

# FOLLOW THROUGH WHAT?

I have always been amazed at the misconception that a big percentage of shooters have regarding Follow Through. Traditionally, at coaching seminars, when the Basics are dealt with, the heading "Follow Through" always appears on the bottom of the list and therefore discussed last and most probably at the end of a long session. Because of this, very little is said and analysed about this very important basic skill.

Let me then explain in a little more detail and break it down into several sections by outlining the actions which we have to execute in order to achieve the skill and get the full benefit out of it.

Follow Through, in my opinion, is a combination of actions which a shooter should perform, in order to complete the correct execution of a shot or series of shots. All these actions are meant to be done simultaneously. It is imperative that this is understood and practiced. But in order to explain this better we will break them down into 4 separate actions.

The explanation that appears in the dictionary is referring to ball games. "Continuation of stroke after impact with ball". I guess you can apply this explanation to a few different actions that we do executing a shot, i.e. Trigger action, 6<sup>th</sup> target in Rapid Fire etc. A good analogy to me is of a Karate athlete breaking a piece of wood or a brick for which they would imagine that the end of their action is 3 to 4 inches below the object they are going to strike so when the hand hits it achieves maximum force and inertia.

So let us see how is this relevant to shooting.

## **FOLLOW THROUGH:**

1. Continuation of action: The shooter should continue to do all the actions that he/she is doing, before the firing of the shot, after the firing of the shot.

Explanation: The firing of a shot is caused by an explosion, which occurs in the cartridge of the bullet, after the firing pin of a pistol hits the primmer, causing the gunpowder inside the cartridge to ignite and cause an explosion, which in turn propels the projectile through the barrel of the pistol in a direction towards the target, which the shooter has pre-determined by controlling the stability of the pistol. Unfortunately, if this stability is interrupted, while the projectile is moving through the length of the barrel, it will change it's projectory and end up at a different point on the target to what the shooter originally intended.

Aim: So the aim here is trying to resist all the forces that tend to move the pistol, which we call recoil, just for a split second to allow the projectile to leave the barrel.

How to do: This is done by engaging tension in muscles or muscle groups which will resist any movement.

- 2.**     **Recovery:**     Once the projectile has left the barrel, the recoil will move the pistol to a specific place away from our aiming area dependent to the recoil characteristics of the pistol.
- Aim:**           What we now have to do is recover the sight picture at the point which it was prior to the discharge.
- How to do:**   If the muscle tensions are correct, and still maintained, we can recover the sights very quickly and accurately back to where they were.
- 3.**     **Release and re-engage:**   While we are processing Step 2, we need to release the trigger finger and let the mechanism re-engage to be ready for the next shot.
- 4.**     **Re-align and squeeze:**     As Steps 2 and 3 are completed we try to re-align the sights in our aiming area while starting to squeeze the trigger off for the next shot. (Time shooting).

As you can see, this way follow through becomes a very important and critical point of our shot execution and it has to be trained as much as all other skills in order to achieve best results.

I hope I was able to clarify the concept of Follow Through and help you develop a better understanding of a good process of shot.

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