



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
UNITED STATES ARMY COMBATIVES COURSE  
ECHO COMPANY, 1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION, 29<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY REGIMENT  
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FORT BENNING, GEORGIA 31905-4420

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

ATZK-SBD-E

25 August 2025

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: REACT TO CONTACT DRILL STANDARD OPERATIONS PROCEDURE

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish all standards, criteria, and environment for the React to Contact Drill.
2. SCOPE. This SOP is applicable to all Combatives Soldiers, instructors, and combatants involved with the "React to Contact Drill" during the Basic Combatives Course.
3. REFERENCE. TC 3-25.150 Army Combatives System
4. GENERAL. The React to Contact Drill is an individual task that will assess a Soldier's ability to apply a variety of Basic Combatives Course techniques and concepts in order to gain control of and dominate a physical confrontation in a dynamic situation. The drill is a graduation requirement for the Basic Combatives Course and will be conducted on the final day of the course. In the React to Contact Drill the Soldier will react to a Combatant's attack by utilizing Options 1, 2, or 3 IAW TC 3-25.150.
5. Purpose of the Drill. ***The React to Contact Drill assesses a Soldier's ability to apply a variety of Basic Combatives Course techniques and concepts in order to gain control of and dominate a physical confrontation in a dynamic situation.***
  - a. Instill the Warrior Ethos in Soldiers by giving them a taste of the physical and emotional distress of hand-to-hand combat in a controlled environment.
  - b. Reinforce the principle of dominating an opponent with the superior tactic of controlling range.
  - c. Build Soldiers' confidence in situations where the immediate use of their primary weapon system is unavailable.
6. Criteria for performing the Drill
  - a. The React to Contact Drill requires a NCOIC/OIC, a Ring NCOIC/OIC, a Combatant, a Combat Life Saver, and a BCC Soldier at a minimum.
  - b. The NCOIC/OIC and the Ring NCOIC will be Combatives Master Trainer Course certified.

c. The NCOIC/OIC will be present at all times during the drill (See paragraph 13) and may double as a Safety NCOIC/OIC.

d. The NCOIC/OIC will not be a Ring NCOIC/OIC.

e. The medical support personnel will be Combat Life Saver certified at a minimum and will have a CLS bag, a medical evacuation plan, and a cooler with ice sheets at a minimum. The medical evacuation plan and emergency procedure will be reviewed by the NCOIC/OIC prior to the start of the drill.

f. All Combatants will be Basic Combatives Course certified at a minimum.

g. The NCOIC/OIC or the Primary Instructor of the Basic Combatives Course will review range controlling techniques, clinch work, and dominant body positions with the Soldiers prior to conducting the drill.

h. All Soldiers will successfully complete the drill from each avenue of approach at least one time as a mandatory requirement to receive the Basic Combatives Course certification. If a Soldier receives an injury during the first iteration that prevents further participation in the drill, the NCOIC/OIC will waive the requirement if s/he feels that the Soldier demonstrated a working knowledge of the Basic Combatives Course concepts and techniques during the first iteration.

i. Individuals with a recent head injury (possible concussion within last 7 days or TBI) may not conduct the React to Contact Drill without written consent of a doctor.

## 7. Sequence of Events.

a. NCOIC/OIC validates all personnel and criteria in Paragraph 6.

b. NCOIC/OIC establishes the boundaries of the training area as well as the rings or lanes that will be used to conduct the drill in accordance with TC 3-25.150.

c. NCOIC/OIC briefs the Combatants (Paragraph 8).

d. NCOIC/OIC briefs the Soldiers (Paragraph 9).

e. NCOIC/OIC assigns Soldiers and Combatants to their appropriate ring/lane.

f. Ring NCOICs/OICs verify the serviceability and completeness of the Combatants' impact resistant suits (Paragraph 10).

g. Ring NCOICs/OICs verify the serviceability and completeness of the Soldiers' equipment (Paragraph 10).

h. Each Soldier will perform the React to Contact Drill two times. The first iteration will involve a combatant who approaches and attacks the Soldier from either the 12 o'clock, 9 o'clock, or 3 o'clock position in regards to the Soldier. Each of these positions are considered "front" since the Soldier is able to see the combatant approach. The Ring NCOIC will determine the position from which the Combatant attacks on the first iteration. The second and final iteration will involve a combatant who will approach and attack the Soldier from the 6 o'clock position.

(1) NOTE: The Soldier does not have to perform both iterations of the drill back-to-back. An effective rotation plan for the Soldiers and the Combatants significantly reduces heat injuries.

i. Soldiers who complete both iterations of the drill will check with the medical personnel before they proceed to the designated holding area (Paragraph 11).

j. Soldiers who fail the drill will report to the NCOIC/OIC to be counseled and retrained (Paragraph 12).

k. After all Soldiers finish both iterations of the React to Contact Drill, the NCOIC will give all Soldiers a Head Injury Brief and will direct all Soldiers who require medical attention to the medical personnel.

8. Briefing of Combatants prior to drill.

a. Combatants will always be briefed before the Drill.

b. Combatants will be briefed by the NCOIC/OIC separate from the Soldiers.

c. The NCOIC/OIC will conduct a modified Grappling Safety Brief in addition to briefing the Combatants on the following:

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

(2) Environmental considerations for both Soldier and Combatant (Weather, environment, etc.).

(3) A rotation plan for multiple combatants.

(4) Starting positions and the actions of the combatant for each iteration (Paragraph 7h.)

(5) Hand and arm signals as well as verbal cues that will be used to increase or decrease the intensity of the drill and to bring it to a close.

(6) Intensity for each Soldier to be used relative to size and shape. The Ring NCOIC/OIC should ensure that the combatants restrain themselves to an appropriate level of intensity that will challenge the Soldier and accomplish the purposes of the drill (Paragraph 5).

(7) Combatants will assume the role of an untrained fighter and will not utilize strikes against the Soldier.

(8) Combatants will maintain a defensive mindset after the initial contact rather than attempting to “win” or to submit the Soldiers.

(9) Drill Completion Criteria (Paragraph 11)

(10) Drill Failure Criteria (Paragraph 12)

(11) Drill Stoppage Criteria (Paragraph 13)

(12) Entry and exit to the designated training area and ring/lane.

(13) The Ring NCOIC/OIC will control the Soldiers and the Combatants at all times and Combatants will take all guidance from Ring NCOIC/OIC. In case of injury, altercation, or any questionable circumstance the combatant will immediately disengage from the Soldier and look to the Ring NCOIC/OIC for guidance.

d. Conditions for completion, failure, and stoppage of the drill will be demonstrated to the Combatants prior to the start of the drill as part of the brief.

e. Combatants will be given the opportunity to ask the NCOIC/OIC any questions they feel are relevant.

8. Briefing of Soldiers prior to drill.

a. Soldiers will always be briefed before the Drill.

b. Soldiers will be briefed by NCOIC/OIC whenever possible separate from Combatants.

c. The NCOIC/OIC will conduct a modified Grappling Safety Brief in addition to briefing the Combatants on the following:

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

(2) Environmental considerations for both Soldier and Combatant (Weather, environment, etc.).

(3) A rotation plan for multiple Soldiers.

(4) Starting positions and the actions of the combatant for each iteration (Paragraph 7h.)

(5) Drill completion criteria (Paragraph 11).

(6) Drill failure criteria (Paragraph 12).

(7) Drill stoppage criteria (Paragraph 13).

(8) Emergency procedures.

(9) Entry and exit to the designated training area and ring/lane.

d. Conditions for completion, failure, and stoppage of the drill will be demonstrated to the Soldiers prior to the start of the drill as part of the brief.

e. Soldiers will be given an opportunity to ask the NCOIC/OIC any questions they feel are relevant.

- f. NCOIC/OIC should complete the brief to the Soldiers with a motivational story to inspire the Soldiers for the drill.

#### 10. Uniform

- a. Soldiers will wear the following equipment at a minimum:
  - (1) Army Combat Helmet
  - (2) Improved Outer Tactical Vest / Plate Carrier (with plates)
  - (3) Gloves
  - (4) Complete Army Combat Uniform (Undershirt, Blouse, Belt, Trousers, Boots)
  - (5) Elbow Pads
  - (6) Knee Pads
  - (7) Primary Weapon System with sling and padding IAW TC 3-25.150.
- b. All Soldiers will wear a mouth piece during drill.
- c. Combatants will wear a complete and serviceable impact reduction suit IAW TC 3-25.150.

#### 11. Drill Completion

- a. Drill completion will ultimately be determined by the ring NCOIC/OIC.
- b. Soldier creates space and effectively transitions to their primary weapon system with enough time and space to engage the combatant (Option 1).
- c. Soldier controls the range between the combatant and aggressively utilizes disruptive techniques or a secondary weapon in a way that the Combatant can no longer effectively attack and the Soldier can transition to his/her primary weapon system (Option 2).
- d. Soldier achieves and maintains one of the following body positions for at least five seconds (Option 3):
  - (1) Double Underhooks
  - (2) Modified Seatbelt
  - (3) Rear Clinch
  - (4) Rear Mount
  - (5) Mount
  - (6) Side Control

- e. Soldier also has the option to submit the combatant with a BCC choke or joint lock.

## 12. Drill Failure

- a. Drill failure will ultimately be determined by the Ring NCOIC/OIC.

b. Soldiers who fail one of the iterations of the drill will be counseled by the NCOIC/OIC on his/her deficiencies and will be given a second opportunity to complete the iteration. Soldiers will be allowed a maximum of one retry for each iteration of the drill.

c. Soldiers who are unable to complete one of the iterations of the React to Contact Drill after one retry will be counseled by the NCOIC/OIC and will not receive credit for successful completion of the drill.

- d. The following list outlines failure criteria for the React to Contact Drill:

- (1) Soldier loses positive control of his/her weapon system.
- (2) Soldier gives up or refuses to engage the combatant.
- (3) Soldier runs away from the combatant.
- (4) Soldier stops actively attempting to gain control of the confrontation.

## 13. Drill Stoppage

a. The Ring NCOIC/OIC may stop the drill at any time to address situations that include but are not limited to the following:

- (1) Soldier refuses to participate in the drill or exits the training area.
- (2) Ring NCOIC/OIC observes unsafe conditions.
- (3) Soldier or combatant is injured.
- (4) Acts of flagrant disrespect or unsportsmanlike conduct from either the Soldier or the combatant.
- (5) Soldier or Combatant consciously attempts a technique outside of the scope of the Basic Combatives Course.
- (6) Soldier or combatant blatantly disregards the safety criteria as put forth in the initial brief of the drill (see Paragraph 8-9).

b. In the event of a drill stoppage, the Ring NCOIC/OIC will separate the Soldier and the combatant immediately and explain the reason for the stoppage. The Soldier and the combatant will then reset and begin the drill from the designated starting position for that iteration. Drill stoppage will not count as a drill failure except in extreme circumstances in which the Ring NCOIC determines that the Soldier is unable to safely participate in the drill.

14. NCOIC/OIC (Instructor) responsibilities

- a. NCOIC/OIC is responsible for the overall safety of the drill.
- b. NCOIC/OIC conducts Deliberate Risk Assessment for the drill.
- c. NCOIC/OIC briefs both the Combatants and Soldiers whenever possible.
- d. NCOIC/OIC counsels any Combatants or Soldiers who fail to follow the rules.
- e. NCOIC/OIC counsels any Soldiers who fail to complete the drill.
- f. NCOIC/OIC ensures any Soldier receives medical attention that needs it.
- g. NCOIC/OIC ensures OPREP is sent up the chain of command on any serious incident that occurs during the drill.

15. NOTE: While any training involving take downs is inherently dangerous, the largest danger comes from Soldiers or Combatants reaching for the ground as they fall instead of “break falling.” This can lead to dislocated shoulders or elbows. Instructors should teach proper ways to mitigate these injuries.

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

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