



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY COMBATIVES COURSE
ECHO COMPANY 1ST BATTALION 29TH INFANTRY REGIMENT
BLDG 9079, MARNE RD
FORT BENNING, GEORGIA 31905-4420

ATZK-SBD-E

25 August 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: OPTION THREE DRILL STANDARD OPERATIONS PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish all standards, criteria, and environment for the Option Three Drill.
2. SCOPE. This SOP is applicable to all Combatives students, instructors, and punchers, involved with the "Option 3 Drill" during the Basic Combatives Course.
3. REFERENCE. TC 3-25.150 Army Combatives System
4. GENERAL. The Option Three Drill will be conducted on the second day of the five-day Basic Combatives Course. The drill will be conducted following a brief which describes the purpose of the drill, safety considerations, and the drill itself. The drill will be performed four times with each student. The student and the puncher will start the drill from each of the range controlling techniques of **Post, Frame, and Hook and Head Control** in reverse order, starting with the hook and working outward to **projectile weapons range** for the fourth and final iteration. The student will then attempt to achieve the clinch and gain dominant clinch position on the puncher, while the puncher attempts to land strikes utilizing the "Universal Fight Plan."
5. Purpose of the Drill. ***It is the overall intent that each student succeeds in the drill and gains the personal confidence to close with the enemy. This means the puncher will usually have to allow the student to succeed. The drill is not a rite of passage!***
 - a. Instill Warrior Ethos in students by giving them a taste of the physical and emotional demands of actual hand-to-hand combat in a controlled environment.
 - b. Teach the principle of dominating an opponent with the superior tactic of controlling range.
 - c. Practical application exercise to help students gain confidence in the range controlling techniques of Post Frame and Hook and their ability to achieve the clinch when necessary.
6. Training the Clinch prior to the Drill
 - a. Students will be trained on the range controlling techniques of **Post, Frame, and Hook and Head Control** as well as the **dominant clinch positions** prior to the drill.

b. The four dominant clinch positions taught to each student for achieving the clinch are the Rear clinch, Modified seatbelt position, Double under-hooks with body-lock, and the Wall.

c. Instructors will reference Annex A for all steps regarding necessary training prior to the drill.

7. Criteria for performing the Drill

a. The Option 3 Drill requires a NCOIC/OIC, a Safety NCOIC/OIC, a Ring NCOIC/OIC, a Puncher, a designated timekeeper, a dedicated medical support, and a BCC student at a minimum.

b. The NCOIC and the Ring NCOICs will be Combatives Master Trainer Course certified.

c. All Punchers will be Tactical Combatives Course certified or higher.

d. The medical support personnel will be Combat Life Saver certified at a minimum and will have a CLS bag and a medical evacuation plan at a minimum. The medical evacuation plan will be reviewed by the Safety NCOIC/OIC prior to the start of the drill.

e. The Safety NCOIC/OIC will always be present during the drill (See paragraph 13). The NCOIC/OIC, safety NCOIC/OIC, or the Ring NCOIC/OIC will not participate as one of the Punchers.

f. All Students will conduct the training as outlined in "Option 3 Drill: Annex A" and show competence on range control techniques and dominant clinch positions as well as pummeling techniques prior to participating in the drill.

g. All students will successfully achieve the clinch from each range of the drill at least one time as a mandatory requirement to receive the Basic Combatives Course certification.

h. Individuals with a recent head injury (possible concussion within last 7 days or TBI) may not conduct the Option Three Drill without written consent of a doctor.

8. Briefing of Punchers prior to drill.

b. Punchers will always be briefed before the Drill.

c. Punchers will be briefed by Safety NCOIC/OIC separate from the students.

d. Punchers will be briefed on the following:

(1) The purpose of the drill as per paragraph 5 of this SOP.

(2) Each ring NCOIC and Safety NCOIC/OIC will be identified.

(3) Safety considerations for both Student and Puncher. (Weather, environment, or a specific concern to an individual).

(4) A rotation plan for multiple punchers and/or multiple rings.

- (5) Hand and arm signals are to be used to increase or decrease the intensity of the drill, and to bring it to a close.
 - (6) Intensity for each student to be used relative to size and shape. Ring NCOIC should ensure that punchers restrain themselves to an appropriate level of intensity to accomplish the purposes of the drill.
 - (7) Exits to the designated training area will be identified.
 - (8) Each starting position and the actions of punchers on each iteration will be reviewed. (See Annex A).
 - (9) All forms of the clinch will be defined. (See Annex A).
 - (10) If in the first three iterations the puncher and student end up at projectile weapons range, the drill will be stopped and restarted at the appropriate starting position for that iteration.
 - (11) If both the puncher and student end up on the ground, they will be stopped and restarted at the appropriate position for that iteration.
 - (12) Assume the role of an individual following the "Universal Fight Plan". Pummeling against the students is highly discouraged. Punchers may not use the "Plumb" or "Hard Wizzer" to control the student and prevent him from achieving the clinch. They must stay upright and not bend at the waist to prevent the clincher from completing the drill.
 - (13) Punchers may not sling or throw students to break from the clinch.
 - (14) Head Punches will be limited to the front and sides of the head. Punches should never be directed at the back of a student's head. If a student takes more than two punches to the head, the puncher should intentionally miss the following blow, allowing an opportunity to close.
 - (15) Body punches will be limited to two body shots per iteration.
 - (16) Punchers will not reach back to create space with the intent of punching the clincher's body while in the clinch. This is to reduce the potential of injury to students.
 - (17) Uniform as per paragraph 10.
 - (18) The drill will be stopped if a student loses or spits out their mouthpiece. In this event, the mouthpiece will be reinserted into the student's mouth and the drill will continue at projectile weapons range.
- e. The Ring NCOIC/OIC will control punchers at all times, and punchers will always take guidance from Ring NCOIC/OIC. In case of injury, altercation, or any questionable circumstance the puncher will immediately look to the Ring NCOIC/OIC for guidance.
 - f. Neither student nor puncher will attempt to take the fight to the ground at any time to prevent injury to the student and/or puncher.

9. Briefing of Students prior to drill.

- a. Students will always be briefed before the Drill.
- b. Students will be briefed by Safety NCOIC/OIC whenever possible separate from Punchers.
- c. Students will be briefed on the following:
 - (1) The purpose of the drill as per paragraph 5 of this SOP.
 - (2) Safety considerations for both Student and Puncher (weather, environment, or a specific concern to an individual).
 - (3) Do not attempt to take the puncher to the ground.
 - (4) Exits to the designated training area will be identified.
 - (5) The drill will be stopped if a student loses or spits out his mouthpiece. In this event, the mouthpiece will be reinserted into the student's mouth and the drill will be restarted at the appropriate starting position for that iteration.
- d. Conditions for successful completion of clinch drill will be demonstrated to the students prior to the drill as part of the brief.
- e. If multiple students are executing the drill a rotation plan will be established.
- f. Students will be given an opportunity to ask the NCOIC/OIC any questions they feel are relevant.
- g. NCOIC/OIC should complete the brief to the students with a motivational story to inspire the students for the drill.

10. Uniform

- a. Students will wear Standard Combatives Uniform per TC 3-25.150.
- b. All students will wear a mouthpiece during drill.
- c. Individuals who have had Lasik eye surgery must wear head gear during the Drill.

NOTE: Boxing headgear does not mitigate the risk of brain trauma and in fact can increase such risk by creating a false sense of safety. It can help prevent superficial injuries such as bloody noses and in the case if eye surgery can help mitigate the risk of the boxing glove coming in direct contact to the cornea.

- d. Punchers will wear quality, serviceable 16oz boxing gloves and be in Standard Combatives Uniform or Instructor Uniform with addition of ACU Top.

11. Drill Completion

- a. Drill completion will be determined by the NCOIC/OIC.
- b. Student take the Rear-Clinch with opposing thumbs grip.
- c. Student achieves the Modified Seatbelt position.
- d. Student achieves Double Under-hooks with body-lock.
- e. Ten Second Rule- Each of the first three iterations if student is **actively attempting** to obtain clinch position for ten seconds, they will be awarded the clinch. On the fourth iteration, after closing the distance the student is **actively attempting** to obtain clinch position for ten seconds, they will be awarded the clinch.

12. Drill Stoppage

- a. Student quits by exiting the training area.
- b. NCOIC/OIC observes unsafe conditions.
- c. Student or puncher is injured.
- d. "One Minute Rule"- During any iteration, if a student does not have the aptitude to achieve the clinch, the drill will stop prior to reaching the one-minute mark, and the student will be retrained until the primary instructor is satisfied. After retraining, if the student cannot achieve the clinch they will be dropped from the course. If the student makes it to the one-minute mark he will be dropped from the course.
- e. The "One Minute Rule" has been put in place to minimize an accumulation of head trauma to Combatives Students. Any student unable to achieve the clinch within the one-minute limit should be looked upon as a failure of the cadre's ability to instruct to standard.

13. Safety NCOIC/OIC responsibilities

- a. Safety NCOIC/OIC is overall responsible for the safety of the drill.
- b. Safety NCOIC/OIC conducts composite risk assessment for the drill
- c. Safety NCOIC/OIC briefs both the punchers and students whenever possible.
- d. Safety NCOIC/OIC ensures ring NCO's properly control the intensity of training.
- e. Safety NCOIC/OIC councils any punchers or students who fail to follow the rules.
- f. Safety NCOIC/OIC councils any students who fail to complete the drill.
- g. Safety NCOIC/OIC ensures any student receives medical attention that needs it.
- h. Safety NCOIC/OIC ensures OPREP is sent up the chain of command on any serious incident that occurs during the drill

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14. NOTE: While any training involving live striking is inherently dangerous, the largest danger comes from overexuberance of inexperienced instructors. Injuries directly related to strikes such as head trauma or rib injuries should be examined closely and any pattern of such injuries should be taken as an indication of such.

1. The POC for this SOP is the undersigned at alexander.l.robinson13.mil@army.mil.

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