



1991: DESERT STORM TANK ART

# COMBAT ARMS

2011



**EXCLUSIVE**



## M14 EBR-RI

**HOW TACOM  
BUILDS AN M14**

**REPORT  
USMC**

## SMAW

**INSIDE THE MK153  
83MM ROCKET  
LAUNCHER**

**TESTED**

**ARMALITE**

## SPR MOD 1

**MEDIUM-RANGE  
MONOLITHIC 5.56**

**FIELD TESTED:**

### BEST TRAINING

- > I.T.T.S. URBAN SNIPER
- > WARTAC CQC
- > VIKING TACTICS

### BEST SIDEARMS

- > GLOCK 17 GEN4 9mm
- > FN FNX .40 S&W
- > ED BROWN STEALTH .45

### BEST RIFLES

- > G.A. PRECISION .308
- > LES BAER .308
- > FNH SCAR-16 5.56



**D**ay three of an advanced winter sniper course had my ass slung in a climbing harness with the weight of my ruck trying to pull me away from the face of an iced-over and rocky Utah mountain. It was snowy weather, and I was learning how to traverse and ascend a rock wall while utilizing an arresting carabineer and a second set of “oh shit” safety carabineers with a strap that was supposed to catch me if I dropped more than 10 feet.

A short vertical section that required me to climb under a ledge before going over it had me blindly searching for footing without actually knowing if I was standing on something or if I could use it to support my weight on one foot as I reached for a higher grip. Clipping each carabineer away from a dangling cable was a deliberate movement followed by the uncomfortable detachment of the arresting D-ring used for safety around my waist.

Not knowing what the other side of the jagged overhang looked like, I mustered the courage and decided to go for it. Time to move up and over the ledge. I detached my arresting strap and tried to stand high enough to clip in to the next attachment point. And that’s when I dropped it. *H-o-l-y shit*, I thought. The feeling of panic swept through me like warm water as I realized my upper-body strength to hold on was quickly draining. I looked back down and frantically began feeling for the bungee that held the arresting hook, but I couldn’t find it. I was in no shape to climb free of a harness and safety cables.

“Where the f\*\*\* is my arrestor?” I forcefully projected. Conversations between the other climbers immediately ceased. “The arrestor is swinging near your left knee,” a climbing instructor below indicated. Recognizing the intense adrenaline rushing, I got pissed and thought to myself, *Don’t panic, you idiot. Slowly reach down. There it is, grab it and pull it up. Look at the arrestor. Slide down the catch and reach up to attach.* It felt like I was standing on my toes to secure the arrestor to an attachment

point, but the calm feeling that followed helped me through the exercise.

## SNIPER COUNTRY

From that point on, I approached each day of training with a high level of expectation to learn as if my life depended on what was being taught. I recall a similar effect that experiencing combat has on person. Once you’ve seen it, you’re never the same.

I returned from the first training event held at Desert Tactical Arms’ new 50,000-acre facility in northern Utah. They call it Sniper Country. The steep terrain and changing winter conditions provided the setting for an opportunity to engage targets out to 1,800 yards across rocky canyons. Sponsored by SureFire, training had each of us using a SureFire-suppressed DTA SRS in .338 Lapua Magnum under the watchful eye of Jacob Bynum of Rifles Only (riflesonly.com) and a still-active sniper we called Kody.

Having discovered the SRS three years ago, I have embraced its unique approach to accuracy and been a student of its bullpup design ever since. It was the first .338 I had ever printed a quarter-MOA group with, and now I can say that it’s the rifle I used to successfully engage my longest target—one mile. Day one had me shooting the SRS into a .47-inch five-shot group in my third string and shooting first-round hits from the kneeling out to 700 yards.

My first-round-hit streak continued from the prone on day two out to 1,700-yard targets, but I choked on wind at 1,800 until the fifth shot. A Horus-loaded PDA, a Nightforce NXS 3.5-15x50mm scope, hot-loaded 300-grain Cor-Bon ammunition and a SureFire suppressor were the ingredients. The only problems with the rifle I experienced were caused by excessive pressures in the ammo (we clocked the 300-grain bullet moving at 2,950 fps). Bits of primer blew back through the firing-pin hole and into the bolt, which prevented the firing pin from moving forward. It happened twice on my rifle and a few times on others.

DTA owner and inventor Nicholas Young unveiled his newest creation, the DTA HTI in .50 BMG. “HTI” stands for Hard Target Interdiction, and each student fired it multiple times out to 600 yards. It’s a bit lighter and much shorter than other popular .50s, and it transfers a similar felt recoil as the .338 we had been shooting all week. The HTI is extremely fast to cycle its five-round magazine. It’s dimensionally larger in scale than the original SRS to accommodate the power the .50 BMG produces, but there are many points of commonality. Nick indicated that we were the first civilians to fire the OD-colored prototype, but the military has extensively demo’d the rifle with positive feedback.

## TALK TO US

Although you may not find this small Utah company or the Afghanistan-like terrain of its training facility (deserttacticalarms.com) in the advertising sections of most magazines, I strive to support American ingenuity and feel that it’s our obligation to share such observations with a reader who might not know how to seek out more information on such forward-thinking products. If you know of something that we should be covering in the pages of our next issue, give us a shout at [specialinterestpubs@imoutdoors.com](mailto:specialinterestpubs@imoutdoors.com).

Sends,

Eric R. Poole

