

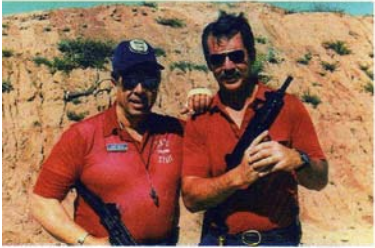


## THE LAST CHAPTER of the JIM CIRILLO STORY

Since the publication of *Guns, Bullets, and Gunfights* (page 5) 12 years ago, Paladin had encouraged Jim Cirillo to share more of his entertaining, instructive stories from his days with the New York Police Department Stakeout Unit in a follow-up book. Other projects prevented him from ever getting started on a manuscript, and the idea languished. Then, a fateful turn of events put Cirillo in touch with author Paul Kirchner, and the result—published less than a year after Jim’s untimely death in July 2007—is *Jim Cirillo’s Tales of the Stakeout Squad*.

**PP: How did this book come about?**

PK: After procrastinating for several years, in March 2007 I finally got around to interviewing Jim for *Deadliest Men II*. After transcribing a few hours of Jim’s stories I realized that his chapter would be twice as long as anything else in the book and even then I would have to leave out a lot of great material. So I told him I was thinking of devoting a whole book to him, and he was all for it.



**PP: One of the great things about the book is how Jim’s voice and personality jump off every page. Anyone who ever met him will hear him telling these stories as they read. Was it difficult to transcribe his spoken words and achieve this effect?**

PK: The quotations are pretty much verbatim, so that the rhythms, the expressions, and the sometimes-fractured syntax are true to him. I cleaned up the salty language, but not to the point that it wasn’t Jim anymore. I only wish that readers could hear Jim’s voice, so full of energy, warmth, and humor, and that vintage Brooklyn accent.

**PP: Getting so many Stakeout Unit vets to participate is quite a coup on your part. How did you track these guys down, and how did they feel about discussing their time in the unit with Jim?**

PK: That was the most challenging part of the project. The key events in this book took place between 35 and 40 years ago, so a number of the players have already passed away. Fortunately, the two I most wanted to speak with have not: Bill Allard and Jim’s first partner, whom I refer to as “George Ballinger” because he doesn’t want his real name disclosed.

At first, neither man responded to my request for an interview. I e-mailed Allard twice and got no reply. Then I tried again, providing him with a list of the questions I wanted to ask him, which pertained to his overall police career, the national pistol championships he has won, and his life after the Stakeout Unit. This time he got back to me and agreed to talk. Allard is a pretty intimidating guy, even over the phone, but in the course of a two-hour conversation, he gradually opened up and shared some fascinating experiences.

It went pretty much the same way with Ballinger. However, once I assured him that my intentions were honorable and I would protect his anonymity, he was willing to speak with me. After about an hour he loosened up and told me a number of terrific stories.

I located four other SOU veterans through an Internet search, and fortunately, they were willing to answer my questions. Had I approached them 30 or 35 years ago I’m sure they would have told me to buzz off; they never talked to the press. One of them told me he was speaking to me only so that I would “do right by Jimmy.”

**PP: Besides Jim’s stakeout stories, what else do you think Paladin readers will enjoy most about the book?**

PK: I got detailed explanations of how stakeouts were set up; the weapons, training and tactics that were employed; terminal ballistics; and the unexpected events that always occur in a gunfight. Most of the book is about the SOU and Emergency Service Unit, but there’s a lot of other material. Jim’s stories about the politics of the department, the reason for the disbanding of the unit, and his opinion of Serpico were very revealing. He told me some great stories about his relationship with Jeff Cooper and his experiences in the world of competition. I also think people will get a kick out of the dozens of photos in the book, none of which have been published previously. Even a lot of people who worked with Jim didn’t know he was a competitive bodybuilder in his youth, but I’ve got the pictures to prove it.



For more information on *Jim Cirillo’s Tales of the Stakeout Squad*, see page 4.