

This review is coming from 'Tickbait', one of the students from the last Scout Course. While he's elaborately describing how many times they got messed up, they also did a heck of a lot right, and come away learning a lot more from their failures to not do that next time. Come out and take your small unit skills to the next level. -NCS

Scout class changed the way I look at walking in the woods. I've been on more than a few western style spot and stalk hunts, and it's a lot like that. Let me back up, class started with the basics. Marksmanship was the foundational skill, and everyone was good to go after the first day. We practiced shooting from 25 yards out to 500 yards. We practiced shooting from difficult positions. We learned how to take coordinated shots, as a team. I've taken dozens of shooting classes over the years, and this training was top notch.

Day two is when things took an interesting turn. We started to learn how to walk in the woods, and we learned how to stalk in the woods. We learned to walk as a team, stalk as a team, take contact and retreat as a team. Ambush as a team. It was hard, physical work. But the work was necessary. We were briefed on best practices; how to do it and why. But that is 1/3 of the learning at best, it's executing where the 2/3rds kicks in. It's no longer academic, but starts becoming muscle memory. You stop thinking about steps, you're just doing them.

Then came the best part, Opfor. I have no idea what that means, but I took it to be the bad guys. Luckily, our bad guys were seasoned and really elevated our game by killing us on a regular basis. I died many ways, doing a variety of stupid things. Each time I died, a lesson was burned into my brain. Mistakes were not made twice. My favorite deadly mistake of the weekend came from a teammate, who was intent on spotting an Opfor ambush. I was skeptical that he could spot them, and truly it's a low odds proposition. But somehow he did. His next move was to point towards them so I knew. Opfor saw that, and smoked him. Then they smoked me as I was bounding towards the line in a rather unstealthy manner.

Next round, again my teammate was determined to spot the Opfor ambush. Again I was

skeptical. The only thing different this time, when my teammate spotted them, he just started shooting. No need to point and explain. I figured out what was happening pretty quickly after the first shot was fired. We won that round. But it was the rounds we lost where the learning happened. And I am happy to report that we lost on a regular basis in Scout class.

Worthy footnote, the campfire stories were awesome. The kind of people who show up to this sort of event in the middle of a pandemic are pretty great. So fair to say that I highly recommend this course.

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