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THE AMERICAN

SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 1979 \$2.00

# HANDGUNNER

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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

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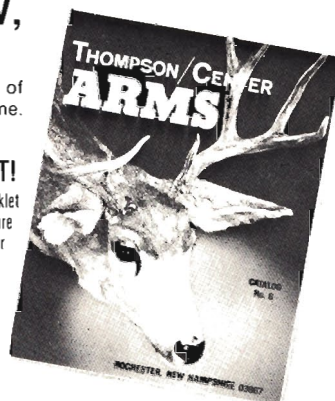
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# THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 1979 Vol. 4 No. 5-18

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Cover photo exemplifies what this month's articles are all about: getting the most from a .45 at the firing line. Photo by James Mason.

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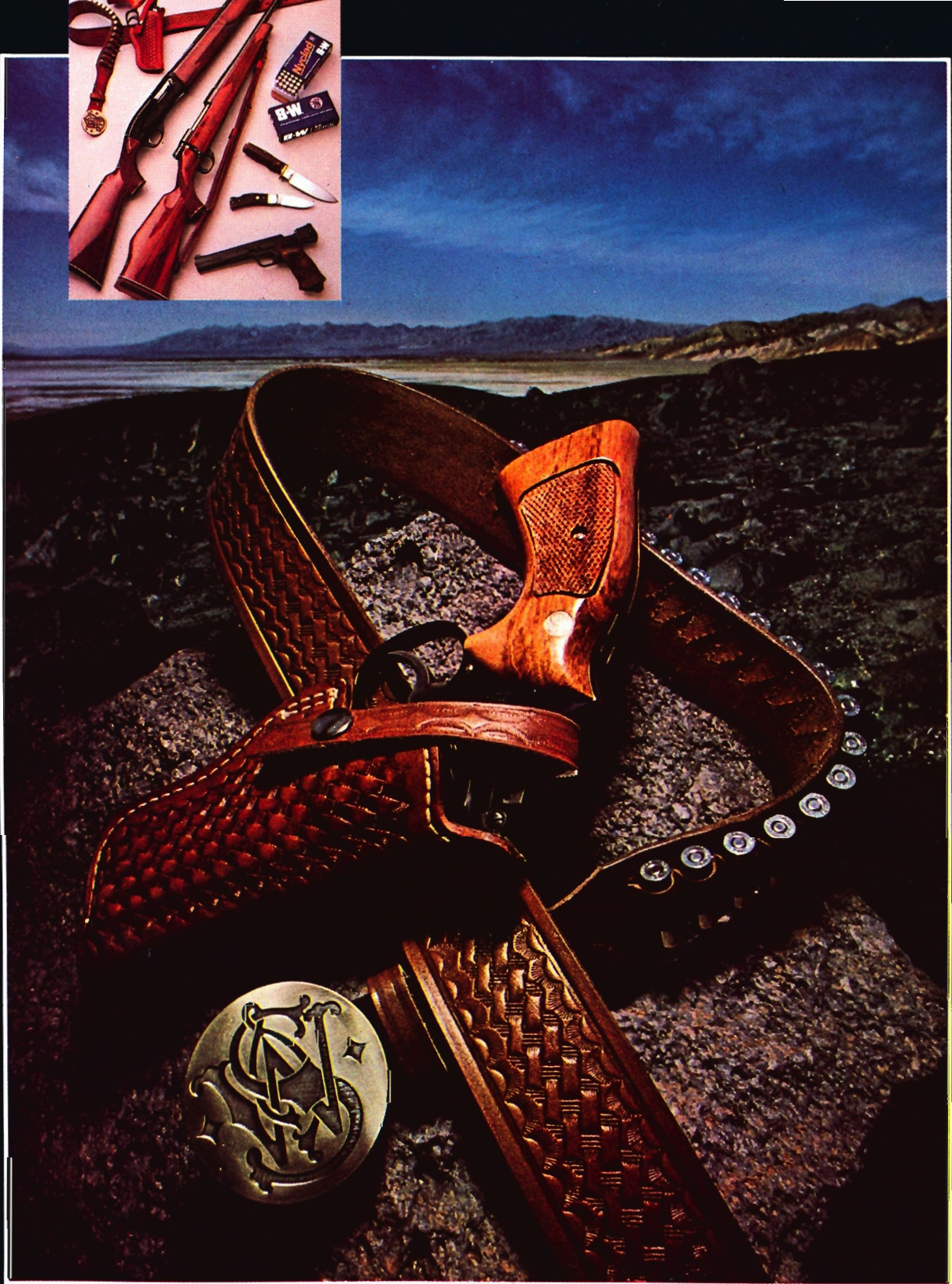
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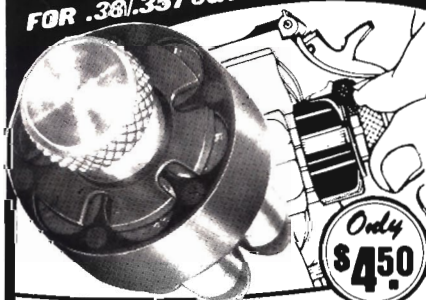
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# SpeakOut

## UPDATE ON SPOONBILL DEVELOPMENTS

### MODIFICATIONS ON COOPER'S FABLED "SPOONBILL"

As our machine shop is working on a variant of the Spoonbill, we thought you might be interested in some modifications that were too late for your May/June issue:

1) To reduce bulk and make the pistol holster compatible, we are going to the Sharps 4 barrel pistol concept, with a solenoid-operated revolving firing pin of adjustable power so that rifle or pistol primers can be used.

2) In order to somewhat reduce the sight change problems cited, a holographic sight is going into production. After simply replacing 2 IC's and 1 MOS-FET for every 2°K, 350m elevation and/or 5 millibars Hg and recalibrating, the shootist will only have to superimpose the holographic display over the target. The laser will then lock on, the image color will change and the firearm discharge.

3) Automatic discharge has been our biggest headache. So many shootists refuse to see the advantage of our system. Their expression of shock at the sudden firing is usually manifested as a flinch, which is cutting into our guaranteed 1.5 MOA at 300m (offhand). Accordingly, we have revamped the power pack and added on an arm brace for the shootist. At target acquisition, and .2ns before discharge, a polarizing current runs thru the brace and the flux lines generated mesh with the vertically oriented, tuned magnetron cavity in the butt of the pistol, thus rigidly locking the piece at the moment of firing. (Of course, should the shootist not have a proper grip on the piece, there is a very real possibility of all 7 wrist bones being broken. We do not see this as a recurring problem, however.) Locking is maintained for .5ms for the .44 magnum and .7ms for the .45-75, to allow for ignition and bullet travel through the barrel. A sample of this design has been submitted to BATF for a determination as to whether or not this surrogate stock falls within the

purview of the National Firearms Act of 1934 (as amended). In the event that they so deem, it would merely add \$200 to the pistol's purchase price.

4) These modifications have resulted in an increased power demand, but we feel that the person monitoring the portable generator can act as an additional range safety officer as well as warn people about tripping over the cable to the firing point. In our hunting version, a retractable 25 ft. cable can easily be attached to any woods buggy or motorcycle of at least 9HP with an adequate 28V400Hz dynamotor.

Those are some of the more obvious modifications. Of course, there has been a slight (30-35%) price increase, but this is due more to the devaluation of the dollar than to anything on our part.

We appreciate your interest in our development, and we will be more than happy to keep you posted on future developments.

Michael Smith  
Offshore Enterprises  
Laurel, Florida

### COOPER REPLY AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Congratulations on the superb continuing efforts you are putting into the Spoonbill project. Mr. Peabody told me of your cooperation, but I was not aware that you had progressed so far.

Much interest has been generated in the Spoonbill concept and we are hearing widely from technicians who feel that they are able to improve the idea. It does not appear to me that the pistol itself will ever reach its full development, as America is too full of ingenuity for anything of this nature to stand technologically still. I feel sure that all of us can look forward to many years of fascinating tinkering as the attempt to knock over those iron chickens reaches its full fruition.

All best wishes and keep up the good work.

Jeff Cooper  
Paulden, Arizona

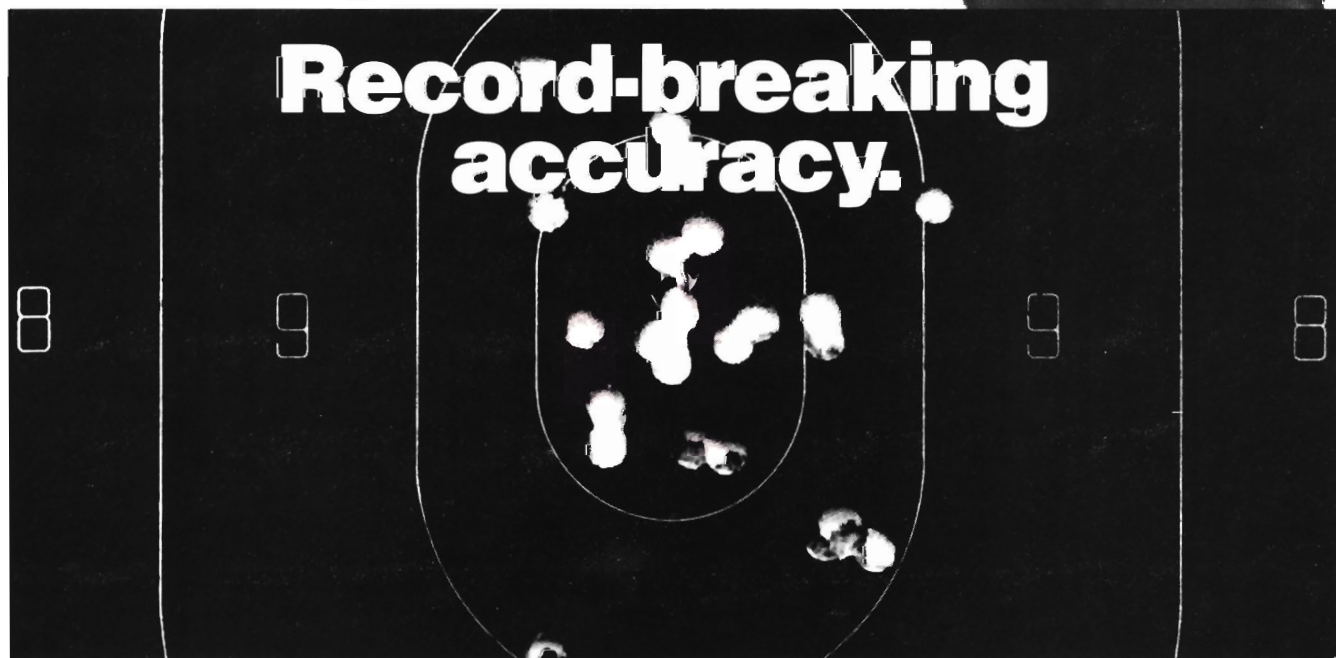
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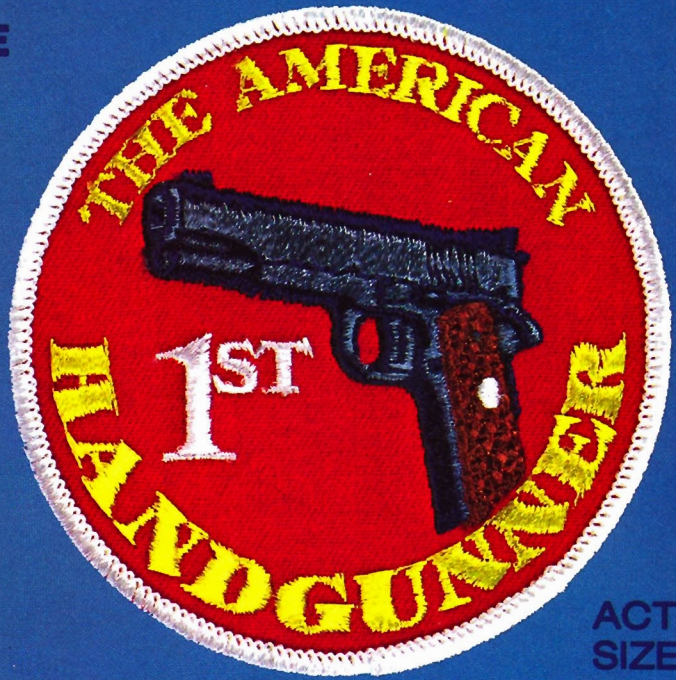
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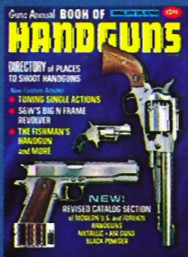
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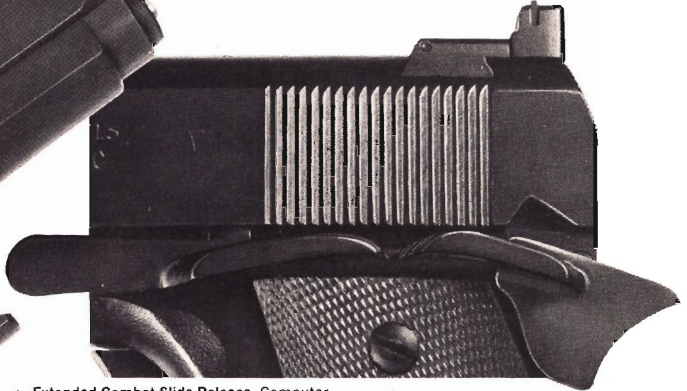
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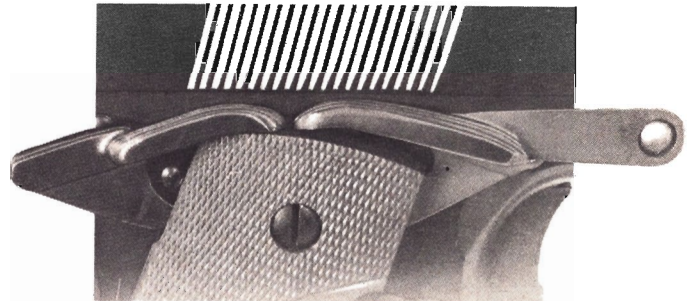
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By Elgin Gates

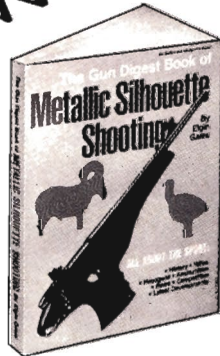
Silhouette shooting has evolved from informal, offhand shooting at metal cutouts of game birds and animals to a highly sophisticated and regulated competition for both rifles and handguns. Gates, a pioneer in the sport and Executive Director of IHMSA (International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association), examines all aspects of this fast growing specialty. He chronicles its beginnings in Mexico, its spread across the border into Texas, New Mexico and Arizona, how the NRA got into the game in 1973, and the development of IHMSA.

He discusses silhouette rifle shooting in detail, covering rifles, calibers, custom cartridges, special scopes, handloading, and such special equipment as electric triggers used by top rifle competitors. Explains how silhouette shooting improves hunting skills plus the appeal it offers to handloaders to develop their own loads and cartridges. Also lists the complete NRA Rifle Shooting rules.

Handgun silhouette shooting is given the same detailed treatment. Gates describes its beginnings, its evolution, its rules and regulations. Chapters cover makes and calibers of handguns, including cartridges and bullets, and loading data; evolution of the unlimited silhouette handgun; big-bore magnum handgunning. He describes how selections are made to the All-America team of handgun silhouette shooters, plus detailed accounts of the first and second national championships.

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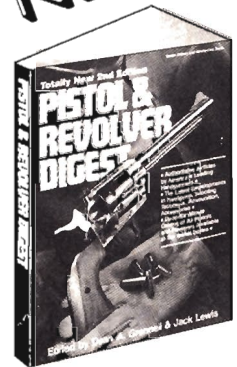
Grennell himself has contributed articles on revolvers and autoloaders that have been manufactured since the last edition, with critical evaluations; new cartridges for handgun reloading; new developments in handgun ammo; how to make a handgun case. Jack Lewis takes us rattlesnake hunting with handguns, and describes the John Bianchi collection of guns, including some owned by famous gun fighters such as Wyatt Earp, Bat Masterson and Frank James.

Bob Steindler discusses the pros and cons of the controversial Vex cartridge. Claude Hamilton reports on his investigations into why revolvers don't shoot alike; which handguns shoot the hardest. Rich Miller, historian for International Combat Shooting, describes the sport and tells about a school run by Jeff Cooper that teaches this specialty.

Bob Zwirz and Dean Grennell team up to report on the Wildey, a new handgun that was on the board for 5 years and is finally on the market. John Hansen, Jr., well-known gun collector, discusses the Smith & Wesson Models 29 and 66 and why they're so hard to find; also covers other handguns that are prime for collecting. The venerable Skeeter Skelton presents his choice for the all-purpose handgun for hunting. Roger Combs reports on new holster innovations and design techniques; explains how to customize a gun by changing the grip. There are articles on care and cleaning, silhouette shooting, and much, much more.

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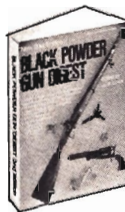


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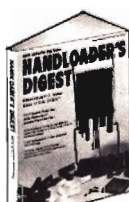
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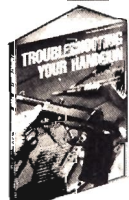


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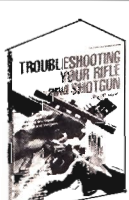
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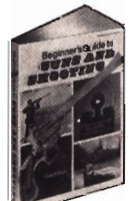


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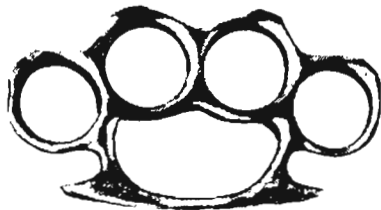
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# Handloading

DAN COTTERMAN

## LOADS FOR YOUR .45 AUTO

*(Editor's Note: This column ran in the Jan./Feb., 1979 HANDGUNNER without the charts. We thought it appropriate to show the complete story and charts for this special .45 Auto issue.)*

Our first look at feeding this heavy-handed and challenging artillery piece came when, in the September/October, 1977, column, I devoted attention to "the need for catering to certain peculiarities of the gun." There was an effort to demonstrate the importance of the shape and dimensions necessary to the successful function of .45 auto ammo within the gun. Stressing what we might call the mechanics of preparing cartridges for auto loaders necessitated devoting only slight attention to bullet performance and powder charges. This time we'll take a more thorough look at what goes inside and on top of the .45 auto handload.

First, however, a brief review is in order for the benefit of those who do not have back issues at hand, as well as for anyone who was with me then but has not yet had an opportunity to put my suggestions to use. As a prelude to discussing handloading for the .45 auto, I am going to mention one significant point purely on the basis of its mnemonic value: I refer to the "transport factor," a function peculiar to all autoloaders which requires the movement of each cartridge from the magazine clip to the chamber from which it will be fired. There is, under such a circumstance, a comparatively long and often damaging trip for carefully prepared ammunition.

Having acknowledged the foregoing, our review should include a look at the mouth of the .45 auto hull along with a thought toward the manner in which it indexes inside the chamber in order to set correct headspace. The provision of a step around the far end of the chamber against which the mouth of the hull comes to rest establishes headspace. For this reason, it is recommended that no appreciable chamfer be cut on the outside of the rim; an inside chamfer to aid bullet seating is recommended.

The need for the cartridge to withstand being slammed from clip to chamber while traveling up a more or less steeply inclined ramp—the most demanding part of the total cartridge movement referred

to in the term, transport factor—calls for a bullet contour that involves a minimum of abrupt angles. Ignorance of this exigency will result in jamming.

There also is good reason to pledge attention to consistency of case trim length and, as well, to limitations of cartridge length. And, finally, the roll-type crimp used with revolver cartridges is definitely not to be applied to the autoloader round for reasons that should be apparent upon recalling the remarks regarding chamfering and headspacing method. A moderate taper crimp—applied with a taper-crimp die so as not to affect headspacing—is recommended.

In the original writing, the mention of but two different powders was sufficient to the purpose then at hand. Those two, Bullseye and Unique, were considered good middle-grounders for the .45 auto. But to concentrate on powders for this round is to realize that the menu lists a wider choice.

As if to gainsay one of my original recommendations, I must confess at this time that I no longer use the former of the two powders previously mentioned as being suitable to use in the .45 auto. Nor, for that matter, have I continued to use that powder in any other handload.

I hasten to add that I am not necessarily stating against the use of long-revered charges of 2.7 in the 38 Special or 3.5 in the .45 auto as target charges. The personal abstinence of caution has arisen as a result of a niggling thought that has rattled around in the back of my memory for years.

The seed of misgiving was planted when, circa 1962, an acquaintance—probably because he knew I was writing within the sporting firearms press—came to my office (right arm in a sling, hand bandaged) to show me what, according to his sincere testimony, had been the cause of his injury. The evidence was contained in a small plastic bottle: it was the twisted remains of a brass (that is, unplated) 38 Special hull. The injured had managed to recover perhaps six or seven ragged fragments.

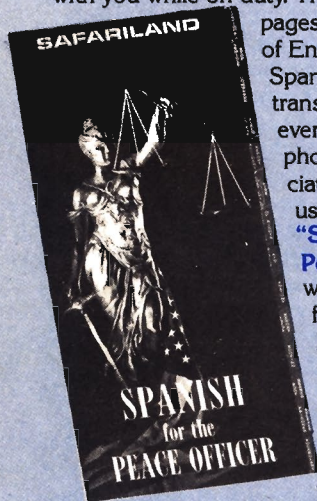
The baffling part of this entire drama existed in the fact that, according to the handloader's statement, he had merely picked the offending round up from his bench when it exploded in his hand. It had

*(Continued on page 50)*

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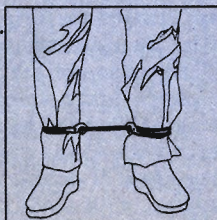
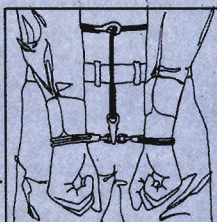
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# Industry Insider

**JEROME RAKUSAN**

We hope Smith & Wesson fans aren't holding their breath waiting for the much publicized Model 629 stainless .44 magnum. Company plans at this writing don't provide for full-scale production until sometime in 1980 (hopefully the first-quarter).

Only a pilot run of the big 6" stainlesses has been produced thus far, and it is a closely guarded secret as to just how many were included in that group. One S&W insider claims that a hundred guns were built, and that most of them are being used for engineering research and exhaustive last-stage product testing by the factory.

There is no reason to believe at this time that there is anything wrong with the stainless .44. Because of enormous demand, all S&W products are way behind orders. It was reported recently that Model 629 #001 was auctioned at a gun show for \$80,000.

S&W's ammo division, making a humanitarian attempt to reduce lead poisoning dangers for police officers practicing on indoor ranges, spared no expense in developing the NyClad ammunition previously discussed in this column. The bullet, jacketed in a blue nylon substance,

dramatically reduces lead pollutants in the air. Still, the product has been the target of a backlash from an unexpected corner of the police community: the ballistic experts.

Power isn't their complaint; they're angry from an evidence point of view. Numerous tests of early NyClad ammunition showed that, for various reasons, it did not pick up and/or retain rifling marks when passing through the barrel. Thus it could not be matched to the gun that had fired it under a forensic examiner's comparison microscope.

This naturally alarmed S&W, a firm that has been second to none in making an effort to look out for the interests of law enforcement. A new research project was undertaken, in conjunction with some of the most prestigious independent ballistics labs in the country. The result is a new NyClad bullet.

This second generation ammo will have a bigger lead core and proportionally thinner nylon jacket, which we assume will reduce that substance's resiliency and force it to take on rifling marks more indelibly as it passes through the bore. The nylon jacket composition has also been changed

toward the same end. Though the new ammo is more difficult to match under a Nikon dual microscope than a standard lead or copper jacketed bullet, decisive matchups are now virtually guaranteed. No more need detectives worry about "untrackable assassins' bullets." This will be welcome news to the AFTE (Association of Firearms and Toolmark Examiners), which was scheduled to discuss the NyClad situation at their annual conference in Milwaukee as this magazine goes to press.

If you've been looking for a good deal in a .45 auto speed rig, BIANCHI has some welcome news for you. Their wildly popular "Chapman Hi-Ride" holster, designed for IPSC matches, has been substantially improved. The previous model, which itself met with much favor, had only a half-lining of steel (in front) and no provision for adjusting the tension. The second generation Chapman holster is lined with steel front and back (just like the custom rigs for two or three times the price) and incorporates a tension screw in back beneath the belt. Best news of all is that the price will remain at around \$25 or less. This will be an all-time best-buy for the practical shooting competitor or the hunter who uses a 1911-style automatic and wants a super-secure rig that still permits a swift, silent draw that won't spook game and uses no safety strap.

Despite the pictures in their catalog, Llama's double action .45 automatic and DA .44 Magnum revolver still aren't ready for mass-market introduction. Stoeger, the firm that imports the line, hopes to be delivering both within a few months, however.

At Sterling Arms the double action stainless .45 auto first unveiled at the National Sporting Goods Association show in Chicago in 1977 still won't be shipped for another six months, if not longer. There were bottlenecks with suppliers and subcontractors; the company's move last year hindered things too; and finally, Sterling is throwing almost all of their present production capability into catching up with demand for their popular, economy-priced small caliber automatics.

Such guns are big sellers in all retail gunshops, and according to one insider, the firm has orders backlogged to December of 1980. Already coming off the lines is their Mark II double action .380 auto in stainless, with retail list of \$250, half-a-

## Could you spot the pebble that could lead to a Killer?

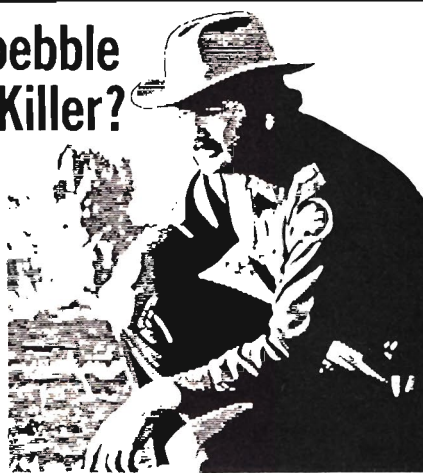
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hundred more than the blue steel equivalent. The Mk. II is flatter than the earlier gun, has trim wooden grips, a new magazine release and other streamlining. A sight the firm thinks will equal Micro in quality while still being snag-free is another part of the package.

Colt says that their eight-inch Python barrels are scheduled for next year. It still hasn't been determined whether they'll be offered through the Custom Shop or as a regular catalog option. It is also possible that there may be one configuration for hunters, and another for metallic silhouette competitors.

More good news from the Colt stable: the long-awaited and long-promised ambidextrous safety for the 1911-series automatics has at last been approved. These won't be extended safeties, but rather the familiar factory pattern with a mirror image on the other side . . . less likely to "walk-off" in belt or holster, and thus probably safer for the working pistol-packer, southpaw or otherwise. The Colt Custom Shop is expected to start delivery as of July 1979. Price hasn't yet been announced, but should probably be \$40 or a bit more. The wide "duck-bill" grip safety is still going through 10,000 round torture tests before it, too, gets the nod from Colt management. For those who can't wait, a custom version is available from Jim Hoag's H&G Shop in Canoga Park, California.

As we write this (early May '79), Dan Wesson's .22 revolvers are due to hit dealers' shelves in approximately seven weeks. This project has been kicking around Dan Wesson Arms' headquarters for years and the only thing holding them up was the fear that somebody might have a mental lapse and fire the .357 cylinder while the .22 barrel was in place. The solution? DWA execs gave up their hopes for interchangeability between .22 LR and .357 Mag.

The new .22 will not have barrels and cylinders interchangeable with other calibers. .22 tubes will be threaded differently, and .22 cylinders will likewise be incompatible with .357 frames. In the .22 caliber model, there will be 2½", 4", 6", and 8" barrels. Price will be the same as for the company's primo .357 wheelguns.

Incidentally, gun clubs putting on silhouette matches will be interested to know that Dan Wesson Arms is providing metallic silhouettes for such matches at no charge. They have two sets of rugged T-1 bigbore silhouettes making the circuit every weekend and have now added ¼" steel .22 targets. All they ask is that the given club take care of picking them up and getting them back on time for their next weekend's assignment. Since freight on 500 pounds of armored steel gets a bit stiff, most clubs taking advantage of the offer have been in the New England area. Fred Hill at Dan Wesson Arms, 293 Main St., Monson, Massachusetts, is the man to talk to.



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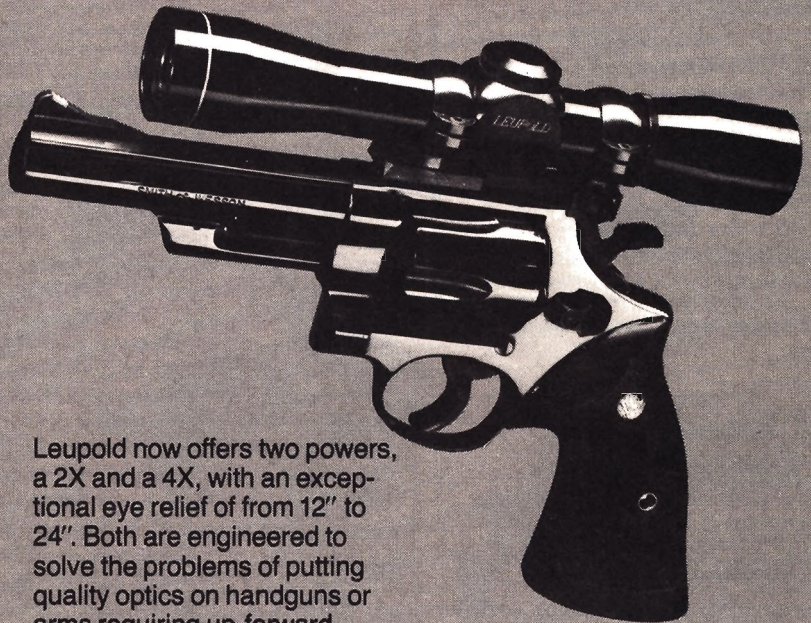
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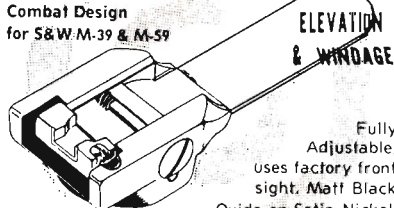
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# Handgun Hunting

**J. D. JONES**

## LET'S GET ON THE BANDWAGON

### EDITOR'S NOTE

*With this column, we introduce our new Handgun Hunting Editor, J. D. Jones. If he needs a more formal introduction, you haven't been reading the magazine. In this first column, we are permitting J. D. to tell you, in his own words, about the new organization he is founding. We wish him luck. We will support the organization and heartily recommend it to our readers.*

Handgun Hunters International is a new organization dedicated to the sport of Handgun Hunting. The purpose of the organization is to share handgun hunting experiences, knowledge of the sport, and provide information of value to members of the organization. We intend to act as a "clearing house" for information on how and where to handgun hunt; including members comments on the services of individual guides and outfitters.

The promotion and propagation of the sport of handgun hunting is our goal.

Information never previously published regarding the actual performance of guns, loads, bullets, etc. will be gathered from members and published. In fact, the publication of the Newspaper will actually be the voice of the members. Articles, letters and experiences of the members are solicited—as little writing by "professional" gunwriters as possible will be used. You have the experiences—others want to know about them. For example: Steve Wynn of Lima, OH, while boar hunting with dogs, required three shots (while in a 'totally on the verge of a heart attack from running' condition) to kill his boar. Good thing he didn't need four—the recoil of his first three shots through the M-29 dislodged the core of round number four which protruded through the mouth of the cylinder enough to stop its rotation. (The jacket stayed in place.)

In addition to valuable information regarding hunting, guns, accessories, and handloading the paper is intended to provide just plain wholesome reading entertainment. Varmint, small game and big game hunting stories will be published.

In addition, if there is enough interest, a "Record" book for handgunners will be established. If there is insufficient interest in the record book by the members—scratch it.

I think Handgun Hunters International

has a service to offer a large segment of handgunners and can fill the needs of the handgun hunter whether he is of the armchair, small game, or big game variety!

Undoubtedly, a healthy, viable organization can accomplish a great deal in promoting the sport and in areas where handgun hunting is not legal; perhaps legalize it. Bowhunters and black powder shooters have special deer seasons—why not handgunners? It can be done.

It cannot happen without an organization. Few members of any organization join to work. The Handgun Hunters International offers information, entertainment—and for those who want it—the challenge and satisfaction of accomplishment.

I believe something else can be accomplished—low cost hunting of just about any game in the country. In addition, I feel worthwhile things can be accomplished by "club" affiliation. Hell, I'm a dreamer and I know it. But as a realist—I do know it can be done. I also know it is expensive, time consuming and a lot of work to found such an organization. The organization has to offer its membership something to fill a need or it will fail. The membership must support the organization through their dues, subscriptions, and interest.

Initially, an annual membership will cost \$12.50 per year. For twelve and a half bucks you will get a membership certificate (if one of the first 1000 members a Charter Certificate) suitable for framing, annual subscription to "THE SIXGUNNER," a newspaper printed bi-monthly by Handgun Hunters International and a patch identifying your membership which you may proudly wear. You are as active a member as you wish to be. Your written experiences may be published. You may start an affiliated club or chapter—or you may choose to read "THE SIXGUNNER" for entertainment. In any event, Handgun Hunters International wants and needs you and your support as a member.

Handgun Hunters International now consists of me—and a few personal acquaintances who snapped up those very low number Charter Memberships. I wish to extend my personal invitation to you to join Handgun Hunters International, P.O. Box 357 Mag., Bloomingdale, OH 43910.





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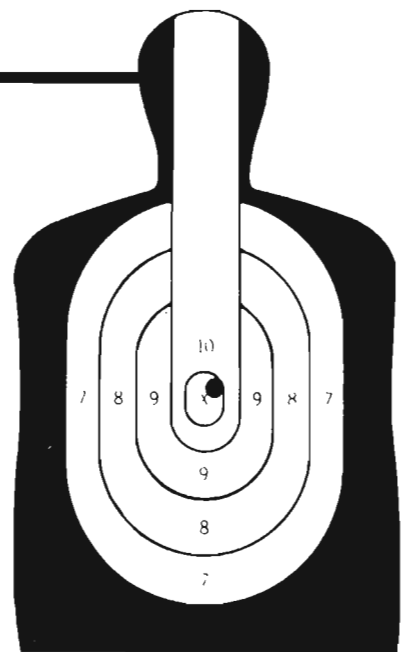
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	Ruger	New Model Black Hawk		6 1/2
	.38	S & W	10 14 15, 64, 67	K
S & W		10 14 15 64 67	K	4"
S & W		10 14 15, 64, 67	K	6"
.44	Ruger	New Model Super Black Hawk		7 1/2

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PHILIP C. BRIGGS

## PUTIN' IT ON: A PLACE TO SHOOT



Silhouettes are in season year long, but often are only shot in matches. Sanctioned shoots with high entry fees are no place to practice nor to learn the game. Worse yet, said shoots are often thinly spread about the state and through the calendar, leaving little opportunity to participate, even if you didn't mind the tariff and the low scores. Not a situation conducive to winning new shooters, for sure. There must be another way.

There is. Low key, low expectation, low cost, low hassle local shoots. Not bad shoots, mind you, but casual fun shoots for the tyro. Anybody can host one and after the area develops a cadre of steady shooters.

First off you'll need a group of like-minded handgunners to help you organize and run the shoots. A few friends could band together to put one on for themselves.

Both the IHMSA (P.O. Box 1609, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401) and the NRA (Competitions Division, 1600 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Washington D.C. 20036) have established rules for use in matches they sanction for both the regular long range course and a short course for those with limited space.

You'll need a place to shoot. If you belong to a club with a range you're off to a good start.

Now, you don't need a nice, flat, manicured range for a silhouette layout. As the sport was designed to simulate hunting conditions, natural terrain layouts are not only acceptable, but desirable. That means you can use a piece of rugged country that is unusable for most purposes; shooting from hill to dale and maybe even crossfiring to fit the banks of targets into

the available land area. The only requirement is that the targets can be seen clearly from the firing points in any shooting position, including a low prone. To facilitate this adaptation of the course to existing range facilities or existing terrain variations, the IHMSA allows a plus or minus five meter variation in distance for all targets in the long range rules.

Targets are the next consideration. It's not the shape, but rather that you get an immediate, visual confirmation of success—what the psychologists would call a reward system. In plain talk, you get to knock the target down, and that appeals to the tin can plinker in all of us.

The size and shape of the targets are standardized for all of the pistol games. The long range version uses the same targets as the rifle silhouette shooters, while the short range version uses special targets that are proportionately reduced for the shorter distances.

Complete sets (20 animals) of full size targets are advertised in the IHMSA newspaper (*The Silhouette*) for \$550 in mild steel, and around \$800 in the tempered steel plate that is necessary to resist damage from the hyper-killer unlimiteds. The IHMSA provides a set of patterns with each new member's pack of goodies. These can be simply scaled up for transfer to steel of the appropriate thickness. All you need is some scrap plate to cut up and weld together.

One other approach that could be used as a temporary expediency is paper targets. Just transfer the patterns to corrugated cardboard and cut out a stencil of each animal. A couple of spray cans and a large roll of kraft paper will yield a whole herd of animals. Set them out on simple

wood target frames and have the target setters count and repair hits. Over the sights the stencilled animals look the same as the iron ones.

The iron animals have to be set on stands. The stands are an important variable in the knockdown equation. To eliminate any stand-caused problems, they must be solid; further, they should be resistant to bullet damage, high enough so that the entire target can be seen and easy to reset the targets upon. The tall, whippy stands used in Salina at last year's IHMSA International Shoot rocked with the animal, which raised havoc with a lot of shooters' scores. Not only did a lot of sheep shrug off well placed hits, there were even a lot of pigs that stayed put. Concrete blocks work and so do railroad ties if they can be set solidly in the dirt. A short piece of three or four inch wide channel iron placed legs down on the dirt can meet all the criteria—besides being cheap. Whatever you use, don't forget the sheep should be set within an inch of the topple point, so mark or build your ram stands to insure that the setters in their haste don't set them hard.

Once you're this far you've about got it whipped. All that's left is to do it. If you've run or competed in other forms of shooting sports you'll have an idea about how to proceed, but let me briefly touch on match day requirements.

As far as manpower goes, you'll need bodies for sign-in, a rangemaster, a referee, several scorers, and a few target setters.

The wife(s) can run sign-up with a little direction. One of the instigators (the one with the CB and speakers on his truck) who's familiar with the shooting procedure will have to be the rangemaster. Another one can be referee, and the shooters can score for one another. You'll have to find a few bodies for target setters and either hide them out down range in bunkers or behind berms, or arrange for transportation from the firing line to the targets.

Be prepared before you open up with copies of the rules, sign-up sheets, pens, score cards, some change, and a lot of patience. More than likely things won't run smoothly the first time out, but as long as there's some steel to shoot, everyone will have a good time.

They always do.

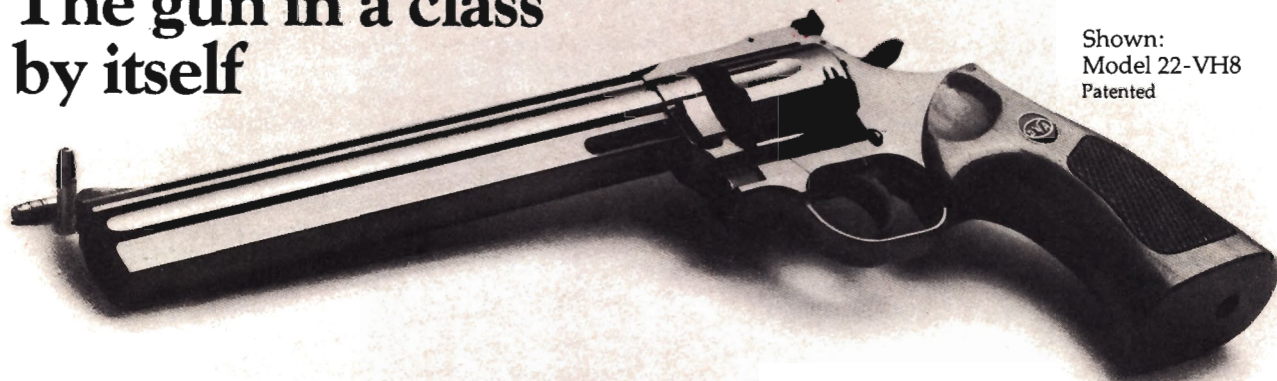


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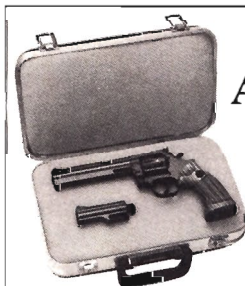


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- **White outline on the rear sight** is standard equipment.

\*Available at additional cost

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# Taking Aim

MASSAD F. AYOOB

## 45 ACP: THE WHEELGUN ALTERNATIVE

Have you ever noticed that when people talk .45 ACP, they're always comparing it with either mid-caliber auto pistol cartridges, or .357 to .44 Magnum revolver rounds? It's awfully easy to forget that since the first world war, big-frame revolvers have been around that will take the stubby, rimless ACP cartridge.

It seems that .45 auto production wasn't coming along quickly enough to outfit all the doughboys who were going to teach the Kaiser to be wiser, so Colt and Smith & Wesson were asked by the government to produce their large frame revolvers in .45 ACP, using an idea Smith engineers came up with, half moon clips that snicked into the extractor groove on the rimless cartridge cases, a device that at once gave the extractor star something to catch hold of when the gun had to be emptied, and which permitted three-at-once loading, the forerunner of today's speedloaders.

After the Great War, both companies kept the .45 ACP wheelguns in the catalogs. Colt dropped their big New Service prior to WWII. Smith has always had one or another .45 ACP in more or less regular production.

Never popular in the mass market (except for the late Fifties when the mail order gun dealers sold surplus 1917 wheelguns for \$27.50 apiece), the 1950 Target and later the 1955 Target, now known as the Model 25, have always had a small, steady allegiance from knowledgeable handgunners. Jim Clark, the only postwar shooter to win a national bullseye championship without preparation as a fulltime military shooter, set numerous national records with Smith .45 wheelguns. He was also instrumental in the 1955 redesign of that sixgun. Al Dinan, the late, great .45 auto customizer and matchmaster, often used a Smith .45 ACP for testing handload consistency.

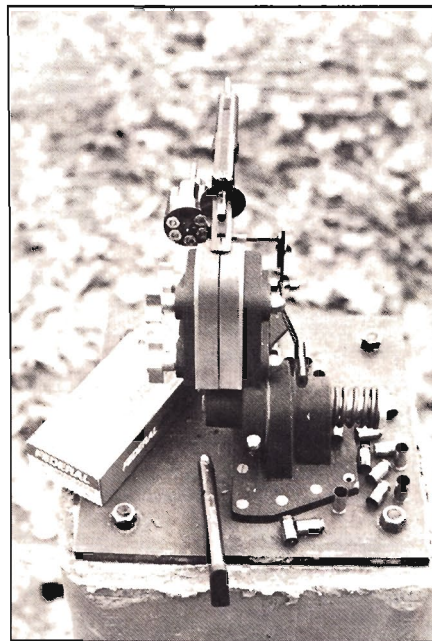
I'll be the first to admit that the 1911 automatic is a great gun, but there are some people and some jobs that simply can't abide autoloaders. For those purposes, a revolver in .45 ACP caliber may well be the answer.

What's it got? Well, have you got time for a checklist?

1) *It duplicates the .45 auto's punch with less recoil.* The 1911's felt recoil is largely generated by the mass of its slide being hurled back and forth. The wheelgun ac-

tually weighs less—36 ounces compared to 39½—and because its bore axis is higher, it should rear up all the harder. But it doesn't. It is *markedly* lighter in kick than its fast-shootin' counterpart.

2) *Terrific accuracy.* A stock Smith & Wesson model 25 will usually equal a Gold Cup, and will often surpass a stand-



**Author's 4' model S & W 25, often his companion on police duty, will shoot under 3' at 50 yards with Federal Match .45 ACP from Ransom Rest.**

ard .45 automatic. Only super-tuned automatics are consistently superior to it.

3) *It has the fastest reload of any revolver.* What you do, is simply weld two half moon clips together, leaving one seam open for flexibility in getting the rounds in and out. Not only are there no buttons, rings, or knobs to operate, but you don't even have to toss an empty loader aside. Loaded with hardball ammo, one of these "full moon" clips can literally be thrown into the gun. John Lazzaro of Keene, New Hampshire, is very probably the best (IPSC) freestyle combat shooter in the country who uses a wheelgun. His choice? Customized N-frame S&Ws in .45 ACP, with full moon clips.

4) *It outperforms the .41 Magnum "Po-*

*lice load" in most senses of the word.* Comparing factory .45 ACP rounds with the .41 "Police" load, we have about equal shock effect mathematically, and possibly greater knockdown effect with the .45 in its several excellent 185, 190, or 200 grain hollowpoints. Nobody makes a factory hollowpoint cartridge for .41. In any case, the .45 revolver is much lighter in recoil with these loads than is the .41 Police. *The .45 ACP sixshooter is also far easier to control than any .357 Magnum, yet has equal or greater stopping power in most cases. Accuracy is equal to, or better than, either .357 or .41.*

5) *The .45 ACP revolver can be fed readily-available types of exotic ammunition, from KTW Glaser safety slugs; it can also be stoked with super-accurate midrange match ammo. The only other revolver you can say this for is the .357, which kicks harder when hot-loaded and doesn't really equal the ballistic delivery.*

6) *Unlike the .45 auto, the wheelgun can digest an incredible variety of ACP handloads.* These range from home-cast 130-grain slugs that are sort of flying aspirin tablets, to bullets as heavy as 400 grains, travelling in the vicinity of 400-600 feet per second. And you don't have brass retrieval problems.

We could go on and on with this, but I think the value of a .45 ACP revolver is becoming clear. Back in the fifties, gun writers worked up humungous handloads for them; bearing in mind that you could buy a 1917 in Very Good condition from Seaport Traders or Ye Olde Hunter for \$30, those experimenters were justified in calling the result, "A Poor Man's .44 Magnum."

Poor men's guns they aren't anymore. The model 25 is right up there with the other deluxe N-frame Smiths in price, and 1917 models of S&W or Colt manufacture often sell for more than used Rugers or Highway Patrolman .357s.

My own predilection for the "revolver in .45 Auto" came about in the mid-Sixties. My dad bought one for me, off a New Jersey street cop who was into guns and did some 'smthing on the side. He had carried it as his street piece until he got stomped by some bikers and went out on disability.

The action had been done by Nolan  
(Continued on page 52)

“To ride, shoot straight, and speak the truth—  
This was the ancient Law of Youth.  
Old times are past, old days are done;  
But the Law runs true, O little son!”

—Charles T. Davis



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32	Astra Constable Astra 3000 10 95	9 95
32	Beretta made 1934 to 38, Beretta mod 100	9 95
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380	Star F.I. mod (15 Rds 16 50)	Reg size 9 95
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# Sight Settings

LUCY CHAMBLISS

## THE BITTER AND SWEET OF AN NRA DIRECTOR NOT ENOUGH WOMEN DIRECTORS?

**N**RA Board of Directors: NRA members have chosen their directors for new terms in our national governing body of shooting events. I am beginning my second year of a 3 year term. Shooting friends I have acquired during my 31 years in the sport, ask me, "Is being a director what you thought it would be?" Yes, and no. The honor, the prestige, the influence you have in some areas has been even greater than I'd thought possible. The thought that over 35,000 people throughout the country, even recognized my name, let alone thought I was worthy of representing them, makes me extremely proud. I try to balance this pride with humility and remember when I am flying to an NRA meeting and enjoying nice accommodations, that the members are paying for it, and they expect honest representation. I remind myself when I am very discouraged with the futility of moving slowly in board meetings, that I am only one director out of 75. As obligated as I feel to adequately represent the members, I must adjust my impatient nature to the pace and use judgement and tact, if I hope to gain the absolutely necessary support from other board members. I was not aware our shooting organization struggled and labored under the load of 4 hour debates on procedural matters and vital shooting matters were sometimes given 4-10 minute board consideration per committee. Neither did I know, that the National Competitions Division at NRA headquarters was staffed by only 15 office workers! These 15 are not specialists, may never have seen a scorecard when hired, and may not stay to become trained. To me it is unbelievable that the statistical work for rifle and pistol events in the U.S. receives such a low priority in a shooting organization. These 15 and the staff member do an OUTSTANDING job under the circumstances, but wouldn't about 50 people be more appropriate for a "shooting organization?" There is a tendency to call the NRA the "national governing body of shooting events," only when we want to call attention to something we want, such as good ranges built for the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles. Other times competitive shooters are rated below collectors and hunters.

I was sorry only two women, Alice Bull

and Marie Alkire were nominated for directors this year. The board needs about 15 more women members. Women are less patient, less willing to sit through 3 hours of where the comma goes and more anxious to get to the Shooter Development Program and the National Civilian Team concept report. I hope the coming year will see a time limit placed on endless debate, and all the NRA's interests given equal time. Board meetings should not be a practice arena for lawyers, computer analysts, or parliamentarians. I realize we are of varied interests such as hunting, collecting, pistol, rifle, range development and gun legislative matters. However, if we don't devote *equal* consideration to these and competitive shooting, we may continue to lose members to organizations like the PMA, the USWIRO, the USFIMTS.

Fortunately, I found the committee work is most effective, though somewhat entangled with other committee decisions. We can't do this if Finance doesn't agree, can't have Tyro classification in Combat unless Smallbore Rifle gets one. Some restrictions, (particularly on finances), are necessary, and as I've seen them, things you can work with and around.

The Whittington Center (Raton) is one issue which seems to bring unjust criticism to those who oppose the idea, or in my way of thinking, have an honest difference of opinion on it. For many reasons, I oppose the idea of a multi-million dollar shooting center being at one location and particularly Raton. I spoke to a large Florida gun club recently, with as good a cross section of NRA members as you will find anywhere. They are doctors, teachers, lawyers, police officers and retail merchants. A group from this club goes west yearly to hunt. They have seen Raton type country and are not especially awed by it. Twice a year the club sponsors the second biggest gun show in the southeast. Being located in the crowded, high cost per acre part of Florida, they had never been able to afford a range until 2 years ago when they bought and paid for 30 acres. They are building their ranges, by themselves, with weekly work teams and when completed next year, their "center" will have rifle, pistol and police combat. I asked during my talk, with no indication as to my per-

sonal opinion, for a show of hands of how many favored the Whittington Center. Not a man, woman, or child raised a hand. The club president asked me, "What good will it do clubs like us?" A good question. I frequently ask for shooter's opinions, to be sure I am not expressing just my convictions on Raton, but am expressing the wishes of a portion of the people I represent. The Whittington Center must not be looked on as something sacred, above criticism, or above cancellation. It should not be allowed to divide us when it appears to me, we are basically united on other more vital issues.

These are some of my thoughts about the first year of a shooter in an NRA Director's chair. As a voter, who perhaps helped put me there, I'd like to know your opinions.

---

## What good will the NRA Whittington Center in New Mexico do for clubs in the East?

---

*New Police Combat Classification:* If the NRA Rules Committee approved our police committee recommendation, Police Combat Competition will be divided into 5 classes, the fifth being a Distinguished Master class. Two 1475x1500 scores would move you into this new class; other classifications were left as they were. I voted for 1480x1500 for Distinguished Master, as many Governor's 20 competitions now take a 1470 to be #20 and the #1 man averages 1488! If we get the 1475, it will be a start toward more realistic classifications.

I acquired some of the new Smith & Wesson Nyclad ammunition. I think coating the bullet with nylon will almost entirely eliminate barrel and cylinder leading and lead emission, and if it does, what a breakthrough. I used good, hard, cast .38 bullets until my custom reloader retired about a year ago and my combat revolvers have leaded badly with swaged bullets. Standing on our OUTDOOR range during large recruit classes, when the wind is either blowing the lead pollution into my lungs or the air is still and the contamination is hanging there to breathe, is very unhealthy. My information from Smith & Wesson is cost for Nyclad will only be about one cent more per round than lead. I spend more than that on lead solvents and wire brushes trying to remove lead, not to mention the health hazard.

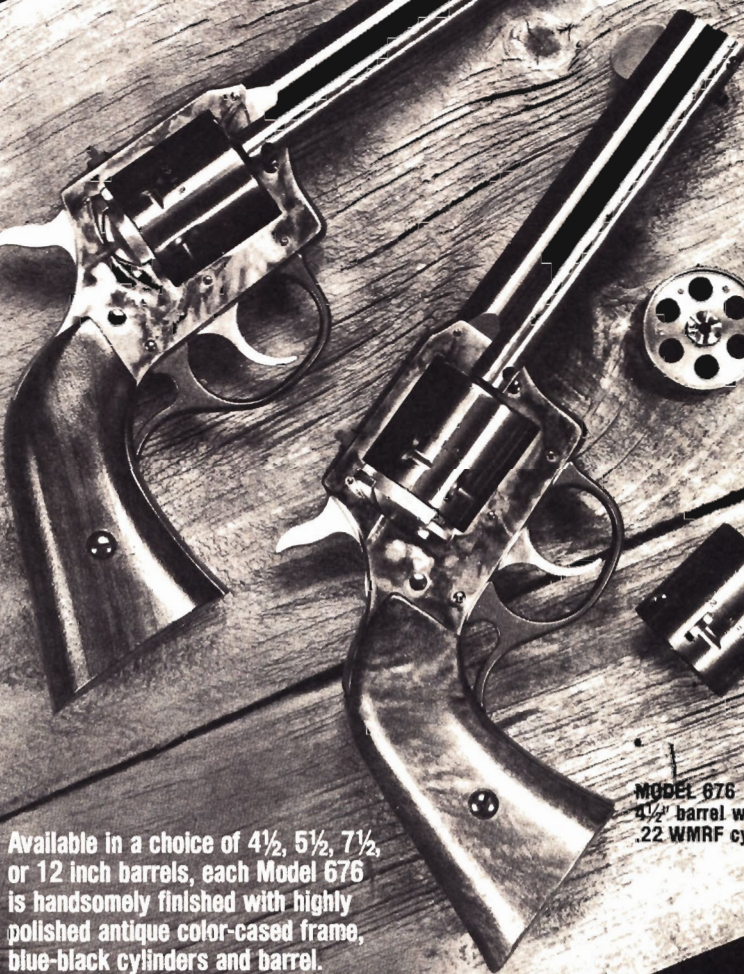
Lucy

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# CopTalk

**"STAFF"**

## .45 AUTO FOR POLICE: THE CHOICE OF EXPERTS

Choice of champions, though it may be, in freestyle combat matches, the question inevitably comes up as to whether the .45 automatic is as highly thought of in purely police-oriented firearms circles. Though Jeff Cooper's teachings have brought many policemen to the .45 auto as a service gun, and far more to it for off-duty, Cooper is not now and never has been a policeman. He must be gratified, then, with the knowledge that many badge-wearers who also have credentials in the firearms field swear by the 1911 pistol Cooper successfully staked his reputation on.

Col. Charles Askins, who never carried an automatic during his shootout-fraught years on the U.S. Border Patrol, nor as a WWII combat soldier, finally decided in the Seventies that this gun was the way to go. When he carries a sidearm today, he says, it is usually a .45 auto, and probably a Pachmayr custom conversion of the 1911 or a lightweight Star PD, loaded with hot hollowpoints. Askins has probably killed more armed opponents in stateside gunfights than any other living handgun expert.

Skeeter Skelton has admitted that his personal protective hardware tends toward the Colt .45 automatic, even though he is most often associated with the six-gun. He has made it clear that he doesn't think the 1911 is a good issue sidearm, but that for a man like himself who is into guns, it has a lot to recommend it. While he says he never carried one in uniform, it is likely that a concealed .45 auto accompanied him now and again during his extensive career in county and Federal law enforcement.

Massad F. Ayoob carried a Colt .45 auto almost exclusively during his first seven years of police work, surrendering it only when a headquarters edict switched all uniformed officers in his department to revolvers. He still carries a customized 1911 off duty, though, like Skelton, he does not recommend it as an issue service weapon. He favors 185-200 grain jacketed hollowpoints, and feels the 1911 is the optimum sidearm for the intensively-trained officer.

George Bredsten is the head of the American Big Game Handgun Hunters

Association, but few people know that he is also a police officer. Though Bredsten's columns in AMERICAN HANDGUNNER have traditionally run toward humungous handloads for big Magnum revolvers, his choice of a duty sidearm is the Colt .45 automatic, with his own stiff SWC handloads.

Evan Marshall, our "Ammo Scene" columnist, is best known as an advocate of the .41 Magnum revolver, but privately admits that his idea of a perfect police handgun is the Colt .45 automatic. Marshall, a Detroit police sergeant, knows whereof he speaks.

Bill Jordan, the great champion of the



**The late, great handgun writer, George Nonte, preferred to carry a Smith & Wesson Model 59 9mm. However, late in life, he carried a .45 Auto. He liked the hot Super Vel load.**

revolver for police work, has said that his .45 is perhaps the only automatic suitable for the job. It is faint praise, but coming from the source, praise enough; even the most adamant foes of autoloading service pistols admit that if you go that route, the 1911 .45 is the course to follow. Elmer Keith has much the same sentiments. Keith has a law enforcement background, and Jordan retired as a deputy chief inspector of the U.S. Border Patrol after enough hairy gunfights to give "Starsky and Hutch" scriptwriters perpetual nightmares. Both Jordan and Keith feel the police .45 is most effective with the SWC handloads.

(Continued on page 52)



## WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN



This twisted mass was once a used, but probably still serviceable, Colt .45 ACP Model 1911 A1. It was "demilitarized" by the U.S. Government shortly after it was decreed that none of these guns should be sold through the DCM. The owner plated the metallic mess and dubbed it "The L.B.J. Commemorative."

Had the "crusher" not done its work, and had this gun been sold to an NRA member, it might have been the source of enjoyment by a collector or the instrument that won a trophy for a competitive shooter. It may have been the first center-fire gun for a new handgun target shooter or the basis for many hours of creative craftsmanship for a home gunsmith. This .45 Colt, with some obvious modifications, could have been the gun that brought home the cash from the Money Shoot in Laramie or the First Place Trophy from the IPSC Nationals.

But this was not to be, for this gun and

thousands others like it. Instead, our government chose to destroy them and sell the battered remains as scrap. The decision, I am sure, came from the same type of twisted bureaucratic thinking that recently proposed nine-digit serial numbers for all newly manufactured guns. Thus the design genius of John M. Browning, the toil of the workers in the arms factory that produced the firearm and the citizens' tax dollars that bought it for the government are all embodied in a gnarled piece of metal standing on a polished walnut base. A monument to the philosophies of Dodd, Mikva, Kennedy, and more recently Carter who feel that the Second Amendment to the Constitution of The United States does not really mean what it says, that "... the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." If these philosophies of the 60's and 70's grow even stronger in the 80's, God help us all. *Photo by Walter Rickell.*

## WHAT THIS ISSUE IS ALL ABOUT

The popularity of the .45 Auto is probably at its highest point since its inception. With the possible exception of the Colt Single Action Army or the German Luger, the 1911 Colt has taken giant steps that led to an overwhelming reception by knowledgeable shooters. A handful of guys like Jeff Cooper some 20 years ago, saw the rainbow and followed it to its present state of sophistication. Here then is a review of the state of the art.

...EXPLODING THE MYTHS ABOUT THE .45 AUTO Jeff Cooper admittedly has been a little prejudiced when it comes to a discussion of "his baby" but little by little and piece by piece he dispels some of the so called myths that have prevailed among unbelievers. How safe is it? How accurate? And the list goes on and on. We feel you're going to feel a little more informed after wading through this informative piece.

...HOAG PROVES THAT A LOT CAN BE DONE You just can't imagine what wonderful things can be done to a Colt Commander. Reading this marvelously detailed piece by author Ayoob...you're going to walk away (we hope) a little more informed than you were before and Hoag isn't the only guy to put your piece into top shape. In our Accessory Listing you'll find other great craftsmen like Swenson, Ries, Pachmayr, etc., that know just what to do to that out-of-the-box plain Jane.

...NOW WHAT ABOUT ECONOMY? Wouldn't it be nice if you didn't have to part with an arm or a leg to make your new Gold Cup a combat-ready piece? Well, Bosselmann takes you by the hand, step-by-step, and proves that you can wow them at the range with very little of your hard-earned cash. Follow along with Karl. He knows of which he speaks.

...WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF THE BREED? There are about 13 other .45 autos that you can choose in lieu of a Colt. Some are exotic, some are small, and one you can pretend you're Dirty Harry with and smash them with terrific muzzle energy and your repeat shots will come faster than Harry's Model 29. They're all there. It's up to you which one is the one you have to have.

...YOU'LL LEARN ABOUT LEATHER, ACCURACY, ETC., TOO This is an issue to read cover to cover, including the ads. Because, brother, if you don't find it here, you just might not find it any place else. For instance, we direct your attention to the Seecamp Conversion. Now there's a rather unique idea. We think we covered the waterfront. We hope you do, too.

# COOPER DEBUNKS THOSE

# .45 MYTHS

By Jeff Cooper

Any discussion of mythology is complicated by our necessarily vague understanding of just what constitutes a specific myth. By definition, a myth is an idea which is widely believed to be true, but actually is not. We can search with some effectiveness for the truth, but to pin down an untruth is harder. For example, what *are* the "Myths of the 45?" Those of us who have worked intimately with this illustrious artifact for decades are not in the best position to comment on any myths which may surround it, for we are too well aware of the facts to be acquainted properly with the "non-facts." When I was asked to do this piece I had to give much thought to the matter because I am, frankly, not sure just what the myths of the

45 really are. A sort of survey was therefore conducted among a select group of acquaintances, limited to those who knew that there was such a thing as a 45 auto but little else about it. As you may imagine, my personal circle does not include many such and I had to look pretty hard. However, I did come up with some reasonably authentic myths. The tally is probably not all inclusive, but it will do. If you know of a myth not covered in what follows, please send it in for processing. Bear in mind it must be a misapprehension plausible to a rational man—not just a goofy notion.

Our list contains eight myths—seven negative and one positive. On the negative side we have: (1) the 45 auto is inaccurate. (2) It is not dependable. (3) It is hard to

shoot well. (4) It is uncontrollable. (5) It is "unsafe." (6) It is slow on the first shot. (7) It costs a fortune to modify it into satisfactory working condition. On the positive side we have one: A 45 will knock a man flat with any hit, anywhere, every time.

## ACCURACY

As we all know, accuracy comes in two categories, intrinsic and practical. Intrinsic accuracy is a function of the weapon itself, plus its ammunition. It has nothing to do with its ignition or sighting systems, nor with the shooter. Practical accuracy is a matter of what can be done by the weapon in reasonably well trained hands. Considered either way, the accuracy potential of the 45 auto is as great as that of any center-



fire handgun available. The target shooters and their gunsmiths have worked for over half a century to bring the 45 auto pistol into an accuracy class which is totally beyond any concept the weapon originally incorporated. The 45 auto is a "meat ax," never intended by its designer nor its original manufacturers to be a pin-point paper-punch. Nonetheless, it has been developed into just that—in specific examples. Certainly one cannot expect the piece as delivered over the counter to print two-inch groups at fifty yards, as the target pistols will do, but this is of very little consequence since the serious use of the weapon demands far less precision than that. The 45 auto is a defensive sidearm and its primary use occurs at ranges of less than ten meters. At this range even the inaccurate versions are plenty accurate. If you desire to have a target-tuned 45 auto, you can have it. If you do not care about 50-yard precision, the pistol as delivered will probably do everything that you need.

One of the problems with the 45 auto is its very venerability. It has been around a long time. Many examples still in use were issued in World War I, and much water has gone under the bridge since then. These pistols have rarely been "shot out," but they have often been abused beyond the point of serviceability. Pistols rusted and forgotten in the bilges have been scrubbed up and put back into use, and they will give reasonable service if not too much is expected. They are not, however, examples of the potential of the weapon and should not be so regarded. Most of the new guns I have seen over the past decade will put ten shots reliably into five inches at 50 yards. That is just fine. What it means is that under no circumstances will the shot arrive more than two-and-a-half inches from the exact point of aim, and usually it will be closer than that. At 50 yards you cannot see an increment of two-and-a-half inches with the naked eye; besides which, 50-yard shots with a fighting pistol are the rarest sort of exception.

*(Continued on page 48)*

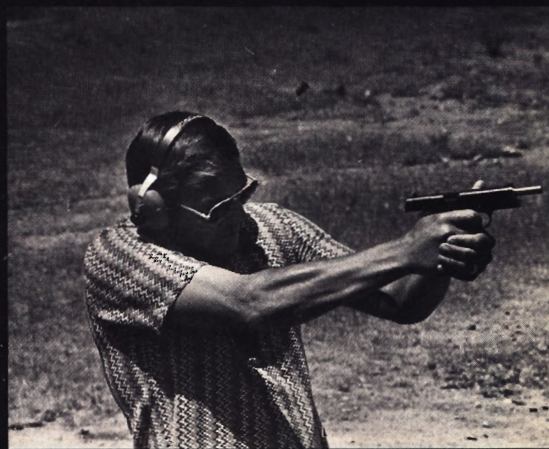
## **COLT .45**

***The blue-steel Colt,  
The new steel Colt,  
She runs to stunts erratic;  
For she's a darn  
Tough arm to learn  
This Army automatic.***

***Yet when you get know this arm  
and how to coax and pet her,  
She'll do her duty like a charm;  
No gun will serve you better.  
She'll stick right closely by your side  
And as the fight grows hotter  
And you are caught in battle's tide—  
You'll thank your stars you've got her.***

***The lusty Colt,  
The trusty Colt,  
The weapon democratic,  
Whose vicious might  
Makes men one height—  
The Army automatic.***

***—Songs of the Training Camps***



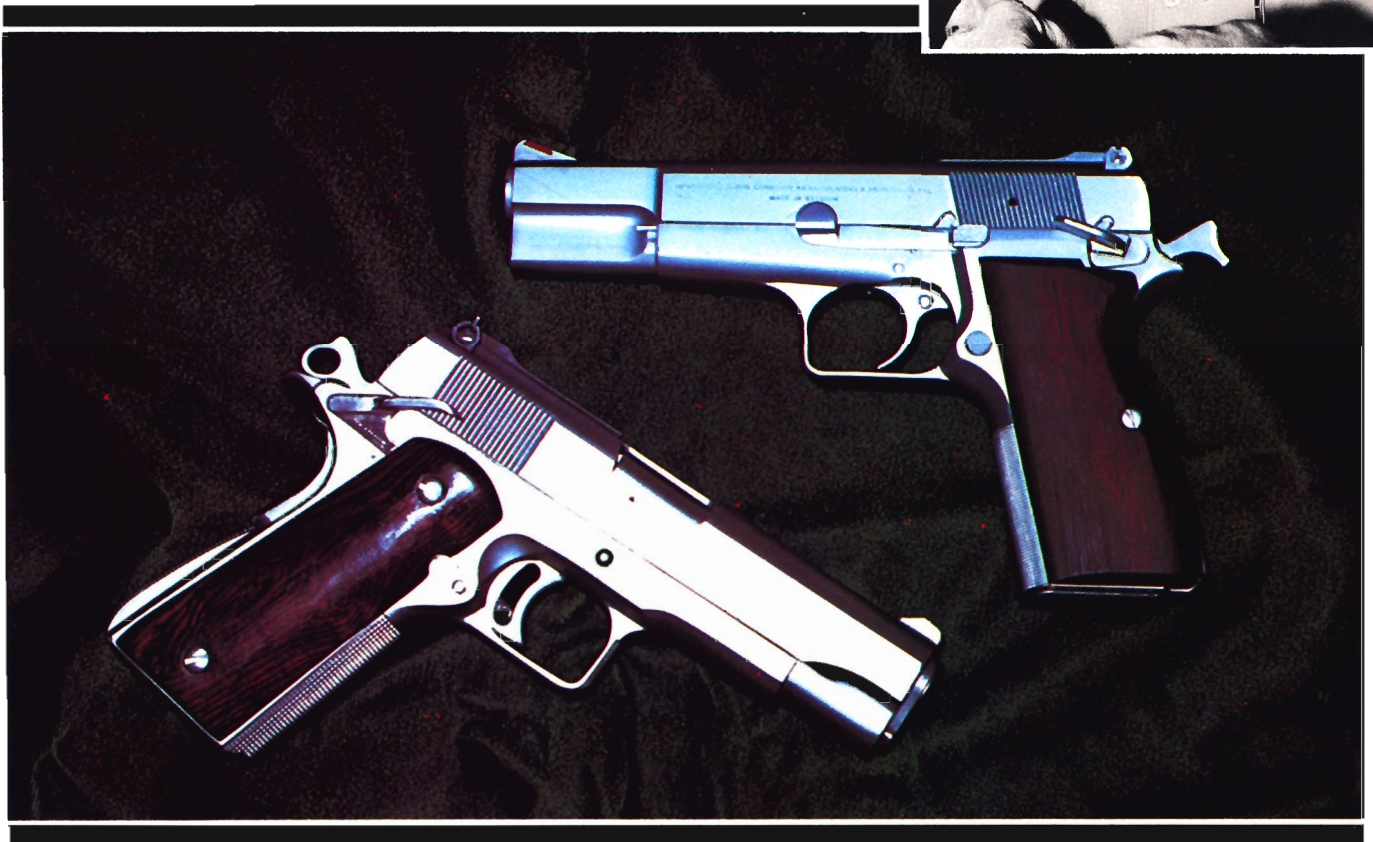
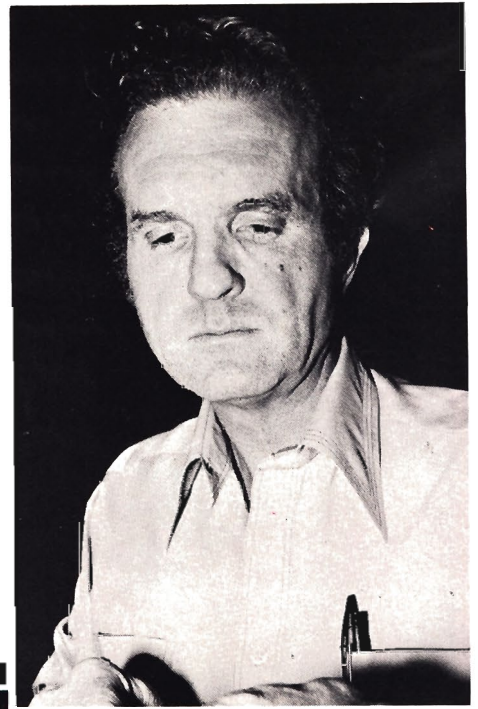
C U S T O M . 4 5 s B Y

# HOAG



**I**n the intense world of Southern California combat shooting, Jim Hoag is a name to conjure with. He's one of the Originals in the sport, starting back in Jeff Cooper's embryonic days at Big Bear, and was a top competitor for years as free-style gunfight simulation grew to its present IPSC format. Though he no longer shoots, his presence is felt at every California tournament, because the Hoag .45 is a major favorite among experienced gunners.

There are some features all combat-custom 1911 autos have in common, but each maker seems to have his trademark. Just as Armand Swenson has the ambidextrous safety, so Hoag has the long-slide combat .45. Jim Clark was the man who popularized that



concept in NRA shooting, but it was Hoag who introduced it to the IPSC gunners. Offered only as part of Hoag's deluxe Master Grade packages, the six and eight inch guns have captured the imagination of combat shooters and hunters, respectively. While the six works plenty slick out of a speed rig, the eight is just too cumbersome for fast work; on the other hand, its long sight radius and slight increase in ballistic efficiency suits it well for handgun hunters who are bored with .44 Magnums. 🐾

**Opposite: Long slide conversions have become a trademark of Hoag. These two, done a few years ago, represent the epitome of the art. (Rickell photo). Above: Both this Super Commander and the hard chromed Browning make top duty guns.**



**Author fired this test group from 2-fisted combat position at 50 feet with an 8" premier grade Hoag. The low-mounted Bo-Mar sights are a Hoag trademark.**

Hoag pistols are beautifully done, and they are expensive. Whether it's worth the price is up to you; the magazine sent me to Jim's shop to gather one subjective viewpoint.

You can almost tell a Hoag when you pick it up and rack the mechanism; they are *tight*. While a number of combat pistolsmiths feel that out of the box accuracy is good enough and only external work is needed, that view doesn't go with Jim; each gun is accurized until a 3" minimum group at 50 yards can be assured, which is sometimes but not always true of the Colt automatic as it comes from the brown factory box.

Jim tightens the fit of the slide to the frame rails, installs a BarSto stainless barrel on the higher grade guns, put in a match-tight bushing, and (except on the economy models) installs a full-length recoil spring guide. Sights will be either Bo-Mar, or the K-size S&W revolver unit, and he likes to hog out the top of the slide so the sights can ride super-low. This is an excellent feature, improving the pistol's pointing qualities in close, fast shooting without sacrificing clear sight picture or precision adjustments. The gun clears leather quicker, too. Jim is believed to be the first to inset the sights that deep on combat .45s, though other smiths are now doing the same thing.

The guns he sells most of, however, are standard size .45 autos: about 30% steel

and aluminum Commanders, the rest Government Models and Gold Cups. He feels the blued GM is the most economical approach. "There's no point in paying extra for a Gold Cup's features if you're going to have the gun accurized anyway," he philosophizes, "and nickel guns cost you

because we have to strip off the plating when we tighten the gun, and then refinish it. For some reason, incidentally, nickel Combat Commanders have been running very rough, but we have no problem with the blued ones.

*(Continued on page 60)*



**For the price of a new small car, you can get this premier grade Hoag kit with four barrels of different lengths and matching slides.**

By Karl Bosselman

The COLT Gold Cup .45 Caliber Automatic Pistol is receiving more and more recognition as a defense weapon, especially in the I.P.S.C. leagues. While this choice is well justified, I don't remember any gun writers giving comprehensive suggestions for recommended special work to be done on the pistol *before* this type of shooting is undertaken. One just cannot take a target gun out of the showcase and have an instant combat piece out of it. No wise man would expect such a thing.

After well over 100,000 rounds through various 'Cups,' below follows a list of the work I have found necessary on these fine weapons before a steady diet of 'Ball' or hotter loads is used.

**First**—The factory-supplied *ELLIASON* rear sight is fine for paper target work, but will NOT hold up with standard .45 ACP or hotter loads. Substitute a COLT *ACCRO* (no milling or special fitting necessary), being certain to use a long-shanked vertical adjustment screw. Use a *rivet pin* to hold into place. Roll pins will shear apart (if these are used replace every two hundred rounds), and the standard issue one will continually work loose. The *ACCRO* sight arrangement, as described above will last, requiring only the rivet pin be replaced every two thousand rounds or so.

**Second**—Despite identical part numbers, the recoil spring of the Gold Cup is *four coils shorter* than the corresponding Govt. Model part. At the least, substitute the latter for the former, but even better, install a custom 18½ lb. spring. (The custom spring should also be installed in the Govt. Models.)

(In pre-Series '70 [National Match] Gold Cups, definitely use the 18½ lb. spring. For loads hotter than 'Ball,' I prefer using a recoil buffer *in addition* to this spring, as the forward slide hood is very thin on this model—slides tend to crack about 1¼" back from the muzzle).

**Third**—Dismantle the gun and remove the sear depressor and spring, discarding them in the nearest wastebasket. These parts are for paper target work only. When using 'Ball' or hotter ammunition, the spring will eventually pop out, leaving the depressor to get in the way and not allow the magazine to be fully inserted in the weapon. Bad news!

**Fourth**—Re-angle the rear of the front sight so it will not drag in holsters or catch on clothing. (Eventually the sight *will leave* the slide.)

This part should be replaced immediately upon purchase of the gun by driving out the original, milling a slot into the slide, and silver soldering in a piece

(Continued on page 62)



The "poor man's Gold Cup" custom job includes: new front sight silver soldered into channel, Colt Accro rear sight with white outline, grip safety lengthened, mainspring housing and backstrap checkered, magazine chute beveled, front of trigger guard checkered, custom recoil spring (18½ lbs.) installed, recoil buffer added and custom Parkerizing.

The

# "OTHER" .45's

NOW...  
MORE AND MORE  
MANUFACTURERS  
WANT A PIECE  
OF THE ACTION



As the man said, "ya pays your money and ya takes your chances." The lid is off Pandora's Box and good and not-so-good are showing up in stainless steel, double action, pocket designs and even manually-operated models . . . yours for the choosing. The old faithful 1911 Colt now has a room full of company. Finishes, sizes, triggers, barrels and

overall weight should fill most any shooter's needs . . . be it accuracy, concealability or (in one case) hyped up muzzle velocity and smashing muzzle energy; muzzle energy, that up until now, was reserved for the .44 or .454 Magnum revolvers. Enter now the other alternatives to the Government Model or Gold Cup that have dominated so long.





## BROWNING BDA

A safe gun . . . without a safety. Double action for a fast, first shot. The BDA holds 7 rounds and 1 in the chamber. No tools necessary for field stripping. Just rotate the single dismounting lever and the slide and the entire barrel group may be separated from the frame. A rugged steel slide with an alloy frame for lightness helps in carrying for daily use. The rear sight is drift adjustable with a white dot on the front blade. At this writing the BDA is going for \$349.95. Write Browning, Dept. AH, Route # 1, Morgan, UT 84050.



## AMT HARDBALLER

This stainless steel auto has been around awhile but for those of you who don't have the specs, here are the facts. It features adjustable combat sights, extended combat safety, serrated matte rib, long grip safety, checkered Walnut grips, beveled magazine weld, serrated frame and wide adjustable trigger. It weighs 39 ounces with a length of 8½". They have a lot of other variations such as the shortened Skipper, the long slide Hardballer and a copy of the Combat Government. At this writing it goes for \$395.00. Write: AMT, Dept. AH, 11666 McBean Drive, El Monte, CA 91732.

## STAR MODEL PD

Only 7" long and weighing in at 25 oz., the Star comes in a rich, blue/black and has checkered Walnut grips. Has heavy duty duraluminum frame and is famous for its trouble-free service. It's based on the proven Browning system and the price is a palatable \$255.00 at this writing. Magazine release is great for the combat competitive shooter. Write: Interarms, Dept. AH, 10 Prince St., Alexandria, VA 22313.

## H&K P9S

Not what you would call an orthodox design silhouette, shooters say it points very well and with the Polygonal rifling and the delayed roller-locked bolt system, it's quite unique. It weighs in at 30 oz. and holds 7 in the clip and 1 in the chamber. Has a lot of optional extras like trigger stop, adjustable trigger, adjustable rear sight etc. The barrel measures 4" with an O.A.L. of just 7.6 inches. An old and well-known name, it has the safety feature of being a double action. When shot automatically it has a clean 3½ lb. trigger pull. The Combat Model is presently going for \$384.00. Write: Heckler & Koch, Inc., Dept. AH, Suite 218, 933 No. Kenmore St., Arlington VA 22201.



## CROWN CITY

Pictured is the copy of the Colt 1911 A-1 but Crown City is now in to modifying the old workhorse much more significantly and has created new models like the Eagle, Hawk, Condor, Falcon etc. The basic one, which incidentally is still hovering around the \$200 price category was a natural after having furnished parts for a long, long time. Now the line is truly extensive. There's the full-sized Government, the shortened Commander and they are into light frames too. Stainless steel is in the line too. Their basic .45 ACP holds 7 and 1 up the pipe. Write: Crown City Arms, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 1126, Cortland, NY 13045.

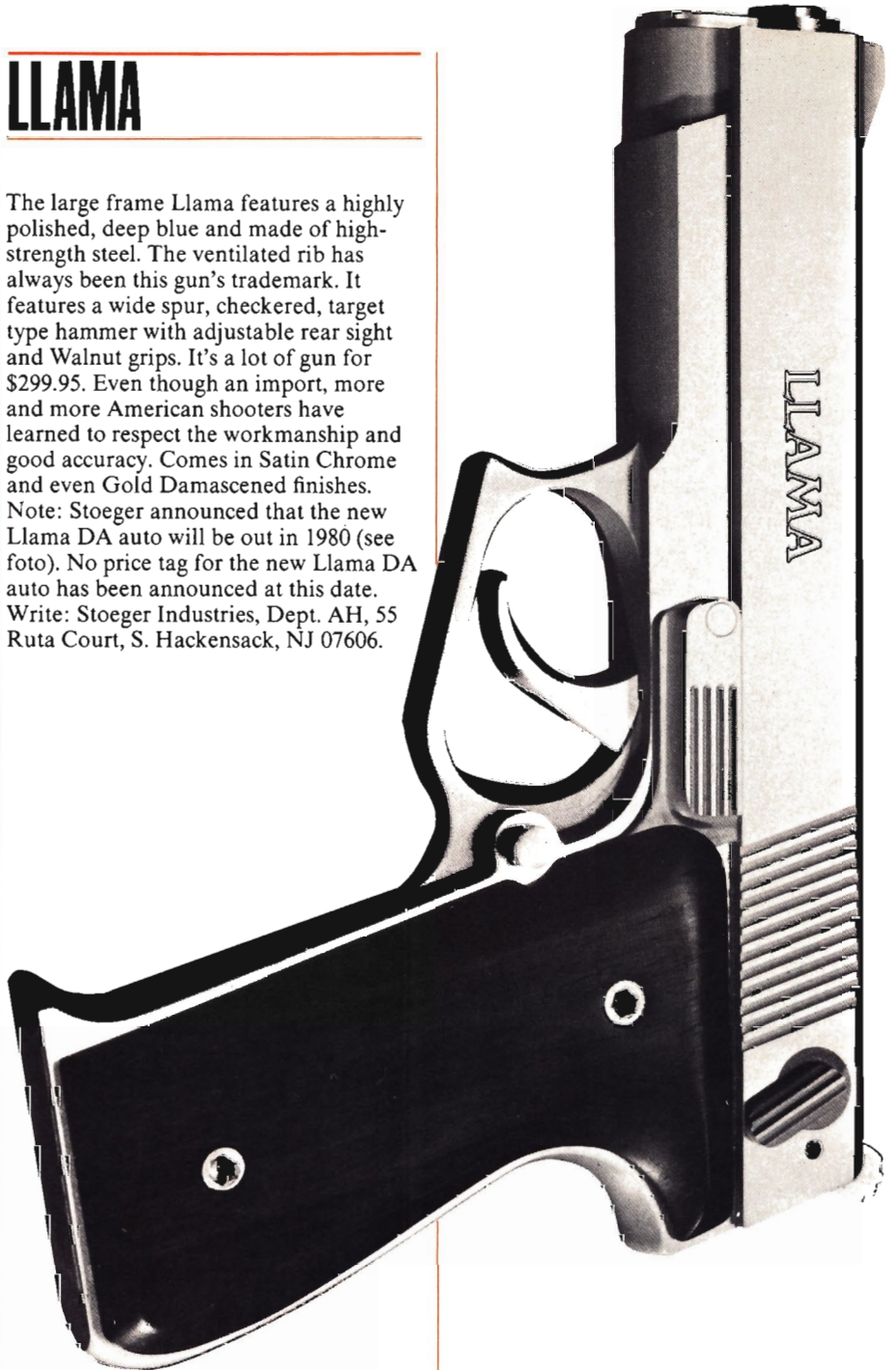


## LLAMA

The large frame Llama features a highly polished, deep blue and made of high-strength steel. The ventilated rib has always been this gun's trademark. It features a wide spur, checkered, target type hammer with adjustable rear sight and Walnut grips. It's a lot of gun for \$299.95. Even though an import, more and more American shooters have learned to respect the workmanship and good accuracy. Comes in Satin Chrome and even Gold Damascened finishes. Note: Stoeger announced that the new Llama DA auto will be out in 1980 (see foto). No price tag for the new Llama DA auto has been announced at this date. Write: Stoeger Industries, Dept. AH, 55 Ruta Court, S. Hackensack, NJ 07606.

## DETONICS

At this writing, this compact little brute is the smallest semi-auto made. The Semmerling is smaller but it must be operated manually. It measures but a mere 6¼" long by 4½" high, and it weighs in at 29 ounces empty. An accuracy job of sorts is included with a unique self-adjusting cone barrel. It has a beveled magazine well for easy clip insertion. The barrel is throated with a polished ramp. Crisp trigger and de-fanged hammer are nice touches too. It holds 6 in the magazine and 1 in the chamber despite its small size. Recoil is said to be extremely light which is quite surprising considering its diminutive size. At this writing the price is \$417.81. Write: Detonics, Dept. AH, 2500 Seattle Tower Seattle, WA 98101.



## STERLING ARMS

The Model 450 features double action firing and a new barrel bushing for an undeviating tight fit. Rear sight has windage and elevation adjustment. Double side rails on front and back give it a smooth, straight ride. Holds 7 rounds in magazine and 1 in chamber. It has a good grip angle and features a push-button magazine release. 7½"x5" and weighing in at 36 ounces, the 450 sells for \$269.95. Write: Sterling Arms, Dept. AH, 211 Grand St., Lockport, NY 14094.

## MOSSBERG

Much has already been written on this new stainless steel military-combat model. Even at this writing, improvements are being worked out. The over all appearance is reminiscent of the Colt, but it has no grip safety and the manual safety is located on the slide instead of the frame. The squared off trigger guard is perfect for two-hand hold and it even has a "hook" to keep fingers from sliding down. The slide release is in a perfect spot, more to the rear of the slide for easier accessibility. The bushing is the screw-in type for a tighter fit. It weighs 36 ounces with an over all length of 7½". Sights are adjustable and there is a 6 round magazine. Write: O. F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc., Dept. AH, 7 Grasso Ave., North Haven, CT 06473.

## WILDEY

The Wildey fires a .45 Winchester Magnum that boasts 30% greater stuff than the .357 Magnum or the .44 Magnum revolver. It holds 8 shots, fires double action, and will come in 5", 6", 7", 8" and 10" barrels. All stainless steel with ventilated rib and adjustable sights. Weight for a 6" barrel will be 51 oz. Patented gas operation greatly reduces recoil. It has 5 lugs and enclosed rotary bolt. Safeties include positive hammer block, magazine safety, and rebounding firing pin. Wood grips standard. Outline sights optional. At this writing the price should be \$389.95. Write: Wildey Firearms Company, Inc., Dept. AH, P.O. Box 284, Cold Spring, NY 10516.



## SEMMERLING

The incredible vest-pocket .45. That's the way it's billed and because of it's deviation from the norm, maybe they're correct. Measuring only 5.2x3.7x1", it holds 5 rounds and feeds from a manually operated-actuation. The first round is ready for fast use just as a typical double action. It weighs only 24 oz. but does not have the heavy recoil its light weight might suggest. Actually, it is an inch shorter than the small .32 PPK. The smallest of the big bore backup guns, the Semmerling LM-4 has a semi-matted blue finish. The stroke is only 1½" and is almost effortless. At this writing the price is \$645.00. Write: Semmerling, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 400, Newton, MA 02160.

## VEGA

After years of development and refinement, the stainless steel VEGA is now available and selling well, by all reports. An evolution of Sam Colt's venerable Government, it is offered as a complete pistol or as separate parts. Almost a perfect match for the Colt in the technical department, the weight and size are virtually the same. It's fitted entirely by hand and is a combination of polished and blasted surfaces. Available with high-combat type sights or Accro-Adjustable. Complaints on performance are practically non-existent. The Combat-sighted model goes for \$349.95 at this writing. Write: Pacific International, Dept. AH, 2215 J St., Sacramento, CA 95816.

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# SELECTING LEATHER FOR THE .45 AUTO

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*By Massad F. Ayoub*



*Color photo courtesy of Bianchi Leather*

The .45 Auto has a lot going for it, but at the same time, it is one of the trickiest handguns for which to select suitable accessories, especially leather.

For one thing, the .45 is often carried Condition One or "cocked and locked." Mechanically safe in and of itself, according to most .45 experts, this practice has certain drawbacks: it can frighten the be-jabbers out of an uneducated onlooker, it can make the wearer himself nervous, and most important, the practice can lead to accidental discharge, *if the pistolero has not been especially careful in selecting his holster.*

This can occur for any of several reasons. First, when the gun is carried "Mexican style" (shoved into the pants behind the hip on the gun hand side), the safety can "walk" off. This is due to the gun shifting as the owner moves, sometimes allowing the thumb safety to be pushed against his side with enough pressure to slip the flat latch into the "fire" position, thus setting the stage for an "accidental."

There have also been many premature discharges of Condition One .45s, not a few resulting in serious leg wounds. These occur most often when the piece is drawn from a holster that left the trigger guard

exposed. Without thinking, the speed-seeking shooter releases the thumb latch as soon as he takes a hold on the gun, at the same time automatically disengaging the grip safety. If his finger touches the exposed trigger as he begins the forceful movement that will clear the gun from the holster, it is all too easy for enough pressure to be applied accidentally exerted on that 3½-5 lb. trigger.

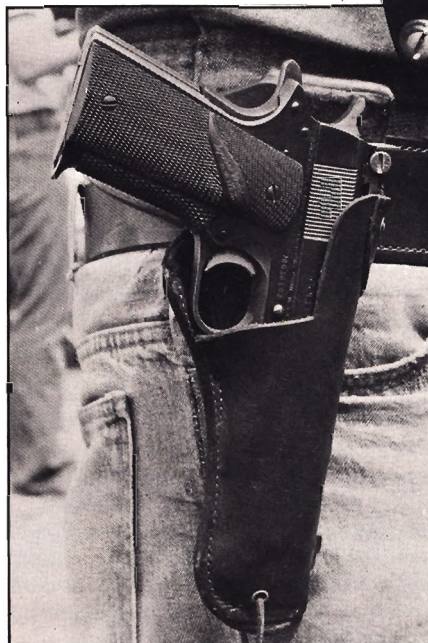
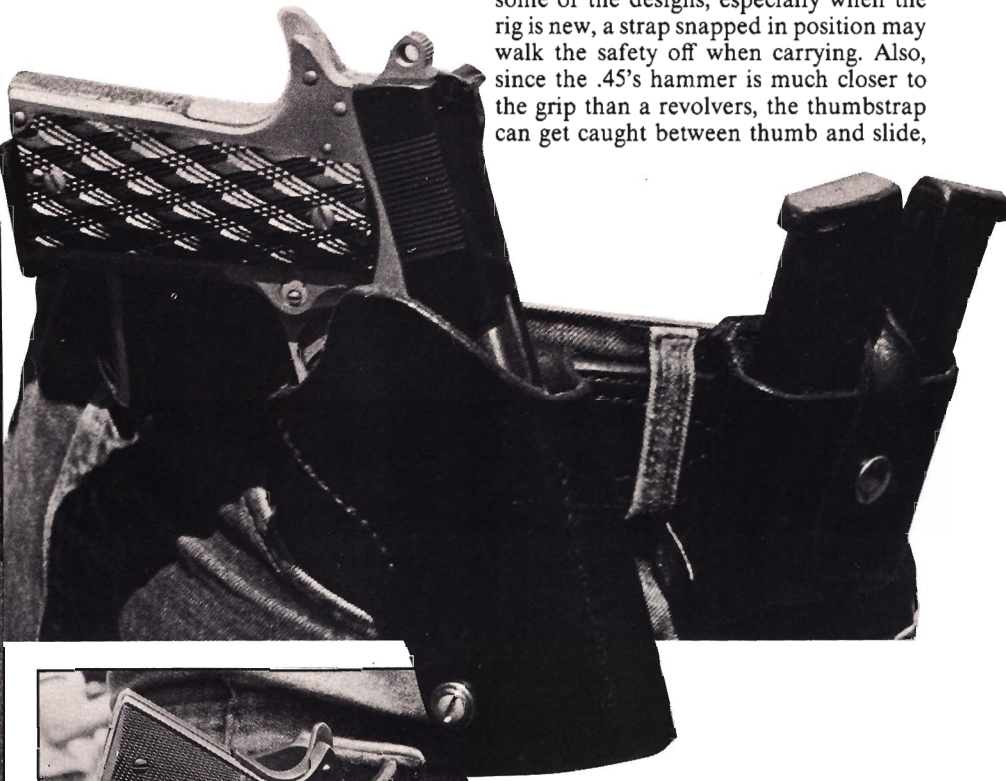
Top shooters agree that a holster shielding the trigger until the gun is clear and away from the body, is essential. This will, however, pose a danger if the .45 is equipped with a trigger shoe. This device is extremely dangerous because it extends out beyond the trigger guard; thrust a gun so fitted into a scabbard that isn't cut away at that critical point, and it will wedge against the leather. If the safety is released when the holstered gun is grabbed . . . BANG! The shooter who needs a wider

trigger can have a safe Gold Cup unit installed in his Gov't model or Commander for \$35 by the Colt Custom Shop.

Another thing especially important when carrying a loaded .45 is total security against the gun falling out. It has long been known that a 1911 with the hammer down on a live round (Condition Two) can sometimes go off when dropped on a hard surface, and some gunsmiths theorize that this can even happen with a cocked-and-locked pistol.

A strap retainer has particular advantages for the shooter or policeman wearing a cocked and locked .45. That thick slab of leather between the firing pin and the cocked hammer has a reassuring effect not only for onlookers, but for the shooter himself.

Conventional strap or thumb-break? I like the thumb release for most guns, but I'm personally leery of it with the 1911. On some of the designs, especially when the rig is new, a strap snapped in position may walk the safety off when carrying. Also, since the .45's hammer is much closer to the grip than a revolver's, the thumbstrap can get caught between thumb and slide,



**Far Left: Author normally carries his .45 on duty in this Buchheimer-Clark Police Auto Breakfront; gun normally carried locked and cocked. Above: External tension screws mark IPSC competition holsters; this one by Milt Sparks. Left: GI flap holsters are fine for sporting use. This one, modified for matches, has flap cut off (good) and trigger area cut out (bad).**

snagging the gun in the holster. If the safety has been wiped off with that same movement, and the grip safety depressed and the trigger touched, and if the shooter tugs against the unexpected resistance . . . BANG!

I carried a cocked and locked Colt .45 on uniformed police patrol for six years and never found a thumb-break I could live with. Some holsters can trip off the safety with their own thumb-safety straps. The soft shoulder holster I have is the most comfortable ever, and one of my favorites for almost any gun, *but* a cocked and locked .45; mine releases the safety with its own leather, as early police thumb-break holsters did. Other shoulder rigs, which carry the gun butt-up between spring-steel posts, can be just as bad; since they appear to be designed so that the gun is pulled out the front, many users reverse that and put the gun in through the front, thus running the risk of wiping the safety into "fire" position as the pistol is inserted. With such holsters, the gun should be inserted from the top, not the front, and are perhaps best drawn from in the same manner.

Whether to carry the 1911-type pistol cocked or with the hammer down is a matter of preference and need. Holstermakers recognize both schools of thought. Bianchi cuts the safety straps on their sportsmen's holsters for hammer-down position, but

the Snick is a safe and very fast IPSC competition rig. Current Rogers competition holsters leave the front of the slide exposed; a shooter running can find his thigh bumping the underpart of the slide, thus levering the pistol right out through its open front. Rogers makes a much more secure breakfront, with forward *tilt* instead of forward *rake*.

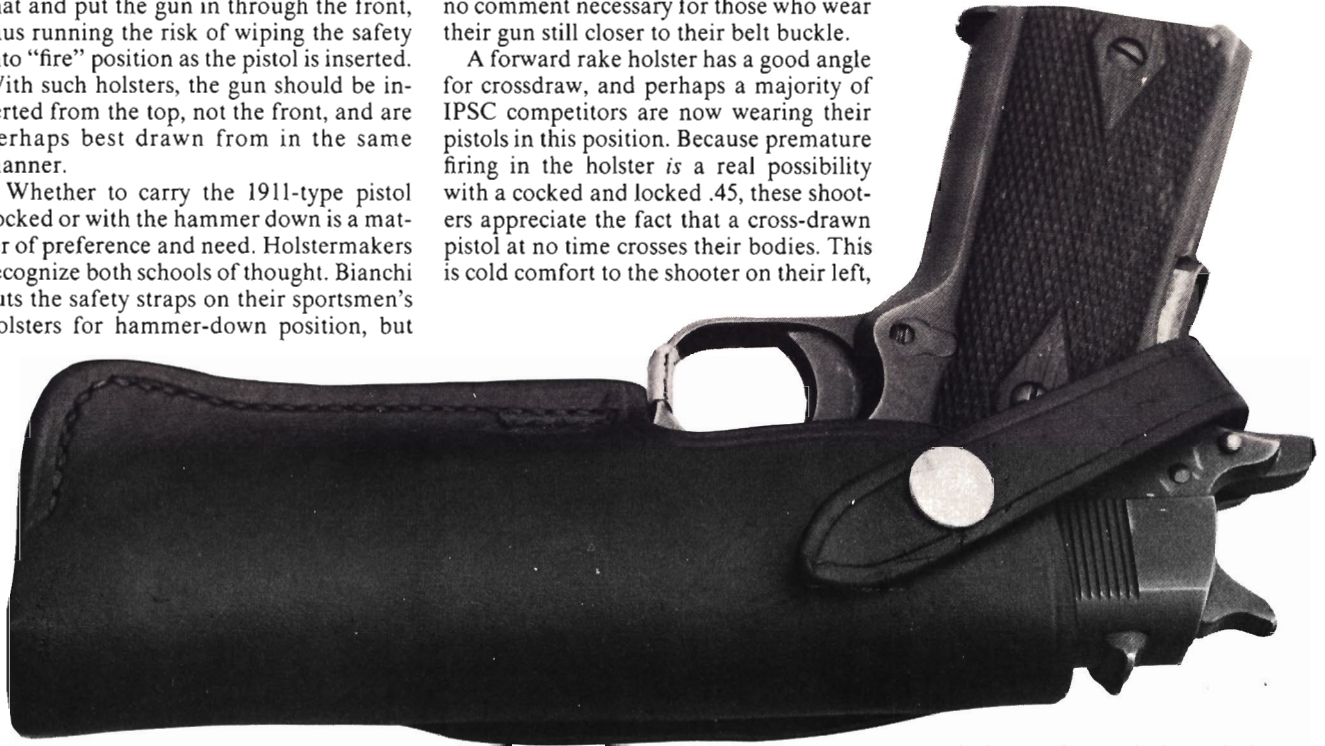
IPSC competitors like the forward rake because the hand comes down on the gun without having to unlock the wrist during the draw. However, if the gun is on the hip, the butt is so far back it becomes awkward for routine wear. Many solve this by shoving the gun to the front. Supposedly, the muzzle is now angled so that an accidental shot will go into the dirt ahead of the user's feet. Those who have shot themselves in the thigh through such holsters take a dim view of that theory, and there is no comment necessary for those who wear their gun still closer to their belt buckle.

A forward rake holster has a good angle for crossdraw, and perhaps a majority of IPSC competitors are now wearing their pistols in this position. Because premature firing in the holster is a real possibility with a cocked and locked .45, these shooters appreciate the fact that a cross-drawn pistol at no time crosses their bodies. This is cold comfort to the shooter on their left,

Incidentally, one popular holster feature that doesn't work well on the 1911 is chamois or "elk" lining. Because of the 1911's flat sides, this surface can become tacky and add more friction than is necessary when the gun is drawn.

An often-neglected piece of .45 leather is the carrier for the spare magazine(s) that will allow the 1911 buff to make use of the firepower that probably influenced him to choose that gun in the first place. The most useful all around carrier I've found for two mags is Bianchi's Clip-Grip with screw-adjustable tension. My favorite single clip carrier, for any purpose, is by Snick (\$10): it is superfast, conceals well, is very secure, and never gets soaked or loses its shape. Most other pouches are too tight when you get them, and eventually become too loose to rely on.

The .45 auto continues to increase in



**Top: a poor method of carrying the .45. Strap over grip safety will cause hang up on draw; it should be over firing pin in cocked and locked, or holding hammer down if uncocked. Trigger guard should not be exposed.**

shapes the police rigs for Condition One carry. Safariland assumes that all its .45 auto holsters will be carrying cocked and locked pistols, and Jackass requests that customers specify which mode they'll be using so the retaining strap can be shaped accordingly. A holster designed for hammer-down wear has the strap slightly further back, which may rub on and release the safety if the pistol is subsequently worn cocked and locked.

Plastic breakfront holsters for the auto have met with mixed success; all have certain shortcomings. The current version of

however, which is one reason IPSC competitors with crossdraws usually stand with their left side edged toward the target: the muzzle clears leather, comes straight up, and is safely dead on.

In IPSC, where the course of fire can resemble track & field as much as marksmanship, the holster *must* hang on to the pistol. In fact, to even qualify, most shooters will have to do a backward somersault with full equipment to make sure everything's in tight. Since there is no time to re-fasten straps while racing through the stages, virtually all have gone to screw-tension holsters. Milt Sparks, G. William Davis, Brent Sheathelm, and others make IPSC rigs that do the job, and all can likewise furnish practical holsters for daily wear, built on the same principle. In the mass market, Bianchi's Pistolero and Chapman Hi-Ride holsters do the job and are fine dollar values.

popularity, and new holster designs are continually introduced to appease the growing sophistication of this classic pistol's fans. Safariland will soon introduce a shoulder holster with built-in safety block for the condition-one hammer; Bianchi's AutoDraw, in its final prototype stages, will be the first real attempt at a snatch-resistant police holster for autoloaders. In the meantime, there are many fine designs available. My .45 working leather, selected after trying virtually everything on the market, is as follows:

*IPSC matches:* Usher International by G. Wm. Davis. This \$115 unit consists of a spring-tension, strapless crossdraw holster with contoured belt and open-top double clip case. My backup rigs include a late-model Snick set and a Bianchi-Chapman outfit.

*Police Patrol:* Bucheimer-Clark Police Auto Breakfront. Though not snatch-

*(Continued on page 62)*

# Pistolsmithing

J. B. WOOD

## TAKEDOWN OF THE MODEL 1911 .45 AUTO

Almost anyone who has ever served in the U.S. Military Forces can dismantle and reassemble it while blindfolded. For those whose memories needed occasional help, a sizeable section of Military Technical Manual 9-1295 was devoted to takedown and reassembly, by the numbers. The gun referred to is, of course, the U.S. .45 Model 1911 Service Pistol.



**With slide forward and hammer down, depress the knurled plug below the barrel, and turn the barrel bushing toward the right side of the gun to free the plug and recoil spring. CAUTION: The spring is under tension, so beware . . . point away from your face.**

Other sources of instruction exist, in various books, and in the owner's manual supplied with new guns, but these are not always available. Also, there is an entire new generation of shooters who have just recently become acquainted with the old hand-cannon and its later variations, so perhaps a review is in order.

The instructions that follow will apply generally to the Model 1911, Model 1911A1, the Colt Commander, and the Colt Mark IV Series 70 pistols. Where small differences affect the takedown, these will be noted. It is assumed that the magazine is removed and the chamber empty, to avoid discharge.

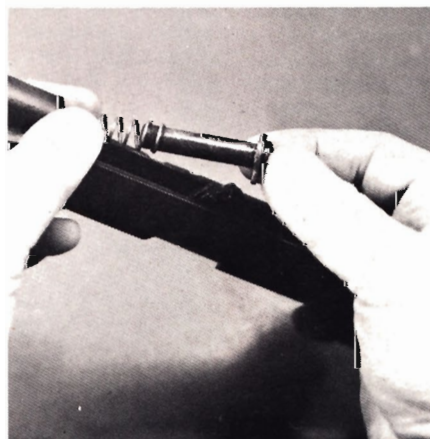
1. With slide forward and hammer down, depress the knurled plug below the barrel, and turn the barrel bushing toward the right side of the gun to free the plug and recoil spring. CAUTION! The spring is under tension, and the plug can cause injury if it is allowed to get away. Ease it out. If the barrel bushing is tight, it may be

turned more easily with a tool. On later Mark IV Series 70 guns, with the spring-type bushing, the bushing can be turned more easily by hand if the slide is partially retracted.

2. Move the slide toward the rear until the semicircular clearance cut on the left side at the lower edge of the slide aligns with the rear tip of the slide latch. Push the



**Move slide to rear until the semi-circle clearance cut on the left side aligns with the rear tip of the slide latch. Pull out slide to left.**



**From the underside of the slide, the recoil spring guide can now be removed from the spring and spring and plug can be removed.**

slide latch out to the left, and remove it.

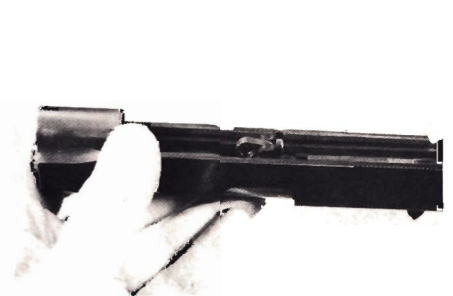
3. The slide assembly can now be run forward off the frame.

4. From the underside of the slide, the recoil spring guide can now be removed from the spring, and the spring and plug pulled forward out of the slide.

5. The barrel bushing is now turned

back toward the left side of the slide, until its internal lug is free, and it can be removed.

6. With the barrel link tipped forward, the barrel is now pulled forward out of the slide. This completes routine field-stripping for cleaning, and unless you already have some knowledge of the internal mechanisms, it's best not to proceed



**In reassembly, the toughest part is the alignment of the barrel link with the slide latch hole in frame. The hole is big enough that it can be seen and the link can be edged into position by moving the slide slightly until it drops into place. Don't try to align the link with the hole and the clearance cut for the latch tip at the same time.**

beyond this point.

During reassembly, the most difficult operation is usually the alignment of the barrel link with the slide latch hole in the frame. The hole is of sufficient size that the proper alignment can be seen, and the link can be edged into position by moving the slide slightly until it drops into place. Don't try to align the link with the hole and the clearance cut for the latch tip at the same time. Get the latch shaft through the frame and link, then swing it up and move the slide to align it with the clearance cut.

Other than this point, the classic phrase "reassemble in reverse order" applies. The same caution mentioned in step one above should be remembered when pressing in the plug and turning the bushing back into place—keep the muzzle pointed away from the eyes and other items that would be difficult to replace.



# YOUR EXCLUSIVE MARKETPLACE

We tried to include as many accessory vendors as possible. We've included addresses so that they can answer any questions you may have. Note that some are simply listed while others are pictured. Space did not permit a photo for all suppliers but we hope where we did graphically portray the item, it would help to clarify. As we said, the companies will be more than happy to fill you in. Drop them a line.

## AMMUNITION

American Ballistics Co.,  
P.O. Box 1410, Marietta,  
GA 30061

Federal Cartridge Co.,  
2700 Foshay Tower,  
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Remington Arms, 939  
Barnum Ave., Bridgeport,  
CT 06602

Smith & Wesson, 2390  
Forman Road, Rock  
Creek, OH 44084

Western Cartridge Div.,  
275 Winchester Ave., New  
Haven, CT 06511

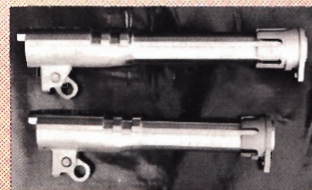


Apparently designed with the new Wildy Magnum .45 in mind, here's a new Winchester Magnum. As you can see, it dwarfs the standard .45 Auto cartridge. Muzzle energy is tremendous. It is intended primarily for silhouette shooting.

## BARRELS

Arcadia Machine & Tool,  
11666 McBean Drive, El  
Monte, CA 91732

Bar-Sto Precision  
Machine, 635 So. Victory  
Blvd., Burbank, CA 91502



Irv Stone has built up a large following with his super-accurate stainless steel barrels for Colt Autos, and rightly so. The barrel he can furnish, with the collet bushing shown, is unconditionally guaranteed. Barrels are bored and rifled right in his own shop, not purchased elsewhere. These are match grade and will shoot into 2" to 3" at 50 yards.

Crown City Arms, P.O.  
Box 1126, Cortland, NY  
13045

L. H. Gun Co., Rt. #1, Box  
210, Devine, TX 78016

Pacific International  
Merchandising, 2215 J,  
Sacramento, CA 95818

## BULLETS

Hornaday Mfg. Co., Box  
1848, Grand Island, NE  
68801

Sierra Bullets Inc., 10532  
Painer Ave., Santa Fe  
Springs, CA 90670

Speer Products, Box 896,  
Lewiston, ID 83501

Winchester-Western Div.,  
275 Winchester Ave., New  
Haven, CT 06511

## COMPENSATORS

American Ballistics Co.,  
P.O. Box 1410, Marietta,  
GA 30061

Mag-Na-Port, 30016 S.  
River Road, Mt.  
Clemmens, MI 48083

PSI, 21908 Dequindre #35,  
Warren, MI 48091



If you'd like to cut recoil by about 40% by just exchanging a compensator for present barrel bushing, then you want a PSI. Good for "flinchitis" and quick recovery it can be installed in seconds and costs \$29.95.

## CUSTOM GUNS

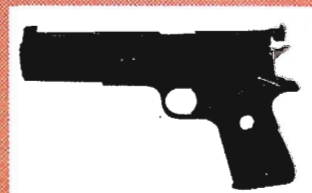
Behlert Custom Guns,  
Inc., 725 Lehigh Ave.,  
Union, NJ 07083

Bullseye Gunshop, 5269-3  
Buford, Hwy., Pinetree  
Plaza, Doraville, GA  
30340

Bob Chow, 3185 Mission,  
San Francisco, CA 94110

Lou Ciamillo, 26200  
Frederick Road,  
Hyattstown, MD 20781

Jim Clark, Rt. #2, Box  
22A, Keithville, LA 71047



J. E. Clark extends the slide 1" on your Government or Mark IV and adds a match barrel 6" long. He adds a trigger job, a Bo-Mar rib with Accuracy Tuner

and then tests. You end up with 2 1/2" guaranteed groups at 50 yards.

Cylinder and Slide Shop,  
P.O. Box 937, Fremont, NE  
68025

Richard Heinie, 821 E.  
Adams, Havana, IL 62644



This Illinois custom pistolsmith offers an accuracy job for \$130.00. The job includes a new Bar-Sto barrel in stainless with collet bushing, tightening slide to frame, throat and polish barrel, polish feed ramp, hone and polish all action parts, adjust trigger, install rounded magazine follower and install leather pad at bottom of magazine. For other modifications you can write for catalog. (See alphabetical listing.)

James W. Hoag, 8523  
Suite "C," Canoga Ave.,  
Canoga Park, CA 91304

King's Gun Works, 1837  
West Glenoaks Blvd.,  
Glendale, CA

Nu-Line Guns, 1053  
Caulks Hill Road,  
Harvester, MO 66301

Pachmayr, 1220 So.  
Grand Ave., Los Angeles,  
CA 90015

Chuck Ries, Box 205,  
Culver City, CA 92030

Smith's Gunsmithing, 965  
Green Ave., San Bruno,  
CA 94066

Sport's West Inc., 2200  
West Alameda, Denver, CO  
80223

Safari Arms, P.O. Box  
28355, Tempe, AZ 85252

Armand Swenson, P.O.  
Box 606, Fallbrook, CA  
92028



# ACE FOR .45 AUTO ACCESSORIES

Trapper Guns Inc., 16746  
Fourteen Mile Road,  
Frazer, MI 48026



Trapper will install an S & W "K" Frame sight with a low profile rib and speed ramp front sight with white outline rear and red insert front, if you prefer. All the extras like slide refitting and bushing tightening etc. are available. As with all the Custom gunsmiths listed, you can write them for more details. (See alphabetical listing for addresses.)

John B. Williams, 704  
Commonwealth Ave.,  
Fullerton, CA 92631

Wilson's Gun Shop, 101-  
103 Public Square,  
Berryville, AR 72616

## EXTENDED SLIDE STOP

H & D Products, 8523  
Canoga Ave., Suite "C,"  
Canoga Park, CA 91304

Safari Arms, P.O. Box  
28355, Tempe, AZ 85252

Armand Swenson, Box  
606, Fallbrook, CA 92028

## FRAMES

Arcadia Machine & Tool,  
11666 McBean Drive, El  
Monte, CA 91732

Crown City Arms, P.O.  
Box 1126, Cortland, NY  
13045

Essex Arm, Box 345,  
Phaerring St., Island  
Pond, VT 05864

Oaks, 954 Florida Ave.,  
Rockledge, FL 32955

Pacific International  
Merchandising, 2215 J  
St., Sacramento, CA 95818

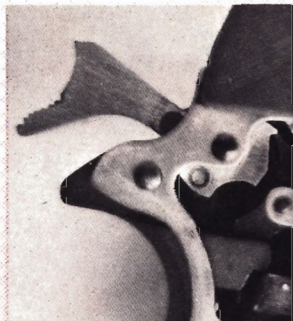
Rock Island Armory, 111  
E. Exchange St., Geneseo,  
IL 61254

## GRIP SAFETY LOCKS

Hamrick's Gunsmithing,  
817 Montague Ave.,  
Greenwood, SC 29646

## HAMMERS (Custom)

Silva Products, 614 So.  
Gold, P.O. Drawer 270,  
Deming, NM 88030

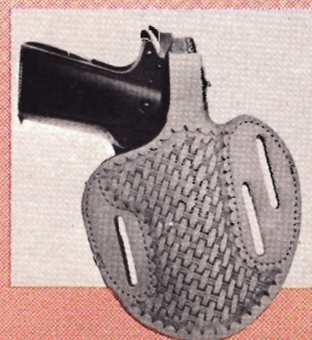


Silva Products has patented a custom hammer that gives a crisper pull to the 1911 Colt. The salient feature is an adjusting screw which allows adjusting the depth to which the sear can engage the full-cock notch. The geometry of the notch is changed to lighten sear engagement. Priced at \$29.95 it's a relatively inexpensive way to better scores.

## HOLSTERS (Competition)

Alessi, 2465 Niagara  
Falls Blvd., Tonawanda,  
NY 14150

Roy Baker's Custom  
Leather, P.O. Box G,  
Highway 132, Magnolia,  
AR 71753



Here is the Baker Pancake for the .45 Auto. New president Calvin Porter announced that several new products are now available under the Hidden Thunder concealment name. The Pancake is famous for its body hugging ability and angle can be changed by using patented slot system.

Belt Slide Inc., Box 15303,  
Austin, TX 78761

Bianchi, 100 Calle Cortez,  
Temecula, CA 92390



## X2000 Phantom

Gun is held securely by specially-designed carbon wire spring. Suede lining protects gun's finish. Sight cutout provides rear sight clearance. Flat shape hugs body and conceals well. Weight is evenly distributed on both shoulders. Bianchi's lineup also includes speed scabbard and cross draw models. Only top grade leather is used.

Brauer Bros., 817 N. 17th  
St., St. Louis, MO 63166

Browne & Pharr, Box  
1103, Norcross, GA 30091

Cobra, 1865 New  
Highway, Farmingdale,  
NY 11735

G. Wm. Davis, P.O. Box  
446, Arcadia, CA 91006



Relatively new in the line is the #1145 Realist. This one rides high with gun butt tilted slightly forward. The big item is the tension screw that allows you to draw fast

and yet will not normally fall out during running or other strenuous movement. Other models have forward rake of muzzle and an inside-the-pants model.

Gene DeSantis, 1601  
Jericho Turnpike, New  
Hyde Park, NY 11040



## XDA Cross Draw

The argument is still going on in competition, is it better to have a thumbbreak top strap or use a speed type scabbard with no thumb break. This New York firm has them both ways. They come in black, tan or cordovan and when ordering specify right or left hand, model, barrel length etc. for speedier service.

Jackass Leather, 7383 No.  
Rogers Ave., Chicago, IL  
60626

George Lawrence Co., 306  
S.W. First Ave., Portland,  
OR 97204

Safariland, 1941 So.  
Walker, Monrovia, CA  
91016

Smith & Wesson, 2100  
Roosevelt Ave.,  
Springfield, MA 01101

Snk (WHM) Enterprises,  
6635 Wilshire Blvd., Los  
Angeles, CA 90048

Milt Sparks, Box 7R,  
Idaho City, ID 83631

Triple K Mfg. Co., 568 6th  
Ave., San Diego, CA 92101

Universal Leather, 6673  
E. 21st Place, Tulsa, OK  
74135

## LOADED INDICATOR

Hi-Quality Enterprises,  
6311 Yucca St., Box 1083,  
Los Angeles, CA 90028

## MAGAZINES

D & E, P.O. Box 4579,  
Downey, CA 90242

# YOUR EXCLUSIVE MARKETPLACE FOR .45 AUTO ACCESSORIES

Laka Industries, P.O. Box 837, Westbury, L. I., NY 11590

Nu-Line Guns, Inc., 1053 Caulks Hill Road, Harvester, MO 63301

Triple K Mfg. Co., 568 6th Ave., San Diego, CA 92101

## MOUNTS

Maynard P. Buehler, Inc., Orinda, CA 94563

Conetrol, Hwy. 123 So., Seguin, TX 78155

Whitney, P.O. Box 875, Reseda, CA 91335

## PARTS

Tom Forrest, Inc., 2785 Kurtz St., No. 7, San Diego, CA 92110

L. H. Gun Co., Rt. #1, Box 210, Devine, TX 78016

Albert Mason, 14274 Shoredale, Farmer's Branch, TX 72354

Nu-Line Guns, Inc., 1053 Caulks Hill Road, Harvester, MO 63301

Numrich Arms Corporation, West Hurley, NY 12491

Rock Island Armory, 111 E. Exchange St., Geneseo, IL 61254

Pacific International, 2215 J, Sacramento, CA 95818

Sarco, Inc., 323 Union St., Stirling, NJ 07980

Sherwood Dist., 18714 Parthenia St., Northridge, CA 91324

SSK Industries, Rt. #1, Della Drive, Bloomington, OH 43910

Texas Armament, P.O. Box 135, Brownwood, TX 76801

## REFINISHING

Armoloy Co., 204 E. Daggett, Fort Worth, TX 76104

Marker Machine Co., Box 426, Charleston, IL 61920

Metalife, P.O. Box 53, Mong Ave., Reno, PA 16343

Shooter's Supply, 3715 University, San Diego, CA 92105

## SCOPES

Bushnell, 2828 E. Foothill Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107

Redfield, 5800 E. Jewell Ave., Denver, CO 80222

Tasco, 1075 N.W. 71st, Miami, FL 33138

Thompson-Center, P.O. Box 2405, Rochester, NH 03867

## SIGHTS AND INSERTS

Bo-Mar, Box 168, Carthage, TX 75633 (sights)

Bullshooter's Supply, 9625 E. Third, Tucson, AZ 85710 (inserts)

Gutridge Inc., 533-214th St., Dyer, IN 46311 (sights)



**This is an entirely new concept in sighting. White line produces a linear and visual surface that is first picked up by the peripheral vision and is guided to the sighting line for faster sight line-up. This is a both eyes open type of sighting.**

James W. Hoag, 8523 Suite "C," Canoga Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91304 (sights)

Lee's Red Ramp, 34220 Chesboro, Space 19, Palmdale, CA 93550 (inserts)

MMC, 210 E. Poplar, Deming, NM 88030

Micro Sight, 242 Harbor Blvd., Belmont, CA 94002

Poly-Choke, P.O. Box 296, Hartford, CT 06101

## SLIDE KITS

Arcadia Machine Tool, 11666, McBean Drive, El Monte, CA 91732

Kart Sporting Arms, Rt. #2, P.O. Box 929, Broad Ave., Riverhead, NY 11901

## SPEED SAFETIES

H & D Products, 8523 Canoga Ave., Suite "C," Canoga Park, CA 91304

Nu-Line Guns, Inc., 1053 Caulks Hill Road, Harvester, MO 63301

Safari Arms, P.O. Box 28355, Tempe, AZ 85282

Armand Swenson, Box 606, Fallbrook, CA 92028

## STOCKS

Herrett's, Box 741, Twin Falls, ID 83301

Mustang, 28715 Via Montezuma, Temecula, CA 92390

Pachmayr, 1220 So. Grand Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90015

Jay Scott, 150 Huyshope Ave., Hartford, CT 06102

Sherwood Dist. Inc., 18714 Parthenia St., Northridge, CA 91324

Southern Gun Exchange, 4311 N.E. Expressway, Atlanta (Doraville), GA 30340

## WRENCH (Barrel Bushing)

J. L. Numbers, Box 3178-R, Scottsdale, AZ 85257



# 3 POSITION SAFETY FOR COLT AUTOS

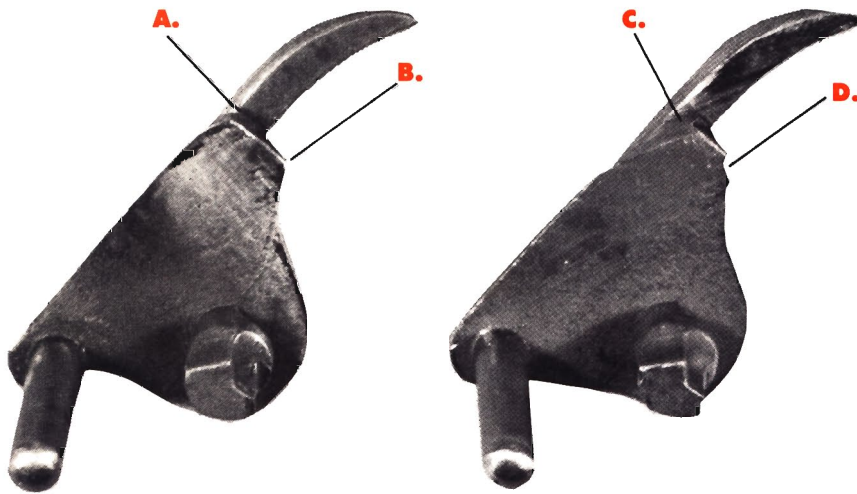
By Richard Allen

Colt automatics have a built in safety hazard. The safety locks the slide closed. To load, clear, or check the chamber, you have to take the safety off. A few years ago, in an article addressing this problem, I detailed a way of altering the Colt safety so the slide can be worked with the safety on. More recently, I've discovered a better solution.

Before we go into details, I'll stop for a

umn, May/June 1978). I don't know how true this is; people are understandably reluctant to talk about such things in print. I do know of a gun shop with an extra hole in the floor they don't brag about . . . At best, such things are embarrassing at worst, of course, they can be immeasurably worse.

Furthermore, the cocked-and-locked Colt has become fashionable among po-



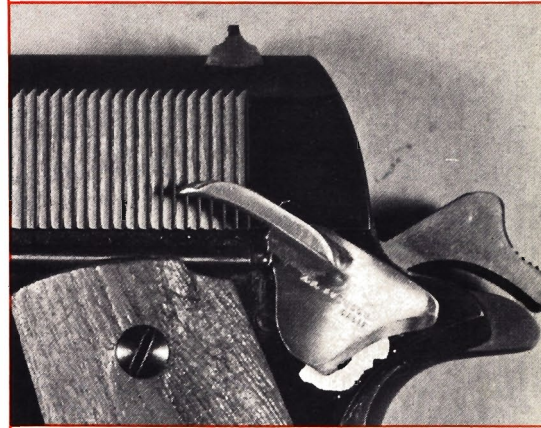
**Conventional Swenson speed safety (left) and safety altered for three positions (right). Alterations are at arrows C and D; arrows A and B show "before." You have to look carefully to see the change at D.**

digression—on why you should keep reading. When I describe my efforts to improve the Colt safety, a frequent reaction is "Why bother?" After all, the Colt is only chamber-loaded-safety-off for a moment, and no one likes to think he's klutzy enough to set the piece off in that moment. Trouble is, this self confidence isn't justified. *The American Handgunner* expressed the opinion that anyone who handles guns frequently sets one off accidentally sooner or later. ("Just Keep On . . . Shooting" col-

lice departments. And many policemen are . . . ah . . . not quite as well trained as we would like. A police department administrator might order the modification I'll be discussing for his department's Colts. *His* ego isn't involved. Put like that, the officer's ego isn't involved either. He's not admitting he could have an accident, he's only following regulations.

This kind of thing is damn childish where deadly weapons are concerned, but that's human nature. A part that kills.

When you know of a safety precaution which doesn't affect the effectiveness of your weapon, and costs little, why not use it? Saying, "It can't happen to me," is one way to increase the chances it will happen. When someone says he doesn't use seat belts because he's a good driver, it doesn't give a very good impression of his driving or his common sense. The most impressive gun handler is the one who takes precautions, not the one who says he doesn't need them.



**White paint on frame depicts quirk of Swenson safety. A small crescent of frame cut is exposed when safety is in locked position.**

Now, back to the details of the safety.

After my article on altering the Colt safety to allow the slide to be worked while the pistol was locked, Armand Swenson came up with an objection. Holstering the Colt in a tight holster, Mr. Swenson pointed out, might force the slide back just enough to activate the disconnecter and stop the gun from firing. This didn't happen when I tested the new safety, using *my* gun and *my* holsters, but that doesn't mean it couldn't happen. The new method involves a three position safety: the two traditional positions, plus a middle position, hammer locked and slide free.

Although the alteration I originally described was simple as things people have done to Colts go, the three position safety is simpler still.

The three position safety is based on the Swenson speed safety, not the Colt issue safety. The Speed Safety is available from Armand Swenson, Box 606, Fallbrook, CA 92028. Either right handed or ambidextrous.

The Swenson safety is bought for its larger blade, but there is another difference. Take a Colt with the issue safety. Cock and lock it. Squeeze the trigger. If all is well, the hammer won't fall. Now start thumbing the safety, not all the way down, but only a little way. Holding the safety between the normal locked and unlocked positions, squeeze the trigger again. A little experimenting shows you don't have to thumb the safety very far

*(Continued on page 63)*

# .45 MODIFICATIONS

By Mike Dalton

Let us begin by saying that the Colt .45 auto pistol is by far the most popular choice of gun for practical pistol competition. The age old conflict between auto and revolver buffs need not concern us here. We are concerned with the newcomer to the sport and will assume you have already decided on a Colt .45 ACP.

With this in mind, let's discuss the first major problem of a new practical pistolero. "A Competition Gun." Many new competitors come into the sport with the idea that a highly expensive, sophisticated arm is essential to success. This is not true. Trouble can become a common occurrence if you overaccurize a Colt .45 ACP. You do not have to spend \$700-\$1200 for a

competition .45. The pistol that I will describe in this article can be built for under \$450, including the cost of the pistol.

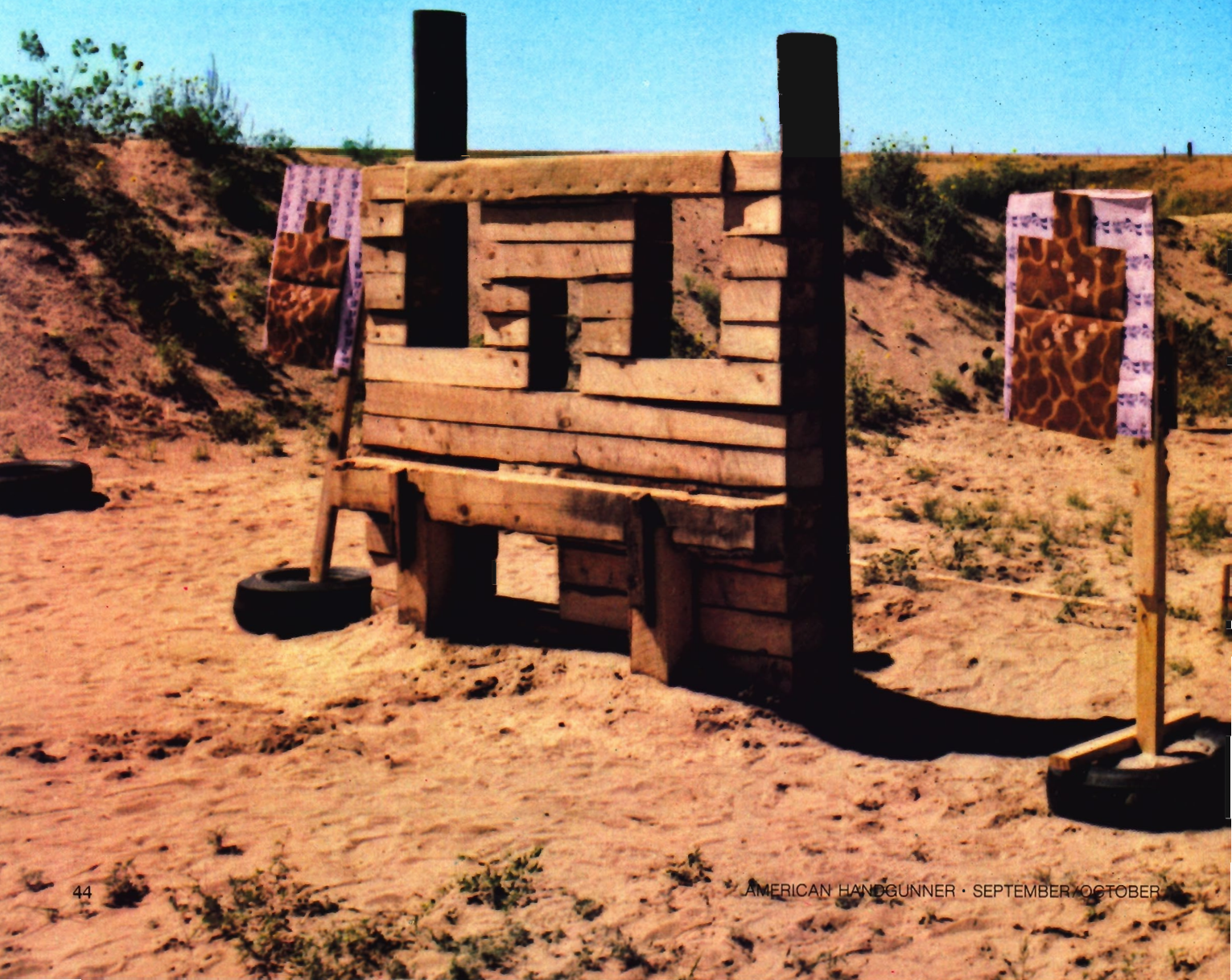
Practical pistol competition is not a rich man's sport. Skill and reasonable equipment produce the champions, not large amounts of money. That's what makes practical shooting one of the fastest growing sports in the nation.

The most important attribute of a practical pistol is that it must function flawlessly, everything else is secondary. A super accurized .45 may not function as reliably as a good 1911 or Mark IV. The reason is simple. A 1911 or Mark IV has greater tolerances than its accurized counterparts. The action of the pistol with the

higher tolerances is not easily slowed up from powder residue, lead fragments and other foulers. The important point that we are looking at here is that too much accuracy may lose you more than it might win. This is, also, a good place to mention that few shooters have ever lived who can outshoot their pistols.

For almost all practical shooting a pistol that will group 4-6" at 50 yards is all that is necessary and this can be accomplished quite easily. Most "out-of-the-box" Mark IV's will give this accuracy, so why should you spend 7 dollars for a smaller grouping pistol when shooting tight groups isn't the problem in practical shooting. The major

*(Continued on page 54)*



# FOR COMPETITION

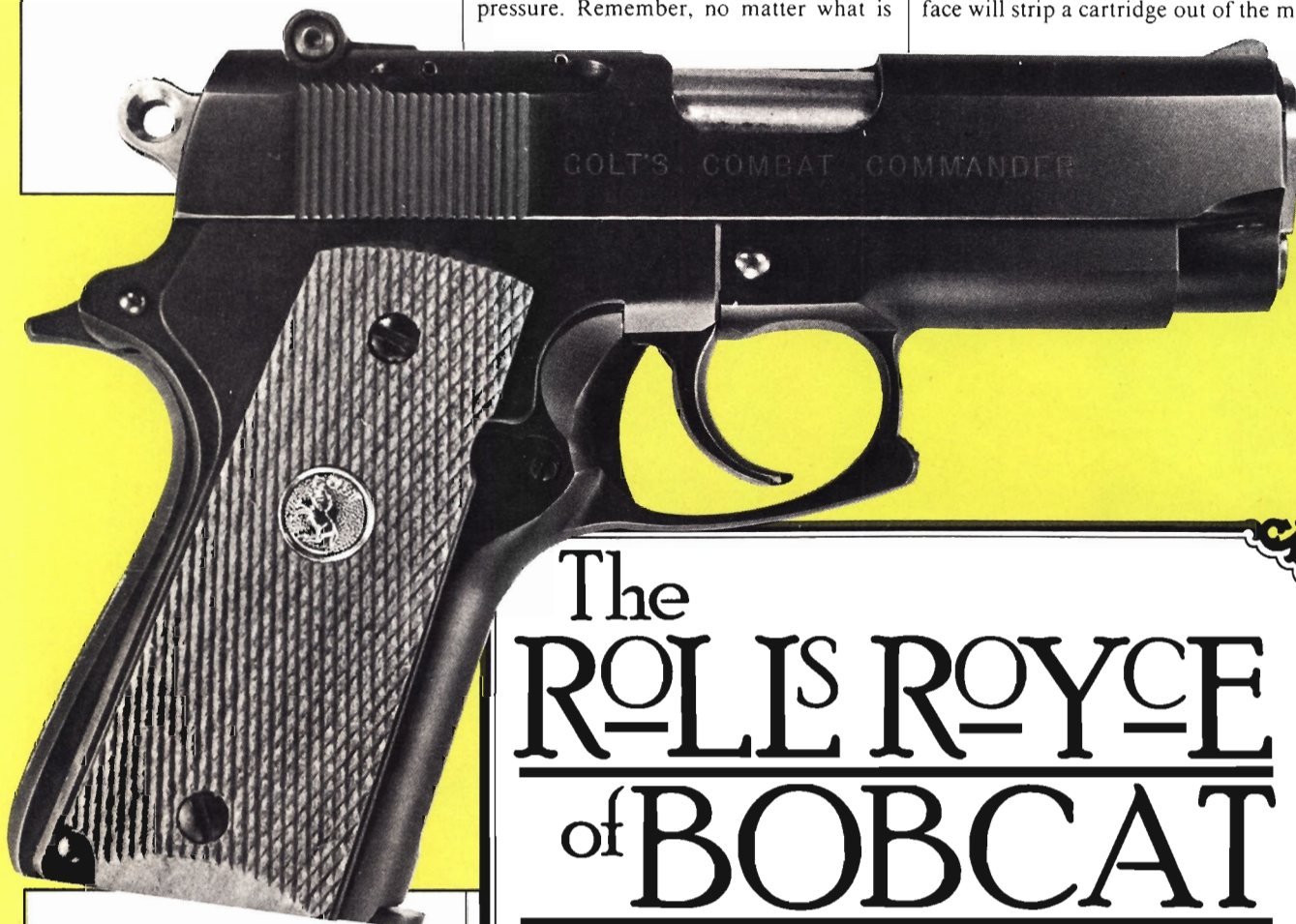


By Mason Williams

Like the Rolls Royce, this pistol is not for everyone. It is the new Seecamp Bobcat 45 ACP pistol. This handgun is for the man who must have reliability, stopping power and ease of handling. Up until now, Bobcat 45's have been plentiful but their reliability has been questionable. Many have been produced with new designs that

If any changes are made in automatic pistols, a corresponding change must be made somewhere else in the mechanism. If a slide is shortened, then the space inside of which the recoil spring is located becomes quite a bit smaller. Sure, cut the spring an inch and stick it into the remaining space. Unfortunately, this is not the answer. A spring is designed and wound and created to absorb a specific amount of pressure. Remember, no matter what is

not all the time. When the slide is brought back, just before the breech face reaches a point behind the magazine, the pressure build-up of the two springs makes movement of the slide extremely heavy. The point at which this resistance peaks may be adjusted by cutting the springs. If all goes well, the breech face will move to the rear of the magazine so that on the forward movement of the slide, the breech face will strip a cartridge out of the maga-



# The ROLLS ROYCE of BOBCAT 45's

are basically untried. The Seecamp 45 uses the time proven John M. Browning mechanism. As readers know, the Seecamp Double Action mechanism has, for many years, provided the automatic pistol shooter with a completely reliable and simple double action 45 ACP or Browning 1935 pistol. Remove the Seecamp modification and you have a standard, unaltered Browning design that works in its original form. The same holds true of the new Bobcat. It is the Browning proven design all the way through but with one fundamental difference.

It's this difference that has held up production of this miniaturized Colt Combat Commander. Larry Seecamp and his father have spent years attempting to work out a practical small size 45. As he told me recently, they insisted upon retaining the Browning mechanism. The more they dug into the problems inherent in producing a small 45, the more both men came to the conclusion that they should retain the Browning recoil spring concept.

done to the pistol, it must continue to be able to fire the 45 ACP factory cartridge plus any reasonable handload. Because of this, we cannot take away a third or possibly one half of a spring's stored energy and then expect it to handle the same recoil pressure that it did when uncut.

Many gunsmiths install recoil buffers that do reduce the shock of recoil impact within the pistol and which partially absorb slide energy. Some of these buffers work. Some do not. In any event, they are not a long term, practical solution to the problem.

Some of the new bobcatted pistols use double springs. One spring fits inside the larger one and is wound in the opposite direction. This works most of the time but

zine, ram it forward up the feeding ramp, into the chamber. The springs must further retain sufficient energy at this point to force the slide and barrel all the way forward into battery and then keep them in battery without any looseness.

If the springs are so adjusted that they permit a basically reliable feeding cycle and if the same ammunition is constantly used, then the pistol may function satisfactorily. But let one cartridge fire with slightly less pressure, or permit dirt or grease to enter the mechanism, and the pistol will either jam or fail to feed correctly.

This can be corrected by reducing the spring pressures. We now have an action that will allow the slide to go all the way to

the rear, pick up a cartridge out of the magazine but which will then, far too often, fail to completely chamber the cartridge and place the slide and barrel into battery and keep them there.

The more the Seecamps investigated these problems, the more they became convinced that the solution lay in designing an entirely new type of recoil spring. Larry told me that the new concept came quickly once they went at the problem without any preconceived notions. The resulting spring assembly now known and patented as the Seecamp Spring Extender is so simple that it is a wonder no one ever thought about it years ago. All it is is a pair of springs acting in tandem and joined by

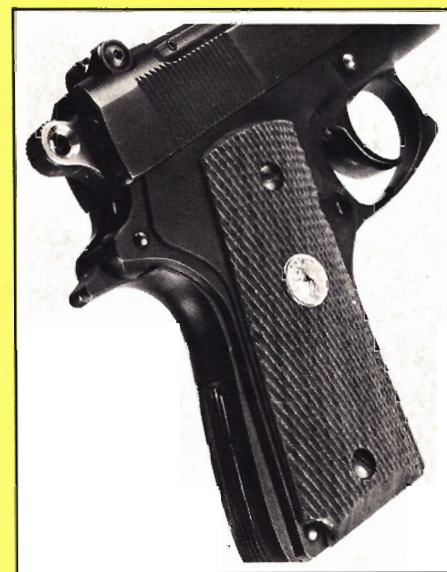
sion. First of all, the existing handgun looks right. It feels right. There has been no need to beef up or cut out or weld in any parts to strengthen areas where too much metal has been removed. As it stands now, it is solid, all steel and completely safe. The finish is a deep, dull blue that is not light reflective.

As may be seen, this pistol incorporates the classical Seecamp double action mechanism with the wide, smooth trigger and the combat trigger guard. The grip safety has been completely eliminated and replaced with a single, solid, one piece hammer spring housing. The grip safety is unnecessary with the double action mechanism that allows the pistol to be safely

not, pop off at odd times. Workmanship is worthy of Rolls Royce and is a joy to behold.

Ahead of the rear sight at the rear of the barrel chamber on top of the slide is the loaded indicator. When the front end is up, the chamber is loaded. When the entire bar is flat with the slide top, the chamber is empty. Simple and effective.

No one would ask a Rolls Royce salesman if the car will run. With the same confidence, I took this pistol outside with a carton full of Federal and Remington 45 ACP ammunition. Due to the hip deep snow, I could not work on my ranges, however, by putting up several log butts, I could not only fire for group but could fire



**Adjustable rear sight, skeletonized hammer and one-piece back-strap that eliminates grip safety.**

a coupling sleeve. Compression and spring energy may be altered by the factory to handle many varying recoil pressures. The result is a spring assembly that fits into a very confined space but which provides the spring energy normally furnished by a single much longer and larger spring. This is such a major development in the field of automatic pistols that it could easily be considered the most significant development in a hundred years in this field. It opens up unlimited potentials for the creation of new and better combat modifications.

Larry Seecamp sent me one of the first production pistols to come off the line using this Spring Extender. This pistol contains most of the current improvements that the company is furnishing, but before I get into these, I would like to point out that in size it relates to the factory Combat Commander as the Combat Commander relates to the big Government Model Mark IV. Larry told me and I agree with him that it is not practical or really desirable to attempt to produce a smaller ver-

carried with the hammer down. The thumb safety remains operational and may be flicked up or down in the conventional manner.

The magazine and the pistol butt have both been cut down so that the magazine holds six cartridges and with one in the chamber provides seven shots. The entrance to the magazine well has been chamfered to aid in ramming the magazine home. The barrel bushing is a heavy duty, stainless steel piece that is tightly fitted to the barrel and to the slide so that when the slide and barrel are in battery, there is no motion of the barrel muzzle.

The sights are ideal. They were designed and created for this little pistol and are adjustable for windage and elevation. All adjustments are in the rear sight so that the leaf may be moved right or left by loosening one screw and tightening the other, thus providing minute adjustments plus positive locking. Elevation screws are set just forward of the leaf and also provide positive adjustments. The front sight is locked into the slide and will not, can-

for functioning with all the various types of ammunition turned out by Federal and Remington. I fired two clip fulls—twelve rounds—of each type of ammunition. There were no malfunctions of any kind.

I then shot about fifty rounds of each of my 45 handloads. The first lot consisted of 5.0 grains of Unique and the Hensley and Gibbs 210 grain wad cutter bullet. The next lot was loaded with 3.5 grains of Bullseye and the 230 grain round nose bullet. The final batch held the Hornady 210 grain dry lubricant bullet ahead of 3.8 grains of Bullseye. No problems of any kind.

The amazing thing is that recoil and handling is specifically comparable to that of the big Government Model Mark IV pistol. I noticed that when I pulled back the slide to charge the pistol that the feel of the spring assembly was smooth, clean, powerful. During the firing, there was none of the customary bucking or slamming that is encountered with so many of the bobcatted pistols. Shooting this pistol

*(Continued on page 65)*

## DEPENDABILITY

There are those who feel that any semi-automatic pistol is necessarily undependable, and there are those who feel that the 45 auto in particular is undependable. By undependable I mean prone to malfunction—not the inability to stop fights when working properly.

Anyone who has used the 45 at great length has known it to malfunction. No mechanism known to man is completely reliable in its operation under all circumstances, and this is just as true of 45 auto as it is of any other firearm, particularly including revolvers. However, normal dependability, in a good example, using good ammunition, runs to about 999 in 1,000. The chance that your sidearm may hang up (not on the first shot but possibly on the second) one time out of 1,000 is a problem you will just have to accept. I do not consider this excessive, especially since I intend to hit with my first shot. We would all like perfection, but it is beyond our reach.

Here again, a major part of the problem is the very age of the 45 auto. Many have been badly treated over very long periods and are simply not in proper working order. There is also the matter of unsatisfactory ammunition. In particular, the short-nosed semi-wadcutter bullets used by target shots are very difficult for the auto pistol to digest. For some reason which I do not understand, pistols which will feed empties reliably often hang-up using the short-nosed wadcutter. The answer to this is simply to stay away from that type of bullet. It satisfies target shots, who do not have to maintain continuity of fire, but for serious work it should be abandoned. For that matter if I were to pull a Ralph Nader, I would require the short-nosed wadcutters, both as separate bullets and as loaded cartridges, to be withdrawn from circulation.

In actual fact, the reliability factor of the 45 auto is extraordinary. It will continue to function under conditions of abuse that will eliminate most other weapons. On the Rio Balsas expedition, which lasted for seven weeks, we were immersed in muddy water almost every day. We also had our share of sand and gravel to contend with. At the end of each day, I checked out my pistol and found it to work perfectly. On the other hand, the revolver carried by my companion required total stripping and cleaning almost every time we made camp. Under other conditions of abuse the auto pistol may indeed hang up a little sooner than the revolver, but if it does it may be quickly cleared, whereas a revolver which has stuck usually requires the attentions of a gunsmith, professional



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# HANDLOADING

(Continued from page 12)

contained 2.7 grains of Bullseye, he said. I later lost contact with the man; the bottle of remnants, although kept in a desk drawer for several years, eventually became lost. But, as I have said, the mis-

## "2.7 grains of Bullseye is a very touchy subject . . ."

giving instilled in me because of the evidence I had seen and the testimony I had listened to, lingered on to pop up now and then as I handled 38 Special rounds I'd charged with the customary 2.7 grains of Bullseye.

When, in the November/December

printing of THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Jeff Cooper, soberly and reservedly, reported on revolver blow-ups with similar powder charges, I saw that the yellow flag that had been waving in my mind's eye all those years had suddenly turned a vivid blue. It was time to seek a substitute target charge.

Urged on by the same haste I referred to a few moments ago, I feel that it is only right to state that never, in the realm of first-hand experience, have I had or, for that matter, eye-witnessed, a bad experience with Bullseye charges. I must join Cooper in his retreat, nonetheless.

I still feel the same confidence I have always felt when it comes to loading Unique and my earlier praise of 7.0 grains of that powder behind a 200-grain, swaged, half-jacketed, cavity-nosed bullet stands unaltered. If, in some far-fetched event, we were to be left on this planet with but a

### BULLET .45I -225 GRAIN SPEER JHP

Powder	Grains	Vel.	Energy	Remarks
Top Mark	5.3	790	310	Low intensity but effective
Green Dot	5.5	794	315	Check against Red Dot charge
700 N	4.8	799	320	High yield in grains to velocity
231	5.5	804	325	Good target load in Gold Cup
HS5	7.0	836	350	Accuracy good here too
Red Dot	5.1	840	350	Higher yield than Green Dot
HS6	8.2	848	350	Excellent accuracy for GI .45
630	11.0	851	360	Accuracy good — capacity well used
Herco	7.2	879	385	Fine load — controllable

### BULLET .45I-200 GRAIN SPEER JHP

Powder	Grains	Vel.	Energy	Remarks
HS5	7.4	849	320	Easy going for long plinking session
HS6	8.0	905	360	A step slower on burning rate scale
Herco	7.5	929	385	Good results — high yield
Red Dot	5.3	942	390	Better suited for 200 than 225
231	5.8	943	390	Compare to lighter charge in 225 grain
Green Dot	5.5	945	395	Identical to 225 charge-compare
Blue Dot	10.2	1010	450	Yield about 100 fps per grain

### BULLET .452-200 GRAIN SPEER SWC

Powder	Grains	Vel.	Energy	Remarks
Trap 100	4.8	762	255	Performs well in my guns
Red Dot	4.5	798	285	Over 1550 charges per lb.
231	5.5	924	380	More power-accuracy good

### BULLET .45I-185 GRAIN HORNADY JACKETED

Powder	Grains	Vel.	Energy	Remarks
HP38	5.5	830	285	Versatile-also for .38 Special
Trap 100	5.0	855	300	Fast-high velocity yield
Unique	5.5	862	305	Mention in first article
HS5	7.0	893	320	Good target load
HS6	8.5	902	330	Not up to HS5
231	6.0	921	345	Target and light load

(See HANDLOADING-November/December, 1978 issue)

single propellant for rifle, handgun and shotgun alike, Unique would live up to its name.

However, the story of full-scale handloading of the .45 auto should include a sufficient variety of propellants to match the gun's versatility. Several of those offered by each of a half-dozen or more makers will extend its usefulness well beyond the comparatively meager gleanings to be had when but one or two are used.

The same can be said—and perhaps with greater emphasis—of the selection of bullet weight and type. The variety of missiles available in both cast and swaged types is, I'll wager, virtually unexplored by the average handloader, a fact that, unfortunately, seems to exist without respect to the cartridge being loaded.

It is, of course, economically impractical to experiment with every bullet-and-powder-charge combination in each of a number of cartridges the individual chooses to handload. A broadening of component types is possible, nonetheless, and is strongly recommended. Bear in mind that each component of the handload was manufactured with a specificity of performance and purpose built in. Take full advantage of the specific nature of these products, but *always* within the limitations set by the manufacturers in their handloading manuals.

I should confess that, for reasons already cited, I have not tried every load listed or written about in my .45 autos, nor have I elected to invent handloads of a spectacular kind with respect to inverted bullets and so on, as noted in my comments on the 38 Special. (See *How Special Is The 38?*—July/August, 1978, issue of THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER). The design, hence, function of the .45 auto, as well as the limited capacity of its case, are such as to render radical experimentation more or less unprofitable.

The included table of handloads is shown in order to augment the bare minimum of data provided in our initial discussion of the .45 auto. It shows results observed in my guns. The results you see upon using any one of these loads in your guns may be different, especially with respect to accuracy. The dominating intent is to stimulate your interest and thereby encourage further experiments by you.

Velocity average—5 shot sequence—air temperature was 77 degrees—elevation 4000 feet—Remington L.P. primers.

Good handloads, by trial and error (within safe limits), can be exposed for the benefit of all, but only if we, as handloaders, communicate freely. For this reason, I would be particularly interested in hearing from readers who care to offer information and commentary on safe, effective handloads for the .45 auto, or, for that matter, any handgun cartridge. The substance of information thus received will be noted in future handloading features.



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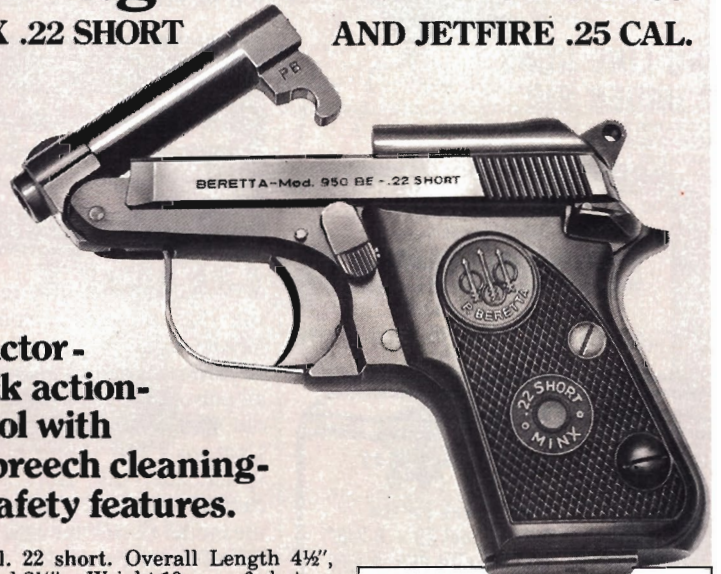
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safety ... Half cock safety

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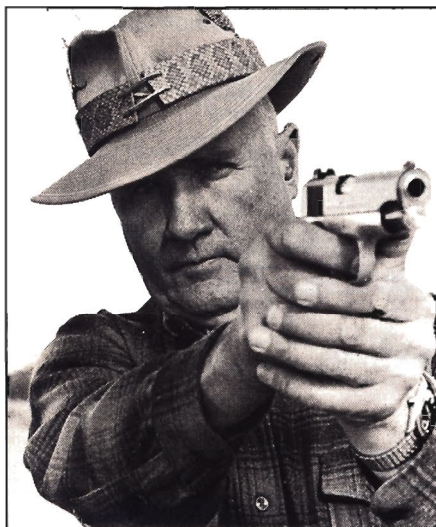
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**COP TALK**

(Continued from page 24)

George Nonte, the late, great handgun writer, favored the S&W model 59 15-shot 9mm. for police use, because he liked the high cartridge capacity, the quick reloads, the double action first shot, and the power of a 9mm. Parabellum cartridge properly loaded. Still, during the last years of his life, he was as likely to carry a .45 auto as a 9mm. for personal protection. Though never a cop, Nonte had solid input from the law enforcement sector, and was influential there. Nonte liked the Super Vel concept for .45 ammo.

Dean Grennell, the ex-cop who helps run a rival gun magazine and authors the "Law Enforcement Handgun Digest," is also partial to the 1911. So is Mason Williams, the HANDGUNNER writer who has influenced numerous officers to switch to the .45 auto through his writings in police journals, even though he has never worn a badge. Civilian gun experts of the caliber of J. D. Jones, Hal Swiggett, and others have analyzed the police handgun

question theoretically, and found an answer in the .45 auto; Swiggett for one has stated that, if he was a cop, he'd no sooner report for duty without a .45 automatic than without his pants. Swiggett's extensive handgun hunting experience with the .45 auto indicates that the 185-grain JHP factory loads give optimum performance on flesh-and-blood targets.

One comes back to Jeff Cooper, who proved the 1911 pistol's desirability as a gunfighting tool, and left it to the policemen themselves to determine whether or not that was an edge they wanted in their dangerous work. While few police departments took him up on the suggestion, many individual officers did . . . and the other gun experts, on their own sometimes, and sometimes at Cooper's prodding, came to the same conclusion.

Other articles in this issue consider more deeply the pros and cons of the .45 automatic as a police service handgun, and caution the need for expertise to precede adoption, but one thing is clear: the Colt .45 automatic is the choice of so many experts, it can no longer be ignored as a law enforcement sidearm.

**TAKING AIM**

(Continued from page 20)

Santy of Bow, N.H., who had also cut the 6½" tube to 4" and installed a Baughman ramp sight with red insert. The base gun was an early, 5-screw model 25. This was

frame Smith & Wessons into .45 Long Colts. There is a sound ballistic purpose to it. But practicality indicates that .45 ACP is a more versatile and shootable handgun round for everything but long-range (over 100 yd.) work.

A custom .45 ACP sixgun? Give it a second look. With a Douglas bull barrel and Magnaporting, it's going to kick less than a stock .38 Special loaded with wadcutters, yet its ballistic delivery will be more impressive than any .45 auto, thanks to the longer barrel. (Don't worry about losing velocity through gas leakage at the barrel/cylinder gap. Most tests indicate that revolvers have higher velocities, perhaps because there is no slide to come open and drain energy.)

An N-frame cylinder is designed to handle rounds like .38, .357, and .44 Mag

my original police duty revolver. I went to the 1911 .45 auto as soon as I got permission to do so, and stayed with it until a departmental edict in late 1978 switched all patrol officers to sixguns. I dug out this old duty piece—backed now by some of Lazzaro's full moon clips in a K-size speedloader case from Second Six—and carried it until the administration made the model 66 .357 the official issue weapon for all patrol personnel.

I still have that .45 revolver, and I'll never sell it. I shot it in bullseye matches in lieu of a .45 auto, and won trophies in every stage with it. Despite the 4" barrel and the need to thumb-cock, I found that its superb trigger—lighter and crisper than any automatic in its caliber could safely duplicate—gave me a deadly edge. The reduced recoil didn't hurt, either.

I can dig all these gunsmiths who are running themselves ragged turning N-

**"Unlike the .45 auto, the wheelgun can digest an incredible variety of ACP handloads."**

**"A stock model Smith & Wesson Model 25 will usually equal a Gold Cup, and will often surpass a standard .45 automatic."**

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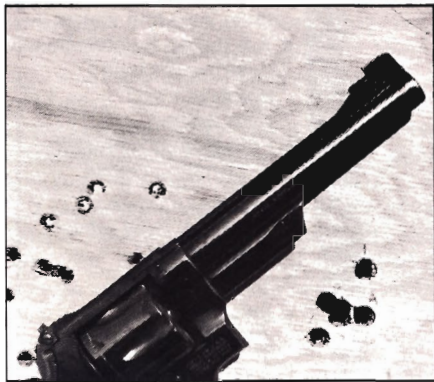
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overall dimensions of a five-inch gun. This also reduces the bullet's free-space leap before it hits the rifling, thus further improving accuracy.

Highway Patrolman frames are available, and would make an excellent basis for such a conversion. In fact, I've got a Charter Bulldog .44 Special that I won in a match, and don't have any use for in its present form; I'm toying with the idea of rechambering it to .45 ACP. The recoil might or might not be less, and the ammo available would be expanded enormously. The only thing the .44 Special ever had over the .45 ACP was that it could be handloaded hotter, and this doesn't apply



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to the little Charter, which the company stresses is built for factory-load pressures only.

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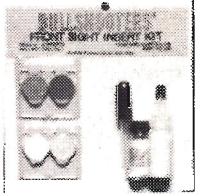
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## .45 MODIFICATIONS

(Continued from page 45)

point here is that G.I. or Mark IV barrels have larger chamber dimensions than the smaller grouping match barrels and thusly, feed better. This is our primary desire . . . flawless functioning, not an inch or so smaller group.

Now let's get into the issue of functioning. The feed ramp must be polished and the barrel "throated." The principle is to smooth the usually rough ramp on the round on its way to the barrel. The barrel has a fairly square machined edge at the beginning of the chamber that must be rounded off. The barrel must be aligned and matched to the feed ramp. These modifications are mainly incorporated to help cast bullets as well as semi-wadcutters feed smoothly, but even hardball will chamber better. This is a delicate process that must be done by a competent gunsmith.

The ejection port should be enlarged and lowered. The reason for this is to insure clear ejection of the spent round so the cycle rate will not be affected by a case squeezing out of the port and slowing down the action. A nice dividend of this modification is brass that is not damaged. This, also, helps avoid "Stovepipe" cases, a phenomenon that usually occurs from too light a load or a standard size port. The slang term "stovepipe" means a case that is standing straight up out of the ejection port like an old-fashioned stovepipe coming out of the roof of a house. Enlarging and lowering the ejection port is a must.

The next part of the pistol that is essential to perfect functioning is the slide return spring. This is the most overlooked item in the pistol but is of major importance. I have seen many beautiful modified guns that just didn't function properly and the cause was the slide spring. The G.I. springs are marginal in my opinion and do not supply the reliability we need. The return spring that I have found that does the job the best is from Bar-Sto Precision Machines, Burbank, California. It is made from stainless steel and, therefore, resists collapsing, and supplies more breech closing pressure. The cycle speed of the .45 is of utmost importance and must not be too slow or too fast. A slide spring that is too light may allow the extractor to pull right past the spent case in the chamber, making a difficult "jam" to clear in a hurry. Too light a spring, also, lets the slide slam back against the frame putting unnecessary strain on these parts. A spring that is too heavy will cause stovepipes even with full loads. The reason here is that the heavy spring requires too much power to overcome its strength. The spring as you get from Bar-Sto is suitable for G.I. hardball but military ammo varies. You will have to trim the spring to suit your pis-

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tol and load. This is accomplished by snipping one coil at a time until no stovepipes occur. Shoot at least 50 rounds each time before changing the length of the spring and be sure that the problem happens with different magazines. There are many, many pistols whose only problem is a bad slide return spring. Don't let it be yours!!

The other items a competition Colt .45 auto pistol needs includes a "trigger job." The release weight on the trigger should be around 3½ pounds, plus or minus a half a pound, and should be crisp. Do not cut the mainspring. This is the most common practice of most gunsmiths when doing a "trigger job" on the .45 ACP. The sear and hammer is where a good job is done, not in cutting the mainspring. Chuck Ries, Culver City, California and Armand Swenson, Fallbrook, California both say that shortening the mainspring changes the cycle rate and may not give adequate hammer force. They are the only gunsmiths I know who don't cut it.

The standard military sights are completely inadequate for competition. You must be able to "pick up" the sights quickly and they must be sharp and clear. The most common move is to install adjustable sights and the most popular are Smith and Wesson, Bo-Mar, and Micro. All three are well made and proven suitable for the practical pistol. The kicker here is that high visibility, fixed sights are the wisest choice. The main reason is that they are nearly indestructible. You zero the pistol with your competition load at 50 yards, check where other loads print, and adjust your hold when necessary. They do not change, so rezeroing is unnecessary. One thing I have seen and experienced is adjustable sight breakage. This is something that can be avoided. Fixed sights are the dependable, as well as the economical, answer.

Some other items are checkering the mainspring housing, the front strap of the frame and the front of the trigger guard. This work is necessary to insure that the handgunner can maintain proper control on the firearm during recoil. The pistol must not be slippery in the hands of the shooter. The front of the trigger guard is checkered to give the forefinger of the second hand on the pistol a slip-proof hold.

Grips are a purely personal matter and should be what you like and feel comfortable with. The reason is that the grips do not afford much of a "grip" on the pistol. The pistol is primarily held by contact of the hand on the mainspring housing, grip safety and the front strap. The only grips I've found that help with the control of the pistol are the Pachmayr Signatures. They wrap around the front strap of the pistol and eliminate the need to checker it. The only disadvantage I find with them is that if you make a "poor" grasp during a speedy draw it's hard to change the grasp because of the sticky surface. However, I know many good shooters who do quite

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well with them. If you get a chance, try a pistol that has them installed and see how you like it. Except for Pachmayr's, the grips are kind of along for the ride. This is your chance to get something you want, not something you've been told you need.

The mainspring housing is a real can of worms. Some will tell you to get a flat one, others will say keep the arched one. This is a matter of personal choice, use whichever one feels comfortable to you. The arched housing fits larger hands better and the flat one is more suitable for smaller hands. The military pistol comes with an arched housing and the short trigger to suit medium-sized hands. No matter which housing you settle on, checkering is desirable.

Triggers are another item that has much to do with personal preference, described and judged. The military trigger was designed to fit everyone and seems not to fit anyone right. I know few successful practical shooters who use them. The most common choice is the match style trigger. It is longer than the standard trigger and seems to suit a larger group of pistoleros. Another type is the extra long flat trigger. The idea behind this trigger is that you would only move one joint in the "trigger finger" to actuate instead of two joints as with shorter triggers. The long flat triggers are still in their formative stage, and I

would only recommend an experienced shooter try one. The "match" type trigger is definitely recommended here. It is the most proven system in competition.

The edges of the magazine well need to be beveled to insure smooth insertion of the fresh magazine so time is not lost on the reload. Time saved on reloading is important to achieving higher scores.

The standard hammer is especially long and in full cock extends the length of the grip safety. Many shooters get the web of their hand pinched between these parts. The hammer can be "bobbed," i.e. shortening the tang as necessary until it no longer "bites" the shooter. The weight removed from the hammer will cause no failures of ignition. A Commander hammer can also be installed which gives the needed clearance. It is easier to thumb cock and gives a nice finished look. But this is an extra expense that may make you decide to just "bob" your standard hammer.

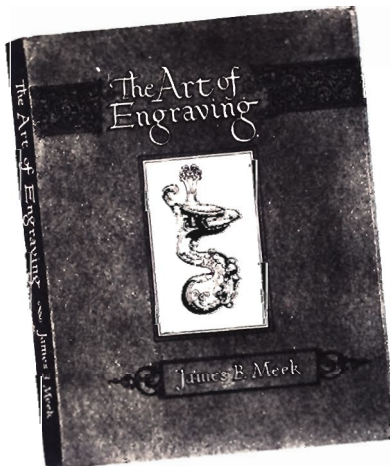
A speed safety is a necessary accessory for the competition pistol. It extends outward from the frame enough to insure the shooter doesn't miss it during a speedy draw. It also acts as a thumb rest if your style of grip desires. An ambidextrous safety is also a desirable item for competition. Many courses require the shooter

to shoot weak handed and the ability to disengage the safety with the thumb of either hand can mean higher scores. The ambidextrous safety runs about \$60.00 and about \$15.00 for a speed safety.

Do not now overlook magazines. The magazines must function flawlessly, so mark each one and keep track of which one was in the well when a malfunction occurred. If the same magazine causes the same problem more than a couple of times, get rid of it. Only trust magazines that never malfunction in a contest, use any that you don't trust 100% in practice until they are proven.

If you build a pistol using the modifications discussed in this article, you will have one that will be limited only to your skill. Practical pistol competition requires a special combination of reliability and accuracy. Each modification must be kept within proper proportions to insure the end result.

The 1977 "A," "B," and "C" class champions in the Southwest Pistol League, California, were taken by shooters using guns that were modified in this manner. To win a championship in the S.W.P.L., your gun must function flawlessly through a heavy match schedule during which thousands of rounds test the reliability.



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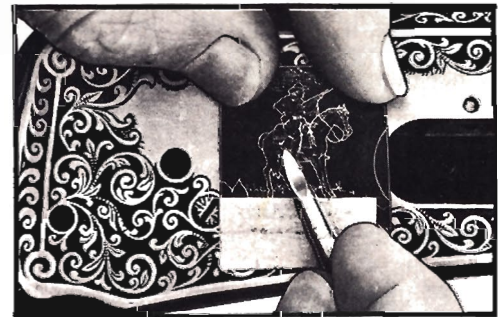
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## .45 MYTHS

(Continued from page 49)

The butt shape on this weapon is particularly well designed to absorb recoil, if the hand is placed upon it properly. It is far better in this respect than any revolver with unmodified stocks. When a properly placed Weaver grip is used, the additional stability afforded by the flexed left arm causes the muzzle to recoil almost imperceptibly. A good man can fire a three shot burst almost as fast as the weapon will cycle, with so little motion at the muzzle that the audience cannot even detect it. The controllability of the 45 auto is thus largely a matter of proper technique and has almost nothing to do with the weapon.

We used to think, in the early days of practical competition, that the man shooting the 45 was mastering the more difficult weapon when he shot alongside the police revolver shooters. It took the old master, Jack Weaver, to point out to us that it was actually the other way around, since shooting a 45 auto in a combat match was a distinctly easier proposition than shooting any double-action revolver. This has been borne out by many years of teaching now in which I find that revolver shooters have either to work about one-third again as hard to achieve the same performance as the auto shooters, or must content themselves with about three-fourths the efficiency of their fellow students.

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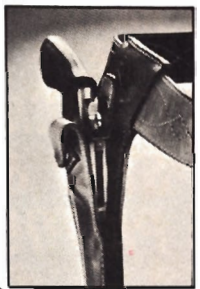
Very little can be done with a man who has made up his mind on the subject of safety. Those people—especially chiefs of police—who are convinced that the auto pistol is “unsafe” are impossible to convince otherwise. They know what they know and that’s that. I suppose it is true that the double-action feature on most revolvers and some auto pistols makes it very difficult for an untrained novice to fire a shot unintentionally, whereas the single-action principle makes this sort of thing more convenient. I am not sure that this is true, but I’m willing to accept it and fall back on the argument that I don’t like to see sidearms in untrained hands under any circumstances.

I’ve seen a good many accidental discharges over the years, on various training ranges. They are always upsetting, yet if proper safety precautions are observed they do no harm, since the piece is never pointed anywhere but down-range when the finger is on the trigger. I will admit that the double-action revolver is at the bottom of the list when it comes to accidental discharges, but it may surprise you to learn that the weapon most prone to AD’s is the single-action revolver. This is followed by the double-action auto, which is then followed by the single-action auto and finally by the double-action revolver. Accidental

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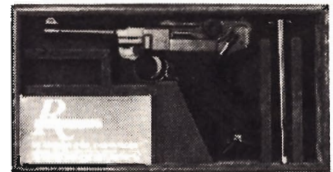
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discharges are something like automobile accidents. They can be fatal. They can also be minor. They do happen. We do our utmost to avoid them. Training and practice will go a long way to wipe them out completely, but it is impossible to build any mechanism which is "fool-proof." A fool can bring about a disaster with anything, including his bare hands.

On one occasion, having completed a demonstration for a sheriff's department, I discovered that all of my arguments had been accepted except that of safety. The sheriff of that county simply had it in his mind that he could not justify the use of the auto pistol in his department because it was inherently unsafe. Clearly there was nothing I could say that would change his mind, but I was most gratified when a young man in the audience raised his hand and wished to speak. He said that in the three years since his department had gone over to the automatic pistol, there had been three accidents with firearms. With some misgiving I asked him to elucidate. He said the first happened with a two-inch snubby revolver which a lady cop had been maintaining in a desk drawer. The second happened with a riot shotgun on withdrawal from the rack. The third took place with a 22 target pistol which had been brought down to the range for instruction and practice. I had nothing to add to that.

### THE LATE FIRST SHOT

The distinguished Ed McGivern once wrote that the double-action revolver had to be the quickest type of sidearm for the first shot because nothing had to be done to it—no hammer cocked nor safety latch slipped—in order to make it ready to fire. Ed could certainly shoot, but his reasoning was at fault in this case. No matter how fast a man can draw, there has to be an interval between leather and line-up. During that interval the hand can do what is necessary to make the piece ready. The truth is that there is no difference in draw speed between the S.A. revolver, the D.A. revolver, and the auto. The Big Bear Leatherslap, the senior event at which this matter was put to a test, was won with all three types of handgun.

It is not widely known that the 1911 auto pistol was designed by John Browning to be carried cocked and unlocked. The grip safety was his answer to the War Department's design stipulation that the test weapons had to be safe to carry and yet instantly ready for action without any manipulation apart from squeezing the trigger. The pistol was tested and accepted on that basis. Subsequent policy directing that the weapon be carried in Condition Three (half-loaded) was the work of less qualified men than Browning and the test board, and has given rise to a lot of misunderstanding.

Current doctrine emphasizes that the 45 auto should always be in Condition One

(fully loaded, cocked, and locked) when worn upon the person. It should not be worn in Condition Two (loaded and uncocked) to be thumb-cocked on the draw, nor in Condition Three—regardless of what various departments may stipulate. In Condition One it is, if anything, quicker than a D.A. to the first shot ("No, Ma'am, it won't go off by itself").

They tell of a Texas Ranger, wearing a 45 auto properly in Condition One, who was approached in some agitation by a bystander:

"Mister, do you know that your pistol is cocked?"

"Yep, friend, that I do."

"But, Mister, ain't that dangerous?"

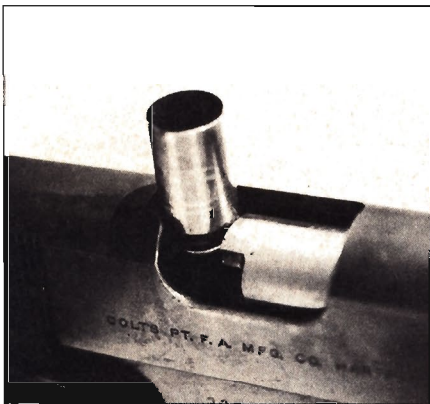
"You damn betcha!"

### MODIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In pursuing this mythology, we uncovered a rather new notion in derogation of the 45, and that is that it takes too much money to set it up for competition, or, for that matter, for serious defense work. We are a nation of equipment buffs and it is certainly true that at competition you may see pistols upon which money has been expended with a lavish hand. It would be a great mistake, however, to feel that this is necessary to the proper function of the weapon. Practical competition simulates the defensive use of the weapon as much as possible, and a pistol which is a success in practical competition may be assumed also to be at its best for carrying on the person in a hazardous situation. It is just not necessary to re-do the weapon, as many competitors do. What the stock Colt 45 auto needs to make it a serious weapon is a good trigger and good sights. The trigger, we have discussed. The sights must be simply of sufficient visibility for quick pick-up. They need not be adjustable. Beyond that there are perhaps 45 semi-standard modifications of the 45 auto which may please some people and not others. I emphasize that they are optional. If you want them, fine, but don't feel that you need them. Some very great performances have been turned in with very standard weapons, including that of the current world champion, David Westerhout of Salisbury. When I am asked what modifications are necessary for the 45 auto, I always point out that my own weapons are modified to my own taste and in some cases modified experimentally in order to evaluate certain gunsmith specialties. My pistols are not "stock," but that certainly does not mean that the full measure of utility may not be obtained from a perfectly standard 45 auto, assuming a good trigger and good sights. The pistol may come with a good trigger over the counter. This is increasingly true today. But if it is not so, it can be quickly changed. A proper sight installation is also a fairly simple matter. It would be nice if the Colt factory

would put good sights on the weapon as they issue it, but pending that policy decision on their part we can take care of the matter ourselves without any great expense.

So much for the negative myths of the 45. On the positive side we have the ancient and honorable legend that the 45 pistol cartridge is so powerful that it will knock a man flat under all circumstances. About all we can say about this is, that is not true. Clearly there is nothing a man can hold in his hands which will always deck his opposition without fail. This specifically goes for a twelve gauge shotgun. (I know of three cases now in which a felon absorbed a full blast from a twelve gauge riot gun and walked away.) The 45 pistol cartridge is indeed a reliable fight stopper, about 92 percent effective. It will not, however, "knock a man down" since it if did it would knock down the man shooting it—Mr. Newton's laws not yet



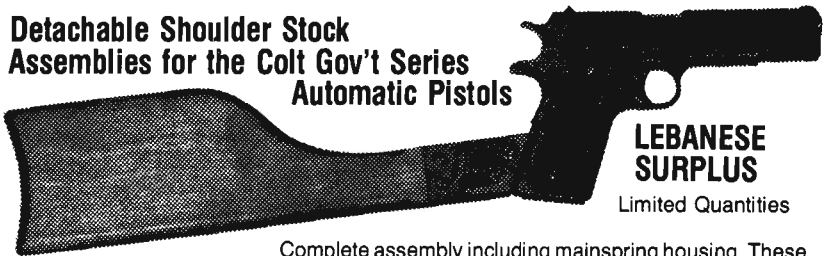
having been "interpreted" by our courts. You occasionally see impact results which suggest enormous potential in this regard but they are explainable on physiological rather than physical grounds. What happens is that sudden, massive tissue damage, especially to nerves, may cause a violent "flinch" target, which, coupled with a slight push, gives the appearance of a spectacular knock-down. The 45 has been seen apparently to throw a man across the room. It has also been seen—not often, but occasionally—to have no effect at all.

Impact ballistics are matters of probability—not in any sense certainties. The subject is deep, complex, and not fully understood. The 45 ACP cartridge is one of the very best choices for personal defense, but we need not exaggerate its performance to the point of absurdity.

It is curious that so many of us would rather speculate than investigate—that we would rather talk about something than do it. The 45 auto is there for us to use, and we need not invest it with a mythology. It is a straightforward, businesslike, proven hand tool—not a magic wand. It does just fine, and it needs no *mystique*. We would do better to make up myths about gods, kings, and movie stars, and to establish our weapon lore on firmer ground.



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## HOAG CUSTOM

(Continued from page 30)

"I personally think the pre-1970 Government Models stand up better in continuous full-power firing," he continues. "A lot of the IPSC shooters use heavy handloads to be sure of qualifying in major caliber class, and the post-1970 Mark IV seems more likely to crack under that kind of abuse. I'm talking about a crack in the frame near the slide stop pin on the right, or on the slide above the slide stop cutout.

"The one place I do recommend a Gold Cup," he adds, "is for the long slide conversions. The little rib on top of the Cup's slide looks a lot nicer on the stretched-out gun. Incidentally, there is no truth to the rumor that current Gold Cups are weaker than Government models."

For every fifty or so Colt autos, Jim does maybe one Browning HiPower; the big 9mm.'s popularity seems to be increasing slightly, he notes. His Browning job includes a trigger rework that leaves you with a crisp, backlash-free, four pound let-off, about as light as you can safely go on the Browning. He also tightens the bushing and does the same sight installation, checkering on grip straps and rear of slide and frame, magazine well flaring, deepening of ejection port, and other modifications associated with his .45s.

In addition to the gunsmithing, Jim is in partnership with Chris Dawn of H&D Sales, offering such goodies as an excellent extended slide release, an oversize thumb safety for Colt or Browning, and other items including a soon-to-be-released plastic shock absorber to fit with the spring guide for a recoil buffer effect.

Chris and I took a couple of armfuls of spanking new Hoag conversions to the nearby Firing Line commercial range, a handsome little facility in Canoga Park. The initial runthrough was disappointing for both of us. Here's a breakdown:

**Hoag Master Class 8" .45:** This ultra-costly gun (\$980 not counting the cost of the base pistol, which Hoag says must always be furnished by the customer) failed to eject and/or extract after every shot. Some 25 rounds of RNL handloads, 250-gr. cast bullets over stiff charges of Unique, and finally my own factory match hardball failed to function the pistol. Grouping in single shots was excellent, however.

**Combat Browning:** This pistol had, without reservation, the finest trigger I've ever felt on a Browning Nine. Accuracy was hard to test on Firing Line's 50-foot range, but seemed more than adequate for street work or IPSC competition. In the first magazine, the hammer followed the slide down to half cock twice during firing, but thereafter ran through the remainder of fifty rounds without a bobble. Lead-bullet reloads were used.

**Commander Special .45:** This fancily-

worked and hard-chromed Combat Commander shot admirable groups (it was equipped with a stock Colt barrel and bushing, but had been tightened somewhat). In approximately fifty rounds, the gun started with an alarming tendency to fail on feeding, but we attributed this to a combination of mild reloads with the very tight and new slide-to-frame fit, plus the fact that the pistol had not been fired since being chromed.

**6" Hoag Master:** Another beautiful pistol, so tight that you had to put lots of muscle on just to open it, this gun shot fine groups but also showed an alarming malfunction rate.

I was thoroughly baffled. I had fired many Hoag pistols before, all without a hitch, and knew too many experts who swore by them to accept these test results. Chris and I went back to the shop, and returned to the range with Jim and some more pistols.

The Browning, Jim acknowledged, may have been too finely tuned. He too was unable to get the 8" Master to cycle even once, diagnosed the problem as a faulty ejector, and set the gun aside for a re-doing. The Commander Special, placed now on a diet of full-power-equivalent handloads (using both SWC and hard-to-feed 250-gr lead hollowpoints) proceeded to function perfectly, demonstrating very satisfactory accuracy along with controllability that allowed both Jim and I to fire hand-size groups from 7 yards as fast as we could pull the trigger from the Weaver stance.

Jim handed me another 8", one belonging to a customer, and ready to ship. Except for the slide failing to stay back on the last shot, this gun perked with 100% reliability. Holding and squeezing carefully, I was able to put 12 rounds into one ragged hole at 50 feet; it wasn't the same as a Ransom Rest at 50 yards, but left me convinced that the gun had all the tight grouping ability Jim promised, along with fine balance and superb "hang" (and a primo trigger, which you should expect on any \$980 conversion).

A post-shooting discussion of what had gone wrong with the original test guns brought up two interesting points. First, the guns that had failed for all three of us were the very same ones that another gun magazine had recently used for a cover-story test, in which they pronounced all specimens to be functioning perfectly. Jim was not amused by this; he had not fired the guns himself until that evening.

The second surprise came when Jim advised me that he does not test fire his guns before sending them back to the customer. "I used to," he explained, "but they functioned perfectly 99.9% of the time, and it seemed pointless. The guns need a break-in period anyway, of some 150 to 400 rounds. The parts are so tight that they won't seat properly right away in every case, though most of the guns function perfectly the moment they leave my work-

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bench. Naturally, if the customer isn't satisfied with it after the break-in period, I'll square it away immediately at no charge."

Jim is very much in demand these days, and delivery time runs as much as eight or nine months. He's doing about 300 guns a year now, and has nearly a hundred in the shop at any given time. (If you're after a longslide, be cautioned: Wyatt Earp jokes can result in cancellation of your order.)

Another Hoag specialty, for the shooter who has everything, is a .45 kit with four matching barrel/slide assemblies (Commander length, standard 5", plus 6" and 8"), all mated to the same frame. He does maybe two of these a year, and each kit costs (take a deep breath) \$4,000. Admittedly, the machine-work is enormous on such a job, and mating each slide and barrel to the single frame with uniform match tightness is truly a painstaking task. Jim tells you with a straight face that half of that expense is in parts. A Hoag four-in-one is a nice thing to have, but I don't think it's going to get a "best bargain" rating anywhere. My own idea of a \$4,000 .45 outfit would be a \$240 Commander and a new Datsun station wagon to keep it in the glove compartment of. Oh, well . . .

A unique piece of Hoag exotica is the 11" barrel Gold Cup. There is only one, and I believe Jim when he tells me the shop time it consumed was ungodly. He's not going to build another for less than three grand.

Incidentally, this gun shot perfectly and superbly, without a single malfunction. Recoil was strange; you could feel the chunk-chunk of the slide as if it was a pump shotgun. Kick was about the same as a stock .45. Recoil was slightly absorbed by the weight, but in a .45, much of the kick is from the slide's rearward momentum, and the eleven-incher's slide is so enormous that any bump-smoothing by virtue of weight is negated. It shot nice, though. All that was missing was sling swivels. Believe it or not, balance and hang on the target was excellent. Hardball *plus* is needed to cycle that monster slide, but properly fed, it delivers the goods.

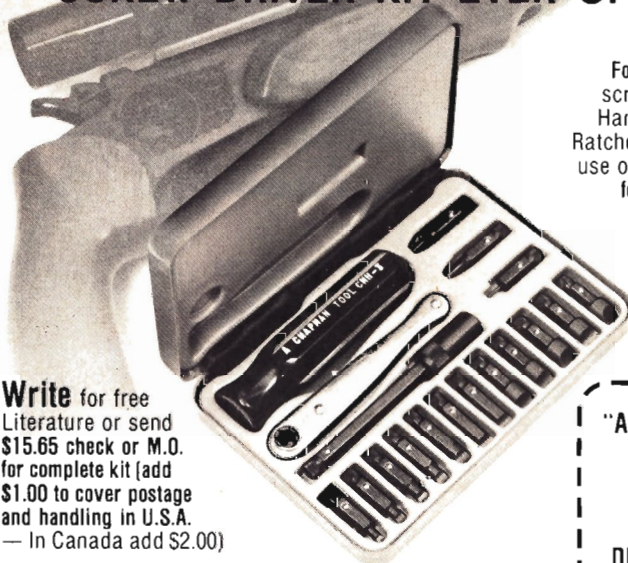
While his exotic guns are out of sight price-wise, Hoag's bread-and-butter .45s are surprisingly competitive with the dollars less-famous customizers are getting. The accurized, fixed-sight Police Special at \$150 is a good value, and so is the \$265 class B competition grade. The Master Grades, which start at \$592 for a 5" and run to \$775 for the 6" and \$980 for the 8", are a different story. They're a trifle easier to group with than the Class B or even the \$395 Class A, but they won't do enough for you to warrant the price spread unless you're going for the National Championship and *know* you'll need every hair's-breadth edge.

J. Hoag Limited, and H&D Products, are both located at 8523 Canoga Ave., Suite C, Canoga Park, California 91304. Among pro shooters, Hoag .45s have an outstanding reputation for accuracy and

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## GOLD CUP

(Continued from page 31)

of 1/8" or 1/10" (your preference) bar stock, then milling into the same approximate shape as that found on the **HARDBALLER** by AMT. I've never lost a front sight when done in this manner.

**Fifth**—For serious social work, the mainspring should be replaced with one *two* coils longer than the issue 'Cup' part, which is *five* coils shorter than the Government Model spring.

Some highly qualified gunsmiths prefer *three* additional over the Gold Cup spring, which is a good idea for colder climates. Use your own judgement.

With the exception of above #4, all work can be done in the living room or home workshop—they certainly don't need the talents of a professional gunsmith.

After the above five items are executed, the Gold Cup becomes a superior combat weapon, and provides a far more practical route than purchasing a Government Model in the first place and spending an additional \$175 and more to make a decent gun out of it.



## .45 LEATHER

(Continued from page 38)

resistant in the sense of breakfront revolver holsters, this rig offers choice of lightning draw through the top, or quick draw through the front in cramped quarters. Strap can be instantly released by thumb or forefinger, depending on drawing mode, without fear of snagging as with conventional thumb-breaks.

**Concealment:** Bianchi's new Pistol Pocket combines the best aspects of the classic Sparks Summer Special with other features. Worn inside the belt, stiff leather and wraparound spring allow gun to be drawn smoothly and reinserted with one hand (unlike conventional, soft waistband holsters), and a wide double-snapped belt

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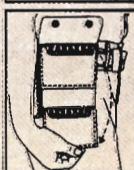
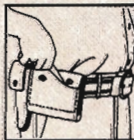


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loop keeps the pistol from shifting and also makes sure the holster won't come out with the gun, something that happens too often with conventional in-pants scabbards. This rig is straight-draw only, with forward tilt; when carrying crossdraw I wear either a Roy Baker Pancake, or a Bianchi X-15 shoulder rig.

**Hunting:** Anyone good enough with a .45 to go hunting with one is probably using a custom pistol with target sights, thus ruling out the GI holster which is otherwise very adaptable to the woods. Here again, you want security in case you take a spill, and you also want a snap-free, silent draw to avoid alerting the quarry. Depending on weather and clothing, I use either my Davis or Bianchi IPSC rigs, or an X-15 (drawing the gun through the top to avoid the snapping sound when the springs come back together, as happens when drawing through the front).

With the 1911-type autoloader, perhaps more than any other handgun, what you carry is less important than how you carry it.



### 3-POSITION SAFETY

(Continued from page 43)

down to unlock the gun.

The Swenson safety comes with an oversized engagement surface, allowing the gunsmith to fit it to an individual gun. If you are planning a three position safety, tell the smith to be sure to remove as little metal as possible. (I didn't give any such instructions for the two guns I had three position safeties built on; the safeties were fitted before I had the idea. But you'd best be safe.)

When a carefully fitted Swenson safety is thumbed down, the pistol remains locked for longer. While the Colt issue safety leaves the pistol unlocked until the safety is almost all the way up, the Swenson safety leaves the pistol locked until the safety is almost all the way down. That part of the safety's arc where the Swenson safety leaves the Colt locked and the Colt safety doesn't is where you put the middle position.

Fit the Swenson safety to the gun, following the instructions that come with the safety. As I said, take extra care to remove as little metal as possible.

Then, with the safety in place and the slide assembly off, position the safety in the middle position. The center of the safety plunger should be just a shade below the corner of the safety. (Figure 1, Arrow B) The safety will only stay in this position while you hold it. Check that:

—The pistol is locked.

—There is enough of the upper detent (Figure 1, Arrow A) below the bottom of the slide tracks to hold the safety plunger

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when the safety is all the way down (unlocked).

The first step is to make the detent that holds the safety in the middle position. With a scribe, mark where the plunger contacts the safety. Once you make the detent you are committed as to where the middle position is. Holding the safety with the plunger against your mark, double check the points above.

Make the detent. Flatten the edge of the safety where the detent will go, then make the detent with a circular file.

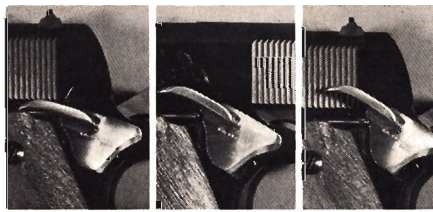
Put the safety back in the gun, in the middle position. Mark with a scribe where the safety is flush with the bottom of the slide tracks. File the safety down to the mark.

Put the safety in, put the slide on, and check everything. Is the hammer locked in the middle position? If not, the only thing I can suggest is buy another safety and start again. Can you put the safety in the middle position with the slide open? Can the slide be pulled back with the safety in the middle position? (These two questions may not be the same if there is any play in the middle position.) You may have to take a bit more metal off the top. And hope you still have enough to hold the plunger.

The fact is, there isn't much margin for adjustment. Your smith had best be careful in the first place.

If the middle position is too close to un-

locked, is there danger of recoil jarring the safety from unlocked to middle? If the middle position is too close to locked, can the safety be brushed or jarred too easily to middle, and off from there? I don't know; I haven't experimented with various middle positions. The middle position shown in the photos doesn't have either problem. The slide slamming closed on an empty chamber will sometimes jar the



safety off middle, but it always goes to locked.

Do NOT, repeat NOT, ever *carry*, or even set down, the gun with the safety on middle. The plunger is resting in a shallow detent; it is very easy to jar or brush it off. The middle position is intended to be used momentarily, as being safer than unlocked while loading, clearing, or checking the chamber.

When going from the locked to middle position, it's easy to overshoot and wind up unlocked. I find it best to use both thumbs, one over and one under the blade. It's also easy to brush the safety off

while working the slide. Dry practice.

Disadvantages? I can think of two, both of which may be more theoretical than real.

The alteration is new. As of this writing, I've had two guns altered, a Gov't Model and Commander Lightweight, both .45, and thoroughly checked out the Govt. Model. *So far*, nothing has gone wrong. When some smith has done a hundred guns, he'll have a good idea of whether anything can go wrong. As always, it's a good idea to check your gun out, with your business loads, after you've had work done on it. If you practice getting the safety off quickly, you're probably in the habit of shooting with your thumb on the safety. In this case, fire with your thumb off the safety, to be sure it stays locked.

Armand Swenson can give quite a list of ways the safety can be accidentally pushed from unlocked to locked in the stress of combat match firing. This is less likely, Mr. Swenson explains, if the rear edge of the safety is a bit forward of the left rear edge of the frame when the safety is unlocked. This is incorporated in the Swenson safety. When the safety is locked, this exposes a bit of the frame cut that takes the safety. I don't see where that makes any practical difference in a city gun. I would worry about another way for dirt, sand, and whatnot to get into a wilderness gun. On the other hand, it's just a small opening; on the side of the gun next to a

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and comes standard with 30 bullet loops. Without a doubt, **The Virginian**, the way it was.

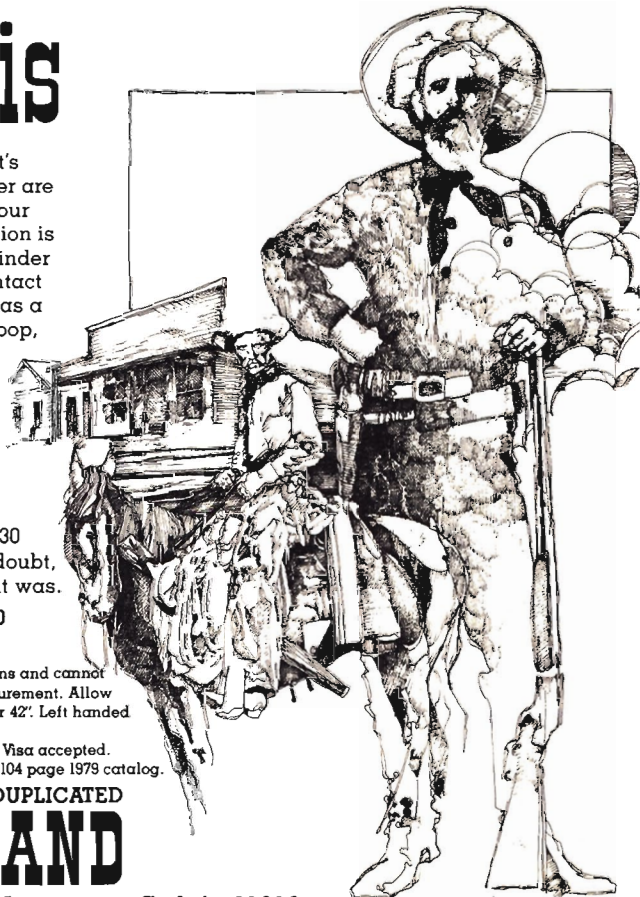
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right handed shooter's body; and, most important, it doesn't worry Mr. Swenson, who certainly knows much more about such things than I do.

Cost? Naturally, I can't say what your smith will charge. I can say it's a simple job. If you're building a combat gun, you'll need a speed safety installed anyway. Making it a 3 position safety isn't much more work. If you already have a gun set up without the Swenson safety, your main cost will be buying the Swenson safety and having it fitted. Will the three position safety work with another brand speed safety? I don't know; I've only tried the Swenson.

To sum up, we have a cheap, simple safety precaution. While we don't have enough experience to *know* nothing can go wrong, it doesn't seem to affect the weapon's effectiveness. If shooters were as safety conscious as they should be, the three position safety would be common on Colt automatics.



## SEECAMP CUSTOM

(Continued from page 47)

is a pleasure. It is made to be shot and shot and then shot some more. It is a rugged, heavy duty piece that has surprising accuracy and which instills tremendous confidence in the shooter. It is like working with a professional bird dog in excellent bird cover. I seldom am willing to go out on a limb and unconditionally recommend a product but I have no reservations about this Seecamp Bobcat 45 ACP.

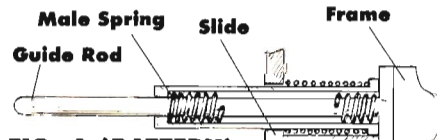


FIG. A (BATTERY)

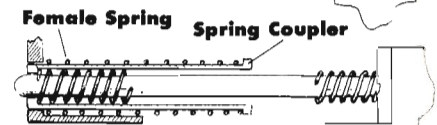


FIG. B (FULL RECOIL)

Like a Rolls Royce, the workmanship is impeccable. Like a Rolls Royce, it is expensive. But the man who needs small size, power and unquestioned reliability should pick up this piece and then fire it. He will be a convert from that point on.

I might add that the Seecamps have worked out an arrangement with a local holster maker to furnish holsters individually fitted to the specific pistols. The holster that was sent to me with the pistol shows excellent workmanship and top quality leather. As far as I know, holsters will be available in shoulder rigs, belt models and inside-the-pants styles. For full details and prices, write: L. W. Seecamp Company, Box 255, New Haven, Connecticut, 06502 (Phone 203-877-3429).



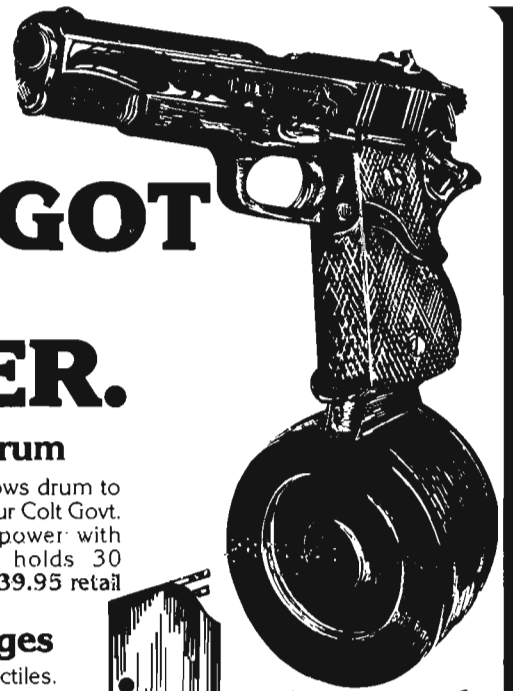
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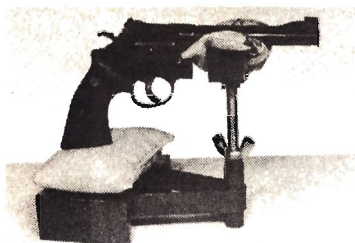
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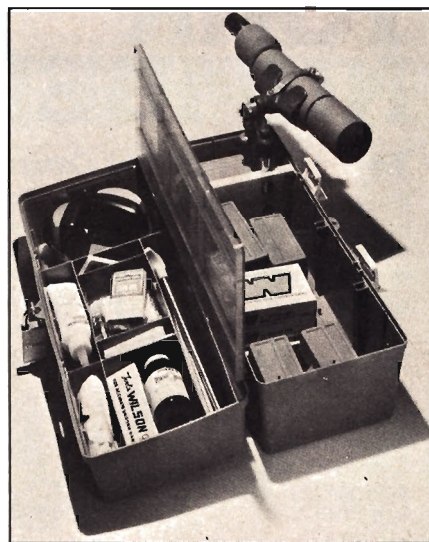
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# What's New

## New Non-Slip Grips

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## Shooters Equipment Box From MTM

● The NEW MTM Shooter's Equipment Box is strong. It is fully warranted.

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The MTM Shooter's Equipment Box includes an integral 5/8" cavity for a spotting scope mounting-rod (not included). See your dealer or write: MTM, Dept. AH, 5680 Webster St., Dayton, Ohio 45414

## Dan Wesson's New .22 Revolver

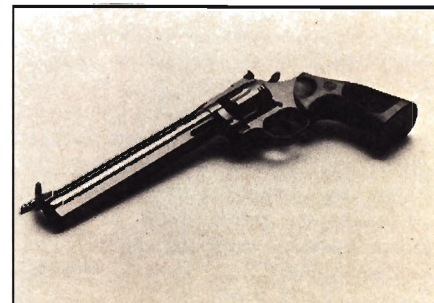
● A new .22 double-action revolver has just been introduced by DAN WESSON ARMS of Monson, Massachusetts.

The new Model 22 will offer all of the unique features made popular by the company's current .357 magnum revolver such as interchangeable barrel assemblies, one piece grips and interchangeable front sight blades. The white outline has also been retained as a standard feature on the rear sight.

Boasting the heft and feel of the popular .357 Dan Wesson, the new model is quite comparable to the larger caliber revolver.

The Model 22 will be available as a single gun, in a Mini-Pac (one revolver and one interchangeable barrel assembly in a carrying case), or in a Pistol Pac (a revolver, three matching interchangeable barrel assemblies, an interchangeable grip, four front sight blades (2 yellow, 2 white), a Dan Wesson belt buckle and patch—all in a carrying case).

See your dealer or write: Dan Wesson Arms, Dept. AH, 293 Main Street, Monson, MA 01057.

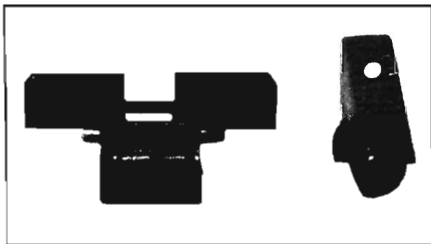


## New Trigger Pull Gage

• The Hunter Spring Division of AMETEK, Inc. has introduced an accurate and convenient system for testing and calibrating trigger pull force on all types of firearms. The system consists of a Hunter Spring Series "L" force gage and a specially designed trigger pull hook. It represents a significant improvement over other test methods utilizing inaccurate "fish-scale" devices or cumbersome deadweights.

Series "L" force gages incorporate a unique "hold-at-maximum-reading" feature which will retain on the dial face the maximum force applied during a test. A touch of the reset button clears the gage for the next test. Accuracy of the gage is  $\pm 0.5\%$  full scale and several capacity ranges are available (from 0-5 lb to 0-30 lb) with either pound, kilogram or Newton scales.

Each gage is supplied in a fitted instrument case with a 6" extension rod and five standard attachments. For complete information and pricing on the gage and trigger pull hook; contact AMETEK, Inc., Dept. AH, Hunter Spring Division, Hatfield, PA 19440.

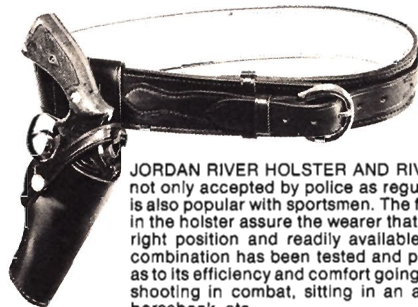


## Nite Site...No Batteries...No Wires...No Bulbs

• Makers Julio Santiago and Elliel F. Knutsen say, "You have to shoot it to believe it." (Ed. Note: All the combat shooters that I shoot with, agree with this opinion). The best of all worlds. No gadgets or extra weight and yet you can see your sights even in low-level light... even at night. Write: Nite-Site Inc., P.O. Box O, Dept. AH, Rosemount, Minnesota, 55068.

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# ACCURACY TESTING THE COLT .45 MARK IV AUTO

By John W. Rockefeller

I decided to test my new Colt with both factory fodder and handloads, just to see how accurate it was, and whether that new "collet-type" bushing actually helped all that much. Starting out with factory loads, I fired ammo of several different makes including FEDERAL, FRONTIER, REMINGTON, SPEER, and SUPER VEL. Ammo used ranged from the old-fashioned "hardball" load with 230 grain Metal Case bullet, through several makes of "combat" loads with Jacketed Hollow Point bullets, and culminated with a couple of "target" loads using both metal case and lead semi-wadcutters.

Testing was carried out at a local sand-pit, firing five-shot groups at twenty-five yards from a "braced sitting" position, gripping the gun in a two-handed hold,



The Colt Mark IV/Series 70 was worth waiting for, according to the author.

my arms braced between my knees, and my back braced against the ol' green Chevy. This is a fairly solid hold, though still subject to human error... particularly in the matter of maintaining a tight and uniform hold on the gun. Regrettably, though, it will have to do. I didn't have a machine rest...

I started using FEDERAL 230 grain Metal Case factory load. This is a conventional round nose, full metal jacketed bullet at 850 feet per second, and is put up in a nickel plated case. My first group with the MK IV showed 5 shots in 2 3/4", with 3 shots in one hole. My second group put 5 in 4" inches, while my third group was five shots in 5 1/2 inches.

Hornady's FRONTIER puts up a similar load, though in a plain brass case, and in a twenty-round box. Three groups were fired in the MK IV, with the first running 5 in 4 1/2", with 4 in 3 3/8 inch. Second group

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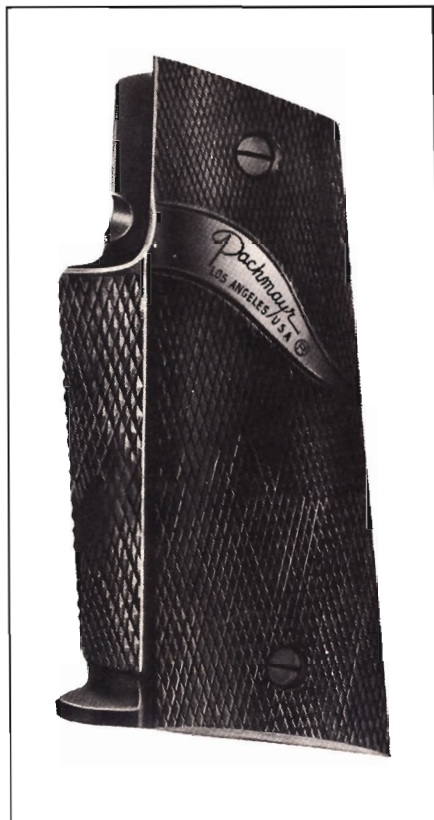
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was 5 shots in 6½", with 4 in 3¾". Third and last group showed five rounds in 4¾", with 4 rounds in only 2½ inches.

The SPEER INSPECTOR factory load uses a 200 grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) and is packed twenty-five rounds to the box, in a reusable yellow plastic box. This is loaded in a brass case, and the Speer bullet possesses a huge hollow point cavity. My first groups ran 6¾" for five shots, with four in 2¾". My second groups showed five shots in 4", with four in 2¾", while my third group was five shots in 4¾", with four in 3½ inches.

Super Vel Cartridge Corporation of Shelbyville, Indiana, has gone out of busi-



**"Wrap-around" Pachmayr Signature Combat grips allows for a secure hold and is almost impervious to impact.**

ness, but SUPER VEL ammunition is being produced by H & H CARTRIDGE CORPORATION, Post Office Box 294, Greensburg, Indiana 47240. The Super Vel factory loads as provided me by H & H seem identical to the late-production Shelbyville ammo I had on hand, and consist of a 190 grain Jacketed Hollow Point bullet in a nickel-plated case. The bullet has a very blunt nose, with a large nose cavity. My first group produced five shots in 6¾", with four in 3½". My second group showed five in 6¾", with four in 4¾". My third group was five in 3¾", with four shots in 2¾". My last group was five shots in 7 inches, which is lousy, but four of these were in 3¾".

The FEDERAL 185 grain Jacketed Hollow Point factory load looks so much



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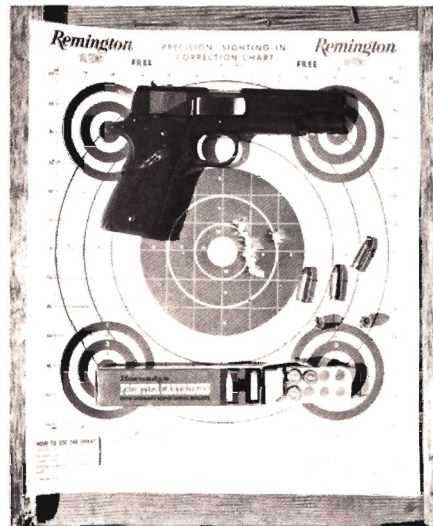
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like the Super Vel load that I can only tell which is which by looking at the head-stamp. Like the Super Vel load, the FEDERAL has a nickel-plated case and a very blunt bullet with a very large nose cavity. My first groups with this load produced five shots in 6 inches, with 4 in 5 1/2". My second was five in 6 1/2", with 4 in 5 1/2". My third ran five shots in 4 1/2", four in 3 3/8", while my fourth and last group was five shots in 7 1/2" with four in 3 3/8", and three in only 1 3/4 inch.

The REMINGTON 185 grain Jacketed Hollow Point load is also put up in a nickel-plated case, but its bullet has more taper and a smaller nose cavity. My first group fired showed five shots in 5 1/2", with four in 4 1/2", and two shots touching. My second group was five shots in 3 3/8", with four in 1 7/8". My third group ran five shots in 5 inches, with four in 2 1/2". My last group showed one shot off the paper, four in 5 3/4", and was strung out vertically. This indicates that I was probably getting tired, and not gripping the gun uniformly.

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**Five shots in 2 3/8" at twenty five yards was best of the group. WW Ball Powders #231 and #630. The #630 for the heavier bullets.**

load with 185 grain Hollow Point bullet is put up in a brass case and in a twenty-round box. Bullet shape is very much like that of the Remington, and feeding is very good. Also, the load does not seem to be quite so "hot" as some of the others, producing less recoil and, as a result, being much more pleasant to shoot. As a result, I obtained smaller groups. My first group, one of the best fired in the whole test series, showed five shots in 2 3/8". My second was five shots in 5 1/2", with four in 3 3/8". My third group showed five in 4 1/2", with four in 3 3/8". My fourth and last group was five shots in 4 inches, with four in a mere 1 3/8".

Two target loads were also tried. The FEDERAL loading, with a 185 grain

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Metal Case Wad Cutter at 775 feet per second, was put up in a brass case, and produced one five-shot group of 2 3/8", while the second group showed five shots in 3 inches with four of these in 2 inches.

The FRONTIER 200 grain Semi Wad Cutter load uses a brass case and a lubricated lead bullet, and is packed twenty to the box. My first groups showed five shots in 5", with four in 3 3/8". My second was five in 2 3/8", with four in one ragged slot. My third group was five in 3 3/4", with four in 2 3/4", while my last group showed five shots in 3 3/4", with four in 2 3/8".

The tests were then duplicated, using handloaded ammunition. Loads were put up on my Brown Bair III, a three-station "H" press, using a Pacific Durachrome three-die pistol set. Winchester-Western Ball powders were used exclusively, with fast-burning 231 Ball being selected for the lighter bullets, the slower burning 630 Ball for the heavier. The Winchester Ball Powder Loading Data booklet was used as a guide, and powder charges were—where possible!—thrown from a Pacific Pistol Powder Measure which uses interchangeable brass bushings. Where a proper bushing was not available, I used my Bair Micro-Measure. Powder charges were checked on a Bair Magna-Damp powder scale.

I started out with the Hornady 230 grain Full Metal Jacket bullet, loading 10.8 grains of 630 Ball Powder as thrown by bushing # 14 in the Pacific Pistol Powder Measure. According to the Winchester Loading Data booklet, 10.9 grains of 630 will give 840 feet per second and 17,000 C.U.P. with a 230 grain F.M.C. bullet. Close enough! As to accuracy, my first group showed five in 4 1/4". My second showed five in 6 inches. My third group was five shots in 3 3/4", while my fourth and last group showed five shots in a mere 2 3/8".

Groups with the SPEER 225 grain J.M.H.P. ran five shots in 3 1/2" for the first group, while the second ran 4 3/8" for five shots with four in 4 1/2". The third group showed five shots in 3 1/2" with three shots touching.

For the SPEER 200 grain Jacketed Hollow Point, I elected to use the Bair Micro-Measure, setting it to throw 5.5 grains of 231 Ball, but this was probably a mistake as ejection was not too positive, and I got a "stovepipe" on the second group. By jumping to 5.7 grains, it is possible to use bushing # 10 in the Pacific Pistol Powder Measure, which simplifies things.

My first group with the SPEER 200 grain J.H.P. put five shots in 4 1/2". My second group—with the stovepipe—showed five shots in eight inches, but with four in 5 3/4". My third group was five in 4 3/8", with 3 in 2 3/8". My fourth group ran five shots in 3-5/4". My fifth and last group showed five shots in four inches, four shots in 2 3/8".

Using the SIERRA 185 grain Jacketed Hollow Cavity bullet (JHC), I loaded 5.8 grains of 231 Ball using bushing # 11 in

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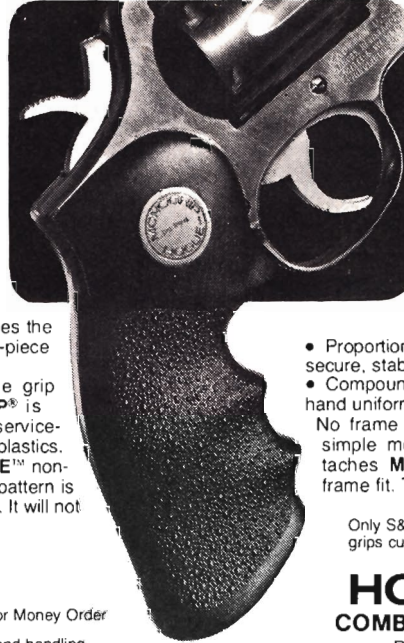
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the Pacific Pistol Powder Measure. Accuracy was quite good. My first group ran five shots in 3 7/8". My second group showed five in 4 7/8", with four in 3-5/16". My third group was five shots in 4 inches, with four of these in 1 7/8", while my fourth and last group showed five shots in 3 3/8".

My final efforts consisted of a target loading using a linotype metal semi-wad-cutter cast in LEE PRECISION'S bullet mould #452-190-SWC, and lubed and sized with that firm's Lube & Size Kit. The bullet was loaded with all bands in the case, the shoulder even with the case mouth, atop a charge of 4.5 grains of Winchester-Western 231 Ball Powder. Tested at twenty-five yards from the braced sitting position, I produced five-shot groups of (1) 3 1/2", (2) 2 7/8", (3) 2 1/2", (4) 2 3/8", and (5) five shots in 2 1/2" with four in 1 1/4". The home-cast bullets showed NO leading and, thanks to the very mild recoil, I was able to produce far tighter groups than I

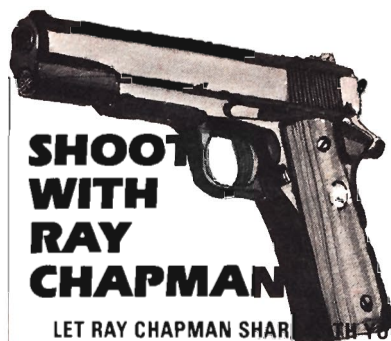


**Here's the .45 stripped for cleaning. Cleaning rod from Belding & Mull. Spring steel pistol belt clip by Browne & Pharr Manufacturing.**

could ever produce with hard-kicking, full-charge "combat" or "hardball" ammunition!

All in all, I am most happy with my Colt Government Model. Stoked with "hardball," or one of the new "combat" loads, it is a powerful and effective weapon while, using mild, cast-bullet handloads, it has more than adequate accuracy for plinking or small game hunting. That I cannot drive tacks with the full-charge loads is, perhaps, a bit disappointing but, then, one seldom has to use a sledghammer to drive tacks.

And, who knows? Maybe, with lots of practice, I will eventually reach the point where I can enjoy the accuracy potential of the magnificent MK IV. I'll keep trying! In the meantime, good luck, and good shooting!



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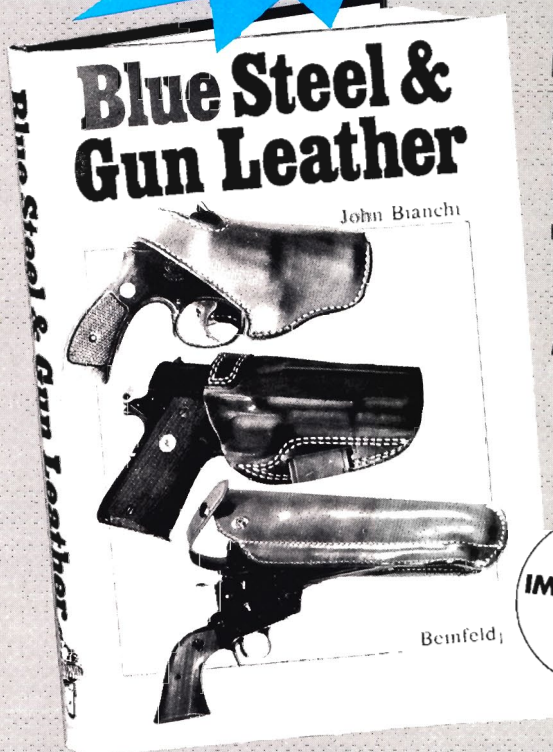
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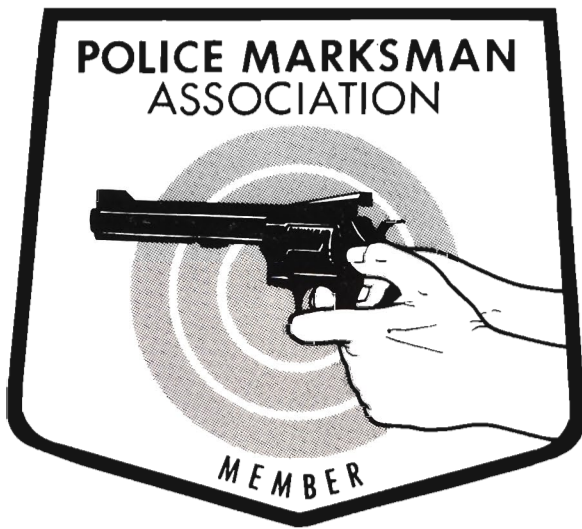
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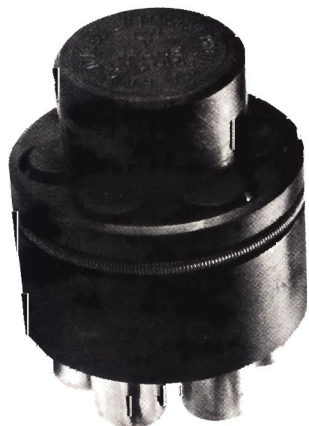
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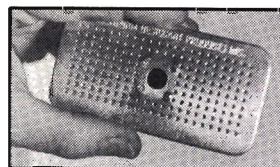
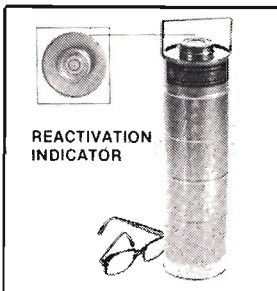
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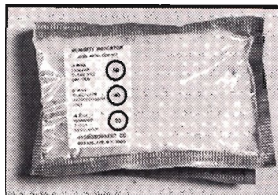
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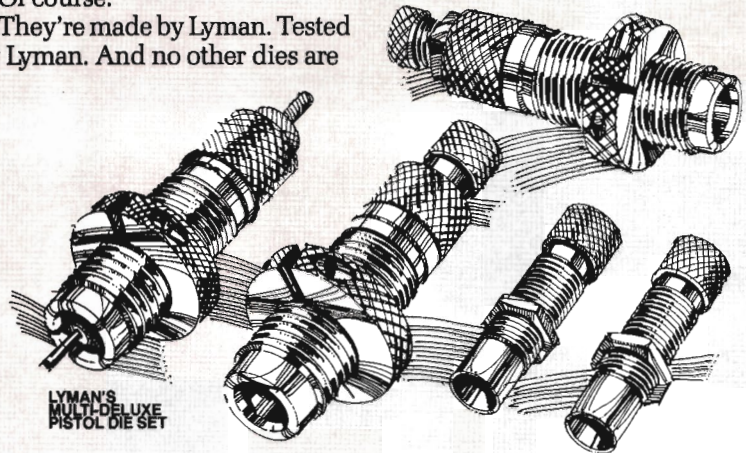
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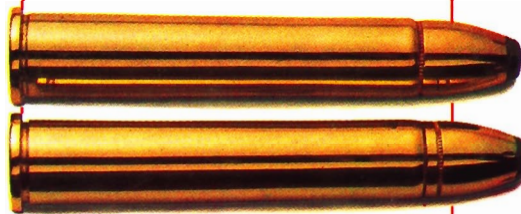


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