

FUNDAMENTALS OF Modern Police Impact Weapons

By

MASSAD F. AYOOB

*Police Officer and Weapons Instructor
Hooksett, New Hampshire*

*Weapons Assistant Professor
Advanced Police Training Program
New Hampshire Police Standards and Training Council*

*Feature Editor
Sentinel Magazine
Trooper Magazine*

*Associate Editor
Law and Order
Guest Lecturer at the Smith and Wesson Academy*



CHARLES C THOMAS • PUBLISHER
Springfield • Illinois • U.S.A.

Property of
H. V. MANNING LIBRARY
CLAFLIN COLLEGE
Orangeburg, South Carolina

HV 7936
E 7
A 95

Published and Distributed Throughout the World by
CHARLES C THOMAS • PUBLISHER

Bannerstone House

301-327 East Lawrence Avenue, Springfield, Illinois, U.S.A.

This book is protected by copyright. No part of it
may be reproduced in any manner without written
permission from the publisher.

© 1978, by **CHARLES C THOMAS • PUBLISHER**

ISBN 0-398-03748-5

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 77-12578

*With THOMAS BOOKS careful attention is given to all details of
manufacturing and design. It is the Publisher's desire to present books that are
satisfactory as to their physical qualities and artistic possibilities and
appropriate for their particular use. THOMAS BOOKS will be true to those
laws of quality that assure a good name and good will.*

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Ayoob, Massad F.

Fundamentals of modern police impact weapons.

Includes index.

1. Police—Equipment and supplies. 2. Truncheons.
3. Handcuffs. I. Title.

HV7936.E7A95

363.2'3'028

77-12578

ISBN 0-398-03748-5

Printed in the United States of America

C-1

112992

FOREWORD

THE HISTORY OF MAN is a story of his weapons. Physically short-changed by nature, his early existence must have been a nightmare of hairbreadth escapes. Weak; slow; with inferior eyes, ears, and sense of smell; a thin, tender skin; and without fangs, talons or horns—his only defense was to climb, hide in caves, or ring himself with fire. Lacking even the reproductive capacity of the other animals which served as prey, that he survived as a species is one of the great wonders of our world. Not only did he survive, he developed weapons allowing him to avoid close physical contact in an encounter and became the most fearsome predator of them all.

The original weapons he learned to use, both of which would be classified as "impact" types, were the rock and the stick. The earliest written account seems to favor the rock, the weapon with which Cain allegedly did a number on Abel, as the earliest weapon. However, since the report on this homicide gives very few details, I would like to hear both sides of the argument before conceding precedence. There is a good chance that Cain took a bum rap. Knowing brothers, I suspect that Abel drew a stick on him and that he threw the rock in self-defense. If that was the case, the murder stigma could have easily become known as the "brand of Abel." A rock is a one-shot weapon, and if Cain had missed, it would have left him disarmed to face retribution from an outraged brother.

The stick was the crude progenitor of all the other weapons. From it evolved the club, the sword, the spear, the arrow, and finally, the bullet, each adding to the ability to kill at greater distance, thus minimizing danger to the user. It also was responsible for the development of shielding armor as a defense against the capabilities of such weapons. Although considered in itself a primitive weapon—brought to greatest perfection by peasants forbidden more lethal devices (as exemplified by the Oriental adaptation of various types of grain flails and the British quarter stave)—the stick, as well as various types of body armor has become increasingly useful in modern police arsenals.

My own law enforcement experience was gained on duty with the United States Border Patrol, a duty in which there was very little call for use of an impact weapon other than a gun. Consequently, for years I thought of a stick as something to pick up and hit someone with if nothing more satisfactory was available. This judgment was permanently changed one night in a New Orleans waterfront bar where I first saw a stick used by an expert. A Military Police sergeant called by the management to take care of a soldier customer who had become overly bellicose walked up to the subject, placed his left hand on the offender's shoulder in a comradely manner, quickly thrust his baton between the legs from behind, turned it so that he was holding it knuckles up crossways in front of the legs, lifted so that the drunk's feet were barely touching the floor, and walked him "tippy-toed" to the waiting paddy wagon. It was obvious to me (*and* to the subject) that if the sergeant had turned his shoulder loose, the subject would have been dumped on his head. The "knuckles up" hold on the baton also got his attention.

My interest aroused, I read the only books available at that time on the subject. These were *Get Tough* by W. E. Fairbairn, *Kill or Get Killed* by Rex Applegate, and *Cold Steel* by John Styrer. All gave excellent accounts of how to kill somebody with a stick, which is fine for the military situation in effect at the time but a mite drastic for use on the neighborhood gentry.

Fundamentals of Modern Impact Weapons gives exactly the same information, broadened and amplified, in a format more applicable for modern usage, by telling you how to use the various impact weapons *without* killing the subject of your attention. This is a commendable change if for no other reason than the possibility that, having been shown the error of his ways without making the lesson permanent, the erstwhile thug might decide to settle down and become a valuable taxpayer.

I am not familiar with the other titles mentioned by the author on page 4 of this book. With the exception of the ones listed above and various military manuals dealing with the use of the baton, I was not aware of the existence of other writings of value on this subject during my enforcement years. This is regrettable, as was forcibly brought to the attention of a group of border pa-

trolmen assigned to a southern university campus undergoing a state of considerable turmoil several years ago. These men were all skilled marksmen. Given batons and armbands temporarily proclaiming them to be U. S. deputy marshals, they took quite a beating because they did not know the technique of the stick and could not ethically defend themselves with the firearms with which they were familiar.

Ayoob has done a superb job of describing offensive and defensive use of impact weapons. In addition to saps, night sticks, batons, and other conventional weapons, he has given excellent coverage of the "makeshift" items which can be used in an emergency. These include handcuffs, key rings, belts, flashlights, guns, beer mugs, and just about any other item which might likely be in reach, not nailed down, and of sufficient substance to give weight to your side of an argument. Nor has he neglected the legal and ethical considerations attendant to the use of "sufficient" force.

Massad Ayoob is a prolific writer. He is now serving on the staff of a number of "gun" publications and free-lancing for the others. I am confident that this, his first book, will assuredly be followed by others. Whether you are in law enforcement work—in which case *Fundamentals of Modern Police Impact Weapons* is a must—or you are not, but have decided that you are going to collect Ayoob for your library, I can hardly think of a better place to start collecting than with Number One.

BILL JORDAN

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
<i>Foreword</i>	v
<i>Chapter</i>	
I. INTRODUCTION	3
II. THE NATURE OF THE WEAPONS	6
Traditional	6
The "Nightstick" or Baton	6
Short Billies	11
Saps	12
Combination Impact Weapons	18
The Prosecutor Baton	21
Yawara Stick	34
Riot Batons	37
Sap Gloves and Palm Saps	41
The Nunchaku	44
Non-Traditional	59
The Sidearm as an Impact Weapon	59
The Flashlight as an Impact Weapon	66
Handcuffs as Impact Weapons	73
Makeshift Impact Weapons	77
III. TWO CLASSIC BATON APPROACHES	87
The Lamb Baton Method	87
The "LAPD" Method	95
IV. THE PARAMETERS OF LETHAL AND "LESS LETHAL" FORCE	103
V. PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS	108
Carrying the Impact Weapon	108
In the Police Vehicle	108
On the Person, in Uniform	111
Belt Carriers for Impact Weapons	117
When to Draw the Impact Weapon	120
Multiple, Unarmed Opponents	123
The Relative Importance of Footwork	130

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
The "Sleeper Hold": Is It Too Dangerous for Police to Use?	132
Home Practice With the Impact Weapon	143
Where to Strike	149
VI. CONCLUSION	156

FUNDAMENTALS OF
Modern Police Impact Weapons

INTRODUCTION

FOR THE AVERAGE American police officer, the weapon he has the least training with is the one he is likely to be using most frequently: the impact weapon. The aerosol incapacitant known as Mace™ (a Smith & Wesson brand) requires little training apart from a briefing on first aid for its effects; sidearms, in all but the most backward departments, are qualified with at least yearly.

The baton, nightstick, or sap is in a different class. It needs both training and practice to be used effectively, for maximum protection of the officer with minimal injury to the non-deadly



Figure 1. Impact weapons and chemical incapacitants both have their places as less-lethal components of the police arsenal; sometimes the roles overlap, but there are many situations where one will be preferable to the other. Courtesy of Smith & Wesson.

offender he uses it against. Yet, beyond rudimentary academy training, few police agencies "qualify" or even fully check out their line personnel with impact weapons. The exception is the officer assigned to riot control units, who even there learns more in the way of crowd control than personal self-defense.

Fundamentals of Modern Police Impact Weapons was written to give the policeman a realistic understanding of the "less-lethal," non-chemical, subduing weapons available to him, and how they can and should be used. I have considered legal and moral aspects as well as purely tactical aspects of self-defense.

Many textbooks and training manuals have been written on various specific stickfighting systems. Among the best are the following:

Kubota, T. and McCaul, P. F.: *Baton Techniques and Training*. Springfield, Thomas, 1974.

Starrett, R. and Anderson, L.: *Monadnock Prosecutor PR-24 Manual*. Monadnock Lifetime Products.

Phillips, J.: *The Nunchaku and Police Training*. Williamstown, JM Phillips.

Phillips, J.: *Nunchaku Two*. Williamstown, JM Phillips, 1975.

I recommend them to the officer who may or must use one method or the other. No attempt was made to treat them all in depth here; no book, including this one, can make you an expert with any stick or club. That comes with extensive personal training and practice and cannot really be learned from a written manual.

The intent of *Fundamentals of Modern Police Impact Weapons* was to go into areas that had never before been written about: practical carry and use techniques, the psychology of the impact weapon, the tactics to be employed during and prior to its use, *methods* of training, the strong and weak points of each police stick-fighting system, and perhaps most important, the legal and moral factors, including civil liability, that are attendant to the clubbing of violent suspects into otherwise unattainable submission.

I have endeavored to give the reader an understanding (if not a life-saving, working street knowledge) of such esoteric weapons

as the nunchaku, the Prosecutor, the yawara, and unconventional striking tools.

Ideally, the well-prepared police officer will have more than one impact weapon and will use his primary stick with eclectic techniques that take the best from each system, adapted to his own abilities. Such an integrated arsenal of defensive maneuvers has to give the officer more versatile capability and confidence than blind reliance on a single form of stickfighting.

In a national climate where unjust assaults on police are increasing both on the street and in the courtroom, the modern officer needs a solid and comprehensive understanding of the less-lethal force he commands with his nightstick, every bit as much as he needs to understand the parameters of lethal force that ominously shroud his service handgun.

Fundamentals of Modern Police Impact Weapons is an attempt to broaden the level of that understanding, to help the law officer in the street in making the split-second decisions of life or death magnitude that are sometimes the curse, but always the trademark, of his profession.

Chapter II

THE NATURE OF THE WEAPONS

TRADITIONAL

The "Nightstick" or Baton

Plastic Versus Wooden Batons

PLASTIC BATONS are now slightly more popular than the traditional wooden nightsticks. Both materials have their own clear advantages and disadvantages.

Weight depends on density, but a typical plastic baton will weigh in the vicinity of 22 ounces, a hickory baton closer to 12 ounces, if both are 24 inches in length. The heavier plastic stick will hit harder. This has been disputed by some baton instructors, who feel that the lighter wooden stick will swing faster and therefore strike at least as potently. However, the difference in velocity is minimal in the hands of a man of average strength, while the difference in weight is significant. It is rather like comparing a 158-grain .38 slug at 950 feet per second velocity to a 230-grain .45 bullet at 850 fps: The greater mass and weight of the big bullet more than make up for its slightly lesser velocity.

There are, however, circumstances in which the lighter baton may be used more effectively than the heavier plastic. If the officer finds the plastic stick *so* heavy that it encumbers his ability to make a decisively rapid strike and recovery, his weapon will be very easily blocked, and he will be in danger. If he can use the lighter baton with more effective speed, that should be his choice. However, only physically small policemen, policewomen, and older officers generally find the plastic baton *that* slow to strike with.

The officer should use the heaviest stick that he can handle effectively. The average officer will not find that the weight of the plastic baton slows him down appreciably in his first strike. He *may* find, however, that he can attain a tangible increase in *recovery time* for multiple strikes with the wooden baton. It is largely a matter of physical build and condition; the officer should ex-

periment with both types, under educated supervision, to determine which is best for him. Ideally, the type of baton he carries should, within limits, be his own choice, since his effectiveness with the instrument does depend so much on his own physique and reflexes. While departmental regulations may reasonably extend to length and general configuration, the choice of wood or plastic should be optional for the individual policeman.

Plastic has certain disadvantages. One is that, when exposed to extreme cold for long periods, it may break when struck against a hard object. However, most such instances have not occurred in actual fights but in squadrooms where an officer walked in from a long winter foot tour and playfully whacked his stick against a countertop. The nature of the plastic composition also affects the vulnerability to cold: A cheap baton is much more likely to break under these conditions than the virgin Monpac® plastic, for example, used in Monadnock® nightsticks. I have heard reliable reports of Monadnock sticks breaking under these conditions, but I have also seen that company's batons immersed in freezers for extended periods, and then struck repeatedly against hard objects: During these tests, the Monadnock batons did not break or crack.

Plastic is definitely sensitive to extreme heat or sunlight. A plastic stick left for eight hours on a dashboard on a bright day may easily warp from the sun's rays concentrated through the windshield. The common practice of securing the baton under the front-seat headrest can jeopardize a plastic baton during hot weather, especially when the car is left parked for extended periods, creating great heat in the passenger compartment. The pressure of the headrest, which is normally jammed down firmly on the stick, can make the nightstick resemble a rocker. This usually requires an extended period of time, while direct sunlight, as on the dashboard, can warp the stick in a matter of hours.

Plastic batons are best kept in specially designed clamps, such as the Monadnock, on the car doors. An alternative is to slip it between the driver's door and seat, but this allows a person in the back seat to grab the weapon.

When a plastic stick breaks, it will usually go completely, with

a sound like a pistol shot and a jarring shock up the arm. A wooden (hickory) baton more often cracks vertically; like a baseball bat, it may be turned in the hand, with the crack toward the palm, and used for at least one more strike before the weapon snaps entirely.

Still, there is no denying that the wooden baton is much more likely to fail than the plastic. Many departments have gone to the plastic models after a number of broken wooden sticks, both in riots and one-to-one street confrontations. It is significant that the Monadnock company advertised, shortly after the introduction of their Prosecutor®, that officers should practice by striking it against trees. A few have broken with such treatment, but only a few. By contrast, no wooden baton should be so abused: The plastic survives this pounding because Monpac is some two and a half times as heavy and dense as hardwood. However, when a small piece of wood (baton) is pounded against a large piece of wood (tree), the inevitable will soon occur. It should be noted here that practice against trees and telephone poles is not recommended with plastic batons of conventional shape, either; the Prosecutor survives it, as do heavy plastic nunchaku, because of the bounce-back effect.

Carrying weight may be significant for foot patrol officers. Certainly an LAPD-style baton will carry more comfortably than a heavy plastic equivalent. This is not, however, a consideration for patrol car personnel.

The ultimate question, really, is whether the extra impact of a plastic baton is really needed. The answer seems to be yes; in many cases, the wooden baton simply will not hit hard enough to stop a drug-crazed or adrenalin-filled attacker who is immune to pain. The plastic baton is somewhat more likely to break bone, however.

Cast aluminum batons, sold by Safariland and others, are seen occasionally on the street. I do not believe that even fairly light, hollow metal batons should be used. Public reaction alone would be reason enough for police administrators to ban them. The individual officer should be aware that this same connotation of

police brutality will carry over into a courtroom if the officer is ever, rightly or wrongly, charged with using excessive force.

Telescoping metal batons, usually made abroad, have been seen in this country occasionally. While they seem to offer many advantages on the surface—good reach coupled with great compactness on the belt—they appear to be too light and whippy for effective blocking and grappling.

Aluminum flashlights, discussed elsewhere in this text, are even more dangerous, since the batteries give added weight and create a deadly crushing effect in a full-power blow.

A frequent question by officers who choose wooden batons is whether they should be finished in black or left in the natural wood color. Natural finish will show less wear, while the black will quickly become scarred just by carrying and insertion in the belt ring. This is a bad reflection on the officer's appearance, and can lead to questions from street people like, "Who's he been beating on with *that*?" It is easy to retouch the scars on a black stick, though, and that color actually makes for a lower profile because it blends in with the dark blue shades that make up most police uniforms. Light brown wood contrasts so that it makes the stick stand out and seem bigger, as if the officer was carrying a baseball bat.

Should Impact Weapons Be Thonged?

Many conventional batons and billy clubs come equipped with a rawhide or plastic thong. The purpose is to prevent the club from being torn from the officer's hand in a scuffle; at the same time, most officers are trained to loop the thong over their thumb instead of their wrist on the theory that they can let go of the baton before a suspect who has grabbed the stick can twist it and break the officer's wrist. That logic seems paradoxical.

The loose thong tends to hang up on things. It dangles in an unsightly manner from a belt baton ring, and more than one officer has been spun around by his own momentum when he passed too close to a doorknob and snagged his nightstick thong. Short billies, usually carried in the sap pocket of the uniform slacks, tend to have their thongs dangling out, and many an offi-

cer has gone into a fight scene only to find that he left his billy hanging by its rawhide on the inside handle of the car door.

There are techniques by which the officer can tie his baton to his hand in a manner that allows quick release if necessary, yet holds the stick in place even when he opens his hand. It does allow the officer to grapple with a suspect without having to drop his baton. But suppose the suspect grabs the baton while the officer's hand is open and reaching for a fistful of shirt? The suspect can easily gain superior leverage, and the officer will *have* to flick his hand and turn loose of his weapon: he has thereby created a situation in which he has armed his opponent and may now be forced to shoot him.

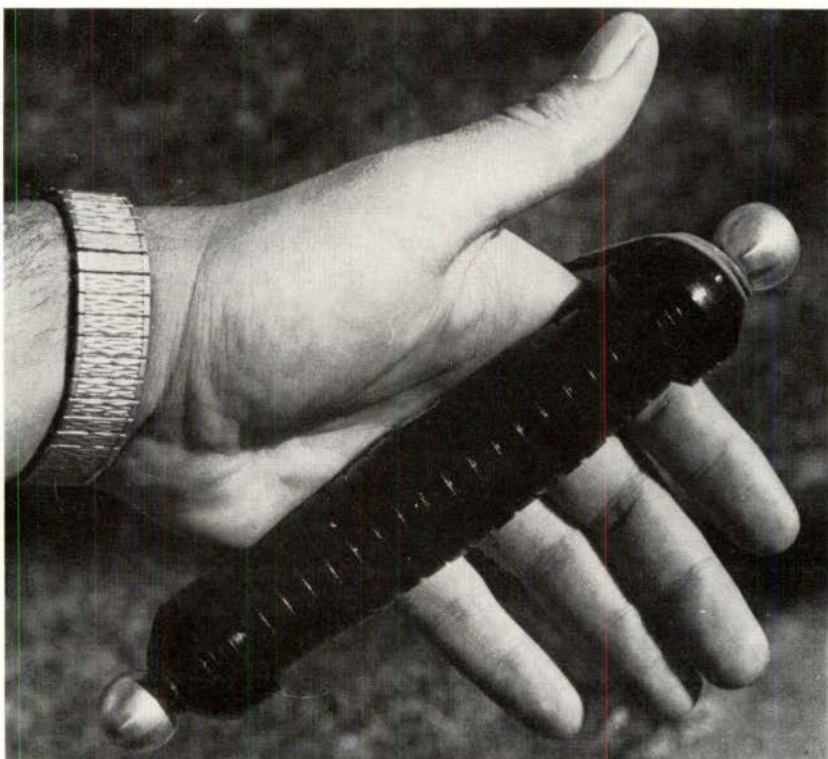


Figure 2. I find that the addition of a heavy rubber band vastly increases the practicality of yawara stick for police work. Looped around the back of the hand, it lets the officer open his fingers for grappling without fear of dropping the weapon. Monadnock's "knobby persuader" model is shown.

A better solution is to train the officer so that, when he feels he has to grab onto a suspect, he should take the extra second to put his stick away. A short billy can often be pocketed in a split second; a full-length baton can be thrust just as quickly into the baton ring if the officer wears the kind of ring produced by Monadnock, which friction-locks in an outward position on the belt and allows a quick, instinctive, one-handed return of the stick.

On a police impact weapon, a rawhide thong is generally more hassle than help. An exception would be a homemade palm-thong for a yawara stick; this would give the officer full striking ability coupled with moderately good ability to grapple with his open hand without losing his weapon; the thong wouldn't be long or loose enough to allow snagging, and there isn't enough stick for an opponent to grab hold of.

I personally feel that a rubber grommet, or built-in retainer ring as with Monadnock's optional models, is to be preferred over the thong.

Short Billies

Many officers in this country are issued, or carry because of tradition, the impact weapon known as the "short billy," a foot-long piece of lathe-turned hardwood or plastic. It is a tradition that may have overstayed its usefulness in terms of practicality.

The billy club is just that: a club best suited for overhand swings upon people's heads. This is a technique that has long been obsolete as far as thinking policemen are concerned.

The billy can be used as a yawara stick, though it's awkward in that application; it can also be used to jab, but because of its design, such a strike is likely to injure the officer's wrist and leave him in an extremely tenuous position if the blow has failed to take effect. Its range is also extremely short.

The Lamb method was designed at a time when Arthur Lamb was training men equipped with 12 inch billies. Happily, it translates into extreme effectiveness with a proper 24 inch stick. The Lamb system remains the best for the officer limited to the billy club by department regulations, but anything that can be done with the billy can be done as, or more, effectively with saps and

blackjacks, weapons that are themselves considered both brutal and obsolete by most enlightened police weapons instructors.

The sap and jack, at least, have the advantage of being so comfortable and easy to carry that they'll always be within the officer's reach, on his person. This isn't necessarily true of the short billy club, which is round, stiff, and uncomfortable to wear, and therefore obsolete in *every* respect. Moreover, the billy doesn't have the smashing impact of the weighted saps and jacks and is therefore less effective even in the close-range situations where short impact weapons can be used best.

Like many police traditions, the billy club has nothing to recommend it but the impetus of years of service. It is in the same category as the belt-pouch carrier for spare ammunition: the least effective method of performing the task it is carried for, yet retained by many departments because it looks trim and nice, even though it can't perform as well as any of the more modern designs.

The short billy's only recommendation is that when it is abused by a poorly trained officer, that is, when it is used to strike someone over the head, it is somewhat less likely than the sap or jack to cause severe damage. The billy club, of all police impact weapons, is the one that is most deserving of total retirement into the history of law enforcement, along with belt lamps and the open-topped police touring car.

Like those other relics, the truncheon, or police billy club, is a product made obsolete by modern technology and by the parameters and practicality of contemporary law enforcement. This holds equally true for the heavy, flexible "rubber" truncheons of the "New York Police" style, which were never carried seriously by any NYCPD patrolman after his first heavy fight. The fact is that the rubber truncheons were less damaging when used improperly, in that an officer hitting a suspect over the head was more likely to cold-cock him and less likely to brain him, but the concept of a weapon that can be used only this way is repugnant to the modern law enforcement officer.

Saps

Many officers favor the flat sap over the springier, rounder blackjack. Comfort in carrying is usually the reason, but some

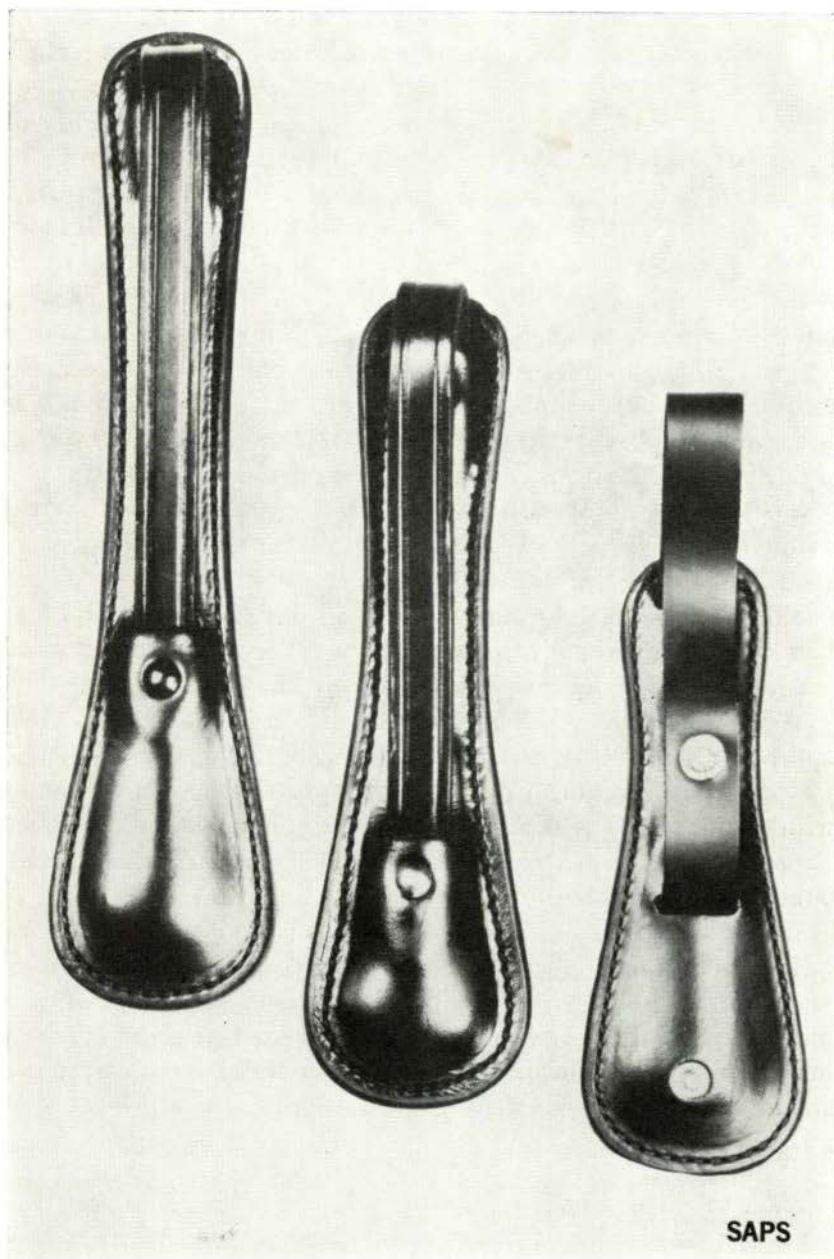


Figure 3. Flat saps, or slappers, come in varying lengths and weights. As with most impact weapons of conventional design, increased effectiveness usually means decreased carrying comfort. Courtesy of Smith & Wesson.

bona fide authorities, like Lamb, prefer the sap because it remains rigid when striking edge-on and translates impact more effectively.

However, the lack of springiness, coupled with the rigidity of an often solid lead striking piece and the chunky weight, can make broken bones, especially cracked skulls, more likely to result. The sap is especially effective for body blows during infighting (strike with the flat side).

My feeling is that the blackjack, by virtue of its springy bounceback, is less likely to break bone and is somewhat more versatile in a grappling situation when the officer's hand and arm movements may be impaired. The sap, on the other hand, is somewhat more effective in jabbing techniques because of its rigidity and will likewise hit harder when swung edge-outward.

The officer who does choose the flat sap would be well advised to buy one with powdered lead, rather than a solid lead piece with leather sewn around it. Flexibility is much greater in the powdered lead models, thus reducing somewhat the danger of breaking bone without sacrificing impact shock; the heavy leather keeps the weapon quite rigid enough for jabbing techniques.

With either sap or jack the Lamb method is probably the best approach. One change is made: Due to the shortness of the weapon and consequent lack of range, the sliding step backward with the weak leg is replaced by a sliding step *forward* with the *strong* leg to close within striking distance of the opponent without sacrificing balance.

In addition to its convenience and concealability, the sap or jack has one other advantage: It is handy for close-quarters use, as when struggling with a violent suspect in the confines of a patrol car. Again, however, care should be taken to avoid overhand strikes to the head; short, snapping blows to wrists, shins, and ankles are the most effective application.

Blackjack

Six to 9 inches in length, and weighing 8 to 16 ounces, the blackjack consists of a flexible main body covered with braided leather, a small lead- or shot-filled cylindrical butt, and a larger striking head that is also "loaded."

The flexibility gives it a snapping action that has two effects: It increases momentum at the moment of impact, and it bounces back from the body after the blow, somewhat reducing the likelihood of "penetrating" impact and resultant broken bones. However, the weight of the striking head alone makes bone fractures likely when head or other areas with little or no muscle padding are struck.

Disadvantages are many. The instrument is too short and flexible for any grappling, and its short length necessitates that the officer move within punching and kicking range of his opponent. Jabs are impractical due to the flexibility of the shaft. Therefore, only swinging strikes will be effective. Due to the springiness of the instrument, it will hit harder in a blow delivered through a short arc than will its sister weapon, the sap.

Sap Versus Jack

The flat sap ("slapper, slapjack") versus the rounded, spring-loaded blackjack presents an interesting question. Purists say neither should be used, but they are popular among police and will remain so for three reasons: They're extremely compact, they hit hard, and they require no training for their crude use.

The flat sap is a piece of heavy steel or lead in the shape of a large exclamation point, wrapped in two pieces of leather sewn together on the edges. The jack is a solid piece of cylindrical lead at the end of a spring, around which has been braided strings of leather. These are available with both flat and coil springs; the latter are most useful and versatile, since they hit harder and from more angles and rebound more quickly, lessening the likelihood of "penetrating," bone-breaking impact.

Lamb suggests that the flat sap is preferable, since one may use its edge to strike with, focusing impact. However, the edge-on blow loses the whipping effect of the heavy sap, and the total impact is not necessarily enhanced.

The flat sap is the most comfortable to wear for an obvious reason: One carries weapons of this type in hip pockets or "sap pockets" sewn into the uniform trousers behind the thigh. In other words, you *sit* on them, and a flat object is more comfortable to sit on than a round one.



Figure 4. Far left, "Texas slapper," the biggest sap and, in my opinion, more than a police officer needs. Smaller saps like the one next to it give adequate shock effect and sacrifice little in range; flat design makes for easy pocket carry. If officer insists on carrying such a weapon, I prefer *coil* spring-loaded jack (third from left); it hits harder, breaks fewer bones, and lets the officer strike if his wrists have been grabbed just by flicking his hand. Third from right, blackjack has flat spring, limiting the direction of hits and bounceback effect: a poor choice. Second from right, smallest blackjack is this plainclothes model in two-tone finish; with coil spring and with loop wrapped around little finger, the officer can grab just the base and deliver a stunning blow without as much danger of breaking bone. At far right is a 12 inch billy club; while more humane than the other weapons in this figure and more versatile since it can be used for jabbing (though at the risk of dislocating the officer's wrist), it is still considered obsolete. Saps and jacks in figure are all by Bucheimer.

Nevertheless, the jack has two distinct advantages over the flat sap, so long as it is of the coil-spring type. First is the rebound effect, which reduces likelihood of serious injury yet magnifies the sensation of stunning impact to the individual the officer must subdue. Second, that whip effect allows the officer with a spring-loaded jack to extricate himself from a situation where a physically more powerful individual has the officer by the wrist. Though his arm may be immobile, the officer can still flick his fingers and thumb forward, and if he's holding a spring-loaded jack, this will be enough to send the weighted head crashing down on the offender's wrist. One, two, or three of these blows will loosen the strongest man's grasp sufficiently for the officer to break free and swing his jack more tellingly.

I believe, for reasons stated elsewhere, that sap and jack are far from the ideal impact weapons. Nevertheless, they have a place as backup tools for the officer, since they are small enough for him to carry constantly; a Prosecutor, Lamb, or Kubota style baton, even if the officer is intensively trained in its use, will do him no good if he's besieged in an alley and his impact weapon is still in his squad car.

Size is not the criteria in a good blackjack; flexibility is. A light one with a good whip effect is more potent than one that weighs over a pound but has a flat spring that restricts its momentum. A small jack like the Bucheimer #8980 (6½ inches, 6 ounces) can be used with as much effectiveness as any other short impact weapon in its class; one simply holds the short end (see Figs. 2 and 3) with the thumb and first two fingers, the thong behind looped over the thumb and around the palm to prevent the blackjack from being torn away in a struggle.

Either can be jabbed in the manner of a short billy. Since they bend on impact, the officer is less likely to injure his wrist with a jab delivered via sap or jack than one with a short billy; it is debatable whether the impact to the opponent is lessened, however. True, there is a springy "give," but the added weight of the loaded blackjack or slapper makes up for it. The jack is best used for jabbing in a Yawara position, with the hand grasping the plaited leather body over the coil spring, leaving the smaller weighted butt protruding from the heel of the fist and the larger

head of the jack extending from the top of the fist. "Hammer fist" blows delivered with a jack held in this manner can be dangerous, however, since the steel ring in the bottom that holds the leather retaining loop can cause severe lacerations, and even fracture bone.

Combination Impact Weapons

The equipment-laden patrol officer understandably wants to reduce his burden of weight and bulk, and given the opportunity to make one tool do the work of two, it is natural for him to consider it seriously.

There are several instruments on the police equipment market that comprise impact weapons that perform one or two extra functions. One is the heavy-duty police flashlight. Rather than an impact weapon that serves as an emergency source of illumination, as we will explain, it should be considered as an excellent flashlight that may, when faced with extreme danger, serve as a blocking and jabbing instrument (and, at the officer's risk in terms of civil liability, as a club). One unique variation of this concept is the VSI Mini-Light®, a cast-aluminum yawara stick that doubles as a "pencil flashlight."

Tear gas batons are among the most common "double-duty" impact weapons. They are available from several firms. In all cases, they are sticks with Mace-type canisters, of pocket size, embedded in the butt end. The officer simply holds the baton vertically, butt end up and hits the button. This maneuver is especially useful in conjunction with Kubota-style baton handling.

Monadnock makes what they call a "Detective Model Tear Gas Billy," actually a yawara stick that conceals a pocket-size cannister of Curb®, in either CN or CS formula. Some liquor commission enforcement people have adopted this as standard after their pocket-size Mace and Curb sprays failed on drunks; they considered the unit a can of Mace that they could hit an attacker with if the spray didn't work. The unit might more properly be considered a yawara stick with a little something extra.

All comments regarding the yawara stick apply to this instrument. It is a barfight weapon extraordinaire, but more important,

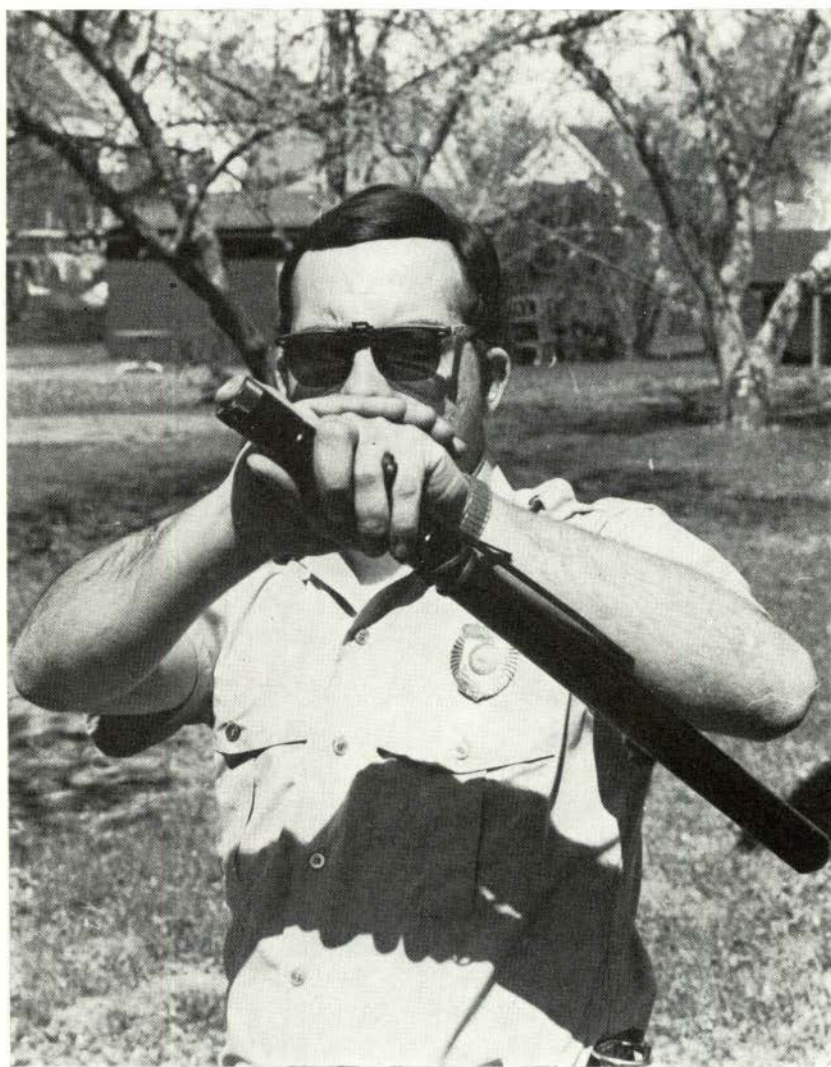


Figure 5. This teargas baton is an excellent combination weapon. Officer has drawn Koga-style with the weak hand from an Ayoob-style belt ring, hand slightly farther forward on the stick than it would normally be. Weapon, a 20 inch Monadnock, is held in a reinforced block position; the index finger of the control hand is about to spray Curb CS aerosol into the attacker's face.

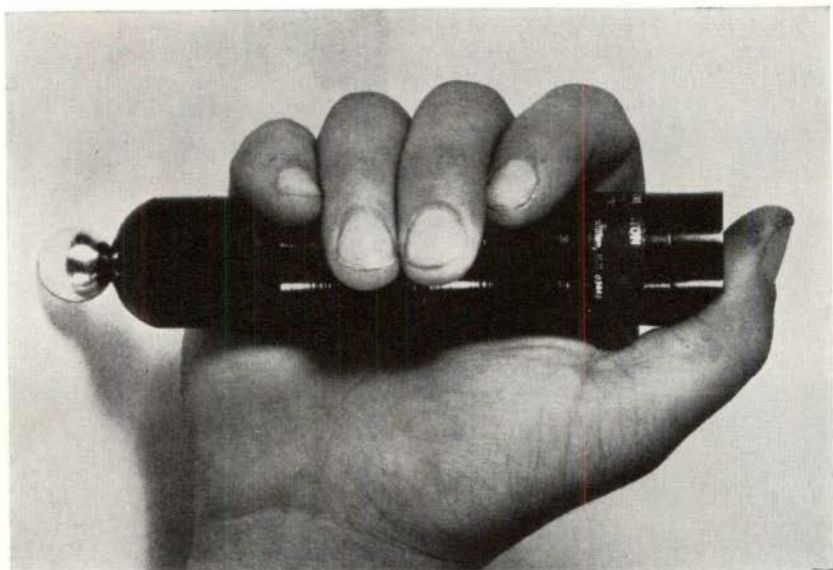


Figure 6. Monadnock tear-gas yawara about to be used as spray instead of impact weapon. An excellent example of a "combination" impact weapon. Courtesy of Monadnock.

it is the most rational form of carrying incapacitating aerosols. It is actually more compact than a uniform-size sixty-shot canister of Mace, Curb, or Federal Streamer®, yet it packs just as much punch per spray (more, with the CS formula Curb). The only difference between a pocket cannister and a belt cannister of incapacitant aerosol is the number of charges available, and any thinking officer will change cannisters as necessary to keep a fresh, full unit on hand anyway. In my opinion, the Monadnock Detective Model Tear Gas Billy, with Curb 20 cannister (preferably in CS), is the optimum delivery system for Mace-type capability.

A baton can also be handy as a tear-gas system, and as we have said, is particularly fast to bring into action when the officer draws Kubota- or Koga-style. The common fear that the spray will "accidentally" go off in the policeman's face is virtually groundless. The recessed trigger button is almost impossible to hit

accidentally. The rare exception would be a suspect who accidentally got his finger on it while grappling with the officer.

A butt-strike with such a weapon would be very likely to cause severe lacerations due to its irregular and sharp-edged surface.

All things considered, though, a tear-gas baton makes more sense than a conventional baton and a conventional Mace canister carried together. If the one fails, the other is in hand, instantly available, and one piece of equipment replaces two on the uniform belt.

The Prosecutor Baton

Introduced in 1972, Monadnock's PR-24 Prosecutor, "the baton with the handle," has become widely accepted as the most versatile and effective police impact weapon available.

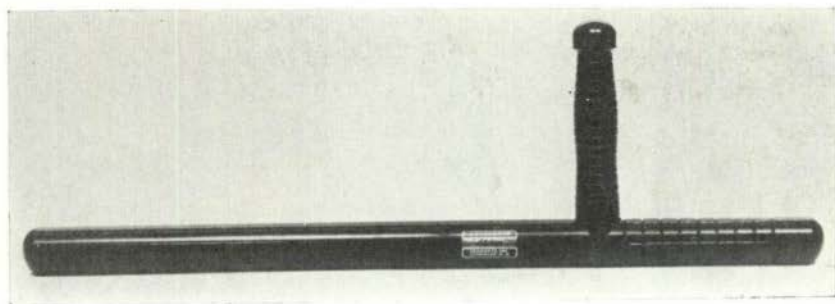


Figure 7a. Monadnock Prosecutor Baton, designated "PR-24."

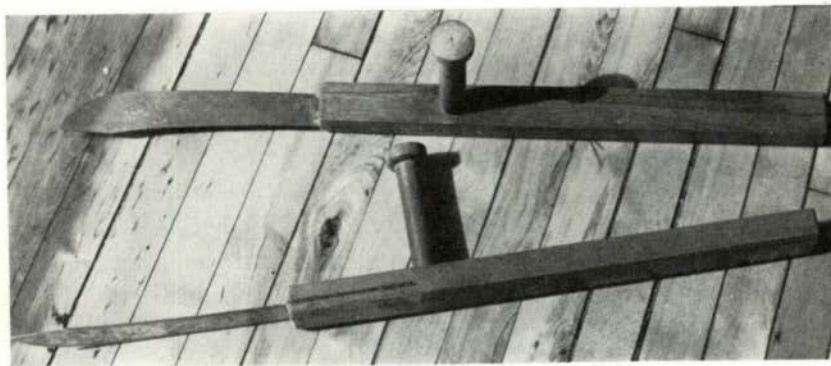


Figure 7b. Original Okinawan tonfa sticks. These rare specimens have half-blades of razor sharp steel.



Figure 8. Versatile Prosecutor allows the officer to fend off a heavy chair from several angles with the use of only one hand, as the author demonstrates in this dramatic multiple exposure. He is striking out to meet and deflect the attack rather than rigidly blocking. Photograph by Richard Morin.

It is a 24 inch plastic stick, fitted with a yawara-shaped handle 5 inches long and $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches down the main body of the stick. This handle is the pivot of a series of spinning strikes, and in grappling, becomes a fulcrum over which the suspect's arm is easily twisted.

The design is a modernization of the tonfa stick of Okinawan karate. Tonfas were semiround, only 18 inches long, and were used one in each hand. The blocks and strikes of the tonfa are continued into the Prosecutor, but since it is a longer, two-handed

weapon, the PR-24 opens a whole new field of effective grappling maneuvers as well.

Blocking

The PR-24 is properly held by the short handle, the body of the stick beneath the wrist, with the short end ahead of the fist



Figure 9. A Prosecutor block will work from almost any position.

and the long end toward the elbow. The heel of the hand should be tight down on the body of the stick (see Fig. 6).

Thus held, the stick becomes a sheer blocking surface that will absorb even blows from baseball bats harmlessly and painlessly (see Fig. 7). Variations use the weak hand to reinforce, or to grasp the long end creating a "bar" type block. The block should always be reinforced when the officer is protecting his head area, since a heavy blow, while it won't hurt the arm, can drive the Prosecutor handle sharply into face or head.

Blocking is instinctive, since when someone swings on you, your natural reaction is to raise your strong hand protectively. The PR-24, in effect, gives you an arm that is impervious to blows, and with a surface so hard that your opponent's knuckles or shinbone can break on contact with the defensive barrier.



Figure 10. Concord, New Hampshire, police officers, issued the Prosecutor as standard equipment, demonstrate some of its uses. It can block potent bludgeon strikes painlessly.

Jabbing

The most effective close-in technique with the PR-24 is the short jab. This is simply a punch in which the fist is "spearheaded" by the short end of the stick body, while the handle is held rigidly in the ready position described above. The result is an ex-

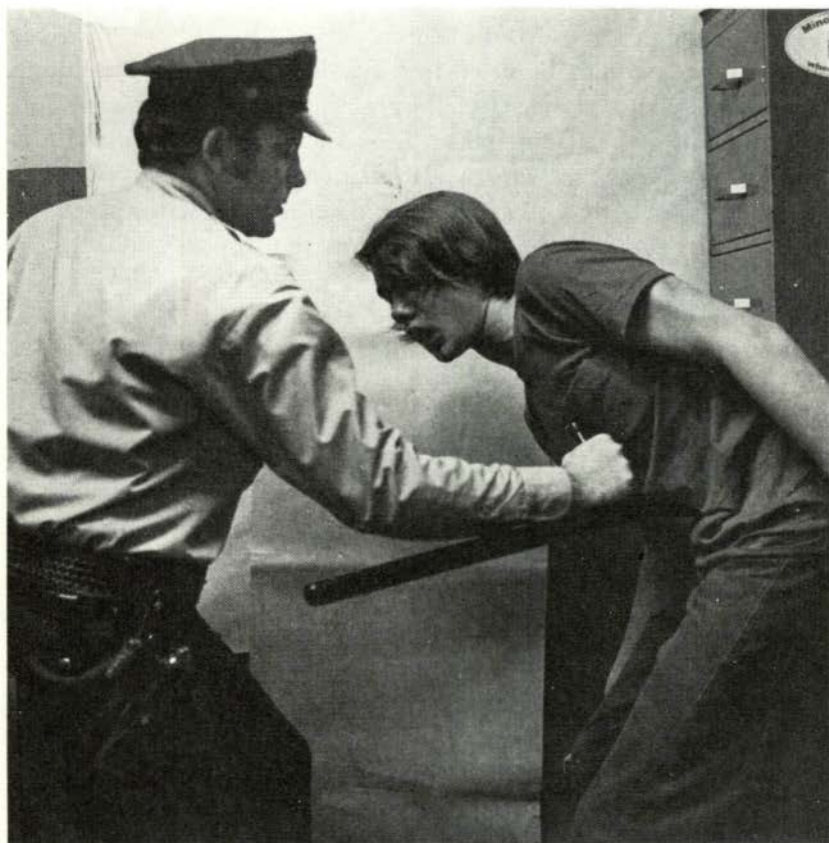


Figure 11. Prosecutor short jab variation: The author "folds" a six-foot, nineteen-year-old opponent during a demonstration. Focused blow just above the navel causes pain and disorientation with little chance of permanent injury. Though long part of the stick is usually held between chest and bicep for this technique, a straight punch as shown works very well. Note that suspect drops arms at impact of belly hit—arms will usually curl in toward abdomen after solid hit—making it unnecessary for the officer to have to strike again.

tremely potent, sharply focused impact that "penetrates" the toughest abdominal muscles and can easily break bone. For this reason, the officer should make a point of never "Prosecutor punching" an offender in throat, face, or breastbone. The navel area is an ideal target.

This blow may be delivered like a simple punch, but many instructors prefer to hold the long end between chest and bicep and "pop" the target in front of them.

Long jabs may also be used, in a two-handed mode. The palm of the weak hand is *over* the long end, which is extended forward, and the strong hand jabs as if with a pool cue. This allows the officer to lean backward, well out of reach of his opponent's fists, in a stance that looks so totally defensive he will appear, to a newsman's camera, to be retreating from the suspect's assault.

Yawara Jabs

The resemblance of the PR-24's handle to a yawara stick is not coincidental. A snap of the wrist can deliver a devastating impact with the end of the fisted handle. Especially useful in crowded areas, since most observers won't be able to see what's going on, this blow can be delivered inconspicuously from the discreet ready position.

Chops

It goes without saying that the PR-24 is very efficient when used for a shuto ("karate chop") type of blow. Again, this should never be delivered to the neck or head area. "Power chop" techniques may also be used, in which the long end, still to the rear, is grasped with the weak hand for better leverage.

Spin Strikes

These are the heart of the tonfa/Prosecutor concept. The handle in the fist becomes the pivot on which the long end is swung out against the target. The spinning action gives the weapon great momentum, more than a rigid stick would have; at the same time, since it is not held rigidly, it will bounce back after maximum hurt has been delivered, but probably before any bone

breaks. Contact will usually bounce it back into the ready position.

There are four methods of spin-striking: forward across the body; backward across the body; vertical; and in a circle in front of the officer.

Forward across the body is the basic spin-strike. To execute, the officer holds the weapon in the ready position on his strong hand side. The hand whips forward, as if to deliver a right hook to the opponent's midriff. Grip on the handle is just a trifle loose; the long end swings by itself in an arc that extends a foot and a half ahead of the officer's fist.

The most common mistake made with the Prosecutor is failure to follow through on spin strikes. The officer should swing hard, "aiming through rather than at" his target; if he has done it correctly in practice, his strong hand will end up touching his weak side just below the rib cage, and the long end of the stick will wrap itself gently around the kidney area. If he has struck a target, the weapon is likely to bounce back into the ready position, with the long end toward the elbow of the striking arm.

Backward across the body is used as a follow-up to the above strike; it may also be used when drawing the weapon while under assault, to keep the attacker at bay. The officer, who will usually be carrying his baton on his weak side, should practice this spin-strike three ways: from the baton ring, from the ready position with his strong hand starting on the weak side (to simulate a follow-up strike after connecting with a forward spin); and with the strong hand from the weak side, with the long end out behind the officer's back (to simulate a follow-up after missing a forward spin).

The *vertical spin* is used in close-quarters. The officer begins with the hand down at his right side, the handle exactly parallel with the floor, *the top of the handle pointing straight toward his own side*. An upward snap of the forearm, coupled with a flick of the wrist, spins the long end up into the opponent's groin, solar plexus, or chin. The officer can attain greater range by extending the forearm as he spins upward. This is a useful technique in hallways or crowd control situations.

The *circular spin* is a good blocking technique against a boxer's jabs but may not always deflect a strong man's round-house punch. With the forearm across and in front of his chest, the officer spins his PR-24 like the blades of a windmill.

Rear Jab

The long end may be thrust backward with great effectiveness from the ready position, if the officer is assaulted from behind. The long end is guided between the chest and bicep, and the handle is turned so that the top of it is pointed across the officer's chest toward his weak side. Thus, instead of going straight back and perhaps skidding off the attacker's rib cage, the long end is directed into his diaphragm.

Grappling and Come-along Holds

The Prosecutor baton is without doubt more effective for grappling than any other police impact weapon. It is only ap-



Figure 12. Prosecutor armlock permits the officer to hold a suspect subdued with one hand, while the other is free for cuffing.

proached by the nunchaku; even the Koga baton in the hands of a master is still a poor third in this respect. The handle is the secret: It gives the officer enormous leverage without requiring him to relax his strong-hand grip.

The simplest grappling techniques with the PR-24 are also the most effective. However, some, like the basic wristlock, are quite difficult to apply with factory instructions.

The wristlock is accomplished by scissoring the suspect's right hand (if the officer is right-handed) between the handle (over the top of the wrist), the lower edge of the officer's wrist and forearm (over the outside edge of the suspect's wrist), and the long end of the stick (under the weak side of the suspect's wrist). By merely stepping back and pressing downward, the officer can exert enough excruciating pain to bring even a big man to his knees.

The problem, of course, is *getting* his hand there. The company recommends that you take the long end of the stick in your weak hand and swing it like a shepherd's crook to catch the attacker's wrist. In real life, that's easy for him to evade.

You will probably have better luck if you begin your approach with a backward across-the-body spin strike to the region of his right elbow. This will numb his arm sufficiently that he'll have trouble evading your armlock attempt. It will also frequently cause him to snap his arm forward in a pain reflex that will make the limb easier to grab.

Once taking the wristlock, move immediately to your left, out of reach of his free hand, and bear down, to make it almost impossible for him to kick. Do not attempt this with a man who outweighs you by more than fifty pounds; that individual needs to be softened up first with spinstrikes to knees and elbows.

The next step, once you have him kneeling helplessly in the wristlock, is to pivot the hold into an armlock. To do so, the officer simply swings the long end up toward the suspect's right rear shoulder blade. This bends the elbow and puts the suspect into a "reinforced hammerlock."

There is one dangerous moment in this maneuver: during the first third of the arc as the long end swings up, the suspect's arm is momentarily free, and he can escape the hold at this point.

Therefore, it should be executed (a) quickly and (b) only after the officer has taken several seconds to apply the wristlock with much vigor, numbing the suspect's arm still further.

Once the hammerlock position is achieved, the officer can lock the long end under his elbow and control the suspect one-handed. The weak hand is now free for handcuffing. Cuff the free hand first, and if the suspect refuses to bring his hand around voluntarily, increase pressure on his trapped arm until he complies. Your leverage in this position allows you to put him on his knees or his face with a slight turn of your controlling arm.

Another simple Prosecutor technique has to be the most effective way ever of removing a recalcitrant suspect from an automobile. In the past, police instructors have taught their students to grab such a man around the neck, pull him out by the hair, or hook fingers into his mouth or nostrils. Such techniques appear to be the height of police brutality in the eyes of horrified witnesses, and they can mark up the suspect severely. Moreover, these techniques leave the officer wide open to belly punches, groin grabs, and other highly disabling injuries.

The Prosecutor technique eliminates all that. The officer approaches, opens the car door (once he has ascertained that the suspect does not have a gun), and places his right foot on the doorsill. He holds the PR-24 in the ready position, along his leg. From this stance, he can injure the suspect's ankle easily with a snap-kick if the suspect tries to kick him; his upraised thigh protects his groin; and the stick is in a position to defend against virtually any hand blow.

Suppose the suspect insists on remaining in the car and locks his hands on the steering wheel. Since he is offering no attack, you cannot very well strike him to overcome his "passive resistance." All you want to do is move his body out of the car.

From your foot-on-doorsill position, you are ideally placed to slip the long end of the PR-24 under his left armpit. Reach over his shoulder with your left hand, and grasp the long end.

Using both hands, you now turn the stick as if you were spinning a steering wheel for a left turn. The suspect is jerked forward and to his left, out of the car, as his arm is twisted into a



Figure 13. Standard ready position with the PR-24; any strike or block can be delivered or initiated from here, yet the officer's appearance is low key and gives no hint of how he may approach a violent offender. Gloves do not hinder the use of PR-24 if the officer has practiced with them on. Photograph by R. Morin.

hammerlock position. Roll him out onto the pavement, taking care not to strike his head on car or road; the option is yours now to hold him on his knees or spread him out face-down for handcuffing.

There is virtually no possibility of injury to the suspect, and

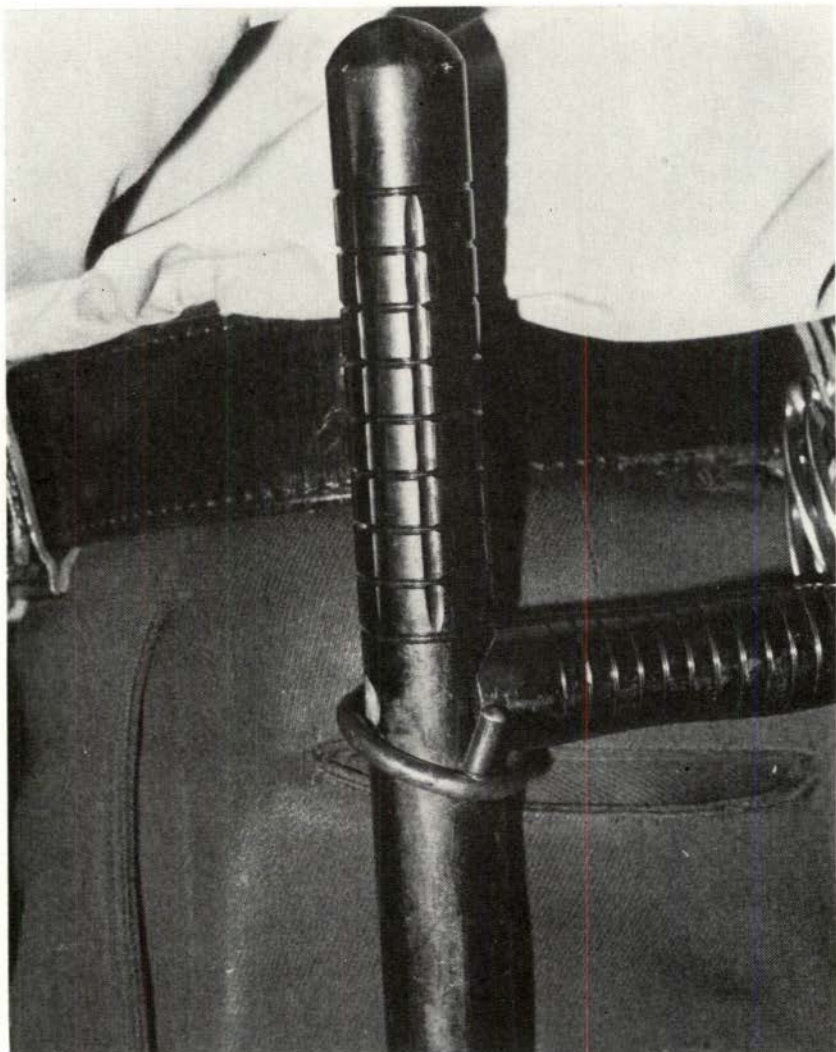


Figure 14. Prosecutor baton is best carried in special ring with stud to keep handle from moving as the officer walks. Available from manufacturer in several variations.

to observers from most angles, it will appear that he has jumped out of the car and knelt in front of you!

There are other grappling techniques, but these are the easiest to master, and the most effective. Use of the Prosecutor for choke-outs is easy but should be avoided, since the suspect can easily twist in this position, causing you to break his neck or crush his larynx.

Monadnock offers an in-depth training manual on the PR-24. Video tapes for departmental training are also available.

Disadvantages include bulk (most American police don't routinely carry 24 inch batons), and the fact that the handle can protrude from the belt ring annoyingly. The Prosecutor should be carried in Monadnock's special ring which has a stud to keep the handle from swinging about. Also, the handle may work loose from practice; the company furnishes a piece of steel stock that can be inserted into the nut that holds the handle in place. Placing another Prosecutor on the other end of the piece, one simply turns each baton until the screws are locked tight.

It is generally unwise to hold this instrument in other than the ready position, since the handle gives so much leverage that whoever is holding it pretty much has control of the weapon.

A lawman can hang onto the Prosecutor one-handed while an attacker struggles to take it away with two, and *so long as the officer keeps the handle pointed toward himself*, it will be virtually impossible for anyone to take it away. The only disarming technique that is effective is for the attacker to grab both ends in either hand, turn, and slam his shoulder into the officer's armpit as he straightens both his own arms.

The Prosecutor may be used as a sword, with the handle forming a protective hilt, against bludgeons used overhand. The attacker's club is caught in the "V" of the long end and the handle; the officer grabs the club and then slides the Prosecutor down the length of the club, smashing the attacker's fingers. The problem is that this presumes an overhand attack; thrusts, jabs, and side-ways club swings can be better blocked if the officer holds the Prosecutor in the ready position.

In any case, neither this nor the nunchaku nor any other "super weapon" should ever be used against an armed assailant,



Figure 15. Overhead bludgeon counter with the Prosecutor. Held swordlike with the hiltlike handle toward the oncoming club, opponent's weapon is caught at the intersection of the handle. Officer then grabs the long end of bludgeon with weak hand and rams Prosecutor handle down the stick onto suspect's knuckles to break his hold.

despite the claims of the manufacturer. An assailant with a weapon is utilizing deadly force, and you must use your service pistol against such a threat. If you try an impact weapon instead, and fail, and the attacker goes over you and hurts someone else with his weapon, or with a deadlier weapon he has taken from you as you lie unconscious, *you* are at fault.

Yawara Stick

The yawara is commonly called, in police circles, a "persuader" or a "judo stick." The latter term is a misnomer; while the weapon is taught in combative jiu-jitsu, it is unknown in the sport-oriented martial art of judo.

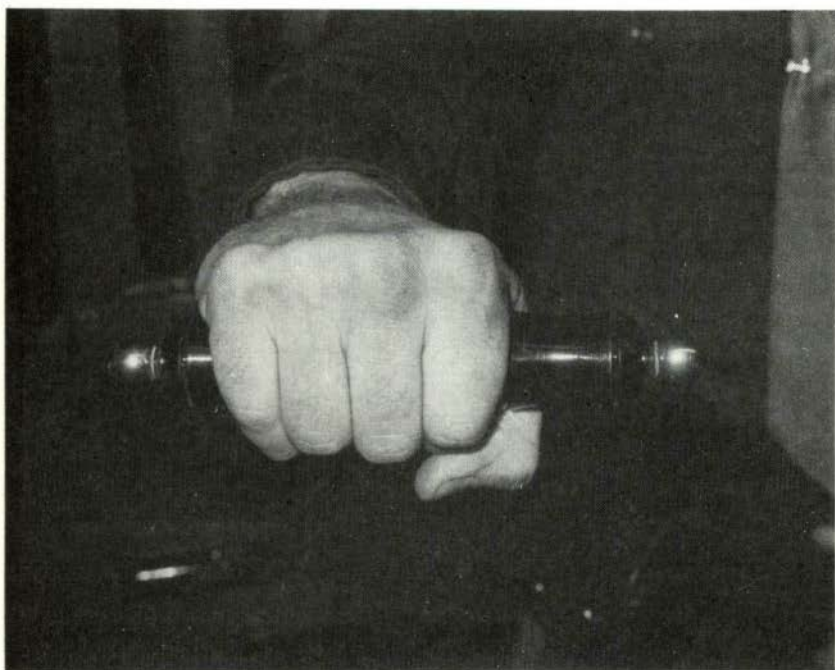


Figure 16. Monadnock yawara stick with aluminum balls on either end, known colloquially to police as "rib separators."

In essence, the yawara creates a reinforced fist. In a forward punch, it has the same effect as the roll of nickels carried by paperboys and street toughs since 1900; that is, it makes the fist rigid and heavy, and allows it to strike with a force approaching that of brass knuckles.

This is the first aspect of the yawara. The second is that it extends the fist one-quarter to three-quarters of an inch above and below, with a hard, focused impact surface. An uppercut with the top edge of the fist, or a hammer-fist strike, now delivers enormously magnified force. Some models—the cast aluminum "judo stick" marketed by Kel-Lite and others or the Monadnock "persuaders" with metal balls on each end—can easily shatter bones and become deadly weapons.

Some jiu-jitsu students are taught to hook the end of the stick

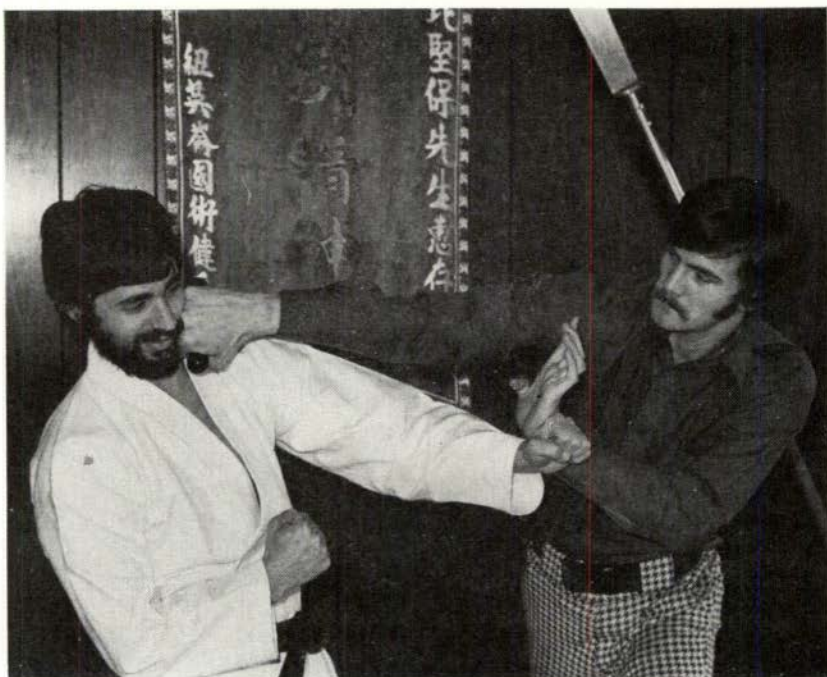


Figure 17. Reinforced fist is basic yawara stick concept.

inside an opponent's mouth and, with a twist, rip the inside of his mouth out. Some local judges have considered their use by police to be a transgression beyond permissible police procedure in non-lethal application of force.

The Kel-Lite style, and one variation of the Monadnock, have sharp edges cut into each end of the sticks. These are supposedly to discourage assailants from tearing them from the officer's hand, but in fact, they also increase the capability of the weapon to severely lacerate flesh.

Disadvantages are that the yawara is totally rangeless, and requires the officer to close in tightly with his opponent. The unit is only as good as the officer's ability to throw his fists and counterpunch; it will do no good to the officer who can't land a right cross in the first place. Blocking ability, for all but the master martial artists, is absent.

Advantages are compactness and element of surprise.

In the "persuader" mode, the officer can use the butt end of the yawara, whether or not it has the metal ball embedded, to dig into pressure points such as those on the back of the hand between the metacarpal bones, when the officer wishes to give a suspect enough pain to forego thoughts of fighting.

NOTE: A lot of street people are carrying "invisible yawara." These are simply short lengths of cylindrical Acrilan™ material. Where they are cut at each end, these crude sticks become fearsome flesh-slicers. Due to the transparency of the Acrilan models, the officer may not see the weapon until too late.

Interesting as it is, the yawara is little but a more socially acceptable set of brass knuckles. Only the officer who has trained with the weapon and appreciates the subtlety of its application will ever be able to use this tool effectively on the street. Some homemade and even mail-order yawaras have spikes on either end. Whether or not the officer chooses to carry one of these, they *are* useful for narcs and for plainclothes officers who want an inconspicuous survival weapon.

The yawara is an experts-only instrument. A trained man can be extremely deadly with one. Most officers avoid them, not for any reason except that it is strange, unconventional, and non-American looking, a fact that has allowed many suspects carrying them to go uncharged, since their innocuous little piece of wood or plastic or aluminum simply didn't look like a weapon to the arresting officers or the judge.

Riot Batons

The yard-long quarterstaff, or riot baton, is analogous to the *bo* or *jo* sticks of the various Oriental martial arts. Many of the techniques taught in karate can be translated effectively into law enforcement applications; others are as useless as tonfa *katas* to police use of the Prosecutor baton.

The long stick is used today primarily in civil disturbance situations. One strikes with it as if using the Kubota or Koga (LAPD-style) batons two handed, or as if the weapon was a bayoneted rifle. Many of our crowd control concepts used in

metropolitan America derive from techniques developed by soldiers.

The effectiveness of the quarterstaff, or the lack of effectiveness, will be a direct function of the tactics used by the officers who have been sent out to deal with the always-unique problem that caused the riot sticks to be issued in the first place. Some officers carry quarterstaves in their vehicles, as well as conventional two-foot batons, but the quarterstaves should not be employed in one-to-one confrontations because they are too cumbersome. A light, quick stick gives the officer more flexibility and reduces the likelihood of his being disarmed.

This text will not delve into riot control techniques using the baton. The rest of the book is aimed at the individual officer's ability to control individual confrontations; in the midst of a mob, he has no choice but to act as a part of the mob-dispersion team, and his methods will have to be those taught by the depart-



Figure 18. Quarterstaff training: Illinois State Troopers during riot control exercises at Illinois Law Enforcement Academy at Springfield. This is the one law enforcement situation where it is proper to use what you're told instead of techniques that are better suited to your physique and skills. Courtesy of Illinois State Police.

ment to the *rest* of the team, or his actions will cause more problems than they will solve.

Those who recommend the use of esoteric impact weapons for crowd control—Anderson with the Prosecutor and Phillips with the nunchaku—do so with the caveat that *all* members of the crowd control team must be experts with those sticks. Most won't be, in real life. Nunchuks or Prosecutors swung wildly can injure fellow officers in the heat of a choked-in melee. While the quarterstaff or riot baton is by no means the best weapon to defend one's *self* with, it is perhaps the best tool to defend one's *team* with when you are flailing in close quarters during a mob encounter, and you can't know whether the back next to yours is that of a rioter or a brother officer.

Certainly, the martial arts techniques of Bo-kibo or Kobu-do permit a single man with a quarterstaff to defend himself against an encroaching crowd of unarmed belligerents. But those techniques—wide sweeps that cut a swatch in front of the defender—were never meant for police crowd control problems, nor will they be suitable in an American gang attack on a single officer, who would be better off to draw his gun and give himself the option of either scaring his opponents into retreat or forcibly defending himself against an organized attack that may end in his death, an attack he is legally permitted to repel by the more efficient deadly force of his handgun. In any case, those martial arts techniques of defending yourself *alone* with the quarterstaff are taught in few if any police academies.

The quarterstaff, outside of a well-orchestrated flying wedge of policemen, is an anachronism that the individual officer should not rely upon in a one-on-one situation. While the length and the weight of the stick give him a great capability to defend himself against people he wants to stay away from him, there are few if any situations where the quarterstaff will serve him better than a regular nightstick when he wants to move in on one person and effect that person's arrest.

Though some riot control teams are issued plastic quarterstaffs, most carry wooden sticks that have to be so thick (to prevent breakage) that they are ungainly to use in one-to-one encounters.

While the 24 inch plastic stick is heavier and slightly more awkward to handle in mano-a-mano confrontations, the 36 inch plastic stick is definitely more maneuverable and quicker to handle in riot situations, because it will be relatively thinner and easier to manipulate, than the wooden equivalent.

The officer who may be assigned to riot control details would do well to study the two-handed strikes and blocks of the Kubota method. These techniques will serve him well in any environment, and many, though by no means all, are as suitable for personal self-defense as for crowd control work as a part of a "protective circle," "flying wedge," or whatever.

This text will not explore riot control formations. Insofar as the role of impact weapons for such operations, we will say only that the quarterstaff is better suited here than anywhere else, but that the 24 or 26 inch street baton gives the riot control officer more flexibility in protecting himself and gives him a weapon he is better trained with to perform in his dual roles as riot controller and police officer. There is little the three-foot quarterstaff can do that the two-foot baton can't, and the fact that the officer has been intensively trained with a *single* impact weapon (bearing in mind the fact that the vast majority of police have too little training with the impact weapon in *any* respect), concentrated instruction with the standard stick could well eliminate the need for a larger "special occasion" riot stick. Look at the experience of Boston, with its heavy crowd-control problems during the busing issue: Boston cops have been able to use effectively a crowd control system revolving around the Lamb baton techniques trained to all its officers. In a riot situation, the Boston cops come in swinging their Lamb batons cross-body, emphasizing the effect with stripes of reflector tape on their 24 inch sticks, and swinging them in rhythm as they shout "Move! Move! Move!"

There are no crowd control diagrams in this book; the text you are reading is designed for the individual officer, not the member of a team. Conventional tactics may work for teams; indeed, they *must*, for the officer in the middle has little choice. We can say here only that the quarterstaff is not, by any standard, the weapon of choice when the lone officer walks into what may be

a "trouble" situation. It is too awkward for a man alone to handle unless he has had advanced training in such martial arts as kobu-do, and in any case, such techniques were designed for unarmed men facing deadly attack by a multitude of other unarmed men, when they had no deadlier weapons with which to fend off the attack.

Policemen *have* other weapons to deter such overwhelming assaults and should use them when they're alone. In modern police work, the quarterstaff is a weapon that should be used only by a member of a team in coordinated action, and it is not the place for this author or this book to determine how that team should operate on its own ground.

Sap Gloves and Palm Saps

The "heavy black gloves" are quite popular among police in some regions and flatly banned by department edict in others because of their connotation of brutality. Essentially, sap gloves are good-quality gloves that have powdered lead sewn into the area of the knuckles and first digits of the fingers, or into the palm to create a sort of reinforced-fist effect. One brand, the Poly/Steelwall™, is completely reinforced on the back, from fingertip to edge of wrist, with a layer of steel mesh in addition to the powdered lead.

Most instructors agree that the best use of sap gloves is to protect the hands when using two-handed sticks in riot situations; for this, the fully reinforced Poly/Steelwall style would seem to be ideal. For duty wear, however, this brand makes the hands awkward, and they are too stiff for casual carrying in belt or pocket. In conventional sap gloves, those with the lead sewn into the knuckle area allow the officer to wear them without seriously impairing his ability to drive or handle his weapon.

Those who prefer the leaded palms say that the best way to use sap gloves is with a slap instead of a punch. This certainly makes a slap in the face feel like a hammer blow. But consider the ramifications.

A slap in the face is normally seen by society as a classic challenge to fight. This can bounce back on the officer in the court-

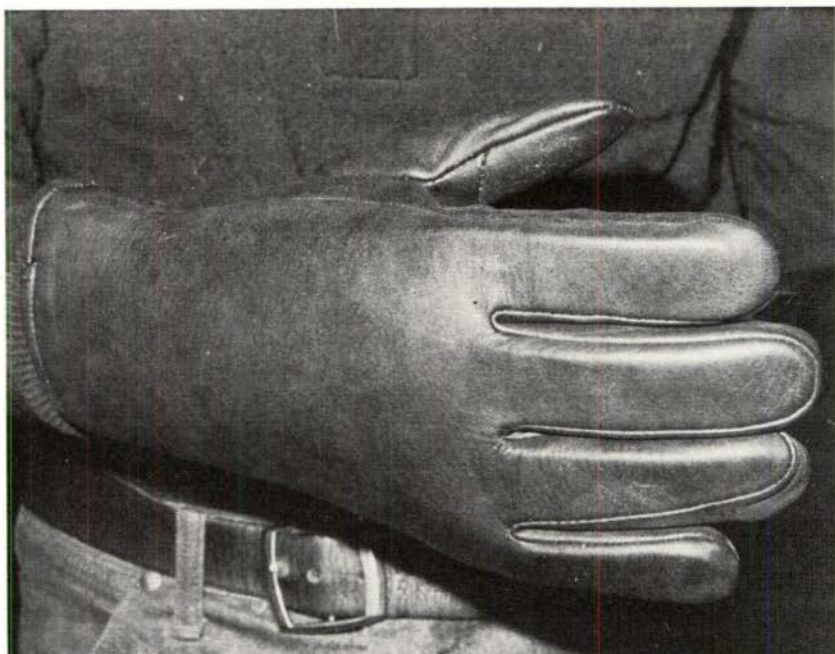


Figure 19. Poly/Steelwall police gloves are extremely effective for riot control situations. In my opinion, however, they are too awkward, stiff, and bulky for routine patrol even when allowed by the department. The length of fingers and the whole back of the hand is protected.

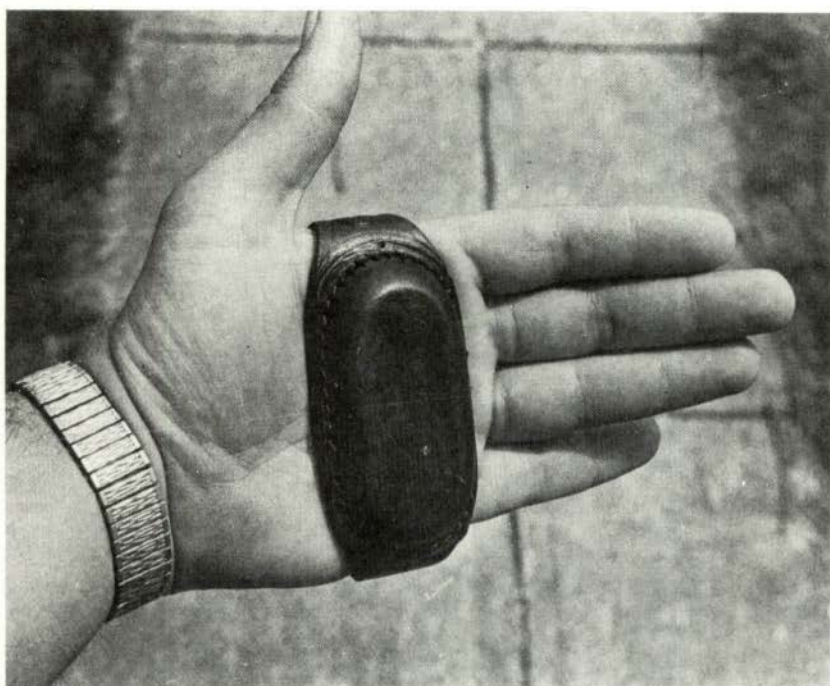


Figure 20. Palm sap by Bucheimer Clark, while effective for slapping or reinforcing a fist for a straight punch, lacks the versatility of a yawara stick. The wraparound design, however, makes it a weapon the officer can't lose while grappling.

room later. The general feeling is that if force is warranted, the officer may use a right cross or a stick as necessary, and that if the danger is little enough that a solid punch isn't warranted, then neither is any other type of blow, especially one that is likely to inflame the suspect if it doesn't neutralize him.

Moreover, there are many who view sap gloves as something akin to brass knuckles—a thug's weapon, not a policeman's, and one that puts the cop in a bad light if he's accused of using that weapon overzealously.

In a similar category is the palm sap, which is looped over the hand. It may comfortably be carried in a pocket, and like the sap gloves, allows the officer to keep his "extra edge" in his hand if

he has to open his fingers to grab a fistful of his opponent's clothing.

Sap gloves and palm saps do give an officer an advantage when he must "duke it out" with a suspect. They make a certain amount of sense in those rare departments where the officer has been instructed not to use his stick on the typical unarmed bar-fighter, though an agency with that philosophy will doubtless frown on weighted gloves as well.

On a rough beat, a light pair of sap gloves that don't restrict hand movement do make for a little extra insurance, but the officer should be careful to determine beforehand that he is not violating department policy, and that his superiors will back him up if his reasonable use of the sap gloves brings on an excessive force charge.

The Nunchaku*

Fad weapons come and go among the street punks. Guns, knives, bludgeons—the basic concept is always there, but variations come in waves.

Twenty years ago, the fad weapons were zip guns, switchblade knives, and brass knuckles. You still see them today, but more sophisticated variations are taking their place. Now sawed-off shotguns are the criminal's choice for armed robbery, and the switchblade has been largely replaced by cheap stillettoes and trick knives that hide inside the belt where a frisk won't find them. Bludgeons, too, have been up-dated.

They call the new version by a number of slang names, "Chucks," "nunchucks," "chakers," "karate sticks," or "killer sticks." True practitioners of the martial arts know it by a more revered name: nunchaku.

In the feudal peasant days in Okinawa, the ruling lords forbade the citizenry to possess any type of weapon, for fear that they would rise up against the armed and armored might of their tyrannical government. This left the peasants helpless against roving bands of criminals who remained unchecked by the sol-

* Reprinted from *Trooper*, an Organization Services Corp. Publication, by permission.

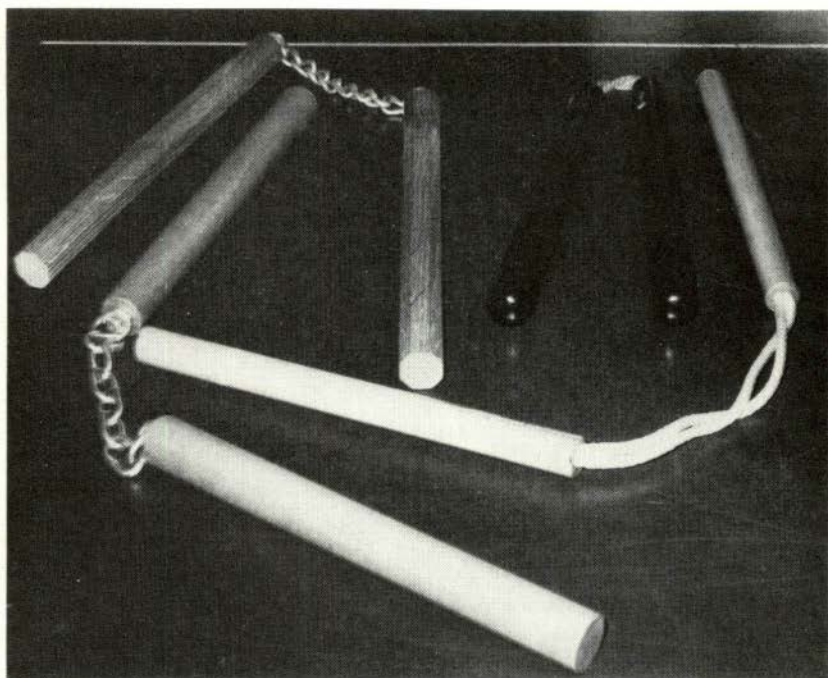


Figure 21. Four common styles of nunchaku a police officer can expect to encounter: (from bottom clockwise) round "chakers" chained together; extra-heavy octagonal nunchucks that not only crush but also tear with their sharp edges; special police nunchaku made of heavy plastic, with short cord to facilitate scissoring; and relatively light sticks with extra-long cord for greater reach and flailing maneuverability.

diers of the time. In desperation, the people of this agricultural society turned to the tools of the field and built fighting styles around them that rivalled the deadliest formal weapons of the period. Perhaps foremost among these was the simple rice flail, the nunchaku.

It consisted of two pieces of wood, each about fourteen to sixteen inches long, and connected at one end by a cord of varying length.

They quickly learned that the rice flail could also flail human targets, and with great effect. The men held one of the sticks either at the base or partway up, and swung the other stick. The

momentum it built up was devastating, especially when the base of each stick was weighted, momentum enough that the swinging stick could shatter the primitive body armor of the period, which was immune to any other kind of club, stick, or staff.

Until about the end of the 1960s, the nunchaku was little known. Martial arts masters taught it only to their black belt students. But then came the kung-fu/karate craze, and Bruce Lee.

Lee, who died in his early 30s, had been Kato on the *Green Hornet* TV series and had played superfighters in a number of other TV shows and movies. Trained in kung-fu, he branched out into all the other martial arts and eventually developed his own form, jeet kune do ("Way of the Intercepting Fist"). Now eulogized as the greatest martial artist of modern times, he was also one of the greatest showmen. He choreographed his own fight scenes, meticulously and exhaustively.

After a number of successful Hong Kong quickies, Lee played the lead in the first major American film of the genre, Warner Brothers' stupendously successful *Enter the Dragon*. In the film, Lee used a handsomely crafted nunchaku to defeat a number of opponents.

Lee's fighting ability on the screen was always breathtaking, but his use of the fighting sticks in *Enter the Dragon* absolutely captivated the audience. Almost overnight, two elements of the public had become fascinated with the weapon.

One was the legitimate martial arts community. Use of the nunchaku had already been increasing among the practitioners, largely because of a book on the weapon written by Fumio Demura, one of the pioneers of karate in this country. In most dojo (karate schools), kobujitsu or kobu-do (the art which involves the fighting sticks) had been taught only to advanced students, but now the "colored belts" of lower rank clamored for instruction with the super-weapon. Many of the schools complied.

But a second and sinister trend had developed. Martial arts films have always been popular in slum areas, partly because the constant action and frequently gross blood-letting they depicted was an even bigger seller of movie tickets than were the porno films. Street punks who had no interest in the true martial arts

saw *Enter the Dragon* and similar flicks and left the theaters muttering, "Man, I gotta get me a set of those sticks!"

True nunchaku of various types are sold by mail order through the martial arts magazines for four to fifteen dollars. They are also available through some karate schools. A few larger cities have marital arts supply houses which sell them over the counter.

But while the karate-ka (karate practitioners) bought these well-made replicas, the street element generally made their own. Most of the nunchucks police have encountered in the street have been homemade. The usual design is a couple of lengths of sawed-off broomstick, or thick wooden dowelling, chained together. (While some of the store-bought nunchaku are also chained, the most popular means of connecting the sticks is with a double length of waxed, braided nylon. Some inventive souls have used aircraft cable and similar esoteric materials.) Street users often drill the butts of their "chakers" hollow and weight them with lead or similar substances to increase their destructive power. A few homemade nunchaku have been encountered which were fabricated of Fiberglass®, and some of the cruder specimens have been assembled from lengths of pipe.

True nunchaku come in several styles. Most popular are the octagonal sticks, each stick fourteen inches in length. One brand made in this country is four-sided: while the edges bite into the hands somewhat, they create wicked lacerations on the opponent. Because the "chakers" can also be held together and used for thrusting, in the manner of a short billy club, a popular model is the han-kei nunchaku, which is rounded on two sides and flat on the other two so that the twin sticks will hold together well. Completely rounded sticks cut less severely and are more comfortable to handle.

There are variations in which a long stick is chained to a short one, as opposed to the usual sticks of equal length. One holds the long end and strikes with the short. These are somewhat easier for an amateur to use, though he sacrifices much of his reach. Yet another style is the yon-setsu-knon nunchaku, which has two ten-inch sticks on either end, and two four-inch sticks toward the

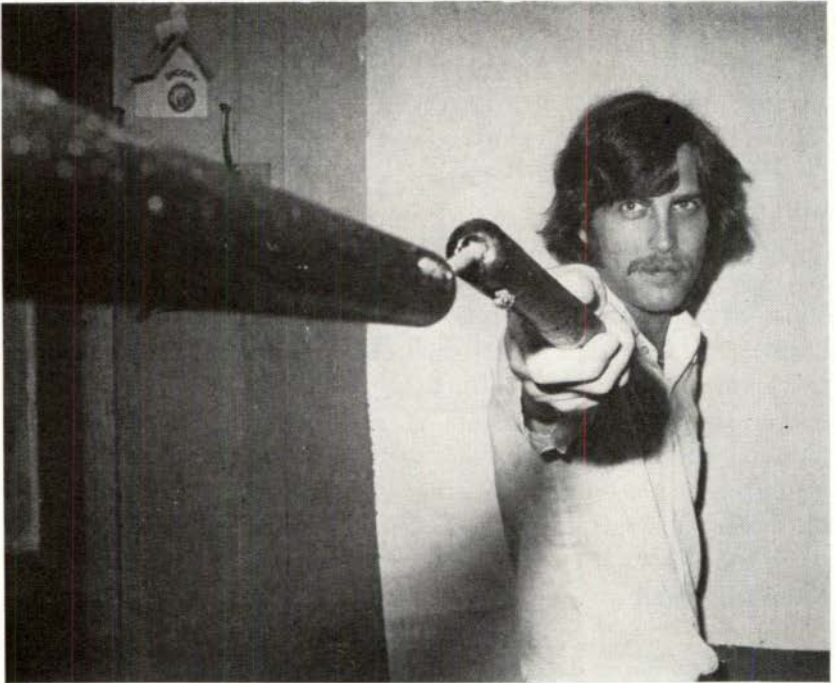


Figure 22. Nunchaku is a lethal impact weapon with reach exceeding that of standard sticks; it carries a great momentum that can easily kill or cripple. An officer facing nunchuks is facing lethal weaponry and should respond with his service firearm.

middle. Each are connected by short cords. This model is much more flexible, resembling a wooden whip when in action.

How They Work

The nunchaku is basically a fast-swinging striking tool. It can be used to either “flail” or “snap.” In the former application, the user holds one stick solidly and, with short flicks of wrist and forearm, whips the other stick in front of him in a constant, sideways “figure-eight” pattern. Done properly, it looks to the opponent like eight sticks flickering at once. The “figure eight” is a defensive maneuver that is very hard to penetrate. Another method—more likely to be used by the untrained—is “propeller-twirling” the loose stick.

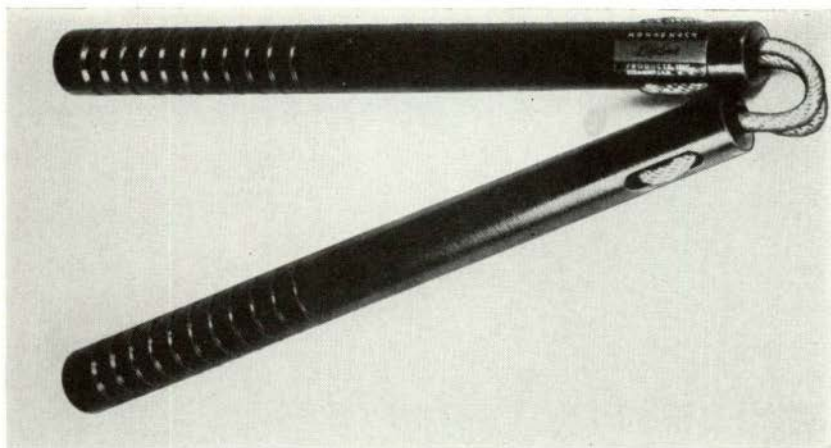


Figure 23. Police nunchaku by Monadnock is round to reduce lacerations, tapered for quick handling, with cord of optimum length for both flailing and scissoring. Weight and density of its Monpac construction give it devastating impact effect. Courtesy of Monadnock.



Figure 24. Nunchaku is ineffective against a knife. An officer's only real chance of survival in such an encounter is to strike a potentially lethal blow to the head. Though some feel that this kind of "super impact weapon" eliminates the need for an officer to use his gun against a knife, there are several reasons why the gun is both more effective and less likely to result in injury to a knife-wielding suspect.



Figure 25. Nunchucks can be whipped into the legs with bone-breaking force. In practice sessions, both individuals should wear heavy-duty protective gear.

While it is relatively easy to disarm a punk using one of these "propeller style," the "figure-eight block" is very difficult to counter. This maneuver should not normally be attempted by a bare-handed officer.

The other striking technique is the "swing" or "snap." The

weapon may be slashed back and forth horizontally (or once vertically) in front of the user. Unlike the flailing technique, in which the weapon is constantly in motion, a swing is usually a deliberate shot to an opponent's body. Swinging strikes are usually directed to the head, the rib cage, or the legs.

The "snap" can be even deadlier. A right-handed user holds the swinging end back either in his left hand or under his right armpit (see Fig. 25), as his right hand pulls slightly on the "control stick," keeping the cord under fairly constant tension. He simultaneously snaps his right wrist and releases the other end; the striking stick whips forward with murderous speed. It is most effective when aimed at face, throat, diaphragm, groin, or kneecap.

As soon as the weapon has struck, another flick of the nunchaku-man's wrist whips the stick around to the right and back in toward his body, where he catches it beneath his armpit. He is now ready to strike again. The movement has taken perhaps less than a second, and a well-practiced fighter can keep the weapon snapping constantly in a blur of deadly motion.

In addition to the power-packed momentum, the nunchaku has another lethal edge over other striking weapons: range. Even the most compact 'chaku—usually a couple of 12 inch sticks with a short cord—has a slight edge over the 24 inch police baton. The more common, bigger "chakers" have significantly greater reach. In effect, the nunchaku gives a fighter an "arm" more than double normal arms-length and vastly increases the potency of his blows.

The weapon looks inoffensive when held closed, and this can be dangerously deceptive to the officer. He may see a loiterer casually holding a closed set of nunchaku, and approach within, say, seven feet, a distance that appears to be safe. Suddenly, with a flick of his right wrist, the punk snaps the weapon open and upward, nailing the cop in the crotch with a savagely destructive blow. Officers should take extreme care when approaching suspects armed with these weapons. Martial artists consider them deadlier than knives.

There is a third application of the nunchaku that is even more lethal. If the cord is fairly short (three inches is about right) the



Figure 26. Nunchaku can be snapped forward, out from under the arm, with lethal force and accuracy. Don't fool with a man in this position.

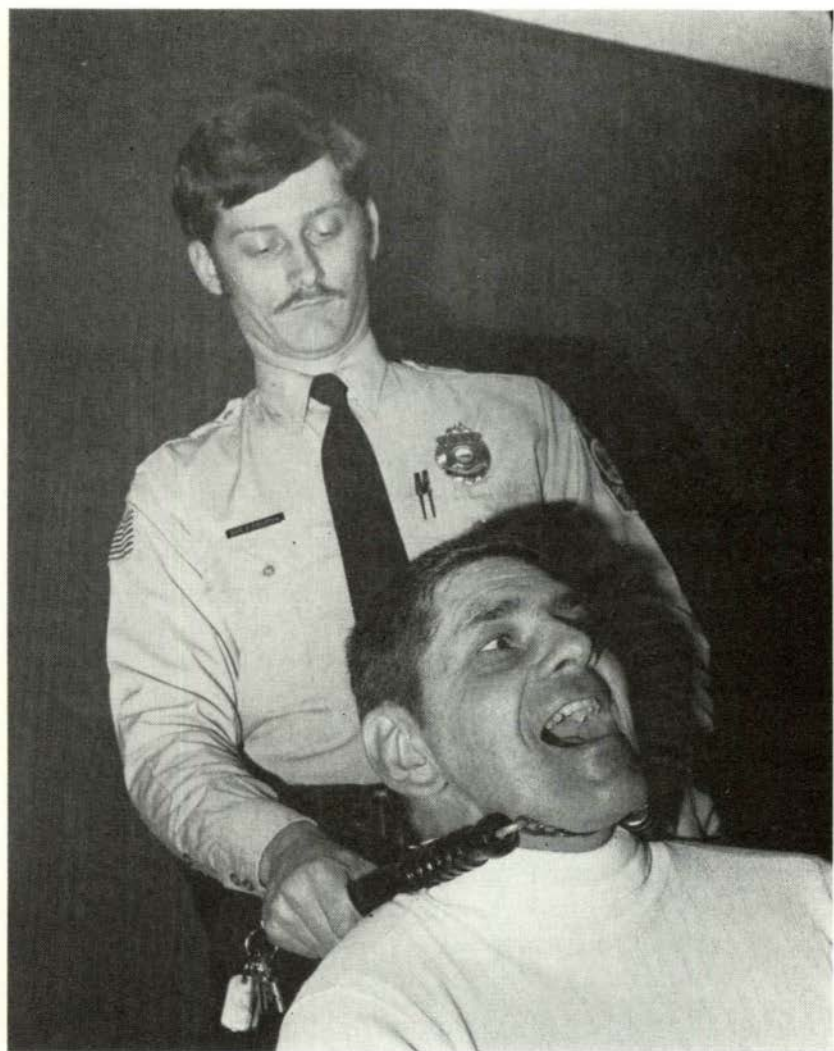


Figure 27. Nunchaku choke-out technique works in seconds but care must be taken that chain or cord does not contact larynx. Danger of spine or brain damage is extremely great with this instrument due to the great pressure that can be brought to bear with it.

weapon becomes a "nutcracker" that can scissor arm, wrist, or neck with a terrible leverage that can easily crush bone. When used on the neck from behind, it can break the cervical spine. More likely, it will cut off the blood supply to the brain, causing the victim to black out in moments. It has been reliably reported that this type of attack can cause a fatal stroke and other severe and permanent injuries. So used, it is an ideal tool for muggers and rapists.

When used sideways—one stick behind the neck, and one in front of the throat—it can easily crush larynx and windpipe and can lever the cervical vertebrae swiftly apart, severing the spinal cord.

How Are They Carried?

Those with the longer cords are often carried movie style, slung around the neck. If the cord is long enough, the two sticks hang down in such a manner that they are concealable even beneath an open jacket. Pocket carry is common; still others carry the two sticks inside the waistband, butts up.

Other, more ingenious methods have been seen on the street. The officer may encounter a suspect who slips one stick down the back of his neck and leaves the other outside his shirt, the weapon suspended by the cord on the collar. Under a jacket, it hangs invisibly in the hollow between the shoulder blades. An officer frisking a suspect should always pat down this area.

Still another popular hiding place is the coat-sleeve. One stick is inside the sleeve, one loose inside the jacket. The weapon is in an ideal position to be snapped out quickly from the under-arm hold position for a surprise snap or swing. Shorter nunchaku can be concealed inside a long-sleeve shirt. Watch for three open buttons in the middle of the shirtfront and for a tell-tale bulge in the region of the forearm when the elbow is bent, or for a suspect who keeps one arm in an unusually straight and stiff position.

Nunchucks can also be found under car seats and hanging from rear-view mirrors. Officers working the famous New Hampshire Motorcycle Races, where 40,000 cycle buffs converge



Figure 28. Plainclothesmen (and street people) carry nunchakus in waistband behind hip. Weapon is accessible for surprise, quick draw-and-strike with either hand and is extremely concealable and comfortable.

each year, have noticed a growing number of these weapons in the hands of the outlaw fringe. They've been observed in saddlebags and hanging from handlebars.

What's the Story Legally?

A few places have flatly outlawed possession of nunchaku. California has been said to have recently relaxed the ban, to the extent that the weapons may be used in karate schools by legitimate practitioners. In one major northeastern city, an elected official recently moved to have what he called "killer sticks" placed on the same level as sawed-off shotguns and machineguns as forbidden weapons.

In most other regions, the officer can make a concealed weapons arrest on a nunchaku carrier in the same manner as if the man were packing brass knuckles, blackjack, or lead-pipe bludgeon.

A word of caution here, however: Many karate students carry their 'chakus from home to class, on their person. It would be unfair to roust these people, since legitimate martial artists no more pull muggings than legitimate target shooters commit holdups. When a suspect tells you that he is a student, check with his school to confirm his innocent intentions before booking him. You're less likely to run into this today, since lawmen are becoming more aware of this weapon and have been busting nunchaku carriers frequently, with the result that the legitimate users are carrying their sticks in special cases or in gym bags.

What Do the Martial Artists Use It For?

Like most of the martial arts weapons systems, it is considered more a highly sophisticated training exercise than a practical self-defense measure, although some dojo are teaching its use in the latter light.

Use of the martial arts weapons in kata or training exercises demands precise timing, perfect coordination, and a keen eye for distance, and constant practice with the nunchaku develops all these attributes. Relatively few of the serious martial artists who work out with the nunchaku ever carry it on the street.

How Do You Handle a Cop Fighter With a Set of These?

A cop fighter carrying nunchaku should be handled very, very carefully, in much the same manner that you would cope with a really good knife-fighter. Stay well back out of his range, and

employ a chemical spray like Mace, Curb, or Federal Streamer. Your department's policy about not spraying directly into the face may be relaxed when you are facing a deadly weapon. The spray should be used with the left hand, with the service sidearm drawn in the right.

Disarming a nunchaku man barehanded is as fool-hardy as attempting the same with a knife-wielder. If you are in a situation where you must use only your hands, keep moving constantly: once the nunchaku fighter starts his swing, it's difficult for him to adjust his aim to nail a moving target.

The snapping motion is perhaps the deadliest: It comes too fast for you to count on evading it, and there is no way to block it barehanded without risking serious injury.

When facing an amateur who is not flailing the sticks too swiftly, it is sometimes possible to dare it and grab the swinging end. If you must do this, take two warnings: *Grab for the end nearest the cord*, which will greatly lessen the impact delivered to your hand, since most of the momentum is in the outer end. If you stop the swing in this manner, be careful that your opponent doesn't catch the other end of that stick with his left hand. If he does, he can scissor your hand at the connected end, crushing your knuckles.

Second, *catch the weapon*, don't block it. A rigid block will serve only to *increase* the impact of the stick into your hand. Instead, swing your hand in an outward, intercepting motion. That is, if an open nunchaku is swinging in on you from your left, bring your hand in a circular motion out from the center of your body to your left and back, with your palm toward the weapon. This way, instead of meeting force with force, your hand redirects the swing of the nunchaku, destroying its momentum. Keep your other hand up to shield your face in case the stick penetrates your defense.

Again, it should be emphasized that the nunchaku is an extremely lethal weapon—deadlier than almost any other type of bludgeon—and barehanded defense should not be attempted unless the officer has been disarmed.

One thing in the cop's favor is that this is a particularly tricky

weapon, and the average street punk has had no proper training in its use. He is likely to flail wildly and awkwardly with it. Also, the weapon is unique in that the user can easily hit *himself* with it if he miscalculates. Even black belt weaponmasters have been known to nail themselves painfully on elbow or noggin. One Colorado officer reports, "This guy came out of his car at me swinging a set of those sticks. I just stepped back and let him practically beat himself to death."

Why Don't Police Carry Them?

They do. Camden, Wildwood, and a few other New Jersey departments have either adopted them or made them optional for cops to carry. However, both of these departments have advanced black belt weapons experts on the force, to supervise training. A handful of individual officers throughout the country use them, but almost invariably, these are cops who are involved in the martial arts in private life and have extensive training, just as most cops who carry .45 automatics are gun enthusiasts on their own time. In both instances the officer is practicing constantly with his weapon, and it works for him where it wouldn't with a cop of only average training. (Massachusetts, as well as other states, has laws against the weapon, it should be noted.)

I did a series on this subject for *Karate Illustrated* magazine, which argued that the weapon is too destructive to serve as a less-lethal police impact weapon, and that it requires intense training and frequent practice to attain proficiency.* Also, anyone who has seen the weapon in action will recognize the potential police brutality factor in the public eye: One police department which adopted the twin sticks was forced by public outcry to abandon them after they were shown in action on a local TV news-spot.

Nunchaku is a weapon you, as a policeman, will be seeing more of. You may have seen it already and not even noticed. The mar-

* Those interested in learning more about this weapon may wish to read *Nunchaku, Karate Weapon of Self Defense* by Fumio Demura, from Ohara Publications, 5650 West Washington Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90016; and *Nunchaku and Law Enforcement* by Ptl. James Phillips, from Officer Phillips, c/o Camden, New Jersey PD.

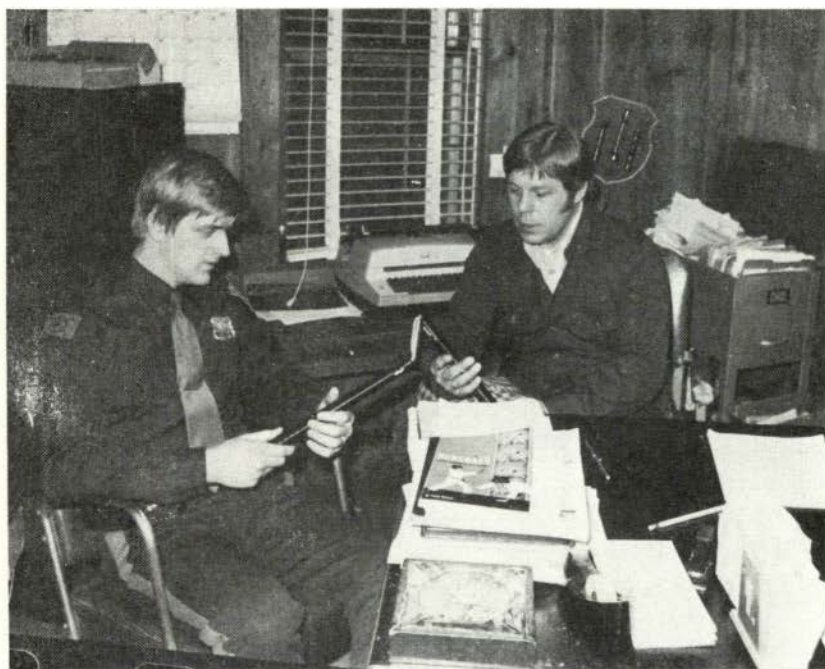


Figure 29. Leading police nunchaku expert Jim Phillips, left, discusses the instrument with Paul Starrett of Monadnock.

tial arts "chop-socky" flicks are emphasizing them more and more, and the TV networks, who are looking more and more at martial arts mini-movies, are sure to follow. It appears that the nunchaku will be the fad weapon of the street punk for years to come.

Watch out for it.

NON-TRADITIONAL

The Sidearm as an Impact Weapon

All officers are cautioned in basic training that they should never strike a suspect with their handgun. There are three excellent reasons for this. First, the weight and sharp angles are likely to cause splintering fractures of bone areas so struck. Second, an accidental discharge is quite possible. Third, no handgun is designed to take sharp blows against hard objects, and such an im-



Figure 30. Using revolver as impact weapon can damage not only suspect but also gun; trigger guard on this .38 service revolver has been badly bent. Courtesy of MFA.

pact may render the weapon inoperable by damaging the main-spring housed in the butt, by bending the ejector rod to the extent that the cylinder will not turn (especially likely in some Colt and Charter Arms revolvers) or by bending the trigger guard sufficiently to jam the trigger (to which light alloy-frame revolvers, and those with cutaway trigger guards, are particularly susceptible).

We should recognize, however, that there are situations when the officer will find himself with gun drawn, and suddenly faced with an unarmed attacker who is assaulting him violently and perhaps attempting to grab the service revolver. It will often, in such cases, be impractical to holster and secure the gun, and then resort to hand-to-hand subdual or draw a "less-lethal" weapon. If the officer holds his gun hand out of the way and attempts to re-

strain the suspect with his weak hand alone, he is likely to be overpowered. Throwing the sidearm away is extremely dangerous: The attacker may break away from the struggle and retrieve the handgun before the officer can, or one of his accomplices may grab the weapon. A friend of mine, a police officer who happened also to be a master karate instructor, found himself in such a position on a lakeside pier. He flipped his revolver into ten



Figure 31. This figure shows several right and wrong aspects about holding the service revolver when striking a suspect with it. Right aspects are that the web of the hand is firmly under the hammer to prevent accidental discharge and that the "fisted butt" (the striking surface) protrudes from the bottom of the hand. This officer has brought up two fingers to cover the trigger guard; this is wrong because (a) the blocked hammer prevents discharge anyway, (b) suspect can still get a finger inside the trigger guard, and (c) the officer's middle finger, the strongest, should be locked securely around the narrow upper part of the grip as it would be in firing position (this gives him maximum leverage if suspect is grappling for the service revolver). Grips on this handgun are rubber ones by Pachmayr; these not only reduce the likelihood of lacerating or fracturing suspect, but they have excellent characteristics for combat shooting.

feet of water, and then dispatched his attacker hand-to-hand. Since he was carrying a spare gun, he did not feel that he had handicapped himself unduly. However, it would be hard to imagine any other set of circumstances in which deep-sixing his sidearm would have been justified or even possible.

For the average officer caught in this predicament, striking the attacker with the gun may indeed be the only way out. When the officer believes this to be the case, the following technique should be employed.

Roll the revolver back into the fist, with the web of the hand solidly in the hook of the uncocked hammer. This does two things. First, it prevents the gun from being fired accidentally or otherwise, since the double-action revolver cannot fire unless the hammer is raised and dropped. Impact will not "jar off" the gun, since any modern police revolver has a safety bar between hammer and firing pin or between firing pin and cartridge that drops only when the hammer or trigger is deliberately pulled back.

Second, this allows the hard and usually square-cornered lower rear edge of the butt to protrude from below the heel of the hand. A hammer-fist blow or side-slash with this "fisted butt" will deliver enormous impact that will easily splinter bone and lacerate badly. For this reason, such a blow should never be aimed at the upper head, or the back of the neck. It will, however, be extremely effective against collarbone or jaw.

A blow with the gun barrel may not be effective, since the rounded contour will allow it to glance off the suspect's body, reducing stunning effect. Jabbing with the gun muzzle may deliver effective force, but at the risk of the gun turning in the hand at impact; with the forward motion, and the fact that the finger is probably tight around the trigger, an accidental discharge is quite likely. If time permits, the officer may wish to position his index finger behind the trigger. This will positively prevent an accidental shot, but also increases the likelihood of his finger being broken on impact or if the suspect grabs and twists the weapon.

The rifle or shotgun may be used as a striking implement, as any soldier knows. Again, muzzle-jabs, while extremely effective blows, present a great danger of an accidental discharge: the of-

ficer is, after all, grasping the weapon very tightly and is thrusting with it violently. Since there usually isn't room inside a rifle or shotgun trigger guard to insert a blocking finger behind the trigger, the gun hand should not be in firing position. It is best

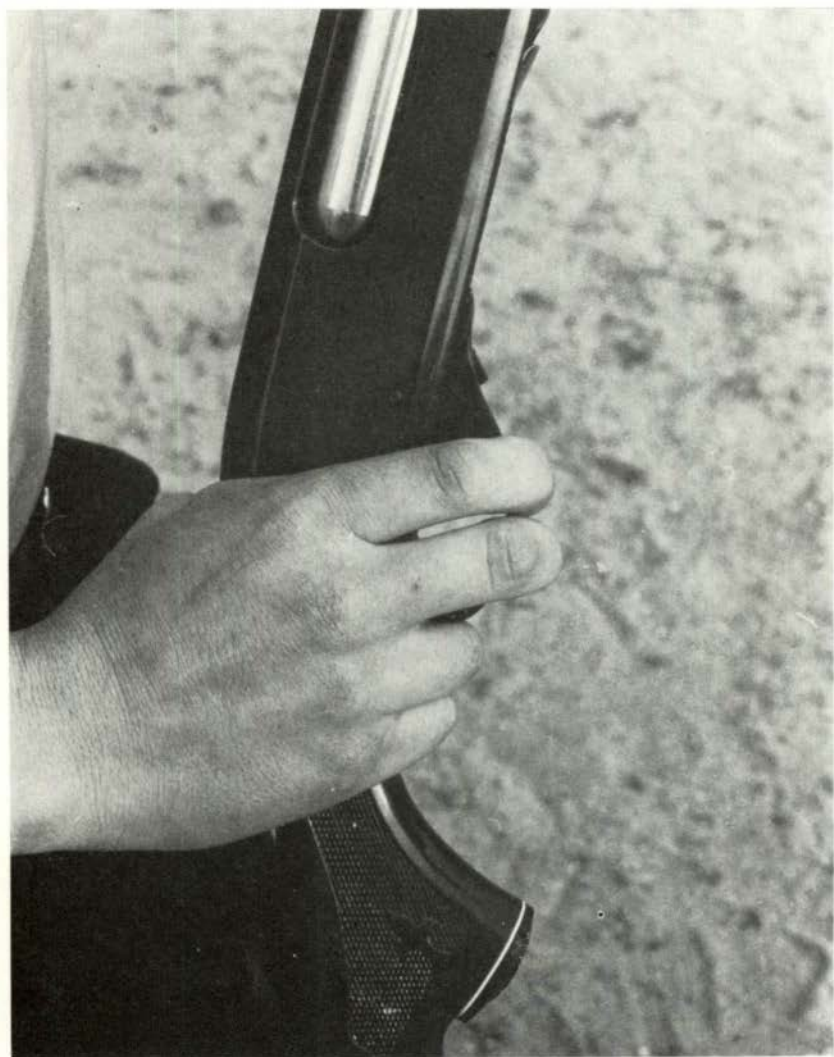


Figure 32. Proper method of shielding shotgun trigger when closing in a grappling situation.

to have one or two fingers over the outside of the trigger guard (see Fig. 32), to prevent the opponent from getting his finger on the trigger and loosing a wild round.

The same danger of accidental discharge applies when the barrel is used in a slashing movement against collarbone or head. The most effective blows with a rifle or shotgun are delivered with the butt. The officer should grasp the weapon by the front of the barrel with his weak hand, holding his strong hand on the pistol-grip of the stock. The man with his hands closest to the ends of a 3½-foot weapon will normally control its motion, as we have seen with the riot baton. However, the shotgun has one advantage for the man armed with one: the shape of the buttstock prevents a man from getting a secure hold on the end of it. If an attacker grabs the stock by its upper rear edge, he cannot



Figure 33a. Since buttstock below pistol grip controlled by officer is too wide for a solid hold by suspect, officer will find it fairly easy to slam stock forward out of suspect's grasp and up into a decisive groin strike.



Figure 33b. Grappling for shotgun: Suspect has a leverage advantage because, since officer dare not remove his hands from "controls," suspect can grab farther out on the weapon. Officer should keep the gun in rapid motion, sideways, back and forth, up and down.

prevent the officer from slashing forward and striking the attacker in groin or kneecap with the lower edge of the butt. Conversely, if the suspect grabs the lower edge, a smart backward motion by the officer will pull the gun completely away from the attacker's hand.

An officer in such a grappling situation should keep the gun moving at all times, with the muzzle and butt both moving in sharp figure-eight patterns, and the gun constantly being jerked upward and downward in a 180 degree arc. This reduces the attacker's leverage. The officer should kick at the suspect's knees and shins, and then pull and step backward. He may also wish to jerk the suspect in toward himself and deliver a knee to the groin.

Officers with military training in bayonet and pugil sticks should restrain their ingrained impulse to smash the attacker with the rifle butt once he is down. This would be considered lethal force, exercised against an unarmed opponent who is not, at this moment, capable of offering deadly danger. However, if the downed suspect reached at this time for a gun or other deadly weapon, and the officer did not feel it expedient to fire the gun at him, a downward blow of the buttstock to skull, neck, or spine should terminate the encounter.

The officer who is permitted to do so should consider fitting his service revolver with a set of Pachmayr Presentation Grips®. These are made of black rubber composition and will reduce the likelihood of lacerating and breaking bone when the officer must strike a suspect with the "fisted butt" of his revolver. They also afford an excellent hold for combat shooting and prevent the revolver from twisting in the hand, either from heavy recoil during firing or when someone is grappling for it. Finally, these grips do not show dents and scars as do wooden stocks, and they have a businesslike look that complements a well-dressed officer's overall appearance.

The Flashlight as an Impact Weapon

A high percentage of our police officers have acquired heavy-duty flashlights for patrol duties. Typified by Safariland's Kel-Lite®, and including the Bianchi B-Lite®, the Tru-Grit®, and a version of the Pro-Light® among others, these units are made of heavy aircraft aluminum tubing. They cost perhaps five times as much as conventional flashlights of the same battery capacity and power.

Theoretically, they are "heavy duty" in the sense that they can easily absorb abuse that would KO an ordinary flashlight. One can, for example, drive a car back and forth over a small-head Kel-Lite or similar product without harming it. But this is not the reason most officers carry them.

They carry them as bludgeons.

Like all impact weapons, the heavy duty flashlight has its pros and cons. The most obvious advantage is that, during any night-stop, it will probably be in the officer's hand at the moment he is

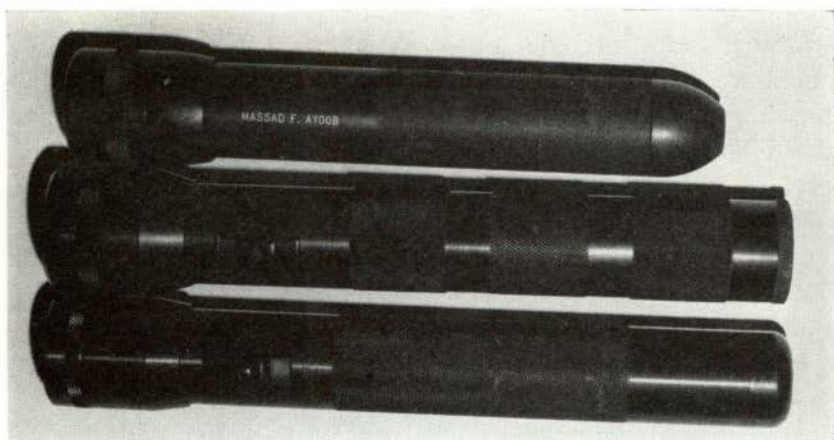


Figure 34. Three typical police flashlight weapons. Top: Three-cell D-size Bianchi B-Lite has bullet-shaped butt, reducing lacerations when light is swung but increasing damage when thrust. Center: Tru-Grit flashlight is thickest and heaviest of the D-cells, with interchangeable one-cell sections to allow officer to change size as needed. Bottom: Safariland Kel-Lite is the most popular police flashlight, an excellent choice.

attacked, dramatically reducing reaction time. It also permits an officer to combine two bulky pieces of equipment, saving weight and comfort.

But the disadvantages are also many. The rigidity of the flashlight, coupled with the weight of the aluminum barrel and the three to five or more heavy batteries, creates a bludgeon deadlier than a lead pipe. Consider a strike across the kneecap. A wooden baton probably won't break the bone. A plastic baton in the same man's hands may cause a simple fracture of the patella. But the heavy flashlight, swung with the same force, can smash the kneecap into particles.

I once had call, in a police classroom, to demonstrate this to a doubtful student: I approached a combination desk/chair, and struck it with each of three weapons. The 26 inch hickory baton made an impressively loud noise smashed full-force across the desk top. I did the same with a 24 inch Monadnock plastic stick, and the desk bounced in the air from the shock.

I then picked up a four-cell Tru-Grit flashlight, and swung it

down onto the desktop with moderate force. As the echo of the crashing sound died and the vibrations of the desk stopped, we could see that all three layers of the tough, laminated plywood top were cracked through, and the upper-most layer was finely shattered for an area of about an inch surrounding point of impact. "That's what you may do to a man's skull if you clobber him with a 'police flashlight.' "

This is not to say that the H/D flashlight has no place as a defensive tool. It does, but it requires special training and understanding of the potential deadliness of the weapon when used as a bludgeon, as 99 percent of the officers carrying it *would* use it in a fight situation.

With Kubota-type moves, the long, heavy police flashlight becomes a humane and effective impact weapon. Used as a blocking tool, on the underside of the forearm, it will absorb impact better than any baton. A rearward jab will take the wind out of any opponent. A forward jab can be quite effective, though due to the shape of the flashlight head, it is likely to lacerate flesh. It is *not* likely that a frontal blow will cause the lens to shatter, cutting the suspect; most of these "torches" have tough Lexan® lenses, and only a direct jab to the point of the chin is likely to break them.

Some officers hold the flashlight on a suspect in the position illustrated in Figure 35: elbow at side, hand next to face, with the flashlight head protruding from the bottom rather than the top of the hand. This facilitates a quick, surprise "bludgeon blow" but reduces the officer's ability to block effectively and strike humanely with the instrument.

The flashlight should be held as in Figure 36. This not only gives the officer maximum control of the light beam but allows him to use Kubota-type blocks and strikes.

To be effective in this application, the light should be at least a four-cell, preferably a five. A three-cell flashlight is too short for adequate blocking or optimum striking.

Many officers prefer the slim "C" cell versions over the more common "D"-battery size. The Cs fit comfortably in most baton rings and in the "sap pocket" of most uniform trousers. Little blocking or striking ability is sacrificed (in the Kubota method,



Figure 35. Many officers are taught to approach cars this way with their police flashlights, but consider that (a) many motorists will readily perceive that the hold facilitates a clubbing motion of the flashlight and (b) there is little you can do in this position except swing it like a bludgeon. Many officers will also argue that it does not give the best light for spotting would-be aggressors in a darkened car.

weight is actually a disadvantage), and the essential quality of rigidity and sturdiness is retained. Duration of light, however, is dramatically reduced in the "C" cell.

Small-head flashlights will be more comfortable to carry and are quite sufficient in terms of light output. The officer who wants maximum illumination will do better to buy a flashlight with extra battery capacity and high-intensity bulbs than to go to the bulky large-head design.

Shape of the flashlight butt has been debated by the various manufacturers. At this writing, the Kel-Lite has a flat bottom rounded at the edges; the Bianchi B-Lite has a bullet-shaped butt; and the Tru-Grit, due to its sectioned design, has a flat bot-





Figure 36. When held in the conventional position, the flashlight can be used (left top) to jab to abdomen or midsection (left bottom), in a block or armbar technique, or (above) in a two-handed jab that will be instinctive to any officer trained in LAPD-style straight-stickfighting methods. Photographs by Robert Kern.

tom with sharply serrated edges. The Tru-Grit, therefore, will cause the most serious lacerations when used in a hammer-fist blow. The B-Lite's distributors say that the bluntly conical end-piece on their product will reduce lacerations. They're right, but it will also increase the likelihood of, for instance, a depressed skull fracture when a hammer-fist blow is struck to the suspect's head. The small end area focuses impact. The Kel-Lite's design is probably the optimum, insofar as impact weapon capability is concerned.

At least one police flashlight, Gem-Lite®, is available with a screw-in butt section that houses an incapacitating aerosol spray. This optional unit attaches to many of the other heavy duty flashlights as well. It too has good and bad points. The unconventional housing will certainly take a suspect by surprise, preventing him from shielding his face against the CN spray. This design is also preferable to previous "tear-gas flashlights," which were designed to be activated while the flashlight was in a horizontal position. In some of these units, residue from the carrier substance in the chemical mix would crystallize in the necessarily long plastic tube inside the flashlight, and after the first couple of "shots," the unit was likely to jam. Since the Gem-Lite is operated in a vertical position via a conventional aerosol head, this malfunction is not likely to occur.

Other "combination" impact weapons will be discussed separately in this book.

It is not wise to use conventional, light aluminum- or plastic-bodied flashlights as impact weapons. Due to battery weight and hardness of the outside shell, injuries will be almost as severe, yet the unit is liable to break apart upon impact. This creates its own problems: The officer is left in darkness, and the very fact that he hit the suspect hard enough to shatter the flashlight may, in the eyes of some courts, become clear evidence of a savagely violent blow that constitutes excessive force.

Many police departments have made it quite clear to their officers that, since the heavy-duty flashlight was not an issue impact weapon, or in most cases, even issue equipment, any lawsuits arising from injuries inflicted with such weapons would be the officer's own problem, and that the department would not undertake the officer's legal defense in such a situation. This is a precedent to be seriously considered by the officer who chooses to carry the heavy duty police flashlight as an implement of self-defense.

It appears, then, that the heavy duty flashlight should not be considered as a primary impact weapon. Its sturdiness makes it excellent as a source of illumination for the patrolman or trooper; its design allows him to use it to block or jab in the Kubota style during a fight. But the officer who uses it as a

bludgeon does so at his own extreme risk, since it is likely that he will not only injure the suspect severely but will not be backed up by his department in the event of excessive force charges and civil suits.

Handcuffs as Impact Weapons

One of the first things every rookie policeman hears is "Never let go of those bracelets when you're cuffing a suspect, son. If the guy gets loose, he'll rip your face off with a swing of that loose cuff."

Obviously, the police officer can do the same with the handcuffs if he gets into a sudden situation that requires an impact weapon and has nothing within reach but his drawn handcuffs.

The swinging motion of a loose handcuff is extremely destruc-

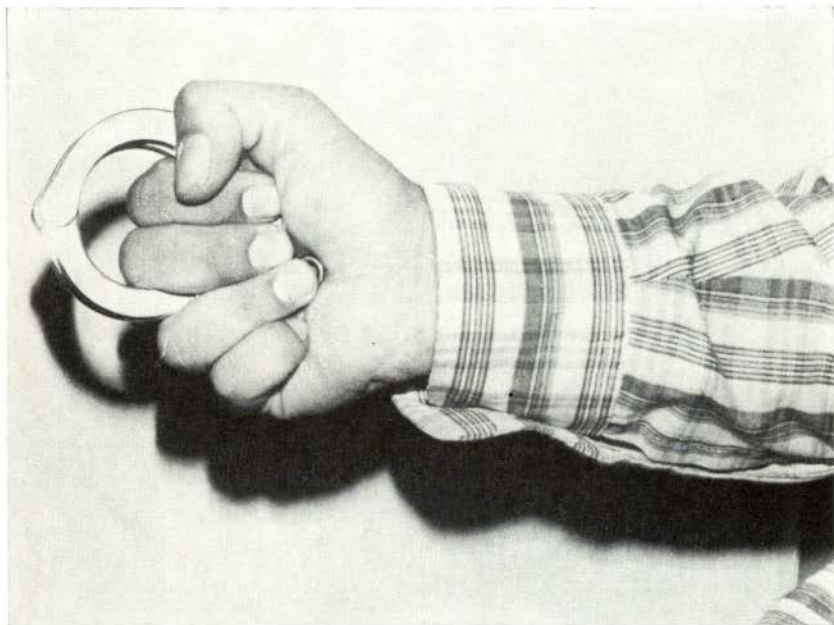


Figure 37. The proper method of holding handcuffs as makeshift impact weapons. Punch to soft areas as the heavy, unshielded metal is likely to lacerate and to break bones, yet the impact will "penetrate" the heaviest muscles. Officers are frequently assaulted as they move in to cuff suspect and holding the cuffs in this position during approach is sometimes a valuable technique. If you do so, hold cuffs loosely so your preparedness to strike will not be readily perceived by the suspect. Photograph by R. Morin.



Figure 38a. When drawing handcuffs as improvised impact weapon, the tips of the fingers slide into the bracelets from the inside.



Figure 38b. When cuffs are drawn, the third finger flips the body of cuffs into position as palm of hand closes. The result is extremely effective "knucks." *Warning: This is an extremely destructive technique, to be used only in emergencies.* An officer who draws his cuffs before being assaulted, with the intent of striking the suspect with them, will be open to charges of brutality. This technique is shown only as a rapid and simple "last resort" for an officer who is being overwhelmed but doesn't wish to draw his gun. Photograph by R. Morin.

tive; it acts like a miniature steel nunchaku. Momentum of the swinging bracelet combines with the weight and hardness of the naked steel to create a severe injury, one that could be fatal if the blow is struck to the temple. An open, saw-toothed cuff will cause severe lacerations or scoop an eyeball right out of its socket.

Regulation police handcuffs should not normally be considered impact weapons. However, as with the sidearm and the flashlight, there may be moments when the officer will have to strike an opponent with something more potent than his bare fist, and he will have to strike that blow with whatever is in hand. The nature of brawls involving officers are such that the policeman is frequently attacked while attempting to manacle the suspect, and the cuffs are already in his hand.

The most effective way to use handcuffs for striking is as makeshift "knucks." However, it is very easy for the officer to break his own hand doing so unless he uses a particular technique.

If the officer is holding the cuffs sideways (that is, with the lock mechanism protruding from above his thumb), frontal impact may slam the bracelets shut, breaking his two fingers inside the cuff. When this happens, the palm of the officer's hand may also be gouged by the saw-toothed edge of the handcuff's locking arm. If he is holding the unit with the lock mechanism to the front, a lateral impact, as from a hooking punch, will lever the handcuffs back sharply enough to break or dislocate those two fingers.

For striking, the handcuffs should be held with the bracelets together, with the index and middle fingers looped through the cuffs, *and with the lock mechanism in the palm of the hand.* This precludes injury to the officer, yet reinforces his hand and focuses impact dramatically. A punch delivered to a bony surface will probably cause a fracture; a blow to the softer body parts will usually be all the officer needs, since the narrow hard surface penetrates very deeply, on the same principle as a bare-handed punch with one knuckle extended. This focusing is enhanced when the cuffs are held properly for striking, since the forwardmost surface will be the raised edge of the joint on which the locking arm of the handcuff bracelet swings.

As with the flashlight, an officer using this unconventional "impact weapon" may run into trouble if litigation follows his striking the suspect. Policemen put in that unenviable position usually wind up saying, "Your honor, he swung at me so fast that I counterpunched before I remembered I was holding the handcuffs."

Makeshift Impact Weapons

Unarmed combat instructors teach you that when you're being backed to the wall by weight of bulk or numbers, you should forget about fists and karate chops and pick up the nearest hard object to use for a bludgeon.

Probably, though, a full beer bottle or a tire iron won't be right there, and even if they were and you used them, there might be someone on the civilian review board or elsewhere who would consider that to be a brutal barfighters' tactic that should ban the user from wearing a badge.

"Lone Ranger" morality is cold comfort if you're about to be outfought and crippled by one or more savage attackers. There is one "weapon" you can carry constantly, in uniform and off duty, that no one will make you check whether you're going into a Maximum Security Prisoner Detention Room or through an airport metal detector. It's a simple, everyday instrument that performs a utilitarian function, and doubles as a savagely potent bludgeon.

Belt-slung Keyring

Get a keyring like the Bianchi, which becomes an eight-inch leather strap which snap-loops over the belt. One problem with the Bianchi, however, is that its quick-release keyring design may permit the heavy keyring to come loose and fly away after the first blow, leaving you weaponless. Bucheimer Clark makes a unit more secure but not quite so flexible.

Put lots of keys on it, even the left-over spares for that auto you traded in five years ago. They'll add weight and bulk. Stagger the keys, one with the edge facing down, the next with the sharp edge facing up, etc. You want three-quarters to a full pound of metal, or enough to occupy about three-quarters of the keyring.



Figure 39. A flick of the finger drops the snap-detaching keyring into the officer's palm, creating an extremely destructive makeshift weapon, one that should be used only in desperate situations. To maximize the value, officer should turn opposite side to assailant as he strikes, maintaining a striking position.

The thick, flexible strap of leather will, when the thing is swung, create the same momentum effect as a spring-loaded black-jack handle, only greater. The weight and hardness of the unshielded metal delivers a crushing blow, and the sharp edges of the keys—which, if staggered, will be effective no matter which way the weapon is swung—cause large and bloody lacerations.

This innocuous makeshift causes such damaging impact that it should not be considered a standard impact weapon. It is, however, something to keep in mind if you ever have to go unarmed into an environment such as a detention center where you may be attacked with a contraband weapon or by multiple, unarmed assailants. Blows to the eyes will probably cause blindness; strikes to the throat or temple may kill. A strike to wrist or kneecap will numb the extremity and often break the bone, while a slash



Figure 40. After drawing the ring, the officer should step back quickly with the weak leg of the amb's method. Held at the flexible end, the keyring is swung suddenly and over, here to the attacker's neck. This is a useful weapon for guards and others who must be ostensibly unarmed in detention centers, locking points, etc. Photograph by R. Kern.



Figure 41a. Adaptation of Villari belt-fighting techniques for police officer. Author has whipped dress belt from loops, wrapped non-buckle end securely around one hand, and grasped buckle in the other. Holding it taut and vertical, a sharp swing deflects punch.

across forehead or scalp will have a stunning effect accompanied by a copious, blinding, and demoralizing flow of blood.

To use, hook the keyring strap over your belt, behind the hip, on your strong-hand side. Sweep your hand upward to "draw," the edge of your palm or little finger breaking loose the retainer. The weight of the keys will drop the strap into your waiting fingers. Slash upward, or sideways.

Think of it as an extremely destructive makeshift blackjack, to be used for extreme emergencies only. It will need a solid swing behind it to take effect, and range is short, so plan your strategy accordingly. Keep your weak side toward your oncoming attacker, so he won't see you preparing to use it; surprise is one

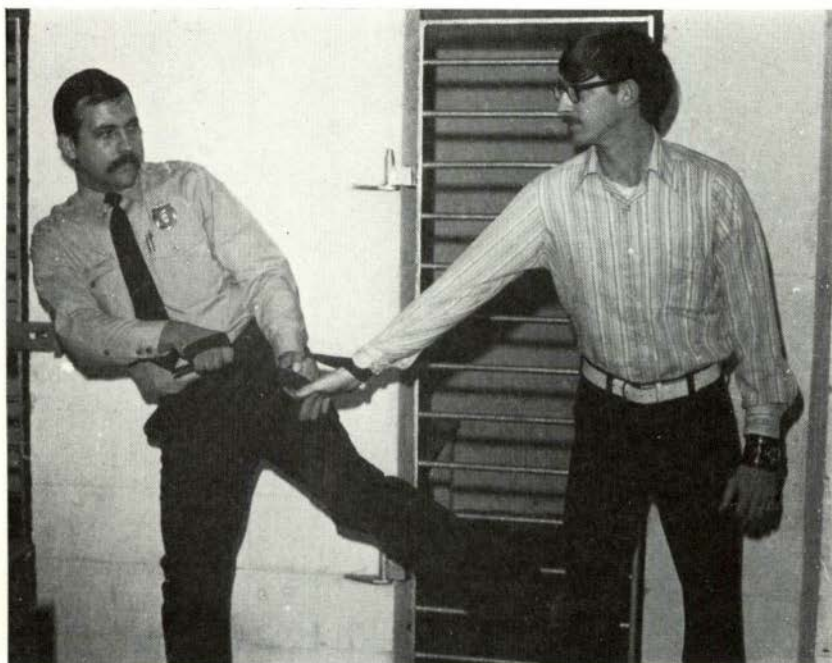


Figure 41b. After deflecting a punch and stepping back, officer whips belt around suspect's wrist and tightens it. Stepping back again, he pulls suspect off balance and counters with a sidekick to knee.

of the main advantages of this unorthodox defensive technique (Fig. 39). Let your attacker move in toward you, then slide your weak leg back as you strike. This gives you better control and protection at this necessarily close range (Fig. 40).

Belt-Fighting

The standard pants belt (as opposed to the stiff $2\frac{1}{4}$ inch gun-belt) can be a formidable close-quarters weapon. Quite apart from swinging it over your head and hitting your attacker with it, you can use this innocuous piece of dresswear to tie up, subdue, disarm, or kill an attacker.

Most officers wear $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch leather garrison belts, or standard dress belts, to actually hold their pants up. The policeman would do better to don a web belt with infinitely adjustable brass

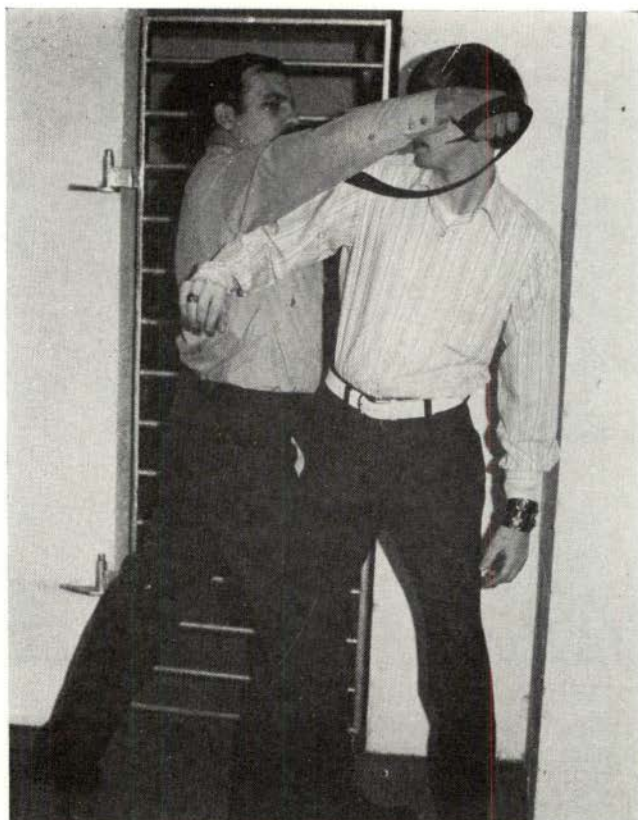


Figure 42a. A more destructive alternative technique is, after deflecting the punch, to step into the suspect and behind his shoulder and quickly loop the belt around his neck.

buckle, the type issued to most military personnel for dress and fatigue wear. The advantages, apart from comfort, include flexibility, improved "drawing speed," greater momentum when the belt is swung overhead as a long-range impact weapon, and speed of handling in grappling maneuvers.

The swinging application is limited. It has to be swung over the head to gain momentum and stay in motion for an accurate strike, and this means that you telegraph your blow as you wind it up; your opponent can judge what you'll do by your advance movement and have plenty of time to prepare himself for an

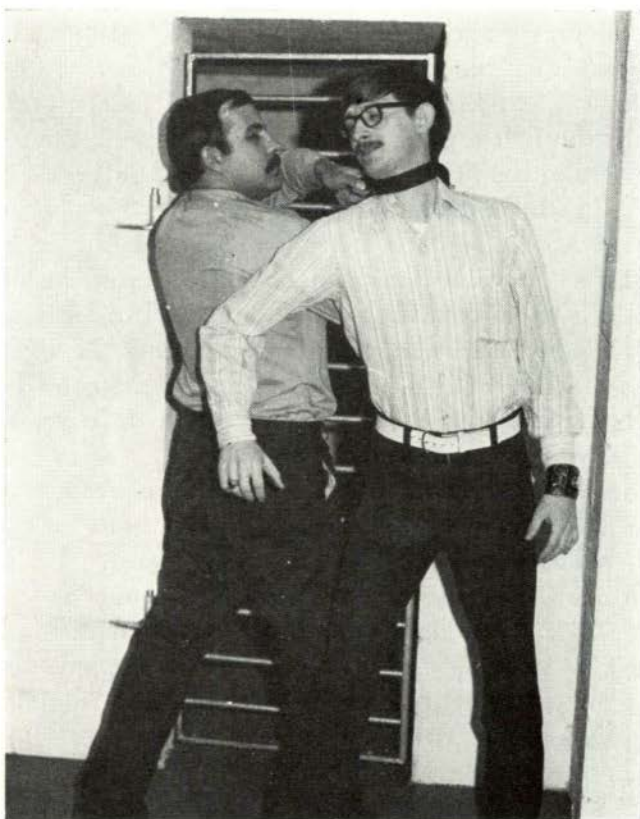


Figure 42b. The officer then draws noose tight. *Caution: This is a killing technique*, to be used only when an otherwise unarmed officer is facing deadly danger. Larynx may be seriously or fatally injured when full pressure is applied. Officer may also bend forward, flipping suspect backwards over his shoulder, a movement that will almost certainly break the suspect's neck. Note that belt fighting is a subtle technique and requires extensive practice to create the right timing.

evasion or counter-attack. Range is excellent, greater than any standard impact weapon because of the belt's length, but a weapon of great range is useless if the target can see it coming and defend against it.

A better approach is to use the type of belt-fighting technique taught by karate master Fred Villari. The flexible belt is held in

both hands, the buckle in one, and a turn of belt material around the other fist securing the loose end. Held taut, this is an extremely effective block that can intercept punches, kicks, and some bludgeon attacks. As you block a fist or foot, a flick of the wrist loops the belt around the suspect's forearm or ankle; you can now tighten the noose by snapping your hands outward, and then jerk him off balance and to the floor.

A variation is to loop the belt quickly around the neck of the attacker. Slip in behind him on his open side, your back against his, and bend forward as if to "flip" him. Holding this position, you can choke him unconscious; by completing the flip, if you don't let go of the belt, you can break his neck. In this position, he can't reach you with hands or feet without a movement that will snap his own cervical spine.

Like the keychain, the belt can become an extremely effective makeshift defense weapon for the officer who must enter hostile environments while ostensibly "unarmed."

The military-style web dress belt can also be used as a restraining device in the absence of steel or special plastic handcuffs. *Caution:* This technique was designed for military prisoners of war, with the thought in mind that the prisoner would be constantly at rifle- or bayonet-point. A prisoner left unattended can wriggle out of this makeshift restraint.

An even more valuable attribute of the dress web belt for standard police wear under the gunbelt is its adaptability, by virtue of the "infinite adjustment" feature, as a tourniquet. The officer who suffers a hemorrhaging wound of an extremity can even apply it to himself, using his standard stick—or, as a last resort, the barrel of his quickly unloaded service revolver—to secure the tourniquet. He should then lie down in such a way that the bulk of his body holds the stick and tourniquet in place, in case he passes out from hemorrhagic shock. The officer who has to give himself first aid in this manner should take a pen, preferably a Flair™, and write on his forehead or face the letters "TK" and the time he applied the tourniquet. This will aid officers and ambulance attendants, who may find him moments after he has passed out, and will help them in their first aid efforts. It may literally save his life or limb, as it will guide his rescuers in mak-

ing the medically delicate decision of leaving or loosening the tourniquet.

Barfight Makeshifts

The officer may find himself in a barroom brawl after entering the scene, for one reason or another, without an impact weapon. He doesn't feel warranted in using his handgun, but his fists alone may not be doing the job for him. The same dilemma may confront the off-duty policeman at his neighborhood tavern on the wrong night.

Gin mills, happily, are full of weapons that a seasoned bar-fighter can use to save wear and tear on his knuckles. If there's a pool table there, make for it: not only will the table give you some protection from attack on one side, but the cue sticks are extremely effective. Use baton- and bayonet-fighting tactics with a cue-stick; swinging the wide end baseball-bat-style delivers awesome power, but it's the first thing your opponent will expect and prepare to defend against, or evade.

Don't neglect those heavy billiard balls. When thrown they are brutal-hitting missiles, and when held in your fist like a roll of pennies, they give fight-stopping weight to your hands.

If you find yourself standing at the bar trying to talk a drunk into leaving peaceably, let your hand stray toward a beer bottle, preferably a full one, for the weight; one with the cap on is ideal if you can find it.

One of the most effective improvised weapons in the saloon environment is the heavy cut glass beer mug. If you have a choice, grab one that's full. The mug, when grasped as if you were going to use it for its intended purpose, becomes a monstrously perfect set of "brass knuckles." Its usually octagonal lower edges become cutting surfaces, and the weight will easily shatter bones. It will almost never break on impact; this means more broken bones but fewer lacerations, and less likelihood of injury to the hand of the man striking with it.

The full mug has two advantages: you can throw the contents into the face of your attacker or his accomplice, causing momentary disorientation and surprise; or you can punch with it full and let the weight of the liquid add to the effect of the blow. In

the latter application, you'll get a spray of liquid all over the place, but probably not enough in your eyes to disorient *you*. It may, however, be hard to explain when you get back to headquarters smelling like a brewery. Maybe the watch commander will give you the rest of the evening off.

Never try to hit anyone with a cocktail or whiskey glass in your fist. You'll wind up spilling a pint of blood on the barroom floor, and possibly severing tendons that will leave you permanently crippled.

A final consideration of the barroom environment comes when you have to go hand-to-hand with one of its denizens up at the hardwood counter. There are two techniques, taught by the late, notorious outlaw martial artist Count Dante (John Keehan), that only work on opponents who are sitting on barstools.

Both are exceedingly simple. One is a punch to the seated man's groin; since his weight and probably the back of the barstool prevent him from moving backward and rolling with the blow, shock effect is increased enormously. A blow to the groin in stand-up free-fighting doesn't necessarily end the conflict, but this one usually does.

The second, like the first, is simplicity itself: as you approach the seated troublemaker, let one foot stray to the nearest leg of his barstool. If he hassles you physically, grab him by the collar or stick your palm in his face, and push backward while your heel hooks the barstool out from under him. The collar-hold is best, since it permits you to "let him down easy" without smashing his head against the floor, while leaving you in control of his movement and momentum. If he falls free, he'll probably land in a tangle of stool legs, and any hostility that he still offers can be safely answered by fast footwork on the officer's part.

TWO CLASSIC BATON APPROACHES

THE LAMB BATON METHOD*

PATROLMAN ARTHUR LAMB of the Boston, Massachusetts Police Department is one of perhaps four leading baton instructors in the United States, the others being Tak Kubota and Bob Koga in Los Angeles, and Lon Anderson, inventor of the Prosecutor nightstick. Several schools of thought have arisen about the use of impact weapons by the cop on the street. Lamb's system is, by far, the most direct and the easiest to master; he considers it a refined yet simplified method.

Lamb joined the Boston force in 1959, working *primarily* night shifts on "the wagon." It was a quick, in-depth education in violence, since the belligerent subjects being transported often chose to duke it out with the wagon patrolmen when the vehicle pulled into the lock-up point.

If you check the records, you'll see that I probably sustained more injuries than any other patrolman on the force. But when I went to the hospital, I usually took two or three with me.

The problem was that we, like virtually all American policemen, were being taught outmoded techniques of unarmed combat and baton use. They worked great in the academy, but weren't practical for the street. With the baton in particular, I quickly found that the standard, military style moves weren't practical. I found myself having to hit a suspect more than I wanted to, because there was no other way to subdue him.

The Lamb Method was born in 1969. Lamb, assigned to a riot detail, was confronted with a huge suspect. The man grabbed the center of Officer Lamb's baton and dragged him around by it for

* Reprinted from *Trooper*, an Organization Services Corp. Publication, by permission.

fully fifteen minutes. When it was all over, Lamb went home, his mind filled with the thought, "There's *got* to be a better way." He handed his short issue stick to his five-year-old daughter and said, "Show me what you'd do with that if somebody was trying to hurt you." The little girl immediately brought it overhead and smashed downward. "Why did you do that?" her father asked. "To hit him over the head," she replied simply.

"My God," thought Lamb. "This is the technique most of our people wind up having to use in the street. If a five-year-old child can do it, what have we got?"

He set about creating a superior stickfighting system for police. His years of studying jiu-jitsu and aikido were called into play, as was his extensive experience on the street. Through it all, Lamb was mindful of the fact that the average Boston patrolman is not trained extensively in the fighting arts and is often older than the person he attempts to arrest, and perhaps not so strong or in as good physical shape.

What emerged was a fighting style equally adaptable to older and younger officers. "Give me ten officers 55 or over, and let me work with them for a day," says Lamb, "and I'll put them against any ten officers under thirty who have been trained intensively for a week in the old FBI and 'standard' methods."

The Lamb method offers several innovative approaches. When going into a tight situation, the officer may draw his baton. He folds his arms, so that the stick in his right hand is concealed behind his left tricep. His arms are folded *loosely*, with the left hand lightly over the right bicep.

If a subject moves in on him, the officer takes a deep step back with his left leg. His left hand rises off his bicep and goes into a block position, fingers open, about three inches from his left temple. Properly executed, the officer's step back has turned his right side toward his opponent, so neither back nor front are offered as targets for blows. The baton remains behind the left tricep.

If the subject continues to move forward, the officer slashes downward, toward the knees. Bringing the baton across the body in this fashion greatly increases its momentum. If the officer

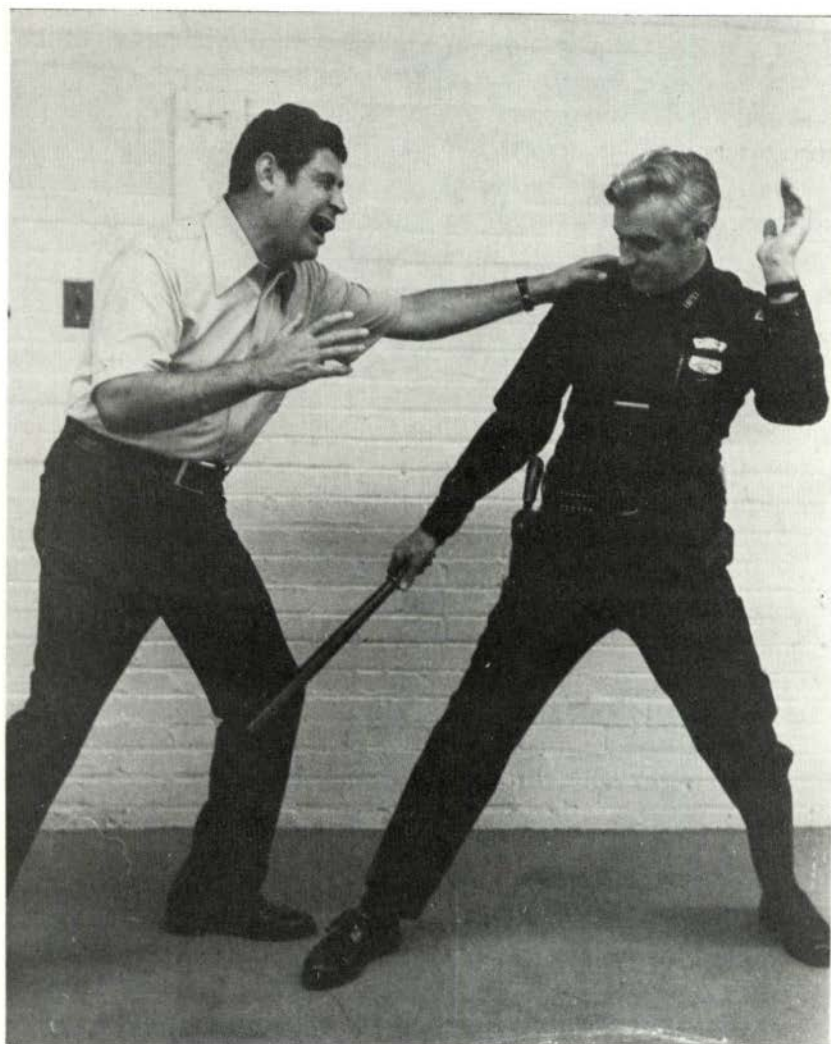


Figure 43. Arthur Lamb, one of the great masters of police baton training, demonstrates several of his principles with a single blow. As suspect moves in, he has taken a deep step back with left leg, drawing suspect both off balance and into baton range. It is virtually impossible for suspect to block this blow to the kneecap. Baton is coming down from Lamb's left armpit out of a low-profile, folded arms position. The other hand is up in a position that protects head or throat and can swing down to protect diaphragm or groin.

feels it necessary, he can follow up by bringing the baton up around in a circular motion and striking to the offender's collarbone.

After the first or second blow, the officer will step back a few feet. As Lamb puts it, this gives the suspect time "to reconsider his negative attitude." This, he explains, is unique to his system, compared to other styles that require the officer to charge in and rain blows on the offender until he is totally incapacitated.

A blow to the collarbone will probably break it. This means that the man's arm and shoulder on that side will drop, causing great pain. He will have to reach under his armpit with his good hand to try to pull his shoulder back into place to reduce the pain. If he attempts to step forward, the broken bone ends will grate on each other, or tear into muscle tissue—nothing that could cause serious internal bleeding, but something that will create extreme pain with each forward step. At this point, he'll usually decide that he's had enough.

The kneecap blow, says Lamb, will seldom actually break the patella.

With a wooden baton, the kneecap won't break in nine out of ten strikes. It will usually cause enough of a contusion that if the man tries to step forward, he will experience great pain, or his leg may give way from under him. This is why I emphasize that the officer should step back after delivering these blows. It gives the attacker a moment to experience the discomfort and realize that any further attack on the policeman will be fruitless. This way, the officer convinces a suspect to give up after one or two blows, instead of having to beat him into submission by continuing the baton attack.

Another advantage of the method is that it is defensive, rather than offensive. If media people are watching the confrontation and taking pictures, the officer appears to be moving backward under the opponent's attack, rather than charging in.

We've had cases where a demonstrator or rioter would punch the policeman in the face, and the officer would re-

spond with a baton blow. When it was captured on film, the media people would delete the rioter's attack and just picture the officer's response, making it look like he was attacking an innocent person with a club. With my method, the officer's step backward forces the attacker to reach toward him, and it is at this point that he strikes with the stick. This way, a TV camera can't show the officer's blow without also showing the suspect's attack, as well. And the tactical advantage is that it pulls the suspect forward, off balance, in such a manner that you can evade his outstretched hands while he has at the same time brought his knees into reach of your baton.

This technique is phase one of the seven that Lamb teaches. The others are primarily variations, i.e. deflecting a kick and then striking to the support leg, or faking in one direction and then striking in the other.

The Lamb method also has a modification of the standard FBI style riot formation. The officers alternate between the method described above and the bayonetlike thrusting motion. The cadre of officers walking forward and chanting "Move!" (coupled with the downward-snapping sweeps of the officers' batons) gives an unruly crowd visions of things to come and causes them to swiftly "reconsider their negative attitudes."

While the method works with almost any conventional stick, Lamb favors a 24 inch hickory baton. "Twenty-four inches gives enough distance to counteract the element of surprise when the officer is attacked," he explains, "while anything longer is too top-heavy to swing effectively with one hand. Hickory is a light-medium wood, giving very fast handling, yet is extremely durable." Lamb doesn't care for plastic batons, citing two reasons: "First, they're too vulnerable to weather conditions. I've seen them warp from being left in the sun in a patrol car, and I've seen them break when taken into a warm room after being out in the cold all night, and then rapped against something. Second, I find them too heavy for fast movement, at least for the majority of veteran officers. The weight of the weapon controls you, rather than you controlling it."

He also teaches the use of the sap with the Lamb method, the basic difference being that the officer steps forward instead of back before he strikes, to compensate for the shortness of the weapon.

There are no jabbing or thrusting techniques in the Lamb method. He feels that they can be too dangerous, since they are directed toward potentially vulnerable points in the body. "An upward jab to the solar plexus won't just take the wind out of a man," he says, "it may also rupture his heart. Jabs to liver, kidneys, or groin may cause permanent injury."

He finds another shortcoming in the two-handed jabs taught in many police baton classes. "They're based on the military technique of bayonet fighting. The trouble is, someone who tries to grab a soldier's bayonet gets his hand cut off, but a violent suspect who grabs the front of a police baton carried in the same way can easily tie up the officer's arms, twist the weapon away, or turn it against the officer with a strike to groin or head."

He likewise has no use for come-alongs or armlocks that use the baton as a fulcrum. "The gun has a purpose," he says. "It's to shoot armed criminals with. You don't turn it around in your hand and hit people with it. It's the same with the baton: its purpose is to strike blows, not to try to wrap people's arms around. Most grappling techniques leave the officer dangerously open. I teach my men to do their come-alongs and hold-downs with their hands, not with sticks."

Lamb doesn't like straps on batons.

That's a hold-over from the military baton tactics. You needed something wrapped around your hand so that when you jabbed into some's midriff, your hand wouldn't slide forward over the instrument. Some officers think they need it to keep hold of their baton, but if they use my method, nobody is going to get their hands on it *to* take it away. The strap can catch on things: more than one officer has been hurt because he reached for his baton when attacked, only to find that it was hanging by its strap on the door handle of his car a block away. And too many officers develop the habit of tying the strap to their baton ring. What are they going

to do when someone throws a punch at them? Say, "Wait a second, I have to untie this leather thong here"?

I asked Lamb about some of the other police impact weapons that are coming into vogue.

Nunchakus, which some police are authorized to carry, are definitely not suitable for police. They are too violent, and too hard to master. The average police officer would have a very difficult time learning to control a set of nunchuks. The yawara sticks, or "judo sticks" or "persuaders," are again a martial arts weapon designed to kill or maim rather than to control and subdue. They work best when striking to the vital parts of the body. I was taught to use a yawara by inserting it into my attacker's mouth and twisting, thus ripping out the entire inside of his mouth. Also, some judo sticks have sharp ends to prevent their being taken away from the officer and can therefore cause severe lacerations when you hit someone with them. *

The Prosecutor baton is based on using old techniques with a stick that has a handle on it. It is great for come-alongs, but I don't think come-alongs are the province of the police baton.

Loaded sap gloves are prohibited in many departments. They work best if a man is using a two-handed FBI-style baton technique, because they prevent his hand from being damaged if the suspect strikes at the baton with a bludgeon. However, one of the basic principles that I teach is that the baton is only for *unarmed* subjects. If the attacker has a weapon, the officer should use his firearm. The officer who thinks he can disarm a knife-man with a baton is kidding himself. With all my training in the baton and the martial arts, I can take a knife away nine out of ten times in the gym. But that tenth time, I'll be killed.

We have the heavy-duty flashlights being quasi-accepted as batons, and the nightsticks with Mace, and all that, but I think that gets away from the basic purpose of the police baton: to strike an unarmed person attacking a police officer,

and to do so in a manner that stops the attack without seriously injuring the suspect.

Lamb emphasizes that an officer using a stick or club should always avoid going to the head.

I've trained over 200 police departments, comprising over ten thousand men. In every class, I ask the officers if they've ever seen a subject subdued with one blow to the head. None of them ever have. What you're doing when you hit a man in the head is first, creating a serious danger of death, and second, you're numbing the one part of the body that can stop him. If you use my method with one or two strikes and step back, he realizes that the thing has gone against him, and the confrontation is over. But if you hit him in the head and put him into a state of shock where he is almost immune to pain, and now enraged beyond reason, the only thing left for you to do is beat him into the ground. This is why so many police brutality charges came about when batons were used the old-fashioned way.

Lamb has made a training film in which a police *surgeon* states that the blows taught in the Lamb method are the most humane. It is useful in courtrooms, and Lamb is available to testify as an expert witness for any officer using his method who is accused of excessive force. Integral to the Lamb method is a quick-release baton holder of his own design.

The method can be learned quickly. A three-hour lecture on baton handling, including films, followed by a one-hour workout usually leaves the officer capable of defending himself well with his baton. It is particularly suited to in-service training of veteran officers, since it does not require a young man's strength or agility (Lamb is 42, which he states is the average age of Boston policemen), and because of the short time needed to master the few moves. Sophisticated methods like those taught to LAPD-men take many hours of basic training with frequent refreshers.

Lamb may not be teaching much longer. "I've been in the Academy for several years," he told me, "and even though it's a satisfying job, it's not what I joined the police department to do. I'm thinking of transferring back to the street."

If he does, Boston toughs who run across him would do well to "reconsider their negative attitudes" before they mess with the slightly built, soft-spoken patrolman.

THE "LAPD" METHOD

The so-called "LAPD" method encompasses the techniques of two of that department's baton instructors, Robert Koga and Takayuki Kubota, both highly accomplished martial artists with extensive background in large-scale police training.

The Koga and Kubota methods are quite similar. Both emphasize one- and two-handed jabbing techniques, and the employment of the baton for armlocks, come-alongs, and other grappling maneuvers.

They also share the fact that they're built around the "LAPD

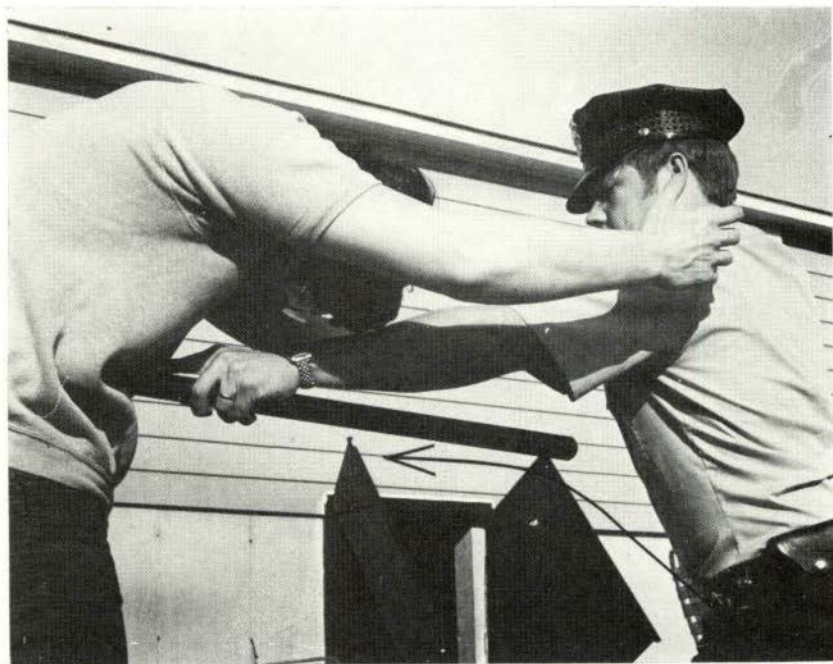


Figure 44. Koga- and Kubota-style draw-to-a-strike is swift, natural, and powerful, though not as potent as some other jabs with the straight stick. This basic technique should be a part of every officer's repertoire of stick-fighting techniques.

baton" (widely known as the Koga Baton), a simple, lightweight 26 inch stick with neither grappling rings nor thong, but only a rubber grommet two thirds of the way up the stick for convenient belt-ring carry. Also emphasized is the draw with the weak hand for instant access. Both are predicated on extensive training with frequent refreshers; Los Angeles Police Department, always in the vanguard of progressive law enforcement, has one of the best and most intensive baton training programs in the world, both basic and in-service.

The LAPD system has many good points: blocking techniques that reinforce the arm and may be applied quickly and instinctively with one hand (see Fig. 44); one of the fastest of all baton draws, whether the stick is drawn to a block or to a strike; and a number of effective, "low profile" maneuvers which effectively break down violent resistance to arrest without creating the appearance of brutality.



Figure 45. Included in the basic straight-stick repertoire is a draw-to-a-block from the weak hand side.

A trademark of Kubota in particular is what I call the “under-hand flip.” It is one of the few blows that may be safely delivered to the groin, which is an ideal target for it. There is little impetus but the weight of the light stick itself and the officer’s wrist action. A deliberately “weak” technique, it will stun when delivered to the groin, without crushing or tearing tissue and leaving the suspect sexually crippled or in danger of death from traumatic shock.

However, because the flip causes the weapon to strike at a moment when it is held only between thumb and forefinger, it can be dangerous for an officer who is not highly skilled and practiced with this technique. If the blow misses, the stick can easily be torn away from the policeman; a forceful flip with a heavy plastic baton may cause the stick to fly out of the hand by its own momentum. *This aspect of the LAPD technique should be used*



Figure 46. Basic two-hand thrust with straight stick can be done bayonet-style as shown or with a “pool-cue” motion. The latter technique has greater speed and quicker recovery but less impact.

only with the light LAPD style baton, though most of the rest of the Koga and Kubota repertoire is quite adaptable to heavier sticks.

The underhand flip, in close quarters, is visible only to the combatants, one aspect of the system's low profile. Another is that the one-handed jab—in which only a small portion of the stick extends outward from the officer's hands, the rest being under the forearm, reinforcing both the limb and the blow—to many observers will look like a simple jab of the hand rather than the blow of a "club" (see Fig. 46).

The one-handed *jabs* of Kubota and Koga are the most effective that can be used with the straight stick, exceeded only by the short jab with the Prosecutor. While a one-handed jab delivered with a standard nightstick held at the knurled base-end can easily injure the officer's wrist upon impact, due to the violent shock when the stick meets resistance, this is unlikely with the LAPD jab, and force is magnified by the fact that the stick is reinforced by the forearm. This also causes the blow to "penetrate" much more effectively.

Leverage is equally enhanced with the two-handed techniques of the LAPD system, especially those used in very close quarters, with the officer's elbows close to his body (Fig. 47). Kubota's backward strike against an attack from the rear is one of the most potent blows in stickfighting (Fig. 48).

Armlocks, etc. are effective, but for the most part, *extremely difficult to put into play*. Kubota's book (*Baton Techniques and Training*, Springfield, Thomas, 1974) shows many techniques that are potentially fatal, and therefore should be used cautiously. Many of his techniques for arm restraint are for "experts only" in that they require hand positions to be changed frequently on the stick, something that demands finely honed timing and deep experience. Any attempt to pin a suspect's arm with a baton-lock should be undertaken only when the suspect has been caught by surprise, or his arm numbed by a blow of the stick. Tak Kubota can easily tie up an able-bodied man in a baton hold—but Tak Kubota is a karate professional and baton instructor. None but the most highly stick-trained street policeman could remotely hope to equal him.

The most effective grappling techniques remain those of the FBI system, of the Prosecutor, and to a lesser extent, of the nunchaku.

Footwork is emphasized heavily in the LAPD system. This is

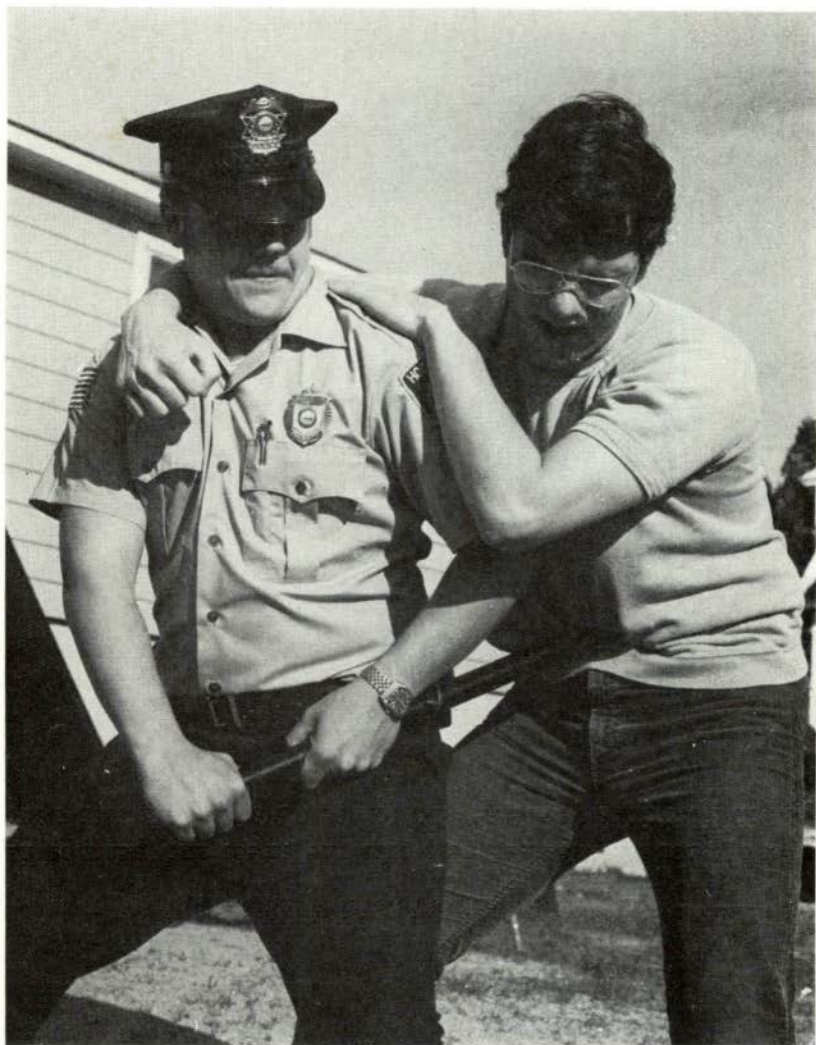


Figure 47. One advantage of the standard baton ring is that when attacked from behind the officer can deliver extremely powerful two-hand jab to assailant's midsection without removing stick from belt.



Figure 48a. A variation of Koga straight-stick method is demonstrated in this sequence. From the low-profile ready position the officer can block or attack.

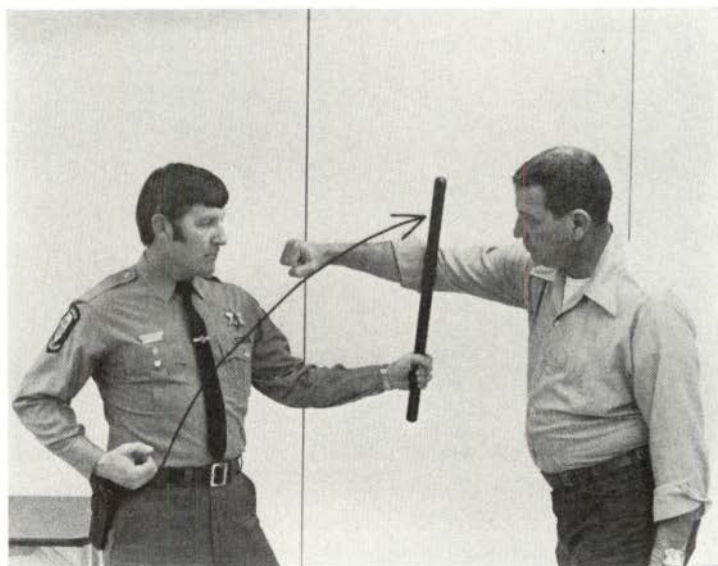


Figure 48b. The officer can slash with either hand to deflect punches.



Figure 48c. He can use Koga-style two-hand jab.

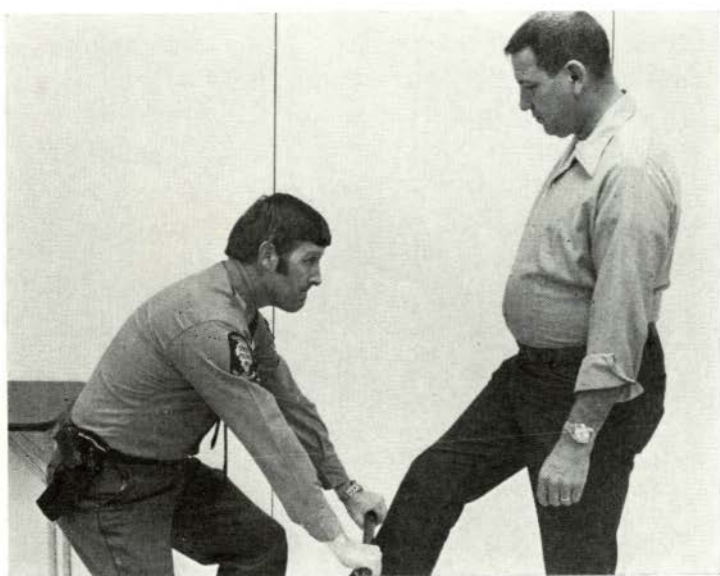


Figure 48d. He can instantly block a kick.

one reason that it is most effective in departments like LAPD, which devote substantial time to impact weapons training.

Even for the officer who does not wish to ascribe completely to the tenets of Koga and Kubota, their systems have much that is of value with any type of stick, in any stickfighting situation. Even the officer who chooses eclectically to take the best of each fighting system and adapt it to his own use, and the officer who has limited time to practice, would do well to adopt the one- and two-handed jabs and the quick weak-hand draw of the LAPD system. These techniques integrate easily and naturally with those from other impact weapons systems.

Koga and Kubota differ on techniques; Koga's is the more simplified (and has been trimmed even further of late, with some of the techniques in his early book having been dropped in his current teachings); Kubota is more into subtleties and complex maneuvers. Of the two, Koga's is by far the more adaptable style for police, and the most influential, though the officer who is into impact weapons will want to be familiar with both. Koga is also notable for some of the best insights into the psychology of facing the violent offender, and of psyching oneself up to coping with the heavier aspects of law enforcement.

THE PARAMETERS OF LETHAL AND “LESS LETHAL” FORCE

WHEN A STREET PUNK attacks a cop with a club, it's assault with a deadly weapon. Yet some police academy instructors tell their trainees that using that same instrument against an unarmed suspect is merely an exercise of prerogative.

It is and it isn't, and if it is, no one who understands the reality of street law enforcement can say it's wrong. The citizen who uses a club to defend himself against a bar-fighter must use only enough force to drive the person away or stop the assault. A cop, by the very nature of his duties, has to do more than that: He must overwhelm his opponent to the extent that the latter is subdued and ready for shipment to the nearest lockup.

In real life, a vicious brawler has to be hit harder to be subdued than to be merely driven out of punching range.

I have witnessed police self-defense instructors who told their rookies, and even their veteran in-service students, "If a man even reaches for your badge or sticks his finger against your chest, he's committing assault on a police officer, and you're justified in using your baton to club him into submission."

Sometimes, in some places, you can get away with that. You get away with it because the people who pick fights with cops tend to be ignorant punks with little sociofinancial power, people who are unlikely to take you effectively to court.

Contrast that doctrine with the one that governs the use of *deadly* force in self-defense: "You or another innocent party must be in immediate and unavoidable danger of death or grave bodily harm" if you are to be justified in taking a criminal's life. The few remaining state statutes that allow the peace officer to kill to terminate pursuit of a non-deadly felon can be disregarded; the trend nationwide is to eliminate the right of police to kill to prevent a felon's escape if life does not hang in the balance.

There is every reason to believe that this trend will soon be universal policy.

The risky part of this is deciding where a weapon the police consider non-lethal or less-lethal stands when statutes consider the same instrument to be *fully* lethal when wielded by someone who doesn't have a badge.

The impact weapon cannot be truly compared with other less-lethal weapons, that is, with chemical agents. Several deaths are on record from CN, the mildest tear gas; CS is possibly even more dangerous in some respects, though few if any deaths due to its inhalation have been recorded. The majority of CN deaths involve (a) victims with heart or pulmonary conditions who were unable to tolerate the impairment of the breathing process and sometimes (b) abuse by officers of the CN substance, as in cases where officers held a suspect in a headlock and sprayed large amounts of CN aerosol directly into his mouth and nose.

The baton is on different grounds. Though there are no complete statistics available, few would doubt that more suspects have died over the years from nightstick or blackjack blows than from being "Maced."

The stick will normally kill the same way the Mace-type substance will: only when it has been grossly overapplied or when the subject has an unusually weak tolerance for the type of trauma it inflicts. In the same way an asthmatic can succumb from inhaling CN, a cardiac patient with hardening of the arteries who is choked out by a baton hold applied to his carotids can die from heart attack, stroke, or ruptured blood vessels.

The real question is, "*When does a cop use his impact weapon,*" and it cannot be answered categorically. Local differences in theory and training are too far apart. The officer who has been instructed to use his stick only against multiple opponents or those armed with clubs or knives stands to be successfully prosecuted for excessive force if he injures a barehanded suspect. The officer who has been trained to use his stick against anyone who so much as grabs at his badge has the advantage of having acted in good faith in accordance with what he was taught by the government agency that employs him.

There is a dearth of classic cases in the legal library's citations. Justifiable homicide with a gun is easier to determine, because there are so many more definitive court precedents. Injuries inflicted with the baton constitute a grey area: more will depend on surrounding circumstances than in almost any other type of excessive force charge levelled against the police officer.

You have perhaps realized by now that you aren't going to get a definite guideline, because none exists.

My advice to the police weapons instructor or command officer reading this would be to consult the departmental legal counsel or the city, county, or state prosecuting attorney's office. Send them a letter that states your uncertainty over the status of the law, and ask for definitive guidelines as to when and how the police impact weapon may be used to subdue a suspect.

Their reply should be circulated verbatim to all officers in the department. It may not be a 100 percent legal guarantee of safety for an officer who acts within these guidelines and is still charged with excessive force, but it performs the important function of establishing good faith on the part of the officer who swings the club. He can truthfully state in court that he acted on the basis of guidelines made known to him by the highest legal authorities in the hierarchy in which he works, and this alone may be enough to absolve him from civil, personal liability. The suit may then become a legal assault against the department, and the "doctrine of sovereign immunity" may or may not win out against the plaintiffs. But being able to quote a highly authoritative source when the officer says, "I did what I was told I could and should do," will frequently soften the blow of an excessive force charge and may ward it off entirely.

The individual officer at the street level may feel uncomfortable taking the above approach. If the county attorney, or whoever, calls the chief about the patrolman's letter, the officer may be called on the carpet and asked, "Since when do you have the right to go over your supervisors' heads and try to establish department policy?"

Another danger exists, which isn't as paranoiac as it may sound at first. The officer who has bought this book for himself has

probably done so because he works the street and perhaps has been in situations where he had to use his stick and wasn't sure of the outcome next time. He is the individual most likely to use his stick again, and perhaps the best candidate for an excessive force charge, however unjust. The opposition attorney may well put him on the stand next time, wave a copy of his letter, and ask, "Why were you the only officer in the department who wanted the attorney general to tell you it was all right to hit people with your baton under certain circumstances? How long did you plan the set-up in which you beat up my client? The very fact that you *wrote* this letter is obvious proof that you are obsessed with the idea of hitting people with your nightstick. . . ."

An instructor or superior officer can get away with the simple letter outlined above that asks for a definite guideline on baton use. A line officer who does the same may possibly get himself into more trouble than he hoped the correspondence could someday get him out of.

Degree of force permissible in making various kinds of arrest is something that is determined at the state level. The statute book of your state is the first thing you want to consult. Next, head for a good legal library; big cities usually have them, and there is a state legal library in virtually every state capitol. Spend a day or so there. While these facilities are used almost exclusively by attorneys and law students, they are open to the public, and the librarians will help you find what you're looking for.

The best starting reference is the complete *Warren on Homicide*. This gives the best and quickest grounding in the concepts of equal and necessary force, disparity of force, and related concepts that will, in the courtroom, apply just as much to the use of batons in the line of duty as to the use of service revolvers.

With the legal librarian's assistance, you can look up relevant case citations. Begin with those in your state, since that is obviously the most important, but *don't stop* there: if you're sued and the proceedings go into superior courts, decisions from other states will be brought in as precedents.

If a trip to a state or university legal library is not feasible for you, talk with your own family or police union attorney. He

probably has *Warren on Homicide* and most certainly has the right citation references in his own office library. Ask for reading privileges, and after you've digested what he's got on the bookshelves, ask him if he'll spend a little time with you explaining your questions. He'll probably do it for free. Committed professionals like to dispense their understanding to people who can use their advice meaningfully, and a good attorney will sit down for a short time with a cop and explain what he needs to know, just as a good doctor will volunteer his time to train ambulance attendants in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Another excellent source is the chief self-defense instructor at the nearest State Police academy. This individual works rather closely with the state's lawmakers and is paid to stay up to date on the kind of legal decisions and judicial climates that we're talking about. When you talk to him, however, get references and citations; if he is moved up and/or out of his position between the time you speak with him and the time you have to use his advice in a hearing room, your memory of the conversation may not be enough. If he is agreeable to committing something to writing, by all means ask him for a letter explaining what he has told you about the parameters of using the force of the police impact weapon in your region. If things do come down to the courtroom, incidentally, he will generally be considered an expert witness who can testify in your behalf, or for an officer you have trained who has done what you told him he could and should do and is still being charged with going beyond where he should have.

We could talk about grey areas, and thin ice, and narrow ledges, but it would all come down to the fact that no real, broadly accepted guideline exists insofar as the policeman's use of his impact weapon in controlling violent or potentially violent suspects. He cannot make his own rules; what he must do is learn for himself what rules there are in his state, his community, and his judicial system, all of which may judge him when he draws his baton and thus wields the symbol of his profession as a keeper of the peace against those who choose to violently disturb it.

Chapter V

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

CARRYING THE IMPACT WEAPON

In the Police Vehicle

ANY IMPACT WEAPON 18 inches or longer presents a problem for the mobile patrol officer who spends much of his duty tour getting in and out of his squad car. The cruiser driver constantly slams his door shut on his stick; the man in the shotgun seat finds himself having to use his left hand to sweep the baton up parallel to his leg as he sits down, a gesture that is awkward to perform in a hurry and amusingly reminiscent of a prim lady smoothing her skirts as she takes a seat.

There are two alternatives. First, the officer may take the baton out of its belt holder each time he enters the squad car and put it back on each time he steps out, but this creates its own set of problems. When he emerges from the vehicle and thrusts the baton securely into his belt ring, observing citizens, logically enough, see his routine movements as an ominous and threatening gesture. More important from a tactical standpoint, slipping the stick into the ring distracts the officer's attention at a moment when he should be concentrating totally on the situation he has stopped for. Second, the majority of American police simply leave the full-size impact weapon in the vehicle, breaking it out only during emergencies. The problem with this is that a violent confrontation may not be predictable: The officer who leaves the baton in the car when he makes a routine stop may miss it sorely when the subject turns out to be a cop-fighter.

This situation is one of the stronger arguments for the police nunchaku, and for the short billies, saps, and blackjacks that are compact enough to be worn constantly with no discomfort or awkwardness of movement. It is an equally strong argument for departments to issue or authorize two impact weapons, one to be



Figure 49. An unconventional method of carrying impact weapon "in the vehicle." Boston mounted patrolmen all carry batons behind saddles. Mounted police are an invaluable asset in riot control situations.

worn constantly, and another, high performance stick to be available when the officer is going into situations he knows to be potentially violent.

Nevertheless, the majority of radio car officers will continue to

carry their primary impact weapons in the vehicle most of the time, drawing them only when they feel superior, non-lethal physical force will imminently be needed. Such officers should follow these maxims.

KEEP THE STICK IN ONE ACCESSIBLE PLACE! There will never be time to fumble under the car seat for the baton, nor to open the trunk and withdraw it when going into a barfight or domestic disturbance. The job requires that the officer respond with all possible haste; he'll look foolish and lose valuable time searching for his stick.

KEEP IT WHERE NON-POLICE OCCUPANTS WILL NOT HAVE ACCESS TO IT! It is common for officers to allow traffic violators, drunk drivers, and some varieties of "street people" in the front seat of the police car with them as they fill out preliminary reports. When an apparently harmless drunk turns vicious, the officer doesn't want him to have a club within reach. Yet this is the case if the stick is on the dashboard, under a front-seat headrest, or on the seat next to the officer.

There are safer places to put the impact weapon, while keeping it accessible. A Monadnock door carrier or equivalent will keep the baton instantly accessible to the driver, yet out of reach of anyone in the passenger seat. In some model cars, the stick can be kept between the driver's door and the edge of the seat, held in place by the seat adjustment lever. Prosecutor batons and Koga-style batons with the rubber grommets are especially secure in this position. Since the shapes of both sticks and seat adjustment latches vary, the officer should make sure that he can carry *his* baton in *his* squad car without the possibility of a carelessly watched suspect in the back seat getting hold of it.

The headrest carry is convenient but has a number of little known disadvantages. First, the headrest must be kept down: an officer who wants maximum comfort is liable to put his stick under the passenger-side headrest, where it will be more accessible to a suddenly violent suspect in the front seat than to the officer himself. Also, the pressure of the headrest, combined with intense heat when the car is left out in the sun for a period of time, has been known to warp some plastic batons into a shape resembling the vital parts of a rocking chair.

One exception to these safety hazards is the Prosecutor baton. Carried with the handle on the *left* side of the driver's headrest, it cannot possibly be grabbed by anyone anywhere else in the car, yet it is in a natural position for the officer to quickly and smoothly remove it as he steps out.

Another option exists for officers who carry shotguns in "boot" cases that run across the lower edge of the front seat. A baton kept there (*above* the shotgun) is handy to get out and doesn't interfere with the removal of the shotgun itself. The stick will not mar the finish of the gun, though the sharp metal corners of the shotgun will soon scar up both wooden and plastic batons.

On the Person, In Uniform

It is unfortunately true that longer sticks are both more effective and more uncomfortable. The ideal 22-26 inch length can be awkward for many officers to carry constantly on foot patrol.

In some parts of the country, it is routine and traditional to carry the full-length stick on the duty belt at all times. Elsewhere, though, the officer carrying a baton on routine patrol will often be chided, "Hey, I didn't know we were expecting a riot!"

There are two methods of carry: the ubiquitous baton ring, and breakaway units typified by the Lamb-style baton carrier sold by Smith & Wesson (S&W).

Described elsewhere, the Lamb "speed rig" has many advantages for the officer who carries a straight stick. The weapon is almost totally inaccessible to opponents, and a suspect who has grabbed the baton while on the belt and is jerking the officer around by it can be "cut loose" with a flick of the officer's finger as he releases the whole unit from his belt. It can be drawn from quickly with either hand and, with the cross-draw strong hand release, comes out in a powerful swing directed toward the suspect's legs. Annoying "side-slap" when walking is reduced. The design discourages "headhunting" blows.

Lost, however, are the quick, surprise weak-hand draws of the Koga and Kubota methods, in which the stick is carried in a belt-hung ring. Most rings also snap on and off the belt, while the S&W breakaway unit requires the duty belt to be removed and the carrier slid on. Monadnock makes a carrier with a ring that re-

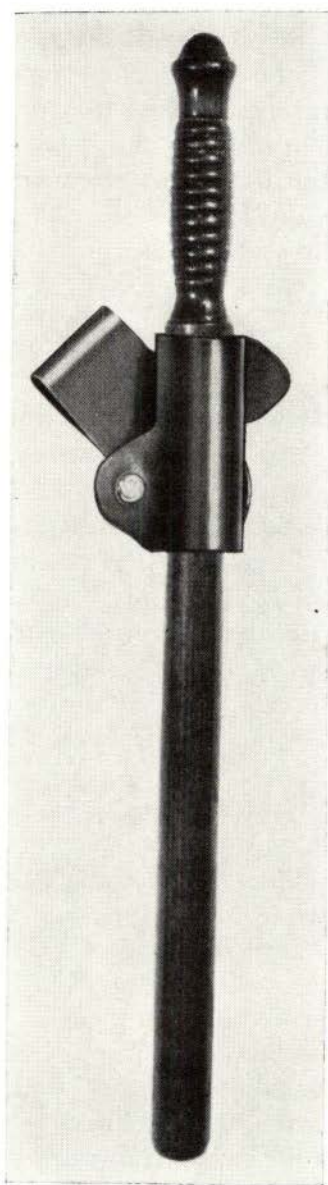


Figure 50. Lamb designed breakaway baton carrier. Courtesy of Smith & Wesson.

mains outward from the belt when the stick is drawn, allowing a one-handed return of the weapon to the belt, by feel, without taking one's eyes off the suspect. It is, in my opinion, the baton ring of choice, and should be ordered in the quickly removable double-snap version. The same company makes a breakaway rig similar to S&W's Lamb carrier, but there have been some failures with the design, and the Lamb-style by S&W should be the choice if the policeman opts for a high-security breakaway baton holder.

Choice of belt-carrying system will depend on the stick-fighting system the user favors, but Monadnock seems to be the best choice in rings, S&W the best in a breakfront style. Policemen of average height or less often find that a 24 inch stick hangs to knee level and impairs their motion when running. I prefer to carry sticks of this length, including the Prosecutor, with the stiff-looped baton ring inverted, that is, with the ring at the top edge of the duty belt instead of the bottom. In this way, the stick clears kneecaps and car doors much better, swings around less when walking, and is every bit as fast for a Koga or Kubota style draw, or a Prosecutor draw-to-a-block.

The nunchaku has always been difficult to carry. It will snag in the conventional ring, and because of its length, will often protrude awkwardly from the sap pocket. Some officers sling them over their holsters, a dangerous practice that impairs access to both the gun and the sticks. Monadnock makes the PN-H, a plastic swivel nunchaku holder, but the several I have tested have proven unsatisfactory because the swivelled section tends to give under the weight of the top-heavy nunchuks when carried, as they should be, butt upwards. Any exertion on the officer's part can cause the swivel to turn in a manner that will drop the sticks on the ground, and they are not kept in a constant position. I would like to see this holder modified with a snap-fastener that would allow the officer to solidly fix the swivel in one of two or three positions, like the better quality swivel holsters for service guns. Until then, a deepened and reinforced side pants pocket is the best choice for uniform carry. Some martial arts supply



Figure 51a. PR-24 is normally drawn to a strike from this handle-back position.

houses make excellent "nunchaku holsters," but none currently are suitable in appearance for police uniform wear.

Worn undercover (the nunchaku is the most potent of concealable impact weapons) the best carry is inside the waistband

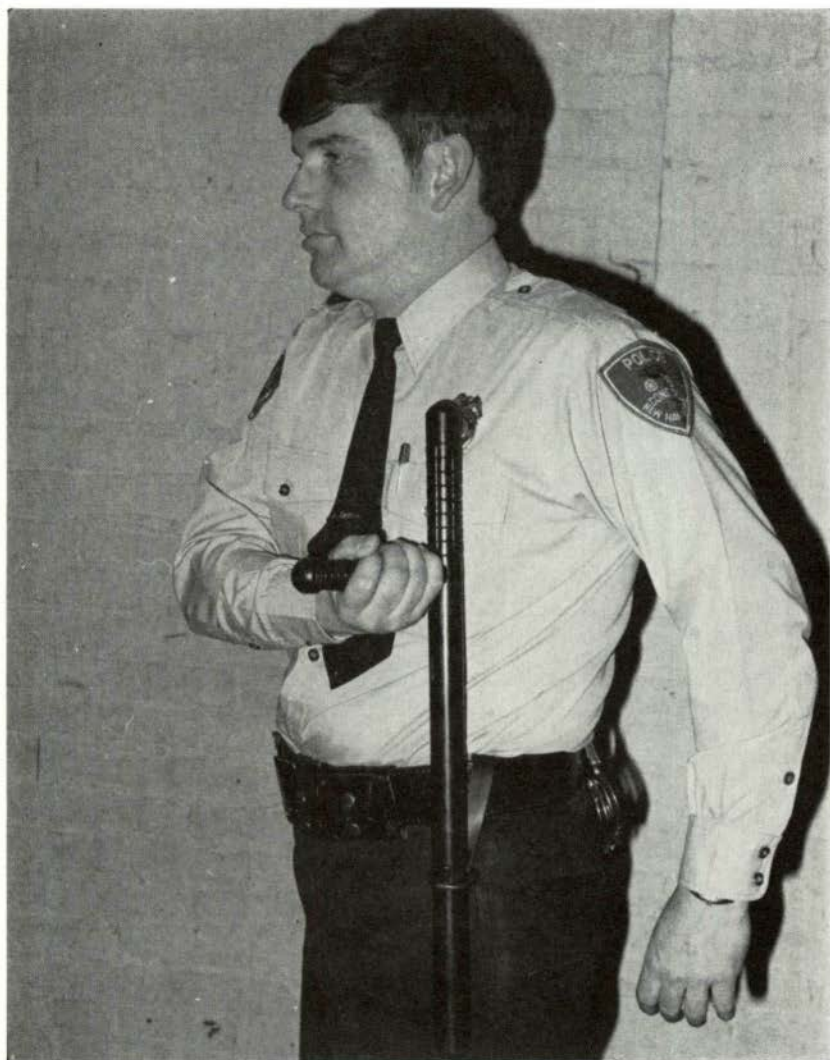


Figure 51b. It can also be drawn to a block from handle-forward carry, which is more comfortable when worn constantly in the patrol car.

with the twin butts pointing forward, and one further out of the belt than the other. This allows a super fast draw-and-strike that hits with tremendous force and takes an attacker quite by surprise. It is equally effective on the strong or weak side and should be carried opposite the sidearm. It is quite concealable

and, with a little practice, very comfortable. Wear trousers with ban-roll waistbands, and you won't have to worry about the sticks slipping around.

Some detectives who carry nunchuks but aren't terribly familiar with them sling one stick down a coat sleeve and leave the other swinging free inside, with the cord securing the weapon in the armpit of the jacket. This not only binds the arm, but makes for a slow and feeble draw-and-strike. It should be avoided but watched for, since a lot of street people carry nunchakus in just this way.

Ironically, though the Monadnock PN-H holder is not terribly functional for the nunchuks it was designed to carry, it is perhaps the best carrying system for an "impact weapon" the company doesn't produce: the heavy duty, "D"-cell flashlight. The size is just right, and the flashlight switch clears the plastic ring and won't accidentally flick on the way a "C"-cell flashlight will when carried in the baton ring. (Note: the officer who does choose to carry a "C"-cell torch as combination light and impact weapon should take advantage of the optional rubber grommets, as offered on Safariland's Baton-Lite series of Kel-Lites, to prevent that accidental switch turn-on.)

The PN-H, unlike most leather flashlight holders, can be drawn from silently and with maximum speed, as there are no snaps to release. Since the protruding part of the instrument is a flashlight's short head rather than a nunchaku's long butt ends, the light can't fall out by accident and will always be in the same place for a quick, instinctive "draw by feel." Even when the policeman takes a spill, the combination of the swivel and the preponderance of weight *under* the retaining ring will usually keep the flashlight from falling out. Since the semisoft plastic ring retains its shape, the officer can quickly and easily return the flashlight to the belt by feel without averting his eyes from a suspect.

The yawara stick is best carried in pocket or waistband. Its nominal girth makes the latter position quite comfortable, and a rubber band looped snugly around it will prevent the "persuader" from sliding down out of reach.

The Prosecutor should only be carried in the special Monadnock ring with a vertical stud that prevents the handle from sliding around, whether the officer chooses to carry the stick in the handle-forward position for draw-to-a-block, or the handle-rear position for draw-to-a-spin-strike.

The officer who carries a standard stick in a standard ring will need something to hold the baton in place vertically, either a thong or a grommet. The pros and cons of the thong are discussed elsewhere. Rubber grommets take nothing away from the handling of the stick and are completely secure. The officer who wishes to acquire a grommet for his present straight stick can simply buy a black rubber crutch-tip in a drugstore and cut out the end.

Saps and blackjacks are normally carried in the hip pocket or the special sap pocket sewn into most standard police uniform trousers. Some patrolmen like to carry a small one in the deep side pocket of a winter reefer coat. They can have it in their hand when confronting a suspect whose potential belligerence is uncertain; the officer appears to be standing casually with hands in pockets, yet can bring his impact weapon quickly into play.

Belt Carriers for Impact Weapons

While saps, jacks, yawaras and similar compact weapons may be carried in the hip or "sap" pocket, the police impact weapon is normally slung on the belt. Standard is a metal ring hanging from a leather loop.

Unless the officer is required to carry a cross-draw holster, the baton ring is normally on his left side if he is right-handed, vice-versa if he's left-handed. This carry lends itself to the Kubota and Koga style draw-to-a-block or draw-to-a-strike techniques with the weak hand. The Prosecutor, worn in a similar carrier but with a stud on the ring to keep the handle from turning, can be carried with the handle toward the rear for a draw-to-a-strike motif, or with handle forward, lending itself to drawing-to-a-block. The latter will wear more comfortably.

Nunchaku sticks are best carried in the Monadnock nunchaku holder; while not ideal, this unit keeps the sticks in a position

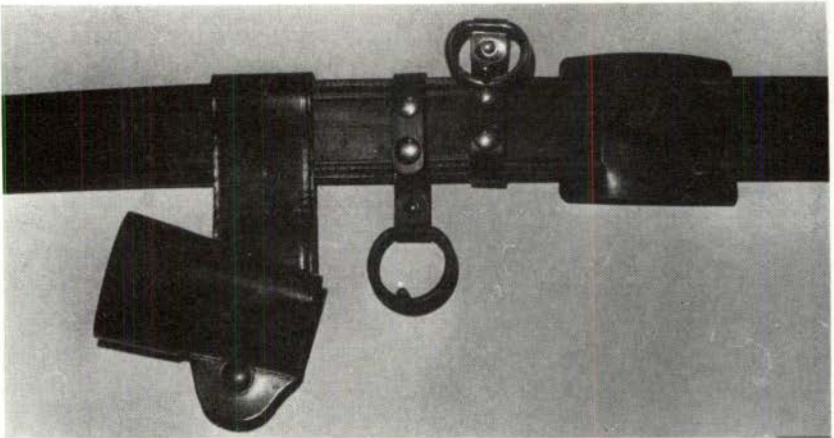


Figure 52. Impact weapon belt carriers: (left to right) excellent breakaway style designed by Lamb and produced by Smith & Wesson Leather; snap-on Monadnock with stud for PR-24 handle (snap-on feature turns baton ring into an extra belt keeper)—similar unit can be inverted so a 24 inch baton won't interfere with leg motion yet can be drawn as quickly; special "Ayoob style" for PR-24 available from Monadnock on special order—for straight baton the standard unit is simply inverted; Monadnock's nunchaku carrier is at its best carrying a Kel-Lite police flashlight in D-cell size, permitting secure carry and instant, silent draw.

quickly accessible to either hand. Unfortunately, those produced to date are too loose in the swivel; running or other activity may cause the nunchuks to turn upside down and fall out. The Monadnock nunchaku holder does, however, make an ideal "silent-draw" belt carrier for long "D"-cell flashlights.

The conventional "nightstick" is normally carried on a baton ring. This arrangement is excellent if the baton is to be used Kubota style; a cross-draw, however, encourages the officer to swing his stick up, out, and down in an arc resembling that of a samurai's sword as he beheads an opponent. This instinctive "headhunting" aspect of the baton ring was one factor that led Arthur Lamb to design the breakfront baton carrier we'll examine shortly.

An item to avoid is the *slip-on* baton ring, sewn in a permanent loop, which can be detached only by removing the belt. If a cop-

fighter grabs the "holstered" baton, he has great leverage with which to pull the policeman off his feet. Better is the kind that is snap-detachable: If someone is jerking the policeman backwards by grabbing his baton, the officer need only unsnap the baton ring with a flick of his finger. He regains his balance, and the offender very possibly loses his.

This breakaway feature is an important part of the Lamb baton carrier design. The tactic, however, poses an interesting question: since the felon is now armed with a deadly weapon (the police impact weapon can easily become a murderous bludgeon in irresponsible hands), the officer must now draw his side-arm. If he is forced to shoot the suspect, the admittedly remote possibility exists that he might be accused of furnishing the suspect with a weapon so he would have an excuse to blast him. Perhaps the court will believe you when you tell them simply that the suspect tore the club from your belt.

The unique Lamb design has two other excellent features that have endeared it to police across the country and abroad. First, it is virtually "snatchproof" in the same sense as the Bianchi or Bucheimer-Clark breakfront holster: only a person familiar with its use will be likely to extract the weapon from it. There is a thumb-break similar to the safety straps used on many police holsters, located inconspicuously between the belt and the baton on the Lamb carrier. While the officer can release it instinctively and instantaneously, a cop-fighter most probably cannot.

What may be the most important design aspect of the Lamb carrier, currently produced by Smith & Wesson Leather, is that it is virtually impossible to draw the weapon out through the top as with a standard baton ring. Lamb's intention was to make it difficult for an officer reacting through reflex to swing the club at the suspect's head. The snap-out design, instead, lends itself ideally to a downward sweep across the opponent's shin or kneecap. An added bonus is that the slight resistance of the baton carrier means that the stick comes out with a little more momentum. This is important with the light hickory batons recommended by Lamb and sold with this unit by Smith & Wesson.

Many officers wearing the Lamb-style outfit also report that the

baton tends to bounce around less on the hip during walking than it would with a standard ring, since the leather is snugly wrapped around a few inches of the stick. The Lamb/Smith & Wesson breakaway baton carrier will fit many other sticks, including some heavy plastic ones, and is perhaps the ideal system for the officer who cross-draws his baton with his strong hand and does not use Kubota or Koga stickfighting methods.

WHEN TO DRAW THE IMPACT WEAPON

Departmental policies on use and show of force vary, and where they do exist in definite form, should be followed by the officer who wishes to keep his pension. If he feels those rules are too restrictive, his only alternative is to approach danger situations with extra caution and hope that he manages to eventually collect that pension.

There are, likewise, regional differences in the feelings of the public and the law enforcement community toward officers handling batons. Few Californians would raise an eyebrow if they looked in their rear-view mirror during a traffic stop and saw a lawman thrusting his baton into his belt as he stepped from his patrol car. They know it is standard procedure. But that driver's cousin in Iowa would be appalled to see a trooper there do the same and would probably write in anger to the State Patrol commandant: "Your antagonistic trooper made a threatening gesture with his baton as he got out of his car, as if I were a common criminal!"

To say that in the absence of strict guidelines the officer should use his own judgment sounds, no pun intended, like a cop-out. But the fact is that too-strict rules either way can jeopardize the officer's control over a situation that he might be able to handle peaceably if he plays it by ear.

Consider the ubiquitous bar-brawl call. Few civilian review boards fault an officer who walked into a possible free-for-all with a stick in his hand. Yet there are times when his walking in so armed will be taken as a show of force by a certain type of clientele and make them more antagonistic toward the officer than they might be otherwise. This phenomenon is more likely

to occur, however, at private parties and residential disturbance scenes than in tough-neighborhood bar beefs.

The concept of escalation of force is often misinterpreted. The officer should not think that he has to wait to see what degree of force an opponent is going to exert before he decides what level *he'll* use; the doctrine is "*Sufficient and reasonable*" force, *not* "equal" force. To digress for a moment, a baton might constitute *equal* force against a brawler with a sawed-off broomstick or heavy cane, but it is not *sufficient* because it does not necessarily intimidate or overwhelm the opponent, nor is it even *reasonable* in the sense that the officer's job is to decisively control violent lawbreakers, not engage them in contests of equal combat.

Indeed, the officer who is forced to use his nightstick to cripple the brawler with the cane might find himself in civil court. The attorney for the plaintiff will probably ask, "Officer X, why didn't you simply draw your gun and intimidate my client by a show of force? Why did you agree to fight him on his terms when you must have realized there was little chance that he'd put down *his* stick in the face of *yours*? You wanted an excuse to hit him with your stick, didn't you?"

Let's go back to the officer responding to the tavern brawl dispatch. He knows his beat, knows the type of people who frequent the place in progress, and has a good idea beforehand whether he's going to be jumped by a bunch of mean drunks in a gin mill or whether he's breaking up a couple of tipsy insurance salesmen in a suburban lounge. This will help to govern his actions.

On the whole, it is generally best to have the baton in hand, either drawn or in a ready-to-draw position if he uses Koga or Kubota techniques. Such an officer can quickly bring his baton from its left-side hang with his left hand, yet his condition of readiness is inconspicuous.

If he will be whipping out the stick in a cross-draw mode, he may as well have the stick out. First, placing his hand over on the stick will create every bit as menacing an impression as having it drawn, and it will be much more difficult to bring into play if

necessary. Second, the drawn stick is actually easier to conceal, either down beside or behind the leg, or behind the left tricep in the arms-folded approach that is part of the Lamb system.

Oddly enough, there is one psychological advantage of going in with drawn stick, apart from the obvious intimidation value. If the officer decides that a gesture of good faith on his part may be helpful in quieting the potentially explosive tension on the scene, the simple act of putting the stick *back on the belt* can have an amazing calming effect. If the officer is trying to create the feeling of "Hey, guys, there's really no problem here, and I don't want to hurt anybody," that thrusting home of the stick into the baton ring seems to say, "I have no intention of hitting anybody; these are all-right guys, not scumbags like I thought they might be."

Such an approach obviously puts the officer on dangerous ground, since the subjects may very well *be* "scumbags" who know what they are and are happy living out the role. For this reason, the officer who does make this little "defusing" gesture should keep his left hand on the baton while it's on the belt until he's *sure* he's safe: A quick Kubota-style draw will arm him again, and he'll now have the advantage of catching any sudden cop-jumper by surprise. Even the Lamb baton carrier can be drawn from in this fashion: it's rather like pulling a gun from a cross-draw holster with your weak hand. The stick comes out in an upward arc to your left, and the opponent's elbow or jawline is your target of choice.

This ploy of holstering the baton to show good faith is best employed in domestic disturbances, not heated civil disobedience situations or facedowns with hardcore barfighters, since the latter are more likely to take it as a gesture of weakness, an advantage they can and will press. If the officer feels that "the good faith number" is the way to go in a given instance, it will be made even more effective if he holsters a stick they haven't seen yet.

The concealed stick approach also gives the officer the tactical advantage of surprise and of drawing a belligerent suspect into a more controllable range before he makes his fight-stopping move. In addition to the subtle carry-in methods described above,

Lon Anderson teaches a technique that works with his Prosecutor and with Kubota-style straight stickfighting, as well. The officer unzips his jacket, and places the long end of his baton in his left front trouser pocket. His controlling right hand conceals the main body of the stick straight up inside his jacket, while the lower end does not protrude. With his arms folded, he gives little impression of menace, yet can bring the stick quickly into play, and from an (probably) unpredictable angle.

MULTIPLE, UNARMED OPPONENTS

Here we have one of the most trying situations the officer can face in the field. There's an occasional officer who's big enough and good enough that he can count on being able to take a pair of unarmed assailants, especially if he has a definite physical advantage. But what about a barful of brawlers? The biggest, meanest karate jock is short on both brains and survival instinct if he tries to take three or more with his hands, even two if the attackers are physically even with him, or more formidable.

This, many say, is what the impact weapon is for, the classic purpose of the weapon that bridges the gap between hand and gun. They are right . . . sometimes.

A very good man can *sometimes* use a full-size stick to ward off several attackers. This is especially true of the rare officer who carries a Prosecutor or nunchaku. But let us be clear: By force of numbers, the gang of opponents will eventually come in on his blind side, or perhaps one of them will risk a broken arm to tie up his weapon long enough for his accomplices to jump the officer and drag him to the floor for a stomping—a stomping that will be all the more vicious and vengeful now that the officer has inflicted hurt on some of the members and perhaps embarrassed them in front of their peers by holding several of them at bay single-handed.

Just as the impact weapon is a poor defense against knife or iron pipe, so does it have shortcomings against multiple, unarmed assailants. And those shortcomings are much the same.

Perhaps when the officer walked into the scene, his primary objective was keeping the peace, his secondary intention was bring-

ing in the violators. But at the moment the gang turns on him, the priority that moves to the forefront is *survival*.

When the mob moves in on the officer, he has several choices, none of them palatable. He may draw his stick and try to face them down, or back them off by decking the ringleader. Nice if you can do it; but if your psychological ploy *doesn't* work, you have no time to resort to anything else.

If you can pick out the ringleader, and he conveniently positions himself so you can drop him writhing with a swift baton swing, circumstances will have fallen luckily in your favor—but don't assume that this will cow his followers into submission.

Years of watching TV have taught many young officers that the "bullies are basically cowards" theory means that calling their bluff backs them off. One recalls the cartoons of childhood, in which some frail little scout finally stands up to the beefy bully and sends him bawling home with a sharp left hook. One may also remember the good little scouts who tried it in real life and wound up in the hospital. Cowards the bullies may be, but their cowardice serves them well in that it allows them only to jump people they're sure they can take.

This translates to the gang mentality. Let us say that five gang members are advancing toward you across a barroom floor, led by a chunky chief we'll call Rocky. Now, Rocky isn't their leader for nothing: he's probably a formidable brawler. But perhaps you're good with your baton, and Rocky has had one too many, and you catch him a fearsome swing that drops him like a sack of potatoes.

Are the other four going to back off in awe? Perhaps they're going to look at each other with puzzled eyes and say, "Jeez, Rocky must be a candy-ass. How could we follow a nerd like that? Let's be good, and maybe this hero policeman will let us join the Police Athletic League and change our miserable lives!"

Will they react that way? Perhaps. And perhaps Santa Claus will come down the tavern chimney and trample them with his reindeer, and cry "Hohoho, Officer Friendly, I like your sense of restraint. In keeping with the spirit of Christmas, you know. Hohoho."

A more likely response is an attack on the officer, by the followers, with doubled savagery, because Rocky didn't get to be leader by leaving any doubt that he might be candy-ass; Rocky is chief because his followers have an enormous respect for him and dote on his favor. They don't want him to wake up and look at them and ask why didn't they take care of him after that cop sucker-punched him with a club. They want to be the first one to *get* the cop who got Rocky, and they are perfectly willing to risk broken heads to do that.

The downed officer is likely to be relieved of his service revolver, and it is not improbable that in the frenzy of the assault he will be shot with it. His sacrificing himself to the gang creates a greater danger than if he had simply walked out. Yet I have posed such situations in test questions during weapons seminars and been shocked to find that nearly one half of the officers would answer, "If I was in this position, I'd try to fight my way out with my stick, and if they got me, well, that's part of the risk I took with the job."

I reiterate: *Risk* is in the contract, but *sacrifice* is not. Martyrs can cause more trouble than they can inspiration, and in this case, we may foresee a problem as grave as a gang of vicious punks who have killed or crippled a police officer and are now in possession of his service sidearm, and of the keys to his vehicle, which may contain a combat shotgun . . . the effects of this officer's poor judgment may ripple outward in an ever-widening shockwave of violence and tragedy.

One of the officer's other options when facing multiple, unarmed opponents is to resort to the firearm. Remember, *disparity of physical force in strength or number of unarmed assailants is equal in the eyes of the law to an armed assault by a single attacker!* A gang bent on delivering a beating is as likely to kill as a lone punk with a knife; this is therefore a lethal force situation, and the deadly threat (or the deadly employment) of the revolver may well be warranted.

Here the deterrent effect of the service revolver is precious. Their courage and intent fortified by their numbers, the gang is unlikely to be deterred by the sight of a stick. It is the firearm

that is "the equalizer" and is universally recognized as such. The advantage to the outnumbered patrolman is obvious.

But there are ancillary problems with this tactic. Suppose that your gun is sufficient to back off all but one of your attackers? If the others retreat, the disparity of force situation suddenly disappears. You are no longer justified in shooting the single troublemaker who is advancing on you.

If circumstances* permit, you may be able to quickly holster your gun, return to your impact weapon, and deck that advance man. But this in turn opens a series of new problems. The people behind the cocky leader probably won't realize what motivated you to put the gun away; they may interpret it as, "Rocky backed down the cop. Let's jump him now, and see how brave he is without his gun!"

You're risking a lot, probably too much. Once you've drawn the gun, don't holster it until you're satisfied that you're in control of the situation, because by introducing the firearm to the confrontation, you have yourself escalated the degree of force involved in the encounter. Don't forget, the people facing you are thinking in a frame totally different from yours; they think *they're* in the right, and you're just giving them something to further justify, to them, their violent assault on you ("We wouldn'ta stomped him if he hadn'ta pulled his gun on us and got us ticked off!").

But this doesn't get you out of the situation described two paragraphs ago. We now have some justification for two tactics with the service handgun that would normally never be employed in an *armed* confrontation: the warning shot and the shot to wound.

The blast of a .38, let alone a .357 or 9 mm, going off in an enclosed space is an awesome sound. It's like a slap in the face: It jars people awake and instills an instant sobering understanding of the magnitude of the situation. If you feel you must fire a

* "Circumstances" being in this case a confident officer who is fast and expert with both gun and stick and who has plenty of room between himself and the advancing antagonist, and *more* room between the antagonist and his reinforcements.

warning shot, aim for something very solid with no one behind it or, if in a ground-floor tavern, put it into the floor which is likely to be more heavily reinforced than the ceiling.

The shot to wound should be directed to the foot area or lower legs. As we've mentioned elsewhere in this book, a wound to the lower extremities can be fatal due to hemorrhage or shock and is likely to result in permanent crippling. You can't "call" a flesh wound, and ironically, in this particular life-threatening situation, a flesh wound won't do the job for you. What you want is a bullet that breaks bone, that drops your attacker in a heap, screaming and clutching his leg. To the people behind him, there is little more in the way of a show of force that will be more impressive.

This is not the contradiction of previous paragraphs that some might think. We have just said that disparity of force ceases to be a concrete factor when those behind the ringleader leave off the attack. However, if they are still close in behind him, and if they have made clear their intentions in their previous moments to commit a gang-assault on the officer, there are a few case citations that may justify the officer's actions, on the theory that the fickle followers still are close enough to do bodily harm to the policeman and have already expressed their intentions of doing so.

If your particular court doesn't care to consider those precedents, you can offer in defense the fact that you did not shoot to kill, but fired deliberately to wound. Neither of the two mitigating circumstances we've just described would normally be sufficient to cover you, but the two of them together give substantial weight to the fact that you were trying to escape an imminent and deadly danger with the least possible use of force. Add to this the statement, "Your honor, I felt it was best to hurt one of them badly enough to shock the others into submission, rather than to let them continue to the point where I would have had no choice but to shoot at more of them, and shoot to kill," and your position is improved still further.

You can, of course, evade the whole issue by backing out when they move in on you, retreating to a secure area (get in your

cruiser and *split*, if you have to), and calling in reinforcements. Psychologically, it's good for you to explain this to the ringleader if you have time before you get pounced. ("Look, Rocky, I don't doubt that you could take me one on one, but my boss doesn't allow me to get beat up on the job, and if it looks like you and your guys are going to gang up on me, I'm just gonna have to go and call out the troops and get everybody *in* here busted. So suppose you guys just call it a night, and save everybody all the hassle.")

There is no shame in calling for reinforcements. If you try to play hero and get stomped, the reinforcements are going to come in anyway, and they're going to come *angry*, and the result will be bloodshed, and a spate of police brutality accusations, and perhaps more officers hurt in an atmosphere of greater violence among a gang that's already gotten a taste of cop's blood. Indeed there is a great deterring and defusing effect in leaving quietly and returning in force. Things inside the bar will often quiet down spontaneously during the interim. ("Hey, Sarge, we're sorry we gave your man a bad time a few minutes ago. We didn't mean nothing.") Failing that, ten of *you* coming back to face down five of *them* not only returns in spades any embarrassment they caused you a few minutes before but (a) reduces the chances of bloodshed, (b) reduces the likelihood of injury to innocent bystanders on the scene, (c) reduces hours of paperwork you'll have processing cop-fighters, and (d) gives your brother officers a chance to go home feeling they've accomplished something in the eternal "War Against Bad Guys" tonight.

But if things break too close and too fast for psychology or a tactical retreat, and you have the choice of using your gun or your stick, you may come up against a rule we see often in police department "use of force" codes: The Gun Will Not Be Drawn on Unarmed Suspects.

In some departments, *Warren on Homicide* isn't worth anything, at least not until after agonizing months of waiting out department hearings and appeals, with the attendant embarrassment to self and family and loss or postponement of income. In the wake of misuse of force by some officers, some departments have stated flatly that guns will not be used against unarmed as-

sailants no matter how large their number, on pain of dismissal from the force.

The officer who works under such policy may wish to take his lumps and risk the loss of his service gun and worse when he is overwhelmed by multiple, unarmed assailants.

He may wish to balance his immediate physical danger against the possibility of future departmental discipline. Officers who have been censured by their departments for using their guns in situations like these may sometimes regret their decision on the scene, but not so much as permanently crippled officers who were afraid to draw their guns in the face of deadly, violent, disparate physical force when the weapons were many pairs of fists and shod feet instead of a single gun or knife.

Which brings us back to the impact weapon. In a confrontation with multiple, unarmed assailants, the baton or whatever can *sometimes* be employed against two or even three attackers, if they're badly alcohol-impaired or if the officer is certain he can overwhelm them. Normally, a pair is highly dangerous and a trio or more is deadly, and here we have the kind of potentially lethal physical force that the police impact weapon was never designed to ward off. Deadly danger is for deadly weapons.

There are many officers who can tell you stories of having subdued multiple opponents with their impact weapons or, for that matter, with their hands. Many of their stories are true. There are also people who can tell you how they broke the bank at Monte Carlo, and some of their stories are equally honest. The two sets of stories have in common the fact that the tellers were gambling, and against heavy odds; a policeman who loses when he bets his stick against a gang of angry toughs stands to take a heavier and more permanent loss than any man can afford.

There has been much made of "a recent Supreme Court decision in which an officer was found culpable for shooting three unarmed attackers, and judged civilly liable for more than \$800,000." This case has been widely misconstrued. It involved a Columbus, Ohio officer attacked in a bar while off duty and carrying a gun per department regulations. Witnesses indicated that the officer was "getting his face kicked in" by three individuals wearing engineer boots; the officer drew his weapon and opened

fire. Two people in the act of kicking him were shot dead; the third fled and was shot in the back as he exited the establishment. An \$800,000-plus award went to the third suspect, who was left paralyzed by the officer's bullet; the estates of the two dead attackers received almost token awards.

The Supreme Court did *not* decide this case; rather, it rejected review, saying in effect that the previous courtroom procedure had been proper and not necessarily agreeing with the philosophy of its outcome. Informed observers believe that the decision against the officer was based on the fact that he had shot a fleeing suspect who offered him no further danger; this question is arguable and, being more in the lethal force category, is not really germane to this book. The case outcome may also have been affected by the fact that the officer was off-duty (though other decisions give the officer full police self-defense rights on his own time, considering the nature of the job to be such that his law enforcement responsibilities surround him constantly), and also by the fact that an argument over a woman was one factor leading up to the violence. The officer, it should be noted, had not started the argument, was not intoxicated, and was in fact found justified in *all* his actions in this incident by a departmental review board.

The Columbus officer's plight was not a cut-and-dried situation; his off-duty status and other aspects entered into the final decision, primarily the fact that he shot the third suspect at a moment when he was no longer in danger from him. The slaying of the first two suspects alone could have been much more successfully defended.

In any case, though some instructors state that this case is a basic reason why the stick and not the gun should be used against superior, unarmed physical force, the fact remains that no decision fully supports this, and that every doctrine of self-defense law still allows the officer to use his gun when threatened with death or grave bodily harm by multiple, unarmed attackers.

THE RELATIVE IMPORTANCE OF FOOTWORK

Stickfighting systems of the martial arts rely heavily on footwork for the basics of moving into and away from the oppo-

ment, for evasion of another's blows, and to maximize the force of each of the practitioner's strikes. In American police training, the most footwork-oriented system is the "LAPD Method," which derives heavily from Oriental forms and was developed for the department by hard-core martial artists.

The FBI style relies on little beyond the most basic footwork. Ditto the Prosecutor system as taught by inventor Lon Anderson. James Phillips, the leading authority on the police nunchaku, de-emphasizes footwork in his police training except to augment the weapon strikes with kicks.

It is well to do without as much complicated footwork as possible. First, it will work instinctively and effectively only for the man who is constantly sparring a practice opponent—a fraction of 1 percent of police. Second, fancy footwork that is effective on the wide flat floor of a dojo or gymnasium will not translate to a fight in a barroom, or on the street in icy weather, or in any kind of close quarters. The officer is more likely to get his feet tangled in the obstacles of the unfamiliar scene and be thrown off balance.

The only footwork the average officer should really try to master is forward and backward sliding of the feet. The Lamb method is the classic example: as the officer prepares to strike, he slides his weak foot back, thus (a) putting him subtly but effectively out of the opponent's range, (b) shielding groin and solar plexus from frontal assault, and (c) increasing leverage and impact of his swing, since the weapon now has an arc of movement sufficiently great to enhance momentum, but not so great as to "telegraph" his blow.* The officer should also be able to slide his strong foot back, thus shortening the range of his stick but permitting him to plant his feet and strike with maximum force: the "reverse punch" position, which also increases the length and hence the momentum of the baton strike.

Beyond these simple and instinctive movements, intricate foot-

* It should be noted that only with an across-the-body swing like Lamb's does this increase in force occur with this stance; most other blows delivered with the strong side forward will shorten and hence weaken the technique. Strong side forward, generally speaking, gives range and speed, while strong side "reversed," or to the rear, gives raw power.

work can get the officer into more trouble than it can get him out of, since he will be using his techniques in an unknown environment and won't always be in a position where he can be sure of his footing or what's behind or beneath him. Footwork is important with the LAPD system, since many of the swings and jabs are employed with most of the length of the stick tucked under the forearm, sacrificing much range. But with Lamb style full-length swings, or with the spinning techniques of the Prosecutor or the whipping movements of the nunchaku, the officer has a long-range weapon that outreaches his feet and his opponent's; he may concentrate on controlling his weapon with hands, arms, shoulders, and hips and let his feet worry about nothing except keeping him upright and balanced.

Another aspect of footwork, of course, is being able to kick or sweep the opponent. Kicks should be used at close range, as when grappling; it is also surprisingly easy to learn to use the lead leg to block or "jam" an opponent's upcoming kick, that is, to catch his rising shin on the sole of your shoe.

The most effective kicking techniques, in stickfighting or otherwise, are quick snap-kicks to the knee and shin region. Low enough that the opponent can't grab your foot and that you don't lose your balance, these blows effectively immobilize your opponent by making his movements slow and awkward, or by dropping him in a heap if you catch him properly. These kicks should be part of sparring and practice, one reason your stick-sparring partner should always be wearing heavy, rigid shin and knee guards.

THE "SLEEPER HOLD": IS IT TOO DANGEROUS FOR POLICE TO USE?*

The "sleeper hold," which mystified commercial wrestling audiences for years, exists. Martial artists have known it for centuries. So have doctors. It operates on the very simple premise that (a) the carotid arteries carry blood into the brain via the

* Reprinted from *Trooper*, an Organization Services Corp. Publication, by permission.

neck; (b) the brain requires a substantial supply of freshly oxygenated blood to function; therefore (c) if one blocks the carotid arteries, the subject's brain ceases to function, beginning almost immediately with unconsciousness.

But it isn't that simple. The brain is the most complex organ of the body, and when you start messing with it you can cause a lot of problems you don't realize.

Various sleeper holds, or "choke-outs," are taught in law enforcement. Let's look at them, and then examine their use in the light of tactical applicability, morality, and the basic laws of both society and medicine.

Applying the Sleeper Hold

Forget about putting an opponent to sleep by grinding your knuckle into the hollow beneath his ear. The carotids are located beneath and ahead of the base of the jaw. To occlude them—block them off—you must apply pressure on both sides. On one side only, impairment of consciousness will take much, much longer, and besides, in a fight situation, it is virtually impossible to hold the neck still enough to apply pressure on one side if you aren't already applying it to the other.

There are many methods, and most of them work best when applied from behind. There are several stick techniques, useful with conventional batons (preferably 18 inches or more), the Prosecutor baton, or the nunchaku sticks that more and more officers are carrying. They are explained in Figures 53 and 54. One trouble with all of them, as will readily be seen, is that it is extremely hard to apply them without putting pressure on the cervical spine as well as the carotids.

Properly applied, the "mugger's lock" can be transformed into a sleeper hold. It won't work as fast, because the bearing surfaces (your forearm on one side, your bicep on the other) are neither narrow enough nor unyielding enough to equal the degree of pressure you can create with a baton "choke-out." This technique is seen in Figure 55. Because the effect of this hold is not so immediate, the officer should take care to protect his groin and eyes

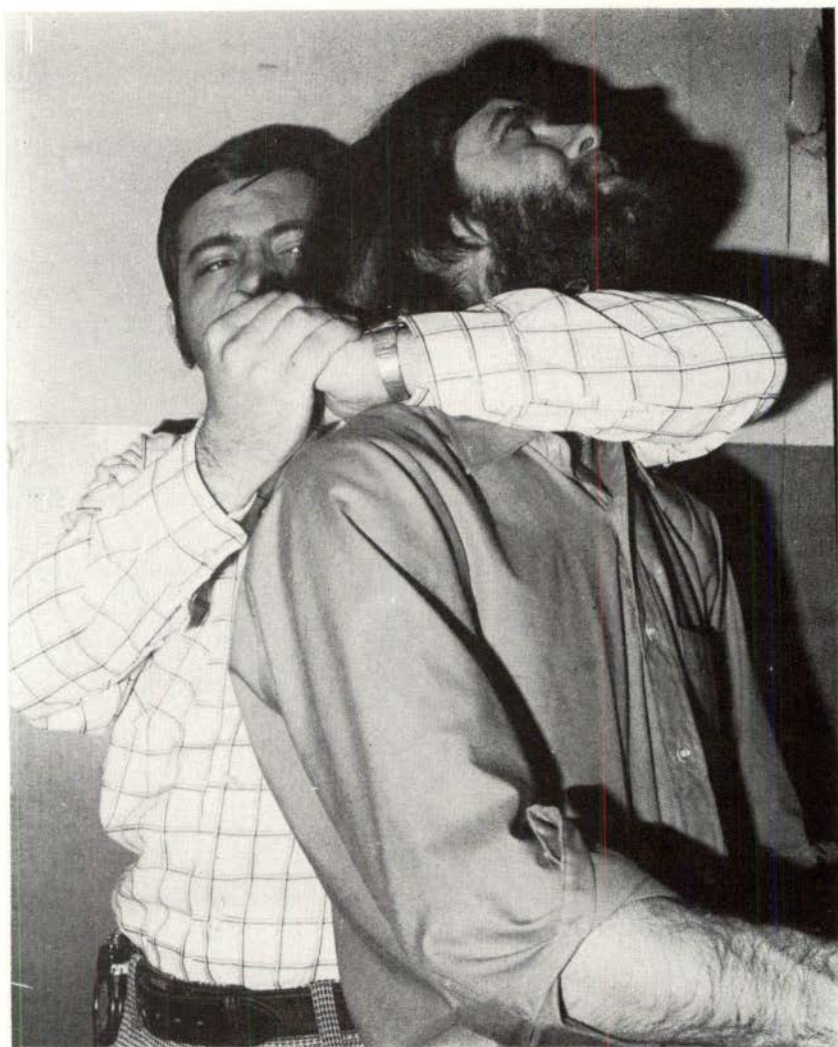


Figure 53. The author demonstrates a weaponless variation of chokeout. Note that the "spare" hand reinforces the hold against suspect's struggles and adds pressure. Bicep on one side and rigid bone of forearm on the other are closing off the carotids. With hip into small of suspect's back, left knee ready to come up to block groin grab, and gun turned away from suspect, the officer is in a controlling position. This technique is often more adaptable to an officer in a barfight than the chokeout technique involving a baton, but either can cause serious injury to suspect. Photograph by R. Morin.

from a clawing hand, and his sidearm should be turned away from the suspect.

Judo-style choke-outs can simply involve grasping the collars a few inches down from the throat and forcibly crossing one's hands, thus tightening the fabric of the collar sharply against the carotids. This works great if the man is wearing a heavy judo *gi* or a denim jacket, but most ordinary shirts will tear during the struggle, destroying the effect of the hold and leaving the officer with his hands uselessly tied up as the suspect counter-attacks. Any choke-out technique, or for that matter *any* two-handed hold applied from the front, is always dangerous to the officer for just this reason: The attacker's hands are free while the officer's are busy, and those hands may claw at the policeman's eyes or groin, or punch his navel right into his lumbar spine.

There are other choke-out/sleeper hold techniques, but those illustrated with this article comprise the ones that are most effectively applied by someone not in the martial arts, and the ones most commonly used by American police.

Why the Sleeper?

On the surface, the sleeper hold appears to be an ideal technique for stopping trouble. If properly applied, it renders the subject unconscious in six to eight seconds—sometimes less if he is in debilitated physical condition, but often longer if he has thick neck muscles and is fighting furiously. If the officer doesn't have it quite right, it can take *much* longer.

But let's assume, oh, seven seconds. Here is a man subdued fairly rapidly, without a head broken by a baton, and without additional blood being spilled. And it often does work like this. In tough Camden, New Jersey, black belt Jim Phillips of the Tactical Unit converted the police department to nunchaku sticks for some time. Many are still in use. Phillips teaches a scissor hold on barfighters and rambunctious drunks: usually, he and his students will apply just enough pressure to convince the subject to come along under his own power, but frequently, the subject will have to be rendered unconscious by the nutcrackerlike pressure of the sticks. Phillips reports no serious injuries and states that physicians he has consulted in his police-instructor capacity

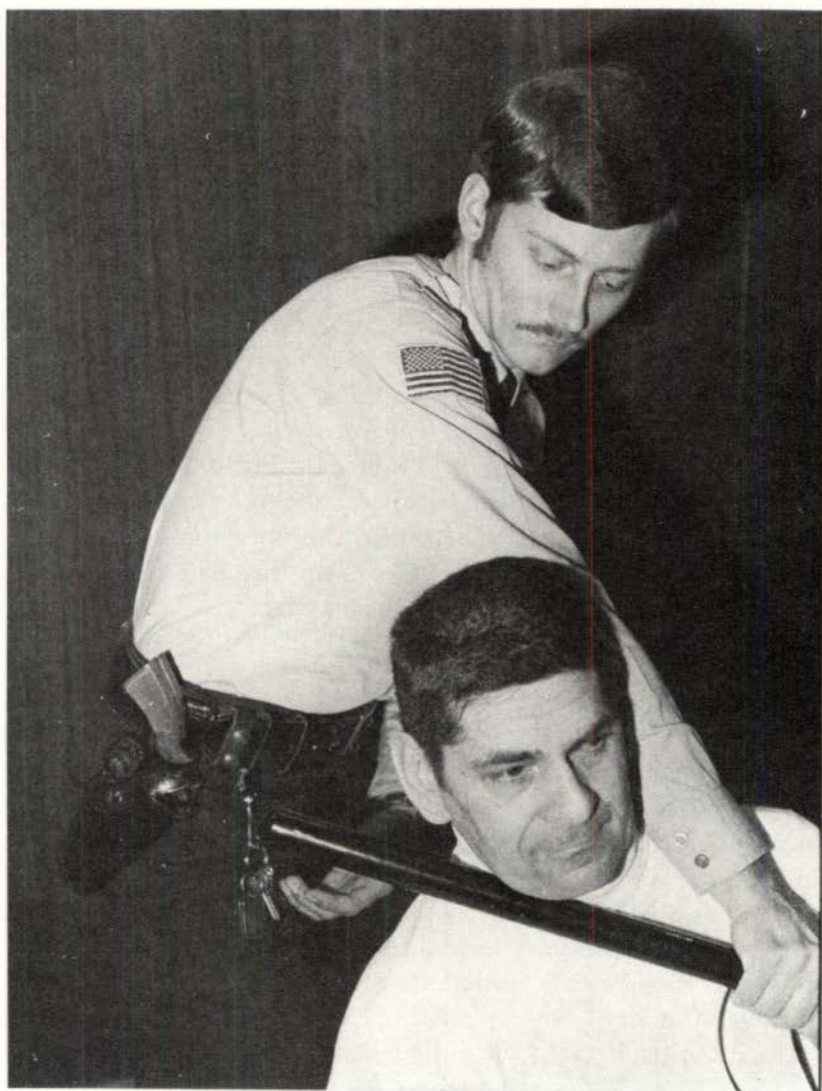


Figure 54a. To execute chokeout from behind with straight baton, the control hand is held forward and slid around neck as shown.

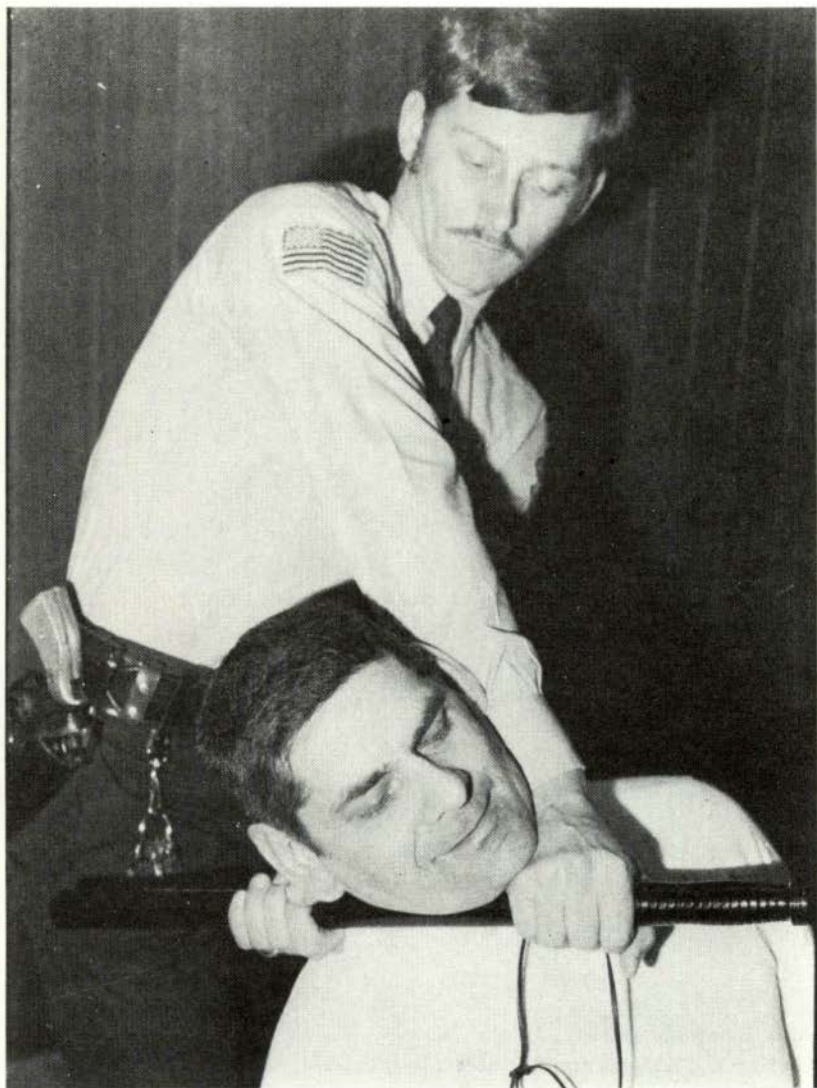


Figure 54b. The other hand grabs protruding end and creates scissor effect that immobilizes suspect and quickly causes him to pass out from carotid artery occlusion. Difficult to apply except from behind without officer leaving himself open. From *Trooper*, with permission.

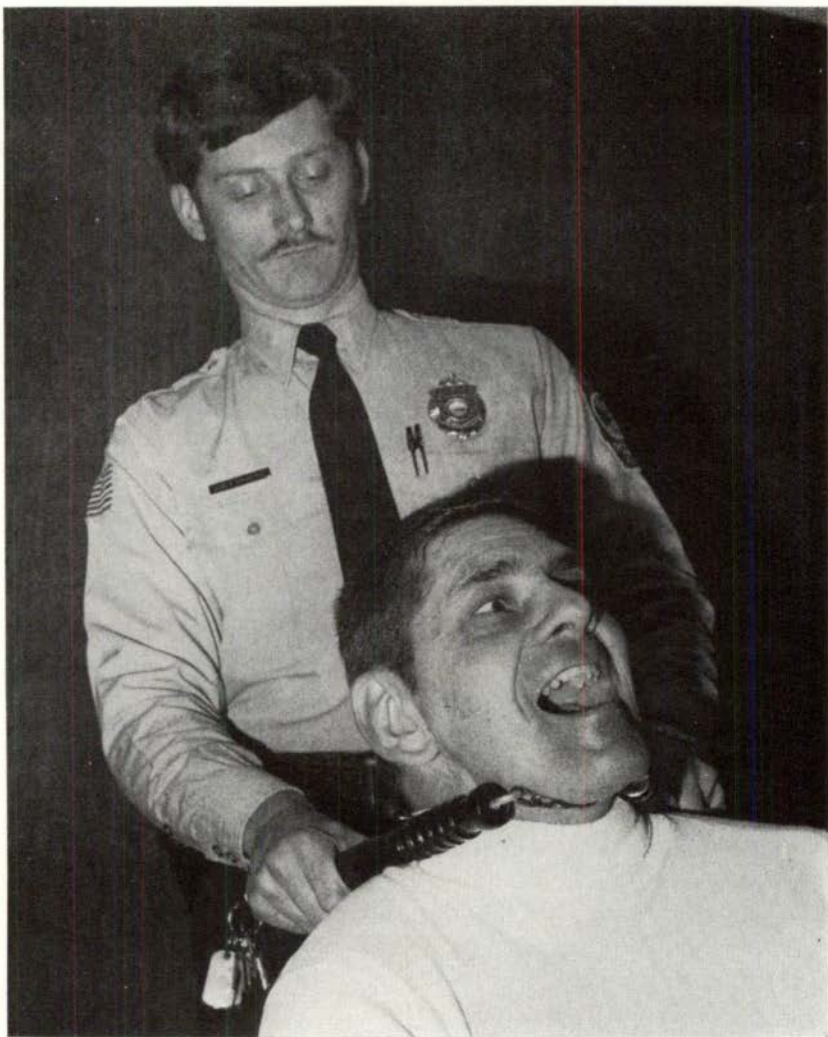


Figure 55. Chokeout technique with nunchaku is swift and effective but potentially very dangerous to the suspect.

have approved the technique as safe. That is at odds, however, with other medical opinion, as we shall see later.

Physical After-Effects

In *most* cases, the choke-out produces little in the way of after-effects. Most subjects will experience a headache when they wake

up. Often, they will vomit upon awakening, just as do many who are rendered unconscious by blows. They may be disoriented or a little "spacey" for a period of time.

Duration of unconsciousness is unpredictable. If the hold has been applied for the minimum time, the person may regain consciousness in less than a minute. It will usually take several. At worst, if the lock has been held too long, if the person has the wrong kind of chemicals in his system, or if there are physical problems that have been aggravated by what has happened, he may never wake up.

And these possibilities are many. They have been pointed out to us by doctors who were familiarized with the various choke-out techniques and asked about what could be expected. They include a neurosurgeon, a cardiologist, an ophthalmologist, and a specialist in internal medicine. They told us we could expect the following in a certain percentage of choke-out victims.

STROKE. A stroke occurs when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted. A choke-out or sleeper hold also works when the blood supply to the brain is interrupted. The difference is one of degree. When talking about something as delicate as the human brain and central nervous system, those degrees are often too subtle for the layman to attempt to distinguish between. A stroke is especially likely in a suspect who, unknown to the officer who is forced to subdue him, has high blood pressure or any of a number of other cardiovascular problems. The physical condition of the suspect is an unknown quantity to the officer, in terms of medical problems that he may have, and stroke is something that must be considered whenever the officer attempts to close off the carotid arteries of even a young and vigorous-appearing suspect.

HEART ATTACK. The pressure applied in a sleeper hold often focuses on a part of the arterial complex called the carotid sinus. In oversimplified terms, what happens here is a backup effect on blood flow that can throw the heart into violent response, causing heart attack.

CONVULSIVE SEIZURES. It is not at all uncommon for an individual to go into a series of convulsions resembling a *grand mal* fit of epilepsy when the carotid arteries have been occluded. This

may occur in a person who does *not* suffer from epilepsy, and I have witnessed such occurrences in martial arts exercises. It is, of course, much more likely in epileptics *but can be expected to occur in the healthiest of subjects*.

ASPIRATION OF VOMIT. Though vomiting is most common after the choked-out suspect has regained consciousness, it may well occur while he is still passed out. To prevent the vomit from being inspirated (breathed) into the lungs, one has to suction out the victim's mouth and throat. Well-equipped ambulance teams do this with electrically operated or bulb-type aspirators. The officer who has to keep alive a vomiting suspect he has choked into unconsciousness will have to resort to the other alternative: suck the vomit out of the suspect's mouth with his own. Enough said.

BLINDNESS. We have been assured by both a neurosurgeon and an ophthalmologist that a properly applied choke-out, held for twenty seconds or longer, may cause permanent blindness. If you doubt it, *and if you are certain you have no cardiovascular, neurological, or eye problems*, put down this book, then reach up and take your left collar firmly in your right hand and vice versa. Pull crossways, hard. You will feel immediately the pounding of your pulse, a flushing of the face, a sense of light-headedness, and, in a few seconds, a definite pressure in the back of your eyeballs. If you are still awake, pick the book back up and read on.

RUPTURED ARTERIES. This is most likely to occur in a suspect who suffers from arteriosclerosis, or hardening of the arteries with attendant narrowing of the actual passageways of the blood vessels. The backed-up blood pressure that occurs in a sleeper hold may burst the weakened arteries; so may *release* of the hold, when the blood comes rushing back in, again stressing the arterial walls. "So what," say some advocates of the sleeper hold. "We'll never apply this technique to any senior citizen with hardening of the arteries." In fact, the condition may be present in people in their late twenties and a *lot* of people in their thirties, and it is particularly common among the alcoholics who start so many brawls. In the aftermath of such a suspect's untimely death, his unknown medical history may be obscured by the fact that "he dropped dead after the cop choked him."

PERMANENT BRAIN DAMAGE. "Brain death" begins when oxygenated blood is withheld from the brain for a period of four to six minutes. Once those brain cells die, they never grow back. In the heat of a fight, most officers will keep the hold on until they are *sure* the subject is totally out. Indeed, if the hold *is* released too early, the suspect may recover his full faculties almost instantly. Few officers will hold a chokeout for five minutes, but they *may* hold it long enough to impair blood supply to certain *parts* of the brain long enough to kill *them*. The result can be a human vegetable, or one resembling a victim of advanced Parkinson's disease. Quite apart from moral considerations, such people are likely to win six and seven figure damage suits against police departments and individual officers.

SPINAL INJURY. Since by definition the choke-out involves a very forcible manipulation of the suspect's neck, the danger of a broken cervical spine is always great. These holds are applied in such a way that if the neck *does* break (probably separating somewhere between the fourth and seventh cervical vertebrae), the sharp ends of the spine will, under pressure, slice right through the spinal cord, which is the consistency of thick cheese or fatty meat, cuts easily, and can never heal. The result is a suspect who is now either instantly dead, mortally injured, or permanently quadriplegic.

This isn't supposed to happen, some instructors say. It's never *supposed* to happen, and in a training environment, it looks safe. As a police combat instructor, I have applied these techniques, and had them applied to me in the classroom without injury. But on the street, they are tricky. Baton techniques are especially dangerous in choke-outs, and particularly the Prosecutor baton, with which the handle goes behind the neck and can act like a fulcrum over which the bones are forced and snapped.

Sure, you're pushing sideways so the neck won't break, and applying just enough pressure to cause unconsciousness. But suppose the suspect goes suddenly limp, and 150 or 200 pounds of dead weight suddenly drop in a direction they aren't supposed to? Or, what if (as you are applying your perfectly executed hold) another 200-pound barfighter is thrown into either you or your

suspect, causing one or both of you to lose your balance or even fall?

At that moment, the sharp cracking sound you hear will be the suspect's neck breaking, and the finality of that sound could be the end of your law enforcement career. A suspect accidentally killed or permanently maimed in a "non-lethal-force," "subdual" situation is extremely hard to explain away.

THROAT INJURIES. When you wrap sticks or brawny arms around people's necks, it's hard to avoid their throats. Even if you apply your hold perfectly to the sides of a person's neck, totally avoiding larynx and windpipe, you may slip during the struggle, or the fighting opponent may turn at an inopportune moment. Since you are concentrating on applying the pressure, you may not realize that you are crushing the throat until it's too late, until you hear the sound of the cartilage caving in, a sound like a horn-net makes when you step on it, only louder and wetter.

A crushed larynx, at best, results in a suspect with a permanent vocal impediment. Most often, it means an airway that is blocked against everything including artificial resuscitation. The only way out for this victim/offender is a tracheostomy, the slitting open of the windpipe below the injury coupled with the insertion of a breathing tube. This procedure, once "taught" to everyone but, or perhaps including, the Boy Scouts, is actually very easy to foul up. It is no longer taught even in Emergency Medical Technician classes (as the instructors put it, the EMT's are only "familiarized" with it), because so many people died after being clumsily "traked."

Conclusions

It's not hard to understand why something that renders a man unconscious in seconds with, supposedly, no after-effects, catches the imagination of lawmen who have to deal in violent physical confrontations.

But one must understand its shortcomings. First, it is hard to apply on a man you don't already have at a tactical fighting disadvantage and if that's the case, why choke him unconscious at all?

The danger of broken necks, crushed throats, strokes, ruptured

arteries, seizures, and other life-threatening trauma is great in this supposedly "safe subduing technique." These things must be considered. The officer who does choose to apply them should be highly trained and skilled in emergency first aid treatment for the injuries that may result.

The sleeper hold: Most of the time, if you do it right, it will work great. But no matter how good you are, the time will come when you face a person who can't take what it does to their bodies: A belligerent barfighter who may have earned some bruises but doesn't deserve to die; a drunk who's like you when he's sober but isn't going to be anymore because a choke-out hold has left him permanently injured or dead.

The sleeper hold works if you know how to use it. But it brings you into that dangerous area of a policeman's use of force, that area between what you are allowed to do with your hands, and what you are supposed to do, if you have to do it at all, with your gun.

Know it. Be able to use it. But understand it, and only use it when there is no other choice that is safer to you and those you protect, or more humane to the person you must subdue.

If that sounds like the rules that govern your gun, it's no coincidence. Both can kill. Both demand the respect of those who command their power.

HOME PRACTICE WITH THE IMPACT WEAPON

It's a rare police station that has a gym with a heavy bag or "numb john" dummy readily available for off-duty patrolmen. In the great majority of cases, the officer who wishes to develop and maintain practical skill with his impact weapon will have to practice at home.

The Monadnock training manual recommends a canvas bag stuffed with old clothing. A fifty pound heavy bag is better. Man-size dummies are better yet, but their cost is relatively high, well over 100 dollars. Moreover, the heavy bag will move and swing with the hit, more realistically simulating an opponent's response on the street.

The light speed bag of the "speedball" type, secured to both ceiling and floor by long, stretching springs, is seldom seen in



Figure 56. Everlast 4220 "reflex bag" is an invaluable asset to baton training. Also useful are fifty pound heavy bags or a canvas sack stuffed with old clothing. Reflex bag is ideal for timing as it returns from each blow in an unpredictable direction, coming straight at the officer.

police gyms but is a worthy addition for either baton or hand-to-hand combat practice: the impact of the officer's blow throws it sharply back, and it will return snappily from an unpredictable angle.

It is possible to attain a certain degree of proficiency without actually striking anything at all. Motion drills with the baton resemble stick *katas* in karate weaponry, and many a martial arts student has attained black belt rating in the use of the bo (quarterstaff) without ever really hitting anything with it.

This approach is certainly better than nothing: It makes the officer dextrous and confident, and a blow that is fast and potent in "shadowboxing" will be equally so against a live opponent. But a definite element is missing: The officer cannot learn, in this way, to recover from a strike, and deliver a second one quickly.

The shock of the impact travelling up the arm can have a jolting, unbalancing effect on the officer who is unprepared for it. It will also change the pattern and direction of movement of both his arm and his impact weapon. For this reason, even the officer who does not have regular access to a heavy bag or similar training aid should make a point of trying one at least now and then, to familiarize himself with what it really feels like to deliver a hard blow with his baton.

Quality plastic batons may be struck against trees in practice. The Monadnock company, which at one time suggested this method in a training brochure, as of 1977 has replaced *all* their plastic Prosecutor batons that have been broken in such a manner. I have subjected Prosecutors to such abuse for some time without damage. Conventional style plastic batons would, of course, be more likely to break during this sort of activity, since they lack the quick bounceback characteristics of loose-in-the-hand weapons like the Prosecutor or nunchaku.

The officer should not, however, practice his striking techniques *only* on targets. There should be a certain amount of no-impact *kata* as well, to familiarize him with quick handling and recovery should he miss his opponent with his baton strike.

There is some argument among police instructors as to whether officers should perform warm-up exercises to loosen up the mus-



Figure 57. *Good* example of eclectic baton technique. Using Lamb movement tactics with Prosecutor baton, the left hand is raised to block. Officer has taken a deep step back with left leg to pull his head out of range and make suspect come in on him overbalanced.

cles prior to baton practice. Certainly, this reduces fatigue and the likelihood of muscle strains and cramps. Some feel, however, that the body is so much more flexible after warm-up exercises that the baton has a different feel than when used suddenly, by surprise; the muscles are tighter, and as a result, speed and fluidity of movement is different. I personally prefer the more realistic method of working out with no warm-up, to more perfectly duplicate the level of physical ability and muscle tone that will be present on the street. This can be done without ill effect simply by reducing the length of the workouts, perhaps compensating with shorter, more frequent, practice periods.

Contact sparring is extremely difficult with impact weapons. Possibly the best approach yet to emerge is a part of the Lamb method: the plastic sleeves that come on golf clubs are cut to 24 inches (or whatever the length of the officer's baton) and used in the characteristic Lamb-style slashing techniques. The sting is negligible. True, the light, hollow plastic "practice weapons" don't have the same feel and balance as the real thing, but they do have a vitally important advantage: they train the officer to swing and hit full force. A surprising number of police find themselves unable to hit another human being solidly with a stick. The result is a light tap that the assailant ignores, and perhaps an officer is felled despite the fact that he had the wherewithal to subdue his attacker.

Karate-style protective gear is available: bamboo chest- and groin-guards and rigid plastic shin protectors. Sparring helmets should also be used, and motorcycle helmets may be even more effective. Some sort of face shield should also be used, in case the practice partner inadvertently lets his stick flash toward one's face. Naturally, blows to the head and vulnerable parts of the body such as the wrist, should be strictly forbidden.

Indeed, sparring with real impact weapons will unquestionably lead to injuries, no matter how much protective gear is used. Such sparring should take place only with true practice weapons: either the light plastic tube as used in the Lamb method, or foam-rubber sticks typified by the Shuriken Practice Nunchaku. Military-style training with pugil sticks is still used in some police

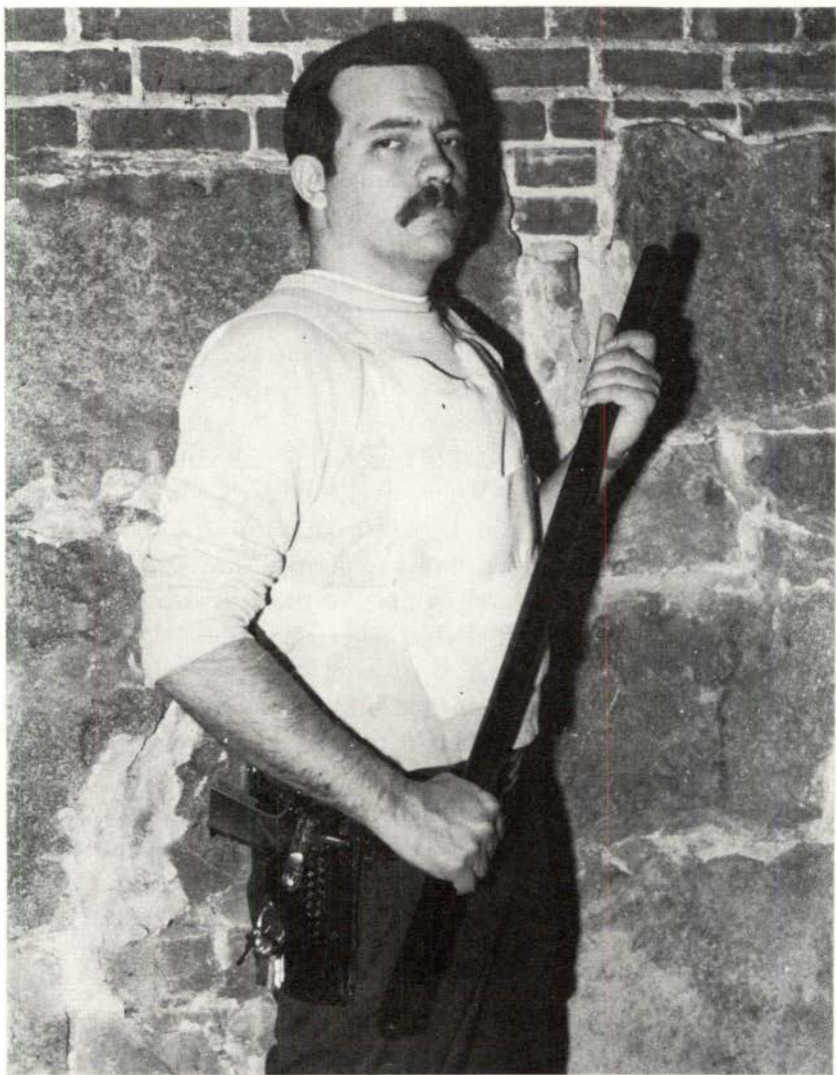


Figure 58. Officer working out on his own time at home should try as much as possible to duplicate his ability to perform in the street. This means duty shoes instead of sneakers, duty gun belt, and vest if one is worn on the job (to prevent soiling vest with perspiration, it should be worn outside the sweatshirt during practice—vest will slightly impair shoulder and torso flexibility). Author, shown during workout with the 36 inch quarterstaff or riot baton has made one mistake: He should be wearing Poly/Steelwall gloves that normally accompany this equipment. Courtesy of Hooksett Police.

academies and riot schools. However, this is far too demanding and high-risk an endeavor for in-service instruction. If it is undertaken, it should be at a recognized training facility under highly experienced instructors, with first-aid trained officers (and emergency medical equipment) present.

Officers working out together on their own time should limit their activities to heavy bags and katas. It will be found that an observer will recognize the officer's mistakes in approach and technique much more readily than he will himself, since his "view from behind the weapon" is restricted, and the officer frequently concentrates so hard on his hand and weapon movements that he forgets his footwork. If the two officers choose to spar with impact weapons, they should use the practice-type soft-impact sticks. They should also practice while wearing issue footgear and duty weapon belt, to exactly duplicate their mobility and body flexibility in street situations. The officer who wears a protective vest under his uniform shirt should wear it in practice also, probably outside his sweatshirt to reduce perspiration saturation. Such vests will, incidentally, offer a definite degree of protection against blows from fists or sticks. The policeman who works in cold climates should also practice frequently while wearing winter coat and footwear, since these will appreciably curtail his speed and latitude of movement; it is best for him to learn the extent of these limitations in a controlled training environment.

WHERE TO STRIKE

Obviously, the *cranium* (skull), the *back of the neck*, and the *throat* are potentially lethal targets of the stick, and should be avoided in any situation where the officer is not legally and morally justified in exerting lethal force on the suspect. This rare circumstance is typified by the officer whose partner is down, grappling with a suspect who holds a knife or gun, and the officer doesn't dare risk a shot for fear of hitting the innocent party.

Other targets are less lethal but still tricky.

The *collarbone* (clavicle) has long been touted as the ideal target for the police officer's impact weapon. Unprotected by layers of muscle, the collarbone breaks readily under the blow of

a stick, and such an injury tends to have a dramatic effect on the subject's continued hostility. As Arthur Lamb says, "It causes him to reconsider his negative attitude." The arm on the side of the fracture will usually drop, unless the suspect is extraordinarily well-muscled and possesses an enormous tolerance of pain. Any movement of his body, such as a continued forward assault, will cause the broken bone ends to grind most painfully against each other. The suspect's natural reaction will be to bring his good arm over to support the injured one. Fractured clavicles tend to heal without unusual complications.

The only disadvantage is that a downward swing to the clavicle comes dangerously close to the head. It is possible that the officer's aim will be off, or that the suspect will stumble, and the blow may land on the temple or face instead. Normally, however, the suspect's reaction will be to jerk his head back, ironically giving the officer a clearer shot at his intended target, the collarbone. Since this blow is normally delivered in a face-to-face encounter, the swing is coming over and in from the side, and there is little danger of the stick smashing into the larynx instead.

The *elbow* is an extremely useful target for the policeman's impact weapon. Since the arm swings free, it tends to roll with the impact, instead of rigidly resisting it. A broken elbow is thus unlikely, while there will still be great pain and numbing effect, due to the unprotected bone and nerve endings that will be hit. In addition to reducing the suspect's capability to continue fighting, a sharp blow on the elbow, or on the "crazy bone" (the nerve complex just above the knob of the elbow) will frequently immobilize the suspect totally by virtue of the overwhelming, if temporary, pain.

The *jaw*, oddly enough, may not be as effective a target for the stick as it is for the fist. A stick blow here is likely to split the skin requiring several stitches, may fracture the lower mandible, and may damage the teeth (that dental work gets *expensive* in civil court proceedings!). Also, while a left hook to the "button" may snap the man's head sideways far enough and sharp enough to cause the brain to spin in its fluids, disrupting blood supply and causing instant unconsciousness, this classic KO blow may

not work as well if delivered by stick instead of knuckles. This is because the stick tends to give slightly, whether of its own construction or at the officer's wrist, while the boxer's fist has a solid forearm behind it to drive it all the way through its arc. The stick-hit suspect may be stunned, but not necessarily knocked out unless struck with great force, and there is likely to be substantial damage to the flesh and bone of the face.

Blows over the *kidneys* and *liver* have a shocking, nauseating effect on the system, but these sensitive organs are quite vulnerable to trauma, and a stick blow here can cause internal hemorrhage and possible death.

The *spine* should be avoided, since the vertebrae can very easily be broken or separated by the deep, focused impact of a two-handed baton jab. Such injuries tend to be serious and permanent, and move the officer's actions into the lethal force area.

The *kneecap* (patella) is a favorite target of police baton instructors. It is possibly the most effective non-lethal blow that will freeze or drop a belligerent suspect in his tracks. Pain and local shock effect are enormous, and the injured leg is likely to give under the suspect's weight. Arthur Lamb has stated that a blow to the kneecap, when delivered with a wooden baton, is unlikely to break the patella; painful bone bruising, he says, is the usual result. He has doctors' testimony in his training film to back up his assertion.

It is possible, however, that a strong blow, especially with a heavy plastic baton, *will* fracture the kneecap, and this is likely to be a compound fracture, with the bone shattered into several pieces. The result is permanent incapacity of varying degrees and usually a series of surgical procedures that might tend to support a victim/offender's claim of excessive force.

The manufacturers of the potent Prosecutor recommend that blows be delivered to the *sides* of the knees, which will create two effects comforting to the officer: the legs tend to fold out from under the suspect quicker, and the likelihood of a fractured patella is greatly reduced.

Any martial artist knows that a flexed joint can take a great impact without breaking, while a locked joint that can't roll with



Figure 59. Straight stick is sometimes effective when swung as a baseball bat. Here, officer is down; he has leverage to make this a powerful blow, and because he's coming in low, suspect can't see him telegraph the strike in time to evade it. Power thus delivered is awesome.

the blow is easily snapped. First aid instructors and karate teachers are fond of stating that forty pounds of pressure is required to fracture or dislocate the kneecap.

The officer cannot, obviously, take the time in every pressure situation to make sure that the suspect's knee is flexed. However, even if a broken kneecap does result, the fact that the majority of American police instructors recommend the kneecap blow will be at least a moderately effective defense in court, especially if medical testimony, such as that in the Lamb training film, is introduced.

Perhaps the ideal target in the lower leg is the upper knob of the tibia, or shinbone, located just below the kneecap. Here many of the same nerve endings are present, and there is only a thin

layer of skin to protect the pain-sensitive bone; a blow in this location will have much the same effect as one on the kneecap, but since this is the thickest part of the bone, even if it *does* break, it is more likely to crack in a simple fracture from which the victim/offender can recover uneventfully with no permanent aftereffects. I consider the upper knob of the shin the target of choice in a police baton attack to the suspect's lower extremities.

The *ankle* is a seldom-considered target that can be hit with great effect. Pain and shock and immobilization effect are great, and the likelihood of really splintering the bone is relatively small. Hard to hit from an officer's upright position, the ankle is the target of choice (a) when the suspect is on a staircase or otherwise standing well above the officer; (b) when the officer is trying to incapacitate a brawler flailing on the ground; or (c) if an agile officer bends low in the movement fencers and knife fighters call *passata sotto*. Executed swiftly, this technique allows the officer to slip under the fist-reach of his opponent.

The *groin* is a highly debated target among baton instructors. Lamb feels that a hard blow here can cause permanent sexual crippling, something the average belligerent suspect hasn't earned; Kubota, on the other hand, has mentioned several groin attacks with the baton, as does Anderson with the Prosecutor.

Both are right. A full-powered sweep to the groin cannot only cause permanent impairment of sexual function, but may even cause death due to traumatic shock and internal hemorrhage. On the other hand, a "weak" Kubota underhand flip probably won't hit hard enough to actually crush tissue, but the sensitivity of the testicles will translate that otherwise mild blow into a temporarily stunning impact. The vertical spin with the Prosecutor falls in between, and the extreme momentum of the nunchaku is likely to cause permanent injury when the officer hits the suspect between the legs.

The *diaphragm* (solar plexus) is quite vulnerable to baton jabs. A blow here can be fatal if delivered with great force, i.e. with the short end of a Prosecutor or in a powerfully executed Kubota two-hand technique. The reason the latter has been performed on suspects countless times with few or no fatalities is

that the officer usually delivers the blow to someone attacking him from behind; he is off-balance, and cannot put the full power of his body into the blow. A truly powerful blow to the diaphragm, especially if delivered on an upward angle which will violently compress air inside the chest wall, can rupture diaphragm or even heart, causing death.

The *ribcage* is generally a poor target for the police stick. Pain and shortness of breath will be the result, but not the shock or immobilization that the officer needs. Side effects include bone shards being forced into lung or liver or spleen, internal injuries that may not show up once the suspect has been forcibly subdued. Such a victim, like the one who has been "choked out," is a candidate for not waking up in his cell the next morning.

The *abdomen* is an excellent target for baton thrusts. Specifically, a well-focused blow with Prosecutor or two-handed straight baton that is delivered about an inch above the navel will "penetrate" the toughest layers of belly muscles, causing acute cramping pain that tends to fold the suspect over helplessly. Since the heavy muscles of the abdominal wall are so naturally protective, the likelihood of internal hemorrhage in the intestinal region is small. One should, however, be extremely careful of low blows, which cannot only cause groin injuries with a focused jab, but may rupture the bladder if delivered an inch or two below the belt.

Blows to the *wrist*, like those to the elbows, cause great and intimidating pain. Somewhat more fragile, the wrist is still not terribly likely to break since it swings on the end of a loose limb. However, an officer who strikes to a subject's hand *may* break metacarpal (hand) bones, knuckles, or wrist (usually at the top of the forearm, or radius, just above the wrist) if the suspect is swinging at the officer and meeting the stick with his own momentum, or if the lower arm is held rigid for some other reason.

Blows to the *bicep* or *tricep* can sometimes numb the arm harmlessly with cramping muscle spasms; strikes to the back of the thigh or the calf can sometimes do the same to the leg. Much of this response, however, will depend on the suspect's muscle tone, position, and degree of intoxication and pain threshold;

while frequently effective, these targets are not 100 percent reliable even with very sharp blows.

If the preceding makes it sound like there are more places you shouldn't hit than you should, well, that's the way it is. Hitting a person with a hard and heavy stick tends to injure the organs and bones of his body. Some areas, such as the collarbone, or clavicle, are safe to break with little fear of permanent crippling. Others, like the "crazy bone," central abdomen, or the knob of the shinbone, may be battered with relative impunity. But the head, spine, and throat can easily give way fatally to the blow of a police impact weapon, and strikes to the rib cage, kidneys, testicles, or diaphragm may cause permanent, serious damage if delivered with substantial force.

Telling a policeman he can hit a man in a certain place and not worry about the aftereffects is like a television cop-show scriptwriter telling the actors that they can "shoot" the bad guy in the leg and he'll get better. Real cops know that a suspect shot in the leg may lose the limb, or walk gimp for life, or die in a couple of minutes from hemorrhage if the femoral artery is severed.

The human anatomy is too complex to make 100 percent safe judgments about hitting people. Most people who have been whacked over the head with police billies have recovered with no aftereffects, but enough have died or suffered brain damage that today's police academies make the head a forbidden target for the police club. Similar policies will eventually follow as far as striking suspects in certain other parts of the body, though the danger may be of a lesser degree.

CONCLUSION

HISTORY IS NOT RELEVANT to this text. Suffice to say that impact weapons were among the first self-defense tools of American police, dating back to the European-style truncheons of the night watches. (The very first police weapons were muskets in the hands of Pilgrims on sentry duty.) Since then, while some form of striking implement has always been a standard item of police equipment, it has only been in the past twenty or thirty years that serious, expert thought and training have been given to the lawman's use of an impact weapon. In the patrol context, impact weapons techniques do not go back beyond Charles Gruzanski and others who brought their WWII-learned martial arts stick-fighting principles to the United States police service.

The function of the impact weapon has never been defined. When, in Tombstone in the 1880s, Wyatt Earp used his Colt .45 to "buffalo" recalcitrant drunks, the locals probably thought he was being charitable in pistol-whipping them instead of shooting them. An officer who did the same today would be pilloried on a spotlighted post of public opinion *and* professional disdain. When the police stick is drawn, the aftermath is often likely to be citizens crying "Brutality!" and cops moaning, "We're damned if we do, damned if we don't." The truth should be in the middle.

A California police chief once told me, "The stick is to be used in that grey area between asking a suspect to be nice, and shooting him." That too is a simplification, though not so drastic a one. Indeed, the scope of the impact weapon is such that there will be times when you'll want to put it in view (not necessarily *brandish* it) before you say a word. There may be other times when an innocent life is in deadly danger and you dare not fire your gun: You may have to employ your impact weapon with lethal or potentially lethal techniques. The latter will include potent blows to the temple or strikes to the back of the neck at

the seventh cervical vertebra ("just above the knob where your shoulderbones connect"), which can separate the vertebrae and cause the sharp bone ends to slice through the spinal cord.

For the most part, of course, the impact weapon is designed for use against the violent but unarmed offender. The officer cannot, and should not, be required to stand toe to toe and duke it out with every hostile suspect, especially in light of the changing shape of the police officer. Relaxation of physical entrance requirements for the police service are resulting in an increasing number of female officers and short-statured male patrolmen. Few if any police academies teach techniques that can effectively compensate for a hundred-pound weight differential between officer and suspect. The same discrimination suits that have brought about the changing of physical size requirements have held up police recruitment in many communities and choked off the flow of new blood: There are several departments where the average age of the street patrolman is forty-plus. Such a man should not be expected to engage in punchouts with young athletes and construction workers.

The impact weapon is an equalizer, but it has its limits. I know one policeman who held an angry crowd of 150 at bay with his stick, striking down nine boldly advancing individuals and sending them to the hospital; it took him ten minutes to cover the twenty yards between the sidewalk and his vehicle. He was very skillful, and very brave . . . and very fortunate to escape with his life. The average officer confronted with such odds would be a fool not to surrender his misdemeanor suspect and retreat.

The average officer will be drawing his stick on one or two people he isn't sure he can take with his hands. As we have seen, bravery can turn to martyrdom for the patrolman *and* his brother officers when he gets too deep into a situation where he can wind up unconscious with his service revolver in the hands of an inflamed drunk or psycho.

As we've said, and will say again, and can't say often enough, no nationwide standards have yet been established for police use of the impact weapon. Each officer in each community must determine his own parameters, a guideline that lies between the

statutes, the mood of the courts, the policy of the department, and the current interpretation of *Warren on Homicide*. Less-lethal force will always be a grey area, but police departments and weapons instructors can go a long way toward defining some of the grey areas on the books from which the ultimate judgment of the individual officer will be drawn.