

## PFC Movement Under Fire AAR May06

PFC: Fighting With Firearms, Gen II review "Movement under fire"

Eighteen students with varying degrees of firearms training recently completed a two-day training event with Steve Krystek and Brian Hartman of **Progressive Force Concepts**. All of the attendees had prior training with PFC, or with adjunct PFC instructor, **Chris Fry (MDTS)**. Chris Fry and I hosted PFC at my club last year for the first "Fighting with Firearms 1" module. The class consists of advanced material, and requires prior formal training experience as a prerequisite. You are expected to know how to properly operate your pistol and carbine before attending the class.

The course on day 1 could have been more aptly described as "movement under cold, windy, gray skies." The grassy range actually was saturated, and had small standing puddles-but the rain had pretty much stopped by the time we started the outdoor shooting portion of the class. As the outdoor portion of the class was intended to focus on movement, and shooting on the move, this obviously presented a safety concern for solid footing.

The class began with an introduction from Steve about his background, and moved to expectations of both a student and instructor in a class of this type. Safety is paramount. Instructors will strive to maintain safety, will give 110%, will push and challenge students to meet their highest level of proficiency. In return, students will maintain safety, give 100%, should accept corrections and maintain an open mind. Students should NEVER QUIT when doing a drill when things go wrong. Work through it! Mindset is key. Firearms safety was stressed, and stressed again.

After 2 classes with PFC, I can say they achieved their end of instructor expectation, and then some. The material was presented in a clear, logical manner, mixed with humor to keep things light. Steve and Brian demonstrated all drills. Their degree of smooth, efficient, professional gun handling is actually enjoyable to watch-and not quite so easy to duplicate-especially when movement enters the equation. ("How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, Practice, Practice!") They are not afraid to answer questions, or modify the intended course outline when deficiencies reared their ugly heads, such as reviewing proper reloading or malfunction clearing techniques when people were repeatedly dicking them up.

After the introduction portion of the class, we reviewed PFC's dynamic contact shooting position, essentially a modern isosceles stance---aggressive, knees slightly bent, well balanced, and solid. This lends itself to both speed and movement-the key to the whole moving portion of the class. How well can you move or respond to a threat when locked in a weaver position? A quick review of shooting positions followed, contact ready, low ready, diamond and half diamond, covert ready, close contact ready (retention position), and high control-a position with the muzzle up maintaining contact with your body (arm or carbine stock), allowing fast, efficient reloads while maintaining focus on your target. We also reviewed the after-action drill concept, which contains 5 vital components: 1) Adversary down? 2) Is he alone 3) Location? Are you safe or should you move? 4) Weapon condition? Do you need to reload? 5) Lastly, are you wounded? There are a lot of factors to consider and address should you ever find yourself in a real shooting situation.

A thorough review of administrative and combative gun handling was completed- loading, chamber checks, clearing, unloading, presentation (pistol/carbine) emergency and deliberate reloads (these guys are sick of the word "tactical!"), as well a quick review of shooting responses-standard defensive response (2 shots, COM), failure to stop drill, (2 COM, 1 well-placed head shot), non-standard response (2 COM, 4 shots to pelvic girdle), and lastly, the immediate stop response (1 shot to head).

Then we were off to the races with a number of drills. (drill detail content edited by request) How fast can you shoot and reload under pressure? How well positioned is your kit? I should mention that as it was cold, windy, and damp, most of us shot the pistol drills from concealment.

Bilateral weapons operation was also incorporated, operating your weapons from both strong and support side. This concept was introduced and heavily drilled in the first FWF class.

We did a series of movement drills, forward, backwards, oblique angles, slide steps, side steps, corner steps-all coupled with shooting, doing weapons manipulations and reloading while moving. Different movement tempos, and hit probabilities, were covered. Barricade tactics, cover verses concealment, was also addressed. Do you always want to shoot from the exact same position from cover? Or should you mix it up, change sides and incorporate vertical displacement?

Carbines were optional in this class. Those who wished could incorporate them into drills and perform transitions as desired/required.

Later drills incorporated multiple targets, movement, displacement, barricades, reloads on the move, and in some cases, malfunction clearances on the move. If you are in a gunfight and your gun jams, do you stand still while you sort out the problem OR do you keep moving to cover or even to simply make yourself a more difficult target to hit?

I'm not going to name names, but some guys have terrible gun maintenance habits. Not properly cleaned or lubed guns, when run hard, will bite you in the ass. However, when you couple dynamic movement with shooting, Mr. Murphy can

also appear. I watched one shooter limp wrist his Glock while moving at a dedicated pace past a series of targets. He wasn't able to clear it in time before passing nearly all his targets. Bummer.

During our lunch break on Day 2, Brian Hartman gave a demonstration on malfunction clearances in AR15s and pistols. Simply outstanding unplanned presentation. We all learned some new techniques. I immediately tried one method in my 1911, a failure to extract (empty case) with the next loaded round jammed up against it. Previously, I had been shown to lock the slide back, rip out the magazine, and rack the slide 2-3 times while rolling the gun to the right. It works. Brian simply rips out the mag without locking the slide back, which allows the slide to close. He then reinserts a mag, and racks/rolls the gun, putting it back in action. It works faster. Ironically, the only time I have ever personally experienced this type of malfunction in my gun involved a broken extractor in a Kimber last year (thank you MIM), so the clearance drill would not work in either case. I tried.

On day 1 after we were finished with live fire drills, we all completely removed our firearms. Steve and Brian gave a lecture on principles of low-light operation. "Be fluid, flexible, and unpredictable." "All dark holes have guns." "A 400 degree world, 360 around, 20 up, 20 down." They demonstrated strobing techniques while searching, and powering up (lighting up) a suspect when located-after perhaps displacing a bit to confuse him. Some types of lights were discussed, and the importance of having more than 1 light. We then did an extremely enlightening (OK, a small pun intended) drill. 3 people, 2 with blue guns, hid in our darkened clubhouse with very little ambient light, near complete darkness. I volunteered to be one of the bad guys-and was unarmed. It was interesting to watch my classmates move too fast past the hidden armed suspects. I will say that I was only "shot" twice. The majority of guys asked to see my hands or lay face down, taking me out of the hunt. I benefited from watching my friends screw up and was a bit more methodical when it was my turn and 3 new "bad guys" were in place. Roll playing the bad guy can be a great learning aid. I must say I think I enjoyed this portion of the class as much as the live fire exercises.

Round count was not especially high. I believe I fired about 200 rounds through my carbine and 300-400 through my 1911. However, the class was about movement as much as shooting. The round count was high enough to drive home the purpose of the drills.

In the class debrief, the point was driven home that the person who has a solid grasp of the fundamentals of proper gun handling and manipulation is light years ahead of the game. There are no short cuts. You have to work to maintain your skills. I think all attendees sharpened already existing skills and added new ones. This class was an excellent training experience, giving me a lot of new material to work on and improve, much as last year's class did. If you have an opportunity to train with PFC, do it.

EDIT:

I forgot to include this in the review: We did a series of drills with different barricades, making 4 different presentations from each barricade (left, right, vertical displacement)---including one where an "intrepid" ARfcommer volunteered his car as a barricade. Amazingly, no one shot it\*... At least 2 of the other 3 barricades ended up with bullet holes in them!

\*Steve placed cones to help make sure none of us got too close to the bumpers. And limited the car barricade drill to pistol only-less sight/barrel offset .