

LEFT: When not working in contact proximity with team members, it is acceptable for the muzzle to be slightly canted.



POSITION CQB SUL PISTOL READY POSITION

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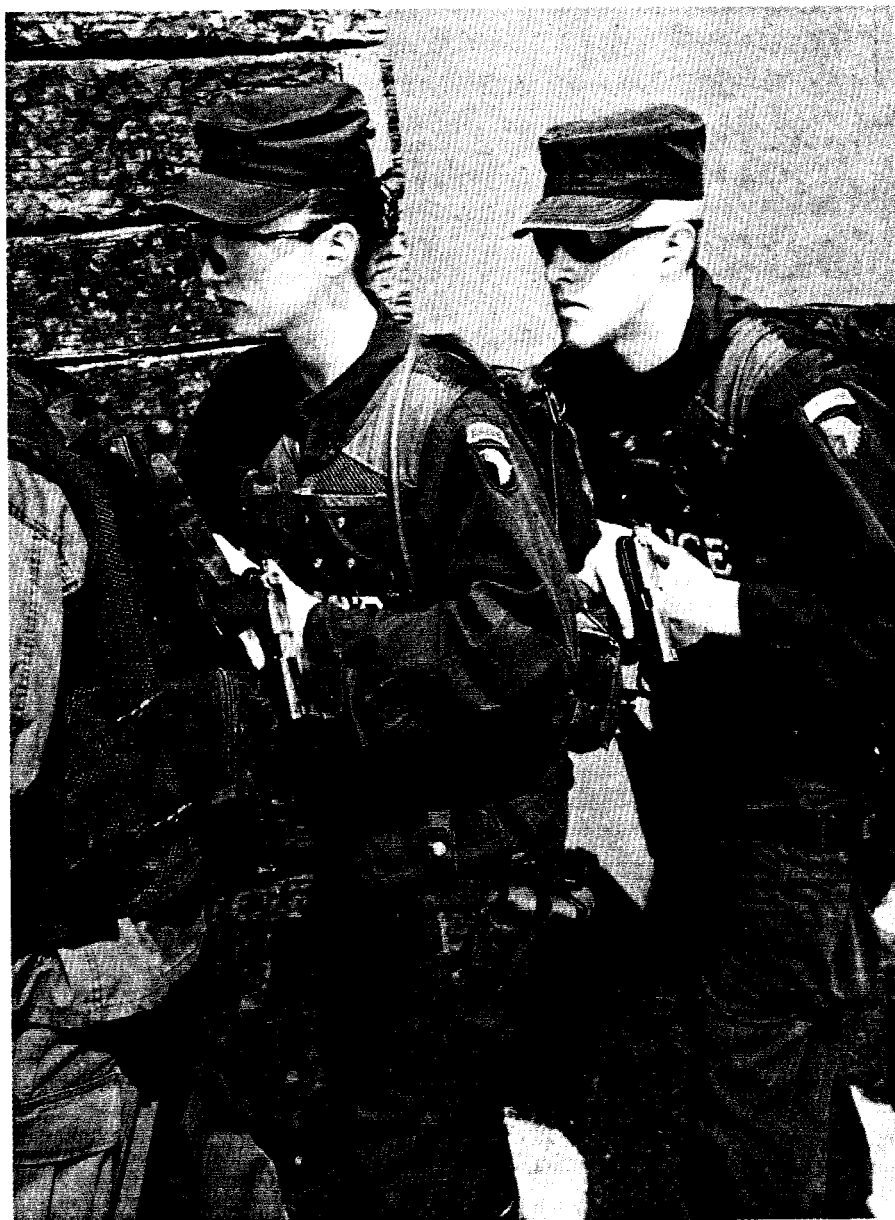
LEFT: If the body leans forward for any reason, the muzzle must cant out so that the shooter never covers his legs with his muzzle.

BOTTOM: Sul affords perfect muzzle safety while in an entry stack.

Watch your muzzle! Lower that muzzle! Bring that weapon in! Keep control of those weapons! How many times have we heard ourselves shouting this to unsafe muzzle wavers during operations or training?

During room entries or other close combat confines, we know that our weapon must be able to be presented instantly if we are threatened. Yet, most of us would agree that our muzzle must be safe during that entry. This is obvious for the welfare and safety of our fellow entry men, and also any non-combatants inside the stronghold. There is a position that is being widely accepted as the new SOP for pistol-ready carry. That is Position Sul. Sul was developed jointly by TFFT and TEES after years of shouting for men to better control their muzzles during Close Quarters Battle Training. Sul means South in Portuguese, and it aptly describes the location of our bore axis while in this position. Since its inception, Sul has met with wide acceptance, and has since become the standard carry position for many teams and agencies. While it is sometimes said that it is very hard to teach an old dog new tricks, nearly every person that has ever tried this position/presentation has quickly fell in love with it and adopted it.

While becoming accustomed to this position, it is best to start with the weapon in both hands, locked out into a standard "Low Ready." Begin by loosening up the grip of your non-shooting hand and rotate your hands so



that the slide lays across the back of your non-shooting hand. At the same time, unlock your elbows and bring your hands into your solar plexus. The open palm of your non-shooting hand should be open and touching your solar plexus. Keep in mind not to project your elbows out too far from your body.

If the elbows are allowed to project out, they will bang into doorjambs while effecting entry. In addition, you do not want your partner banging into your elbows as he tries to make his way past you, and finally, we do not need to offer more exposed area to return fire than necessary. When men are first learning the position, I always have them come first to Low Ready, then to Sul. After the mechanics are learned and muscle memory becomes fairly natural, it is possible for the men to come from the draw immediately into Sul.

Presentation up to the target from Sul is the smoothest of any retention/CQB ready modes. The secret is for the operator to maintain contact between the first knuckle of the non-shooting hand and the middle knuckle of the shooting hand. Finger is always straight and outside the trigger guard until the sights are on the target. It is important to keep in mind that no portion of your body should ever be covered by your muzzle

at any time during any drill, carry or ready position. Therefore, if you are in the habit of leaning your body forward during entries or range training, it is critical for you to cant your muzzle slightly forward to prevent covering your body or legs with your muzzle.

While it is not mandatory, I choose to keep contact between the pads of my thumbs while in Sul, since I have ingrained muscle memory for 1911 type weapons. By having my thumbs touching in a "V" position, I am afforded instant access to my safety, which I of course always ride high.

During crowd control, whether it is during a raid on a bar, or ushering would-be victims out of an active shooter site, is always a bit more hazardous with regards to muzzle control and weapons retention. Any time that we may have to come into physical contact with suspects or hostages, our awareness level must become heightened. While in position Sul, the weapon is kept in a position of authority, ready to instantly come up on any potential threat, yet when having crowds in front of you or moving past you, you are not in an overtly threatening position. This is sometimes extremely important when cameras are capturing all for the six o'clock news.

How many times have we all seen incidents, either on duty or later that night on the news, that illustrated officers having no coherent directive with regards to where their pistol should be held when they are out of leather for an extended time? We see the images of one officer with his weapon in the high ready (usually an older cop who received his training in the '70s). Another has his pistol in the one-hand swinging mode. This shows lack of clear SOPs and lack of professionalism.

Room entries present a high output of adrenaline for all tactical team members who take their job seriously. This is the most hazardous moment during both training and operations. Target identification and judgment calls need to be made in extremely quick time. However, that does not necessarily mean that your muzzle should be up and swinging wildly towards any and all suspected danger areas. Ideally, the weapon is kept in the carry mode, in this case Sul, until a specific threat or potential threat has been identified—then the rapid tactical presentation to target is initiated. This all takes place in fractions of seconds, which is all it takes to punch that pistol up from Sul. There are those out there that would say this takes too much time and that the pistol



Contact must be kept between the middle knuckle of the shooting hand and the first knuckle of the non-shooting hand.



BOTTOM: Elbows should be kept in close to the body to prevent "chicken winging," which will restrict fluid movement through doors.

should be on a semi horizontal bore axis when moving through areas. I would counter by pointing out that only a decade ago, officers were being taught to keep their fingers in the trigger while moving since it obviously was a waste of time to keep that finger straight!

Bad calls and bad techniques can result in both dead operators and dead non-combatants. With stress being what it is, officers should not increase the risk of momentary lapse of muscle control by having their muzzle up where it is endangering their team members.

Over the last couple years, there have been several tragic incidents involving poor muzzle control on the part of the arresting officers, who manage to put rounds into non-combatants, or unjustified rounds into cooperating suspects. You cannot afford to let this happen to you. Some would say that this is a result of not following rule number two: Keep your finger straight until the sights are on the target. Of course, that is a factor, but that is also why keeping your muzzle in a safe direction is the

first rule!

Running up stairs is one of the most muzzle-hazardous times for teams that have no better place for their muzzle than at the ass of the man in front of him. The chance of falling is greatly increased, as is the physical exertion factor for the bear claw fan club. For running up stairwells, I would employ a modified Sul that involves canting your muzzle in a 45-degree angle towards your weak side, while still keeping your bore axis down and away from your partners legs in front of you.

Another modification that could possibly be used would be the one-hand Sul. This would be employed while ushering hostages towards you or conducting one-hand escort maneuvers with non-combatants. During

one-hand Sul, the strong hand is brought into Sul, with the pistol held into the solar plexus with the finger straight.

During dynamic domination of a small, crowded stronghold, whether it is a bus or aircraft assault, the stress and confusion level increases in proportion to the close spaces of the stronghold. In those close confines, you don't dare project your weapon out where someone is bound to either grab it (suspects) or run in front of or into your muzzle (hostages). Good tight control of that pistol is of paramount importance.

There is a problem out there with many departments and officers in regard to muzzle control. Sul is very well the answer to that problem. Try out this position next time you are at the range. Give it a fair chance and you will quickly find that your body adopts it very easily and naturally.

After you become accustomed to it, you may find yourself looking behind you on your next call out and shouting to the man behind you, "Watch that muzzle!" ●