

# StressVest...a New Reality for Firearms Training

Learn to concentrate on the fight, not the pain.

By Don Munson

Reality based training has always been a struggle for trainers. We get pepper sprayed or TAsERed to be able to testify in court to the effects of less-lethal force. However, for obvious reasons, we cannot fully experience being shot during firearms training. Trainers have been implementing a wide variety of options from paintball to pellet guns to try to fill this gap. Now we have another option in our arsenal—the StressVest™ made by Setcan—who also makes the ShockKnife™.

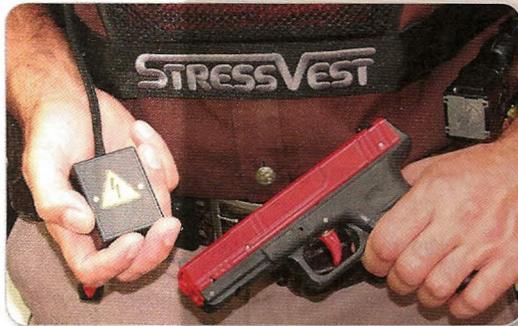
The StressVest is a reflective body panel with a battery control pack and a set of electrodes. The electrodes are spaced a short distance apart, designed to be worn at belt level against the belly or at the bicep of your gun arm. The unit runs off a nine volt battery. The lightweight, reflective panels register the hits from the laser emitted from the laser-dedicated replica pistols.

The StressVest comes with four modes of operation and a total of 12 different settings. The first mode is “role player,” a beginner mode. This mode sets the unit to vibrate at each hit or after two to three hits.

The second mode is “move to cover.” This can be set to either a vibrate on the first registered hit with shocks for following hits, or low to medium shocks for the first hit followed by increased shock intensity with subsequent hits. The idea is that if you stay exposed you will be punished.

The third mode is “stress exposure.” This is more of an advanced mode with shocks of the same intensity for every hit or a vibrate and then shock with every subsequent hit. There is no greater teacher than pain. The goal of the StressVest is to invoke that reactive fear of pain from the shock and to teach the student to train his mind to work through it.

The fourth and last mode is “injured officer” mode. This mode is more random and may be the most realistic. With shocks randomly every 10-, 20- or 30 seconds it teaches the student to work through the pain. This also applies to the injured limb training. With the electrodes located on the upper bicep of the shooter’s dominant arm, it is a great tool for



▲ The unit with the electrodes is typically worn under the pants belt. A variety of laser-dedicated firearms are available.

▼ A hit on the StressVest from the laser-dedicated firearm triggers either a vibration or a mild shock.



pain management.

The units we tested came with the StressVest reflective panels for just the chest. In the future, panels for the head, arms and legs will be available. The benefit to the StreetVest chest panel-only unit is it teaches students that center mass is your focus. Only center mass shots will be rewarded.

There was an additional RF remote, designed to be used by the trainer. Much like a car key fob, it works remotely to activate the vest at the trainer’s discretion. This could be used for a number of training modes including live firearms training to teach shooters to use cover versus concealment while engaging targets. The shock varies from irritating to unpleasant to painful—a punch in the gut. As a result, the stress caused by just the threat of the StressVest is very, very real.

StressVest also makes “sure strike” laser inserts, blank firing laser-dedicated pistols for realistic sound, and a M4 laser-dedicated rifle that uses a CO2 cartridge for realistic recoil. A one-person StressVest kit is \$2499, and a single, Glock-style, laser-dedicated pistol is \$469.

Stress caused by pain or the threat of pain has adverse affects on people. This tool will allow us to experience the realities of firearms stress without having to actually be shot—and is as close as actual real-life firearms training could be. The variable levels of pain generated by the StressVest cannot be under estimated for training the brain to overcome the flight reaction and concentrate on the fight.

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