Third Coast Airsoft Magazine

Vol. 1 Issue 1

LEGAL:
What The Law Says About Airsoft

Team Spotlight:
Black Ops Airsoft



FEATURE:
Offensive Operations Planning
relating to Airsoft

AIRSOFT:
Therapy For Veterans?

THE ROLES:
Support Gunners

What is Third Coast Airsoft?

Classic Army M249 Mk II:
ODA 205's Upgraded Hellion

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR:

First, I would like to say that it has been an honor putting this magazine together for my fellow members of Third Coast Airsoft (TCA). It's taken us a while to generate this first issue, but it's finally here. It is my most fervent hope that you, the readers, glean something useful from the pages of this magazine and use it to the betterment of yourself and your teams. If you are a newcomer to this sport, I hope that what you learn in the pages of this issue, and those to follow, will enamor you to the sport that I and my fellow airsofters cherish so much.

Well, what have we in this issue? We are spotlighting the airsoft team, "Black Ops Airsoft", several articles about support weapons and their uses/tactics, the laws that pertain to airsoft on a Federal Level and at the State level for Florida, the therapeutic possibilities of airsoft for our Veteran and our Feature Article on Offensive Operations Planning relating to Airsoft. This first issue is jam-packed with good information.

I hope you enjoy this first issue and look forward to publishing the future issues of ***Third Coast Airsoft Magazine***.

Respectfully,

Patrick Scott
CEO/Chief Editor
Guardian Publications, LLC.

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"What is Third Coast Airsoft?"

Third Coast Airsoft (TCA) was founded by several Airsoft Team Leaders in the Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida areas that wanted to grow and play the hobby/sport/obsession know as Airsoft in a safe and organized way. TCA Teams play a form of Airsoft called "MilSim," or Military Simulation, which stresses realistic scenarios and requires strategy, tactics and teamwork rather than a free for all type of play.

Additionally, all TCA Teams, Fields, Vendors and Affiliate Organizations have a representative voice on the TCA Council. The Council decides, by vote, issues that affect the TCA Community. This ensures that those in the hobby always have a say in the sport. Players, vendors, or fields that are not in line with the TCA Code of Conduct and Rule Set are not supported or allowed. This ensures that players associated with TCA are playing in a safe and organized manner.

Third Coast uses the American Airsoft Association Rule-set for FPS/MED limits being that they are considered the safest while remaining fun. As such, Third Coast Airsoft is fully endorsed by the American Airsoft Association and is an Affiliate Organization.

Be sure to stop by our website, www.ThirdCoastAirsoft.com, and see what we have going on in your area.

-TCA Council



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THE FAST-GROWING SPORT OF AIRSOFT:

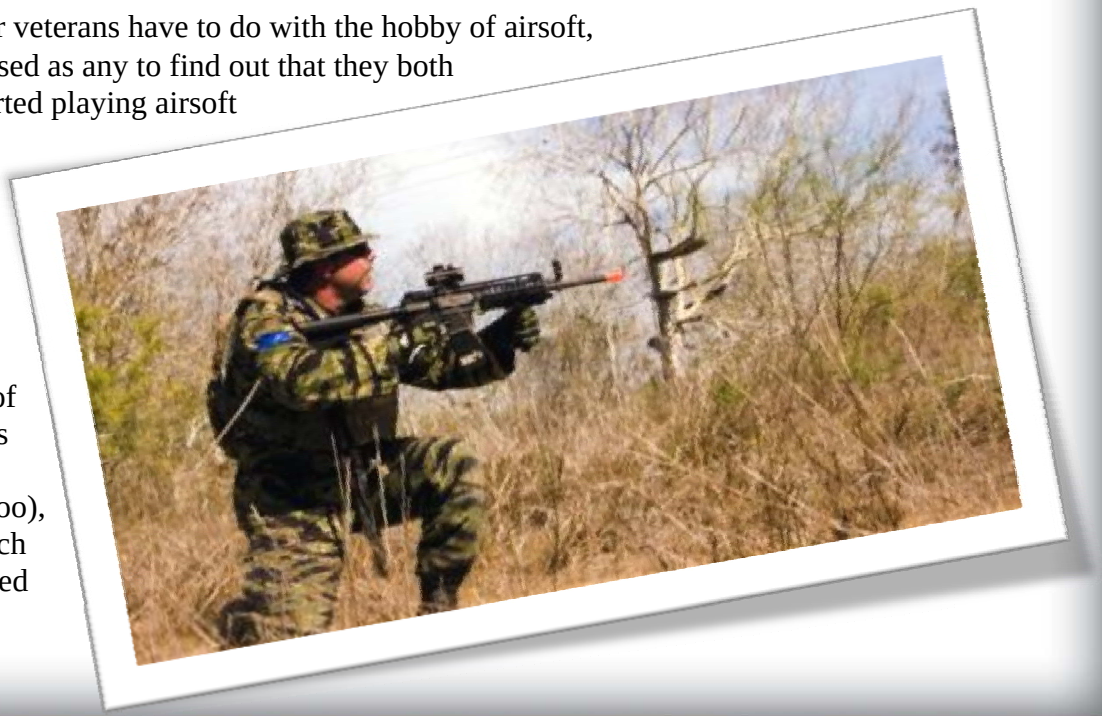
6mm Plastic Therapy for Veterans

By Mike Govan
CO, ODA 205, 2nd Grp, 1st SFAOC



Down here in South Texas we have hot, sunny days, wide open spaces, a beautiful beach, and a rapidly growing and vibrant air soft community. Surprisingly, we also have a lot of US military veterans, and as a Christian Counselor and a combat vet myself, I can tell you that we have growing PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) numbers among our veteran community, as well.

So what does PTSD and our veterans have to do with the hobby of airsoft, anyway? Well, I was surprised as any to find out that they both have a lot in common. I started playing airsoft with my teenage son a little less than two years ago. What began as fascination with the quality of the high-end replica guns and gear ended up becoming a form of therapy for myself and many other veteran friends of mine. In fact, it still is. This crazy little sport where guys and gals (yes, women play too), sling 6mm plastic BBs at each other out in the woods dressed





up in camo uniforms contains all the good things we love about the military. For example, friendship and camaraderie, teamwork, strategy, and definitely a lot more realism than one would expect, (especially if you are a former paintballer) are just a few of this simple games' perks. And as just as important, airsoft has already served as a polarizing factor in the uniting of several of our local communities, and this means if kids are on a safe, controlled airsoft field they are less likely to be somewhere else getting hurt or into trouble. The game also benefits the video game generation because it not only allows them to experience the 3-D aspect of the shooting games they play, but also gets them off the couch and outside for some much needed exercise!

One of the most beautiful aspects of the game for me is when they blow the air horn to signal the end of a mission, I rejoice inside when I see all my buddies walking out of the wood line with nothing more than maybe a few red BB marks on them. I can tell you that as a former medic, it is a wonderful sight. Then everyone heads back over to their gear or team area, loads up some more BBs and are ready for another round of fun! The smiling faces, the time spent with good friends, and opportunity to see a good plan come together, no one getting seriously hurt … and all that with a gun in your hand! That is indeed therapy!

I know that many veterans use this game as an ongoing tribute to the memory of our buddies who paid the ultimate price for our freedom. In a way it helps us remember the good, and for me to be able to share all the good things about my military service with my son is also priceless. I am now recommending this game to the vets with PTSD that I counsel as form of therapy. It is being received very well and I foresee it being both a valuable healing tool and a very enjoyable hobby for a lot people for a long time. So with all that being said, get those boots out, lace 'em up, charge those batteries, load some mags and go have a blast!





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Offensive Operations Planning Relating to Airsoft

By Zmonster
ODA 204, 2nd Grp, 1st SFAOC



Now that the summer has come to an end and the prime recruiting time is upon us, my Airsoft Team, ODA 204, is working to train players and conduct Tactical Clinics for other teams. The question I get routinely is "Why?" the answer is simple; this sport requires a degree of teamwork and the basic knowledge of tactics and applying them. Otherwise it turns into a speedball or lone wolf game where one team that is organized usually tears apart less organized teams. We rely heavily on tried and proven SOPs garnered from FM 3-21, FM 7-8, the Ranger Handbook, and other military manuals. Teams and players like to learn and then apply new skills bringing more to a MILSIM event.



Using the terms Shoot, Move, and Communicate motivates players to get out there and move tactically with a partner. The current situation as of late has gotten so focused on the urban fight that even active duty troops are forgetting the basics of movement in the forests, jungles, and suburban landscape. In addition, recent events in the various theaters of

conflict have started to cause Maneuver Leaders to rethink the small unit methods of urban area clearing (i.e. stacking up to clear a building). As more and more of our enemies and potential enemies are evaluating our methods, and as we are getting more focused on the urban fight, the bigger picture of Command and Control (C2), mission planning and rehearsals (known as Troop Leading Procedures), and the small unit leader's ability to fight his element with the knowledge of the Commander's task/purpose/intent gets often ignored in order for us get the "stack" right.

I have been a big believer in Airsoft being used as a great training tool, and my parent Airsoft Organization (1st Special Forces Airsoft Operations Command) allows for that. My ODA decided to focus training on two levels, Mission Planning and Tactical Application, giving all interested players a chance to learn and then practice.



Mission Planning:

Normally mission planning is done at all leader levels in various degrees of detail; to scale it down for Airsoft, we use the five paragraph operations order format that the US Army uses (the format can be found easily using a Web search engine):

1) Situation: Briefed Enemy first, then Friendly elements that are not under your control
2) Mission: A who, what, when, where, why statement for your unit (not how you are conducting it)
3) Execution: The how, broken down into teams or task/purpose by individual. We teach using the BASES format for offensive operations:
    - B: Breach or Base of Fire
    - A: Assault element
    - S: Support element
    - E: Exploit element
    - S: Security element

Now, that sounds like a lot of moving pieces and some players immediate ask how their small team is going to be able to pull off that many elements? Honestly it doesn't require that many teams, BASES is used to ensure that a leader/planner has addressed all the important elements to conduct an assault.



In my team, some elements are the same people but during an assault, they know when to switch elements, example: the Assault element becomes the Security element once on the objective with the Breach/Support element switches to the Exploitation element to search the dead enemy, seize sensitive materials, or treat wounded teammates.

4) Service/Support: Location of medics during movement/during the assault, how much ammo/specialty equipment (anti-armor, grenades)
5) Command/Signal: Where the leadership will be during the operation and the succession of command, Signal covers the radio frequencies and important backup signals

During the training we initially show a mission planning and briefing example to give the players a chance to see what it looks like. Then break them up into groups to plan a mission (usually a simple raid/or “bank hit”)

Tactical Application:

During the tactical application portion of the training, we break the players into groups of 6-8 and have them conduct rehearsals of their mission; discussing the use of enablers like SAWs, Snipers, mines, and Anti-Armor/Bunker weapons. Tactical Movement is also taught and it comes together with an raid on an objective with opposing forces. We then continue the day with multiple operations to give as many players a chance to plan and execute missions.



Teams quickly come together and realize the value of massing their efforts on an attack. Afterwards, each team builds on what they have been taught, often adding their own commands and style. The great part is that they value the military feel to the training and what it adds to the game play.



-ZMonster

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THE ROLES:
SAW GUNNER

By: Arthur Lowther (Oct. 2008)

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The soft sound of the wind and foliage moving seem to permeate the air as you step through the grass. Watching your footing, sweeping your weapon with your head, your doing everything right, slow breath, listen, scan, move, slow breath, listen, scan, move, the rest of your squad do the same each one spread out about 5 to 10 meters. Snap…great…the new guy stepped on a twig and it popped. The snapping twigs snap fills the air around your squad as you all freeze.

Your heart pumps faster, your thoughts moving a hundred miles an hour and all you can think of is the chewing out your going to give the new guy. 5 seconds pass...10…then the point man motions forward once more.

You slowly pass the new guys position as he gives you a look of apology and the air is ripped apart by the sound of a beast! Rounds are flying at you from the left! The sound by itself has you frozen in spot, a hundred angry bb's flying at you in rapid fire has just pinned your squad in place, and you move to scream out AMBUSH! The only thing that comes out of your lips is "HIT!" Later at the rally point and every one is sitting around chewing the fat you realize…I just faced a SAW…how I operate in Airsoft will never be the same again…

This is the scenario many of us as Airsoft operators have faced at least once in our career as an Airsoft Operator/Enthusiast. The Coveted SAW or Squad Automatic Weapon at one point in time was an Airsoft Enthusiasts dream. To own and operate one on the field held many implications. First off it meant you had a rather large wallet. SAWs at the time where made by Classic Army, TOP and other high end Airsoft Company's and with those names came a hefty price, a thousand dollars or more. To field a SAW was a major step into the Airsoft world.

Secondly the way you operated on the field with and against a SAW completely changed. HOW!? You ask? It's just a fully automatic Airsoft gun! My M4 can do that! Well of course your M4 can, or your G36 with a drum magazine, or any other weapons platform you decide to use, what makes the SAW so much different then the others? The simple fact it's a SAW, a Squad Automatic Weapon. Whether your fielding an M249, M60, or an RPK the first sight of that weapon pulled out of your weapons case is going to strike fear and awe into people's minds and hearts. You have in your hands the ability to realistically and tactically take out a whole squad by the pull of your trigger. Note…I said *"Realistically"*. It's a psychological advantage the SAW has over other weapons platforms in Airsoft. It's an actual Fully Automatic weapon designed to fire with a Drum Magazine. Where as any other systems just aren't.

Now let's look into the Strategic and Tactical use of the SAW. Having a SAW on your team is going to as already stated DRAMATICALLY change how your team and your as an Airsoft Operator move and respond on the Airsoft field. Many misconceptions abound as to how

you should use the SAW and with the introduction of the Lower Cost SAWs on the market you're going to start seeing a huge amount of tactically and strategically diverse attitudes on how to use a SAW. So…with that, how do you use the SAW? By definition the Squad Automatic Weapon is to be used as a Direct Suppression weapons system. What is Direct Suppression? Simply put you put rounds on target to suppress the enemy while your squad or team moves to engage.

Firing the SAW:

Something for those of you who have ever fired a real steel fully automatic weapon, recoil and muzzle climb become a huge factor. In Airsoft it's hardly an issue. With the SAW the best techniques for firing at a target is the same as the real steel variety 3 to 5 round bursts. Gaining the ability to control the trigger of a SAW will extremely enhance your ability to deploy the weapon. One of the largest factors that face SAW Gunners and those who play against them is the over whelming desire to squeeze that trigger hold it and spray and pray. Wrong, ladies and gents, plan wrong. Your wasting rounds, your giving away your position and your not doing any good for you or your team. 3 to 5 round bursts allow you to adjust your fire on the fly moving from target to target. In Airsoft as already stated you don't have the recoil issue to deal with, what this does is allow you to effectively and continuously place those 3 to 5 round bursts on target. The Largest mistake made by new SAW owners is to pull that trigger and hold it down. Tactically and Realistically this is wrong and you will find yourself often shunned on the field by other players as its also unsafe, but it also puts a lot of wear and tear on that SAW.

Rule of thumb – 3 to 5 round bursts.

Deployment of the SAW:

Now that we have discussed firing of a SAW System lets look into its deployment. Now every one has seen the Hollywood movies...Rambo, Predator, Swordfish etc. In these movies you have the hero or villain as it where pulling out a large SAW Weapon system, a Man Portable Gatling gun, M60, M249 and just opening up with it and mowing down the attackers! WOW its awesome entertainment but it's just that, intertainment. Deploying a SAW system is more about brains then brawn. It's a support system. Not a M16 Rifleman on point, or a grenadier, the whole reason is to for the SAW System is to suppress. Suppression is an art form of tactics, strategy, cover and concealment. SAW systems should be deployed in such a way that you have a very clean fire lane, a steady platform and good cover. Hip firing of the SAW system is often extremely frowned upon but it's capable of being done. SAW Gunners in the

almost every Military around the world, are taught three major positions to shoot their SAW system in, Standing, Kneeling, and Prone.

Standing:

Deploying in the Standing Position, the SAW gunner will raise the weapon and place it securely into the shoulder, grasping the pistol grip in the firing hand while holding the hand guard firmly in the off hand. Sighting down the iron sights and firing a 3 to 5 round burst. This position is good for quick firing engagement then moving to a more stable position and better cover. The SAW systems are often so heavy that constant engagement in the Standing position will cause extreme fatigue. A secondary method of the Standing if you have to continuously engage in this position is to move the SAW from the firing position in the shoulder to the ready position, with the barrel pointed at the ground while still holding the weapon into your shoulder, bringing it to bear on target firing then returning the system to the ready position.

Kneeling:

Kneeling is often the most common method of firing the SAW system. Simply put you will assume the position of fire as in the Standing position but drop down on either knee supporting the weight of the weapon in your arms on your raised knee. This position is more stable then the Standing due to the more body to body contact of your arms to knee. It also provides a SAW Gunner the ability to fire from a lower profile then the standing position. The Kneeling position is often seen used in conjunction of areas that have low to the ground cover such as fences, walls, shrub lines etc.

Prone:

The Prone position is by far the most stable position to fire a SAW System from. One of the major factors that sets a SAW System apart from any other weapon system with a drum magazine and the capability of firing at full auto is a built in bipod. To deploy a SAW system in a prone position, first you will deploy the bipod, on most M249 SAWs, it is as simple as reaching up to the forward hand guards pushing the metal bipod together then letting them flip out. The M60 is much the same way, as is the RPK. Each bipod is located pretty much in the same location. Once your bipod is deployed set the SAW system down on as close to level ground as possible. Lower your body behind the weapon system, placing the stock of your weapon into your shoulder, resting your cheek on the buttstock, grasp the pistol grip and pull back on the weapon so that it is seated tight into your shoulder. Your free hand will reach up and rest on the buttstock slightly forward of where your cheek is, ensuring not to block your sight picture/sight alignment.

Once this is down make sure your body is low as possible to the ground, move your body slightly at a 45 degree angle from the weapon, spreading your legs for further stability laying the insole of your feet as flat to the ground as possible. This position as stated is the most stable position of the three. When used in conjunction of pre-fabricated defensive positions such as Bunkers, Fighting Holes, Portholes in walls etc. This is a devastatingly strong position and extremely safe and secure.

We've covered firing and deployment…now to the meat and potatoes. Sure you can deploy your weapon in the proper position, and you can fire it…but can you use it tactically and strategically

Tactics and Strategy for a SAW System:

Often I've seen some one pull out a SAW load it up and walk out onto the field and use it like a rifle! I sit there and watch shaking my head as the SAW gunner pulls the trigger spraying an area. Or the Point man going out in the lead with a M60…sure you can put a lot of fire down range but are you going to be able to sustain point for a long
time?

When using a SAW System the first and foremost thing you need to remember and realize is everything you've ever done as a Rifleman or Sniper or any other role you have played in, Toss it out the window. The Mentality of a SAW System gunner is one of Support. Your not the hard charging, fast gunning assault man, or the stealth oriented long range, Intel gathering sniper, or the close quarters, heart pounding adrenaline building Close Quarters Combat specialist. You're a SAW Gunner.

The first strategy/tactic you need to learn and love is suppression. Suppressing the opponent in Airsoft often times can be a taxing and frustrating event. This is due to the fact that if your hit, 30 minutes or less and your back out on the field. People who participate in Airsoft are often found to take far more risks there then in a real world situation. Suppression with a SAW System is a true art form. Suppressing an enemy with a SAW System you need to continuously keep your eyes moving and scanning for potential targets. "Targets?" You mean people, right?! Well not always. Suppressing an opponent can be done in many ways. Lets go over a few scenarios.

1. **Y**our moving to contact and report comes from the point man that a squad is dug in forward of you. Your squad leader orders you to provide suppressive fire while they move to flank. You set up your position in a good location with a good firing lane, and good cover and concealment, and find that the enemy squad is dug in with

good defense bunkers made of tree branches, limbs and hard wood. The Opponents have one way of exiting the trench and that is backwards. Many of the branches still have leaves. So how do you suppress them?

In this situation, I would immediately start looking for portholes in the defensive position. Once you've located them map them out mentally. On the command to open fire if you are the only SAW System in the squad do not systematically fire at each hole, If you see movement at one open fire on it just above the hole, you may get a lucky shot and hit some one but its far more nerve racking to hear those rounds smacking into the tree branches over head, leaves falling down on top of you etc. Rotate through each hole as you see movement, rotate your shot placement, and move from shooting over the hole to shooting into the hole the back over. 3 to 5 round bursts 5 seconds at a time at each location. If you immediately start taking fire from a hole and they have your location pinned return fire. The key is to not worry about if you are actually making hits, but if the fire coming at you stops then that means your doing your job: Suppression.

2. You're in a built up area, houses, and cars. Suburbs. The opponent is reported free roaming and around your patrol route. You spot movement to your left spin and kneel down behind a vehicle. You've made contact with a squad of approaching opponents and immediately open fire sending them ducking for cover behind multiple vehicles. Unlike the first scenario this situation is not a contained as in one egress route for the Opponent. How do you suppress them?

This situation is a very difficult one and one that many SAW gunners will face no matter how or where you play. The battlefield is a liquid environment always flowing and always changing. Immediately upon engaging the opponent you need to call out contact and pass out information as soon as possible as to their disposition. I.E. location, how many etc. Once that is out, start your scanning and start firing as previously stated in the first scenario, 3 to 5 round bursts 5 in second intervals. The largest change is now you have metal objects to shoot at as well as glass etc. Shoot them! Ping those BBs off those objects, shoot, then move targets, shoot, move targets. Keep your bursts going and continuously adjust your targets, don't worry about trying to make hits, keep their heads down. Rotate your rounds from hitting the vehicles or buildings to firing in open lanes, such as between the vehicles, under the vehicles, and over their heads. Doing this it allows your squad to move and get better firing angles as well as look for flanking positions. The key to suppression in a situation like this is removing as many avenues of movement as possible from the Opponent, while keeping your self in a secure covered location. Make it impossible for your Opponent to move any location that you do not want them to move.

3. Your set up to ambush a superiorly numerical force. You are in the center position as per your Squad's standard operating procedure and set to open fire after your squad leader fires. The Opponents' squad enters the clearing, good spacing, your squad leader fires, hitting one. The Opponents' squad responds in good order immediately getting on line and attempting to assault through. How do you provide suppression in this situation?

This is a situation yet again you will often find yourself in as a SAW Gunner. The ambush is a tried and true tactic that SAW gunners are highly used in. In this situation you need to immediately start firing in 3 to 5 round bursts at targets that you see moving. Any Opponent that attempts to rush forward put rounds directly at them. Don't worry about any one bunkered down. If they are flat on the ground that means they are less likely to fire at you and your other squad members can keep them pinned by accurate fire. Every time an Opponent moves fire at them, swing and scan. Keep your fire to 2 second intervals, especially right after the initial contact is made with the Opponents Squad. Increasing your rate of fire can cause the Opponents squad to seek better cover. Go off the orders of your Squad leader.

The key in all three of these situations with suppression is to continuously scan for targets of opportunity whether they be opponents or inanimate objects. Often times the mere sound of a SAW System firing at someone will cause them to hunker down to get better cover. The sounds of your bb's banging off the wood and tin or buildings, or vehicles they are hunkered down behind often have the same effect. Continuously search for openings to fire into. A bb bouncing off a wall followed by three or four more seriously hampers a persons ability to not only get a good sight picture to fire at you, but slows their thinking process down. Increasing or decreasing your rate of fire also puts a person into a situation where they have to rapidly think and respond.

Lets touch on increasing or decreasing your rate of fire. "Does it matter?" you ask? Why yes, it does! Increasing your rate of fire causes two things in an Opponent.

1. Over confidence – If they hear you firing more rapidly they confuse this to some one who is inexperienced and easily taken out. Increasing your rate of fire masks the sound of 3 to 5 round bursts especially in Airsoft. So how do you increase your rate of fire? Decreases the time between bursts. This does not mean hold the trigger down for longer bursts but instead fire your 3 to 5 round burst every 2 seconds rather then 5. What this does is allow you to fire more often and increases the sound and rounds coming down range. Increasing your rate of fire should be done in a multiple of situations. Specifically in Ambushes, Full on frontal Charges by the enemy, or tactical withdrawals, basically any situation where you have multiple targets and clear fire lanes.

2. **C**onfusion. Increasing your rate of fire decreases the amount of time your opponent has to respond to your fire. If your sending controlled accurate 3 to 5 round bursts towards your opponent those rounds are going to start causing them to think of a way to get out of the line of fire. Increasing that fire causes an automatic response for the body to get out of harms way. Thus increases your opponent's confusion, to many opponents an increasing the rate of fire on a SAW System means an immediate attack on their position is to come. So be sure to adjust it keep them on their toes.

By simply extending time between your bursts you can decrease your rate of fire, just as easily as you can increase it. Decreasing your rate of fire is far less often used then increasing your rate of fire. Decreasing your rate of fire can be used when you want to keep a pinned down opponent in place for extended periods of time. Typically, a siege type situation where your just swapping shots. Decreasing your rate of fire is also used when breaking from an Ambush after you're sure the area has been completely suppressed and controlled you can slow your fire so as to conserve ammunition.

Simple tactics that will make you a better Gunner:

Communication is a key ingredient to being an excellent SAW Gunner. You have to have continuous communication abilities with your squad/platoon and Squad Leader/Platoon Leader. Most often then not the SAW Gunner will be directed by your squad leader or platoon leader and you will be operating with more than one SAW Gunner. Whistles, body taps, hand signals, radio communication are all typical methods of communicating between SAW Gunners and your Squad/Platoon Leader. Ensure that each and every method is not only familiar to you, but is also clearly understood per your Teams Standard Operating Procedure. If you don't have a communications plan, get one!

When operating as a SAW Gunner you are often going to be one of at least two Gunners in the field. This allows you to do a technique called "Talking Guns." Not only is this a fun method of suppressive fire but when done properly is just plain…*Impressive*.

For the "Talking Gun" method two or more SAW Gunners are needed. Starting either from center and moving left to right or right to left, or from left to right down a line or right to left, one gun will shoot a sustained 3 to 5 round burst, as soon as that gunner is finished the next in line opens up with a 3 to 5 round burst in response this continues from one gunner to the next providing a sustained amount of fire and a sustained amount of noise. If done properly even with two SAW Systems this method can cause an attacking opponent to think they are facing far more weapons/Troops then they actually are. The direction of fire I.E. moving from right to

left down the line or starting center and moving out etc. is pre-determined and multiple ways are established with different signals to switch.

Let's talk about reloading a moment. In Airsoft with a SAW System most SAW drum magazines hold any where from 2000 to 5000 bb's. A good SAW Gunner can go almost an 8 hour period with a 2400 drum magazine. Even in a heavy fire fight situation you should still have plenty of ammunition left over. For those situations where you do run out of ammunition, communication comes back into play. Tell your team that you are out of ammo. Two things should happen:

1. You start reloading, and
2. Your team immediately increases their rate of fire to compensate for the loss of your SAW until you're able to reload.

Now we have covered a lot of information in a short period of time. But there is something we must do. Let's look at the Don'ts of Airsoft SAW Gunners.

1. Do NOT Run and gun. You loose the suppression factor and accuracy. Stop, get a position and fire.
2. Do not treat the SAW system as a M16, Sniper rifle etc. It's a suppression Machine Gun. Nothing more, nothing less.
3. Do not be Rambo. Shooting from the hip can be done, but only when you cant get a good stable position and not for long extended periods of time.
4. Full auto does not mean, "hold the trigger till you run out of bb's!" 3 to 5 round bursts!
5. Do not ever stop communicating! Communication will keep you on target!
6. Just because you are a SAW gunner does not make you a one-man army. You are there to support your team, not lead it.
7. The SAW is not about hits. Its about support and teamwork.

In closing ladies and gentleman, this simple sentence holds true with all SAW Gunners: *"I will support my team, with superior accurate suppressive fire, and make a lot of noise doing it!"*

The SAW System is not only about high rate of fire, but psychological, visual, and auditory impact. It's a weapon system that when deployed and utilized properly can often cause an Opponent to think twice before even engaging a unit.

What we have gone over here is just the tip of the iceberg in conducting yourself as a SAW Gunner. Having a SAW System in your squad or team will dramatically change your style of play and those who face you on the other side of the field will be in the same situation. For more information on being a capable and effective SAW gunner get your hands on any US Military Infantry Manuals to gain a better understanding of the deployment and duty responsibilities of an SAW Gunner. Or drop me a line any time!

Remember: Keep that finger straight and off the trigger till you intend to send rounds down range, eye protection on, and get to suppressing!

-AL

Adding a General Purpose Machine Gun or Support Weapon to your Airsoft Team

By Ranger Mike
Florida Swamp Rifles, TCA

So your team is getting more and more organized. Team drills and specialty roles have been developed. You have even done some collective fund raising and finally decided to purchase a general purpose machine gun (GPMG) or Automatic Support Weapon. One of your team mates has decided he or she will take on the role of becoming the hinge that the rest of the team will pivot on. But what does that mean to the team and its tactics? It is not just another AEG on the team, a good support weapon can really dominate the field, allowing for fire and maneuver for the rest of the Airsoft Team.

Depending on the size of your team and the general type of play they do, will determine the type of ASW or GPMG that you should acquire. Our decision to go with the Classic Army M249 SAW and the A&K M60E3 was driven by team preference. You could opt for the following, BAR, RPK, RPD, L86 LSW, M249, M60, Stoner Mod0, or even a MG42 (yes we have seen one in Georgia!). No matter which one you decide on, it is the employment on the field that counts.

My team for example, has 2 four man teams, and a team leader. The 4 man team is the base element consisting of 1xM4, 1xM4/M203, 1xSR25/M110, and either a M249 or a M60E3. This 4 man team is quite capable of suppressing a target with the designated marksman and ASW, with the 2 riflemen flanking the target. If the team goes online and suppresses an OPFOR, the second 4 man team has the firepower necessary to flank or get behind the opposing force. Our style of play is mostly in wooded areas with an occasional 1 to 2 room single story structures. In the offense, our team uses our support weapons in the “base of fire” method, keeping the OPFOR's heads down allowing the team to take action. This method is pretty standardized among teams because of its ease to grasp the concept and train on; each weapon carries 2500-4000 rounds and with a good battery and operator can lay down an excellent amount of covering fire. In the defense the support weapons are placed in positions that can cover open areas, trails, objectives, or areas that are always traveled, this allows for the riflemen in the teams flexibility in the defense (counterattack, ambush). The only recommendation I have for your machine gunner is to have an alternate position to move to, because once he starts shooting the enemy will either move away from his location or aggressively come at him to take out your most casualty producing weapon. If the support gunner has that alternate position identified, it will disorganize the OPFOR's attempts.

The other method, or “German” method (called that because it was developed by the German army in WWII), is to have the Squad or Team suppress the enemy with their rifles and have the machine gunner move forward or flank the OPFOR. This is a total reversal compared to the offensive tactics mentioned above, but with training it can be done. The risk involved is that the Machine Gunner could be taken out during his/her movement forward. Normally in this method the Machine Gunner has an assistant moving with him/her.

Adding a Support Weapon to your team easily adds to the amount of firepower your team can deliver, but it boils down to what you do with that extra firepower.

RLTW!
-RM

ODA 205's Classic Army M249 SAW

By F.A. Rangel "Arcangel"



Once upon a time not to long ago a player could go out to almost any given airsoft field on any given Saturday and find more M4s and MP5 than are in existence in the armories of the entire U.S military. Fortunately this trend is changing and new rifles are being produced and there is now a style that suits every player at an affordable price. From Sigs to Styers and Enfields to FALS, weekly skirmishes have become gun shows but sometimes we long for a classic. Think about it for a second, among all those M4s and MP5s there was almost always one unique and often misused bit of kit; a gun that was often a center piece for an entire teams; a gun that you didn't buy unless you were either a gluten for punishment or an animal. That gun was an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon or SAW.

Heavy and unwieldy, these things can be a nightmare to carry but every team had to have one. And let's face it, they just look intimidating. This is one of those guns that when you take it out on the field, people are looking for you because they are convinced that your gun can shoot invisible bullets around corners and threw brick walls. That may be the image but often times these fears have no base in fact and the SAW is seen being used as nothing more than a very heavy M4. Often time I would ask myself why that was and after shooting one, I found the answer. The answer is, out of the box they really are just a very heavy M4. I set out on a mission to finally change this.

CLASIC ARMY M249

When I got my hands on this thing, it was visually a piece of art. All the parts that should be there were there and they we all metal. I handed this gun to a friend who served in Iraq and carried one of these and at first he couldn't figure out how I got my hands on a 5.56mm machine gun, then he realized it was an airsoft gun was amazed at the detail. The stock was study and the bipod just loose enough to be useful. The carry handle operated as expected and felt rugged enough to actually be functional in a skirmish. The but-plate was heavy duty alloy and was equipped a swing out shoulder hook just like the real thing. Upon opening the operating cover, I discovered that it even had the slots for a fake ammo belt.

The box magazine turned out to be far superior that found on the other Chinese made replicas which operate on sound. This magazine utilized an on off switch which activated a motor drive that was pressure sensitive. What this

means is that when the button is pushed to the on position the motor turns until the magazine is properly wound the automatically shuts off. As rounds are fired the pressure is released from the winding mechanism, the box magazine winds itself again. After running threw 2000 rounds without a single dry fire, I determined that this system simply works as advertised.

While the external features of the gun were amazing, what really got my attention was what was under the hood. The gearbox on this monster is literally a brick. Big, beefy, square and rugged this gearbox looks and feels like it could take anything you could throw at it. Like all stock Classic Army guns, this one was underpowered out of the box. Here's the up side, this can be fixed in less than 5 minutes. As it turns out there is no need to open the gear box to swap the spring out. As a matter of fact, no parts have to be removed with the exception of a bolt that holds the but-stock in place. Pull the pin, swivel the sock and push the spring release. Apply some pressure to the spring guide and that's it. The spring and spring guide will slide right out. I'm confident that the stock parts could easily handle a 110 to 120 spring which would bring the rifle right up 400fps.

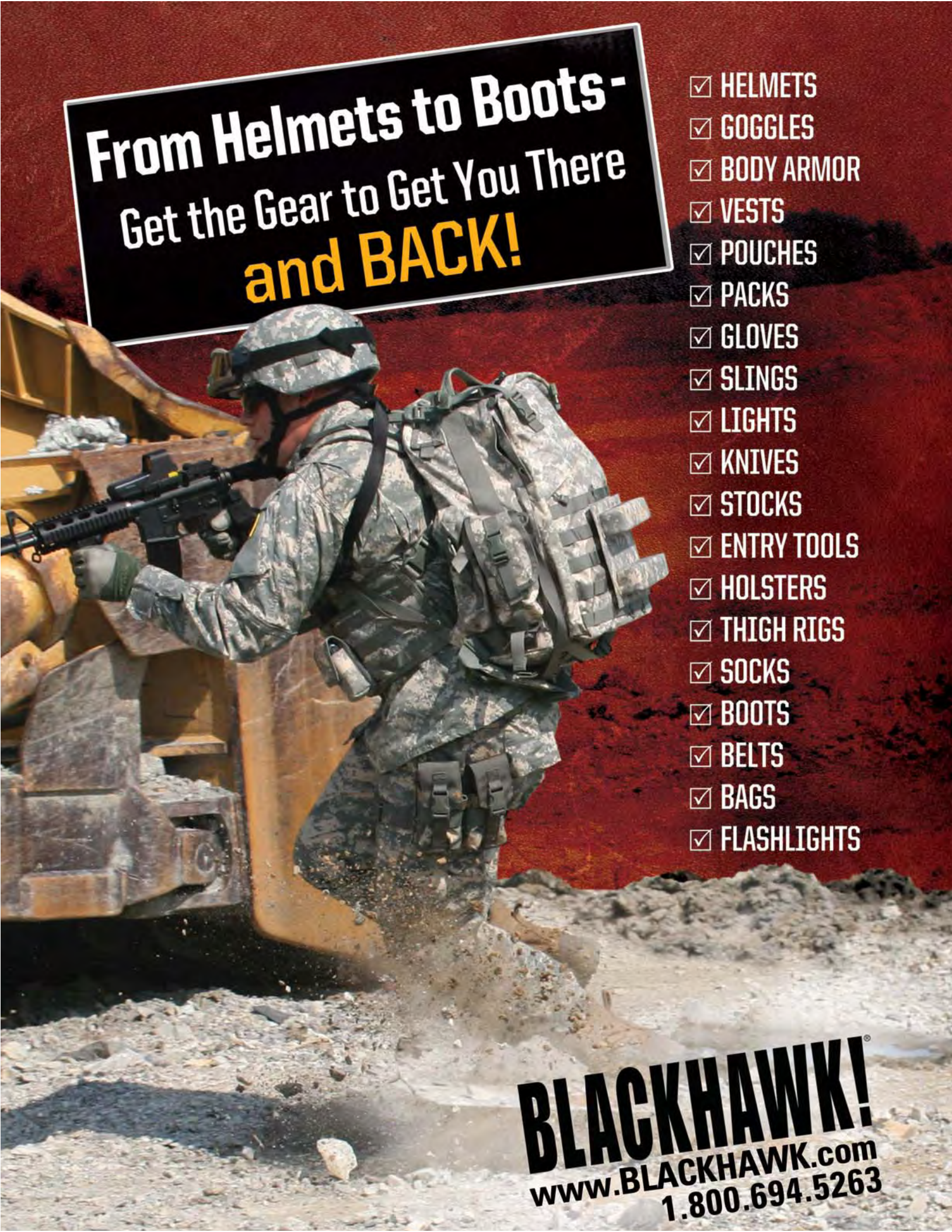
If I had one complaint about this replica, it would the same complaint that I have in regards to ALL Classic Army replicas which is the fact that Classic Army motors are extremely underpowered when paired with upgraded springs.

Now I knew what I had to work with. Getting this thing up to 400fps at a reasonable rate of fire should have involved an upgraded spring, motor and a decent 9.6v battery. Here's the catch, TCA, TASO and A3 regulations allow up to 450fps with unlimited rate of fire for support style weapons. So I decided to take this to the next level:

- Motor: AMP high torque short style motor
- Spring: JG M130
- Shim set: Angel shims
- Piston: Matrix light piston with full steel tooth rack
- Piston head: Modify Aluminum
- Cylinder head: Systema Brass
- Battery: Tenergy 11.1 2800mah 20c discharge

End result:

A SAW that shoots 450fps at 1350 rpm (22.5rps). So far I have fired over 10,000 rounds out of this monster without a single failure and still going strong.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Team Spotlight:
Black Ops Airsoft



TCA: When, why, where was Black Ops Airsoft created?

BOA: Black Ops began around April 2010. An M4 got the attention of Raul and Sam, who now are the leaders of BLACK OPS known as "*Bullet Proof*" and "*Ruthless*". Our work place was where it all started with Raul, Sam, Role (Rhino), Mark and me, "*Punisher*". We started playing as friends for fun. Addiction is as good an answer as to why we made up our team. We began to do research on the sport and found out there was a whole community of players like us addicted to the sport and eager to play and challenge other teams. Black Ops was a name voted by our team as a whole. That's why the name has stuck.

TCA: Where does the Team practice? Where are you based out of?

BOA: The place we found was a bike trail in Mission, TX. It was perfect, lots of shade, brush and no thorns. We began playing every Saturday morning. Our team got bigger and playing in a pubic place was no longer suitable. We needed a private field. Our fear of playing in a pubic place was that we were endangering our sport. Our current field is known as Wolf's Ranch. It's a wonderful place big enough to play and private. We have plans on a 30 acre field, "Black Ops Field".

That's the basic Idea on how we started.

TCA: Loadout and kit standard across the team, any common weapons? Do you have specialty positions like Support Gunner, Sniper, and/or CQB?

BOA: We have three companies in our team. We have all kinds of weapons. M4s, AKs, G36s, M14s, and Sniper rifles. We are in the process of buying a M249.

TCA: How is the Team Organized, have you attended or hosted any large operations?

BOA: We have three companies in our team numbering 30 total. Our current roster:

1) SAM (RUTHLESS)
2) RAUL (BULLETPROOF)
3) RICK(PUNISHER)
4) MARK (BAM BAM)
5) ROLY(RHINO)
6) SAMMY (VENOM)
7) VINNIE(KRUEL)
8) JOEL(PYRO)
9) CARLOS(IRONMAN)
10) MANUEL(WOLF)
11) OMAR(BLADE)
12) MAC (MAC21)
13) (SHONDA)
14) TONY(BLM)
15) (NOBEL)
16) (SCAR)
17) (BABYBLUE)
18) CHRIS (FLAME)
19) ALEXIS(CYBORG)
20) NICK(STING)
21) JOHNNY (TANK)
22) JESSE
23) JOE
24) JR
25) IVAN
26) MINGO(MACHETE)
27) DANNY(GHOST)
28) JOHNNY(MANIAC)
29) TUBS
30) PHATS



Hosting a major op is definitely one of our goals.

TCA: As a new member to the Third Coast Family, what are your Team's expectations for the upcoming year?

BOA: Our plans for the upcoming year are to have the largest and baddest Airsoft Field in the valley. Our goal is to get Airsoft recognized as an official sport. We believe that joining with TCA gets one step closer to our goal. Our vision is very similar. We are a young team with lots of passion and potential to grow.

Keep on playing. Slinging BBs. Can't be weak!




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AIRSOFT: A SURVEY OF LAWS IN THE UNITED STATES

By
Mike Watkins Attorney at
Law, October 2008
(Federal and Florida)

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I. Introduction

There are many misconceptions about that laws govern the hobby of airsoft, a military simulation (MILSIM) sport that uses accurate replicas of military firearms to shoot low energy plastic 6mm bbs. The sport of airsoft simulates military-style combat with each side shooting at the other to achieve some objective to win the game.

The main distinction between paintball and airsoft is the fact that airsoft is played with guns that strive to be as accurate a replica of the real military firearm, called "real steel", as possible. While nearly all paintball guns can be universally recognized as such by their distinctive shapes, airsoft guns are so close to their real steel counterparts that one wouldn't be able to tell the difference right away if you held it in your hand. Therein, lies the problem. These guns, while not toys, are not guns either but their appearance is so realistic that safety concerns arise due to the fact police can't distinguish them from their lethal cousins.

People who have publicly brandished their airsoft gun have been shot by police who reasonably believed they were under an imminent threat of deadly force. Such tragedies, it is thought, can be avoided by requiring manufacturers to paint the ends of the barrels of their airsoft guns with a highly visible "blaze orange" colored tip to signify the gun as a non-gun, or more insidiously, to make them of clear plastic. Thus, Federal Law was enacted in 1988 to mandate such a requirement for manufacturers and retailers who sell the guns to the public.

United States Code Title 15 Chapter 76 §5001

15 USC 76 §5001. Penalties for entering into commerce of imitation firearms

(a) **Acts prohibited**

It shall be unlawful for any person to manufacture, enter into commerce, ship, transport, or receive any toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm unless such firearm contains, or has affixed to it, a marking approved by the Secretary of Commerce, as provided in subsection (b) of this section.

(b) **Distinctive marking or device; exception; waiver; adjustments and changes**

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) or (3), each toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm shall have as an integral part, permanently affixed, a blaze orange plug inserted in the barrel of such toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm. Such plug shall be recessed no more than 6 millimeters from the muzzle end of the barrel of such firearm.

(2) The Secretary of Commerce may provide for an alternate marking or device for any toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm not capable of being marked as provided in paragraph (1) and

may waive the requirement of any such marking or device for any toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm that will only be used in the theatrical, movie or television industry.

(3) The Secretary is authorized to make adjustments and changes in the marking system provided for by this section, after consulting with interested persons.

(c) **"Look-alike firearm" defined**

For purposes of this section, the term "look-alike firearm" means any imitation of any original firearm which was manufactured, designed, and produced since

1898, including and limited to toy guns, water guns, replica nonguns, and air-soft guns firing nonmetallic projectiles. Such term does not include any look-alike, nonfiring, collector replica of an antique firearm developed prior to 1898, or traditional B–B, paint-ball, or pellet-firing air guns that expel a projectile through the force of air pressure.

(d) **Study and report**

The Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics is authorized and directed to conduct a study of the criminal misuse of toy, look-alike and imitation firearms, including studying police reports of such incidences and shall report on such incidences relative to marked and unmarked firearms.

(e) **Technical evaluation of marking systems**

The Director of the National Institute of Justice is authorized and directed to conduct a technical evaluation of the marking systems provided for in subsection (b) of this section to determine their effectiveness in police combat situations. The Director shall begin the study within 3 months after November 5, 1988, and such study shall be completed within 9 months after November 5, 1988.

(f) **Effective date**

This section shall become effective on the date 6 months after November 5, 1988, and shall apply to toy, look-alike, and imitation firearms manufactured or entered into commerce after November 5, 1988.

(g) **Preemption of State or local laws or ordinances; exceptions**

The provisions of this section shall supersede any provision of State or local laws or ordinances which provide for markings or identification inconsistent with provisions of this section provided that no State shall—

(i) prohibit the sale or manufacture of any look-alike, nonfiring, collector replica of an antique firearm developed prior to 1898, or

(ii) prohibit the sale (other than prohibiting the sale to minors) of traditional B–B, paint ball, or pellet-firing air guns that expel a projectile through the force of air pressure.

Comments: As you can read from the above Federal Statute, it applies only to manufacturers and retailers who sell airsoft products to the public. This statute has been the most frequently misquoted and misconstrued federal law by the airsoft public and retailers alike who have neither actually read the statute or studied its application. There is nothing in this Federal Statute that prohibits a person, once buying an airsoft product, from removing the orange blaze tip.

Now that Congress has said it will regulate the sale of airsoft guns, the Dept of Commerce created the Federal Rules to implement the enacted Law. Enter Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 15 Chapter XI CFR 1150.

TITLE 15--COMMERCE AND FOREIGN TRADE
CHAPTER XI--TECHNOLOGY ADMINISTRATION, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PART 1150--MARKING OF TOY, LOOK-ALIKE AND IMITATION FIREARMS

Sec. §1150.1 Applicability

This part applies to toy, look-alike, and imitation firearms (``devices") having the appearance, shape, and/or configuration of a firearm and produced or manufactured and entered into commerce on or after May 5, 1989, including devices modeled on real firearms manufactured, designed, and produced since 1898. This part does not apply to:

(a) Non-firing collector replica antique firearms, which look authentic and may be a scale model but are not intended as toys modeled on real firearms designed, manufactured, and produced prior to 1898;

(b) Traditional B-B, paint-ball, or pellet-firing air guns that expel a projectile through the force of compressed air, compressed gas or mechanical spring action, or any combination thereof, as described in American Society for Testing and Materials standard F 589-85, Standard Consumer Safety Specification for Non-Powder Guns, June 28, 1985. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies may be obtained from the American Society for Testing and Materials, 1916 Race Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103. Copies may be inspected at the office of the Associate Director for Industry and Standards, National Institute for Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC; and

(c) Decorative, ornamental, and miniature objects having the appearance, shape and/or configuration of a firearm, including those intended to be displayed on a desk or worn on bracelets, necklaces, key chains, and so on, provided that the objects measure no more than thirty-eight (38) millimeters in height by seventy (70) millimeters in length, the length measurement excluding any gun stock length measurement.

Sec. §1150.2 Prohibitions.

No person shall manufacture, enter into commerce, ship, transport, or receive any toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm (``device") covered by this part as set forth in Sec. 1150.1 of this part unless such device contains, or has affixed to it, one of the markings set forth in Sec. 1150.3 of this part, or unless this prohibition has been waived by Sec. 1150.4 of this part.

Sec. §1150.3 Approved markings

The following markings are approved by the Secretary of Commerce:

(a) A blaze orange (Federal Standard 595a, February, 1987, color number 12199, issued by the General Services Administration) or orange color brighter than that specified by the federal standard color number, solid plug permanently affixed to the muzzle end of the barrel as an integral part of the entire device and recessed no more than 6 millimeters from the muzzle end of the barrel. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director of the Federal Register in accordance with U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of Federal Standard 595a may be obtained from the Office of Engineering and Technical Management, Chemical Technology Division, Paints Branch, General Services Administration, Washington, DC 20406. Copies may be inspected at the office of the Associate Director for Industry and Standards, National Institute for Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(b) A blaze orange (Federal Standard 595a, February, 1987, color number 12199, issued by the General Services Administration) or orange color brighter than that specified by the Federal Standard color number, marking permanently affixed to the exterior surface of the barrel, covering the circumference of the barrel from the muzzle end for a depth of at least 6 millimeters. This incorporation by reference was approved by the Director for the Federal Register in accordance with 5 U.S.C. 552(a) and 1 CFR part 51. Copies of Federal Standard 595a may be obtained from the Office of Engineering and Technical Management, Chemical Technology Division, Paints Branch, General Services Administration, Washington, DC 20406. Copies may be inspected at the office of the Associate Director for Industry and Standards, National Institute for Standards and Technology, Gaithersburg, Maryland, or at the Office of the Federal Register, 800 North Capitol Street, NW., suite 700, Washington, DC.

(c) **Construction of the device entirely of transparent or translucent materials which permits unmistakable observation of the device's complete contents**.
(d) **Coloration of the entire exterior surface of the device in white, bright red, bright orange, bright yellow, bright green, bright blue, bright pink, or bright purple, either singly or as the predominant color in combination with other colors in any pattern**.

Sec. §1150.4 Waiver
The prohibitions set forth in Sec. 1150.2 of this part may be waived for any toy, look-alike or imitation firearm that will be used only in the theatrical, movie or television industries. A request for such a waiver should be made, in writing, to the Chief Counsel for Technology, United States Department of Commerce, Washington, DC 20230. The request must include a sworn affidavit which states that the toy, look-alike, or imitation firearm will be used only in the theatrical, movie or television industry. A sample of the item must be included with the request.

Sec. §1150.5 Preemption.
In accordance with section 4(g) of the Federal Energy Management Improvement Act of 1988 (15 U.S.C. 5001(g)), the provisions of section 4(a) of that Act and the provisions of this part supersede any provision of State or local laws or ordinances which provides for markings or identification inconsistent with the provisions of section 4 of that Act or the provisions of this part.

Comments: As you can see, the important Federal Law and Regulatory Rules by the Department of Commerce govern the manufacture, importation and sales of Airsoft guns but do not apply to the end user. Under Section 1150.5, the States or local laws cannot conflict with the Federal Regulation in the requirements for coloration of the airsoft gun. This is an important section. The States cannot have requirements that differ from the approved standards by the Dept of Commerce, however, the State are free, at present to adopt a specific approved coloration scheme. If the State of Vermaineafornia wants to enact legislation making airsoft guns sold in that state to be of only bright pink under subsection d of **§1150.3 Approved markings,** they are free to do so because it is an approved marking.

Let us hope we are not taking the airsoft field with bright pink airsoft guns in the near future. All it would take would be one media-overblown incident and the Legislature will require airsofters in their state to do exactly that.

Now that we have covered the Federal Law and Regulations and the Power of the State to adopt the Federal Standards, let's examine how the States presently regulation airsoft.

II. The Police Powers of the States to Enact Laws: Coloring and Possession

There is nothing to prevent the individual States exercising their police powers from further regulating airsoft guns with restrictions on approved coloring, the manufacturing materials, restrictions on the locations or use of BB guns or prohibitions against the removal or covering of the safety coloring. Indeed, since the States, under the 10th Amendment of the Constitution, have the power to enact such laws and regulations, called "police powers", that power is extended to cities to enact their own laws including the regulation of airsoft guns. A wise airsofter will check not only the Federal law but State, County and Municipal laws as well that regulate airsoft or "BB" guns. For example, the City of Beaverton, OR has banned "replica firearms" in public places, the first city in Oregon to do so. The State of California also bans them from public places.

As to orange markings, removing the orange tip is not illegal under Federal Law. Having stated that, however, most assuredly that is about the most unwise thing a person can do. It is a matter of your own life should you unexpectedly encounter law enforcement with an airsoft gun that they cannot discern from the real steel weapon. The problem has never been orange tips on a sanctioned airsoft field. It is, rather, during transport between the field and home, playing airsoft on one's own property, or playing on an unsanctioned field that most unfortunate incidents occur with police and frightened bystanders.

If you are stopped by police for any reason, tell them right way that you are carrying AIRSOFT guns in your vehicle in gun cases so that they will be informed. It is much better to prevent a misunderstanding with a timely announcement instead solving one after you lying facedown on the pavement at gunpoint.

Always play on sanctioned fields for airsoft events or have written permission in your possession if you play on someone else's private property. Always play out of sight of the general public so that frantic calls to 911 reporting "people with guns shooting at each other" are avoided. Don't display your airsoft guns in places that would likely alarm people who know nothing about airsoft. Never use your airsoft gun other than for airsoft gaming. Event sponsors should have a good relationship with local police. Inform them when events are taking place, especially the larger regional events with many attendees.

It is the common sense gap in the Airsoft sport that makes headlines and gives the Airsoft community a tarnished reputation in the mind of the public and those pesky lawmakers in State Capitols and Congress. Some states have responded already with such legislation. This article is a cursory survey of the laws of the 50 states. This survey is ***NOT*** intended to be construed as legal advice in any form as the author is not licensed to practice law in all 50 states. Please consult with a licensed attorney or the District Attorney's Office in your area if you have specific questions about the laws of your state and how the Courts have applied those laws. I have attempted to pick five states from various parts of the country and present them in each issue for your information as to how to proceed in your contact with your local District Attorney's Office.

III. Survey of Some State Laws Regulating Airsoft and BB guns

State of Florida ----------

First, let's examine the State of Florida Statute related to BB Guns.
Title XLVI Crimes, Chapter 790 Weapons and Firearms.
790.22 Use of BB guns, air or gas-operated guns, or electric weapons or devices by minor under 16; limitation; possession of firearms by minor under 18 prohibited; penalties.—

(1) The use for any purpose whatsoever of BB guns, air or gas-operated guns, or electric weapons or devices, by any minor under the age of 16 years is prohibited unless such use is under the supervision and in the presence of an adult who is acting with the consent of the minor's parent.

(2) Any adult responsible for the welfare of any child under the age of 16 years who knowingly permits such child to use or have in his or her possession any BB gun, air or gas-operated gun, electric weapon or device, or firearm in violation of the provisions of subsection (1) of this section commits a misdemeanor of the second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(3) A minor under 18 years of age may not possess a firearm, other than an unloaded firearm at his or her home, unless:

(a) The minor is engaged in a lawful hunting activity and is:

1. At least 16 years of age; or

2. Under 16 years of age and supervised by an adult.

(b) The minor is engaged in a lawful marksmanship competition or practice or other lawful recreational shooting activity and is:

1. At least 16 years of age; or
2. Under 16 years of age and supervised by an adult who is acting with the consent of the minor's parent or guardian.

(c) The firearm is unloaded and is being transported by the minor directly to or from an event authorized in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b).

(4)(a) Any parent or guardian of a minor, or other adult responsible for the welfare of a minor, who knowingly and willfully permits the minor to possess a firearm in violation of subsection (3) commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

Analysis: Notice at the beginning of 790.22, the statute expressly includes "*air or gas-operated guns, or electric weapons or devices*". This can be easily construed to include airsoft guns as "devices" since airsoft guns function on the very principles intended and described in the statute. Courts must defer to the intent of the legislature when the law was enacted and absent some clear intent by the Florida legislature to exempt Airsoft guns, it would not be difficult to maintain the argument that an airsoft gun clearly operates on the same principles as a BB gun and squarely places airsoft guns in the framework of the statute when using the plain meaning of the statute's wording. Also note that the term "electric weapons" in this statute doesn't apply to an airsoft automatic electric gun or "AEG". The Florida Statute 790.01 (14) defines this term ""Electric weapon or device" means any device which, through the application or use of electrical current, is designed, redesigned, used, or intended to be used for offensive or defensive purposes, the destruction of life, or the infliction of injury." The clear meaning of this term applies to tasers or electric stun devices.

What is of important note is that individuals under the age of sixteen cannot possess a BB gun or airsoft unless there is a supervising adult present, with parental permission if the parents are not present. Airsoft sports attracts many under-16 participants. I would strongly argue that if a group of fifteen-year-olds are out playing airsoft in nearby woods without a supervising adult present, they are in violation of this statute. Further more, the parents can be held criminally liable for knowingly and willfully permitting a minor to possess such a weapon as a third degree felony. Is playing airsoft with your underage friends in Florida worth having your parents charged with felonies? I hope that under-16 participants consider the risk for doing so. Read the entire statute including the penalties at:
http://www.flsenate.gov/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch0790/SEC22.HTM&Title=-%3E2008-%3ECh0790-%3ESection%2022#0790.22

Another interesting read in the Florida State Statute in the State's Declaration of Second Amendment Rights in 790.333 (3)(h) which recognizes that "*Sport shooting and training range" or "range" means any area that has been designed, or operated for the use of, firearms, rifles, shotguns, pistols, silhouettes, skeet, trap, black powder, BB guns, airguns, or similar devices, or any other type of sport or training shooting."*

In 2006, a bill in the Florida Senate SB 1490, was introduced to severely restrict airsoft by name but the bill failed for a number of reasons, one of which was the negative response from the airsoft community.

Conclusion: It is legal to play airsoft in Florida. What you may find are local governments that prohibit the discharge of BB guns (and airsoft guns by implication) within their city limits or police jurisdiction. There is an age restriction for those under 16 in that you must be accompanied by an parent or authorized adult. for game play. Florida also holds that any crime committed with an "imitation weapon" is punished in the same manner as if it has been a real weapon. Be a responsible airsoft player. Transport your guns in a locked case, unloaded,

to and from game sites. Advise any law enforcement officer who stops you that you have an airsoft gun in your locked case and that you are just doing your duty to inform them.

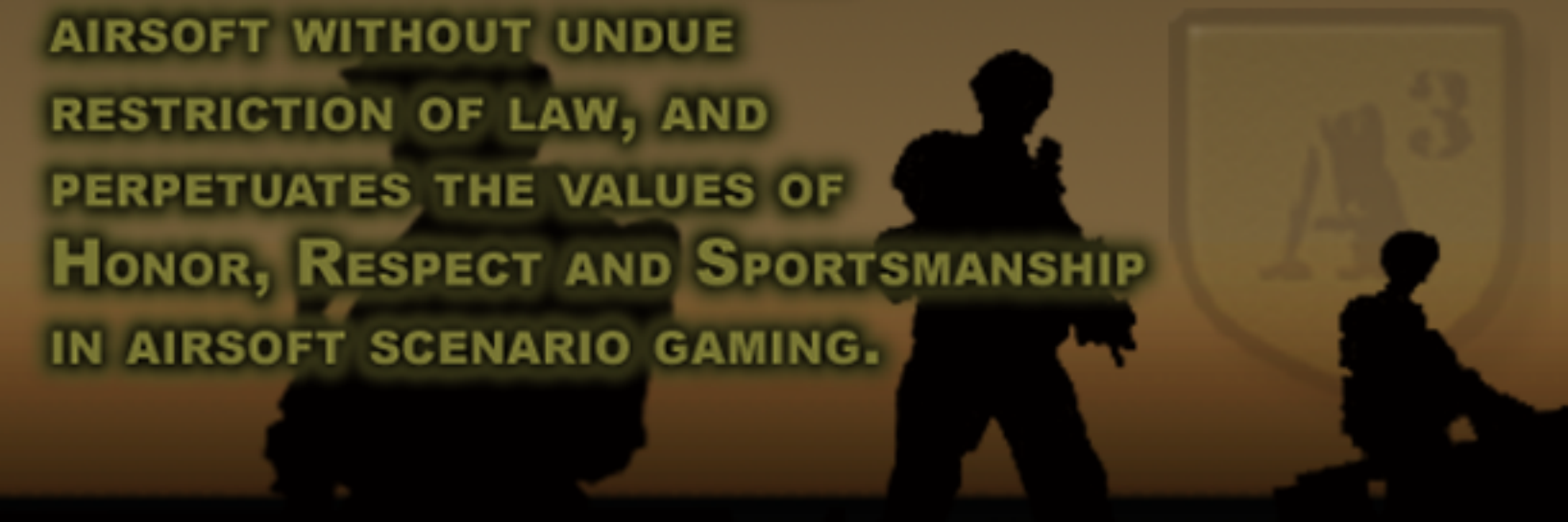
-MW

American Airsoft Association



The American Airsoft Association is a national organization that provides education and motivational support, promotes safe and legal gaming for the American airsoft community, advocates freedom to play airsoft without undue restriction of law, and perpetuates the values of Honor, Respect and Sportsmanship in airsoft scenario gaming.

"United We Scenario"



www.AmericanAirsoftAssociation.org