

POLICE NOTEBOOK

DUE TO THE NUMBER of assaults on police officers continuing to rise, Thames Valley Police felt it vital to prepare officers to defend themselves on the street and in the court room. All officers are now issued with a Monadnock PR24 Expandable baton, which represents state-of-art in officer safety and restraint equipment technology. With this baton also comes a basic training course enabling the officer to use the equipment safely and competently. All officers should have a sound theoretical foundation on which they build so they understand what they are doing and are able to justify it.

Officers should be made aware of the emotional psychological responses they will experience if they are injured or assaulted. "Does this instruction work, and is it easily learned and retained?" To be of use to police officers any system must:- work for people who are past their physical prime; work for smaller people against larger people; work for females against males and work for weaker people against stronger ones.

The object of defensive tactics is to establish control using minimum effort for maximum effect. Officers must develop their communication skills as well as their physical force responses, as this then promotes a system that is based on verbal skills coupled with physical alternatives.

It is too early to evaluate this baton package, but evidence from America, where this idea was



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developed, suggested that officers resorted to use of force in only just over two per cent of arrests. Over seventy per cent of offenders in those cases were drunk or had been drinking. Although I have not had to use the new baton, I can appreciate the significant protection it gives us. However it is rather bulky and is cumbersome getting into vehicles.

CRIME BUSTERS REVIEW

Gangs of professional burglars are leaving surrounding cities and towns for rich pickings in our villages. We know the offenders are coming from Cheltenham, Bristol, Oxford and goodness knows where else.

Were you around Church Path on Monday 26th June 1995 between 1100 and 1400 hrs? Did you notice any vehicles parked in the driveways of these houses? A burglary occurred when offenders broke in through the front window.

Following a recent burglary in Fifield, three offenders from the Oxford area have been arrested. Some of the property has been recovered and it is hoped other burglaries can also be cleared up.

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