



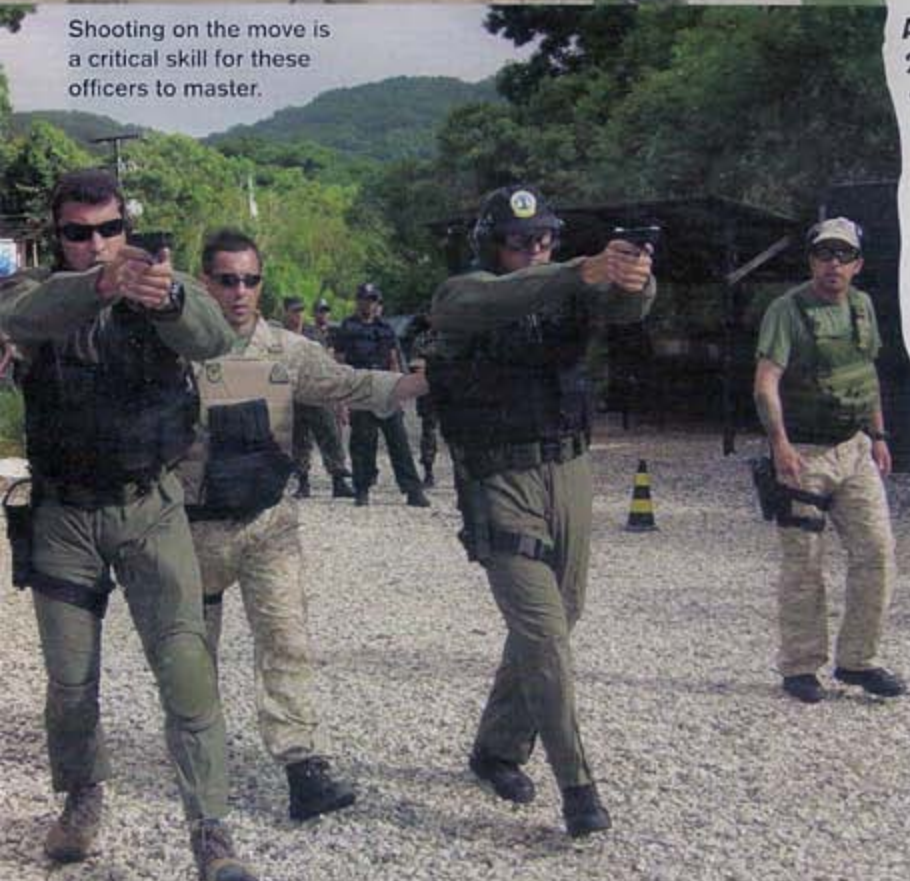
right: Det cord and Dyno Gel spider charge.
left: Result of Spider Charge on 6-inch thick concrete wall.



SHOC

» BY MAX F. JOSEPH

Shooting on the move is a critical skill for these officers to master.



Associated Press,
29 December 2006

"RIO DE JANEIRO—Drug gangs set fire to buses and opened fire on police stations and posts around Rio de Janeiro early yesterday in a wave of violence that killed 19 people and wounded 21, the state's top law enforcement officer said. Officials stated that gang members used handguns, machine guns, and grenades in 12 attacks on police stations and outposts that began in the early morning."

And so it goes. Clearly, the job of a police officer or soldier is dangerous by nature and requires a certain type of person to fulfill the mission. Dangerous is a relative word and is based upon the level of violence in the environment you operate in. Let it be known that Brazil is one of most deadly locations in the world to be a police officer. Police work down there resembles military operations more than it does any-

COB live fire basics are taken seriously.



K CASE!

SWAT Operations Course At TEES Brazil

thing else—that is exactly why I love it down there.

While most Americans are somewhat informed about the dangerous streets in the United States, such as Los Angeles, Houston, Chicago and New York, I wish to humbly remind them that many police officers throughout the world face truly warfare-like conditions on a daily basis.

While I have seen many beautiful countries in my travels, nothing quite matches Brazil. Brazil stands alone as far as primal beauty and disposition of the people. This nation is totally unique and separate from the stereotypical image of Central and South America. It is a land of contrasts, as an incredibly violent criminal element occupies the same land as the most friendly and hos-

pitable people I have ever encountered.

Twenty-six hours after leaving Los Angeles airport, I finally arrive in Curitiba, about a 40-minute flight from the Brazilian capital of Sao Paulo. The richness of the air is one of my favorite sensations when I am in this part of the world. The roads here are normal crazy for this environment, with the ruts providing the biggest threat to the suspension system and shocks of our vehicle. It was almost ten years ago that I first arrived here to teach a SWAT Tactics course with Alan (Kiwi) Brosnan of TEES. Coincidentally, Kiwi and I are sitting here together again at "Base Choque" ("Shock Base").

I am here to observe a very special training program. Kevan Gilles is the director of TEES Brazil. I first met Kevan in

1997 when he and "Slim" Pericles came to Memphis to attend a TEES Explosive Entry course. Kevan talked to Kiwi about bringing him and me down to Brazil for a Mobile Training Unit (MTU) course, and things rolled from there. We conducted dozens of MTU classes that grew in size with each sortie. Based upon the demand, Kevan and Kiwi worked together and started TEES Brazil in 1999. Kevan and Kiwi worked themselves raw to budget for the facility that has become Base Choque. This facility may seem somewhat humble to those accustomed to training in the U.S., but let me assure you that it is the Brazilian equivalent of Gunsite, Thunder Ranch and Blackwater all rolled into one.

Kevan is hosting an extremely high quality program. The annual TEES

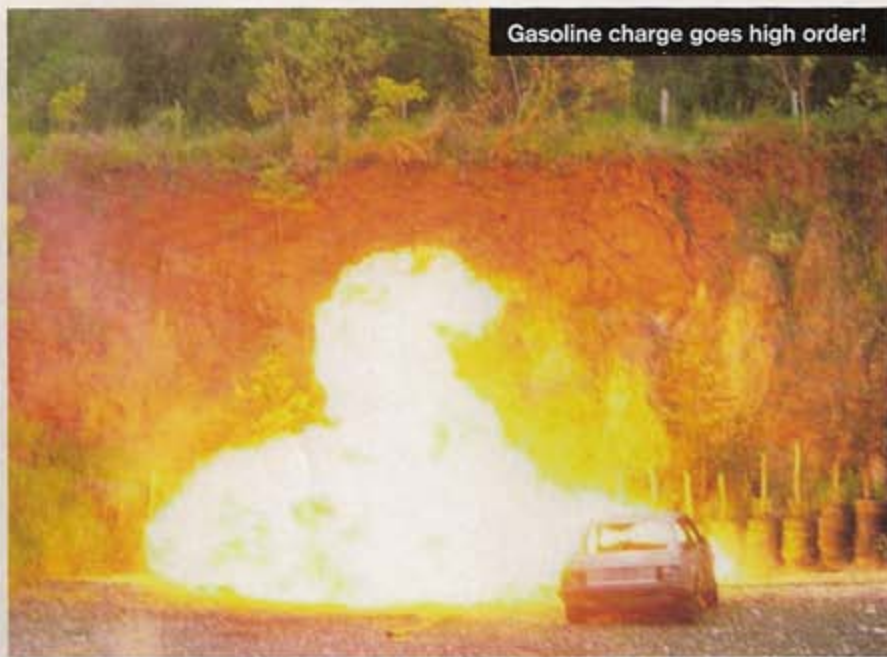
SHOCK BASE!

Brazil SWAT course teaches an excellent skills set for all police officers and military personnel. This ten-day program encompasses the following objectives:

- Tactical Shooting
- Street Patrol Tactics
- Live Fire CQB
- Jungle Patrol
- Brazilian Defensive Tactics
- Defensive Driving
- Explosive Breaching
- Night FTX

Brazil has been (and remains) one of my finest experiences as a tactical instructor. The responsibility is huge, as we know that these officers and soldiers will put the skills and tactics that we hand down into operational play almost immediately after graduation. I take a great amount of pride in the fact that the skills and knowledge passed down will definitely save lives. Every period of instruction is received by the students with great motivation and enthusiasm.

The 48 students are broken down into four 12-man squads. The students are an excellent representation of police and military from around the country. There



Gasoline charge goes high order!

are operators here from the Brazilian Army, Air Force, Presidential PSD unit, Military Police, Civil Police and Federal Agents. I feel that the term "operator" is a little overused these days, but when I use it in this context, I mean it. A surprisingly large number of students sport scars from gunshot wounds, and a

few have several from multiple engagements. I will not attempt to cover this course day-by-day, as it would consume too much copy. I will simply document the highlights of the main topics.

The program begins with an introduction and quick medical exam for blood pressure and weight. A physical fitness

SHOCK BASE!

test follows with timed sit ups, pull ups, push ups and a 2K run. All of these stats are carefully recorded and, when the students perform this test again at the conclusion of the course, they will all see a dramatic improvement in their scores (if they are still here to take it). Improve they will, because every day will consist of sensible PT, shooting, moving and communicating. I use the word sensible for the PT portion, as this is exactly what it is. We have all heard about or experienced some sort of asinine PT during SWAT selections/training. The mission here is not to drop people, but to harden everyone up.

Kevan has trained up his instructors to the highest level. They all remind me of my own cadre with their crystal-clear explanations of the periods of instruction. Their command presence and bearing speak volumes about the quality of tactical instruction offered at TEES Brazil.

As everywhere, individual skill level of the students varies greatly. There are operators who can execute man-on-man drills with the cadre and hold their own. There are also men who cannot remem-

ber to decock their pistols no matter how many times they are told. Normal stuff when training mixed units.

The sidearms in use here consist mostly of Taurus pistols in 9mm or .40. As I am sure most readers know, Taurus' are manufactured in Brazil and are of quite good quality these days. Some officers who can afford to purchase their own weapons often carry Glocks, usually in .40 caliber. Long guns range from CBC shotguns (also Brazilian made) to FN-FALs and a smattering of Colt M4s. The biggest hindrance to officers here is the ammunition. The ammunition is controlled by the government and is less than the highest quality. I will leave it at that, as I don't care to have a full cavity search on my next trip down.

Several of the students are previous graduates of TEES Brazil courses. This is excellent, as their weapons handling skills and discipline set the standard for the new students. There is no greater reward for a tactical instructor than to see a student whom you guided several years before, now carrying himself in strong fashion and executing complex

live fire, close quarter battle scenarios.

The close quarter battle techniques taught at Base Choque are the standard TEES tactics of dynamic room clearing. These tactics are time proven by literally hundreds and hundreds of live operations all over Brazil and throughout the world. The room combat tactics taught here are simple, effective and easy to remember under stress. Most important of all for any live fire activities, they are safe. CQB occupies a good amount of the training time, as it is an important skill that the officers execute regularly.

The slum tactics portion is one of the most popular blocks of instruction for the men. Their nightly patrols in the *favelas* claim many officers' lives. The most critical facet of these tactics is properly clearing corners and taking your angles correctly when there is no real rhyme or reason to how some of the ghetto neighborhoods are laid out. The TEES Brazil facility offers two live fire shoot houses. The first is the traditional railroad cross-tie, five room shoot house. The second is a new addition, which is of cinder block construction with bullet traps in



Base Choque MOUT Town.



Basic pistol warm up on day one to evaluate students' skill level.



13th Mech. Cavalry from Sao Paulo; 10.6 Gram Det Cord Linear Charge.

all rooms. The alleys that lead up to this structure are laid out in typical Brazilian slum fashion.

One of the best maneuvers executed in this venue is the Officer Down/Extraction drill. The officer down drills are undoubtedly important for these officers to master, as they will probably utilize them in the near future. These drills are very intense, realistic and are based on past operational incidents.

Another skill put into play in the shoot house venues is the proper deployment of flash bangs. I can confidently say that there is no doubt in any SWAT officer or soldier's mind that the proper deployment of flash bangs is a great asset for operators during hostage rescue missions and other types of situations where a high level of "Shock Action" is needed. Flash bang deployment drills taught at Base Choque are solid, effective, dynamic and safe. Once again, safe is a key word here, as many a man has blown his hand off or wounded a noncombatant by the reckless deployment of these devices.

The Explosive Entry portion is a full day of some of the most often employed charges, namely, the frame charge, linear charge and strip charge. In addition, the students construct and fire gasoline distraction charges to incorporate into a final hit at the end of the day. The explosives used here are limited to Dyno Gel for conventional blasting and det cord for breaching. The primary instructor for the explosive breaching block is Kevan, who has many operational breaches with Tiger Group throughout southern Brazil. It is quite a high volume of information for the students to absorb, but it is presented in a very logical progression.

Det cord is the most versatile explosive available for breaching, as it is perfect for wood on its own and may be employed with either rubber strip charges or water bags to defeat the metal doors that are common here. I have always said that if I was stranded on a desert island and had to spend the rest of my life with only one explosive, it would be det cord.

The operators here at TEES Brazil take the use of det cord one step further, as a main blasting charge for brick and cinder-block walls. They say that necessity is the mother of invention, and some of these charges are perfect examples. They have

taken standard charges such as the fracture and flex linear Ghost Buster charge and employed det cord in place of the Deta sheet and LSC normally used in those charges. The det cord in Brazil is measured in the amount of PETN expressed in grams per linear meter, as opposed to grains of PETN per linear foot as is the case in the United States. The variety available is 10.6, 5.3 and 3.1 grams of PETN per meter. This is the equivalent of our 50-, 25- and 15-grain det cord. The students successfully breach a multitude of different targets, including doors, windows and cinder-block and concrete walls.

The Final Training Exercise (FTX) is conducted at night and is something to behold. It consists of two 24-man teams conducting simultaneous assaults on two strongholds. Alpha team is tasked with planning and executing a hostage rescue mission on a mountaintop slum stronghold that they have to fight their way up to. Bravo team meanwhile is busy conducting an emergency assault with full explosive breach on another stronghold.

The students were given sufficient information by the intelligence officer earlier in the day to formulate fairly good operation orders and complete dress rehearsals.

The best part is, when it's over, everyone has ten fingers and ten toes—at least those who started with that number—and no more holes than they came with. Motivating!

Be advised that this training course is actually open to American police and military personnel. The value of this course cannot be overstated. The tuition is less than what most Americans pay for a week-long course in the States.

I strongly encourage all American police and military operators to seriously consider attending this program, as it is an outstanding experience and good value for your training funds. Many Brazilians speak quite a good smattering of English and are very enthusiastic and motivated when American operators visit. The exchange of tactical information is beneficial for all concerned. At TEES there is always a fluent English speaker on site to give an orientation

and translate all the periods of instruction. Be advised that this program is restricted to police and military personnel only. No exceptions. If there is a warrior culture for police officers, it is currently still in existence here in southern Brazil at "Base Choque!" ☉

[Max Joseph is the founder and training director of both Tactical Firearms Training Team and the Direct Action Group. He has been involved in Special Operations and training non-stop for the last 21 years. He has trained and worked with Counter-Terrorist officers and troops from Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East and South America.]

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