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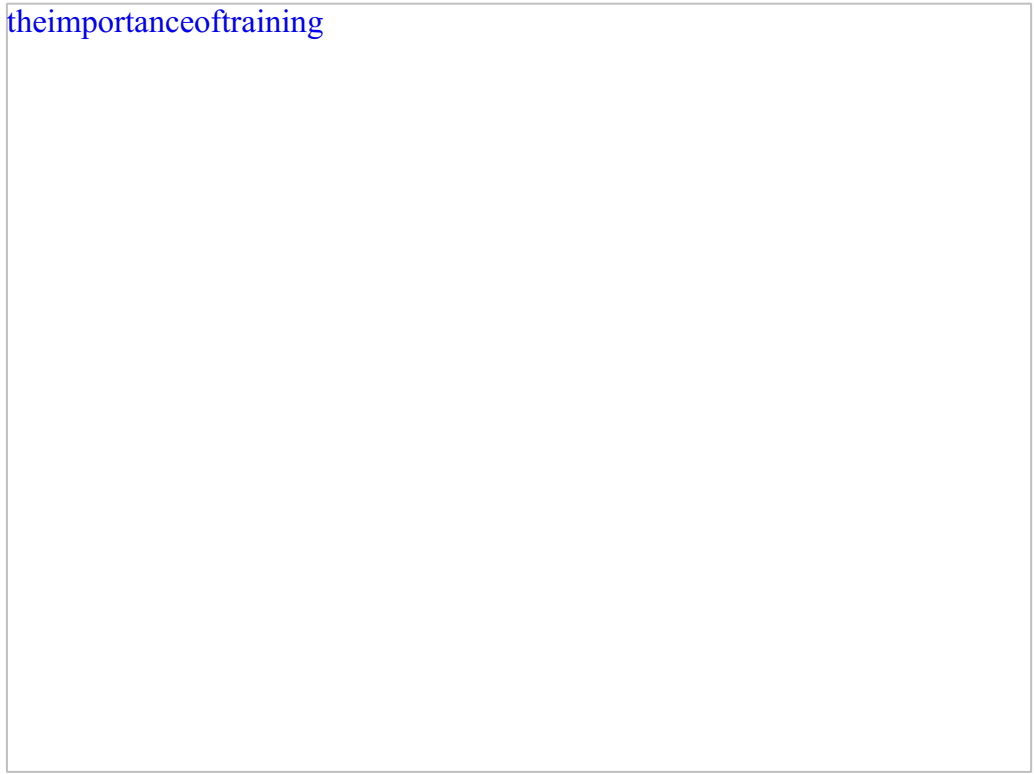


# The Importance of Training

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by Jason Van Tatenhove , September 30, 2015

theimportanceoftraining



I got the call late in the evening last Wednesday. “Hey do you want to go to this training in Idaho on advanced small team tactics?” My immediate answer was “YES, I want to attend it and every training opportunity that I possibly can.” So that was the start of my 5 day adventure into the mountains of northern Idaho. I first met up with some fellow colleagues here, in our local area, to make sure that my kit and rucksack were ready to go and to go over some review on basic small team patrolling tactics. This may seem like pretty basic stuff to those of you that may have done very similar things while in the military, or those who are already regularly training with a group in their area. However, I would be willing to bet that there are a good number of individuals that either have not gone through those experiences, or have gotten so rusty that they may have some troubles getting back into a squad and moving as a team. Those that have been following my work know that I have been an avid martial artist for the majority of my life and feel that training is an essential part of my lifestyle. Training for rolling BJJ, or even getting in the cage for an amateur fight is a completely different creature from practicing for a post crash event scenario, all together. Much like when I first started training in firearms tactics, I quickly began to realize just how little I actually knew when it comes to patrolling, planning an operation, and small team tactics. I do realize just how important these skills will be if we ever do see a crash event (whether it be a financial collapse, loss of the power grid, or even a terrorist attack.)

I was very intrigued to meet someone who is well known in the training scene, that has been using one of my ancestor’s name as their own. When I first heard about John Mosby from Sam Culper, I remember wondering if he actually might be a long lost family member. As it turns out, it was just a pen name he was using based on one of my relatives. Still, it was pretty interesting to me. John is a retired Special Forces operator and has the Mountain Gorilla blog. He puts on several classes a year, and has also written several books on tactics and his own philosophies.

I have got to say, this was a pretty incredible class. We all met up at a local supermarket, from there we convoyed up to the training grounds deep in the local mountains. We were told to be ready to live out of a rucksack for 4 days. After we got to the mountains and had a preliminary brief, we were told to go set up our sleep systems and be ready to start learning in one hour. We then went on to learn how to plan an operation. The particular scenario we were presented with was that we were a “plan b”, or bug out community, after a crash scenario had unfolded. We had a report from a member of the outer community that there was a group of 13 or so armed individuals that seemed to be loitering in an area on the other side of the mountain from our location. We needed to plan out how to get eyes on the target and see what they might be up to. We had to assess the members of our group, their skill sets, and equipment then decide how to form up into teams and go. This other group could just be a group of hunters, or they could be a raiding group getting ready to attack our own community. We needed to plan ahead, observe, contact, and possibly engage this group if they turned out to be bad guys and hostile. If you have never served in the military, you probably have never really realized what really goes into planning an operation like this to make sure it is done in a safe and secure manner. There is so much more that goes into an operation like this than your average citizen would ever think of.

What I took home from this experience was that spending a whole lot of money on having the latest greatest gear and guns doesn't really help if you really don't have the prior training and skills to use them effectively. I was very glad to have invested in a military 3 piece sleep system and a camp hammock as things got very cold at night. I found that the most expensive gear was not necessarily the right gear. It also showed me that I definitely prefer camping in the open rather than using a tent. It just seems to be so much less work and allows you to better see what is going on around you. Until you try to use your gear in a realistic and strenuous situation, you really don't know if that gear will work for you, in the way you think it will. I think it is time that we took a more realistic look at our own preparedness, knowledge, and skill levels, trade in a gun or two so we can get some serious tactical training from professionals who really know what they are doing. We all need to do any and all the possible training that we can.

I would also recommend you begin reading some books on the subject of tactical training. I am currently reading “Contact!” by Max Velocity, and any of the James Wesley Rawles books also are a great start.

John Mosby also has some great articles to get you primed here:

On packing a patrol ruck:

<https://mountainguerrilla.wordpress.com/2013/04/05/travel-light-freeze-at-night-comments-and-notes-on-packing-the-bug-out-baggo-bagpatrol-pack/>

Tactical Intelligence Collection, including a description of terrain analysis

<https://mountainguerrilla.wordpress.com/2013/06/03/tactical-intelligence-considerations-for-partisans/>

An Introduction to Battle Drills

<https://mountainguerrilla.wordpress.com/2013/05/31/oh-shit-battle-drills-101-an-unconventional-approach/>

He also has a great suggested reading list to add to your training regiment here:

<https://mountainguerrilla.wordpress.com/professional-reading/>

Please take the time to watch this video I shot with Todd, one of the organizers of the trainings going on at the Northern Idaho Training Center.

So get out there and get training!

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## About Author



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