

Podcast Transcription: #182 - Off-Body Carry

Jeff: Not too many years ago a popular television show introduced the world to the Jack Sack. The show was *24*. And action hero, Jack Bauer, managed to make the man purse, or tactical purse, look really cool. What was great about the tactical shoulder bag that Jack Bauer carried, which quickly made messenger bags all the rage in popular culture, was that he always seemed to have whatever he needed in it, from what seemed like 10,000 rounds of nine millimeter ammo to whatever he could use to torture a confession out of a terrorist.

Most of us aren't out there defeating sleeper cells of terrorists in our spare time, but that doesn't mean you can't take a tip from Jack Bauer anyway, and take a different perspective on what and how you carry your personal tactical gear off your body.

In fact, one of the things you could choose to carry off-body would be your firearm. Especially if you can't easily conceal it, or you don't dare get caught with a firearm printing on your person, off-body carry might just be the solution. But that solution brings with it several new problems you'll have to solve, and that's what we're here to talk about today.

Hello, everyone. This is Jeff Anderson, Editor for *Modern Combat and Survival Magazine* and Executive Director of the *New World Patriot Alliance*, with another podcast to help you better prepare for any threat you may face in your role as a protector and a patriot. With us today to talk about this topic is my friend Omari Broussard. Omari, welcome back to the program.

Omari: Thanks a lot. Thank you for having me. I really appreciate it. I'm looking forward to today's discussion.

Jeff: Yeah. It seems like I just saw you. Hmm. Listen, everybody. Omari is the founder of 10X Defense, and I'm happy to say he lives right around the corner from me now here in Texas. Well, Texas corner that is. Everything out here is an hour away, so he's still right around the corner from me. But it's good to get together and have dinner and stuff like that now.

But besides from being my buddy, he's also a lead Combat Focus Shooting instructor and adjunct instructor for I.C.E. Training Company. He carries certifications from I.C.E. Training Company, CrossFit, National Rifle Association and the U.S. Navy. Omari retired from the Navy after 21 years of active duty service as a Chief Petty Officer and was a founding member of the Navy's Heliborne Visit, Board, Search and Seizure Team One.

He has extensive experience in training military, law enforcement, security professionals and private citizens in unarmed personal defense, defensive

shooting and instructor development. He continues to work with armed professionals, private citizens and firearms instructors around the country as an instructor, consultant and mentor.

To learn more about Omari and his training, make sure that you go to his website at www.10XDefense.com.

Omari, when we're talking about off-body carry for a firearm—that's specifically what we're talking about here. We've come a long way since the fanny pack. Right? The fanny pack was cool. Then you saw everybody that looked like a police officer. Everybody had a fanny pack, and you knew pretty much what was inside of that fanny pack.

We kind of moved away from all of that for a long period of time. And now we're back in where a lot of people just in general—carriers, non-carriers or whatever—are now wearing some sort of off-body carry, whether it is a laptop bag—or a lot of guys now, myself included, have some sort of either a sling pack, messenger bag or things like that, where we can carry our stuff and still look masculine and cool.

But the problem I think, when you talk about concealed carry handgun owners, is that a lot of them don't really think that off-body carry might be an option to them, or maybe it's not the best option, but that it's not an option, or you wouldn't be able to get to it, or it's too much like a purse, or whatever it is. There's a lot of misconceptions out there about off-body carry.

When you're training these guys, in your training sessions and out on the range and stuff like that, when the topic of off-body carry comes up what do you see as the biggest—I always use the word misconception. But people have these false perceptions of, no, that's not an option because of whatever. So is off-body carry a good alternative? And what are the biggest misconceptions that you see out there, that people need to get over in order to use it, for an effective concealed carry option?

Omari: Right. So first of all, great question. This isn't a topic that's discussed a lot. Now that I'm retired from the military, it's only been a couple years, as of 2018 I think I'm coming up on my third year, my mindset has shifted. So during my military career I wouldn't have ever thought about off-body carry, although I was doing it. If you're carrying gear while you're traveling, yada, yada, yada.

Now I'm a civilian, for all intense and purposes, and I'm looking at all facets of concealed carry. And I do find myself having a firearm in an off-body carry fashion, which means in a sling bag, a backpack. Some people may have one in a briefcase, because we have teachers carrying guns now. I think it's more common for off-body carry now than—more so than it used to, also because a lot of people live a mobile lifestyle. So there's a higher propensity now for off-body carry.

I would say some of the misconceptions—to deal with the misconception—is understanding that it is an option and that you may find yourself, whether it's the way you're dressing—for ladies especially, they'd rather carry a gun in their purse versus their body.

For me, a lot of times I find myself having to hang it in my backpack because of backpack, because I do carry—my first option will always be to have the gun closest to me, which is on my body. But as I'm traveling, as I'm going to different training events, I may have a firearm in the bag as a backup. It is a thing. Right? It is a thing. However, with it being an option, and being a viable option, it does require adding new training to your kind of repertoire there. Right?

Jeff: **Yeah. That's probably a huge misconception, that, "Okay. I know how to handle a gun and I have one in my bag. I'm good to go." You're right. One of the misconceptions might be that's all they need. It's not. Right? There's other considerations that you have for that.**

So let's go ahead and go into that now. So Omari, when I'm looking at getting a bag of some kind. I'm going to choose a bag for off-body carry, whether it's a backup or primary weapon. Because of the way I'm dressed, maybe it's easier to carry off-body than it is if I'm wearing shorts or something like that, or my 1980s spandex parachute pants or whatever. Hey, don't judge me.

So what do I want to do—when I'm thinking about getting one, or thinking about the dynamics of off-body carry, what are some of the major considerations I need to keep in mind when I'm choosing the right bag, or what dynamics do I need to think about?

Omari: As in my courses, I'm going to take a principle-based approach to this. Actually, to most of the questions you're going to ask I'm going to take a principle-based approach, which means if you follow certain principles then they will apply across multiple platforms.

So when choosing a bag, we have to look at—we need to think about our off-body carry bag no different than we think about the holster that's on our body. So the number one thing I look for is a dedicated pocket. By dedicated, I mean a dedicated pocket for the firearm. Not firearm accessories. Not keys. Not lipstick. For the firearm. The bag is designed to have a pocket separate from all other storage compartments on your bag for a firearm. That's number one.

If you can—I'm a big fan of a company called CrossBreed Holsters. They make what's called a Pac Mat. Basically it's a kydex platform with Velcro. Then they have a holster with Velcro that you can attach to that platform. So now that pocket becomes a sturdy platform. So that's another one. You kind of want a pocket that is not loose like the other pockets. Right?

You want to make sure that when you have the gun in the bag that the trigger guard is completely covered. Not partially. Completely covered. Right? It's the same thing that I recommend for a holster. You don't want to be digging in the bag, even to access your firearm, and then have an accidental discharge or a negligent discharge while you're gripping the gun.

Then the last one is that the bag has to be mobile. I'm less inclined to recommend a backpack, something that's on your back with two straps, so it's attached to you that you can't maneuver around your body. So a messenger bag, for ladies a purse, for males—I know, Jeff, you have a sling bag that I'm interested to get my hands on, because that can be maneuvered from your back to your side or your front so the gun is accessible. Accessibility to the firearm is what's important. You want to be able to get to the gun, and you want to be able to get to the gun and access it safely.

Also, another consideration is a bag that you can maintain positive control on. You want to be able to hold it to your body. So if it's a big, huge duffle bag that's kind of slinging down your body, it's harder to maintain positive control over it as you're accessing the firearm.

Jeff: Yeah. Yeah. It makes total sense. So Omari, one of the benefits I think of the messenger bag, or whatever type of bag that you're using for off-body carry for your firearm, is that you do have the ability to have other gear in it. As opposed to a holster, you're not going to have typically a bunch of stuff on there.

But let's face it. Police officers have other things on their belt, because in the job that they do, which is totally tactical, all of those things can come in really handy. A lot of people don't wear that stuff, other than Batman, wear it around your belt, and me. Batman and me.

But nonetheless, you've already said that you want to make sure that the bag that you have has its own dedicated pocket for the gun, so you don't have other things flying around in there that you reach in to grab the handgun and you grab your hairbrush and try defending with a hairbrush instead, or a pen makes the gun go off or something like that.

But having another bag, there's other things that you can put in it. I know you and I have talked in the past also about other things that concealed carry handgun owners might want to carry on them, and this gives them the ability to do that.

So what are some other things that you recommend for concealed handgun owners, for off-body carry for everyday carry gear that could come in handy, either for personal defense or whatever?

Omari: Cool. Great question. I want to start with this warning. I want people to understand, you want to avoid what I like to call—and this is a cultural thing—“Big Momma Syndrome”. When I was a kid, my grandmother—in my neighborhood big momma was the matriarch of the family. She always had a bag and it was always huge. No matter what you

needed, she was able to pull it out of the bag. If you needed a Tylenol, she had it in the bag. If you needed a kitchen sink, it was in the bag. So the first thing I want everybody to understand is to avoid “Big Momma Syndrome”. Just because you have a bag with space, doesn’t mean you need to put everything in it.

Going back to principle-based, I’m thinking of using a bag—I like to remain principle-based. So I find carrying a bag, I’m going to have some personal defense gear in there. I’m going to look at my big five. So gun, ammo, COMMs, medical and a flashlight. So obviously I’m having my firearm in there. It’s going to be loaded. But I want extra ammo, so I can fit a couple magazines in there. We always used to say in the military, in a firefight the two biggest things that goes first is ammo and COMMs.

Number two, you can have your phone—most people carry their phone on their body. But you can still have a throw away phone, especially when you travel. Most networks will allow you to call 911 or emergency services even without service. So have a throwaway phone in there if you’re traveling. That covers your COMM.

Medical. This is a huge, huge thing. We’ve had some incidents recently that has brought to light that carrying med gear is a viable thing. It’s something you should do. At a minimum a tourniquet, some gauze, a pressure bandage, some QuikClot, something to stop the bleeding. There are literally pocket trauma kits that you can carry. So those are great for a bag.

Flashlight. You never know when you might need a flashlight. Flashlights are always good.

So those are kind of the main five.

If you want to take in a little extra without taking up so much space, here’s some extras. Number one, a cutting tool, preferably with a glass breaker. This is something that I carry. Once again, I travel throughout the U.S. So maybe a throwaway kind of prepaid debit card, just in case. Twenty dollars in cash, a ten, a five and some ones. You can carry all the things that I just mentioned and not take up a lot of space.

Oh. I almost forgot one—and this is something that I learned from a doctor back in the day—is a USB drive with your basic med info. Pretty much everything in the hospital allows for USBs. So if you have a USB, and maybe you put a cross sticker on there, then you have your med info.

Once again, those eight things aren’t going to take up a lot of space. But if things go bad or you get in a situation, a natural disaster, whatever, you have your basics that can get you to your next spot.

Jeff: Yeah. That’s interesting. I’ve never heard of that USB drive before. Of course, being in the military your dog tags always have things like your—obviously your name and your social security number. But it always had your blood type on it. Everybody always assumes, no, bad guy goes down, I remain unscathed. It

doesn't always happen. You might be able to get off that 911 call, but when they show up it sure would be nice if they knew that you're diabetic or that you have high blood pressure, that you're on these medicines and this is your blood type. That would be awesome stuff to have. Right? So good stuff. Good stuff.

Omari: Yeah. Absolutely.

Jeff: Yeah. Yeah. So Omari, let's talk about—the biggest obstacle for off-body carry is going to be able to get to the firearm as fast as possible. Obviously, that has to do with the design of the bag that you're using as well, so that you have something that you can access quickly. But a lot of times, even if it's women, they have a purse. It might go into its own dedicated pocket in the purse, but it could be covered up with a bunch of stuff as well.

So let's talk about the best method of drawing a firearm from any sort of off-body carry. It's obviously going to depend upon the bag itself. But are there any specific, either techniques, or more specific considerations you want to talk about when it comes to design, or something like that when it comes to getting to the firearm and getting it into play as quickly as possible?

Omari: Cool. Great question. First of all, you want to know your gear. By know your gear, I mean taking it further, other than I know where the zipper pockets are. You want to know and practice getting to the gun. When we talk about accessing a firearm from a bag, we can use the same principles that we would use for a holster. Once again, very principle-based. So if I had a holster, I know I would have to grip the gun, come straight up out of the holster to clear it, orient the muzzle towards the threat, extend it, and while extending getting a two-handed grip on the gun to put me in a good shooting platform, touch and press the trigger.

So I can take those same principles and apply them to the off-body carry presentation, with a couple added things. Number one is control. You have to control the bag. Maintain positive control of the bag, because you don't want to be reaching in a loose bag that's flopping around. So that's number one.

After you get control of the bag, you want to open it. So you want to be able to open that pocket. Normally a lot of bags will have a zipper to the compartment or—most likely it will be a zipper on your Maxpedition bags, a lot of purses. They've got that zipper.

Then once you get the zipper open—so control, open, grip. You want to get a good firing grip, 90 percent if possible. No different than a holster. Then you want to come straight up out of the bag. What I like to tell people is treat it as if you're drawing a gun from a holster, in relation to where the gun comes up, high up in the chest. That's pretty consistent. We call it in my program the "high compressed ready". I want to go through that high ready position as I'm extending.

So once I bring it straight up and it clears the bag, I want to orient the muzzle towards the threat. If I orient the muzzle towards the threat while my hand is still close to my

chest, then that prevents me from swinging the gun out. So we say on presentation we don't want to hold the gun—we don't want to go fishing. We want it to come straight out, in the straightest line possible. So I'm going to orient the muzzle towards a threat. Then as I'm extending the gun—this is very important—release the bag with the hand that's controlling it. So most likely you're going to be controlling the bag with your weak hand, weak arm. While you're extending, you want to release your weak hand off the bag to get a two-handed firing grip, while you're extending out. Then touch and press.

So to kind of review. You want to control with your weak hand or support hand, control the bag. Open the compartment. Grip the firearm. Come straight up out of the bag, preferably towards the high center chest, with the muzzle pointed down. You're going to orient the muzzle towards the threat, just in case it's a very close encounter. So we don't want to assume that we're going to pull this gun out and swing our arm out, and there's nobody that's going to be close to us. So keep the gun close to you as you're coming straight up. Orient the muzzle. Then extend the gun. While you're extending, release the bag to get a good two-handed grip. Then touch and press. Address the prowler. Does that make sense?

Jeff: **Yeah. It makes total sense. Yeah. Absolutely. So let's go ahead and put all of this together, Omari, with training this. One of the things that we identify, one of the biggest misconceptions that a lot of people that are using off-body carry have, is just shoving the gun into whatever means that I'm good to go. You've given really good tactics for being able to control it, get to it, present it.**

So are there any training tips that you have for this? We always tell people, practice your draw. Do it in front of a mirror. Whatever. We tell them you've got to practice your draw, so that it becomes second nature. People probably aren't doing—unless you're a woman and the purse is your main thing that you're carrying in, most people probably aren't using off-body carry as their primary everyday go-to carry method for their firearm. So they probably don't think about practice of it a lot.

So what tips or advice do you have for somebody to be able to make this second nature with using off-body carry for concealed carry?

Omari: Cool. I want to make sure that I'm very clear with what I'm about to say. Especially with a new piece of gear, or a piece of gear that I'm not going to use often, I have to create opportunities to compartmentalize the training of these skills and these techniques. So with off-body carry, one, you can get a training gun, you can get an airsoft, a SIRT pistol, a rubber training gun, and just work on having the bag closed. You can set the bag on the table, just to get familiar with the zipper, just to get familiar with getting that grip. So it's a very step-by-step approach, but it will pay off dividends as you move forward. In a sterile environment you're most likely static.

Then you put the bag on, and put the bag on in a way that you're most likely going to wear it. So if you wear it on your left shoulder, you've got to work through that. Work

through accessing, just like we talked about in the presentation. If you're wearing a sling bag across your body, diagonal, you've got to practice getting the bag in the position for access. So once you look at what's optimal, then you've got to look at, okay, what if something goes wrong? What is something that's less desirable, less optimal? What if the bag is in an awkward position? What are the boundaries of the positions I can have the bag in that I can still access my firearm?

You can do it while you're walking around the house. So you have the bag, you have your training gun, you're kind of walking around the house and you're just working on getting to the gun while you're in motion.

Then with every technique, you've got to pressure test it. Right? You can pressure test what we're talking about today in two ways. One, you can pressure test it on a live fire range. So if you're going to a training course—make sure you talk to the instructor first and make sure it's cool—but get your off-body carry system in a safe training environment with live fire. A lot of different dynamics when you're training with a live gun versus a training gun. But if you haven't trained it with a live gun, I believe you lose a sense of respect for what you're doing.

People tend to play around when they have training guns. But live fire—you've got to respect the gun as if it's live. That I get. But you never do that unless you're in the environment where that is required. So definitely find a way, and definitely talk to the instructor. Because as an instructor who travels and teaches all over the country, no one in the decade that I've been teaching has ever brought an off-body carry system to a class. No one's ever said, "Hey, Omari. How do I do this with a purse?" Which tell me that there's this magic talisman syndrome going on, which has been going on for years.

So definitely talk to the instructor and see if you can do that. Or go to your local range. If you're in an indoor range, make sure you talk with the staff. Because it's not common, so people will be like, "What the hell?"

Then lastly, pressure testing. So doing training with your off-body carry system on a live fire range is one form of pressure testing. But the ultimate form of pressure testing would be training in a reality-based training scenario.

What I mean by that is having a training weapon and training it in an environment where you actually have to deal with an active resistor. The easiest way to do this is if you're—probably the most dynamic way you can do it is if you're part of a Jiu Jitsu school. Take your bag with your training gun and roll with it.

Jeff: **Roll with it.**

Omari: Yeah. Literally roll with it. So you're in an environment where now you have to deal with the most amount of sensory overload. You have to think. You have a bag on you. You have to maintain control of the bag. But you've got to deal with the person. Obviously, we want to deal with the biggest problem first, which is the other person. So we can't get

sucked into, “Oh. I have a gun in my bag. I should go to that first.” You’re going to learn real quick that that is the wrong option.

If you have the opportunity to do an extreme close quarters course—I run a three-day extreme close quarters course, and the end of that is the scenario set out where it’s live action. We’re in a controlled manner, but we’re taking you to that point to where, okay, if you decide to go for your gun, and wrap your life around your magic talisman, you’re probably going to get punched in the face. So that’s what I mean by pressure testing, the two levels of pressure testing.

If you do not create the opportunities to do these things, especially live fire testing in a controlled environment, or having a training gun in a bag in a, for lack of a better term, force-on-force scenario training, then you’re kind of rolling the dice here at the highest level. Whatever skill you want to bet your life on, you need to take that skill to the highest level, so you can get exposure to the dynamics of the environment and what’s going on. Then you can make a decision from there. Then you can make a decision and go, “Hey. I know that I have these boundaries on this method of carry. I understand these boundaries. I know the dangers and the benefits of having an off-body carry system.” I hope that helps.

Jeff: That makes a lot of sense. It really does change the—I like the pressure testing, both live fire—because you’re right. You can throw stuff around. You really have a lack of respect a lot of the times when you do dry fire. The range changes everything instantly, as soon as you realize that there’s a live round in there. Definitely force-on-force training, a huge, huge fan of that as well. Airsoft is a really good option for that too.

But you really start to learn the realities of close quarters gun fighting, because most people that are going to the range do not understand the dynamics of that at all. It’s totally different when you have somebody running at you or trying to smack you around the head when you’re trying to get to your firearm. It changes things a little bit there. But that’s awesome.

So thanks, Omari. I really appreciate you—you really had a lot of great tips in there for people to really take this—even if you’ve never even thought about off-body carry before, I’m sure that you’ve at least come across more than one time where you were dressing up for maybe the beach or something and you’re like, “Where the hell am I going to put my gun? I guess it stays home with me.” A lot of times a lot of people just leave it at home because, hey, I don’t have a way to carry this on me. Well, these are some really good tips for how you can. So thank you very much. I appreciate that.

Listen, everyone. I’m a huge fan of Omari’s work. He’s a great tactical trainer. I’m really glad that he’s here now and he’s doing classes out in my location, in my area here. So I’m really happy about that. Go check out his website. He does travel around. He does do training around the country. There are lots of

opportunities to get together and train with him. Also check out his online stuff as well. Go over to his website, www.10XDefense.com.

Until our next broadcast this is Jeff Anderson saying prepare, train and survive.