elements determine what needs to be done in order to get the hits you want for the specific situation. Rob repeatedly referenced dash-cam video footage and ATM-camera footage to demonstrate the difference between what we will probably do under extreme stress and then what we may have to do. The overriding lesson was that the target dictates the need for precision and spending excessive amounts of time on precision shot placement training does not support what is seen from video evidence of actual shootings. Combat Focus Shooting is a course about how to protect or defend with a handgun, not shoot bulls-eyes. After this lecture we shot a series of drills designed to tie complex motor skills to a command. Shoot and no-shoot decisions and the ability to locate, identify and accurately engage targets large and small.

### 1:00-1:50

We broke for a quick lunch, topped off magazines and hydrated even though it was damn cold. Lunch gave all the shooters the opportunity to get to know one another better and discuss the morning's lessons.





**Students drilling Balance of Speed & Precision**

### **2:00-2:30**

After lunch we hit the range and revisited the Balance of Speed and Precision drills. A discussion on how the human mind processes perceived penalties for missing and how that affects our confidence and decision to shoot fast or slow.

### **2:30-3:40**

Presentation from the holster was next with a discussion of assessing the threat and the natural reaction to immediate, sudden stimuli. Rob explained to us how humans react and then the importance of integrating that reaction into our combat draw stroke. Several drills were shot from the holster with all of it starting from concealment. No discussion of clearing the cover garment was given and when I questioned Rob later about this he simply said “people figure it out”. Slowly working through the draw stroke process it became intuitive for many of the new shooters without overcomplicating the mechanics. The last drills we shot were more Balance of Speed and Precision drills from the holster combined with movement and everything else we had already trained.

### **4:15-5:00**

The final module of the day was on multiple target engagement. Similar to the low ready position, Rob feels that shooters too often leave the handgun at extension and swing from one target to another. This swinging cause’s over-shoots past the intended target. Instead, Rob suggests a retraction of the handgun to the compressed ready and then a separate extension and biomechanical lock for each target that needs to be engaged. This sequence compensates for the over-shoots and again focuses the attention of the shooter on the threat, not a race for the eyes to catch up with the sights of the gun.

### **5:00-6:00**

That did it for day one, we policed the range and everyone headed into the clubhouse for a detailed debrief and questions about the day. Rob pointed out to everyone that not once did he explain shooting grip, sight picture or sight alignment. He simply started everyone out with Extend, Touch Press and the importance of biomechanical lock out. He then explained a little bit about his teaching philosophy; learn a skill in context and then evaluate it in simulation. Day two would take us into the simulation phase of the CFS program.

## **Training Day 2**

### **8:00-8:30**

Training day two started a little earlier since we had to be out of the range by 4pm so club members could hold a league shoot. Rob wasted no time and jumped right into the safety brief and then a review of the Balance of Speed and Precision lecture and its importance in how we train the skills that are probable and the skills that are plausible.

### **8:30-11:00**

We headed out to the range. Average temperature on the range both days was around 20-30 degrees up front near the backstop where we did most our shooting. Rob started day two with the first of his simulation drills. The “Spin” drill forces the shooter to react, orient and engage the threat following the proper balance of speed and precision dictated by the target. Next was the “Push Your Limits” drill which demonstrated the shooters ability to apply the fundamentals of Combat Focus Shooting based on a solid foundation and platform. Then Rob started moving us back to 21 feet for some “Up” drills and, Balance of Speed and Precisions drills with head shots. We then moved to the 35 foot line for more “Up” drills. “Wind Sprint” drills followed testing our ability to tie complex motor skills with the decision process or what Rob referred to as cognitive engagement drills. This drill was one of the reasons I was excited to train with Rob. The CFS system is only the second shooting program I have seen that places a large value on the shooters ability to multi-task under stress. The only other program I’ve seen do this is SouthNarc’s Extreme Close Quarters Concepts program. Cognitive engagement has been utilized in padded assailant combatives programs for quite some time and it is good to see this methodology carry over into the personal protection firearms industry by progressive trainers like Rob.

### **11:15-12:00**

Lunch was called and everyone rushed out to grab a quick bite to eat. It was amazing how fast the morning flew by.

### **12:00-1:00**

After lunch we hit the range for more simulation drills with the “Figure 8” drill. This drill is excellent and provides the shooter with multiple skill training tied together into one drill. Most of the skills we had already learned were covered to include reaction, orientation, natural movement and dynamic reactionary movement, presentation from the holster from concealment, combat efficient shooting and precision shooting were all addressed in this one drill. For me, as someone who teaches others, this drill alone was worth the price of the course.



**Figure “8” Drill**

### **1:00-1:30**

It was pretty cold on the range so the next lecture was held back in the clubhouse. Rob talked to us about the CFS counter-ambush training methodology as compared to training other skills. CFS focuses on worst case scenarios and dynamic critical incident shooting. Rob used some graphics to compare the need for control of the training environment and how the presence of danger can determine the efficacy of the training experience. This balance affects the student's retention of information and where between those two elements dynamic critical incident training falls.

### **1:30-3:00**

Back to the range for more Balance of Speed and Precision drills and multiple target engagement skill development drills. After we finished that series Rob concluded the live fire portion of the class with a short lecture on "Shooting in Motion" and the negative effect movement can have on each shooters Balance of Speed and Precision again citing dash-cam footage to support the points he was making. The class concluded with the "Shooting in Motion" drill which again was worth the price of the course by itself.

### **3:00-4:30**

Everyone was fast to get the range policed and cleaned up so we wouldn't slow down the incoming club members when it was their turn to shoot. After clean up we hit the classroom for the final course debrief. Everyone was on information overload at this point trying to process the lessons and information learned over the past two days training.



## **Personal Course Summary**

I shot a total of 950 rounds of PMC ammunition with zero malfunctions in my Glock 17 which had not been cleaned in around 1700 rounds. I used a brand new Crossbreed Super Tuck holster in this class and it performed exceptionally well with very little break in other than me doing some dry fire presentations with a blue gun the night before day one of this course. Magazine holders were Raven Concealment and they are hard to beat for comfort, retention and speed.

Rob created a lot of food for thought, specifically about ready positions and teaching methodology as well as how the motor cortex processes information, rationalizes failure and deals with stimuli. Having met Rob last spring at the Northeast Shooters conference I knew he possessed an excellent presentation style and the ability convey his message. Rob is a dynamic, well spoken instructor who has obviously spent a great deal of time and effort designing the Combat Focus Shooting system. The contextual training model supported by the simulation drills blends well with my previous training experiences and current training practices. I really enjoyed the unique drills the CFS system offers. Overall, I would not hesitate to recommend CFS to a new shooter or seasoned professional and the \$400 course fee was money well spent.

Rob will be in Rochester, N.Y. in April of 2010 conducting his Combat Focus Shooting course hosted by Finger Lakes Training Team. For more information about the Combat Focus Shooting system or to register for a course, check out: <http://www.icetraining.us>