



## PSP 10: ECQ knife work and forward grip edge in/up methods



This PSP is a look at a forward grip, edge in/up method of blade use. This is my interpretation of the method behind this grip, based upon my years of training and how I've seen blades used for real, particularly early in my law enforcement career while working corrections.

I'm not a real big fan of knife techniques that require a lot of wrist canting and articulation. Canting the wrist weakens your grip, and grip at ECQ is a pretty critical attribute.

Here's a pic of a classic sabre grip with the thumb perched on the spine of the knife. Notice the wrist cant. The knife is very susceptible to a lateral hit or deflection of bone, both of which would already compromise an already tenuous grip. This grip allows for a lot of precision in a knife sparring match but is less than ideal for an ECQ, clinch range, life or death fight. Personally I could care less about the "accuracy" of my point under those conditions (within reason), and whether or not I hit a blood vessel dead on. The objective of the game is general targeting, furious pumping combined with body manipulation, and forward drive.



Now compare that to a convulsive, clutching “hammer” grip. Lee Aldridge brought up an excellent example of grip strength differentials in a thread yesterday and I would encourage everyone to try his exercise.

Notice here that the grip is closed and the wrist is not canted but locked. Very strong.

Following the premise that we wish to preserve as much of that strength as possible, some things regarding knife carry and movement come to the surface.



First let's look at carry. Here I've stuck a Mickey Yurco trainer in my pocket to simulate the way most people carry fixed blade knives; tip down.



Notice that to draw this knife requires me to break my wrist to establish the grip. If we understand that breaking the wrist compromises grip strength, then what this means is that my draw mechanics are immediately less than ideal for in-fight ECQ tool manipulation.



A solution then is to try and carry fixed blade knives tip up. Here I have the trainer just stuck in my belt to simulate a sheath. Look at my wrist. No break, convulsive, and extremely strong from the initiation of the draw. Remember that someone may be pounding on you while you have to access a tool.





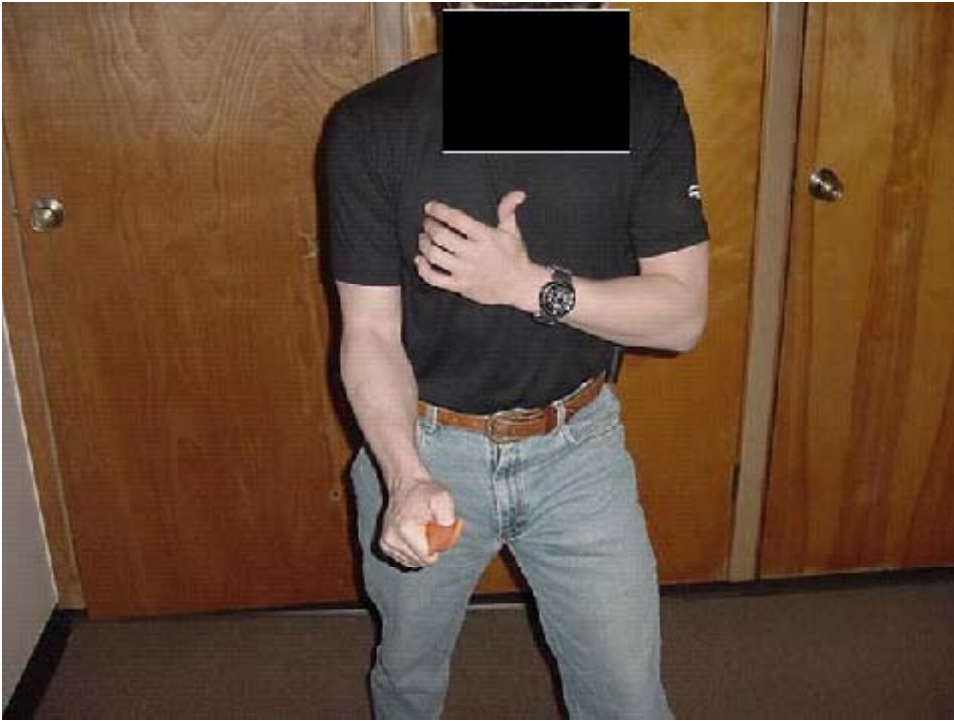
Carrying the grip strength issue over to motion, one should be able to see that this changes the way most people thrust with knives. No longer do we try and articulate/cant our wrist to hit a pin-point target with the tip of our blade like we're holding a fencing foil. This is knife work at Tic-Tac distance.

Because we no longer articulate the wrist, our motion becomes more arced than linear. This doesn't mean wide looping circles. It means **very** tight arcs that follow our traditional lines seen in conventional methods, utilizing the hips. It's very analogous to a good boxing hook, except you're holding a knife.

So thrusts look like this.



...and this. Notice that my elbow stays in close. At ECQ one usually doesn't have a lot of lateral, up and down shoulder room, so that particular muscle doesn't really play a huge role in how I develop power. That comes from my center and my hips. You want to thrust with your entire body lifting up, in, or through.



Upward center-line thrust. Go watch *American Me* for live motion references.



Back hand thrust mid-line.



Back hand thrust arcing upwards.



Let's look at the forward grip edge in/up method.

If you have a double edged knife then both this method presented and the traditional edge forward application are present. If not and the knife is single edged, then what we've lost is the ability to conventionally slash and the tool is effectively been rendered point oriented. Now that's a loss granted, but when we look at how close ECQ is we see that other things start to emerge that are relevant when you're dancing with a guy.

Here I've initiated a forehand thrust, high line that he has interrupted.





I immediately hit him with a palm strike and pull with my blade. This pulling isn't as powerful as the point down edge in shearing, because as Lee noted in his thread there's more power for that kind of motion with the blade protruding from the bottom of your hand. But still none the less, he gets sheared a bit on his forearm, just not as much as in pikal.



Following the palm strike, I'll drive forward and jam him into the wall while clearing his arm away that interrupted my thrust.



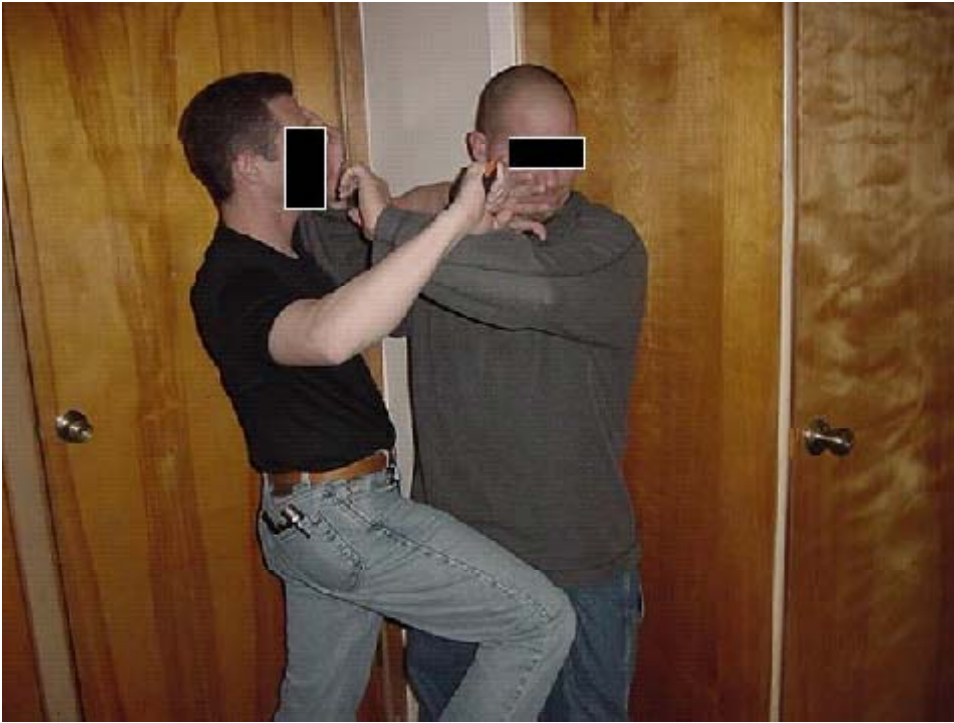
And then hit him **hard** with a locked wrist, upward arcing thrust to the abdomen. With the edge up, everything on the inside of his torso continues to get ripped. Ralph Grasso at the old CC forum did a lot of historical work on this method utilizing the bowie knife.

Even if you can't retract your blade from his torso (not likely but might happen), continue slamming him into that wall and tearing whatever you can. You got to have a locked wrist to do this.



In this sequence I have again initiated a forehand thrust but we are even closer. He has blocked and is clawing my face, and I'm clawing his in response. This is a common impasse' in a fight, even without a knife present.





To break this stalemate, I'll drive a knee into his groin.



Now remember in this picture that this is single edged, facing in. I'll shear his arm hard, by using my off hand on the spine of the blade to compensate for the leverage disadvantage I have for this grip. Think about pulling a rolling pin to you. It's the same technique that you see for a pocket stick wrist lock that's often taught and is quite prominent.



Clear the arm out of the way.  
You're probably touching bone  
at this point from the shear.



And start pumping again.



Back hand thrust which he interrupts.



Drive forward while controlling the arm and push it in to the edge which at the same time is pulling backwards. If you've ever seen an old guy whittle a stick with the edge up, that's the idea, except the stick in this case is the back of his arm. Make it bite deep.





Follow with a knee strike and pull back with your lat, dragging the blade through his tricep belly and allowing you to reamber for a thrust.



And start pumping him again with those powerful, locked wrist, tightly arced thrusts.



I flinched late and he's clocked me a good one, that's buckled my knees. Notice the knife in a simulated tip up carry configuration.



In fact he hit me so hard I went to a knee rattled, and he's hitting me again.



I can't continue to take those shots and might already have a skull fracture (no fun take my word for it). I clinch his leg to negate those big fists and initiate a convulsive draw.



...and stab him in the perinium, or in red-neck parlance the t'aint!





Driving forward with the shoulder while pulling that blade with my lat levers him down to the deck and rips him nicely from asshole to bag. Not pretty huh? Gentlemen's rules are for duels.



Scramble up him and start pumping again if need be.

Gee I wonder if I could do that with a kerambit? Hehehe!



He blocks my forehand thrust.



And gets palm struck for being an interfering mankey.



Remember that at ECQ all tools work synergistically. Elbows, knees, head butts, clinching clothing grabs, etc. I'll use my palm striking hand to tie up his arm.



We'll end this one up with an upward thrust that catches him in the throat.





I hate to show knife to knife stuff because it will probably never happen *but* it might.

He thrusts to my abdomen first, and I jam him.



Using forward drive, I continue my jam into a simultaneous knee strike and thrust.



I've jammed his upward thrust and he's jammed mine.



I'll knee strike to break the impasse.



And either punch him in the neck...



...or bury the blade. Just depends on which is quickest and whether I have the room to pull my elbow out a bit to get that arcing downward thrust.





He's cracked my head against the wall and is clawing my eyes. Notice fixed blade carried tip up, now on the off-side, which I convulsively clutch and begin to draw.



Blade is drawn...



...into an upward arcing thrust that catches him in the neck. Thrusting blind like this I may catch him in the face or in the head. If your grip is weak, there's a good chance of that blade getting knocked out. Again...convulsive, locked wrist grip.



As I pull back to rechamber I'll catch his tricep on the retraction with the inward facing edge. Combined with driving over and forward, hugging the target arm to me I'll bite deeply with the rip.



Finally upon rechambering I'll pop him on the inside of the thigh, hopefully catching the femoral.

That's it for this one. Again, all the conventional methods apply and by no means discard them in favor of this method. You should know them all.

Enjoy!