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LEAVE A MAN BEHIND

Peeling off a team member to cover multiple threats!

By Leroy Thompson

Although I do cover smaller formations in this column, more often I approach tactical situations from the point-of-view of the five-BG (bodyguard) team, since this is a widely used formation. I want to discuss the situations that may arise when the team leader of a 5-BG team decides to peel off one or more members of the team to deal with a specific tactical situation.

One of the real advantages of the 5-BG team is that if one member is peeled off, the team leader can just assume his position and thus retain a 4-BG box. The scenarios discussed are also based on the assumption that the team is operating without any additional personnel except the drivers, who will remain with the vehicles.

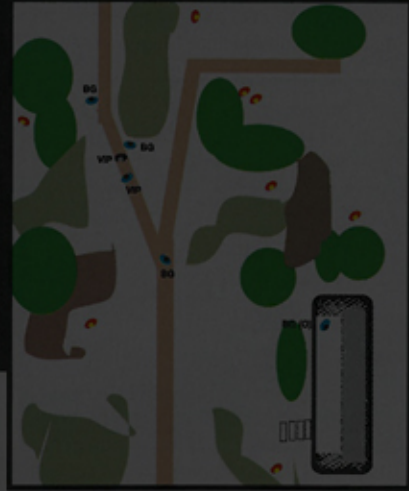
In one situation that I have encountered, the principal will decide to go "walk about" without prior notice in an area that has an abundance of cover for potential attackers (i.e., a park, garden, etc.). If there is "high ground" that's readily accessible, (i.e., a ridge, footbridge, observation deck, etc.) I peel off a team member to dominate this position.

Peeling Off A Bodyguard For Observation/Fire Support

In this scenario the Team Leader (TL) sees that the terrain hides too many potential threats. He peels off one member of the protective team to ascend onto an observation deck [BG (O)] to provide observation and possibly fire support from the high ground. The other bodyguards (BG) provide an open box and attempt to cover the VIP as well as possible.

This team member can accomplish multiple missions in doing so: 1) He can deny the high ground to a potential shooter. 2) He can observe any approaching threat and alert the team. 3) If armed with a rifle he can also supply long-range fire support. Once the team and principal are clear of the potential danger zone, this team member can rejoin the team, usually by vectoring himself to intercept them as they move to the vehicles.

Another option is to cover them until they reach the vehicles, hustle to the closest pickup point and enter the trail car. Generally, peeling off a team member in this situation is rather



ad-hoc, so a well-trained team with the ability to think on their feet is a necessity. I have incorporated this scenario in training courses during the escort exercise just to see if the trainees perceive the advantages of controlling the high ground.

Another scenario that can arise needs a real judgment call whether or not a member of the team should peel off. When moving through a crowd, it can happen that one individual will stand out as particularly worrisome.

PAIR OF 9mm POCKET PISTOLS

One of the most important trends for those of us who carry pistols all of the time, but may have to dress in clothing that does not conceal a belt gun, is the current availability of excellent 9mm or .40 pistols that can be carried in a normal-sized trousers pocket. Recently, I've been testing two of these compact 9s and have been impressed with both of them.

The first is the Walther PPS. I first shot this gun on a visit to Smith & Wesson a few months ago and immediately knew I wanted one. For years, my pocket pistol was a Walther PPK in .380. The PPS is almost the same size and lighter, yet is chambered for a real combat cartridge. At 6.3 inches overall, a hair over an inch wide, and 19.4 ounces without a magazine, this pistol car-

ries in a pocket very well, especially in the pocket holsters from DeSantis.

The magazine capacity with the flat-bottomed magazine I carry in the pocket is 6 rounds. A 7-round magazine comes with the pistol as well and an 8-round magazine is available. As a result, one can carry 6 + 1 rounds in the gun plus another 7 or 8 rounds in another pocket.

Walther seems to have designed this pistol from the beginning for pocket carry, as controls are all very flat, while sights are low profile with white dots. The ambidextrous magazine release is located along the triggerguard and works best if operated with the trigger finger, though the support hand thumb may also be used. A lever



Walther PPS is very compact and recoil is quite acceptable with +P loads.

safety in the trigger must be depressed in order for the trigger to be operated, a system familiar these days to most shooters.

I like the PPS a lot. I've shot good groups out to 50 feet with it using Federal's 9BP 115-grain JHP ammo and Black Hills 115-grain JHP. I've put at least 150

rounds through it with no malfunctions. I feel that the PPS makes an excellent second gun and when concealment is paramount, an excellent first gun. Since the DeSantis Nemesis pocket holster may be used in either right or left pocket, it complements the PPS well.

The other compact 9mm pistol I've been testing is the Rohrbach R9S. This very compact pistol is produced in a small shop in the US to exacting quality control stan-

Teams that have "sleepers" moving through the crowd will have one of them position themselves right behind such an individual. However, if there are no extra team members, no "sleepers" and no local law enforcement to lend assistance, then it would be advisable to have one team member lag behind to keep an eye on the perceived threat.

This is particularly true if the individual is perceived to be stalking the principal and moving after him. As long as the individual is in the crowd, I would recommend watching him as the protective formation keeps moving. If, however, the individual leaves the crowd to follow the principal, then I would recommend one BG hanging back and confronting him, while not confronting him.

By that I mean, "Hello, Sir, can I help you? Did you have a message you'd like me to deliver to Mr. Principal?" By engaging the individual in conversation, the trained BG can make some judgments about his psychological state as well as delaying him in the process. He can also get into his space a bit, which will deter some.

An alternate case of splitting off a team member can also occur when moving through a crowd. If the terrain is such that the team has trouble observing a portion of the crowd because they are on higher ground, a team member can be split off to move behind or through the crowd to allow faster reaction time.

The problem with leaving a bodyguard to confront an individual who sets off "cop radar" is that he may be a decoy intended to "bleed

dards. Only 5.2 inches in overall length, 0.8 of an inch in width, and 12.8 ounces in weight, the R9S is even more concealable than the PPS. The frame is of 7075 Aluminum to cut weight. Magazine capacity of the R9S is 6 rounds as with the PPS. The R9S's double-action-only trigger pull offers good safety in a pocket gun yet still leaves the little pistol ready for instant action. Factor in the lack of external levers or buttons, the hammer fits flush with the frame and the bottom magazine release, and one has a pistol well designed for carry and draw from the pocket.

There are actually multiple versions of the Rohrbaugh. The R9 has a slide without sights, while the R9S has rudimentary sights. There is also a "Stealth" version of each pistol with a

Continued on page 70

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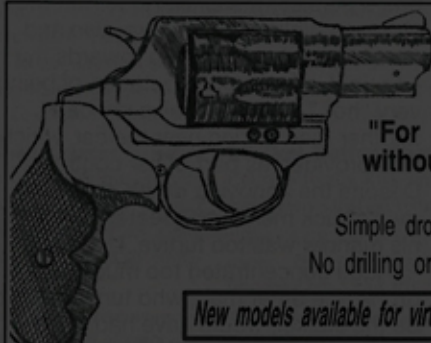


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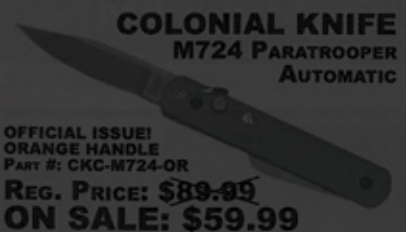


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off" team members so that there will be fewer around the principal when the real attack is launched. I have not often worked for entertainment figures, but once in London, I was guarding a well-known singer who had a one-week engagement at Ronnie Scott's, a trendy jazz club that attracted top talent, and a high profile audience, Prince Charles and his entourage among others were there. I was the lone bodyguard who picked her up at the end of the night's gig and escorted her to her hotel. One reason I had been hired was that she had a persistent stalker. As we left the club one night, a very aggressive and drunken fan kept pushing towards my principal, who had a reputation of being very "hot." However, I also noticed another man lurking near the car, which was provided as part of her contract.

Despite the annoying drunk, the other man struck me as the greater danger; his manner was too furtive. I was right.

Had I concentrated too much on the drunk, the other man, who turned out to be the stalker, would have had a clear shot at my principal. I had put myself between my principal and the drunk while giving him an elbow and shin rake with my heel, but had kept watching the "stalker." Thus, I was in position to stop him as he moved suddenly towards my principal. Somehow he fell down and had trouble getting up before we were in the vehicle and disappeared! Obviously, this was not a case of bleeding off a

member of a team since I was the team, but it is an example of attention being distracted from the main threat.

Of course, engaging a threat is a situation where it's SOP (standard operating procedure) for one member of the team to peel off. Then, the team member who's engaging the shooter is left behind to neutralize the threat and cover the evacuation.

I have also seen the situation arise when some form of check-in is necessary at a hotel, airport, and so on. If there's a personal assistant to the principal, then that person should handle it. If only the team and the principal are available, then one team member can peel off to deal with administrative details while the rest of the team moves the principal away from crowds.

Since most situations where a team member is peeled off arise in reaction to unforeseen circumstances, there could be numerous other scenarios when detaching a bodyguard might be tactically useful. Generally, though, when a foot movement is anticipated, plans are made to deal with potential threats and possible additional personnel are brought in when necessary. Still, the team leader and the team must remain flexible to meet changing tactical situations as much as a football team remains ready to adjust the offense or defense based on audibles.

Pair Of Pocket Pistol

(Continued from page 69)

diamond black slide or a standard version with bright slide. My gun is the Stealth version with sights.

The Rohrbaugh is only rated for standard 9mm rounds, not +P or +P+. As a result, I did my testing with Winchester 115-grain Silvertip and some Black Hills and Blazer 115-grain FMJ. All functioned reliably. I did most of my shooting at 7 and 10 yards and found that I could easily keep all rounds within the "center-of-mass" on human targets firing rapidly.

I use a Milt Sparks left side sharkskin pocket holster with the Rohrbaugh and fired about half of the rounds in my tests from the pocket with the left hand. Those were normally fired one-handed. The remaining rounds were fired right-handed either with a two-hand hold or one-handed. The Rohrbaugh performed flawlessly on reliability. Recoil was noticeable, as it was with the PPS, but not so bad that the pistol could not be quickly brought back on target for follow-up shots. As might be



The Walther PPS in DeSantis Nemesis pocket holster (left) and the Rohrbaugh in Milt Sparks pocket holster (right).

expected with the Rohrbaugh's rudimentary sights, groups were tighter at longer ranges with the PPS.

I feel no compunctions about recommending both of these pistols. Both conceal well and are well designed for pocket carry. Both are utterly reliable and both show acceptable or better accuracy at close combat ranges.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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