

Sniper Truths

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The following are some truths concerning sniping that have been misused and misquoted over time. Some of these may bring hostility from some. Keep in mind that some of these may fall into opinion, however most are fact.

Kims Game does **NOT** stand for Keep In Memory System. The name comes from a book by the same name written by Rudyard Kipling. The book is about a young orphan boy named Kim who is half-English and half-Indian living in India. He is recruited by British intelligence to act as a spy. In the book Kim is taught how to increase his memory by being shown a number of gems for a short time and then being asked what they were, their color, and worth. The account in the book is more detailed but this is the concept. The British adopted this game and subsequently so did the Americans.

A gas gun is **NOT** better than a bolt gun. They are two different systems. Either is as good as the other, however bolt guns are inherently more reliable while gas guns are inherently faster.

.50 caliber Sniper Weapons Systems (current US Military systems) **CANNOT** routinely hit human targets at 2000 plus yards. The fifty is used against material and hardened targets. Current weapons systems with current available ammunition are not sub-minute capable. Consider that the round itself is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch in diameter to start with.

Military snipers **CANNOT** routinely make cold bore head shots at 1000 meters. This is not to say that it hasn't happened, but it is not a routine occurrence with 7.62mm SWS. Under standard conditions, the .308 goes subsonic at around 975 meters. The human head is under 1 moa at 1000 meters.

Field SWS **CANNOT** hold $\frac{1}{4}$ moa at 1000 meters (5 inches approx.). Although several manufacturers make this claim, there are very few shooters who could hold this standard and even fewer are in the military.

$\frac{1}{4}$ moa Sniper Weapons Systems do **NOT** exist. Guns that are capable of this extreme accuracy are found on the bench using carefully hand-loaded ammunition.

The Leupold M3 Ultra is **NOT** a $\frac{1}{4}$ mil dot scope. It has $\frac{1}{4}$ minute round (Army) dots.

.308 or 7.62mm x 51mm NATO is actually more useful out to 600 – 800 meters than a 300 Winchester Magnum. Of course the 300 WM. flies faster and can help in bucking winds, but when combined with the training requirements and availability the .308 becomes the caliber of choice for military snipers.

Iron sights should be available on every SWS. Should the optics become damaged the sniper should have a back up system. There are times in combat when iron sights would be quicker and more useful than optics.

Most sniper missions do **NOT** include a ghille-clad stalk. Trained snipers will use the available terrain to mask their movement and provide them with concealment. Ghille suits are bulky and hard to use in combat.

Most sniper missions do **NOT** require a long stalk to take a shot at one pre-identified target. The vast majority of military sniper missions place snipers in static locations for days waiting for targets of opportunity. A sniper's first mission priority is gathering intelligence, shooting is second.

M852 (7.62mm Match) is **NOT** banned from combat use. It was at one time due to a Geneva Convention ruling that hollow point ammunition cannot be used in combat. M852 has a small opening at the tip, which looks like some hollow point ammunition. It has been determined that M852 is NOT hollow point. The hole in the tip is the result of the way the bullet jacket is extruded over the core.

Shooting tracers through a sniper rifle does **NOT** ruin the barrel through the burning of the tracer materials, the tracer doesn't light until it exits the barrel. The jacket is very hard on tracer, which will leave a heavy residue, but can be removed as any copper fouling.

Using JB bore cleaner does **NOT** harm the barrel. JB is a fine grit and it would require an extreme amount of lapping in order to harm a stainless steel barrel.

The screw in the trigger shoe of the M24 does **NOT** adjust trigger pressure (as the manual indicates). This screw is the result of the Army contract, which called for an adjustable trigger. The trigger is set at the factory at approximately 4.5 pounds. The screw which has a spring behind it **WILL** increase the pressure, but will never lessen it beyond the factory setting. The trigger is a Remington M700 trigger with an additional screw in the shoe period. In fact, the sear adjustment screw is staked at the factory (unlike the commercial M700) so that soldiers cannot adjust it.

Regardless of how capable a sniper is (military), he should always take torso shots. Snipers should train to take headshots at 400 yards/meters and closer but in combat torso shots are preferable due to target unpredictability. I am not saying that headshots are never to be taken, I am saying that snipers should be trained to make the best decision for the moment.

.223 (5.56mm) **IS** an effective sniper caliber, especially in an urban area and using SS109 ammunition. The steel Penetrator does very well against glass and light obstacles. With the addition of 77 grain Open Tip Match, 5.56 systems are even more viable now than ever.

Mil Dots do **NOT** stand for military dots. It stands for Milliradian dots.

The **ONLY** way to become proficient at sniper skills is to practice ALL aspects. If I had two guys of which only one I could make a sniper; one was an excellent shot but not good in the woods and the other was extremely good in the woods but could not shoot very well. I would chose the second guy because he can learn to shoot much easier than the other guy can learn field craft.

Counter Sniper is a mission **NOT** a position. You are either a sniper or you are not. If you are hunting another sniper then you are conducting a counter sniper mission. It is highly doubtful that hunting other snipers will be the limits of your duties.