

CRIME SCENE/ INTERPRETING IMPRESSION EVIDENCE

Course Outline

I. Introduction

- A. Tool for investigative use
 - 1. Following trail to suspect
 - 2. Interpreting events through impressions
 - 3. Determining "Special Circumstances"
- B. Leads to suspects, evidence, or witnesses

II. Finding / Viewing Impressions

- A. Angle of sun changes ability to view impression
- B. Artificial lighting to view impressions
 - 1. Flashlights
 - 2. Mirrors

III. Tracking Stick

- A. Setting up the tracking stick
 - 1. Shoe measurements
 - 2. Stride and step intervals
- B. Use in difficult terrain
- C. Linking small indications of track
- D. Marking tracks
 - 1. Step by step
 - 2. Maintaining reference points

IV. Sketching tracks

- A. Measurements
- B. Tread details
- C. Wear pattern details
- D. Step and stride intervals

V. Track Awareness

- A. "Granny" tracks
- B. Partial tracks
- C. Substantiating evidence

VI. Sign

- A. Any change inflicted by person's passage
- B. Four basic types
 - 1. Flattening
 - 2. Regularity
 - 3. Color change
 - 4. Disturbance

- C. Additional sign
 - 1. Shine
 - 2. Transfer
 - 3. Dew trails
 - 4. Interlaced vegetation
 - 5. Scuffed objects
 - 6. Broken twigs
 - 7. Cohabitants
 - 8. Information
 - 9. Vegetation injuries

VII. Crime Scene Preservation

- A. Approach
- B. Identification and elimination of tracks
- C. Briefing to other officers
- D. Marking tracks / trails
- E. 1:1 Comparison
- F. Track Destruction
 - 1. Rain
 - 2. Wind
 - 3. Helicopters
 - 4. Passing Vehicles
 - 5. Frost and Dew
- G. Scene Transfer
 - 1. Vehicles, floor mats
 - 2. Dwellings, counter tops, furniture
 - 3. Tile and polished floors
 - 4. Detecting
 - 5. Eye level and lighting

VIII. Aging

- A. Effects of sun and wind
- B. Shine
- C. Floating of soil
- D. Appearance

IX. Track location

- A. Track traps

X. Suspect movement

- A. Walking
 - 1. Stride
 - 2. Inclines
 - 3. Obstacles
- B. Running
 - 1. Stride

2. Weight distribution
3. Toe digs
4. Disturbance and discoloration
5. Deep sandy soil
- C. Stopping motion
 1. Parallel position of tracks
 2. Concentration of tracks
 3. Direction
 4. Location
- D. Flattened areas
 1. No obvious shape
 2. Body and torso extremities
 3. Clothing seams and fabric impressions
- E. Jump tracking
 1. Using track traps
 2. Leap frogging
 3. Solo tracking
 4. Locating lost tracks
 5. Sealing with track traps
- F. Two trails
 1. Tracks to a crime scene
 2. Tracks away from a crime scene
 3. Location of witnesses or suspects
- G. Perimeter cutting
 1. 360° search
 2. Location of suspect tracks
 3. Size of sweep
- H. Suspect linking
 1. Connecting two or more suspects
 2. Connecting suspects to vehicles

XI. Geometric shapes

- A. Marks made by property
- B. Documentation
- C. Linking to suspects

XII. Dislodged objects

- A. Location
- B. Linking to other impressions
- C. Linking to suspects

XIII. Vehicle tracks

- A. Wheel width
- B. Wheel base
- C. Diagrams

- D. Photography
- E. Vehicle information from tracks
- F. Direction of travel

XIV. Track traps

- A. Commercial patrol, alleyways
- B. Two passes at separate times
- C. Rain and other factors

XV. Collection

- A. Photography
- B. Casting
- C. Dusting
- D. Gel lifters
- E. Electro-Static Dust lifters

XVI. Practical Exercises

- A. Students will complete a short, basic tracking exercise using a tracking stick to determine step, stride, and follow a suspect's path.
- B. Students will complete several "crime scene" scenarios where shoe and tire tracks are the primary evidence. Students will be expected to interpret the track evidence to reach conclusions as to the events surrounding the crime.
- C. Students will be presented with crime scenarios where shoe and tire tracks are the primary evidence. Students will then be provided with victim and suspect statements. Students will be expected to use the track evidence to determine who is lying and who is being truthful

XVII. Suspect interviewing

- A. Presenting the suspect with track evidence from the scene
- B. Letting the suspect "spin" the tale first

XVIII. Reports

- A. Writing a tracking report
- B. Explaining evidence to the lay person

XIX. Diagrams

- A. Crime scene
- B. Track routes

XX. Court testimony

- A. Thorough investigation
- B. Accurate report
- C. Court preparation
- D. Diagrams

- E. Overhead projections
- F. Explanation of tracking process

XXI. Preparation

- A. Pre-trial conference
- B. Strong and weak areas of investigation