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# HANDGUNNER

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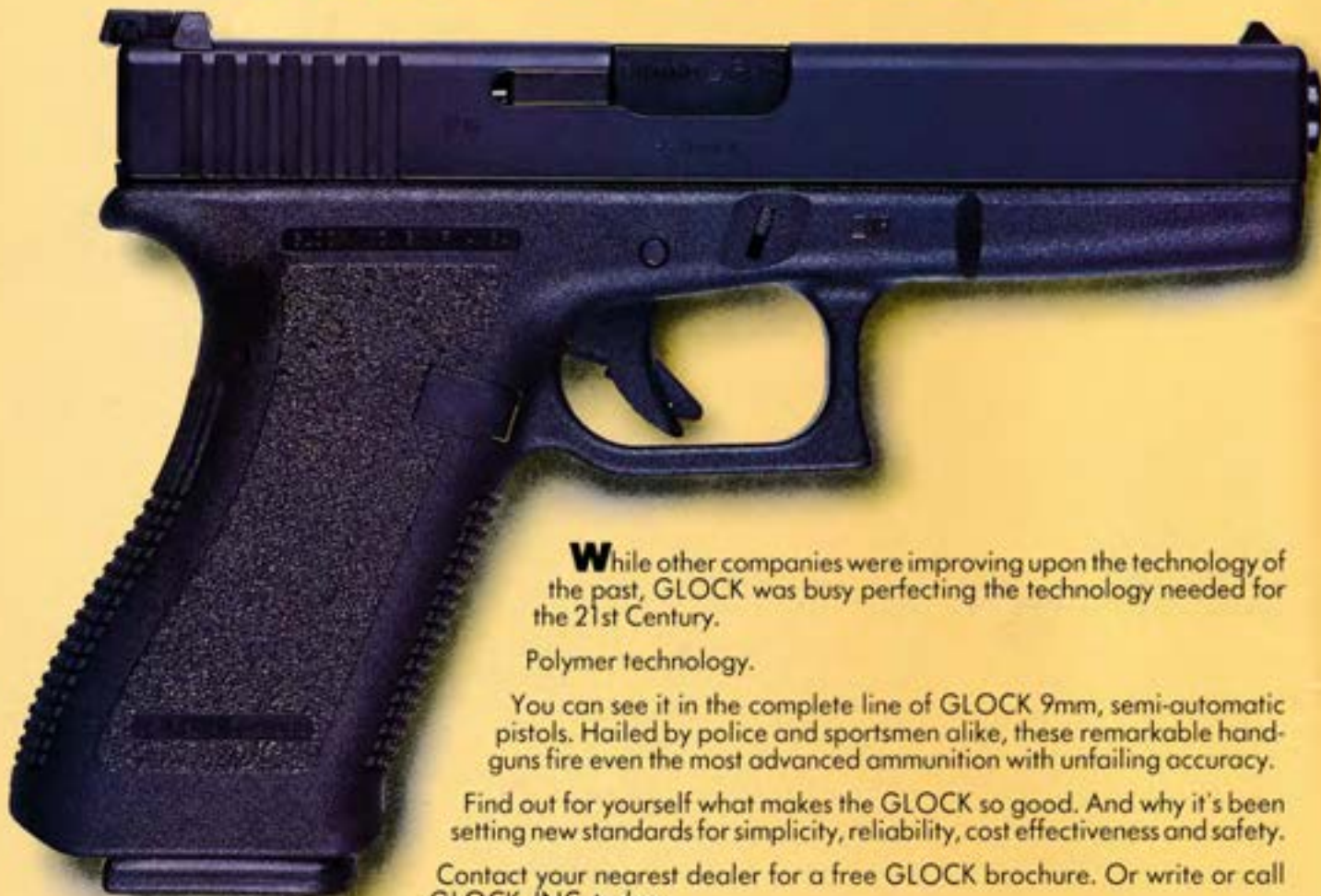
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Presenting

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A firing, limited edition issued by The American Historical Foundation



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## 24-Karat Gold Plating

The proud service of our Vietnam Veterans is memorialized in this limited collector's edition. The slide is mirror polished and deeply blued. Etched into its side and plated with 24-Karat Gold are the dates of the war and the words of General Westmoreland, framed in a bamboo-patterned border. Dragons—the Asian symbol of power and protection—guard the panoply. Ten components—the trigger, hammer, slide stop, magazine catch, magazine catch lock, safety lock, and grip screws—are plated with 24-Karat Gold.

The grips are specially hand-finished to look like golden bamboo, but they are actually custom-crafted American Oak. Made by the respected firm of Herrett's, each grip is inset with a full-color, fired-enamel cloisonne medallion of the Vietnam War Service Medal.

## Limited Edition; Fires .45 ACP

Over 2.5 million Americans served in Vietnam. But only 2500 Veterans and collectors worldwide will own this .45, your guarantee of rarity and value. Each pistol in the edition is serially numbered from 0001 to 2500 with the

prefix VN for Vietnam.

A Certificate of Authenticity attesting to the edition limit and the purity of the 24-Karat Gold plating accompanies each Vietnam War Commemorative .45.

Each is being custom built to the Foundation's rigid specifications by Auto-Ordnance Corporation, the company founded by General John T. Thompson, who helped develop the .45 pistol. NRA test firing of their .45 shows accuracy "significantly better than the average as-issued M1911." All parts are interchangeable with military-issued pistols. It fires .45 ACP ammo readily available in your local gunshop. And because it is a firing .45, it could be used in the defense of your home or family.

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The Vietnam War .45 is available exclusively from The American Historical Foundation. To reserve, call our Member Services staff toll free, write or visit our historic Headquarters and Museum, "Columbia-Camp Casey."



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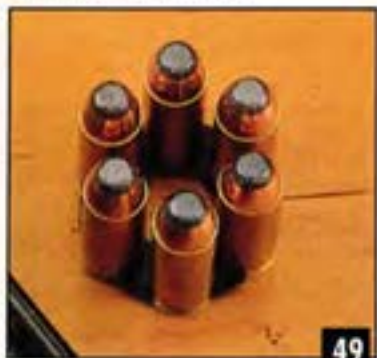
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Space-age technology comes alive in Tom Volquartsen's racy "Stingray" pistol, a custom Ruger Mk. II. Photo by Ichiro Nagata.



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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1989

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Of course shooting timers, like guns, are **not created equal.** A well designed shooting timer is an invaluable training aid which will dramatically improve your practice sessions. A poorly designed timer, with functions that are inconvenient or difficult to use, becomes nothing more than an expensive buzz box that distracts you from your shooting each time you use it.

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FIND SHOT: 7

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### Full function keypad

Our 32 character display and 16 key keypad make the MKIII about as easy to use as your pocket calculator. For example to

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We designed the MKIII, we build it, and we sell it factory direct to you. We take full responsibility for your satisfaction. If you are not 100% satisfied with any PACT product, return it to us undamaged (no fair driving over it) within 30 days, and we will refund your money. That's our promise and you can depend on it.

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The MKIII features a real **simple repair policy.** If it breaks due to a defective part or faulty workmanship we'll **fix it free.** If you break it (people really have driven over them, ask Mickey Fowler) we will fix it for cost. No hassles and no questions asked.

### Shop Around & Call Us Last

Before you buy a shooting timer take the time to do a little research. Call the different manufacturers and get their literature. Compare each timer feature for feature and watch out for bizarre operational limitations, like the inability to review shots when using a PAR time or the requirement for two machines to run a Man vs Man event. You'll find that dollar for dollar and feature for feature the PACT MKIII gives you more honest "bang for the buck" than any other shooting timer on the market.

# Straight from the Shoulder



## The Scorpio System

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## The Eagle

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## Free Bullets

As a dedicated target shooter, I'm looking forward to the assault rifle ban. Once I am made a criminal (just for possessing a semi-automatic firearm) I can then take advantage of the full set of rights entitled to a criminal.

Maybe I can even get the government to issue me free bullets just like they give free needles to junkies.

John J. Pistro  
Chicago, Ill.

## Anti-Gun Soviet Plot?

The NRA has characterized the anti-gun forces as elitist. I just refer to them as limousine liberals. I believe they are a front for the hardcore left wing socialists who work with KGB and GRU plants to end this nation's existence.

I further believe that the Purdy affair could easily have been a programmed killing to produce a maximum emotional public outcry that coincides with an all-out effort by the anti-gun forces.

What most Americans don't realize is that there isn't a single soldier, sailor or airman specifically designated to defend the continental United States. We are extremely vulnerable on our southern border to elite Soviet Spetsnaz infiltration.

The Soviets see an armed citizen as a threat to their operations and would not lose a single minute's sleep over the killing of a few children if it helped their cause.

Robert C. King  
Tulsa, Okla.

## Attaboy

I would like to compliment the young reader (*Speak Out*, July/August 1989) Eric Kelley for his letter about shooting instead of the drug and alcohol scene. Congratulations, Eric, I hope there are more kids like you in the world.

Eric, I hope that you joined the junior membership in the NRA. I bet you could recruit some of your classmates into a gun club and start your own method of combatting the drug problem in your school. I know a kid in Iowa who did this except his program was with fishing, and it was a big success.

David D. Anwyl  
Hermitage, Tenn.

## Jews Should Fight Anti-Gunners

It is disgusting to see so many Jewish groups including B'nai B'rith International supporting Howard Metzenbaum's futile and unjust anti-gun SB 386 (Jewish

Journal, May 12, 1989). In order to fully comprehend the magnitude of the stupidity of this bill, it is necessary to examine some cold hard facts.

As to the fear of neo-Nazi groups and the Ku Klux Klan, I suggest that instead of adopting a wimpish Ghetto Jew mentality and expecting the government to protect them, Jews are the one group that

most needs to bear arms. The Jews need to learn from history.

Firearms were not available to the Jews of Europe before 1933 and when the deportations and exterminations came, most of them meekly marched off to the gas chambers, offering no resistance.

A few Jews in the Warsaw ghetto managed to get their hands on a small amount of weapons and ammunition. It was too little too late, but they managed to hold off a crack German unit for a whole month.

How many more Warsaw ghettos would there have been if the Jews of Germany had had the same right to keep and bear arms that American Jews enjoy?



Since radar displays only one number, the operator has the responsibility to decide which vehicle is being clocked.

## Why radar makes mistakes. How to protect yourself.

It's hard to believe, but traffic radar does not identify which vehicle is responsible for the speed displayed. It shows only a speed number. The radar operator must decide who to blame.

### How radar works

The radar gun is aimed at traffic and it transmits a beam of invisible radar waves. Moving objects reflect these waves back to the radar gun. Using the Doppler principle, the radar calculates speed from the reflected waves. But there's a problem.

### The best guess

Remember, these reflections are invisible. And truck reflections can be ten times stronger than car reflections. How can the operator know for sure which vehicle is responsible for the number?

The truth is, in many cases he can't be sure. The result? You can be ticketed for somebody else's reflection.

The only way to defend yourself against these wrongful tickets is to know when radar is operating near you.



### Self Defense

We specialize in radar warning. Escort and Passport have a unique warning system that tells you radar strength—with both a variable-rate beeper and a visual

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Instead, the Jews are fighting to take away the very right that they the Jews should be fighting to preserve. There is no honor in marching meekly to a gas chamber. Indeed, the Holocaust is more of a disgrace to the Jewish people than it is to the Germans. There is a great deal of honor in dying the way the defenders of the Warsaw ghetto died, and there is always a chance you will defeat your enemy and survive.

All American Jews should go to Israel when they are 18 and serve three years in the IDF. I did. American Jews can serve the IDF without losing their American citizenship.

In the IDF these Jews will learn the safe handling of real "assault weapons." Upon their return they should purchase a high-powered rifle and handgun. Every American Jew should be armed.

Timothy J. Curtiss  
IDF serial # 2311203  
Ventura, Calif.

### Love Or Hate Jeff Cooper?

Just finished reading your July/August issue. It seems you either love Jeff Cooper or you hate him.

Dave Anderson credits him with contributing more to the knowledge of pistolcraft than any other person. Rob Leatham blames him for barrel fouling problems.

Regarding Rob's statement, "cooper in

your barrel is no fun," I personally don't think it will ever catch on.

Korte Young  
Milford, Utah

### Taffin Helps

I am writing to let you know how much I appreciate John Taffin's work. I have been interested in handguns since 1966, but it was my keen interest was only revived a year ago when a friend gave me a Model 19. I bought a Dillon 550 and began loading .45 ACP, .45 Colt, .44 Magnum and .44 Special. I wanted to find out what cartridge and gun suited me best.

John Taffin's Taffin Tests proved invaluable. John not only gives the data, but also what he's thinking about. I had many questions about revolver strength and the difference in capabilities of the .44 Special and .44 Magnum.

The question of the difference between the Model 24 and the Model 29 arose because the two models seemed so similar yet the industry standards for their ammunition is so different.

Would it be really unsafe to load a Model 24 of recent manufacture and in good condition past industry standards for the .44 Special?

John's data and the inclusion of his experience with loads he has used for a number of years has been much appreciated. Thank you, John! I look forward to your future work.

Fred Harkins  
Lancaster, Calif.

### Tack Sharp Photos

Every month I look to see what type of new and outstanding work your photography editor, Ichiro Nagata, will contribute to what is without doubt the best handgunning magazine on the market.

As a self-employed, free-lance photographer, I marvel at the quality of his work. It is truly amazing when the photos that accompany a story are of higher quality than those of your advertisers. Rarely do you see such perfection in an enthusiast magazine.

The amount of information that a reader can pick up from a "tack sharp" photo is fantastic.

When Nagata features a custom, top-of-the-line product, you can see why they will A) shoot like nothing else and B) cost like hell! The reader gets a chance to see what his choice of handgun will be when finished by a master craftsman.

With a staff that includes Nagata, Massad Ayoob and John Taffin, the only improvement that needs to be made is to go monthly.

Stu Mitchell  
Mirror Lake, NH

### Numbthumb For President

Hooray for Numbthumb! Let's run him for president!

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He finally said in writing what I've been preaching since all that goofy 9 million-meter silliness got started. What are they for?

The American military decided it was too much effort to teach anything as complicated as marksmanship, so they came up with that funny little rifle with a magazine as long as your arm. The ammunition for that borderline varmint rifle doesn't weigh much, so the troops can carry a lot of it.

Now the military has fallen in love with a foreign-made "magic nine." If they can keep it operable long enough to get it into a combat area, it will do exactly what the cartridge is designed for—wound!

I can only guess at the military's thinking, but I guess they assume that if you've got enough lead in the air, some poor unfortunate is apt to stumble into one of 'em!

Red Zimmerman  
Tonopah, Fla.

### Ruger Wrong

I note that Bill Ruger has called for a ban on large magazines. I'm sick over this. I am an owner of Ruger products and I've helped sell thousands of his guns.

I ask you to stop accepting any advertisements from Mr. Ruger's company until he rescinds his anti-Constitutional

proposal.

I am asking dealers in my area to stop ordering Ruger products. I am asking people not to buy any Ruger products.

This may seem harsh, but we are going to lose our rights if we don't all fight together.

Rock S.S. West  
Morrisville, NC

### Kopp Is Tops

I am writing in regards to one of the pistolsmiths your magazine recommended. The pistolsmith is Terry Kopp, 1301 Franklin, Lexington, MO 64067.

While at one of the local gunshows I spotted an Action revolver that was just what I wanted. Built by Mr. Kopp, the pistol is well-balanced with its bull barrel. The finish is bead blasted, satin black with the American Pistolsmiths Guild logo in real gold. The trigger pull is smooth and the action function is flawless.

I purchased the revolver and headed for the range. To my surprise, the Kopp custom revolver chewed several two-inch, 12-shot groups fired from prone at 50 yards. I then fired from a Ransom Rest and a 48-shot group went into an unbelievable 2 1/2 inches!

I was practicing a couple of weeks ago at one of the local ranges when all of a sudden my groups started going all over the target. I started looking for problems and finally found a small crack in the fore-

ing cone. I guess after putting 50,000 rounds through this revolver in two years, something is bound to wear out.

I phoned Mr. Kopp that evening and he said that all his custom pistols are guaranteed for the life of the original purchaser.

I arrived at his shop the next day and he said that it was going to take a new barrel. The revolver was completely rebuilt to like-new at absolutely no additional cost!

I had him install a removable barrel extension that aids in the Barricade Event at the Bianchi Cup. He also designed a special scope base that uses Ruger rings and extends my Aimpoint 2000 above the barrel so it clears my fingers while shooting around the barricades.

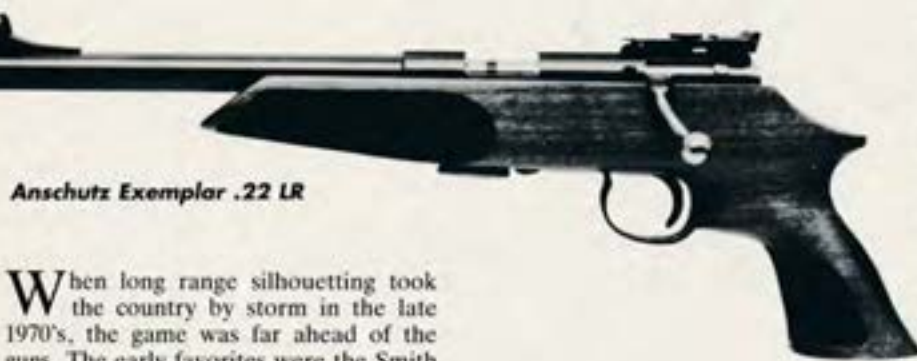
The revolver was returned to me in two weeks. You just don't get service like that from a custom pistolsmith! It's good to know that there is at least one pistolsmith who works up to the standards of the American Pistolsmiths Guild.

I would like to close by thanking you for recommending people like Terry Kopp.

Curt Cotton  
Independence, Mo.

**AMERICAN HANDGUNNER WELCOMES** letters to the editor of no more than 350 words. Letters must include the writer's full name and address. Letters must be signed by the writer. Typewritten letters are preferred, but legible handwriting is acceptable. Send your letters to Speak Out, American Handgunner, 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA, 92108.

## A LOOK AT THE BEST GUNS FOR .22 SILHOUETTE GIVES MANY OPTIONS



Anschutz Exemplar .22 LR

When long range silhouetting took the country by storm in the late 1970's, the game was far ahead of the guns. The early favorites were the Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum in barrel lengths of 6½" and 8½", the Super Blackhawk 7½" .44 Magnum, and the .357 Colt Python. These were the choice picks of thousands of shooters because they were the best revolvers then available for silhouetting.

At the first silhouette match held in Tucson in 1975, 46 eager competitors took part. A rundown of the guns they shot shows just exactly how much the guns for the game have changed in the past 15 years.

S&W Model 29 .44 Magnum .....	12
Ruger S'Blackhawk .44 Magnum .....	8
Colt Python .357 Magnum .....	7
Auto-Mag .44 Magnum .....	7
Auto-Mag .357 Magnum .....	6
Auto-Mag .41 Magnum .....	6
S&W Model 57 .41 Magnum .....	1
Ruger Blackhawk .357 Magnum .....	1
Colt 1911 .45 ACP. ....	1
S&W Model 25 .45 Auto Rim .....	1
T/C Contender .44 Magnum .....	1

The ensuing years have seen tremendous development and virtually none of these old relics will be seen at a modern silhouette match today. The exceptions are, of course, the occasional long barreled Smith & Wesson .41 or .44 Magnum and the odd Ruger Super Blackhawk being encountered occasionally. The T/C Contender, needless to say, is now the runaway favorite, a big step up from one solitary man's favorite in 1975.

All of the early competitors chose good guns for the time, but the game grew quickly. It soon became obvious that there are two kinds of shooters: those who want to compete with out-of-the-box handguns and those who preferred to experiment and come up with the best possible combination of gun and cartridge.

To accommodate both, separate classifications were set up and the majority of the early technical improvements came in the area of Unlimited guns. Numerous gunsmiths specialized in building exotic bolt guns in equally exotic cartridges and the race was on to create the best long range handgun cartridge. Handgunning in general benefitted tremendously.

For those preferring the out-of-the-box category, progress was slower, but it did come. The splitting of this category into Revolver and Production really opened the doors for advancement of both sixguns and single-shots.

Ruger early provided shooters with long barreled .44 Magnums, improved the click adjustment on the rear sight and a revolver capable of perfect "40" scores was born.

Dan Wesson's history has paralleled silhouetting beginning with eight- and ten-inch heavy barreled .357 Magnums, followed by the development of the .44 Magnum, .357, .375, and .445 SuperMags. Dan Wesson, at the same time, continued to improve their sights.

Even Smith & Wesson joined in—albeit somewhat late—with a 10-inch .44 Magnum equipped with special sights.

On the single-shot side of the ledger, Thompson/Center already had the production gun in the Contender. It was simply necessary to make a few improvements as to caliber, sights, barrel and stock configurations. With the addition of a Super 14 model, the Contender became a very reasonably priced Unlimited gun as well.

One of our illustrious politicians in Washington held forth in 1875: "I propose that we close the United States Patent Office. Everything that could possibly be invented has already been patented."

I am not going to utter something equally at risk of appearing absurd in a few years, but it seems to me that the guns we have now are better than the game.

All phases of long range silhouetting have been conquered, and perfect "40's" are possible with numerous Unlimited guns, Production guns and Revolvers. No

*Continued on page 17*

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further significant development will take place in guns for long range silhouetting.

The one exception to the conquered category is Standing which is not a function of gun quality but of shooter excellence. No, the cutting edge of development is no longer present in centerfire handguns for long range silhouetting.

It still exists, though. It has simply shifted from centerfires to rimfires. The most significant developments in the past few years have been in the .22 category of handguns.

It took quite awhile for big bore shooters to discover the joy and challenge of .22 silhouetting, but once the discovery was made, the firearms industry began to provide quality rimfires for the short range, but elusively targets designed for the .22 course of fire.

The following .22's are all capable of perfect "40" accuracy and have been developed in a very short period of time. In fact most have been introduced in the last two years.

It was only natural for Dan Wesson to follow their excellent lineup of centerfire revolvers with the same quality in a .22 rimfire. The Dan Wesson .22 is simply a .357 Magnum chambered and barreled for the .22 rimfire. The same sight options are available for the .22 as for the centerfire calibers.

## Is silhouette development complete? I think not.

The leading silhouette revolver in Europe is not American-made but comes from the French factory of Matra Manurhin Defense. In the rimfire category, Manurhin offers the MR Silhouette Model that is exactly what most silhouetters would design into a rimfire silhouette revolver.

Barrel length is 10-inches for maximum velocity and sight radius. To increase sight radius even more, the rear sight extends about one-inch back over the hammer. Both front and rear sights are interchangeable with different heights and widths being offered.

While basically a double-action revolver, the Model MR 73, for silhouette competition, has the DA feature removed. Operating the trigger revolves the cylinder, but does not activate the hammer. Hammer fall is short, the trigger pull is crisp and light. The trigger is furnished with an adjustable stop.

The Manurhin .22 cylinder itself is not full length, but shortened to cut down the long travel of the .22 bullet from cylinder to barrel.

The only drawback to the Manurhin Silhouette .22 is its price which is way

*Continued on page 20*



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**Colt's 1909 Military Revolver** by John Malloy. After the 38 Colt and before the 45 automatic, the U.S. had the most powerful military sidearm ever issued. Malloy takes a reverent look back at the big old double-action Colt Model 1909 revolver that shot the full-house 45 Colt, how it held the line and some of the tough duty it saw.

**My Old Man Was A Pistol** by Charles Askins Jr. This self-confessed unrepentant sinner writes of his father who was a great gun writer and of a lifestyle they shared in a wilder Southwest when powder burned every day or something was wrong, when a man and his son could travel from Oklahoma to New Mexico and take three months to do it.

**Big Bangs From The Big Fifty** by Bob Bell. They're shooting more 50-caliber — yes, the Browning machine-gun cartridge — rifles these days and enjoying it more, too. There's a national club and national shoots and a technical network and Bell tells you nearly all about nearly all of it.

**The Englishman And The Revolver** by Wilfred Ward. Sam Colt showed the British how to make them and the Queen bought over 50,000 of his guns. But the chaps from the east side of the Atlantic caught up and Ward tells of the whole different approach the Brits eventually took to the combat revolver.

# 1990 GUN DIGEST

## 44th Edition

Edited by Ken Warner

**A Trusty Pair For Africa** by Peter Barrett. Now he writes of fishing, but Peter Barrett carried his two trusted Model 70s in Africa for 10 years or so. That was long ago but he hasn't changed his mind — they were good then and they're good now.

**Mateba: An Upside-Down Revolver** by Raymond Caranta. A forceful twist of commonplace revolver mechanical layout produced this innovative Italian 357 with a really new look and feel. Caranta says it shoots well and may be the first of a whole new family.

**The Guns Of Sporting Clays** by Don Zutz. Don Zutz tells of the changing clay target game and the whole new set of guns designed to meet the challenge. The trusty old cornsheller still works, but it's not as slick as this new breed.

**The Guns Of Royland Southgate** by Rick Hacker. Tennesseean Southgate foresook engineering in this century to make muzzleloaders from the past in the way in which they had always been made. His dedicated life produced 1007 Southgate guns, now thought of, by those who know, as originals not replicas.

**Antelope Autumn** by Donald Hamilton. The novelist and creator of Matt Helm, once again copes with his recalcitrant rifles, this time among the pronghorns in two or three states. At 71, Hamilton's rifle pursuits appeal more and more and so do the insights.

**The Truth About Derringers** by Holt Bodinson. Three generations of Bodinsons have noted 41 rimfire pocket pieces, some of them in purses, and the current generation tells us some things we never knew about these handy little pistols. Bodinson hunts rabbits with a Remington 41 rimfire two-shooter!

**Mixed Bag In Mongolia** by Clarence E. Ellis. This is a classic rifleman's mountain hunt for sheep and high-country game. Ellis says it's cheaper and easier than Alaska, not to mention the adventure of hunting with descendants of the Great Khans in the wild Mongolian highlands.

**The School For Shotguns** by Robert J. Robel. Tuning up for the shooting season in the U.K. means going to school and the Holland & Holland school is the MIT of wingshooting. Robel has taken the course, a few grouse and, perhaps, an odd high pheasant and makes a good case for this decidedly British approach.

**The Ultimate Assault Rifle** by Eric R. Strahl. In this spoof of the military procurement process Eric Strahl provides language that sounds as official as 9mm pistol testing, but actually comes from his fevered relationship with a fully automatic BB gun.

**Elmer Keith's Ball-And-Shot Gun** by Howard French. As different as a Prince of Wales, a Maharajah and our own Elmer Keith may seem, they had one thing in common — all three owned a Paradox-style double gun. Long-time double rifle collector and shooter Howard French tells the fascinating story and describes the turn-of-the-century Paradox phenomenon.

**Ring Around Your Pattern** by Don Zutz. The world awaits a quick and simple way to assess a shotgun pattern and Zutz may have found it: he assesses the edge of the pattern not the middle — and his argument makes sense.

**The Myth Of The Perfect Whitetail Rifle** by John V. Miller, Jr. That dreamy quick-firing, lightweight the books advise rarely cuts it in the woods, Miller claims, and he backs his assertions with facts and several hundred bagged deer.

**Experiences With A Hornet** by Paul A. Matthews. This introspective Pennsylvanian with some 50 years of gun experience has found the 12 years he's spent with a Ruger No. 3 in 22 Hornet as rewarding as any in a lifetime of rifle use. Matthews likes the 375 H&H, but he's always loved the Hornet, and tells why.

**The Takedown Rifle** by Sam Fadala. The idea of the easily disassembled (for cleaning, packing) rifle never really disappeared and it may be coming back. Sam Fadala has tried it, he likes it and he tells us why.

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above the IHMSA ceiling price for production guns. But since it sells in France for less than the ceiling price and import fees raise the price in this country, it is legal for IHMSA competition. For a free Manurhin catalog and further information contact ABO, 845 Third Ave., Suite 1400, Dept. AH, New York, NY 10022.

The T/C Contender in .22 LR has been around for a long time beginning with the lightweight octagonal barrel model in the 1960's. The latest .22 T/C with a 10-inch bull barrel is capable of one-hole accuracy

in hands that can deliver the goods.

The sights have been improved over the years and now feature an excellent front post and positive click adjustable rear. The awful saw handle grips have evolved into very usable grips or they can easily be replaced with Pachmayr's excellent Gripper soft rubber grips.

The Ruger semi-auto .22 has been around since 1949 in various configurations, but the introduction of the Mark II 10-inch heavy barreled version has resulted in a top quality silhouette rimfire.

Accuracy is excellent, aided by quality sights including an undercut front post.

The trigger needs a little help, but since trigger jobs are legal on Production guns, this is no great problem. I would venture to say that the Ruger .22 10-inch Mark II will outshoot many .22 rifles costing more. Expect five shot groups of one inch or less at 50 yards with the right ammunition.

Bill Bartram of IHMSA worked with Browning to design the ultimate .22 silhouette pistol and the result is the Browning Buckmark Silhouette Model with 10-inch barrel. A very heavy .900" bull barrel can be topped off with a wide, full length rib that accepts either silhouette sights or Weaver type rings and a scope.

The front sight is hooded, as all competition front sights should be. The trigger pull is light and crisp with an adjustable stop. This is one .22 that comes with excellent wooden grips.

Accuracy? Unbelievable as it may sound, in my tests it proved to be even better than the Ruger Mark II. Slightly.

The T/C Contender fits right in the Unlimited division with a Super 14 barrel that can simply be added to the frame used for production competition. No need to buy an extra gun, just the barrel. Everything that can be said about the 10-inch barreled .22 for the Contender can be expanded upon for the Super 14. One of the truly real bargains available to .22 handgunners.

For more than 10 years, Unlimited centerfire shooters have been experimenting to find the perfect bolt gun. It is already here for .22 silhouette and it comes not from a custom gunsmith but from a factory, a West German factory. The gun is the Anschutz Exemplar and it is a dandy!

Sights are near perfect with a hooded front post and a numbered rear sight adjusting wheel for easy reference. The trigger is light and crisp and adjustable; the stock of real walnut would do a custom stockmaker proud.

Not a single-shot but a clip fed five shot bolt action that is available with the bolt on either the right or left side. The bolt is normally furnished on the left side for right handers for operation with the left hand while the right hand maintains a constant grip.

As an added bonus, the .22 Exemplar is grooved for .22 mounts and, by using high bases, a scope can be mounted without removing the regular sights. Scoped it is ready for squirrels and varmints; loosen two screws and remove scope, rings, and bases, and the Exemplar is ready for silhouette competition.

Is .22 silhouette development complete? I think not. There is still room for both revolvers and, especially, semi-automatics. Perhaps a 10-inch barreled Smith & Wesson Model 41. Or a 10-inch barreled Model 17 K-22 with heavy barrel and improved rear sight. Or a heavy barreled Ruger Single Six or Bisley Model, preferably with a 10-inch barrel. Or a . . .



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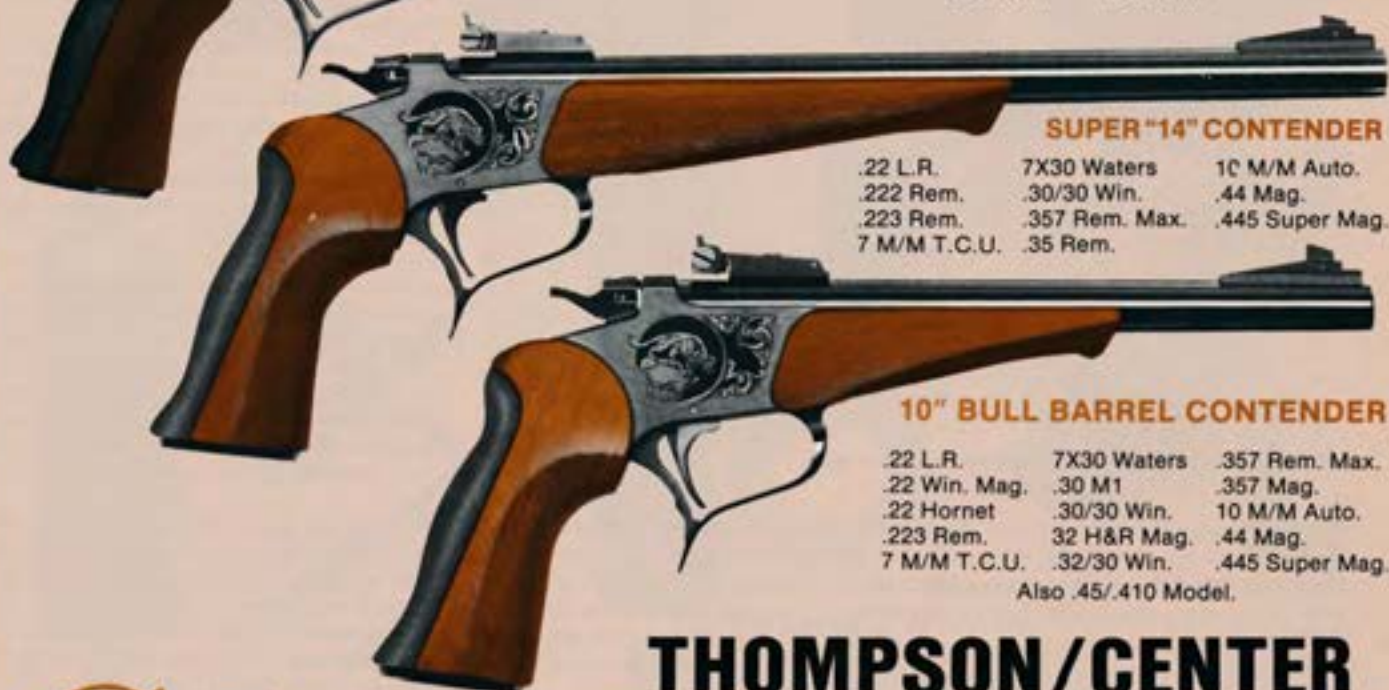
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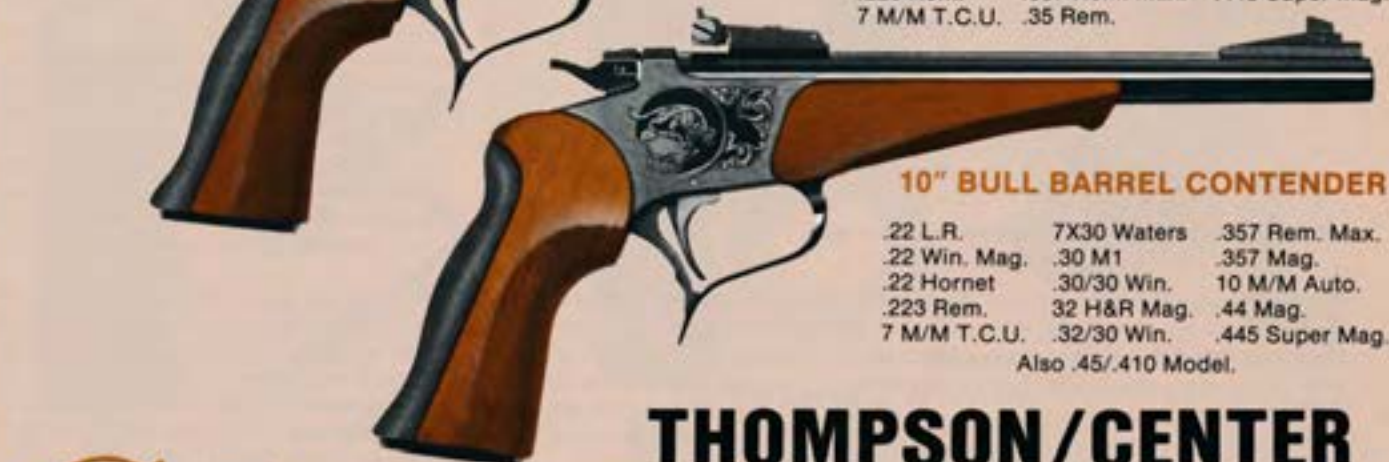
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## NEW GEAR FOR IPSC: CMC SEARS, .38 SUPER BRASS, BLOCKER T'BOLT



Ted Blocker's "Thunderbolt Convertible" holster

The "Thunderbolt Convertible," from Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters, is a cleverly designed and well made competition holster that allows a wide range of adjustments.

The holster body is attached by two screws to a slotted, leather-covered steel bar. By loosening the two screws it's possible to move the holster up and down in the slot to suit individual preference for holster height. The range of vertical adjustment is approximately two inches.

The steel bar in turn attaches to the belt loop by a single screw that can be loosened to permit adjustment of holster rake. A matching gear-tooth arrangement on the bar and loop keeps the holster locked in position when the screw is tightened down.

The holster body itself is typical of current competition designs, with a low-cut front and a single variable tension screw just in front of the trigger guard. The cut-away front helps speed up the draw, since

after the muzzle has been lifted some 2 1/4" it is clear of the leather and can start moving forward.

This is a high quality rig, both in materials and workmanship. Leather is heavy and well finished, stitching is tight and even; fit to the gun (a comped Government Model) was excellent.

The wide range of adjustments provides great flexibility in positioning the gun, allowing almost any shooter to find the ideal position for his build and personal preference. It also makes for a very versatile competition rig.

For example, some PPC competitions that permit the use of autopistols usually specify a hands-at-sides start position. At one of these matches the competitor could adjust the holster for a low carry, placing the gun butt close to the hand.

Some action-type matches, such as the Steel Challenge, require a wrists-above-shoulders start position. For these matches the competitor could raise the holster to a higher position; or for an extra-high carry he could reverse the belt loop on the belt, so that the holster shank is connected to the loop above the belt rather than below it. Again, this reduces the distance the hand must travel from the start position to the gun, speeding the draw.

About the only criticism I can make of this outfit is that a little more hand clearance would be welcome, especially when the holster is positioned for a low carry. If the individual finds this a problem it would be simple to fix merely by adding a spacer (such as a rubber or leather washer) between the holster and the shank. Worn for a higher carry, as most people would for IPSC or action-shooting matches, hand clearance is no problem. It's a quality outfit that gave good, consistent draws.

Blocker makes a wide range of fine leather products, including a well-designed line of police leather (designed with the help of some LAPD Training Officers), concealment holsters, Western rigs, and competition gear for PPC and IPSC. For information write Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters, 409 W. Bonita Avenue, Dept. AH, San Dimas CA 91773 or call (714) 599-4415.

Loading the .38 Super cartridge to make the IPSC major power factor isn't as difficult as some would have you believe, but it does call for attention to detail and the use of the right components.

High quality cases are essential, and Winchester's nickel plated "Plus P" brass in .38 Super certainly seems to make the grade. These Plus-P cases weigh on average about five grains more than Winchester's standard Super cases.

David Trowbridge, from Winchester's product management department, saved me the trouble of sectioning a case by sending along sectioned samples of both

Continued on page 24

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the old and new cases. These samples clearly show the extra brass in the case walls, just in front of the case head.

To see how well the cases stood up to major loadings, I loaded some 162 grain cast lead bullets to a velocity of about 1140 fps for an IPSC power factor of 185, using Accurate #7 powder. The same cases were then fired and reloaded over and over.

After 20 loadings there were no case splits or cracks, primer pockets were still snug, and in fact the cases looked good for more reloads. My feeling is that after 20 major power loads the case doesn't owe me anything so I stopped at that point. Incidentally the gun used has a standard (i.e., non-supported chamber) barrel from Wilson's Gun Shop.

Even with good brass I think it's a poor idea to try and get every possible reload out of a case. Usually after about 10 major loads I relegate the brass to less demanding use, such as a 125 grain bullet at 950 fps for action-shooting competition. Maybe this is being overly cautious, but the Super Face Syndrome is one I'd just as soon avoid.

These Winchester Plus-P cases are of excellent quality and are highly recommended to .38 Super shooters. Your local firearms dealer should have no trouble obtaining a supply for you.

For information on Winchester's full line of handgun, rifle, and shotgun am-

munition write: Winchester/Olin Corp., 427 N. Shamrock St., Dept. AH, East Alton, IL 62024.

For loading data on Accurate #7 and the complete line of Accurate powders send a buck to: Accurate Arms, Rt. 1, Box 167, Dept. AH, McEwen TN 37101.

Every once in awhile a new product comes along that sets new standards for design, quality and utility. One such product is the CMC hammer/sear combination for the 1911 autopistol, marketed by top competitor Chip McCormick. (McCormick won the World Speedshooting Championships in '86 and '88, and was second at the '88 IPSC World Championships).

Competitors have been looking for years for a way to get a light trigger release that is also consistent and will stand up to a lot of shooting. A light pull is not appropriate if the gun is to be used for personal defense, but it is certainly an advantage in competition.

A good trigger pull has several characteristics. Obviously it must be safe. Any tendency for the hammer to slip from the sear or to follow the slide cannot be tolerated. It should be consistent; nothing will drive you batty faster than trying to do accurate shooting with a trigger that varies from shot to shot. It should have as little creep and overtravel as possible.

(Don't confuse creep with the trigger slack or takeup that is normal for autopistols.) And it should be durable, meaning it should retain these qualities for thousands of rounds.

Getting these qualities with a four pound pull isn't too difficult. Taking the pull down to three pounds while maintaining these characteristics is a whole lot tougher, and getting under three pounds is tougher yet.

The problem results from two factors, tolerances and materials. Achieving the extremely fine fit of hammer notch to sear by mechanical means is very difficult. If the hammer and sear metal is hard it becomes more difficult; if the metal is softer the pull won't stand up for long.

Getting a trigger break in the two pound range with the 1911 has been as much art as science. Most shooters who use such pulls are either pistolsmiths, or they work closely with pistolsmiths who can touch up the trigger when it needs attention.

McCormick and his associate, Virgil Tripp of Tripp Manufacturing, attacked the problem from a different angle. As McCormick puts it, "We're using the technology of the 1990's rather than the 1890's."

The CMC hammer and sear are made from hardened, A-6 tool steel. They are brought to finished dimensions by means of electron discharge machining (EDM).

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According to McCormick, the parts are much smoother, and made to much tighter tolerances, than could be achieved by any casting or mechanical machining process.

The smoothness and proper fit make a quality trigger break easier to obtain, while the hardness of the steel means a long service life.

Both the hammers and sears are available in what are called "prepped" and "non-prepped" versions, the difference being that the non-prepped versions have a little more material left on, while the prepped models are finished and virtually ready to install. The extra material on the non-prepped versions could be necessary if, for example, the frame pin holes for hammer and sear were outside of normal tolerances.

The manufacturers do not sell these as "drop-in" units and the instructions point out that **installation must be by a qualified gunsmith**. The thumb safety will almost certainly require fitting, as extra material is left on the sear to allow for precise functioning of the safety. The smith will also check and if necessary adjust the sear spring, disconnect, and trigger takeup and overtravel, to ensure safe and reliable operation.

The test samples were prepped models of the hammer and sear, and were fitted to a Wilson Accu-Comp LE .38 Super. Fitting of the sear to the thumb safety was the only gunsmithing required.

With no other polishing or fitting whatever the result was a nearly flawless trigger release, clean and crisp, with virtually no detectable creep or overtravel. Checked with a set of gunsmith's weights, the trigger would just barely pick up 2½ pounds (if you were really careful and raised the weights very slowly) but not an ounce more.

Since then the gun has been fired some 7500 to 8000 rounds (mostly IPSC major loads with about 2500 lighter loads), and has been dry-fired a few thousand times as well. Following this the trigger was checked again with the same set of weights. The pull hadn't changed even a fraction of an ounce.

The hammers are available in a variety of shapes to suit your taste, including the "McCormick," "Delta," and "Nastoff" patterns plus the standard spur. These prepped models are narrowed so as not to rub on the slide, and they are shaped to function properly with the popular low-mounted Bo-Mar rear sight.

The Commander pattern is the non-prepped, oversize version.

Current prices for these CMC hammers and sears are: prepped, \$76 and \$22.95; non-prepped, \$52 and \$16.95. Not cheap, but the best.

If your local gunshop or IPSC supplier doesn't have them in stock, write to: Chip McCormick Co., 7506 Bender Dr., Dept. AH, Austin, TX 78749, or call (512) 280-3666 between 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM.



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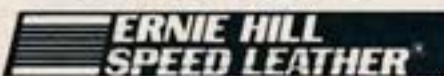
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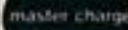
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**S&W Model 4506 double action .45 ACP and Speer's 200 gr. "Lawman" load is Ayoob's recommendation for a duty weapon.**

My small department in New England recently adopted a single weapon as its standard sidearm. That in itself was not a concept I was enthusiastic about. My feeling has always been, "Let those who ride, decide."

The department had gone in 1983 from the policy of issuing a standard Smith & Wesson Model 13 to permitting a reasonable range of privately owned, department approved guns. A majority had since gone with autos, mostly 9mm, after qualifying to a doubly high training standard.

The chief wanted uniformity, now and for the future. I could see that. What made me grudgingly realize he was right, in this case, was the fact that, despite the presence of a department armorer, a lot of these guns were showing severe wear and a few of the personally owned weapons had turned out to be lemons.

When the chief assigned me to pick a single handgun, here's what I had to look at.

**Revolver vs. Auto:** The majority of sworn officers were now carrying some type of autoloader. Personal survey of the wheelgunners showed the chief and I that they had no real hostility toward an auto so long as they could be convinced that it would be as reliable as their old standby. Personnel confidence in the individual weapon is a critical selection factor. Several of the auto shooters said they'd feel a loss in their survival capability if forced to revert to a low-firepower gun. Given an environment of frequent remote patrol, and an increasing number of autos seen in the hands of "the other side," the choice of an autoloader was clear.



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9mm v. .45: We had expected a heavy vote at first in favor of the currently popular Parabellum. However, shooting incidents both local and nationwide (good cops read their professional journals) had eroded some of their confidence in the 9mm. We were issuing an optimum 9mm load, CorBon +P+, but it had not yet been street-proven in our jurisdiction or even our region. The rank and file were surprisingly enthusiastic about .45s; this pleased me personally since I had a strong tactical reason for favoring this caliber.

Our Northern New England climate sees everyone wearing heavy clothing for perhaps three months of the year. It is well known that thick, inert fabric can "pack" the cavity of a police controlled expansion round and cause it to act like ball by the time it finally reaches its intended target. It is likewise universally accepted that when ball rounds are compared, the .45 is distinctly superior to 9mm. If our hollowpoints would turn into ball 25% of the time, I wanted it to be .45 ball.

It was not lost on the troops that in the .45/9mm arguments in the gun and police journals, half the experts say 9mm and .45 are both good, half say 9mm is feeble and .45 is good, and no credentialed expert insists that .45 isn't a reliable manstopper. The choice was virtually a mandate: .45 ACP.

*Double vs. Single Action:* This was no contest. Only the senior weapons instructor had been allowed to carry a cocked and locked Colt single action .45 auto on duty, and then only by special permission. Experience showed us that our officers would be taking suspects at gunpoint or drawing loaded pistols during tense building searches and night manhunts many, many times for every instance in which they might draw and shoot to stop. The double action mechanism is far more resistant to accidental discharges during this type of stress than the cocked and locked gun, designed originally for military battle.

The decision was instant: double action. Another factor, by the way, was the same cold weather that had helped dictate the .45 caliber choice. Numb or gloved hands work better with double action autos than with cocked and locked ones. This is even true when compared to the revolver, since a gloved finger may block the trigger return of the latter after the first shot.

*Finish and Design Factors:* An intense four-season climate requires rust-resistant weapons nearly as much as a humid or seashore environment. In winter, the officer is going from heated cruisers, offices, and dwellings into sudden bitter cold, and back again, vice-versa with summer heat and air conditioners. Condensation can build up rapidly inside the weapon. We felt that either the stainless construction of the S&W product or the optional Z-Kote finish of the SIG-Sauer would serve our purposes in this respect.

Ease of manipulation was a factor. The SIG P-220's decocking lever worked more rapidly than the S&W's. The P-220 had good "feel," it was perceived that the S&W 645 did not, and the 645's successor gun the model 4506 seemed to equal the 220 in this admittedly subjective category.

The P-220 was lighter and better for concealed carry, while the 4506 kicked less and was easier to shoot rapidly. Trigger pulls double and single action were excellent on the 4506 and the P-220, mediocre on the 645. The smallest hands of any of our officers could handle either the SIG or the new S&W.

A strong factor was proprietary nature to the user. Our personnel often patrol alone and fairly remote from backup. The possibility of an attempt to disarm an officer and kill him or her with their own weapon was judged to be significant, and while we were the first agency in our state to fully train all personnel in weapon retention, we also knew of many cases nationwide where a suspect who'd gained control of the officer's weapon was unable to fire it because they couldn't figure out where the safety catch was. The SIG-Sauer does not have a manual safety and the S&W does.

With these factors in mind, once we'd narrowed the choice to a double-action .45 auto, we became the fourth police department in the United States to adopt the Smith & Wesson Model 4506. The transition should be well along if not complete by the time you read this. The duty load will be the CCI-Speer "Inspector" (Lawman Series) 200-grain JHP. Duty holster will be a high-ride Ted Blocker for male officers, the same unit with "Border Patrol" dropped shank for female. Each officer will carry a minimum of two magazines, and concealable plainclothes/off duty holsters will be made available to individual officers at reduced cost through the department.

I had been assigned to come up with a single weapon that would be suitable for each of our officers, one that would be utterly reliable and demonstrably capable of stopping gunfights, one that would function under a specific set of climatic conditions and would give them an advantage if they faced the proverbial one-in-five copkillers who try to do it with the officer's own gun. I am confident that the Smith & Wesson Model 4506 and the authoritatively street-proven CCI-Speer Lawman .45 ACP police cartridge fulfill those demanding requirements.



*Massad Ayoob's authoritative training manual, The Semiautomatic Pistol in Police Service and Self Defense, sold out within six months of introduction and is now available in the new printing for \$11.95 including postage from Police Bookshelf, Dept. AH, PO Box 122, Concord, NH 03301.*

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## The AYOOB FILES

### BATTERED WOMAN FIGHTS BACK: THE MARY HOPKIN CASE

**Situation:** A hulking wife-beater struggles to break down the door. "Mary, I'll kill you!"

**Lesson:** Mary has a gun. Mary is tired of abuse. Mary fights back, but faces a legal aftermath.

April 17, 1984, not quite four in the afternoon. Mary Menucci Hopkin sits in the small living room of her modest mobile home at 3280 NW 30th Street in Miami, Florida. She is very much afraid.

Mary is 63. Until recently she lived with James Yarolem, 46. A surly 222-pounder, Jim had been all hugs and kisses at the beginning of the relationship. But soon the honeyed words had changed to verbal abuse. Then came the shoves, then the slaps, and finally the blows of the closed fist. It was your standard escalating cycle of spouse abuse.

Mary loved Jim, but she had come to fear him. When he was drunk, which was more and more often of late, he bragged of having murdered a man in Nebraska and gotten away with it. Unashamed of striking a woman, Jim had loudly threatened in front of numerous witnesses that he was going to "beat the s--t out of her."

Jim had been leeching off Mary for some time now. Finally, it came to a head. She sat him down for a frank talk. "Jim," she began. "You drink all my beer, you smoke all my cigarettes, you won't get a job..."

She didn't add, "And you slap me around every other day." It is the last thing the battered woman admits, even to herself.

"It's my house," she continued, "and Jim, I'm asking you to leave."

Jim had not taken the news well at all. He began savagely beating her. Mary, who suffered from severe degenerative arthritis in both legs, staggered toward the telephone. Jim got there first. He ripped out the phone, looped the cord around her neck, and choked her unconscious. He then strode out of the little trailer, leaving her for dead.

But Mary was alive. When she regained consciousness, she crawled to the trailer next door to seek help. The police who arrested Jim noted that as they put him in the cruiser he was screaming "Mary, I'll kill you for this!"

That was then, this is now. The hands of the clock are edging toward 4 p.m. Jim is long since out on bond now, and he's been calling on the re-attached phone, alternating his whining requests for her forgiveness with threats.

As the clock ticks, Mary watches the locked door. The police, the arrest haven't done any good. In her heart, Mary knows what kind of man Jim is, and what he is capable of.

She looks down at the .22 revolver lying beside her on the sofa. She knows that Jim is coming, and she knows that this time he's going to kill her. The gun seems to be the only answer left.

The clock ticks one more time.

\* \* \*

Battered Women Syndrome was popularized in the American consciousness through Farrah Fawcett-Majors' TV-movie portrayal of Francine Hughes, the battered wife who had torched her husband in the notorious *Burning Bed* case. We know a lot more about it than we used to.

The battered woman tends to be a relatively mild and subservient person, who may come

*Continued on page 32*

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from any walk of life. The abuser has led her to believe that she is undesirable to other men and her only chance of a happy life lies with him. Often, she is a second generation victim who has grown up watching her mother suffer through a similar situation, and has come to believe that abuse is a woman's lot in life.

Often brainwashed into believing she has done something shameful to deserve the maltreatment, she is hesitant to tell, and too emotionally or financially dependent on the abuser, to flee. He may have threatened her or her children with death or worse if she reports him.

Perhaps she has had him arrested, only to see him freed on bond. She develops the feeling that society can't, or won't, do anything to help her.

This leaves battered women locked in the escalating upward spiral. The kind of man who physically torments the helpless seldom stops of his own volition. Typically, the cycle will peak when he finally uses deadly force against her, or when—predictably—he turns his wrath on the children and triggers her protective maternal instinct.

Mary's children were grown and gone, safe from James; she was the only victim. She had been a victim long enough to see where it was going.

When it reaches that point, if the authorities do not or cannot intervene, one of two things happen.

Often, they die. They die like sad little sheep, like the woman in my community who told her vicious husband at the end, "Do what you have to do. I can't go on like this." He shot her twice in the head.

Alternatively, they come to terms with the threat of murder in a way closer to what nature intended. The survival instinct is triggered, and the mind and body are gripped by the fight or flight reflex. This woman will no longer die like a lamb at the slaughter. She'll struggle for her life. She will lash back.

If necessary, she will kill.

It is two minutes to four when Mary Hopkin hears the noise at the door. Looking through the curtain, she sees the familiar bulk of James Yarolem, bent over and working on the locked screen door. He has punched a hole inward through the door and is working at the lock with a bent coathanger.

She goes to the door, keeping the barrier between her and him. The dialogue begins. No one knows exactly the words that are said, because Mary will be too traumatized to remember them precisely. The earwitnesses hear tones more than words: Jim's yells, Mary's pleas.

The big, bad wolf was at the door. His pleas for entry turned into demands. Mary told him she knew what he was going to do and she wouldn't let him do it. She showed him the gun. She warned him that she would shoot him if she had to.

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But Jim didn't believe her. He knew she had only fired one shot from that little revolver in her life. During a previous beating, she had fired a shot into the floor to ward him off, and Jim had fled like a rabbit until realizing later that she didn't have the guts to point it at him and pull the trigger. Well, now he knew.

And now he makes his move. James Yarolem twists his bulk through the door he's surreptitiously sprung. The big bad wolf is in the door... and he is charging, the fury visible on his face.

Mary Hopkin, only eight feet away, knows there was only one chance left. She raises the little RG Model 23 revolver and pulls the trigger three times, fast.

Yarolem twists in agony as the little .22 slugs lance into him. One has caught him in the leg, another has found his side, and a third has taken him while he was spinning and entered his upper back. Yarolem completes the turn the bullets have started and barges back out the door.

But he has only about 20 feet to go. The final bullet that entered beneath the left shoulder blade has coursed through the blood-rich spleen and liver before stopping in the ribcage on the opposite side. En route, the standard velocity lead .22 Long Rifle slug has sliced the front of the aorta. The hemorrhage is instant and massive. Jim's blood pressure, and the supply of oxygenated blood to his brain, plummets.

His knees buckle, and Jim Yarolem sprawls unconscious. The dark fluid builds swiftly inside his chest, choking down the heart. Soon, the heart stops pumping. It will never beat again.

feverishly and hopelessly over the body of James. And a heart-stabbing realization strikes Mary Hopkin at this moment.

Scumbag though he was, James Yarolem is the only man in many years

*There was only one chance left. She raises the little RG Model 23 revolver and pulls the trigger three times, fast.*

Mary sits in her living room amid the hectic activities of the homicide investigators and the evidence technicians. She is surrounded, yet alone.

A well-meaning detective asks her, after she's been Mirandized and has waived her rights, what happened. Like most women telling their story to the police, Mary goes back to the beginning to lay the foundation of the cycle of violence that has just caught up with her and her erstwhile lover.

She explains that Jim had been drinking all her beer and smoking all her cigarettes and wouldn't get a job. But before she can finish telling how explaining this to Jim had nearly cost her her life, Mary glances through her living room window.

Outside, the paramedics are working

who has looked at her and said, "Mary, I love you."

And she has just shot him to death. Mary slips now into what psychologists call a state of fugue. They walk, they talk, they appear to be hearing you, but they are like zombies. The lights are on but nobody's home. Mary is off on her own now, somewhere in a tragic, bittersweet distant memory, but it looks for all the world to the detective as if she has co-gently completed her answer.

When the case is presented to the state's attorney's office for prosecution, that's the picture. "Lady shoots former live-in boyfriend. Is asked why. States he drank her beer, smoked her cigarettes, wouldn't get a job."

It is not hard to see why the State's At-



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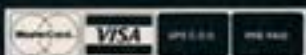
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torney's Office charged Mary Menucci Hopkin with Murder in the Second Degree.

Mary Hopkin was indigent, entitled to a court-appointed attorney. Mark Seiden, of the Miami firm of Black & Furci, volunteered. Mary had just had her first stroke of luck.

Picture that you have to shoot an IPSC two-man team match, and the match sponsors will pick your teammate. Instead of the usual cash or trophy, the stakes is the rest of your life.

And the teammate they pick for you is Robby Leatham.

That, essentially, was Mary's situation. The bad news was that she stood accused of murder, and would probably die in prison if convicted and sentenced according to standard guidelines. The good news was, her defender was one of the two or three finest attorneys in the country for defending a justifiable homicide case; I would rank Mark Seiden with LA's George Franscell and Wyoming's Gerry Spence.

Mark and I had worked together before, and when he brought me into this case, I did two contradictory things. One was to introduce him to the "learned helplessness defense," and the other was to urge him not to use it except as an absolute last resort.

Psychologically and morally, the learned helplessness concept is absolutely valid and honest. However, it is an impaired capability or diminished capacity defense, rather like temporary insanity. My experience is that juries don't like people who get "temporarily diminished" and kill other people, and they are not inclined to turn such defendants loose to do it again.

The temporary insanity defense has been so widely prostituted as to have lost most of its credibility in the few cases where it might be morally valid. The learned helplessness defense for a woman who killed a batterer was in danger of going in the same direction.

The state would charge that for homicide to be justifiable, the shooter had to be in immediate and otherwise unavoidable danger of death or great bodily harm. Why hadn't Mary picked up the phone and called the police instead of picking up her gun and letting her fingers do the walking with the .22 instead?

The other factor would be the bullet in the back. Juries and prosecutors tend to see this as a sign of "death by murdering ambusher," and the state made much of it in the Hopkin case.

The first great success of the learned helplessness defense had been the case of Beverly Ibn-Tamas, whose Murder-2 conviction in the death of her abusive spouse had been ruled in error because the trial court had not allowed expert testimony on the syndrome. However, the strategy was

Continued on page 36

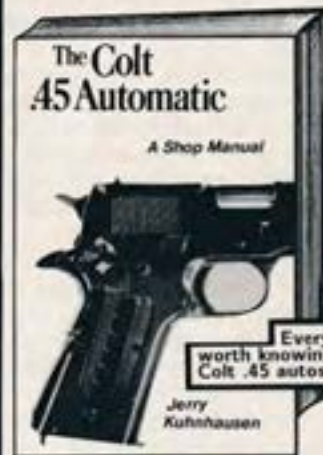
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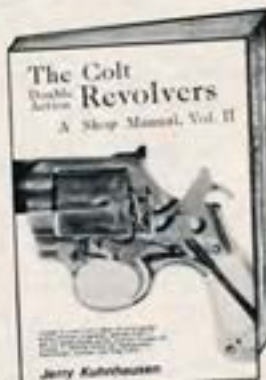
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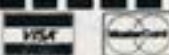
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Continued from page 34

still failing a good 50% of the time.

I thought a better role model was the classic *California v. Inez Garcia*. Two men raped Inez in her apartment and said they'd come back for more. Inez took her .22 rifle and went looking for them in the street. When she confronted them, one reached for his knife and she shot him dead.

In her first trial, the plea was temporary insanity and the jury didn't buy it. When the conviction was later overturned, gifted lawyer Susan Jordan pled justifiable homicide in self-defense the second time around, and won her an acquittal.

This, Seiden and I agreed, was the route to go. Why should one plead temporary insanity for shooting a monster in self-defense, just because the monster was someone you'd once been misguided enough to sleep with?

Still, we wanted the learned helplessness argument for backup. I put Mark in touch with Dr. Lenore Walker, the brilliant Colorado psychologist who awoke the world to the syndrome, and she in turn arranged for a Miami protegee to speak for Mary if necessary.

Seiden orchestrated the defense of Mary Hopkin beautifully.

*Why didn't she reach for the telephone instead of the gun?*

Because the last time she'd tried that, he'd almost strangled her to death with the phone cord. She never could have reached the phone before he could have reached her throat.

*Why did she shoot an unarmed man?*

Yarolem didn't need a gun. From the foundational *Warren on Homicide* to the classic *Washington State v. Wanrow* precedent, the law in its wisdom has shown that it understands a violent man's power to be so much greater than his female victim's that his strength becomes his weapon, a weapon that allows her to reach for a gun to equalize the balance.

*Why didn't she flee?*

She couldn't, on two crippled legs, and besides, no law required her to retreat in her own home.

*How about the bullet in the back?*

It could have been the angle as he shouldered his way through the door, but more probably, what doctors call "post-agonal response" made his body twist involuntarily from the leg and side shots, swinging his back in front of the muzzle during that pull of the trigger.

By the time I reached the witness stand, Mark's strategy had been set: pure self-defense, with the battered woman angle on standby if that should fail.

On direct, I explained the dynamics thoroughly. The cross examination by the prosecutor lasted less than a minute. He asked what I was getting paid to testify, and I replied I'd taken the case for free. Shocked, since experts normally charge for their time, he asked why.

I replied, "Counselor, this case is an outrage. I've seen the occasional miscarriage, but nothing like this."

The prosecutor's objection was to no avail: "You asked him his opinion, and he gave it," the trial judge explained, overruling him.

Shortly after, the defense rested. The case for justifiable homicide in self-defense was unchallenged. After the final formalities, the jury took less than two hours to return their verdict.

Not guilty. Three of the jurors waited outside on the courthouse steps to tell Mary Menucci Hopkin that they thought the charge against her was an outrage, too.

Seiden's meticulously crafted defense laid out the lessons of this case better than I could hope to. Some would say that an unarmed man eight feet away does not yet present deadly danger enough to shoot. Mary, untrained but practical, knew better.

I told the jury I'd replicated the attack using pistol champ Ray Chapman, a man exactly Yarolem's powerful build but 10 years older: Ray had leapt that eight-foot distance in 54/100ths of a second.

The term "Saturday Night Special" is a nebulous one, but if any gun ever fit that title it was Mary's RG. Her survival is proof of such a gun's "redeeming social

qualities." A crippled woman of Social Security age cannot fight off a 220-pound self-confessed killer with a knife or a frying pan. Only a gun will do it.

Mary lived on a fixed income, too poor to afford a lawyer or a Colt Python. The \$50 RG allowed her to survive what was unquestionably James Yarolem's last of many acts of violence.

The charges against Mary should have been dropped, but it proved that the system worked when she won. Still, had she been trained to shut up and not discuss these things in the overwhelming emotional aftermath of the incident, the "cognitive dissonance" factor in her questioning would not have led to the detective's wrong impression and she might well not have been charged at all.

Remember, you'll be so rattled in the immediate aftershock of a shooting that you're the world's worst person to be talking for the record on details and subtleties of motivation. Wait 'til you've had time to sort things out, calm down, and access an attorney.


Battered women will continue to die—and battered women will continue to kill in desperate self-defense.

The next time someone who wants to ban guns tells you most fatal shootings are the result of domestic arguments, remind them that according to one study, 51% of such domestic homicides are victim-precipitated, typically in a case like Hopkin/

Yarolem where a violent male forces a defending female over the final edge.

One answer, of course, is to support local spouse abuse hotlines and shelters for battered women, and to make counselling available to abusive males. But the nature of the syndrome is that this will not always work. When a woman has to fall back to the gravest extreme to protect her children or save her life, let us hope that her attorney won't plead temporary insanity, but will fall back to the better and more just precedents of the second Garcia case, or of Florida v. Mary Menucci Hopkin.

Even the acquittal won't be a total victory. Dr. Walker found that most battered women who shot in self-defense didn't intend to kill, just to stop the attacks. The post shooting trauma these women suffered was deep.

Shortly after the trial, Mary Hopkin suffered a severe stroke. It is safe to say that the stress of the trial did not help matters any. She did not fully recover, and remains in the care of her family, permanently disabled. 

*The author wishes to thank attorney Mark Seiden and psychologist Lenore Walker, whose efforts have saved the lives and futures of many innocent victims who have been forced to kill violent aggressors in self-defense.*

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## PISTOLSMITH'S ORACLE PROVIDES CLUES TO SOLVING NEW PROBLEMS

The caller sounded tense and agitated as he verbalized fears that a good many pistolsmiths are having.

"I'm wondering what the outlook for my shop will be over the next few years, in the wake of some manufacturer's problems and biased media focus only on the irresponsible use of firearms. I have a family to feed, and if any career changes are necessary I'd like to make them before my back is against the wall."

"From what I can determine, we'll all have to become more involved in politics from a local to a national level, but otherwise it looks like business as usual," I told him.

"I just wondered if you had a direct wire to the Delphic Oracle," he chuckled nervously.

Actually, I have always consulted a different oracle that has an ancient and powerful name: ORCAM. This is an acronym

for Observe, Remember, Compare, Analyze, Modify. By using this formula, lessons learned in the past will always cast their shadow into the future.

There will be an increased demand for adequate sights in the future. As shooters become more familiar with weapons, sighting equipment requirements change. Higher visibility fixed sights, plain blades, those with colored combination inserts, removable blades and special height specifications are going to be in demand.

Adjustable rear and front sights are increasing in familiarity and popularity, so the shop with an adequate selection usually makes the sale and does the mounting. Optical sights and infinity focus types as well as light projectors are being seen more and more on the firing lines across the country.

Luminous sights are another item in increased demand. And, as always, cus-

tomers want to actually see the item before they buy. Some shops have increased sales by use of simple demonstrator models and others by renting guns for use on indoor ranges.

Triggers and trigger pulls are another indication that shooters are becoming more sophisticated. Virtually every production arm is a candidate for trigger work, depending on the level of sophistication of the owner. Shops that specialize in trigger work for a certain class or group of weapons often have a backlog of work, so this field is wide open.

Grips are another individual accessory in great demand by shooters. Often, a specific set of production or custom grips will turn an adequately accurate weapon into an X-ring shooter. A few alternate types for popular weapons will result in a noticeable increase in sales.

Finally, the big item: modified shape and modified function replacement parts. With an increased number of new pattern arms showing up across repair counters, pistolsmiths find themselves in a similar condition to 'smiths 20 years ago, when aftermarket parts were mostly manufactured to order.

Although the machinery to make parts on an individual or production scale amounts to several big ticket items, the investment is worth considering. If a cus-

*Continued on page 40*

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*Continued from page 38*

tommer will drive across town to obtain a custom part, he may decide to buy several other things or have all of his work done in the shop that provides him with special options.

The first necessity of a pistolsmithing shop is a drill press. Every swap meet you visit on Sunday afternoon is likely to have a small time tool merchant with at least one drill press in stock. Most also will have a drill grinding attachment and a suitable tool grinder.

The next requirement is a back geared screwcutting lathe. While the tiny tabletop models will suffice for much of the necessary work, one of the larger models

will pay dividends in the variety of work that can be turned out.

Most lathes have milling attachments as accessories, but the metalworking lathe is very much like the current crop of 35mm cameras that require more than the original investment in accessories in order to cover the spectrum of work desired.

Milling machines and shapers are next on the list of power tool requirements. Today, milling machines rule the industry, with shapers disappearing from the scene. However, milling cutters are expensive and not easily resharpened without special grinders.

If you already have a milling machine, you might want to consider a shaper for those special one-off jobs that would require a special cutter that is too expensive for a single use. Shapers use common lathe tool bits ground to the shape necessary. Although a shaper will often gather dust for months on end, that occasional use will more than pay for its keep.

One of the pleasures of the pistolsmithing business is scrounging through swap meets and garage sales for useable machine tools. I have found suitable lathes and drill presses for several friends in recent months. So, if you can't afford a new machine, consider a used one. You can almost always resell a machine tool for more than you paid for it, provided that you clean it up and do some repair work as indicated. Looks has little bearing on utility, but the first impression a fresh coat of paint and polished metal makes on a prospective owner often makes the sale.

Once your shop is ready to produce custom parts, survey the field by a careful field testing of individual models of weapon. Note any personal desires for modification, as well as indications from a wide spectrum of shooters, and you have the basis for projecting the possibility of sales of certain parts or modifications.

I have put together a number of the new Para Ord frames lately, and several shooters have expressed a desire for a slightly longer trigger. Besides the obvious solution of building a whole new trigger, some other options come to mind, such as replacement only of the trigger portion, or of making a cap, as opposed to a trigger shoe. A cap might be attached by small screws from the rear.

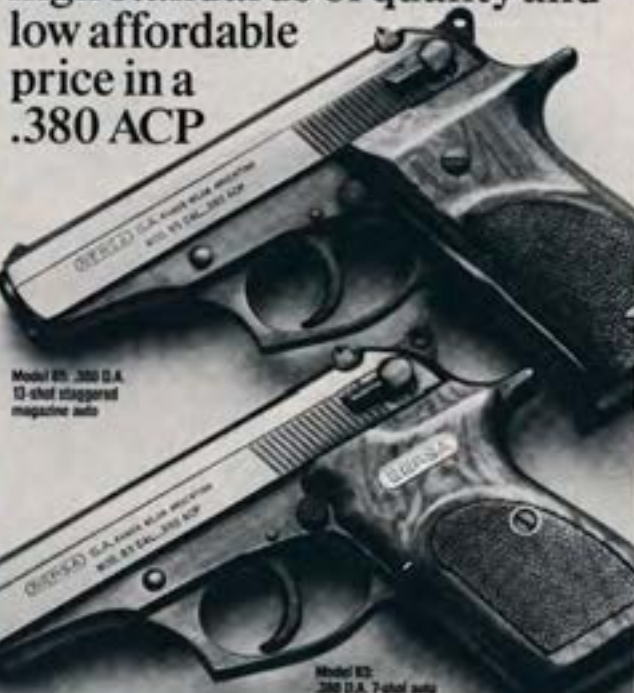
Another uncultivated field for idle machine tools is the pistolsmith's accessory or fixture for a specific job. One case in point might be a fixture for holding frames while milling a bevel in the magazine well. Another idea that comes to mind is a fixture for milling grips for certain ambi safety combinations, or for modifying Series 70 parts to Series 80.

Whenever you find your tools idle, consult your oracle, then put them to work. It doesn't cost anything to consult, and it has provided answers unflinchingly for some 11,000 years during mankind's struggle from the mud of the caves to the threshold of the stars.



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## BOTH AUTOS AND REVOLVERS HAVE A ROLE IN TODAY'S COMPETITIONS



Champion shooter Rob Leatham says there's a place for both auto and revolver in competition.

**G**o to any range and you're bound to hear someone discussing the merits and faults of their favorite type of weapon. To a grisly old deer hunter, you'd be hard pressed to convince him that the 100-year-old lever action Winchester isn't the best gun ever created. But if talk to an

antelope hunter, you'd have to work at it to persuade him that Wyoming's vast open plains aren't perfectly suited to a scoped bolt action in a flat-shooting .243.

But these discussions are mild compared to a bunch of pistol shooters arguing the autoloader versus the revolver.

In most cases the matter never gets

down to the facts, but instead centers around personal taste. "I like the feel of a revolver." "I like the way an auto points."

These are vague ways to measure the function of the auto and revolver and usually these sessions end just the way they began—everyone leaves thinking just what they did before. No one really learns anything because no one gets down to the facts. Let's do that.

In many forms of competition, the revolver has been replaced by the autoloader, yet in other areas the revolver is the overwhelming choice.

Take the freestyle, anything-goes game of combat shooting. Not only is the revolver seldom seen, but also when they do surface they have to compete against each other in a special "revolver class." The reason for the special treatment for the wheelguns is that it's much easier to fire quick recovery shots and multiple hits on a target with an auto.

And the main reason for the auto's superiority is the comparatively short, light trigger pull. The other factor making the auto a better gun for IPSC shooting doesn't have anything to do with the cycle of the weapons, but the mode in which their ammunition is carried.

We're talking reloading, and the auto has it made in spades over the wheelgun. Anyone can reload an auto quickly, but it takes a good deal of training to learn to reload a revolver even moderately fast. Sometimes this matters, sometimes not.

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but the advantage stays with the auto nonetheless.

Okay, we know all that. So why even mess with a revolver? Well, there are those situations where reloading and magazine capacity are not factors. Then the high points of the revolver come to light.

Revolvers seldom ever malfunction. If kept clean and well maintained, you may never have a misfire, ever. (Of course this same argument can be used with an auto.)

A classic example of the revolver's superiority can be seen at the NRA Action Pistol National Championship, otherwise known as the Bianchi Cup. If you take a look at the weapon of choice here, it takes not time at all to recognize the preponderance K- and L-frame Smith & Wessons.

Now wait a minute, you say, how can this be? Isn't this an "action" match that places a premium on speed. Well, yes and no. There is no reloading under time. You never fire more than six rounds in a string. And every string is fired under a predetermined time limit. Under these circumstances, the revolver has no equal. Revolvers have won every Bianchi Cup since 1983.

Let me explain the advantages of a revolver in action shooting.

When you are progressing through the firing cycle—meaning you have recognized the sight alignment and the sight picture on the target—then and only then

can the subconscious mind begin sending messages to the hand to begin squeezing the trigger. At this point the conscious mind takes over and begins implementing the instructions to the hand: pull the trigger.

At this time the sight alignment is of little value to the conscious mind because it can only concentrate on one thing at a time. True, it can switch its focus quickly, but in doing so it generally stops what it had been doing before. And what happens here is a short, heavy jerk with the trigger finger. Not good!

Normally this flinch is accompanied by a twitch of the wrist to combat the recoil that the conscious mind is perceiving to be imminent.

This doesn't make much difference if the range is close and the target big, but otherwise you get a horrible flinch and a lousy shot. One of these at the Bianchi Cup and you might as well put your gun away and go home. Today's competition is so tight that you don't have a prayer of winning with just one bad shot into the 5-ring.

An auto will almost certainly fire with such a short, sharp jerk. However, the garbled message from the mind to the hand doesn't necessarily result in a flinched shot with a revolver.

The firing cycle of a revolver is different than an auto because the relatively long double-action trigger pull actually

gives you a chance to correct a would-be flinch before the gun fires.

Also, the long travel of the double-action trigger creates a sort of cadence between shots that gives you a built in "governor" on your speed. The double-action pull acts as a limiter to make it much more difficult to rush the shot, therefore giving you more time to align the gun on the target.

The Bianchi Cup is weighted heavily toward accuracy, unlike IPSC which is slanted strongly toward speed. Revolvers can be amazingly accurate.

Look at the guns that have won the Bianchi Cup to see that the revolver is the "choice of champions." We haven't seen an auto in the winner's circle in quite some time. Ron Lerch won in 1979 with a .45 auto. Mickey Fowler captured an unprecedented three-in-a-row, 1980, 1981 and 1982, with his .45 auto.

Then came the revolvers. Brian Enos took the next pair, 1983 and 1984. I won in 1985, Riley Gilmore captured the crown in 1986 and John Pride took the honors in 1987 and 1988. Lemoine Wright is the current 1989 champion. Every one of us took home the coveted silver Cup with .38 Special revolvers.

I found it interesting to note that even The Incredible Mickey Fowler, who returned to the Cup this year for the first time since his victory in 1982, was shooting a revolver. Now here's the guy who



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won three Cups with a .45 auto making his return with a custom .38 Special "circle cyler." He recognizes the advantages of the revolver. Smart guy.

To understand the whole picture on why the revolver came to dominate the Cup, you've got to look back at the origins of this relatively new sport.

When the Bianchi Cup began most of the competitors were IPSC shooters. This brand-new game was designed to attract IPSC shooters, bullseye shooters and PPC shooters to determine the "greatest all-around handgunner," much the same theme of The Master's today except that The Masters seeks to unite IPSC, bullseye and silhouette.

Anyway, at the time the majority of the contestants were IPSC shooters. They used what they had, which was autos. Back then a score of 1900 was considered something akin to the Holy Grail of Handgunning, a near-impossible feat. John Bianchi once put up a bonus of \$5,000 cash to anyone shooting into what was called "The 1900 Club." Today a score of 1900 wouldn't even make the top 20!

Soon people began to experiment a bit with the Cup. Also, PPC shooters began shooting the match with their standard weapon, the revolver. Things began to even out a bit and around 1982-1983 it was just about an even split between revolvers and autos in the match.

Perhaps the single most significant change in the history of the Bianchi Cup was the introduction of the optical sight to the match. Popularized by Brian Enos, an Aimpoint "electronic dot" scope won in 1983 and again in 1984. The writing was on the wall.

From then until now an optical sight is seen on virtually every Bianchi Cup gun, which is now a revolver in nine out of 10 cases. The scope spelled the doom of the auto as much as anything else since it is much easier to mount an optic on a revolver.

Cost comes into play too in seeing the evolution of the revolver. To build a custom .38 Special capable of winning the match takes about \$750. A really slick auto designed for accuracy and with a dependable, strong mounting system for an optical sight will run you about three times that amount, sometimes more.

The example of the revolver in the Bianchi Cup demonstrates the point that each type of weapon excels in certain forms of shooting. Some matches demand shooting skills that are best displayed with a revolver while others require an autoloader for best performance.

Find the advantages of each and use them to their fullest potential. And the next time you get into a discussion about auto or revolver, think instead about auto and revolver.



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# TAFFIN TESTS

## the .45 Auto Rim

The United States of America has never lost a war. This is especially amazing in light of the fact that we also have never been prepared for one.

Take the Great War for example: World War I had been raging in Europe since 1914 and, though it was inevitable that we would become involved, we were unprepared to equip the doughboys with sidearms when we entered the fracas in 1917. Colt 1911 Government Models simply could not be produced fast enough.

An engineer at Smith & Wesson came up with an ingenious idea that would allow the big S&W N-frame revolvers to accept the .45 ACP cartridges—the half moon clip.

Since .45 ACP brass is rimless, there is nothing to keep the brass from falling through the cylinder, nor anything for the ejector to contact for unloading. The half-moon clip accepted three .45 ACP cartridges. Placing two of these loaded clips in the S&W cylinder not only provided for the use of semi-automatic cartridges in revolvers but also resulted in very quick reloading if the clips were pre-loaded.

Thus the problem was solved and many soldiers of the American Expeditionary Force were armed not with Colt 1911's but with either a Colt 1917, which was a New Service chambered for the .45 ACP, or a Smith & Wesson 1917, formerly known as the Hand Ejector Second Model.

After the war, as usually happens, the "new" Colts and Smith & Wessons became popular with civilians, but those troublesome clips could be bent or lost and then what?

It was discovered that the Smiths, and all but the earliest Colt sixguns, had a shoulder in the front of the chamber which prevented the .45 ACP rounds from dropping straight through. The .45 ACP could actually be used without the clips! Well, they could if all the brass is the same length, which it is not often the case. Short brass allows the case to move forward just enough to cushion the blow of the firing pin resulting in either poor ignition or misfires.

Then there was also the problem of unloading. Each .45 ACP case had to be picked out with the fingernails or pushed out from the front with a pencil or rod of some sort. This was no great problem in a plinking session, but that could get a

shooter killed in a serious situation.

Military handguns were available in abundance but ammunition remained a challenge. Fortunately, a worker at Peters, now part of Remington, came up with the logical solution in the early '20s. The simple answer was to put a rim on the rimless .45 ACP brass. The .45 Auto Rim was born.

Most revolver cartridges have a rim thickness of .060-.065" but the .45 Auto Rim required a rim of .090" to take up the headspace provided by the half moon clips. There is no doubt that the .45 Auto Rim has a rim and it is quite an interesting looking cartridge with its stubby .900" length and thick rim. Kind of like a short fat man with big feet.

Smith and Wesson took the Auto Rim seriously and has offered numerous models over the past 70 years. In addition to the 1917 Model in both military and commercial models, two first class Target Model .45 AR's have been offered.

Target shooting with the big bore paper punchers was quite popular in the 1950s and Smith responded with the Model 1950, basically a 6½ inch .357 Magnum chambered for the .45 AR. Smith then followed with basically the same gun but with a heavy bull barrel. This was designated as the Model 1955 for the same year it was introduced.

Both of these revolvers were prized by target shooters who had not yet discovered the accurized .45 ACP Model of 1911.

Beginning in 1957, the 1950 and 1955 Target Models became the Model 26 and 25 respectively. The Model 26 was dropped in the '60s and the Model 25 became the 25-2 until it also was just recently removed from the Smith and Wesson catalog.

Used 25-2's can still be found at very reasonable prices and I picked mine up in a gunstore in 1987 for only \$200. A word to the wise should be sufficient.

Smith & Wesson has good news and bad news for .45 AR lovers. The good news is that the .45 AR is back in a special run of .45's officially known as the 625-2. As its "6" suggests, this modern .45 AR is a stainless sixgun and it carries some very interesting and practical features.

The .45 AR is no longer in demand as a target cartridge but has a fascinating appeal as an action shooting cartridge. This is reflected in the 625-2 which has a five-

inch heavy L-frame style barrel, standard trigger and hammer, Patridge front sight, and a K-frame round butted grip configuration. That's the good news.

The bad news is that the 625-2 is a limited edition of only 5,000 guns. Perhaps shooter demand will change the mind of the powers that be at S&W.

When I first started shooting the .45 AR in an extra cylinder for a .45 Colt Single Action, Auto Rim brass was very hard to come by. Ammunition was readily available in a 230 grain round-nosed version, but empty brass required a six month wait from my supplier. Happily, that has changed and I just recently received 500 rounds of brand new Remington .45 Auto Rim brass in one week's time.

Reloading the .45 Auto Rim is pure pleasure. There are probably as many, if not more, excellent .45 bullets available, both jacketed and cast, as for any other handgun. If one has a set of .45 ACP dies, it is only necessary to add a .45 AR shellholder to instantly have dies for the .45 ACP. That is, within some limits.

I believe in crimping all revolver cartridges and most .45 ACP dies will not perform this feature. The simple addition of a .45 AR seating/crimping die completes the .45ACP/.45 AR die set.

Favorite loads for the .45 AR are assembled with both .45 ACP and .45 Colt bullets. Two long time favorite cast bullets for the .45 ACP, namely RCBS's #45-201KT and Lyman's #452460, are also excellent performers in the .45 AR. I prefer to cast 'em hard for best accuracy as the .45 AR does not do well with soft bullets.

The Speer 250 swaged SWC, which does well in the .45 Colt, will not perform in the .45 AR, shooting quite inaccurately. I also crimp these 200 grain semi-wadcutters over the front shoulder to preclude any chance of them moving forward under recoil.

My favorite load for both bullets is 7.0 grains of Unique for around 975 fps.

In the 1950's, Ray Thompson designed a series of bullets for Lyman. These are all gas-checked, semi-wadcutters designs and the .45 bullet was originally designed for the .45 AR and the Smith Model 1950. Weighing in at 250 grains, this is a favorite cast bullet for the .45 AR. Excellent accuracy is obtained with 13.0 grains of #2400 at 956 fps, 14.0 grains of #2400 at

1094 fps, and 9.0 grains of Herco for 1126 fps. The last load is warm and should be carefully approached starting at 7.0 grains.

The long time favorite cast bullet for the .45 Colt, Lyman's 260 grain Keith semi-wadcutter #454424, also performs very well in the .45 AR when loaded over 15.0 grains of #2400 for 1100 fps or a milder loading of 6.0 grains of Unique for a pleasant 800 fps load. When one considers the .45 Colt's factory loading of a 250 grain bullet at 850 fps, it is easy to see that the .45 AR is no pipsqueak by anyone's standards.

I've actually had better results with the 260 grain Keith in the .45 AR than in many .45 Colts. The big bullet has to make a long journey from the stubby .45 AR case to the barrel but it seems to manage without any problem.

The .45 AR is more efficient than the .45 Colt with most loads because of its reduced case capacity. The .45 Colt is preferred in cylinders that are large enough and strong enough to use the large capacity to its best advantage; the .45 AR is better in cylinders of standard size such as the Smith & Wesson Model 25 and the

Colt Single Action Army.

The heavy loads mentioned should only be used in .45 AR's in excellent shape and of recent manufacture and definitely should not be used in any of the Smith & Wesson Model 1917 Brazilian Models that are now available from many sources. These are good old guns with the emphasis on "old" and should only be used with standard .45 AR loads.

Switching to jacketed bullets in the .45 AR gives us a wide open field of hollow-points from 185 grains up to 240, 250 and 260 grains with numerous full metal jackets in the 185 to 230 grain range.

My loading technique for all jacketed bullets is simple. All revolver style bullets are crimped in the crimp groove provided and bullets designed for the .45 ACP are loaded for the .45 AR with a light crimp over the front shoulder.

Top jacketed bullet performers in my Model 25-2 .45 AR are both the Hornady and Sierra 185 grain JHP's over 8.5 grains of Unique for 1000+ fps. These are excellent choices for either self-defense loads or small game hunting.

For action shooting, both Speer and Hornady offer a 200 grain full metal

jacket semi-wadcutter design that shoots accurately and will provide loads in the major power category, 875 fps or more. Try 7.0 grains of Unique, 7.5 to 8.5 grains of Herco, and 10.0 grains of Blue Dot. All of these loads will shoot in the one-inch category at 25 yards.

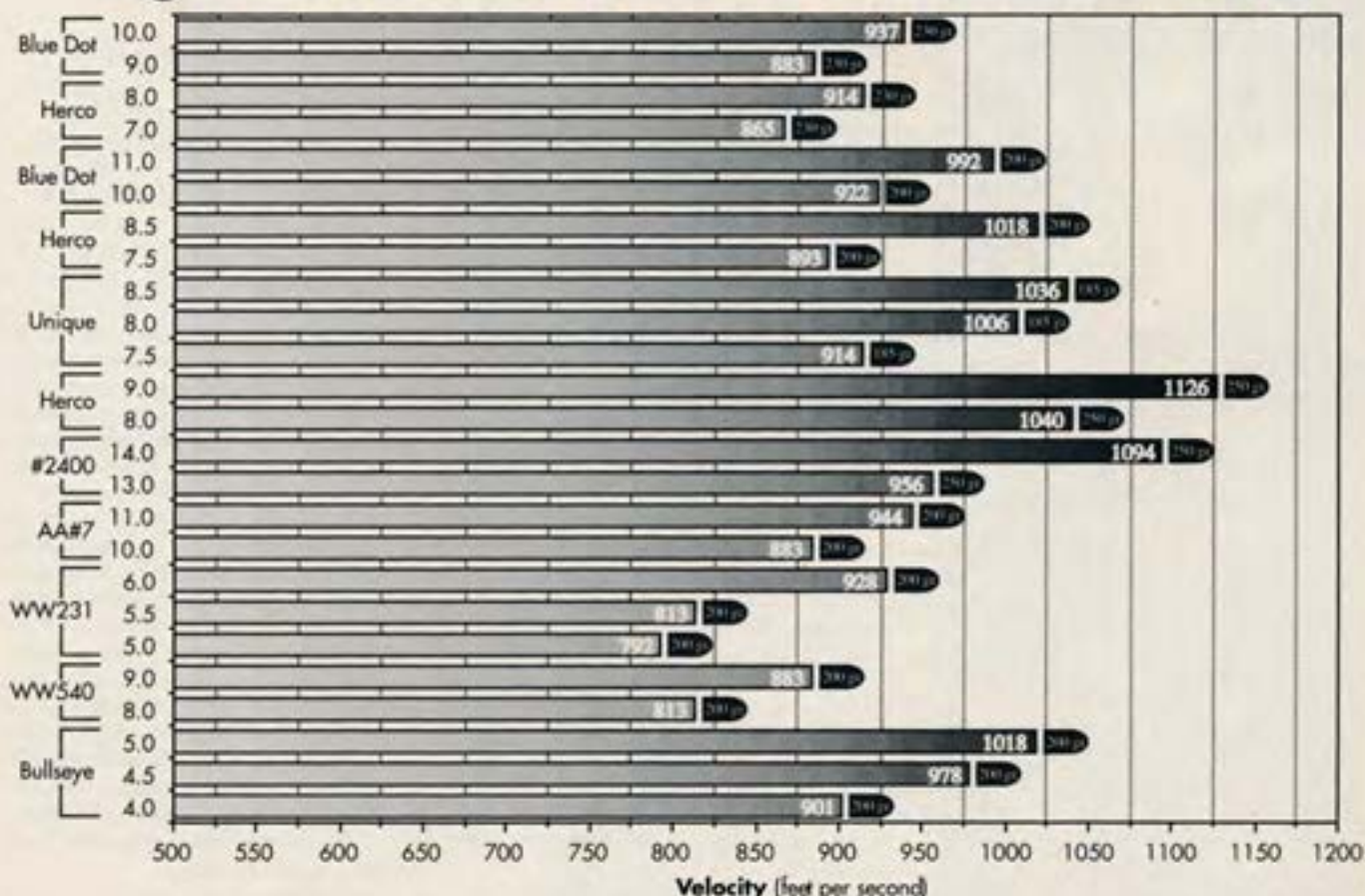
My preference is for the 230 grain bullet as typified by Hornady's FMJ-FP. Major power factor is obtained with mild shooting velocities in the 800 fps range. The most accurate loads experienced in this category have been with 7.0 grains of Unique (860 fps), 8.0 grains of Herco (900 fps), 10 grain of Blue Dot (940 fps), and 11.0 grains of AA #7 (800 fps).

Is there really a place for the .45 AR in today's handgunning circles? Most definitely! It gives big bore feel and performance with medium bore recoil. While lacking the power for long range silhouetting, it will certainly do the job on the shorter Hunter Pistol and Field Pistol course.

Let's hope the Smith & Wesson Model 625-2 is just the beginning of major renewed interest in the .45 Auto Rim.



## High Performance .45 Auto Rim Favorite Loads



Approach all handloading carefully by reducing charges listed by at least 10% and working up cautiously. Neither the author nor American Handgunner can accept responsibility for results obtained with this information due to the inherent variation in reloading components and individual handloading techniques.

BULLSEYE

XS 86-2

## THE FACTS ON CRIME AND GUNS ARE IGNORED BY ANTI-GUNNERS

**J**ust what are the facts about the relationship between legal firearms and violent crime?

Not surprisingly, the facts are simple as well as obvious:

\*America's 70 million law-abiding gun owners do not contribute to the wave of lawlessness sweeping our nation.

\*Statistics show that gun-wielding criminals commit crimes most commonly with illegally-obtained guns.

\*Laws against firearms ownership don't and won't stop criminals.

They are usually repeat offenders who should be in jail. Yet, due to the failure of our criminal justice system, these felons are released to our streets where they quickly obtain black market firearms and continue their careers in crime.

These facts are not the result of hap-

some politically-inclined police chiefs, many news commentators and writers, plus a few sociologists, psychologists, and some researchers.

Fiction writers might be a better term for these people. But many publications are ready and willing to present anti-gun "facts" as gospel. So anti-gun researchers can get away with mangling the truth. Some lawmakers even believe all this nonsense. And when they do, law-abiding gun owners stand to suffer.

Just a few months ago, a supposedly respectable publication, the New England Journal of Medicine, issued a misleading "study" slamming firearms. This anti-gun propaganda contrasted gun ownership and violence in two cities-- Seattle and Vancouver.

The contents were far from impartial.

*Gun owners of America, and all people who believe in the Constitution of the United States, should make it their duty to be aware of the real facts concerning firearms ownership and crime.*

hazard guesses. They were obtained after years of exhaustive study conducted by leading criminologists across the country. To defend your right to own firearms, NRA officials pour over reams of statistics, studies and reports. Most of these studies were not sponsored by the NRA nor paid for by any pro-gun organization. The resulting data are in the public domain, available to anyone who seeks the truth about guns and crime.

So why such a vast contradiction between the NRA's "get tough on crime" policy and the "ban all the guns" solution so eagerly sought by our opponents?

Obviously, the same crime reports are available to us all. Yet anti-gun groups have notoriously turned up their collective noses at any data that fail to support their cause. Instead, they commission their own "studies," which in the final analysis are a far cry from good, honest scientific research.

Since firearms bashing is currently faddish among an elitist group of America's upper crust, it hasn't been hard for the anti-gun movement to enlist some prominent spokesmen. These include

The researchers said they chose Seattle and Vancouver because the two cities were twins in every respect except for firearms laws. They sought to prove that Seattle, due to fewer restrictions on handgun purchases, had a far greater homicide rate than its Canadian neighbor, where the authors alleged that strict handgun controls keep citizens safe and sound.

Criminologists Dr. Gary Kleck of Florida State University has faulted the researchers for their "primitive" methodology and severely criticized their conclusions.

For example, they failed to mention that homicide rates were approximately the same among whites, the majority of the populations. The discrepancy in crime statistics between the cities originated among minorities. The racial woes of Seattle simply aren't reflected in Vancouver. This alone should make the study invalid. But there's more.

The authors also failed to mention that strict firearm laws already exist in Seattle. The State of Washington requires a "waiting period" and background investigation for the purchase of a handgun.

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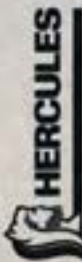
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The study nonchalantly dismissed self-defense as a criterion for owning a handgun, saying that it had little bearing on the public safety. Later, the authors admitted several of the handgun "murders" were actually self-defense in which law-abiding citizens thwarted criminal attack.

Still, this apples-and-tomatoes comparison had the audacity to conclude that the crime rate in America is higher than the crime rate in Canada due to "lax" handgun laws.

They totally ignored existing data to the contrary. They didn't quote survey research which Dr. Kleck said indicates nearly 650,000 Americans annually use handguns to defend themselves against crime.

They failed to consider the socioeconomic or legal status of minorities in the two cities- factors that breed crime.


They didn't state the truth about Canadian gun laws-- nor those in Seattle.

***Firearms opponents  
hope  
to make inroads  
with their anti-gun  
message.***

In fact, they didn't conduct a survey, they issued an opinion, opinion the anti-gun media was eager to accept.

Now quotes from this "survey" reverberate through the halls of Congress and anywhere else that firearm opponents hope to make inroads with their anti-gun message. Such deceit often leaves the American public confused by the conflicting messages. Such a misrepresentation of a fact is a disgrace. But we can't change our opponents' tactics. Instead, we must do a better job of keeping people informed.

As I've said, the NRA has available reams of statistics compiled by impartial and reliable criminologists and researchers. These findings dispute all the propaganda from anti-gun groups.

The gun owners of America, and all people who believe in the Constitution of the United States, should make it their duty to be aware of the real facts concerning firearms ownership and crime. We need to preach it and teach it. Otherwise a lie like the Seattle/Vancouver "study," told enough times, will become believable. And then become law. 

*Richard E. Gardiner is a firearm owner and Director of State and Local Affairs for the National Rifle Association of America.*

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# .44 JAG

By Massad Ayoob

*A wildcat revolver cartridge designed not just for shooting but also for fast reloading. The rimless .308 parent case takes the fast handling full moon clips of a .45 ACP for the fastest possible revolver reload. It hits as hard as a .44 Magnum too!*

**D**irty Harry thought the .44 Magnum was the "world's most powerful handgun" and "would blow your head clean off." Dirty Harry didn't know a whole lot more about guns than he did about police tactics, but that's another story.

Sure, there are more powerful guns—the .454 Casull, to name one. There are also faster guns, such as Bob Booth's .357-44 Bobcat Magnum, which drove a 110 grain .357 slug an incredibly flat-shooting 2000 fps out of an affordable, easily re-chambered Ruger Blackhawk. And of course, if one shot at a time is all you need, there are monster loads like J.D. Jones' field-proven .375 JDJ.

Did the world need another wildcat? Hell, I didn't think so, but then came the



annual gun show of GO-NH, Gun Owners of New Hampshire, and a new cartridge was born. It happened like this.

I was talking with gun buff Bill Grimmett, a Keith disciple with a sharp mind who happens to think the use of a gun less than .41 Magnum in caliber is indicative of testosterone deficiency. We also chatted about my forthcoming sally to the Second Chance bowling pin match. Talk turned to the revolver event.

I explained why the winning gun was a Model 25-2 Smith & Wesson

*Continued on page 86*







Model 422

# Model 41 vs. Model 422

By John Taffin



Model 41

## *Just how much better is S&W's high priced target pistol than the budget priced plinker?*

An old saying goes like this: "We grow too soon old, and too late smart." Hopefully that's not true in all cases because I've learned that even though big bores are exciting, exhilarating and downright fun to shoot, there are times when the punishment that builds up over thousands of rounds of full-house big bore loads finally requires this sixgunner to back off and look at more relaxing endeavors.

So when the idea arose of a side-by-side test of the tried and true Smith & Wesson Model 41 and the upstart Model 422, I was more than happy to oblige. At the time I was working on a loading manual for the Freedom Arms .454 Casull and had just come through a six hour period of firing 783 full-house .454 rounds. I was ready to relax.

Smith & Wesson certainly should know something about making .22's as they have been doing it since since '58. That's not 1958, but 1858— or more than a century of experience beginning with their first cartridge revolver, the Model 1 First Issue.

By the 1890's, Smith & Wesson began

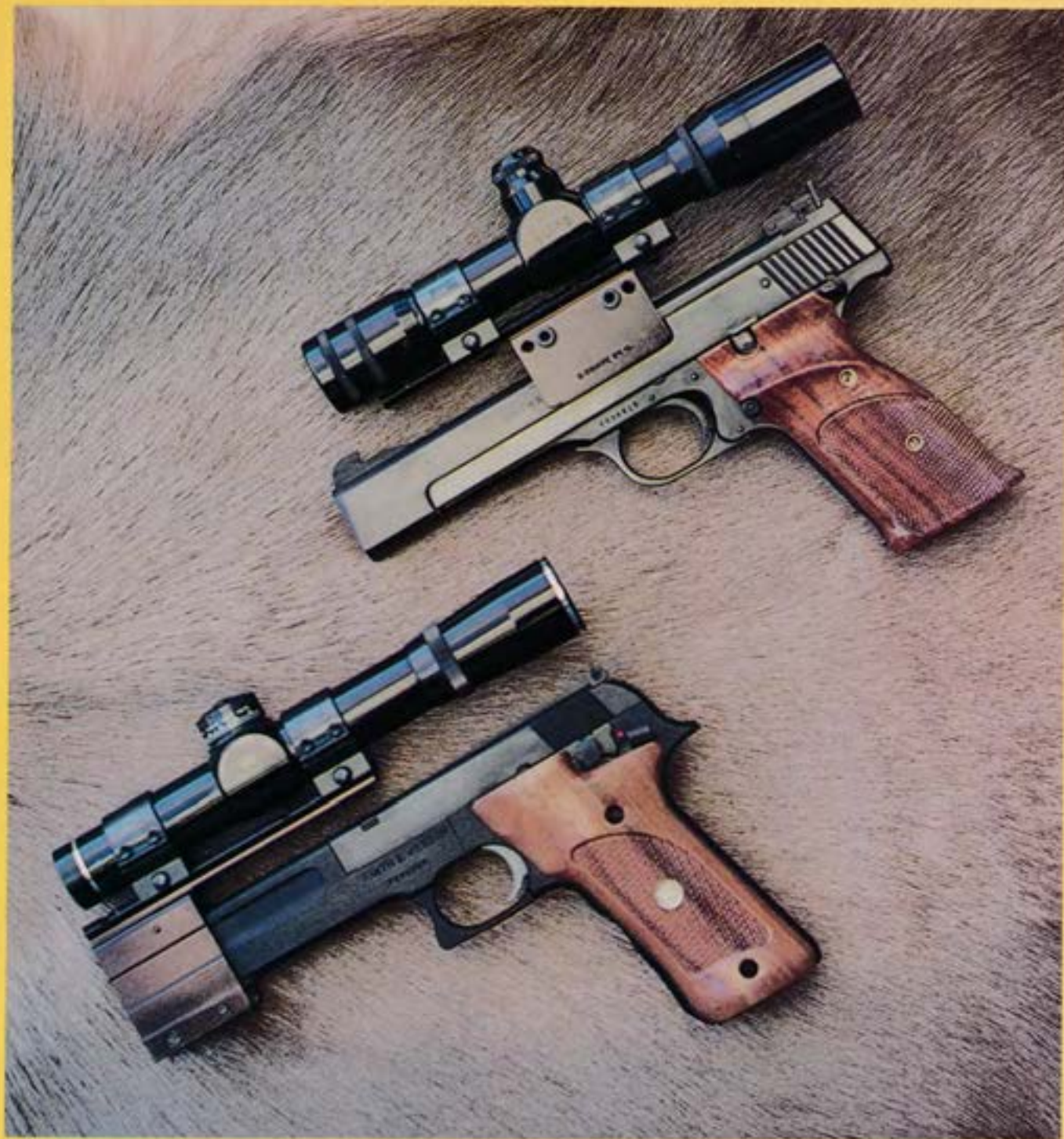
making quality .22 single-shot target pistols for the paper punchers. The modern era really began when a San Francisco gun dealer by the name of Phil Beakert placed an order for 1,000 of the first .22/32's, .22 rimfires on .32 frames that would eventually become the Kit Gun.

The most famous of the Smith & Wesson .22's, now known as the Model 17, began life in 1931 as the K-22 Outdoorsman and is still lovingly referred to by sixgunners as the K-22. This was the first Smith & Wesson .22 on a large frame, being simply the .38 Military & Police made into an adjustable-sighted .22 target model.

While Smith & Wesson had what many sixgunners will attest to as the finest .22 revolver in existence, Colt and High Standard ruled the world of semi-automatic rimfire pistols. Finally, after 10 years of testing and nearly 100 years after the first .22, 1957 saw the introduction to the shooting public of the first Smith & Wesson .22 semi-automatic target pistol, the Model 41.

There were a lot of things right with the Model 41: the rear sight was mounted sta-





tionary on the frame and did not move forwards and backwards with the slide; the grip felt just plain good with the proper angle to avoid undue strain on the shooting hand. And it was accurate.

The shooting public responded with a demand that placed the 41 in an early back-order situation. You might say they never caught up. Even 30 years later, the 41's are in such high demand that new ones rarely ever languish on gunshop shelves, and used 41's are hard to find.

Two Model 41's are now available to shooters, the standard 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ " version and a 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " heavy barreled 41 that was designed to mimic the feel of competition .45 autos.

Until 1964, a less expensive Model 46 was available also, but it did not sell well as it offered too little to competition shooters and was still too expensive to appeal to the field shooter types.

Smith and Wesson found themselves without a plinking .22, a real Saturday afternoon fun-gun that could compete with the Standard Model Ruger.

Enter the Smith & Wesson .22 of the 1980's, the Model 422. A radical departure from the Model 41, the Model 422 is not all-steel but a steel slide on an alloy frame. This results in a much lighter, less expensive .22 that bears not the slightest resemblance to the Model 41. In fact, with

its rather straight grip, the Model 422 looks more like European semi-automatics of by-gone days.

Since the test was to be a head-to-head confrontation of the Model 41 and the Model 422, I picked two test guns that are as close together in specifications as possible so neither .22 would have an unfair advantage over the other.

In my infinite wisdom, I, of course, knew which .22 would win the match—the Model 41 would eat the Model 422 alive! Preconceived notions are difficult to avoid, so I don't worry about them anymore; I just do not let them interfere with the testing. I knew the 41 would come out

## ACCURACY SHOOT-OUT

Ammunition	M-422		M-41		M-422		M-41	
	IRON SIGHTS		ELECTRONIC SIGHTS		ELECTRONIC SIGHTS		ELECTRONIC SIGHTS	
	25 Yards		25 Yards		50 Yards		50 Yards	
CCI Stingers			1 3/8"	1"	1 1/4"	2 1/4"		
CCI Mini Mag	2 1/2"	1 3/4"	7/8"	3/4"	2 1/2"	3 1/2"		
CCI Mini Mag HP			1/2"	1"	2 1/4"	2 1/2"		
Federal Hi-Velocity	1 5/8"	1 1/2"	3/4"	3/4"	3 3/4"	1 1/2"		
Federal Hi-Velocity HP			2"	1 1/8"	4"	2 1/4"		
Federal Champion	2 1/2"	1 3/4"	1 3/4"	1"	3 1/4"	2 3/8"		
Federal Spitfire			1 1/4"	1 5/8"	4"	3"		
Remington Target			1 1/8"	1 1/8"	2 1/4"	2 1/4"		
Remington Hi-Velocity			1 1/4"	7/8"	2 1/4"	2 1/4"		
Yellow Jackets	1 1/4"	1 3/4"	1"	1 1/4"	2 1/2"	2"		
Winchester T-22	2 1/2"	1 5/8"	1 1/4"	3/4"	2 1/4"	2"		
Winchester Hi-Velocity	2 1/2"	1 5/8"	1"	5/8"	2 1/4"	2 3/4"		

All groups represent 5-shots measured center-to-center fired from a stable sandbagged rest. The Model 41 was fitted with a Tasco ProPoint sight and the Model 422 was fitted with an Aimpoint 2000 for the optical sight portions of the test.

way ahead, but I also was willing to let the test results speak for themselves. If nothing else, I would be able to say, "I told you so."

Shortly after placing the order with Smith & Wesson, I received a 5 1/2" Model 41 and a 6" Model 422 with adjustable sights. The Model 422 comes with both fixed and adjustable sights and in either 4 1/2" or 6" versions.

If I had ordered a 7 1/2" target sighted Model 41 and a 4 1/2" fixed sighted 422, the test would have certainly been invalid. This way, the two .22's were as close to being the same as factory specifications allow.

Let the games begin, and may the better Model win. Categories were established to judge each model side-by-side as follows:

**GRIP:** The first thing this shooter notices about any handgun is the feel of the grip. Is it right to begin with? Or is it necessary to replace the factory grips to get the proper feel and control?

The walnut Model 41 grip, either by accident or careful planning, is a masterpiece of design. I've never encountered a Model 41 with a replacement grip. The angle is right, the swell at the bottom of the grip is perfect for my hand, the thumb rest is ideally placed to allow either a right-handed or left-handed shooter to acquire the same feel and control. The checkering performs its job of keeping the heavy Model 41 from squirming in the hand.

Normally I am no fan of factory grips, but this one is an exception.

Switching to the Model 422, we find a wooden grip that is thinner, straighter and, though it does have a swell at the base, there is no thumbrest. The grip of

the Model 41 is a wrap-around style while the Model 422 is the less expensive, conventional two piece design.

Chalk up a big one for the Model 41? Maybe.

The grip of the Model 422, while completely different, also feels good and seems properly mated to the lighter Model 422. When holding the Model 41 firmly with my shooting hand, I cannot change my grip by moving the muzzle with my off-hand; with the Model 422, I cannot hold onto the grip securely if I wiggle the muzzle with the off-hand.

So, although the grip of the Model 422 feels good, it is not nearly so secure as that of the Model 41.

**BALANCE:** This is probably a even

more subjective area than grip feel. Everyone knows that heavier handguns, at least up to a point, balance better than lighter ones. Or so we have been told these many years. And muzzle heavy handguns are the best of all, well, at least according to the experts.

The Model 41 weighs 43 ounces with a definite muzzle heavy feel that for this shooter just seems to hang right on target. The Model 422 is a very light 24 ounces which should bounce all over the place.

But, I found it very easy to consistently roll pop cans at 50 yards with the 422, and a brand new shooter (with no preconceived notions) was doing the same before he made it through his first box of ammunition.

*Continued on page 112*

### TAFFIN'S CHECKLIST

	Model 422	Model 41
Grips		✓
Sights		✓
Balance (iron sights)		✓
Balance (optical sights)	✓	
Accuracy		✓
Price	✓	
Trigger Pull		✓
Ease of Operation (slide release)		✓
Ease of Operation (thumb safety)	✓	
Ease of Operation (magazine release)		✓



By Cameron Hopkins  
Photos by Nyle Leatham

Only one run at the plates remains on the final stage of the last day of the World Speed Shooting Championships. Two prior days of slapping leather and ringing steel boils down to this last stage, Showdown. Even in a game that is measured in hundredths of a second, this would be a thrilling photo finish.

Three of the fastest guns in the world would face off in a blazing duel of speed shooting, three men who had shot magnificently throughout the match to emerge virtually neck-and-neck in this last stage.

Angelo Spagnoli, a firearms instructor

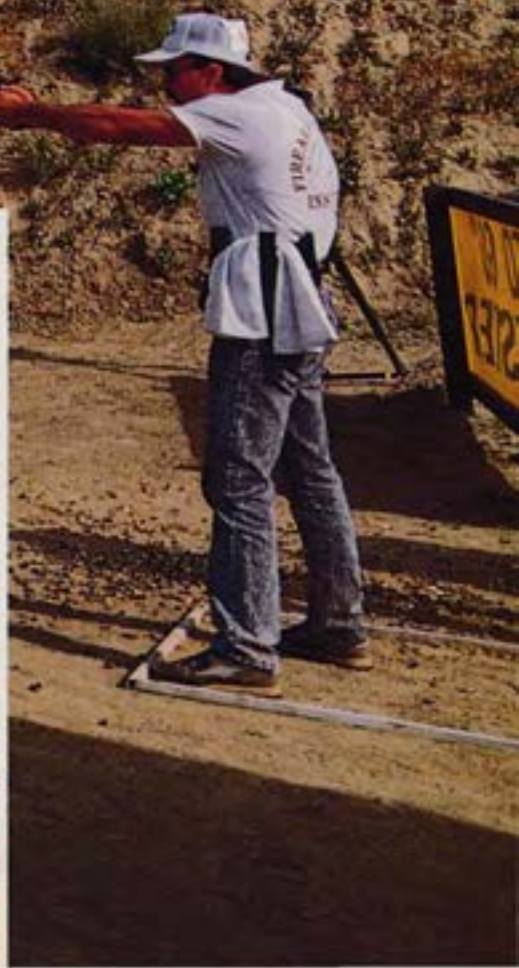
from San Francisco, holds the lead by a scant half a second, precisely .50, over Rob Leatham. A nose behind sits Brian Enos, .76 seconds behind Angelo, .26 seconds off Rob's pace.

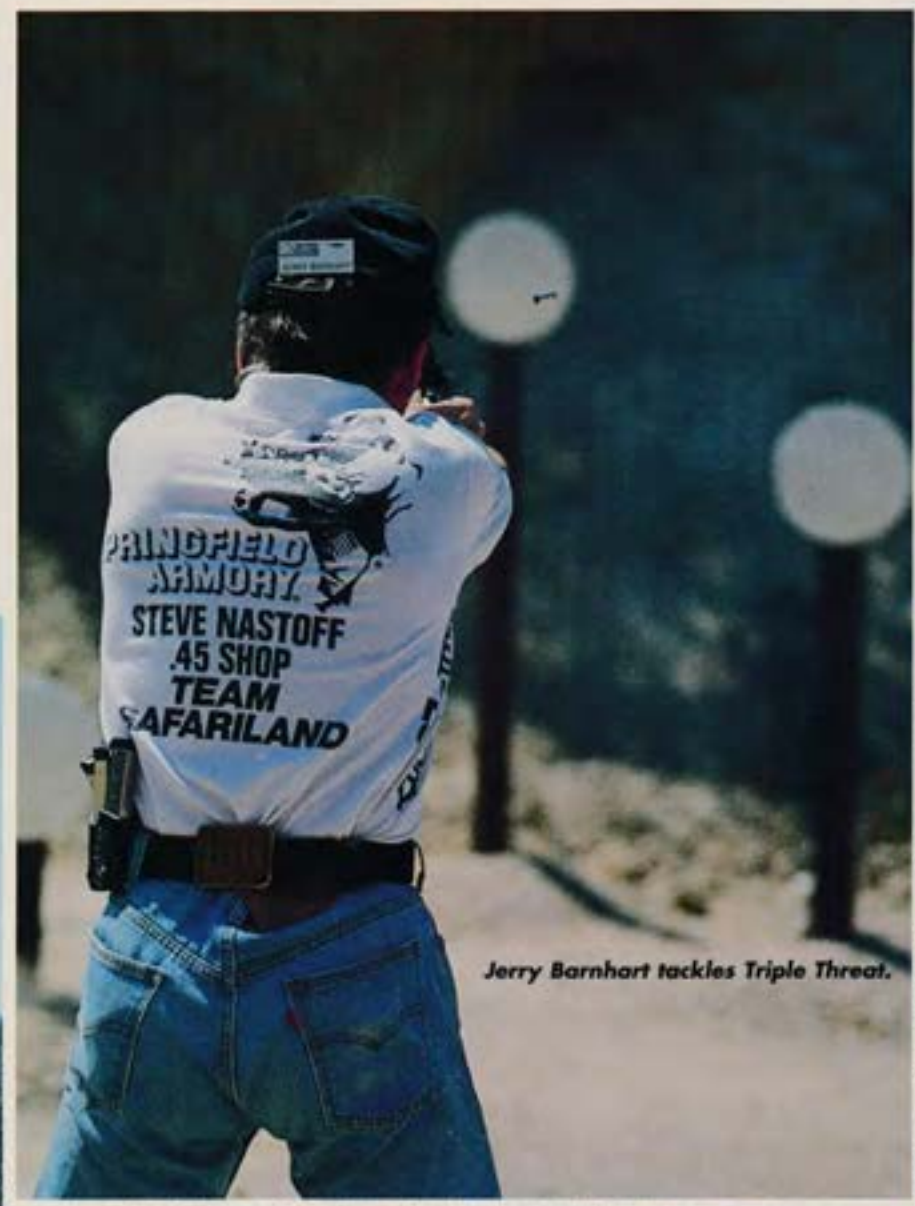
They would shoot Showdown as their seeding in the tournament stands: the leader would shoot last, preceded in ascending order by Rob, Brian and then the fourth, fifth, sixth place shooters, etc. Angelo would know exactly how fast he would have to shoot to win, a prerogative that the Steel Challenge accords to the leader on the last stage of the match.

The pressure is enormous. Here, in a microcosm of all that is the science and art of speed shooting, lies the tournament's victory and the rich prize purse that accompanies it.

A crowd of spectators gathers eagerly to watch what everyone is saying will be

# STEEL CHALLENGE





*Jerry Barnhart tackles Triple Threat.*

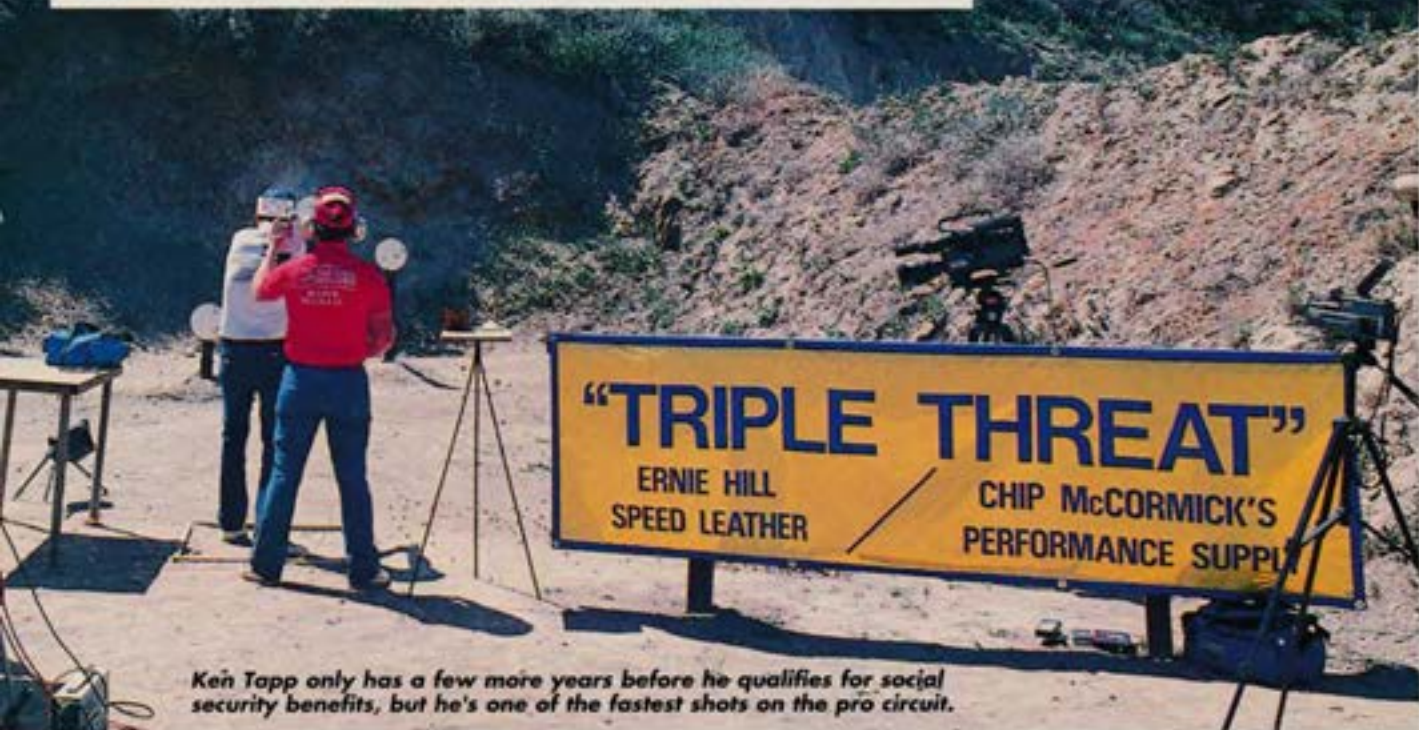
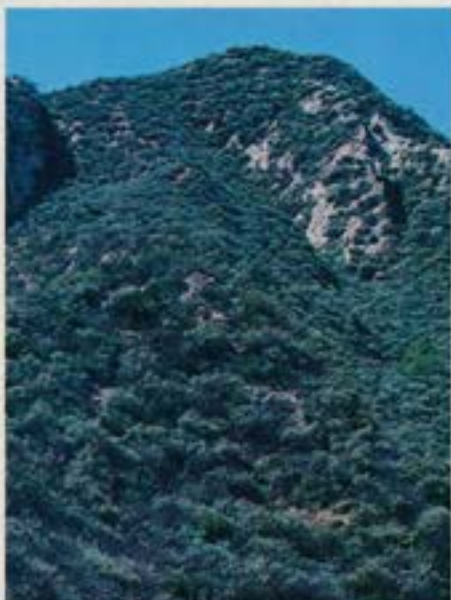
the most exciting finish in the nine year history of the Steel Challenge. Three men are virtually tied and three others are close enough to grab the championship if they pull off a stunning two-minute offense. Jerry Barnhart, Chip McCormick and Doug Koenig are all poised to come from behind and win.

Chatter in the crowd betrays the excitement as the shooters begin to filter into the roped-off enclosure reserved for competitors.

"Angelo's hot, he's gonna win it," ventures one fan.

"No way," counters his buddy, "the pressure's gonna get to him. Leatham's hungry and he'll turn on the afterburners. I say Rob's gonna win it."

The banter is throughout the overflowing bleachers of spectators. "Brian's been shootin' great. He's gonna win it," says one in the crowd. "Five bucks says



*Ken Tapp only has a few more years before he qualifies for social security benefits, but he's one of the fastest shots on the pro circuit.*





*Plate's-eye-view shows Jerry Barnhart in the ready position, wrists above shoulders, as he waits for the start signal. The cameraman is filming for a new television series from Lenny Magill Productions called "American Shooting Sports." It will run on independent channels nationwide, the first TV show devoted to the handgunning sports.*

you're wrong. This kid Koenig is fast."  
 "Barnhart's gonna hose!"  
 "Chip's gonna blaze!"

### **"LET THE OTHERS MISS"**

Angelo Spagnoli patiently waits his turn to shoot. Last. His pace will be determined by the speed of his competitors. He will use his advantage tactically and simply match the pace set by the catchers-up. A half-second is actually a solid lead, but not enough to go to sleep on. Angelo will defend his position with a simple strategy: "Let the others miss."

But strategy is not Angelo's alone. Rob and Brian can play their hands two ways, both with good tactical merits. In order to catch Angelo's half-second lead, they could pull out all the stops and blaze the five steel plates at warp drive speed.



**Rob Leatham, '85 Steel Challenge champ, hoses out the plates on Triple Threat.**



A simple tactic, simply shoot faster than Angelo.

Of course this is dangerous. Whenever you dance on the edge, you run the risk of falling off. To shoot at maximum speed will give the margin of victory, but it's a risky ploy. Too fast often means too many misses.

The other strategy is safer. Shoot a controlled, solid pace. Nothing to set a record, nothing to break the speed of sound. Shoot a steady cadence and then let the pressure fall on Angelo to match it.

This is much more conservative. This is kicking a field goal instead of going for it on fourth-and-one.

And this "put the pressure on Angelo" strategy is what the catchers-up tried. It would seem to be the logical tactic; after all, Angelo has never won a major match. Perhaps he would crumple with the pressure.

Meanwhile, the others in contention to win are too far behind to use the field goal strategy. Chip, Jerry and Doug have

## STEEL CHALLENGE SHOOTOFF

By Dave Anderson

Springfield Armory sponsored the shootoff for the top eight women competitors and the top sixteen overall at the 1989 Steel Challenge. The match organizers set up a straightforward but challenging format with four Pepper Poppers at alternating ranges and a stop plate.

The top eight women shooters started things off with an impressive and entertaining display of shooting ability. Two of the competitors, in fact, seemed to enjoy the shootoff atmosphere so much they didn't want to quit.

The shootoff was run as a best-of-three, single elimination. Gunning for third place, women's Steel Challenge champion Shirley Hamilton took the first bout over Susan Cooper. In the second run both shooters faulted. Then they tied,

at 3.09 seconds vs. 3.07. (In this type of event times within .05 of a second are deemed to be ties.)

They tied again on the fourth run, 2.98 vs. 3.02. On the fifth run it was 3.01 vs. 3.00, with each leaving one Popper standing. By this time it appeared to be a question of who would run out of ammo first, but finally on the sixth run Shirley won decisively to clinch third place.

Shooting an Aimpoint-sighted Smith & Wesson revolver tuned up by J. M. Custom, Yoko Shimomura of Japan earned a spot in the final by defeating Diane Lamb and Shirley Hamilton. Her considerable ability is all the more impressive considering Japan's horrendously restrictive firearms laws, and her dedication to the sport made her a favorite with the spectators.

But she faced a formidable opponent in the final. All the women in the top

*Continued on page 114*

## GUNS AND GEAR OF THE TOP 16

SHOOTER	SCORE	PISTOL	CALIBER	GUNSMITH	HOLSTER	BULLET	POWDER CHARGE
Angelo Spagnoli	67.54	Springfield	.38 Super	Bruce Gray	Hill Speed Leather	124 gr. Hornady	4.2 grs. WW452
Brian Enos	67.81	Springfield	.38 Super	Bill Wilson	Safariland	130 gr. FMJ	4.9 grs. WW452
Rob Leatham	68.11	Springfield	.38 Super	Bill Wilson	Safariland	150 gr. CP Elite	4.5 grs. Bullseye
Doug Koenig	69.17	Springfield	.38 Super	Springfield	Safariland	150 gr. CP Elite	5.4 grs. WW452
Chip McCormick	69.73	Springfield	.38 Super	Shooting Star	Hill Speed Leather	125 gr. LRN	3.8 grs. WW452
Jerry Barnhart	69.99	Springfield	.38 Super	Steve Nastoff	Safariland	130 gr. FMJ	4.5 grs. AA#2
Jethro Dionisio	70.18	Springfield	.38 Super	Pepe	Safariland	125 gr. LRN	4.2 grs. WW452
Ted Bonnet	70.84	Colt	.38 Super	Greg Ferris	Hill Speed Leather	125 gr. LRN	3.8 grs. WW231
J. Michael Plaxco	71.43	Springfield	.38 Super	Mike Plaxco	Safariland	130 gr. CP Elite	5.3 grs. WW452
Michael Voigt	72.94	Springfield	.38 Super	Voigt Custom	Hill Speed Leather	130 gr. CP Elite	5.0 grs. WW231
Lew Gosnell	73.92	Caspian	.38 Super	Shooting Star	Hill Speed Leather	130 gr. FMJ	3.7 grs. WW452
Donnie Chatelain	74.30	Springfield	.38 Super	Jim Clark	Hill Speed Leather	125 gr. LRN	3.5 grs. Bullseye
Frank Garcia	75.12	Springfield	.38 Super	Ed Brown	Hill Speed Leather	125 gr. LRN	4.8 grs. WW231
Blake Gann	75.59	Springfield	.38 Super	Gann Custom	Safariland	124 gr. Hornady	5.2 grs. WW231
Jerry Mikulek	76.29	S&W	.38 Spl.	box-stock	Hill Speed Leather	130 gr. LRN	4.2 grs. Bullseye
Joe Hamilton	76.55	Colt	9mm	Joe Hamilton	Safariland	130 gr. LRN	3.5 grs. WW452



*About the only common denominator is the Government Model among these various shapes, sizes, and configurations of "race guns." One theory holds that the lighter the slide, the less the recoil, hence the skeletonized slides where metal is hogged out to expose the extractor, among other parts visible in these "shooting cutaways." Compensators come in all shapes and sizes, but it appears the multi-port expansion chamber is the best. Here you can see double-chamber comps, triple-chamber comps and, on Jerry Mikulek's Model 27, no comp.*





Shirley Hamilton,  
1989 Ladies Steel  
Challenge Champion



Debbie James, current  
IPSC Ladies World Champion



Diane Lamb and her  
.38 Super Wilson Astro-Camp



Tammy Roberts likes the new  
Safariland Final Option holster.

## GUNS AND GEAR OF THE TOP FEMALE SHOOTERS

SHOOTER	SCORE	PISTOL	CALIBER	GUNSMITH	HOLSTER	BULLET	POWDER CHARGE
Shirley Hamilton	94.84	Springfield	9mm	Bill Hamilton	Hill Speed Leather	124 gr. Hornady	4.1 grs. WW231
Michelle Griggs	96.91	Colt	.38 Super	Glenn Martin	Hill Speed Leather	163 gr. LRN	3.5 grs. WW231
Yoko Shimomura	98.18	S&W	.38 Spl.	J.M. Custom	Ted Blocker	158 gr. SWC	American Eagle
Susan Cooper	100.59	Springfield	.38 Super	Gann Custom	Hill Speed Leather	130 gr. CP Elite	4.1 grs. WW231
Tammy Madigan	101.59	Springfield	.38 Super	P. Liebenberg	Hill Speed Leather	130 gr. CP Elite	4.6 grs. WW231
Deborah James	103.78	Colt	.38 Super	Bill Wilson	Hill Speed Leather	130 gr. CP Elite	4.0 grs. WW452
Diane Lamb	104.31	Colt	.38 Super	Bill Wilson	Gordon Davis	128 gr. LRN	4.0 grs. WW452
Lorraine Ferns	105.86	Colt	.45 ACP	Jim Boland	Safariland	185 gr. SWC	4.6 grs. 700X

Either Mike Plaxco is on his 89th reload and still hasn't hit the target, or they haven't swept up the day's brass yet! Mike won the 1982 Steel Challenge.



no choice but to heave a Hail Mary and hope for a big play. However, it is not to be. One by one these top-flight professional shooters step to the line and turn on the afterburners. One by one they crash and burn.

Jerry Barnhart posts a blistering 2.44 seconds in one of his five runs, but his other runs don't equal this phenomenal speed. He ends up placing 13th in Show-down, a most respectable finish but no where close to bumping Angelo out of first.

Doug Koenig enters the shooters box. He's one of the bright new stars on the horizon of professional shooting and one to watch in the future. However, not today.

Doug is shooting a highly customized Springfield Armory .38 Super that's painted fire engine red. Sadly, his bright red gun is all that will dazzle the crowd today. He finishes 15th on the stage. Angelo quietly notes another challenger has fallen.

Chip McCormick is the only two-time winner of the World Speed Shooting Championship in the nine year history of the Steel Challenge. No one counts Chip out of any speed contest until the last piece of his brass hits the ground. He's been in many similar situations of intense pressure before.

Chip is shooting a specially designed "steel gun" that is elaborately customized by his company, Shooting Star Industries, especially for speed shooting on steel plates. Basically, it's a lightweight .38 Super with an extended sight radius.

A third Steel Challenge is not in the cards for Chip: he places 11th in the stage.

And now the field goal unit trots onto the field, Leatham and Enos. Brian, in third place, will shoot first followed by Rob in second and then match-leader Angelo.

Brian shoots an exceptional Show-down, good enough for 2nd place in the stage. His runs average around 2.7 seconds to draw and hit five plates. To lend perspective, Jerry Barnhart's sizzled on one run with a 2.44 seconds. It can't be shot much faster than that, but Brian's 2.7 is solid, very solid.

Rob knows that he has a lead of .26 seconds over Brian and lags behind Angelo by .50 seconds. He need only match Brian's 2.7 second average to hold his lead over his longtime shooting buddy from Arizona. Then the pressure falls on Angelo.

Rob shoots two runs of 2.7, one beautiful run of 2.5 and then he misses, and misses and misses. He has to eat a 3.61 second run. Not only has he removed any chance of holding up to Angelo, he's lost his lead over Brian. He places 9th in the stage.

A hush falls over the crowd as the last shooter prepares to fire the last rounds of

*Continued on page 104*



# TANFOGLIO TZ-88

By Jim Weller

Earlier this decade, a pistol that was given mucho press was introduced to the shooting world. It was the Czech made CZ-75 pistol, and was claimed by some to be the apex in a combat sidearm.

Offered only in 9mm, the CZ was a "dual carry" pistol, allowing the owner the option of either a DA first shot or "Condition One" carry. A thumb safety actually was in a position that made it easy to wipe off on the draw, instead of having to be pushed forward and up.

The biggest drawbacks to the CZ were the problems of getting one; and the cost if you did. Uncle Sam takes a dim view of importing firearms from Soviet Bloc puppets, thus the price was around \$1400.

Now, the CZ is available for somewhat less, but so are some very finely made copies. One is the Action Arms AT-84, and now comes the latest, the TZ-75, Series 88.

Made by Fratelli Tanfoglio in Italy and imported by FIE, the TZ-75 was originally tested by *Handgunner* in a previous issue, and in my test I found it to be a very nicely made handgun, although not without its faults. At the time, it was a sort of "semi-copy" of the CZ pistol, but had no SA capability, the slide release was large and protruding, and the safety was the same old "push forward and up" affair that disgraces many others.

Not so the new Series 88 model. Take away the slight hook on the trigger guard and it becomes a spitting image of the CZ, at least on the outside. There

are other refinements and options.

Shucking ammo from its double stack magazine, the TZ-88 can crank out 16 rounds of 9mm before running dry. That's 15 in the mag and one up the spout. Also, the newer version will be offered in the hot .41 Action Express as well. The larger caliber will hold 11 plus one.

The newer version weighs in at 39.5 ounces, or 4.5 ounces heavier than the original version. The extra weight is in the slide which has been beefed up in anticipation of the introduction of a conversion kit for the .41AE which will be forthcoming in the near future. Also, the front sight is now an integral part of the slide.

The rear sight on the test pistol looks much like a Millett fixed, with white outline. It's dovetailed into place, adjustable for windage only by drifting from side to side. Slide serrations are much improved over the old 75 model, offering more of them and a much better purchase to the shooter.

There are three different finishes offered this time around. The test gun was done in a very nice matte blue which was not as heavy a matte as sometimes seen in other makes, and very handsome. Also available are an all satin chrome, and the "IPSC" finish consisting of a blue slide and chrome frame. Stock options include Rosewood, Ebony Micarta, Black Rubber, and three versions of Ivory Polymer.

There are always flaws to be found, and the TZ-88's come in the form of the trigger. It's bright nickled and nicely

shaped, but the DA pull is terribly long and gritty. That's purely subjective on my part, but the reach is one of the longest I've tried on any handgun.

Taking a proper firing grip, I could barely get the pad of my finger onto the trigger. I wouldn't have considered a DA first shot with this gun in the first place, but if I had, the length of pull would put a stop to it in a hurry.

However, the SA mode was very nice. There was a slight take up and just a hint of creep, but the trigger felt light and predictable and made it a pleasure to fire, pulling at just over three pounds.

The safety has been redesigned and looks exactly like it's CZ counterpart. The thumb lever is located on the rear of the frame just below the slide and is easily manipulated. When placed in the ON position, the safety locks the sear in place. This is coupled with a firing pin safety block to ensure the shooter's safety in Condition One.

Gone, too, is the fixed bushing found in the older TZ-75. This has been replaced with a large belled area on the front of the barrel that centers itself in the slide. The thought is that this is in anticipation of the installation of compensators for IPSC and action shooting competitors.

The take-down of the TZ is very similar to the Colt/Browning designs. By removing the magazine and lining up the two notches on the frame and slide, the slide stop is pushed out from right to left. The slide is then removed and the recoil spring and barrel lifted out. Simple and quick.

Shooting the TZ-88 is a pleasure. The gun recoils modestly and is spread out through the wide backstrap. As I only had a very short time with it, testing was limited to only 200 rounds of mixed ball and JHP ammo which the gun ate up handily. Groups of just over three inches at the 25 yard mark were common, with no failures to feed or eject noted.

Overall, I rate the TZ-88 as excellent. Other than the long reach in DA firing, I could not find fault with the pistol at all. As this is written in September of 1988, delivery is expected to begin within a month for the 9mm version, and the .41AE should be available early in 1989.

Whichever one you like, the price is the same for either caliber. The price for the original TZ-75 in 1985 was \$350. The Series 88 will be \$425 in blue, and \$445 in satin chrome or the two-tone finish.

For further information, contact: F.I.E., Dept. AH, Box 4866, Hialeah, FL 33014.

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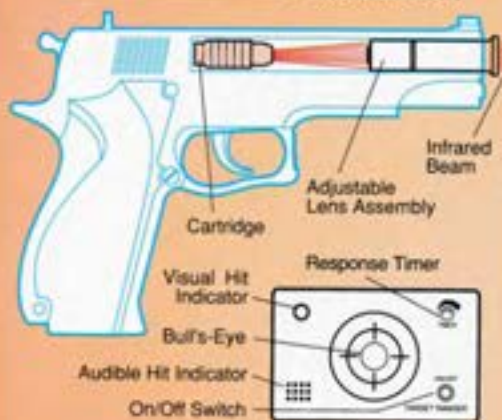
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# RADICAL RUGERS



By John Taffin  
Photos by Ichiro Nagata

Custom firearms hold a certain fascination for most shooters whether the gun is a finely fitted shotgun, a beautifully crafted rifle, or a good handgun made even better by the touch of a master gunsmith.

At one time, in the not so distant past, the major firearms manufacturers offered varied custom services from the factory on special order. Like the full-size family sedan and the mom-and-pop grocery store, specially ordered, factory-custom handguns are pretty much a thing of the past.

In my growing-up years, I learned about handguns mainly from Elmer Keith, and mostly by reading his articles in *GUNS* and in his excellent book, *Sixguns*, long before I ever met him face to face. Both magazine and text were replete with Keith's custom sixguns, mostly Colt Single Actions, that the most skilled gunsmiths in the country had crafted for him in the 1920's and 1930's.

Using belt driven machines and hand files, these pre-war artists



## V-2000

AMMUNITION	IRON SIGHT GROUP	BURRIS 3X GROUP	VELOCITY
PMC Match	1.500"	.750"	943 fps
CCI MiniMag	1.125"	.625"	1101 fps
CCI Stingers	1.000"	.875"	1353 fps
Federal High Power	1.250"	.625"	1069 fps
Federal High Power HP	1.000"	.750"	1100 fps
Federal Spitfire	1.375"	1.250"	1169 fps
Federal Spitfire HP	1.500"	.875"	1232 fps
Winchester High Velocity	1.250"	.500"	1088 fps
Winchester T-22	1.000"	.500"	1055 fps

Groups were fired at 25 yards, 5 shots. Chronograph was an Oehler 35.

turned out some truly fine work that remains the envy of many gunsmiths today.

Following WW II, we became a more sophisticated country and many of the old traditional talents seemed to fall by the wayside. Fortunately, there were enough dedicated handgunners to lure top craftsmen to once again ply their trade with the building of fine custom handguns.

For many years, most of the effort was spent building better 1911 Colts for target shooters.

Beginning with the rise in popularity of both silhouetting and handgun hunting in the early-to-mid 1970's, the market for affordable custom handguns really arrived. A large variety of custom smiths offered bolt-action silhouette/hunting handguns, big bore revolvers in .44, .45, .475, and



## SS V-12

AMMUNITION	IRON SIGHT GROUP	AIMPOINT 2000 GROUP	VELOCITY
PMC Match	1.000"	.750"	1071 fps
CCI MiniMag	.875"	.875"	1237 fps
CCI Stingers	1.250"	1.250"	1562 fps
Federal High Power	1.000"	.375"	1138 fps
Federal High Power HP	1.500"	1.000"	1228 fps
Federal Spitfire	1.125"	.625"	1278 fps
Federal Spitfire HP	1.375"	.875"	1370 fps
Winchester High Velocity	1.250"	.500"	1216 fps
Winchester T-22	1.000"	.625"	1143 fps

Groups were fired at 25 yards, 5 shots. Chronograph was an Oehler 35.

.500 calibers, and custom single-shot handguns in rifle calibers.

Dan Wesson's current offering of the .445 SuperMag and Thompson/Center's .45-70 Contender are indicative of the influence of the custom builders.

While much of the custom effort has centered on the really big handguns such as SSK's rip-snorting Handcannons and Hamilton Bowen's powerful .45's and .50 Specials, the smallbore end of the spectrum has not been entirely ignored.

For the past few weeks, I have been shooting, fondling, showing, and just plain appreciating three really fine stainless steel .22 semi-automatics from Voltquartsen Custom Pistols.

Tom Voltquartsen, custom pistolsmith hailing from Carroll, Iowa, offers 11 dif-



## STINGRAY

AMMUNITION	GROUP SIZE	VELOCITY
PMC Match	.625"	951 fps
CCI Mini-Mag	.750"	1095 fps
CCI Stingers	1.250"	1399 fps
Federal High Power	1.000"	1077 fps
Federal High Power HP	.875"	1072 fps
Federal Spitfire	1.000"	1161 fps
Federal Spitfire HP	1.250"	1236 fps
Winchester High Velocity	.750"	1068 fps
Winchester T-22	.625"	1044 fps

Groups were fired at 25 yards, 5 shots. Chronograph was an Oehler 35.

ferent custom .22's using the excellent Ruger .22 semi-automatic as the base pistol.

Boasting such exotic and interesting names as *Predator*, *Terminator*, *Stingray* and *SS V-12*, Volquartsen does what I did not think could be easily accomplished. He makes the Ruger Mark II even better.

Not only does Volquartsen manage to improve the Ruger Mark II, he accomplishes his magic at a reasonable price with most conversions on a customer's gun coming in under \$500. His "radical Rugers" range from \$315 to \$815.

Volquartsen's Custom Pistols is not a "mom-n-pop" business, but close. Father and son are the only employees in the 20-year-old business that advances as its goal a most commendable work ethic: "producing the highest grade pistols possible



**The SS V-12 (right) features adjustable barrel weights and is modeled like an Olympic Free Pistol. The Stingray has an expansion chamber compensator with exhaust ports to keep the muzzle stable for rapid fire strings (below right).**

at reasonable prices; firearms that our customers can shoot with pride."

A general feeling of dissatisfaction with handguns being offered in the late 1960's and the feeling that guns could be drastically improved were all that was needed for Tom Volquartsen to open his shop. Beginning with refinishing of metal and wood, Volquartsen branched out in his search for the "perfect" pistol.

Three of the results of this search, the Stingray, SS V-12 and V-2000 have been enjoyably tested by this writer with off-hand conventional bullseye shooting, two-handed plinking, and solid rest group shooting with a variety of .22 rimfire ammunition running the gamut from match ammo to high speed hollowpoints.

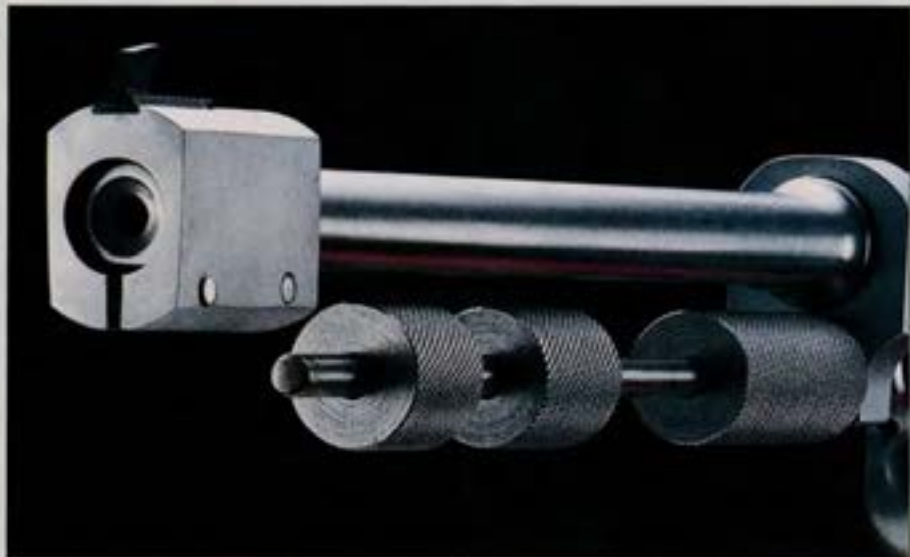
All three custom Rugers handled all the various .22 rounds tried without a malfunction of any kind and also produced exceptionally tight groups with all types of ammunition.

With the three guns tested and nine types of .22 ammunition employed, 21 of the 45 groups fired, with both scoped and iron-sighted versions, yielded groups less than one-inch in diameter. Nine were right at one-inch in size, and 10 more were one and one-quarter inch in diameter or less. The remaining five groups were all one and one-half inches or less. All groups were five-shots at 25 yards.

This is excellent performance from a variety of guns and ammunition.

Volquartsen's Stingray is as exotic looking as it sounds. Fitted with a .985" diameter bull barrel to add weight

*Continued on page 82*





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# HANDGUNNING HINTS

*Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton*

## *The Creedmore Position*

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2. Always make sure your muzzle is pointed downrange.



3. Using your off hand as a brace, 4. Extend both legs, and make certain they are well behind the firing line.



5. Some shooters like to bend only the on side leg for a gun rest.



6. Others prefer to bend both.



7. You will want to brace the back of your head and neck with your off hand. Make adjustments to find the most comfortable position.



8. Experienced shooters often develop unique variations to suit personal comfort.



9. Protect yourself from cylinder flash when shooting revolvers. Heavy fabric draped or made into leggings will work. Leather chaps provide good protection.



10. It can be enjoyable (and less expensive) to practice, experiment and hone the position with lighter caliber guns.

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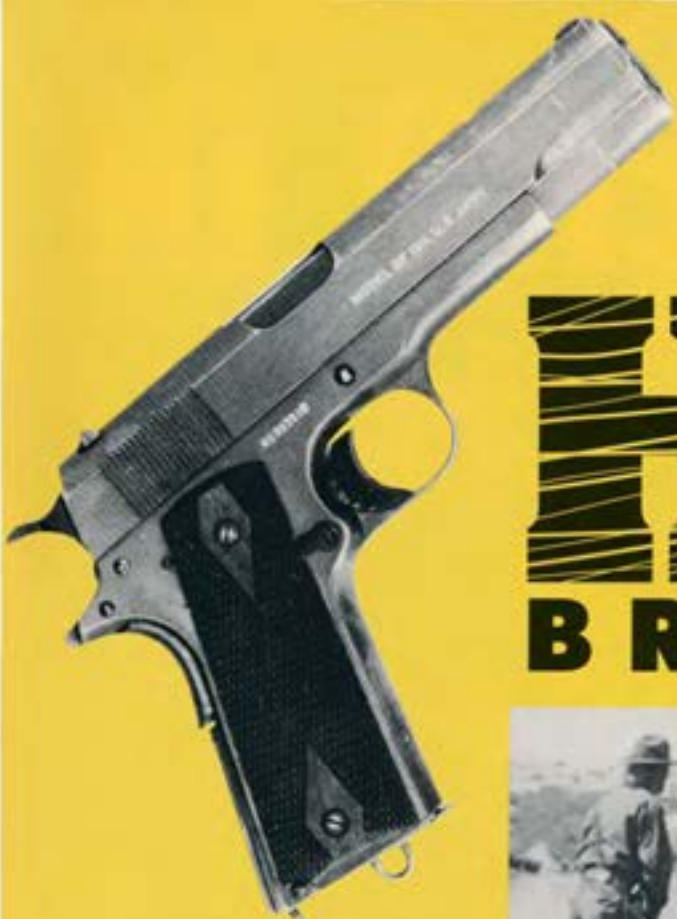
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# TO HELL FROM BREAKFAST

*A real go-getter was the old GI .45 which I carried into many a lively fracas. It's a real killer!*

*By Col. Charles Askins*



*The jig is up! The gang leader is armed with a sixshooter, but he wisely decided not to use it. We were armed with Winchester .351 rifles.*

**T**he bullet hit me just below the knee cap, passing through me and hitting the horse in the flank. This sorta startled the old pony and he shied to the left and spilled me in the sand. Then he ran off with my rifle in the scabbard on the saddle.

We were, my partner and I, about 35 miles west of El Paso hard along the US-Mex frontier. Old Bill, the other Border Patrolman, was about a mile and a half behind me and he had our pack mule. He heard the shot and he put his horse into a high trot to take a hand in the fray.

Duval and I were members of the United States Border Patrol and were assigned to ride 150 miles across the south end of New Mexico where it borders the Mexican state of Chihuahua. The year was a half-century ago and times were lively.

Mexico had just had its last revolution and the border country was filled to overflowing with a fine cross-section of outlaws — bastards who had taken an active part in the abortive revolution, other scoundrels who were ready to ride over in the land of the gringos and rustle their



*During the biweekly ride which the Border Patrol made from El Paso to Rodeo, Ariz., the patrolmen always made a point of stopping off at this line camp. Cowboys were glad to see us and swap the latest gossip.*



*The horse-mounted Border Patrol here working along the Rio Grande in the Big Bend of Texas. The officers are looking for tracks from smugglers.*

cows, and still others who would be happy to fetch in a couple of hundred gallons of Juarez whisky, tequila or mescal and for \$3 would fight you for it.

Bill and I had just been down in Mexico with Ed Cox, a local rancher, and fetched home 17 head of his stolen cattle. As I lay on the ground I suspected the cabron who had bushwhacked me was a companero to those ladrones that we had killed.

### *The border country was filled to overflowing with outlaws*

As I lay in the sand -- I couldn't get up, although the leg didn't hurt much-- I reflected on the shot. It had come from a long way off. I could tell by the sound. At least 200 yards, which is just one hell of a long way to try to bushwhack a man.

I was riding straight at the rifle when this sonofabitch got me in the knee. He had probably been trying to shoot me in the body and had damned near missed altogether.

As I wallowed about, I worked my way under a low-hanging mesquite, unholstered the old Colt .45 Auto and waited.

### **BUSHWACKED!**

I knew this would-be killer would come up to see if he had really bagged a hated Federale, but what sorta had me on edge was that I figured he would probably have seven buddies with him.

I kept a pretty sharp lookout in the direction that the shot had come from and in about 20 minutes I saw the bastard moving from mesquite to mesquite, his rifle at the high port. I let him come on until he was about 20 long steps from my hiding place and then I put an old hard-nose 230 grain .45 slug spang through his brisket. I was the pistol champion of Texas at the time and at 20 steps this mariachi was a dead ducko.

I then waited for the others, lying still

and keeping a careful watch. About that time old Bill, my partner in crime, trotted up. He had my horse and the pony was not badly hurt. The bullet had gone in and out through his flank, raking him long-wise, and it wasn't even bleeding much. I was relieved about that.

"Go look at that sonofabitch over there under that mesquite, Bill," I said to my riding mate. Bill had a look and came back and reported, "He's deader than



*Contrabandista crossing the Rio Grande with their booty of illegal liquor. During Prohibition we did a lively trade with the Mex booze runners.*



*The peaceful hamlet of Columbus, NM, on March 8, 1916. The night of March 9 it erupted into a real battleground as C Troop of the 13th Cavalry rode in.*

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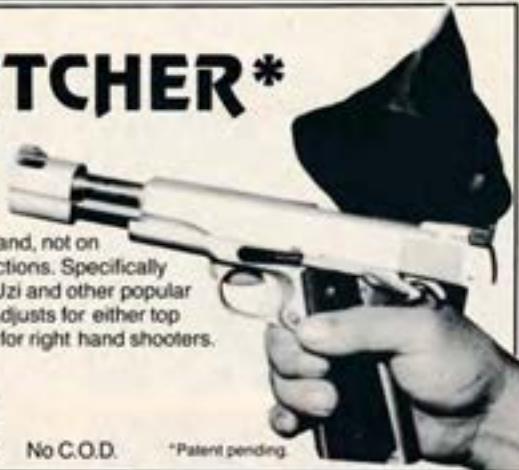
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hell."

Duval bandaged the hole in my leg as best he could and then helped me back in the saddle.

The bullet had gone through the right knee so I could stand on the left leg and hop around on it. I got on the horse but not before I gathered up the bandit's rifle. It was an old Winchester Model 94 in .25-35 caliber with 26-inch octagon barrel and a full length magazine. The would-be killer had a bandoleer of cartridges swung over his shoulder. I took it along with the rifle. I have the rifle to this day.

Unlike most Mex bully boys, he had no sixshooter which was quite out of the ordinary. Bill and I got the hell out of there. There were others of the gang somewhere in the immediate vicinity and they would be closing in on the shots which they must assuredly had heard. We were only 20 miles from our permanent camp and we headed for it.

We got back to quarters about 10 o'clock and went to bed. The bullet hole never did bleed much although it was pretty sore the next morn. I loaded myself up and took the wound in to my medico. "Well, I see you've shot yourself," was his greeting. This old doc had seen a good many bullet wounds in his day and he wasn't much excited about mine. It healed up all okay and Duval and I were riding over the same ground three weeks later.

## COP KILLER

Before I was assigned to the horseback station 20 miles west of El Paso, I had been doing duty out of the main headquarters in El Paso. This was pretty good duty as there was a lot of gunfighting. Almost nightly some of the boys (we had to work in three's) would exchange shots with the contrabandista.

These were the days of the Volstead Act and most of the stuff smuggled was liquor. Drugs were small time stuff in those days, some marijuana was brought in but it was minor indeed compared to the whisky, sotol and tequila that was crossed.

While I was on this duty up and down the Rio Grande, a new recruit named Eugene Hill ran after a smuggler in east El Paso one night. He chased this cabron up an adobe jacal and as the officer got to the door, the smuggler turned and shot him through the heart.

The killer was named Fausto Carrasco and he was a hero once he got back to Juarez. He had killed a hated Federale. Shot him down, he bragged, and he elaborated on the shooting until he was lionized by the gentry who made a business of contrabando.

We planned to kill this coyote. Justice back then was pretty clear cut and we didn't mess around. It was clear he'd killed a lawman — he didn't just confess,

he ran around bragging about it — and for that he would die.

Funny thing, we didn't have too many repeat offenders in those halycon days before Criminal Rights took precedence over the simple difference between right and wrong. Killing a lawman is wrong.

### REVENGE IS SWEET

We sent a stooley into the Calle de los Muertos in south Juarez to knock him off. We had given him a sixshooter and \$20, but the killer slipped away.

It was pretty obvious that Carrasco knew all the tricks. He then went to Chihuahua City, the capitol of the state and about a hundred miles south of Juarez. We had our "informers" — we never referred to them as stoolpigeons — to keep an eye open for his return.

He was too deeply involved in the smuggling racket to stay long below the border. Sure enough in three weeks my boy Jesusito informed me that Fausto was back in town.

In east El Paso was a curious sort of geographical phenomenon, Cordoba Island. Once the Rio Grande flowed around this isle and then during one rampage it suddenly changed its main channel and left Cordoba high and dry. The old channel was still there but there was no water.

The old river bed quickly grew up to a dense stand of willows and these were ideal for the liquor runners. They toted their loads up to the willows, sat down and waited for an all-clear signal from their point man and then legged it over the international boundary into the nearest adobe jacal on the US side. It was made to order for the contrabandista and they took full advantage.

Cordoba Island was two miles in length and 1 1/2 miles in width at its widest. There were hundreds of shacks and every chosa held a smuggler. A dozen El Paso streets ran down to the island and stopped on the banks of the now defunct river. Most of our gunfights occurred where the city street so abruptly ended.

The smugglers would spew up out of the willows and if the Border Patrol was not there to meet them, the wet goods, smuggled in cans carried in a gunny sack, were dumped into a waiting auto and sped away. The runners simply ducked across the frontier.

"We've got to inveigle this chignon Carrasco onto Cordoba Island to kill him", Punky McAndrews was speaking.

"Yep," I agreed. "And while he won't come over on the gringo side if we can just get him on the isle we can give him the business."

### A COCKFIGHT

There were three of us intent on putting a mortal end to the killer. This was long before the days when there was

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a fund to buy information and to set up such killers as Fausto. It had to come out of our pockets and while all the boys — there was 27 of us in the El Paso headquarters — chipped in the dinero, as you will appreciate, the fund was pretty limited.

We had by this time three stooleys watching our man — there was my boy, Jesusito, and along with him Enrique and Domingo. I'd meet them every night about 10 p.m. at the foot of Piedras Street and get their report.

"Carrasco comes on Cordoba to watch his loads delivered but he don't go beyond the middle of the isle," Jesus informed me.

I discussed with the others a plan to bushwhack the sonofabitch in the middle of the island. "The hell of it is he'll be in a crowd of cargadores (liquor packers) and we couldn't be sure we were killing the right man," Nelson Lynde pointed out. I agreed.

Unexpectedly we got a break. Domingo told me one night at the foot of Piedras, "Tomorrow night there will be a big cockfight at Tomas Montes rancho. It is in the middle of the isle and Carrasco told Montes he will fetch three of his roosters.

Punky, Nelson and myself crossed onto the island two hours after darkness had descended. I had my old Remington Model 11, it had a 22" barrel and the magazine ran right out to the muzzle. The other seven boys each had an old Winchester Model 1907 in .351 caliber with 10-shot clips. The clips were taped together and after the shooter ran through one clip he very rapidly flipped the magazines and was ready with another 10 shots.

We slung the guns under our armpits and barged ahead. I knew where the Tom Montes place was located and we eased up to the festivities. Jesusito had volunteered to come along just to point out Fausto Carrasco and then he planned to amble back to the international line.

The cockpit was illuminated with gas lanterns and was pretty well lighted. "Esta el cabron," Jesus whispered in my ear excitedly, as he pointed out a big burly Mexicano standing across the ring. This sonofabitch was about 40 years of age, must have stood six feet in his sock feet and was casting his weight about like he owned the place. The crowd was big and, like all latinos at a cockfight, everyone was excited. The ring was in a corral and where the roosters were put down was low chicken wire maybe two feet in height. The crowd was held back by a rope barrier and only the chicken handlers were allowed into the inner ring.

I was in a quandary. It was obvious to me that with the number of roosters held in cages off to one side that the fighting would most likely go on all night. I didn't fancy standing around hour after hour while this went on. Carrasco might stay the course and again he might fight his

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three birds and decamp.

We gringos got a few ugly glances and it was pretty obvious to me that if we stuck around too long someone was going to want to know what we were doing there. We were dressed like cowboys and with our hats pulled low it was pretty hard to tell we were Americanos. Even so it was kinda hazardous.

We worked our way around the corral fence and then I said, "When Carrasco walks into the ring and puts his rooster down, we'll take him." The others nodded in agreement.

The distance was maybe 50 feet from our position to the cockpit. We must have waited a full hour and fights were going on all the time. "After we shoot him up it will be every man for himself and we'll make a run for the line," I explained. The boys nodded.

About the time I saw Fausto pull his most gaudy gallo out of the cage and start to step over the wire barrier into the ring, I whipped the old Remington from beneath my jacket and I noted the other boys had made ready their .351s. On the instant the Mex killer placed his bird on the ground I gave him nine of the big 00 buckshot through the middle. I heard the automatic rifle going and I saw Carrasco fall. His rooster crowed loudly.

There were four Coleman lanterns hanging over the ring and I shot each of them out with as many shells. The Remington had a magazine that ran out to the muzzle and I had plenty of cartridges. When the place plunged into darkness pandemonium reigned. There were shouts, curses, cries and screams.

The crowd on the first shots had all hit the ground; on the last shot they got to their feet as one and made a rush for the fence. It was a strongly made corral but it was smashed down on two sides. The spectators took off running.

So did Punky and me with Nelson at our heels. I'll bet we reached the International line in three minutes! There were no shots and no pursuit.

The next morn I went in to see Chief Horsley. "We killed Fausto Carrasco last night, Chief," I informed him. The old Chief Patrol Inspector had been through the mill, he knew what the score was. "Where'd you knock him off?" he wanted to know.

"We give him the business on Cordoba Island," I explained.

He smiled his wintry little smile. "The contrabandista will know we did it and with our stooleys who play both side of the game, they will tell the liquor boys who engineered this job. They'll be after you, Charley," he summed up.

Within 10 days I was back on the horseback station and riding off toward Arizona. That quick change might just possibly have saved my hide. I kept the station for five years, a happy fun-filled assignment.



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The enterprising firm of Springfield Armory has developed the Kwik-Komp, a drop-in compensator for 1911 pattern pistols. The unit was designed for Springfield Armory by Illinois pistolsmith Richard Heinie. There are a lot of pistolsmiths these days who specialize in the 1911 pistol, but Heinie would make almost anyone's "top five" list, and there are more than a few who would rate him number one.

The test unit, a standard length model in .45 ACP, included a match grade barrel, barrel bushing, heavy-duty recoil and



The author found the Kwik-Komp lived up to its claims of being easy to install and reducing felt recoil. The match barrel improved accuracy too.

# SPRINGFIELD ARMORY KWIK-KOMP

By Dave Anderson

firing pin springs, a bushing wrench, and the compensator body itself. The 5.75" barrel is made of 416 stainless steel and appears to be of excellent quality. Rifling is six-groove, left hand twist, the rate of twist is standard at one turn in 16 inches. The barrel is throated to help ensure reliable feeding.

The only .45's in my gun safe at present are Colt Gold Cups, which require that the barrel hood be narrowed slightly for proper fit. This wouldn't be a very big job, but I get nervous with any tool more complicated than a hammer and, besides, I wanted to see if the unit would really drop into a standard gun with no fitting.

The solution was a call to my friend Tony. Tony is an armorer for a major police agency, and while he does no commercial gunsmithing he will sometimes provide advice and counselling when I'm working on a project. (Generally he advises me to take it to a gunsmith.) The problem was to convince Tony to lend me a slide, since for some reason he has no faith in my abilities.

"Yeah, I have a slide you can use," Tony said reluctantly after I had explained the situation, "but I don't want it wrecked. You have to promise not to use any tools."

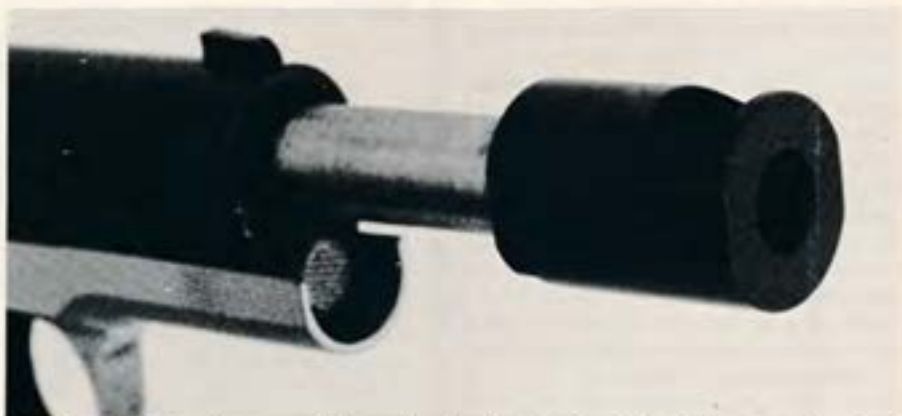
"Maybe just a plastic mallet . . ."

"No! No mallets, no files, no screwdrivers, and above all no power tools!"

"Okay, okay, don't get so excited." I was a little put out. "You know I'm not all that bad at gun tinkering."

"Yeah, right. I remember the time you tried to fit an ambi safety."

That was a low blow. It was true the ambi safety operation hadn't been a suc-



Despite five thumbs on each hand and a knack of ruining things mechanical, the author found the Kwik-Komp remarkably easy to install.

cess, but I had learned a valuable lesson—it's easier to remove metal than to put it back.

The slide Tony gave me was from a pre-Series 70 Government Model Colt, to which he had fitted a set of high-visibility fixed sights. The Kwik-Komp barrel and bushing did indeed drop right into place, and the slide/barrel assembly hooked up nicely with a Series 70 Gold Cup frame.

But would it shoot? Proper barrel fitting is critical to accuracy in the 1911 design, and it just didn't seem likely that the combination of a mismatched slide and frame, and a drop-fit barrel, would deliver.

I decided to try a few groups prior to installing the compensator body. If it wouldn't shoot I could save myself the trouble, and it would be interesting to see if the comp had any effect on accuracy. From a sandbag rest I fired a series of five

5-shot groups at 25 yards, using my standard IPSC load of a 200 gr. H&G bullet at 925 fps. The largest group was just a whisker over 2", the smallest was 3/4" high by 7/8" wide, average of all five groups was 1.7". Repeating the test with the excellent Hornady 200 gr. C/T Match jacketed bullet the average was a bit smaller at 1.6" and also more consistent, with no group exceeding 2". There are plenty of high priced custom autos that won't do any better.

More than a little impressed, I proceeded to install the comp body. About the only thing to remember here is to completely degrease the threads on both comp and barrel so the Loctite 271 thread-locking compound (included) can set up properly. Applying the Loctite, I turned the comp into place, carefully lining it up with the slide, then locked it in place with the hex-head set screw on the comp.



the bullet might touch the edge of the hole and accuracy will be lost. The exit hole on this comp measures .462", only 0.010" over bullet diameter. That it can be made this small without reducing accuracy is a real

Nothing to it, I thought, even Tony will have to admit I did a good job.


Just in time I remembered to pull back the slide and wipe away the surplus Loctite. Another five minutes and the comp

were 1.1 and 1.2 seconds for the stock unit and 0.6 and 0.7 seconds for the comp.

In other words, the rate of aimed fire was nearly doubled. There were no functioning problems at any time during the test shooting.

I asked Springfield Armory representative Bob Grueskin if they had considered offering the unit with the front sight mounted on the comp. This increases sight radius a bit, but more importantly it's much easier to maintain a sharp focus on the front sight when it isn't moving back and forth with the slide. His reply was that if customer feedback indicates that shooters want this feature, they will certainly consider it. At this time they see the demand for the Kwik-Komp coming from shooters who want a reasonably priced, effective comp that can be used without altering the basic configuration of the gun.

The Kwik-Komp is available to fit both standard length and Commander length guns, in .45ACP and .38 Super. The .38 Super units have ramped, fully supported barrels and require fitting by a qualified gunsmith. The match grade barrels can be purchased separately in either five or six inch lengths.

The Kwik-Komp unit tested is an excellent product, and at \$189, it's a great buy. For more information, write to Springfield Armory, Dept. AH, 420 West Main St., Geneseo, IL, 61254. 

## **An inexpensive drop-in compensated barrel for the .45 ACP Government Model reduces muzzle jump and gives top notch accuracy.**

tribute to good design and workmanship.

The purpose of a compensator is to increase the rate of aimed fire. To estimate the effectiveness of the Kwik-Komp I fired a series of five-shot strings on an IPSC target at 15 yards, first with a stock five-inch barrel and then with the Kwik-Komp. Ammunition was the Hornady 230 gr. FMJ at 850 fps, equivalent to factory ball.

Only strings in which all five hits were in the A-zone were counted, with the time from first to last shot recorded on a Pro-TNT timer. With the stock barrel in place, times ran around 1.8 seconds, compared to about one second with the Kwik-Komp. Moving in to seven yards, times

would have been glued to the slide, and I'd never have lived it down.

The dimension and finish of the comp matched those of the slide very well. After allowing the Loctite to cure for 24 hours I fired another series of groups and was pleased to find that accuracy was unchanged.

The comp is of the well-proven expansion chamber design, with a single large opening on top to vent powder gases. A critical part of an expansion chamber design is the front exit hole through which the bullet passes. If it's too large, more gases will escape past the bullet and the comp's effectiveness is reduced. If it's too small, or non concentric with the bore,

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## RADICAL RUGER

Continued from page 69

and stability, the Stingray features 14 circular cut-outs around the barrel that gives it a "ray gun" look.

Further adding to its space-age look is the fact that the Stingray is fitted with an expansion chamber compensator threaded to the end of the barrel to reduce muzzle jump. Looking at the profile of the Stingray reveals both the circular cut-outs and the three holes of the expansion chamber. Altogether a unique appearance indeed.

The Stingray is intended as a light-weight hunting and target pistol. The test gun is fitted with an Aimpoint 1000 scope and Volquartsen's unique *Volthane* grips which brings its weight in right at 3 lbs. 8 ozs. Barrel length is seven and one-half inches, however, this includes the one and one-half inch expansion chamber.

While I am not particularly fond of so-called "target-style" grips, Volquartsen's cleverly designed orthopedic grip on the Stingray is quite comfortable with its finger groove and thumbrest features. For those not enamored with synthetic pistol grips on fine custom guns, this target grip is also available in a variety of plain and fancy woods as well as the synthetic *Volthane*.

With its low-mounted Aimpoint 1000 scope, the Stingray looks good, feels good, points good, and shoots *goood*. Its exceptionally fine shooting qualities are further enhanced by its tuned action and a crisp, two pound trigger that may or may not shoot better because it's gold-plated.

All three test pistols feature gold-plated triggers and adjustable trigger stops.

The price of the Stingray is \$475 on the customer's gun and \$650 if Volquartsen Custom Pistols supplies the Ruger Mark II.

Volquartsen's V-2000 is billed in the catalog as being a "most unique" conversion. One of my pet peeves is the use of the terms "most unique," "quite unique," or "really unique." Something is either unique or it is not. I can be fat, fatter, or fattest, but I cannot be unique, unique, or unique. I am simply unique. Now having said all that, I must agree with Tom Volquartsen that the V-2000 is indeed "most unique!"

What makes the stainless and black-Teflon finished V-2000 *most unique* is the barrel and sighting system. The barrel is not round but rectangular from its .740" wide bottom that begins to taper about halfway up to a ventilated rib.

Measuring more than one and one-half inches in height, the barrel on the V-2000 features fins on both sides of the bottom rectangular half of the barrel to

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dissipate heat.

On very close examination, one finds that the bottom part of the barrel is actually a separate piece and serves as an underlug that both adds weight and keeps the barrel cool. Volquartsen claims that the special stainless steel in the V-2000 underlug absorbs heat quickly.

It really works! I fired the V-2000 as fast as my partner could keep me supplied with loaded magazines and experienced no problems with the barrel heating up.

The sighting system of the Volquartsen V-2000 can only be described as perfect (most unique?) for target shooting, especially for indoor ranges where the light is normally not the best for aging eyes. The rear sight is the unsurpassed Bo-Mar unit and the front is an undercut post on a serrated ramp. Both are big, bold and easy to see.

An added touch, that will be appreciated by many handgunners, is the fact that the top of the receiver is grooved to accept .22 tip-off mounts for easy scope installation. More and more shooters are going to scopes and the Volquartsen V-2000 can be easily scope mounted without marring the finish or tapping extra holes.

*Its two-pound trigger  
may  
or may not shoot better  
because it's gold plated.*

In addition to shooting the V-2000 with iron sights, I also mounted a Burris 3X using Weaver .22 tip-off mounts. By using the high-style mounts, it is possible to use the scope or by looking underneath the scope bring the iron sights into play. A very practical system, especially for varminting.

Placing the V-2000 on the postal scale gave me a surprise as it weighs only one ounce more than the Stingray, but has a much heavier feel because of the barrel configuration.

Instead of being fitted with the comfortable finger grooved, thumb-rest style grips of the Stingray, the V-2000, as well as the SS V-12, came with adjustable target grips. Here I experienced the only problem with any of the Volquartsen .22's. My fat little paw would just not fit within the parameters of the adjustable grip causing the back of my hand to get hit by the operating slide. A situation that can become quite uncomfortable quite fast.

The only solution was to completely remove the adjustable heel rest to give my shooting hand breathing room.

The V-2000 is \$635 on the customer's Mark II.

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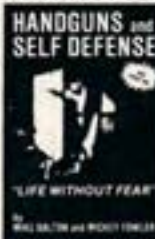
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Weighing in at four pounds even, the SS V-12 gets its weight not from the slim .625" barrel of 12-inch length, but rather from its unique adjustable weight system.

This is accomplished by the fitting of a yoke to the barrel in front of the frame. The front of the yoke carries an eight-inch rod beneath and parallel to the barrel itself and is fitted with three weights held in place by set screws. This allows the weights to be moved back and forth, or removed entirely.

*The Aim-Tech mount  
sets the  
scope high enough to  
allow  
instant iron sight use.*

The sighting system consists of a Thompson/Center Contender rear sight and a drastically undercut front post that is clamped around the barrel and is fully adjustable giving almost unlimited sight radius by scooting the front sight along the barrel.

While no malfunctions occurred with the guns themselves at any time, the rear sight on the SS V-12 did loosen. A little Loc-Tite needed here. Fortunately, this was after the SS V-12 was fitted with a scope sight.

I had such a good time shooting the SS V-12, especially off-hand bullseye style, that I had to fit it with a scope to see what it would really do. Since the receiver of the SS V-12 is not grooved to accept tip-off mounts, I siezed this as my first opportunity to use an AimTech mount and mounted an Aimpoint 2000.

AimTech is a relatively new product that offers "no-gunsmiting" mounts which accept Weaver or Weaver-style rings. In this case, the AimTech mount replaces the right grip of the Ruger Mark II and sets the scope high enough to allow instant iron sight use as well as the convenience of a scope. I will be giving a full report on the AimTech series of mounts in a later issue of *American Handgunner*.

Their mounts seem to offer good quality at reasonable prices. They can be reached at L&S Technology, 403 Smith Avenue, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 223, Thomasville, GA 31799.

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I am no bullseye shooter by any stretch of the imagination, but I did find it fairly easy to keep all my shots in the black at 25 yards using iron sights with both the SS V-12 and the V-2000. A little practice would certainly see these tighten up pretty close to 10-ring performance.

Volquartsen's latest offering is designated the V-Comp, a bolt on expansion chamber for the Ruger Bull Barrel Target and Government Model .22's. Since the V-Comp incorporates its own front sight, the shooter simply removes the factory front sight and mounts the V-Comp. The V-comp is designed to vent gases upward and reduce recoil significantly. It sells for \$39.50.

As a final test of the Volquartsen .22's, it was decided to pit the SS V-12 and the V-2000, both with iron sights, against my super-accurate, out-of-the box .22 Ruger 10-inch Bull Barrel Mark II. I can't say if all Ruger Mark II's are as accurate as this one, but I did feel it would be a good test of whether or not the accuracy of the .22 Ruger was improved by the Volquartsen touch, even though very little room is left for improvement.

*The V-2000 exhibited a 30% increase in accuracy over the standard Ruger. Switching to the SS V-12, a 17% gain was noted.*

The Ruger Mark II had somewhat of an advantage as it has been shot regularly allowing me to both know it well and what it was capable of performing.

In the head-to-head contest of the three iron-sighted .22 Rugers, two Volquartsen custom and one factory, all of the groups were fired using the Outers Pistol Rest consisting of a padded rest for the hands and a rubber covered V-rest for the barrel. It would be interesting to see what these excellent .22's would do when a machine rest is employed.

The V-2000 exhibited a 30% increase in accuracy over the standard Ruger. Switching to the SS V-12, a 17% gain in accuracy was noted over the standard Ruger.

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## .44 JAG

Continued from page 48

chambered for .45 ACP and reloaded with full moon clips for the mandatory 7th and 8th shots, and how the only thing lacking in that technology was that .45 Auto ammo didn't take the chunky pins off the table quite as spectacularly as the .44 Magnum.

"Then why don't you just shoot .44 Magnum," he asked, logically enough.

"Cause the recoil slows you down as you go between the closer-spaced pins on the 8-pin table," I answered, "And the full moon clips for that rimless .45 ACP round are simply faster than a Jetloader or any other state of the art revolver quickloader."

The wheels were turning under Grimmett's blond hair. "Suppose you had a rimless .44 Magnum that you could reload with full moon clips, with a monster bullet with no real kick or chamber pressure that you could shoot fast and accurate?"

I rolled my eyes and answered, "Sounds good. How about a rabbit that comes to my house on Easter and brings me eggs? That'd be good, too."

This would turn out to be Famous Last Words.

Before the GO-NH show was over, Bill

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had conferred with Russ Jefferson, one of the savviest gunsmiths in New England. Bill dragged me over to Russ, who told me, "We can do it. Picture a .44 AutoMag with full moons in a Model 29!"

"Picture," I interrupted, "My hands turning to jellied protoplasm when I fire a damn AutoMag at 50,000 units of pressure and turn my revolver into a hand grenade . . ."

Russ put a hand on my shoulder and looked me straight in the eye. "I think I can build it and make it work. Do you believe me?"

It took me only a very short pause to remember some of the guns I'd seen that he'd built—a sub-MOA .30-06 match rifle he'd charged his marksman customer only a few hundred bucks for, a sporting .30-06 that weighed 5½ pounds and shot about MOA and didn't hurt your shoulder. And then I answered him.

"I leave in a couple of weeks. I've got a four-inch Model 29 laying around that ain't doin' nuthin' useful except aggravate my testosterone output. I'll toss it in for the experiment. You get me the gun in time for Second Chance."

*This completely  
bollixed-up  
the superb action job  
that had been done on  
the four-inch,  
bobbed-hammer 29.*

The experiment was on. I got calls every day or two as it progressed. One real concern was that regular .44 AutoMag ammo was, in fact, far more potent than the Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum revolver was supposed to be stressed for. We considered using heavier-cylindrical .44 Magnum double actions with a reputation for taking the pounding better, like the Dan Wesson or Ruger Redhawk, but rejected them because the wider chamber spacing of the thicker steel cylinders would keep the full moon clips, designed for an N-frame Smith & Wesson or a Colt New Service, from fitting.

"Screw it," I finally told Bill. "Let's drop the AutoMag bit altogether. Make the damn thing a wildcat with a shorter case so they can't get an AutoMag round into the chamber."

Bill and Russ agreed instantly. I had just made the one piddling contribution to a round that would be named one-third after me: the wildcat .44 JAG, which stands for Jefferson-Ayoob-Grimmett. Actually, both Grimmett and Jefferson contributed vastly more than I did, but my name comes before Bill's because they needed a vowel in the middle for a catchy sound.

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Thank God my name isn't Unger: who'd want to own a .44 J&G? No matter: the die was cast.

It was cast in the agreement, and then cut in steel: Russ Jefferson spec'd the chambering reamers from Clymer. Only two of the revolvers were ever made in full .44 AutoMag chambering: my prototype four-inch 29, and Bill Grimmitt's.

Rechambering was perhaps the least of it. The cylinder face had to be completely re-cut, and the ejector star complex accordingly re-cut and re-finished. Head-space would now make the chambering of a stock .44 Magnum round a dangerous and iffy proposition if a firing pin fell on it.

This also completely bollixed-up the superb action job that had been done on the four-inch, bobbed-hammer 29 by Rick Devoid before I sacrificed the gun to the caliber-change experiment. The same happened to the once-decent factory stock action of Grimmitt's DA/SA 29. By the time the work and the proofing was done, there was no time to return it to Rick to put the firing mechanism compo-





nents back into a relatively friction-free relationship with one another. The raw, converted guns and I flew to Second Chance.

Also in the belly of the airliner were the prototype loads. Most were cut down from Lake City Arsenal .308 Match Rifle brass. Some were contained in CDM .44 AutoMag casings. I know not what others may think, but I only half-jokingly suspect that the Mexican armory melted down ashtrays to make those CDM casings; that could explain the softness, the horrible quality control, the great unwillingness for the casings to leave the Smith & Wesson chambers when their service was done.

This is one thing if you are shooting a metal animal every now and then with a stopwatch running, and quite another matter if you have to fire six shots, eject, reload another six, and fire at least two more—all hits—in well under 10 seconds if you expect to win anything.

We quickly set the loads in the CDM brass aside for sighting in, and stayed with



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the loads in the casings Russ had crafted from Lake City and Remington rifle brass. These stood up far better and worked perfectly, with no hitches in extraction.

Prior to Second Chance, we had one day to try out the rounds. I had been gone, so Russ and Bill had carefully assembled not one but two loads. The "starter load," the six in the gun, were built around the 290 grain Denver bullet, a slug that has an identity crisis and is not sure if it's shaped like a wadcutter, a semi-wadcutter, or a beer keg. Trundling along in the low 800 fps velocity range, it sort of lifted the pin up and carried it in front of it into the backstop. The load was 6.5 grains of Winchester 231 powder in front of a CCI 300 primer. Recoil was negligible; it felt like shooting a .45, only the target moved considerably more when hit.

*It blew my Model 29  
completely out of time  
with fewer than 100  
rounds fired.*

But the Second Chance revolver match requires 8 rounds with a mandatory reload, even if the first six shots have somehow managed to take all eight pins off the table. That rule, by the way, is not facetious: the guys who've set the record time in this event, speed runs like six seconds, did it when they lucked out and a bad hit toppled one pin into two others, which just decided to roll off the table. Ergo, 8 pins with six shots, and their time stopped while they were halfway through their desperately-executed reload.

That has changed: Second Chance sponsor Rich Davis has since decreed that even if all eight roll off with three shots, you must empty your revolver, reload, and fire two more rounds for the time to stop and be counted for the record.

Now, reloading a .45 ACP revolver with full moon clips is one thing. The rounds are short, and given the great amount of slop and wobble of the case heads inside the circle of the metal clip, it has been noted that .45 hardball is the best thing to reload with for maximum speed.

However, when you have a much longer cartridge like a rimless .44 Magnum wildcat, the flop is considerably greater. In fact, the damn thing looks like an ice cream cone upside down, with the bullet noses pointed more toward the ejector star than toward the six firing chambers you want to make their home. If you couple that with the flat points of the 290 grain Denver bullet, you start getting a serious reload problem that negates

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all the advantages of the full moon clip.

Enter, then, the "reloading load." I told Russ and Bill I'd need something with a pointy nose. The result was a scaled-down version of my old "Ram Load" during the short time I shot competitive metallic silhouette. This was comprised of the superb Hornady 265 grain softnose semi-jacketed bullet, this time with 7.0 grains of W-W 231, giving us a very conservative velocity at around the low 800 fps threshold.

In my 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " Model 29, I had used this bullet and a vastly heavier charge of 231 for the 40 lb. steel sheep at 200 yards. You will forgive me if I don't publish the load. It was witnessed to hit the metal rams on the lower legs hard enough to turn them sideways so they would fall in slow pirouettes. It also blew my Model 29 completely out of time with fewer than 100 rounds fired.

This light pin load was much nicer to the gun. With several hundred rounds through, no loss of timing or parts integrity was noted in the 4 x 44. Surprisingly, the 265 grain load performed even better than the heavier lead Denver round. On one memorable table, the Hornady bullet hit Pin #2 so violently that it split it asunder, and did so with such force that the large chunks of wood blew Pin #1 and Pin #3 completely off the table. This would have given me a great record time, were it not for the fact that I had jerked the trigger and taken the time to fire at and miss #1, which is why it was there to begin with. Nonetheless, three for one on bowling pins is most impressive ballistically.

Again, recoil was very controllable, as the videotapes, taken by LFI alumnus Peter Dayton, clearly show. About the only difference is that broad daylight shows merely a puff of smoke with the lead bullet load, and a bright flash from the muzzle and cylinder gap with the jacketed Hornady.

We wanted to see a victory with the JAG at Second Chance. It was not to be. The longest I've ever led that marathon event was four or five days, and that was back in the '70s, and never with revolvers. I put the JAG in the hands of the best wheelgunner I could find at the Chance, Craig Wood of Vermont.

I barely made the top 20 in the four-inch revolver match (460 competitors), and Craig didn't do much better. What hurt me was crummy shooting on my part, but what hurt Craig was the fact that there had been no time to re-tune the actions between the last-minute conversions and the shoot. As soon as we returned, Grimmer's gun and mine went back to Rick Devoid (Tarnhelm Police Equipment, Dept. AH, 67 $\frac{1}{2}$  Rumford St., Concord, NH 03301) and got slicked back up again. Now, they were ready. Mine also sported a Patridge front sight installed by Jefferson (the better to pick up in bad light and under stress, don't you know).

By the time you'll have read this, I'll

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have shot Second Chance again with my .44 JAG. Reload as quick as a Model 25-2, same recoil, and far more takeoff power. I can't live up to its potential—I'll have to talk someone like Jerry Barnhart or Mike Plaxco, true Second Chance champions, into shooting it to see what it can really do—but in a dozen years of shooting at Second Chance, it's the best combo I've seen for the Eight Pin Revolver Match, and I say that as the one-time professional shooter who said what the ideal gun for it would be and saw it built, not as a godfather with any stake in it. I'll never make a nickle off the .44 JAG: that belongs to Jefferson and Grimmett.

I'm getting too deep into shooting bowling pins," I thought one night as I cleaned the .44 JAG. "First I wrote a



book about it (*Hit the White Part*, \$7.95 + 2.00 postage and handling from Police Bookshelf, Box 122, Concord, NH 03301), and then I instigated the first damn wildcat cartridge designed for bowling pin shooting. But what else is the .44 JAG good for?"

The answers came surprisingly fast. I know several people who have had enough failures with factory ammo that they only trust their own handloads for anything serious. I don't happen to agree with that philosophy, if only because I've been in court in shooting cases enough to know that using handloads—what opposing counsel will describe as "bullets so deadly they couldn't be bought on the open market, so the defendant had to skulk into his basement and make his own"—can backfire on you about three ways to Sunday after you've actually used



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one. If one simply didn't trust any ammo but his own, a wildcat round like the JAG is the most logical reason for having handloads in your gun: "Nobody makes ammo for this special target gun in factories, your Honor. We have to load the ammo ourselves, like a photographer rolling raw film for an unusual, special purpose camera."

Reason #2: The gun, or at least its caliber, was born in sport. It wasn't made to be a killing gun. It was made for reaction target shooting in a tournament setting. By a happy coincidence, any handload for it that duplicates the ballistics of the various street-proven .44 Magnum loads will do exactly the same when fired from a .44 JAG.

Reason #3: I know that a great many people out there with little kids running around the household just don't feel comfortable having any sort of loaded revolver around, and that many also are uncomfortable enough with auto pistols that they won't go for the old advice, "Keep an empty Colt 1911 in one place and a loaded magazine someplace else." If they're going to start the defense of their household with an empty revolver they have to load in a hurry, *nothing* beats those fast full moon clips.

Reason #4: The potential for high-powered hunting handloads is significant. That chopped-down .308 rifle case simply handles more pressure: it was designed to function at pressure levels that are supposed to blow up revolvers.

Does this mean that a cut-down .308 case inside your revolver turns your revolver into something that can magically take the pressures of a Mauser-type bolt rifle action? *No, of course not. What it does mean is that it gives you an extra safety margin when you seek maximum .44 Magnum loads within the reasonable and prudent parameters of documentable guides like the published reloading manuals.*

To be frank, we don't really know yet what the hunting potential is for the .44 JAG. We haven't had enough animals die yet to get a feel of its potential killing power. We do know that anything a .44 Mag can do, a .44 JAG can do. Bore diameter is the same, leaving the person who presently loads his own .44 Magnum ammo pretty close to set up to handle a .44 JAG. The JAG has been proven an easy and forgiving round to reload.

By the time you read this, I shall probably have sacrificed a second Model 29 to the experiment, this one with a long barrel, 8 1/2" to be specific.

I will shortly be taking the .44 JAG to Africa. By then we should have some interesting "full industrial strength" loads utilizing the 320-grain ultra-hard JDJ bullet.

In international air travel, as in domestic, one's ammo must be in a separate container from the locked, checked luggage that contains the firearms. I've been sep-

arated from my suitcases often enough to know that you can get someplace with your guns but not with your ammo, and Yellow Cab does not deliver late arrivals of suitcases at the Johannesburg airport into the bush.

Accordingly, I intend to have Rick Devoid fit a cylinder of conventional .44 Magnum persuasion to my JAG, in case I have to buy ammo there. Going that convertibility route is a bit trick, since S&W does not sell .44 Magnum cylinders to anyone outside the plant; it sort of requires you to have another .44 Magnum to cannibalize. What a deal: I have this 8% that sacrificed itself to maximum ram loads, and I think I may just work this out.

The .44 JAG: is it for you? Damned if I know. If you're into shooting bowling pins under the Second Chance Rules for the four-inch Stock-Configuration revolver stage, it should be the neatest trick since compensators, and they don't allow compensators in four-inch wheelgun class at Second Chance, so that kind of limits the field.

We've discussed its other special purpose applications. I'll tell you frankly, whether you buy one or not is going to depend on whether you have the same kind of adventurous handgunning soul as Bill Grimmer and Russ Jefferson. If you do, get on board: we need some more heavy hitters who can give us input on research from their angle instead of ours.

I don't really know what's going to happen with the .44 JAG. It might take off—though history tells us that, with rounds like the .22-250, it takes a lifetime to make a new round popular.

If you've got an extra 29 around, you might just be tickled to take it beyond the edge and make it a JAG. Heaven knows, the conversion is reasonable: \$275 done on your Model 29 or 629 Smith & Wesson, or if you don't have one, that plus whatever it costs Russ wholesale for the .44 Magnum of your choice in the Smith & Wesson catalog, with standard 10% markup.

The unprimed cases, laboriously hand-made, are \$35 for 50, and in the unlikely event that you don't have time to reload your own, those cases can be reloaded for \$19.95 per 50 with the bullet of your choice, including components.

I had a piece of this action, so I'm not going to push it: conflict of interest, you know, even though I don't make any money on it. All I can tell you is, I participated in the experiment and considered it a success, and thought that if you had any of the same requirements, you might find it a blast to jump in on the ground floor of the wildcat cartridge project and experiment with us.

It's not going to change the world or anything, but it's sure as heck going to be fun.

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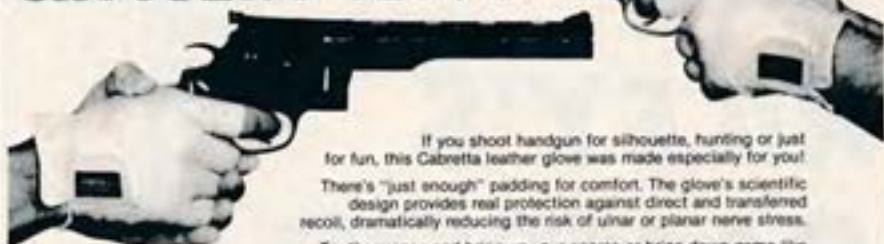


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# RILEY'S RAMROD

*By John Taffin*

In 1961, two radically new handguns were introduced by Remington and Ruger. Remington's contribution was the single shot bolt action pistol with the space age look, the XP-100 .221 Fireball.

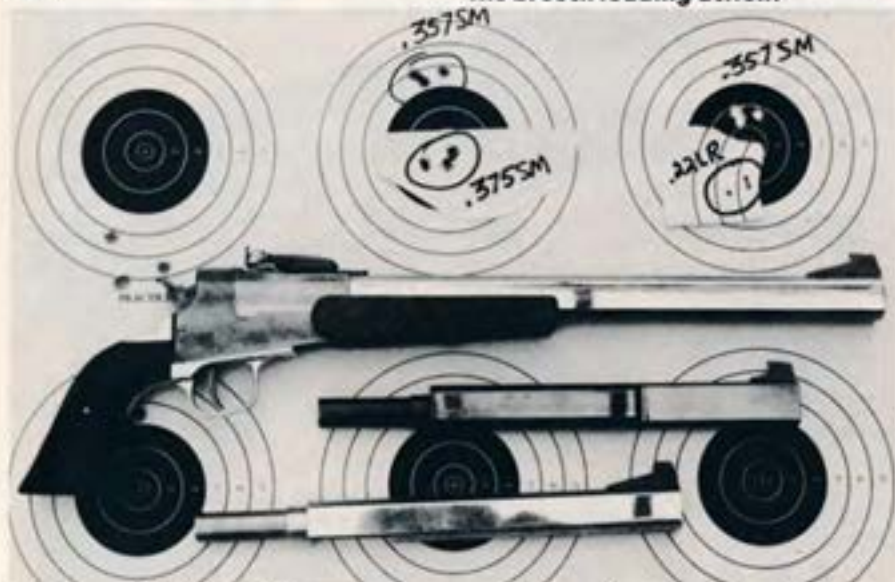
Ruger, being much more traditional, utilized their single action frame fitted with a dummy cylinder and came up with the single shot Hawkeye in .256 Winchester. The .256 had been tested in various revolvers by both Ruger and Colt, but proved to be unworkable in conventional revolvers because of its bottle-neck shape.

The Hawkeye disappeared from the Ruger lineup virtually unnoticed by the shooting public and today is highly desirable as a collector's item. Remington's XP-100 came close to same fate but was saved in the '70s by two things: the beginning of long range silhouetting and the demand by handgun hunters for powerful pistols that were virtually short rifles.

The XP is no more in .221 but is now offered in the more powerful .223, 7-08, .308, and .35 Remington chamberings plus it



**The hammer is cocked for firing, and the lever on the left is simply the take-down switch to break open the breech loading action.**



**The Ramrod delivered "extreme accuracy," according to author Taffin.**

has been wildcatted in dozens of calibers from .22 rimfire up to .458 Winchester.

The XP-100 paved the way that has been followed by such single shot pistols as the Thompson/Center Contender, the Merrill, the Wichita, the M.O.A., the Pachmayr Dominator, and numerous others. The Contender has been the most popular because of its reasonable cost and its ability to readily accept interchangeable barrels of both T/C's manufacture as well as custom barrels such as offered by SSK Industries.

Lately, I have been working with a prototype pistol, Riley's Ramrod, that possesses the best features of both the Ruger Hawkeye and the T/C Contender. That is, it has the traditional single action style grip and the interchangeable barrel feature.

Robert Riley of Tucson, Arizona is the creator of the Ramrod and the test pistol supplied features ten-inch barrels in .22RF and .357 SuperMag, and a 14-inch barrel in .375 SuperMag. It started with a Seville grip frame, but all other parts are handmade by Riley who has considerable experience having worked for both United Sporting Arms and Freedom Arms in the past.

Riley's Ramrod has the traditional single action feel, but is definitely a high quality single shot pistol. Fitting of metal parts is near perfect with the mating of the block and frame barely detectable. All three barrels mate up precisely with the block, and require the removal of only two screws, one in the forearm, and one in the front of the block to accomplish the change of barrels.

Operating the Ramrod is the easiest of any single shot pistol I have experienced. Next to the firing hammer, on the left, is a second hammer lever used to break open the pistol. Operation is positive and easy and can be accomplished by the thumb working the hammer lever without changing the position of the hand on the grip.

Barrels start as full one-inch bull barrels but are machined flat on both sides to a width of .790". Even at this, the 14-inch .375



SuperMag barrel and frame weighs right at the IHMSA and NRA limit of 4½ pounds.

Rather than having both front and rear sights mounted on the barrel, the rear sight of the Ramrod is permanently mounted on the block and each barrel must be sighted in as it is mated to the block. Barrels can be tapped for scope mounts which can be used without removing the rear sight. Front sights are the highly desirable undercut post type that are perfect for silhouetting.

Test firing the Riley Ramrod with the three mentioned calibers proved to be an experience in extreme accuracy and reliable functioning. No malfunctions of any kind were encountered and all barrels were easy to remove and replace. Other than its availability only as a prototype, I can find no fault with this quality single shot whatsoever.

Those who find the grip frame of the various single shots based on the Colt Model 1911 punishing will find the single action style grip frame of Riley's Ramrod quite comfortable.

What is in the future for this presently one-of-a-kind pistol? Riley is presently negotiating with a financial backer that will guarantee the production of 300 Ramrods. This would satisfy the IHMSA 200 gun requirement before a pistol is legal for Production competition. For more information, contact Robert Riley, 5702 E. Calle Silvana, Dept. AH, Tucson, AZ 85711. At the present time, Riley is quoting a standard price of \$400 for a complete gun with one barrel and \$650 for a three barrel pistol package.



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# **SAKO TRIACE**

*A tri-caliber pistol for ISU competition fulfills the excruciating demands of the three disciplines of the world's most demanding pistol tournaments.*

*By Charles E. Petty*



Every Olympic year there is renewed interest in a rarified form of pistol competitions collectively known as "International." The International events utilize a number of different guns in a variety of courses of fire, but they all have a common denominator: they're hard as hell!

Whether it's precision 50 meter shooting at a minuscule 10-ring in Free Pistol or one shot at each of five turning targets in four seconds of Rapid Fire, the events call for the utmost from both men and guns.

As best as I can recall, no perfect score has ever been fired in any International event.

Each event traces its history to military origins and the field of combat, just like the Olympic Games themselves. But over the years the guns have evolved into highly specialized thoroughbreds suitable for racing only. Strictly competition guns for experts.

Free pistols, for example, have trigger pulls so light that they are measured in grams. Some adjustable triggers can be set so fine that merely tilting the gun past 45° will cause the gun to fire. The weight of the trigger is enough to fire itself!

Although not quite as radical as some of the exotic Free Pistols, the Sako Triace (pronounced try-ace) is an excellent example of the gun used in three of Olympic's International events.

The Sako name is well known to rifle

shooters and hunters, but it is an obscure tidbit that the Finnish gunmaker also has a pistol. The Triace is convertible by exchanging barrels and slides to make it suitable for Centerfire, Rapid Fire and Standard Pistol.

The gun is chambered in .22 Short (Rapid Fire), .32 S&W Long (Centerfire) and .22 Long Rifle (Standard Pistol). It may be purchased as a three-caliber set or in a single caliber.

I first shot the Triace during a visit to the Sako factory in Riihimäki, Finland in

the fall of 1986. That brief encounter was enough to encourage me to further testing. So for the last few years I've been shooting the Triace in matches and practice, and loved every minute of it.

Shooting the Triace is something everyone should do just once. Like riding a fine horse or driving a high performance sports car, it's something to be experienced.

In .22 Short the feeling is difficult to describe for there's lots of noise and some muzzle flash, but absolutely no



The trigger on the Triace is adjustable for length of pull, over-travel and weight of pull. The allen bolt forward of the trigger holds the unit in place.

movement. Three ports on top of the barrel vent a portion of the gas straight up and the jet action effectively dampens any muzzle rise. This isn't a new feature—rapid fire guns have used compensator ports for years, but Sako's system seems especially effective.

In the Rapid Fire match, the shooter is faced with a bank of five turning targets that are somewhat man-like. The scoring rings are elongated and the 10-ring measures 10 cm by 15 cm (3.9" x 5.9"). Each subsequent scoring ring is increased by the same proportion out to a 6-ring, which is the lowest shot value.

The shooting technique required is to sweep the gun across the target bank in a continuous motion (with four seconds to aim and shoot five shots, there isn't time to stop and aim on each target) and have the shot break when the sights are somewhere in the 9-ring. In practice, it's not unlike shooting a moving target, but with the "lead" removed.

Obviously any sort of recoil is anathema for Rapid Fire shooters, thus the .22 Short is the universal cartridge. The Sako's .22 Short barrel fills the bill for the Rapid Fire event.

The next part of the three-caliber set is .22 Long Rifle for the Standard Pistol



*"Shooting the Triace is something everyone should do once. Like riding a fine horse or driving a high performance sports car, it's something to be experienced."*



course. The Standard Pistol is fired at 25 meters. The scoring rings are tiny with the 10-ring measuring a shade under two-inches.

The .22 LR Triace functions well with every standard velocity load I tried, but the gun seems to have a fondness for RWS R-50 match ammunition. Federal Champion and Winchester Mk. IV seem to do quite nicely too.

The final goodie in the Sako Triace bag of tricks is the Centerfire .32 S&W Long. The cartridge is suitable for NRA Centerfire competition, but it doesn't seem to be popular. There isn't an American-made auto pistol chambered for the .32 S&W Long. It's a shame that there's no demand for it because the .32 S&W Long is superbly accurate and offers substantially less recoil than .38 Special target loads.

Federal is the only US manufacturer to offer the round, which fires a 98 gr. hollowbase wadcutter. The Sako is designed for this style of bullet and will not func-



**Federal and Sako are the only .32 Smith & Wesson Long ammunition manufacturers currently supplying ammunition for the Triace.**

tion with a roundnose. I've shot Federal, Sako and Lapua wadcutter in the Triace and all functioned perfectly.

Speer offers a 98 gr. HBWC, an excellent little bullet, and reloading the .32 S&W Long is as simple as the .38 Special. I use 1.5 grs. of Bullseye for accuracy nearly as good as factory ammunition.

The International Centerfire match is one that contains two distinctly different elements. First there's the precision stage which consists of 30 rounds fired at 25 meters in five shot strings in six minute time limits.

The second portion is the Duelling Course, an obvious throwback to the sport's origins in personal combat. The shooter begins at the "ready" with his gun lowered. A target turns for three seconds, then spins away. This is repeated for 30 rounds.

One of the attractions of the Sako Triace is its suitability for all three types of competition. Only the barrel and slide are interchanged to convert from one caliber to another, so the shooter is always using the same trigger and grips. Conversion is simple—there's a single screw that locks the barrel and slide to the frame.

These are complete units and the most obvious difference is the weight of the slides. Since all three operate by straight blowback, the slide mass must increase with the power of the cartridge. The slide of the .22 Short is quite light, moderate on the .22 Long Rifle and rather large on the .32 S&W.

The trigger, as it came from the factory, was very good but there is one caution needed here. In order to convert to .22 Short, the shooter must also make a trigger adjustment to prevent doubling. The Sako designers have cleverly provided a two-position adjustment of the sear spring and it requires moving a pin from one hole to another.

There's nothing difficult about it, although it does take a bit of time. No change is needed in the trigger as long as you go from .22 Long Rifle and .32 S&W Long.

There are also adjustments for trigger location, over-travel and weight of pull.

One of the things American handgunners find different about International shooting, other than the diabolically small scoring rings, is the basic style of grip. Most international pistols are muzzle heavy and the grip is designed to favor a wrist position that is droopy compared to the more erect position of American target pistols. This takes a bit of getting used to, but it helps to lower the center of gravity so that recoil is absorbed in a straight line with the arm.

The Triace grips have an adjustable palm rest and are generously oversized to allow the individual shooter to fit them to his own hand. For this reason, there's no checkering, nor are they finished. It took several shooting sessions, a little carving



here and there and a lot of sanding to get things adjusted to my liking. But the final glove-like fit was well worth the effort.

The Triace set comes in a neatly fitted attache case which holds everything you need including a couple of boxes of ammo. In addition, there's extra room for both of the additional barrel and slide units. There's a roll-up tool kit, six magazine (two for each caliber), proper metric Allen head wrenches, cleaning gear, a set of plastic chamber plugs for dry-firing and several sight blades of varying width. That's a bunch of accessories, folks!

The Sako Triace is deluxe in every way and it should be—it ain't cheap! Depending on how you want it, it can run as much as four figures. It's virtually handmade and the cost actually is in line with similar guns for International shooting.

Anyone who has a chance to shoot or, better yet, own a Triace had better understand that this thoroughbred must be treated accordingly. It is a high-grade target pistol and demands a much higher level of attention than ordinary guns. Cleaning must be meticulous to insure proper functioning and the only jams I experienced were from lack of proper cleaning. My fault, not the gun's.

International style pistol competition is, at least as far as I'm concerned, the most demanding of all the shooting disciplines. It isn't everyone's cup of tea, though, and there is notable shortage of properly equipped ranges in this country.

It is the most solitary of the shooting sports with shooters physically separated from one another into little booths. It's just you, the gun and the target. Maybe that's why I like it.



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# S & W BODYGUARD

By Charles E. Petty

This is a weird looking critter. It has an odd hump and I sometimes think of it as the Quasimodo of the gun world. It's a S&W Bodyguard, now known as the Model 49. When first introduced in 1955, the Bodyguard was offered in the alloy frame version (Model 38) which was a reversal of Smith's normal practice of steel followed by alloy. Then, in 1959, they introduced a steel frame version known as the Model 49. Now there's a stainless steel version, the Model 649.

There's absolutely nothing beautiful about it and it probably drew a few stares at first. Simply stated, it's ugly.

But it was Smith & Wesson's answer to a real problem in carry guns: the cursed snagging hammer. It seems as if, back in the Fifties, cops carried pistols in their pockets and wanted something that wouldn't wear holes in their pants. The hammer shroud which gives it the humpback look was S&W's answer, and it works.

One of the agencies that still follows that practice is the Michigan State Police. They issue a special version with a stainless steel cylinder to their officers to carry as a backup. Their uniforms have special leather pockets so that everyday carrying won't wear out the pocket.

In every other respect it's the same as the Chief's Special. It's a five shot .38 Special revolver with a two-inch barrel that uses S&W's "J" frame. It has been in the product line all these years because it is eminently functional. It isn't a target pistol although I shoot plenty of tens with it, and it really isn't

much fun to shoot because the light weight (20 ounces for the steel versions and 14 oz. for the alloy frame) and small grip make the recoil a mite sharp. But that's okay, if I ever really need it the last thing I'll have time to worry about is recoil. Actually the accuracy is surprisingly good and it will keep the rounds in the ten ring of the B-27 target at 25 yds if I do my part.

Smith & Wesson was kind enough to send me a new Model 649 for photos and testing and what I'm about to tell you may not endear me to them. Under the heading of "Special Instructions" on the packing list was the notation, "QC Audit." This means that it is supposed to receive extra inspection because they know where it's going. Although I don't blame them for that, it really makes me wonder when one of these guns has something wrong with it. That was exactly the case with the 649. There was a 0.010" to .015" gap at the top of the side plate. If they always make guns like that I wouldn't have thought much of it, but they don't and it looked really bad.

Then, when I shot the gun the first time I found it impossible to eject one of the fired cases. I'd push the ejector rod and the cases would pop right out, but when I released the ejector it would pull one fired case right back into the charge hole. The cause was a king-sized burr on the star. It was obvious that the part had been popped in just as it came from the machine without any deburring or polishing.

The burr dug right into the case and it took

considerable effort to remove the empty. This is a much more serious defect than the side plate fit, for it was impossible to reload the gun quickly. All it took was one pass with a deburring tool and there was no more problem. Now the new gun shoots just as well as my old one.

A continuing question about small frame .38 Special revolvers such as the Bodyguard family is whether you should use +P ammunition. S&W advises against using it in "J" frame guns because the extra recoil of +P ammunition will accelerate wear and continued use can cause the gun to shoot out of time. That's the alignment of cylinder and barrel. And if that happens, other more serious problems may arise.

Of course, I know of law enforcement agencies that use +P exclusively without ill effect, but my feeling is that use should be restricted to the minimum amount needed to be proficient and the gun should be periodically inspected for any signs of trouble. +P ammunition is loaded to pressure levels that are 15-20% above standard .38 Special loads but these are still safely below SAAMI standard proof pressures for the cartridge.

So, for plinking or recreational shooting, I always use standard velocity ammo but don't hesitate to load with +P for duty. My old Bodyguard has fired quite a bit and is still doing just fine. The key is limited use and shooters need to be aware that a problem caused by too much +P ammunition may not be covered by the warranty.

It's tempting to call any gun that has been in production so long a classic, but I just can't. The gun's too homely. But beauty is as beauty does and the Bodyguard is, above all, utilitarian. So, if I ever find myself in the deep stuff, it will be the prettiest gun I've ever seen.



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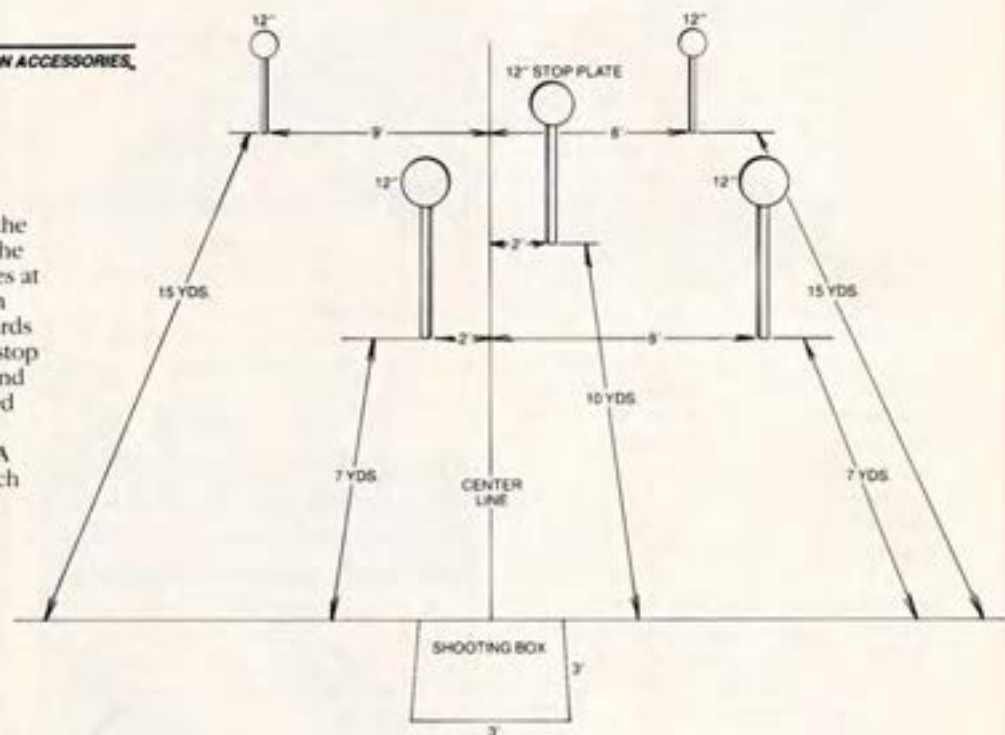


### STAGE 1—ROUNDBOUT

TARGETS: 12" round steel plates

RANGE: 7, 10, and 15 yards

PROCEDURE: The contestant stands in the shooting box facing the targets and on the start signal, draws and engages the plates at 7 and 15 yards. They may be engaged in any order, except the stop plate at 10 yards must be engaged last. Failure to hit the stop plate will result in an automatic 30-second string. The course of fire will be repeated for a total of five strings. The best four strings will be totalled for a final score. A five second penalty will be given for each premature start and each target not hit (except the stop plate).



## STEEL CHALLENGE

Continued from page 61

the match. Angelo Spagnoli has seen Brian post a very good total time of 11.04 seconds for the stage, and he holds a .76 second lead over him. Angelo must shoot 11.79 to win the Steel Challenge, an average of 2.95 per run.

"I can close my eyes and shoot three second runs in practice," Angelo reflected after the match. "I really wasn't worried by the pressure. I'd prepared myself mentally to win."

Angelo seems remarkably cool and calm as he steps into the shooter's box and awaits the Range Officer's command to load and make ready. If he's nervous, it doesn't show.

After taking a few sight pictures and adjusting his stance to align perfectly with the targets, Angelo signals that he's ready as his hands rise into the "surrender" start position, wrists above the

shoulders.

At the start signal his hand streaks to his Bruce Gray custom .38 Super in his Ernie Hill Fas-Trac holster. His draw is smooth and fast, his stance a perfect isosceles. Everything looks good, but he misses!

A groan rises from the crowd as the Competition Electronics timer flashes the bad news: 3.12 seconds. Brian Enos, sitting in the competitor's enclosure, displays no emotion whatsoever but one can assume that he's quite interested in the proceedings.

Angelo makes his second run cleanly and as the last Hornady 124 grain 9mm bullet impacts the stop plate, the crowd sees the official time: 2.81 seconds. Two more "keepers" like that, and he's won the Steel Challenge.

Angelo fires his third run even better, 2.75 seconds. He has two more to go but only the best four out of five runs will count for his score. The Steel Challenge rules dictate that the worst of the five runs is a "throw away" and does not count. Angelo needs only one more sub-three second run to clinch the champi-

onship.

Obviously not concerned with giving writers the great copy of "it came down to the wire," Angelo displays the poise under pressure that is the mark of a true champion: his fourth run is 2.85. He has just won the Steel Challenge!

While the finish was exciting and, actually, "down to the wire," the honest truth is that Angelo Spagnoli led the field from the first stage. He was never anywhere but First Place from the beginning to the end of the tournament.

## THE ITALIAN STALLION

The 29-year-old firearms instructor from San Francisco operates the Firearms Training Institute with his partner and world-class competitor Stu Mullins. (For information on classes and private tutoring, contact F.T.I. at P.O. Box 2239, Petaluma, CA 94953.)

Angelo is a first-generation American having immigrated from Italy when he was three. He still has family in Italy and he travels there frequently to visit his family and to coach the Italian IPSC team.



# STEEL CHALLENGE

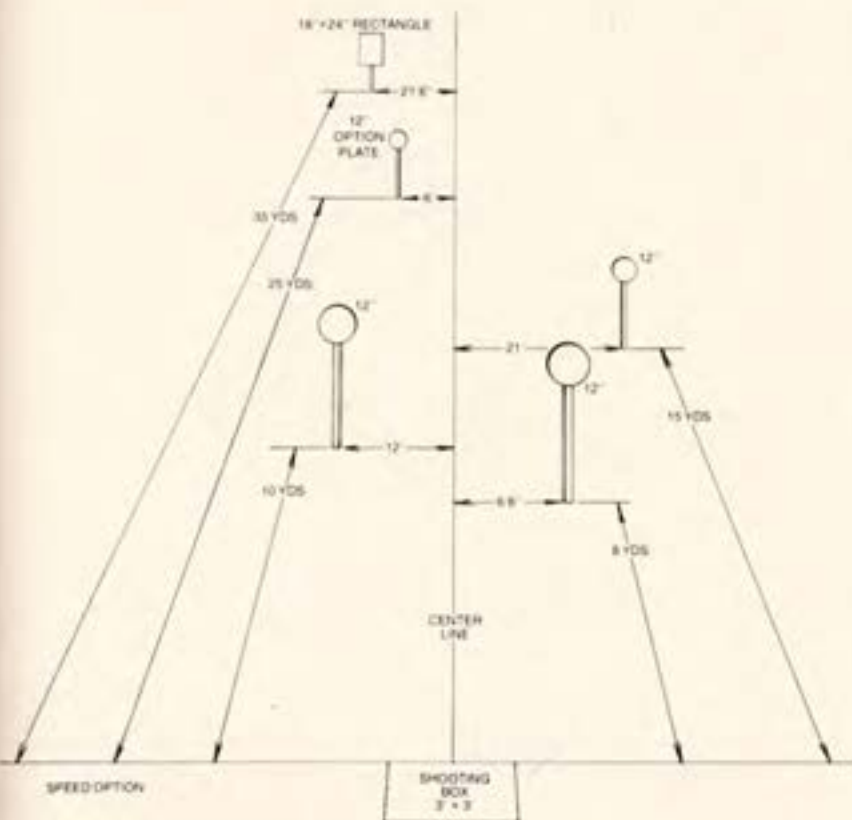
## COURSE OF FIRE

### STAGE 2—SPEED OPTION

TARGETS: 18" x 24" rectangle and 12" round steel plates

RANGE: 8, 10, 15, 25 and 35 yards

PROCEDURE: The shooter stands facing the targets and on the signal to start, the contestant draws and engages the round plates at 8, 10 and 15 yards. The round plate at 25 yards is an optional target and does not have to be hit. If the option target is hit, a bonus of two seconds will be deducted from the contestant's total time. The bonus is awarded only once in each string and then only if all other three round plates and the rectangle stop plate are hit in the string. The four 12" plates may be fired in any order, but the contestant must engage the rectangle last. Failure to hit the rectangle and stop the timer will automatically give the shooter a 30-second string. A five second penalty will also be given for each premature start and for each of the mandatory targets not hit. The course of fire will be repeated for a total of five strings. The best four strings will be totalled for a final score.



A world-class shooter who has placed in the top ten of all the major matches, Angelo put it all together in 1989 after finishing 11th in the 1988 Steel Challenge. He practiced his shooting religiously in conjunction with a program of mental training.

"You have to be prepared to win," Angelo explains. "The success syndrome kills most competitors. If you find yourself in the lead and you don't expect it, I guarantee you won't be in the lead tomorrow."

Angelo pictures himself winning, a visualization technique that two-time Bianchi Cup champion John Pride also employs. "I told myself that this would be my last match if I didn't win. I was convinced that I would win or never shoot again," Angelo said.

Did he really mean it? Never is a long time.

"Well, not really. If I'd lost I'd still be shooting, but I told myself that I have to win or I'd never shoot a match again. I guess it worked!" Angelo said.

But what about the pressure of coming into the last stage as the leader? Had he

prepared himself for the wobbly knees and trembling hands that can come with the pressure cooker of shooting for all the marbles?

"Chip McCormick (1986 and 1988 Steel Challenge champion) was very helpful," Angelo explained. "Chip talked to me on the night before the last day and Chip said you'd feel something you've never felt before. That helped a lot when I got on the line and I knew that I just had to settle down and shoot consistently."

### THE WINNING GUN

Angelo shot a .38 Super Springfield Armory pistol elaborately customized by Bruce Gray. The gun is specially refined for "steel shooting" with features that make it ideal for the unique requirements of the Steel Challenge.

The rules of the match do not specify a "power factor," only that the minimum caliber is 9mm. (A few years ago there was a debate over the .380 ACP. Did "9mm" refer to bore size, in which case the .380 would be legal? Or did it refer to the cartridge 9mm Luger, in which case the .380 ACP would be illegal? The rul-

ing: 9mm Luger is the smallest legal cartridge.)

Because of the lack of a power factor, Angelo's "steel gun" shoots a 9mm Hornady 124 gr. jacketed flat point in his .38 Super propelled by 4.2 grs. of WW 452AA and Winchester primers in Winchester cases. This is a soft shooting load.

The guns can only manage about 3 1/2" groups with lead bullets, but Angelo says the Hornady jacketed flat points shrink the clusters down to one-inch at 50 yards. He's enthusiastic about the Hornady target bullet: "It's very, very, very good!"

The Gray custom "steel gun" is quite light at 38 ozs, with a Commander-length slide for an overall length of 5 1/4". The winner's pistol features a double chamber compensator designed by Bruce Gray. The sight radius is very short at only four-inches, which contrasts sharply with Chip McCormick's contention that a long sight radius is better for shooting steel.

"The sight radius is not that important, what's important is controllability. If you have a good sight picture, you'll hit your target," Angelo said.

# SPECIAL BONUS SECTION

## PISTOL STAGES

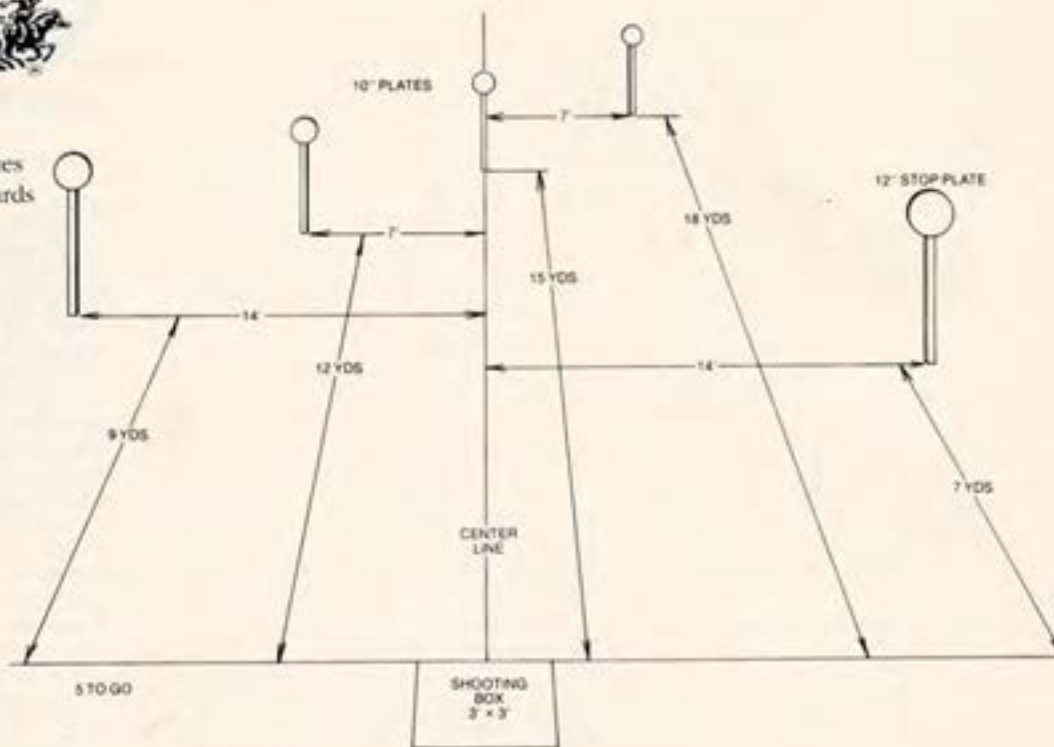
WINCHESTER

### STAGE 3—FIVE TO GO

TARGETS: 10" and 12" steel plates

RANGE: 7, 9, 12, 15 and 18 yards

PROCEDURE: The contestant stands facing the targets and upon the start signal engages the 10" plates. They may be engaged in any order, except that the 12" stop plate must be engaged last. Upon striking the stop plate, the string ends with the total time being the contestant's score. The contestant will repeat the procedure four times for a total of five strings. The total elapsed time for the best four strings, plus any penalties, will be the contestant's score. A five second penalty will be charged for a premature start and for not hitting a 10" plate. Maximum time allowed per string will be 30 seconds.



The Gray custom gun is fully checkered with what some experts say is the finest handcut checkering in the business. A really top notch pistolsmith can do the many different phases of a custom 1911 very well, but there's usually one or two operations where he really shines. Bruce positively sparkles on checkering.

I've thought doing an article on the "ultimate custom 1911" wherein a hypothetical gun would be constructed with different master pistolsmiths performing one specialty they do best. For instance, Paul Liebenberg would do the metal-smithing on the backstrap, Richard Heinie would install the sights, George Huening would fit the barrel, Steve Nastoff would fit the slide to the frame. Bruce Gray would do all checkering. He's that good, he produces the best handcut checkering. The best.

Bruce is a true craftsman and the custom .38 Super he built for Angelo stands above every other pistol in the world; it won the 1989 Steel Challenge.

### SLAPPING LEATHER

Speed shooting requires a fast holster and Angelo Spagnoli snatches his pistol from what he considers is the slickest, quickest rig available. Angelo's custom .38 Super rode in the hottest new holster on the market, the Fas-Trac from Ernie Hill Speed Leather.

The innovative new Fas-Trac features two significant improvements that render it extremely fast and versatile. The speed comes from a cleverly engineered "muzzle plug" device at the bottom of the holster that retains the pistol without any friction. The need for retention screws or other tension to pinch a pistol into a holster is not needed with this fascinating invention of master leathermaker Ernie Hill.

The device consists of a two-piece unit that serves both to retain the pistol laterally and vertically. A round post protrudes upward about an inch and the pistol's barrel fits over the post to prevent any side-side, back-to-front wobble. The post is attached to a block that prevents the pistol from shifting up-and-down.

"It's extremely fast, extremely

smooth," Angelo said of the Fas-Trac.

The Fas-Trac's remarkable versatility comes from its ability to be positioned at any angle. Two "poker chips," one on the holster itself and a matching one on the belt loop attachment, can be rotated 360° for any cant desired. Literally a full circle of adjustment in 4° increments.

Ernie introduced his new Fas-Trac only three months before the Steel Challenge, but his radical speed rig won both the men's and lady's titles. Eight of the top 16 finishers used a Hill holster. To put it mildly, Ernie was pleased.

"The Fas-Trac cut a twentieth to a thirtieth of a second off my draw, I'm definitely going to keep using it," Angelo told *American Handgunner*. Angelo drew his gun precisely 25 times for score and if you figure that he saved 1/30 of a second on each draw with the new Fas-Trac, that's .83 seconds. His margin of victory was .27 seconds.

### WORLD'S FASTEST LADY

Third place might be good enough for a lot of shooters, but not for a determined lady who worked hard to win the Steel

# STEEL CHALLENGE

## COURSE OF FIRE

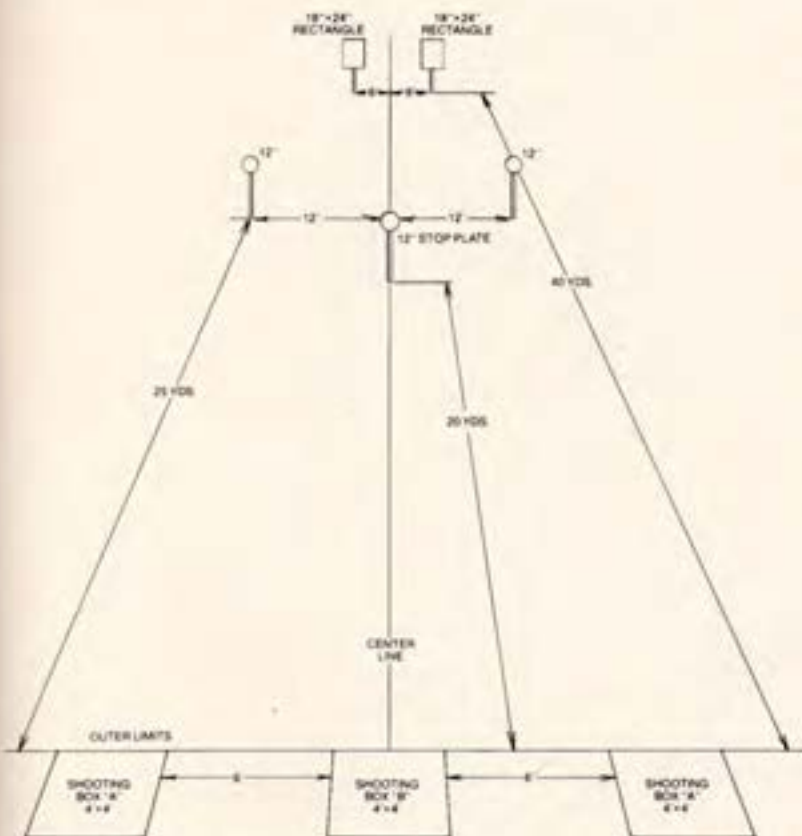


### STAGE 4 — OUTER LIMITS

TARGETS: 18" x 24" rectangle and  
12" round steel plates

RANGE: 20, 25 and 40 yards

PROCEDURE: Right handed shooters will always begin in shooting box "A" located left of centerline and left handed shooters will always begin in shooting box "A" located right of centerline. Upon the signal to start, the shooter will draw and engage the 25 yard and 40 yard targets on their side of the centerline, in any order. The shooter then moves to shooting box "B" and engages the 25 yard and the 40 yard targets on the other side of centerline, and then engages the stop plate at 20 yards to stop the time. Once leaving the starting box, that side's targets may not be re-engaged unless the shooter returns to that box without having first fired from the opposite side. Both feet must be in the 4' x 4' shooting boxes when shots are fired. Maximum time for each string of fire will be 30 seconds. Each contestant will run the course three times with the best two runs being the final score. A five second penalty will be charged for premature starts, each overtime shot, each shot fired without both feet in the shooting box, each shot fired on the wrong target and for any targets not hit (stop plate excepted).



Challenge after placing two spots behind the Lady Champion in last year's match.

Shirley Hamilton utilizes mental conditioning too, but her commanding victory is best attributed to hard work. She won the Steel Challenge the old fashioned way.

Shirley earned her win by practicing for five months before the Challenge. Actively involved in IPSC, Shirley began shooting "minor" 9mm ammunition in the local IPSC matches back in December to begin her preparation for the Steel Challenge.

The Arizona, California and Nevada Lady's IPSC State Champion gamely accepted her lower IPSC scores from "minor power factor" hits in the Linea De Fuego matches of her native southern California. She and husband Bill had bigger fish to fry—training for what she came to refer to simply as "the match."

Consequently, she was fully prepared after the months of hard work—10 hour work days, then out to the range for practice. The only obstacle remaining was imaginary. Mr. Doubt tagged along with her everywhere whispering negative

thoughts in her ear.

The natural doubts and insecurities that all competitive shooters feel came to be personified in her imaginary companion, Mr. Doubt.

At the Steel Challenge Mr. Doubt became the responsibility of her husband. "Okay, Shirley," Bill would sternly admonish her before she stepped to the firing line, "Leave Mr. Doubt out here with me."

It might seem funny, but it worked. Psychologists tell us—and Shirley has a Master's degree in psychology—that most children create imaginary companions through whom they work out some of the distresses and anxieties of growing up. Shirley applied a similar technique for the "match nerves" of competing against world-class shooters. Mr. Doubt became persona non grata at the Steel Challenge.

Shirley fired a 9mm Luger pistol customized by hubby Bill from a Springfield Armory 1911-A1 Model. The gun has an extended barrel weight, like Jim Clark's Bowling Pin Model, instead of a compensator. Bill performed a good trigger job,

not too light in case Mr. Doubt makes her flinch, and fitted the usual amenities like a beavertail grip safety, buried Bo-Mars, match barrel and speed safety. It's a good-shootin' gun, obviously.

The world's fastest lady drew her pistol—very quickly, mind you—out of a rig from Ernie Hill Speed Leather, one of the new Fas-Trac holsters. "Ernie's new holster is really fast," Shirley commented, "I like it a lot."

With a time of 94.84, Shirley placed 100th overall out of 268 competitors. That was a lucky finish because Rob Leatham's LSI shooting school donated a free two-day class to the person finishing 100th.

Second place in the ladies division was Michelle Griggs, the 1988 Ladies Champion, with 96.91 seconds and 112th overall.

Behind Michelle in third was a competitor with a most unusual shooting history—she had never fired a real gun in a match before! Yoko Shimomura is Japan's "Air Soft Bianchi Cup" champion, a title she won by shooting a replica of a real gun that fires a plastic pellet

# SPECIAL BONUS SECTION

## PISTOL STAGES

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SPEED LEATHER®**

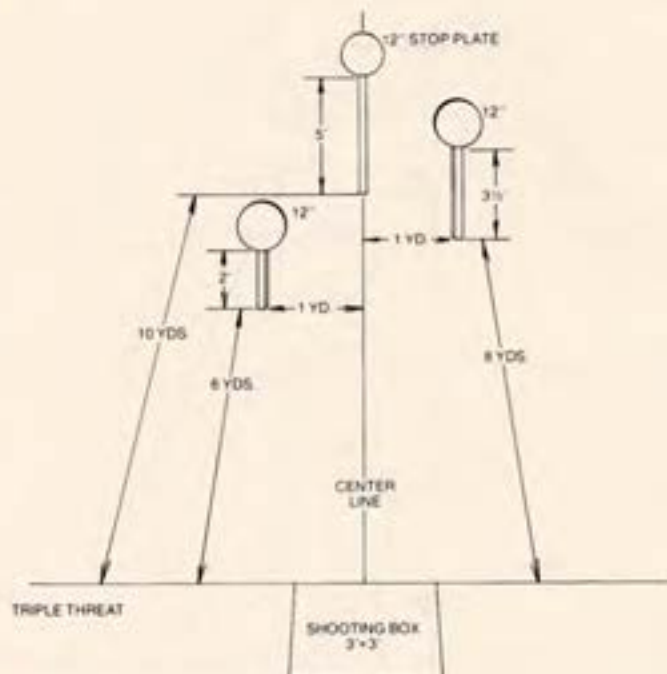


### STAGE 5—TRIPLE THREAT

TARGETS: 12" round steel plates

RANGE: 6, 8 and 10 yards

PROCEDURE: The contestant stands in the shooting box facing the targets. On the signal to commence, the shooter draws and places one hit on each of the plates at 6 and 8 yards. The stop plate at 10 yards is the last one hit. Failure to hit the stop plate will result in an automatic 15 second string. The course of fire will be repeated for a total of five strings. The best four runs will be totalled for a final score. A five second penalty will be given for each premature start and each mandatory plate not hit.



with a jolt of air pressure.

Yoko came to the United States to compete in the genuine Bianchi Cup, but she stopped over at the Steel Challenge for a warm-up to the match she really came to shoot. Yoko fired an Aimpoint-sighted custom S&W .38 Special. *American Handgunner's* Photography Editor Ichiro Nagata helped Yoko prepare for the Challenge where she placed 119th overall with 98.18 seconds.

### PROFESSIONAL SHOOTERS

The top American pistol shooters flock to the Steel Challenge for the fun of competing, but it's also just part of the daily 8 to 5 grind. Out of bed (yawn), gulp down some coffee and off to work—at the range.

Some of our best professional shooters, who literally shoot for a living, are sponsored by leading manufacturers of sporting goods equipment. Just as Arnold Palmer is paid to endorse a golf club, so too is Rob Leatham paid to endorse a holster. Just as "Air Jordan" flies with Nike, so too does Jerry Barn-

hart blaze with Springfield Armory pistols.

And just as Angelo Spagnoli endorses Ernie Hill holsters, John Day shoots for...carrots! Yes, John Day, top-ranked shooter from New Zealand, competed on behalf of his sponsor, Foster's Carrot Farm. His co-sponsor, the logo boldly emblazoned on his shirt, was Mac Trucks of New Zealand.

Speaking of professional shooters, John Shaw resurfaced to compete in the Steel Challenge after a year's hiatus. John won the first Steel Challenge in 1981 after taking two consecutive IPSC national championships in 1980 and 1981. It's good to see this world-class competitor back in the shooter's box again.

### MORE WINNERS

A lack of classes in Advanced Double-Tapping at his high school keeps 16-year-old Aaron Bush from being a professional shooter, but his marksmanship ranks him as one of the best. Aaron, shooting a Paul Liebenberg customized .38 Super, took second place on the

Speed Option stage just behind stage winner Angelo Spagnoli. Aaron shot superbly, especially for a competitor who's not old enough to legally own a handgun.

Another Wunderkind of speed shooting who nearly stole the whole show is 17-year-old Jethro Dionisio. Jethro is from the Philippines and his 7th place finish was good enough to win him honors for both Top International and Top Junior.

Jethro won an unbelievable three out of seven stages. He blazed Outer Limits in an amazing 9.50 seconds. The young man with so much promise bested the world's best shooters on the blink-and-you-miss-it Triple Threat stage with 5.92 seconds. He also won Go For Broke with a new world record time of 9.34 seconds.

Jethro was the only competitor to win multiple stages, the remaining four being won by four different shooters (Michael Voigt, Roundabout; Angelo Spagnoli, Speed Option; Chip McCormick, Five To Go; Jerry Miculek, Showdown).

So what happened, how can a guy win three out of seven stages and not win the

# STEEL CHALLENGE

## COURSE OF FIRE



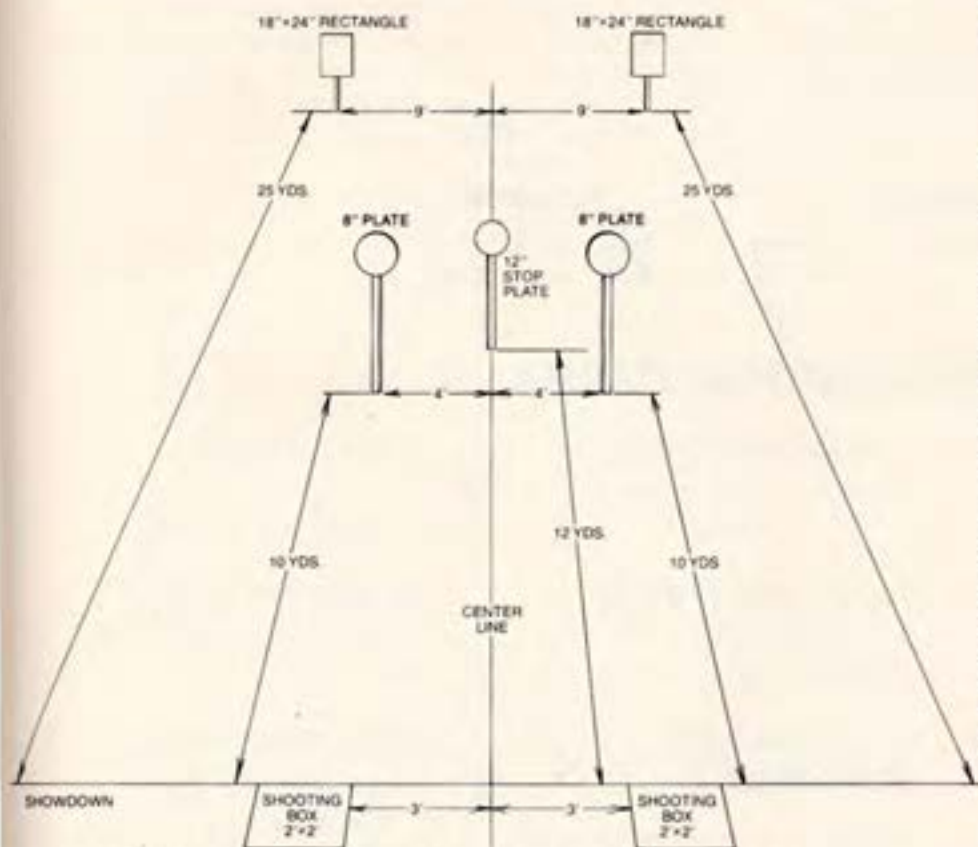
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### STAGE 6—SHOWDOWN

**TARGETS:** 18" x 24" rectangle, 8" and 12" round steel plates

**RANGE:** 10, 12 and 25 yards

**PROCEDURE:** Shooter starts in either of the two shooting boxes facing the targets. Shooter will make two runs from one box and three runs from the other box in any order. On the start signal, the shooter draws and places one hit on each of the 8" round plates and on each of the rectangles. The targets may be engaged in any order with the 12" stop plate being the last one hit. The course will be repeated for a total of five strings, two from one side and three from the other side, in any order. The best four strings will be totalled for the final score. A five second penalty will be given for premature starts and for each target not hit (except the stop plate). Maximum time allowed: 30 seconds per string.



match? By blowing-out on the others, that's how. In Jethro's case, heartburn is spelled S-p-e-e-d O-p-t-i-o-n. A disappointing 9.18 seconds dropped him four seconds off the pace. Four seconds is a lot; you might as well spot Ivan Lendl four games in a set.

The 1989 Steel Challenge saw the return of the founders of the match to active competition in their creation. The concept of shooting steel with time simply being the score was conceived by Mike Dalton and Mike Fichman. They designed the course of fire, wrote the rules and organized the first Steel Challenge nine years ago when the match was administered by the Southwest Pistol League.

Today the Steel Challenge is privately owned by shooting sports enthusiast Don Hamilton. Private ownership of shooting competitions is quite common: SOF publisher Bob Brown owns the Soldier of Fortune Three-Gun Match; Smith & Wesson owns The Masters; John Bianchi used to own the Bianchi Cup until he gave it to the NRA; Rich Davis, president of Second Chance, owns the Second Chance

Bowling Pin Shoot.

These firearms philanthropists run the matches as non-profit ventures, although many times the expenses outweigh revenues. Don't think for a moment that fat cats are getting rich on entry fees and sponsor-donated prizes. They're not.

Other winners of the Steel Challenge include Top Cop Rick Castelow who placed 27th overall with a time of 79.42 seconds. The award for the best newcomer to the match, Top Tyro, went to 29th place finisher Christopher Laconson with 79.44 seconds.

The award of Top Revolver belongs to one of the most incredible shooters I have ever seen on the pro circuit. Jerry Mikulek placed 15th with a score of 76.29 seconds, winning outright the stage called Showdown. His gun? A box-stock S&W Model 27 shooting .38 Specials.

Have you ever heard a really fast typist rip off 100 words a minute? Rat-tat-tat go the keys, clicking so fast they almost sound like a steady purr. That's what Jerry Mikulek's Model 27 sounds like when he dry fires it while warming

up to shoot.

"Holy s---t, I didn't know a cylinder could spin that fast," exclaimed one spectator when Jerry was dry snapping his Model 27 during the "make ready" before Roundabout. Absolutely incredible shooting skill with a revolver.

### THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

The Steel Challenge wouldn't be the world-class tournament that it is with its lucrative cash prizes and generous merchandise awards without the support of key sponsors. Firms within the firearms industry generously support the Steel Challenge and other professional matches in order to stimulate the growth of the handgunning sports.

"What we really want is to legitimize handguns as sporting tools," Roy Jinks, match director of The Masters, explains. "Our goal is to have handguns and handgun matches recognized as legitimate sports, just like golf, tennis and bowling."

The following sponsors contributed significantly to the Steel Challenge. Next

# STEEL CHALLENGE

## COURSE OF FIRE

### PISTOL STAGES



#### SPRINGFIELD ARMORY

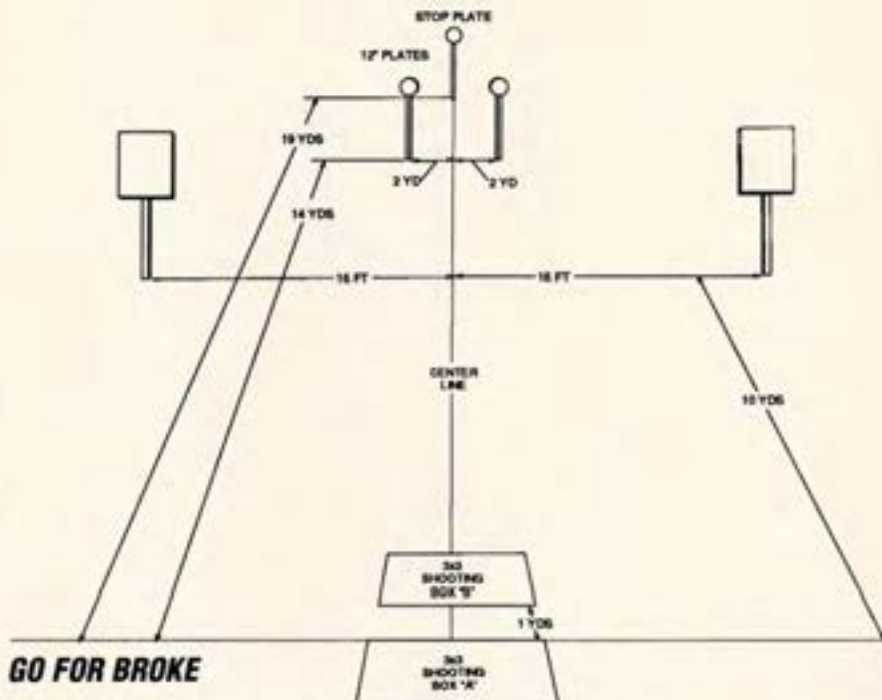
#### STAGE 7—GO FOR BROKE

TARGETS: 18 x 24" rectangle  
12" round steel plates

RANGE: 6, 8 and 10 yards

PROCEDURE: The contestant stands in shooting box A facing the targets. On the signal to commence, the shooter draws and places one hit on each of the 18" x 24" plates. The shooter then advances to shooting box B and places one hit on the 12" plates.

Failure to hit the stop plate will result in an automatic 30 second string. The course of fire will be repeated for a total of four strings. The best three runs will be totaled for a final score. A five second penalty will be charged for premature starts, each overtime shot, each shot fired without both feet in the shooting box, each shot fired on the wrong target for any targets not hit.



**GO FOR BROKE**

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
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Top Junior.....Cannon Safe  
Scoreboard.....Millett Sights  
Banquet.....Springfield Armory  
Blast For Cash.....Lenny Magill  
Productions

Now that it's time to sweep up the brass—only about 30,000 pieces—it's also time to look forward to the Tenth Anniversary of the Steel Challenge next year. Angelo will be back to defend his title, and you can bet the match will be just as exciting and fun as the previous nine. And like those previous nine, *American Handgunner* will be there to bring you the match!

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## 41 VS. 422

Continued from page 53

When optical sights are added, in this case a Pro-Point on the Model 41 and an Aimpoint on the Model 422, the weight is brought up to 55 ounces and 35 ounces respectively. Now guess which one balances better for offhand target shooting?

So give a checkmark to the Model 41 with iron sights and likewise to the Model 422 when both are equipped with optical sights. Pretty close contest so far.

**SIGHTS:** Here there is no contest whatsoever. The Model 41 has the best possible sight arrangement with a precision set-up of an undercut front blade combined with an easily adjustable rear sight whose blade also slants to reduce glare.

If one were to custom design a set of target sights, this would be the result.

The Model 422, being basically designed as a field pistol, has sights made to a price with a ramp front sight and a J-frame style rear sight. Adequate, but certainly no match for the sight set-up of the Model 41.

**TRIGGER:** Now we get down to mechanics, the operation of each Smith & Wesson .22. The trigger of the Model 41 is clean and crisp and comes fitted with an over-travel stop. Just what one would expect in a quality target pistol.

Switching to the less expensive Model

422, we find a trigger that is more commensurate with a field pistol—a little creep, not quite as light. Adequate, but no match for the target trigger of the Model 41.

**SLIDE RELEASE:** The slide release of the Model 41 is placed so that one simply has to raise the thumb slightly to release it while the slide release of the Model 422 is placed further rearward requiring the thumb to move upward and to the rear to hit the slide release. No great problem, although the release on the Model 41 is just slightly more convenient to operate.

**MAGAZINE RELEASE:** To release the magazine of the Model 41, one simply pushes inward on a button located on the left side, below the thumbrest. It can be operated with a very slight change in grip, or equally as easily by pressing with the thumb of the offhand.

To release the magazine of the Model 422 requires pressing a latch located in the front strap. This requires a change in the shooting grip whether the latch is released with the shooting hand or off-hand.

**SAFETY:** Both safeties are located to the rear and above the grip. The Model 422 wins this one with a safety that is larger and much easier to operate. In fact, I cannot operate the safety of the Model 41 with the thumb of my shooting hand; I have to use the thumb on my offhand. Chalk up a big one for the 422.

**PRICE:** This is probably the least valid comparison. The Model 41 is built as the best possible target pistol with no corners





cut on materials, sights, trigger, grips, barrel and whatnot. The Model 422 was created as an inexpensive field pistol.

The price reflects these conditions with the Model 41 retailing for \$485 while the adjustable sighted Model 422 at \$235, is less than one-half the price of a Model 422.

**ACCURACY:** Here is where I was certain that the Model 41 would prove its ultimate superiority over the less expensive Model 422. Since the Model 41 costs twice as much, I expected it to be at least twice as accurate.

Both guns were fired with six types of .22 ammunition for accuracy with iron sights at 25 yards. No attempt was made to condition the bore of either .22 to a particular ammunition, nor were the guns cleaned at any time throughout the testing. All shooting was done from a solid sandbag rest using five-shot groups. After finishing the iron-sighted phase of the test, both Smith & Wesson .22's were fitted with optical sights using B-Square mounts. B-Square (Box 11281, Dept AH, Fort Worth, TX 76109) offers a complete line of "no-gunsmithing" mounts that allow any shooter to install a scope without drilling or tapping or altering the handgun in any way.

For the Model 41, the B-Square mount clamps over the frame immediately in front of the slide. Care must be taken in installation to insure proper operation of the slide. The Model 422's B-Square mount clamps over the front of the barrel and does not interfere with the operation of the slide in any way and its installation still allows the iron sights to be used.

Utilizing these two mounts, an Aim-point scope was mounted on the Model 422 with a companion Pro-Point mounted on the Model 41. Both of these electronic red dot scopes performed perfectly and were a welcome addition to the Smith & Wesson .22's.

With iron sights at 25 yards, the Model 41 came out way ahead. Five out of six groups were tighter than those of the Model 422.

For some reason, the Model 422 shot Remington Yellow Jackets much better than the Model 41. In fact, with iron sights, the best group of the 12 fell to the Model 422 with five shots in 1/4". That is excellent accuracy by anyone's standards and especially with a field pistol.

Switching to optical sights brought some real surprises. With 12 different types of .22 ammunition, the Model 41 did not eat the Model 422 alive as expected at the beginning of the test. In fact, it performed only slightly better.

The Model 41 came out ahead in only seven of the 12 groups fired. I had expected a clean sweep from the Model 41. So much for preconceived notions.

The best group fired at 25 yards with optical sights was again registered by the Model 422 with a one-half inch group using CCI Mini-Mag Hollow Points. Five of the 12 groups fired with the Model 422

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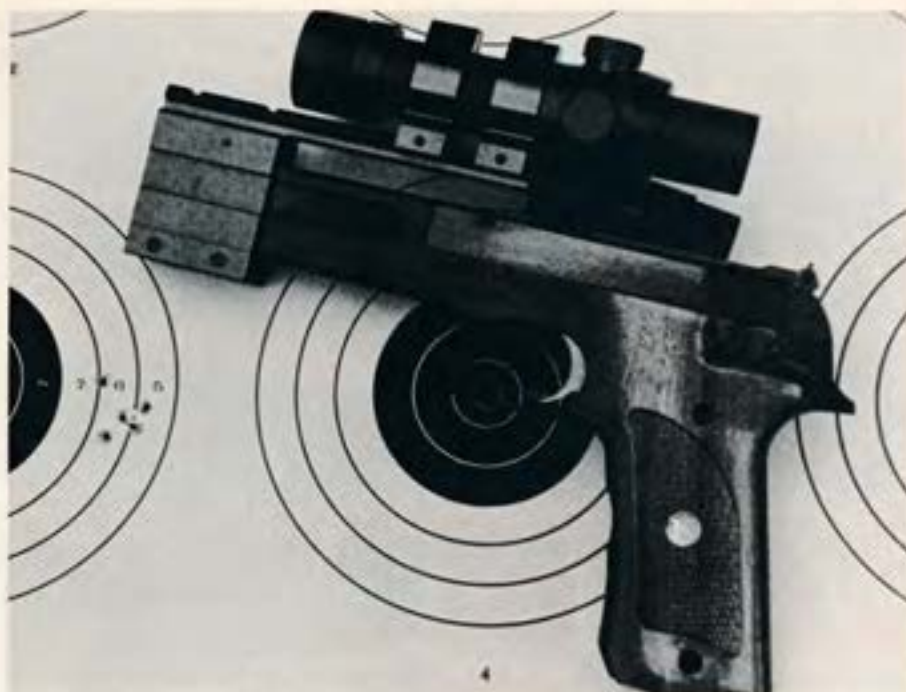
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## STEEL SHOOTOFF

Continued from page 58



resulted in groups of one-inch or less. The Model 41 put eight groups of the 12 into one-inch or less.

Switching to 50 yards, the duo of double-deuces finished in pretty much of a dead heat with the Model 41 besting the Model 422 in only six of the 12 groups. Once again the Model 422 registered the tightest group, 1¼" with CCI Stingers.

Another way to interpret the accuracy figures is simply to take an average of all rounds fired at each distance. With iron sights, the Model 422 averaged 2.15" at 25 yards while the M-41 came in at 1.67".

Switching to optical sights at 25 yards sees the M-422 average 1.18" for 12 different types of ammunition and the M-41 slightly better with an average of .99".

Going to 50 yards, the Model 41 widens the gap with an average groups size for 12 different types of .22 ammunition of 2.39" compared to the Model 422's 3.04".

One final comparison is in order. That is the comparison as to reliability or maybe a better choice of words is *ability*. That is, the ability to handle all types of ammunition.

Not a single malfunction of any kind occurred at anytime during the testing of

the Model 422. The Model 41, with its heavier slide, is more dependent on ammunition and does not always operate with lower powered ammunition. The Model 422 can digest anything; the Model 41 is a little more selective about its diet.

What conclusions can we then draw? The M-41 wins the accuracy match, but only slightly. The Model 422 comes out way ahead on price and comes in looking very good accuracy-wise, certainly much better than the price differential would lead one to expect.

Which is the better .22? Impossible to answer. Clearly, at least to this shooter, the Model 41 remains the premier choice as an iron-sighted target pistol, but when optical sights are employed, I prefer the balance and weight of the Model 422.

For an everyday packin' pistol, there is no contest. I would much prefer to carry the 24 ounce Model 422 as a field pistol. This is exactly what its designers had in mind.

Smith & Wesson supplied me with two quality .22's, and I can't decide which is really the best. The only solution is to cover all the bases. I'm buyin' 'em both.



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eight are exceptional shooters, of course, but Debbie James had won back-to-back IPSC national championships plus the 1988 IPSC world championship. More importantly, Debbie has been in many shootoffs, and in one-on-one competition like this experience means a lot.

Where the other women were turning time in the low to mid three second range, Debbie James was shooting consistently around 2.7 to 2.8 seconds. In the best-of-five final, she seemed to get a bit rattled in the first bout and had to do some make-up shots, her time a relatively slow 3.70. But that was good enough to win, since Yoko also had a miss to make up and wound up at 3.81 seconds.

That win seemed to give Debbie confidence, for she settled down and won the next two bouts with solid runs. That made her the shootoff winner, with Yoko second and Shirley Hamilton third.

The top 16 shootoff was also a best-of-three, single elimination event although the competitors waived the .05 second rule in the interest of saving time. They saved even more time by shooting some blazing fast runs.

Two of the fastest shooters on the circuit are Jerry Barnhart and Doug Koenig. Barnhart had a best run of 2.08, Koenig a 2.05 as each won his event in the first round of the eliminations. So when these two speedsters hooked up in the second round, the spectators were on the edge of their seats, expecting fireworks. They weren't disappointed.

The buzzer sounded for the first bout and exactly two seconds later it was all over. Barnhart's clock read 2.00, Koenig's was 1.94.

"Wow," one of the other top 16 shooters exclaimed, "How does it feel to shoot a two-flat and lose!"

Koenig didn't beck off the gas pedal a bit on the second run, winning the bout and the event with a 1.91. Folks, that's the total time to react to the start signal, draw from a hands-above-shoulders start position, and fire five hits on five different targets. Is that good shooting? Yes it is!

Koenig went on to earn a spot in the final by defeating the Steel Challenge champion, Angelo Spagnoli. Michael Voigt, meanwhile, had earned the other berth in the final by winning over Brian Enos, Jethro Dionisio and Rob Leatham.

Prior to the final event third place had to be settled, and Spagnoli clinched it with two straight wins over Leatham.

Koenig took a quick lead in the best-of-five final by winning the first two bouts. But Voigt refused to give up, and he evened the match, winning the next two. With everything riding on the last run, Koenig once again put the pedal to

the metal and took it with a 2.06.

Voigt was the first to offer congratulations. Later he commented, "Taking on Doug today was like tangling with a buzz saw. I'm just glad I was able to push him to the limit."

The two bouts won by Voigt were the only losses Koenig had in the entire shootoff.

Looking at the equipment being used, the .38 Super cartridge and the 1911 pattern pistol continue to dominate. Compensators continue to be refined, with considerable experimentation being done with double-expansion-chamber designs. The top shooters don't seem to think these designs are a lot better than single-chamber comps, but they are a little better and at this level of competition no one wants to give up even a slight advantage. (Voigt losing 2.00 to Koenig's 1.98 in the shootoff is representative of the sort of tight competition we're looking at here.)

For this type of action shooting, where

Its advantages are cleaner burning and greater efficiency, meaning similar velocities with a smaller charge. Old favorite 452AA isn't the cleanest burning powder around, but it almost always gives uniform velocities and excellent accuracy.

It's a popular powder with action shooters, and there was concern when the decision to replace it was announced. Competitors must have mentioned their concerns to Dave Trowbridge, senior product management specialist with Winchester, for at the awards banquet he advised that the decision to drop 452AA could be reconsidered.

In the holster department, Ernie Hill and Safariland split the honors in the top 16, and were also the choice of the majority of the rest of the competitors.

Safariland has a good holster in its Final Option model and is aggressively promoting it through a system of sponsorships and contingency prizes for major match wins.



Doug Koenig won the Steel Challenge Shootoff with a .38 Super from Springfield Armory's Custom Shop painted fire engine red.

light loads are used and recoil isn't a problem, guns are becoming lighter. Shooters seem to want a gun that weighs (empty) in the 35 to 40 ozs. range. A light gun is faster and easier to handle and is less likely to overswing when shooting multiple targets.

Although cast lead bullets will no doubt continue to be most popular for practice shooting because of their economy, jacketed bullets are being chosen by many shooters for match use. Jacketed bullets are often, though certainly not always, more accurate; they don't lead up the expansion chamber of the comp the way lead bullets do; and they don't cause as much smoke when fired. With cast bullets, under some conditions, the smoke from the burning bullet lube can hang over the gun during a fast string of fire in a most annoying manner.

C. P. Bullets (1814 Mearns Road, Warminster PA 18974), whose cast bullets have such a fine reputation, is now marketing their "Elite" line of jacketed bullets which were the choice of a lot of shooters.

In January 1989 Winchester announced it would be bringing out a new powder, Super Target, to replace 452AA.

Ernie Hill, meanwhile, has just got into production with his new Fas-Trac model, a brilliant design that's so fast it's downright spooky. With holster rake quickly and easily adjustable, a muzzle plug system that provides gun retention yet allows a totally resistance-free draw, and that unsurpassed Hill quality, this model really puts it all together. Even though it's so new most shooter had little chance to practice with it, the Fas-Trac was chosen by a lot of competitors—including women's champion Shirley Hamilton and overall champion Angelo Spagnoli. Finally, before deciding it's no use trying to get into competition shooting because the equipment is too fancy and costs too much, consider the case of Jerry Miculek. Miculek won the rifle event at the Challenge with a rifle borrowed from a friend, which he had fired less than a dozen shots prior to the match. He placed 15th in the match using box-stock Smith & Wesson Model 27 with 8 3/8 inch barrel. Your local gun dealer will be glad to sell you one just like it. Then all you need is some talent, determination, and practice. Lots of practice.

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## HANDLOADING

CHARLES E. PETTY

### MAGNUM PRIMERS AND IMPROPER CRIMPING MAY LEAD TO PROBLEMS

**S**ilhouette shooters and handgun hunters have found that heavier bullets are proving to be good choices for the .44 Magnum. There are quite a few in the 300 gr. range but most have been either cast or expensive custom jacketed types. Now Sierra has a 300 gr. JSP. Sierra's offering is the first jacketed bullet in this weight in a non-custom make. I've shot quite a few of them and have been really impressed with the accuracy potential.

Sierra has just sent me some loading data for their new 300 gr. JSP bullet. The jacket is pretty thick to hold together on silhouettes so expansion is not one of the goals. As with any magnum cartridge maximum overall length is important and Sierra recommends 1.735" for the .44 Magnum.

I've only had a chance to try one powder with this bullet and I think a word of caution is in order. I've shot some of the heavier loads with Hercules 2400 and, although Sierra reports that they have had no problems with the maximum load of 2400, I did. I experienced difficult extraction from two different Rugers. This may well be nothing more than the differences between guns, but I would strongly suggest that you begin around 18.0 gr. and work up very carefully from there.

#### MAGNUM PRIMERS

The word magnum often seems to be used synonymously with "better." If a little is good, more is better is a popular reloading philosophy.

Some folks think substituting magnum primers for the standard variety will improve the performance of their loads. Actually the truth is that they may do more harm than good and the practice can, under some circumstances, be dangerous. Using a magnum primer with some of the faster burning powders can cause too rapid ignition and raise pressures to levels that can sometimes be dangerous.

When I was beginning to think about this topic I wondered if some comparison of burning rates would be in order, but there are plenty of slower burning powders that aren't helped by magnum primers either. Conventional wisdom is that ball powders are harder to ignite and require magnum primers. This isn't true either, at least not as a generalization.

I was also tempted to try to generalize between extruded and ball powders, at least as far as their use in magnum car-

tridges was concerned, but that didn't work either. About the only extruded powder that seems to benefit is good old 2400 and, among the ball types, only 296, H110, 680 and Accurate #9 are good candidates.

Blue Dot, an extruded powder that is very popular in magnum loads, rarely needs them. The best advice is to adhere to the published data. If the load was developed using magnum primers it's safe to use them but it's not a bright idea to substitute magnum primers for the standard variety otherwise.

I've done some preliminary testing of loads where I substituted standard primers for the magnums and have found some instances where velocities were actually higher with the standard primer and many cases where velocity spreads were lower. This suggests that there may be cases where better accuracy will be the result.

It's too soon to make any sweeping judgements on the subject and I certainly don't think you should never use magnum primers, but bigger isn't always best.

#### REDDING PROFILE CRIMP DIE

One often overlooked consideration in magnum loads is the amount of crimp and the resulting bullet pull. In fact, most magnum loads are more dependent upon bullet pull than the primer used for consistent velocity.

The term bullet pull refers to force required to overcome the crimp and neck tightness of the case before the bullet can begin to move. We are routinely warned that heavy loads generally work best with heavy crimps, but there is no good way for the average handloader to really know when his crimp is right or too heavy.

Too much crimp can be a bad thing too and can cause pressure to climb in an otherwise safe load not to mention shortening case life. Carrying crimping to the extreme can lead to deformed bullets and poor accuracy.

It's hard to measure the amount of crimp applied and say, for example, apply 0.010" crimp. It would be nice if we could but it's hard to get an accurate measurement with the dial calipers most of us have in our loading setup.

The factories have special equipment to measure bullet pull and they often use neck sealing compounds to increase tension on the bullet. Those methods are

beyond the scope of even the most sophisticated handloader.

Some sources have used the terms light, medium and heavy to describe the degree of crimp, but these lack definition and my idea of a light crimp may be someone else's medium. And, without a chronograph and careful accuracy testing, you probably won't be able to see much difference in everyday shooting.


One thing that I've found to be more consistent is Redding's new Profile Crimp die. This is a separate crimp die that actually is a combination of both roll and taper crimps in the same die. I've used it with both .44 and .357 Magnum loads and found that velocities are generally more consistent. Other reports have

If you're limited to a roll crimp one of the best hints I can offer is to try to duplicate, visually, the amount of crimp present on your favorite factory load. Most of the magnum loads have a pretty hefty crimp and you may be able to come close to approximating it visually.

### RCBS Calipers

One of the most used tools in my loading room is a set of dial calipers. I use them for all sorts of things but most frequently it's for determining when cases need trimming and measuring the overall length of loaded ammo to be sure it's correct.

Dial calipers fall into two categories: cheap and expensive. The cheap ones are usually made of plastic and are serviceable enough but are susceptible to warping and losing accuracy. The other side of the coin are the expensive stainless steel products.

Now there's a good compromise. RCBS has an imported stainless steel six-inch caliper that is both accurate and modestly priced. They aren't as pretty as my expensive pair but they are accurate. The best evidence of this is the fact that the folks at RCBS are using them in their manufacturing. 

### Dial calipers fall into two categories: cheap and expensive

shown significant accuracy improvement with really heavy loads such as those favored by silhouette shooters.

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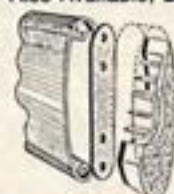
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## TIME IS RUNNING SHORT IF YOU'RE HUNTING FOR EXOTIC ADVENTURES

It is a well known fact to knowledgeable shooters world wide that, handguns in the more powerful calibers correctly loaded and used by experienced hunters are capable of effectively taking any size animal.

The exact same thing can be said of rifle, muzzleloader or bows. The bow hunter has the toughest job—both in actual hunting and in learning how to use his bow and arrow effectively. The obvious leader in countries of the world in promoting these sports is the U.S. No other countries have the opportunities to shoot and to hunt that we take for granted.

In Europe almost everyone that shoots much, and in particular hunts, is a wealthy person. Americans have the sheer numbers to have a significant number of individuals both interested and able to afford to hunt widely. We also have the opportunity to get out and shoot as often as we want with little difficulty. We are not restricted in most places to shooting at short range nor at great expense as are individuals in other countries.

I get a fairly wide correspondence through SSK with individuals living in what we might consider unusual parts of the world. I'm usually surprised when mail from behind the Iron Curtain arrives. This has occurred only within the last couple of years—maybe glasnost is working as the interest in handgunning for sport is still alive.

Mail from countries generally regarded as unfriendly to America, guns and hunting arrives regularly. Simultaneously, I see other countries such as Argentina and others opening the doors to sport hunting—some of them opening up for handgunners— at what I consider somewhat high costs.

While we are speaking of costs, be assured they are directly affected by politics. I'm leaving for South Africa in a few weeks and my round trip airfare from Pittsburgh to Johannesburg is about \$1760. This is simply due to the fact that many countries are trying to make things difficult for South Africa. South African Airways is no longer allowed to operate out of the US nor are other airlines allowed to fly to SA.

Not politics but inflation you say—then explain how a friend has a rate of \$972 round trip from St. Louis to New Zealand which is a far longer trip. This is simply a case of our own government penalizing both South Africa and Ameri-

can citizens who wish to visit there.

Add the list of countries where they penalize hunters with excessive daily taxes to hunt simply because you aren't wanted there—they would much rather you would just send the money and stay home.

Picking a spot to hunt is no longer a simple matter. Two years ago in the airport at Nairobi, Kenya, I was charged \$10—that's right ten dollars US—for a bottle of local beer while my wife was "issued" one square of toilet paper at the ladies room. Of course the whole airport was guarded by guys in camo holding FN-FAL's who looked anything but bored.

Now do you believe in some places you are not wanted because you are white and American? I think we are now approaching the "Golden Sunset" of world-wide hunting. It seems to be going




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# GUNS STORIES:

## THE CASE OF THE "NEWSSTAND NEUROTIC."

**10:57 a.m.**

Suspect enters Bill's Books & Magazines on 5th and Main and immediately proceeds to magazine rack where he picks up the last copy of GUNS Magazine.

**11:03 a.m.**

Two unidentified males enter store, also proceeding directly to magazine rack. Suspect nervously peers over shoulder, obviously disturbed by their arrival.

**11:04 a.m.**

Witness sees one of the unidentified males reach for magazine rack. Suspect obviously mistakes sudden movement for an attempt on his copy of GUNS. Suspect reacts by assaulting both men with a rolled up magazine.

**11:16 a.m.**

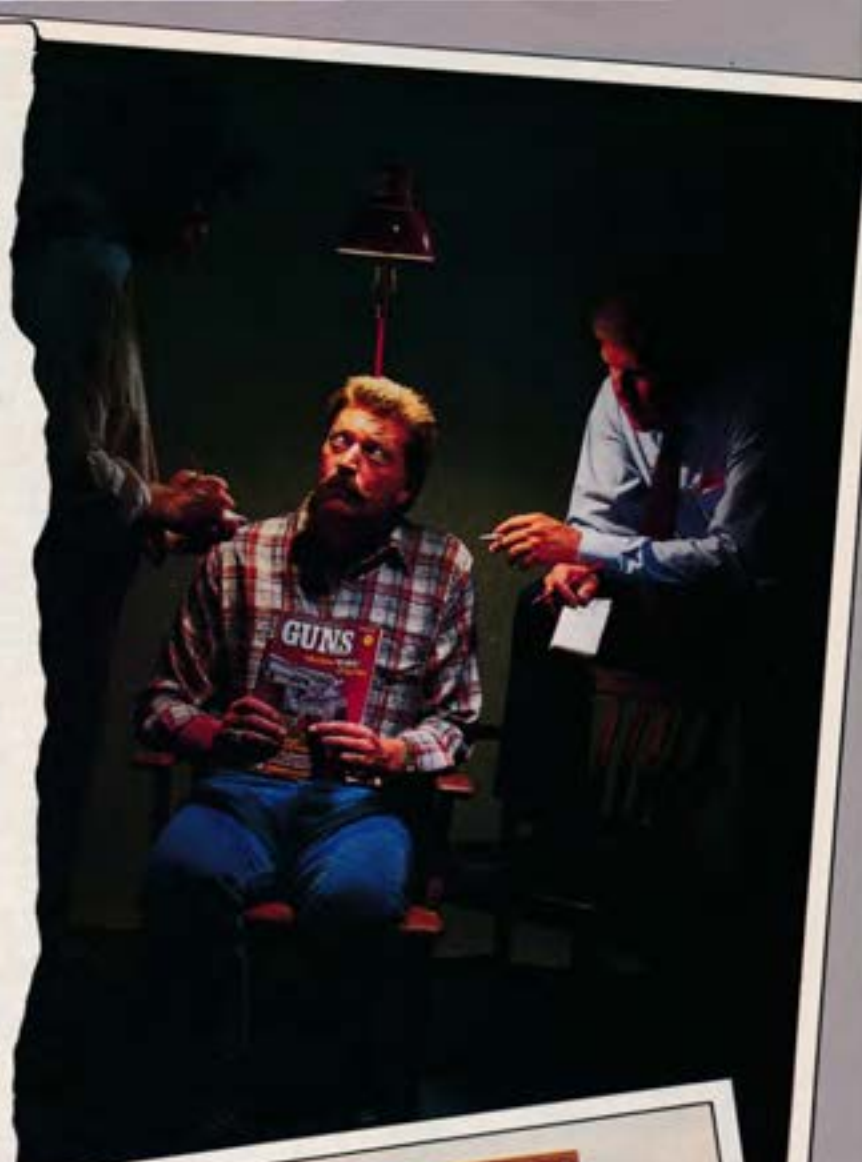
Suspect flees the scene and is quickly arrested for needlessly magazine whipping two innocent fishing enthusiasts.

**12:43 p.m.**

Suspect confesses to criminal acts. His reason? Nothing was going to come between him and the only magazine he trusted for the latest gun and shooting sport information. He wanted the facts . . . just the facts. He wanted GUNS Magazine.

**1:05 p.m.**

Suspect is released on his own recognition promising to never frequent newsstands again and agreeing to subscribe to GUNS instead.



### CASE FOLLOW UP:

1 month later, suspect seen sharing his subscription copy of GUNS with two unidentified gun enthusiasts—proof positive that GUNS subscribers get the facts every month.

### CASE CLOSED.

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down the tubes fast in many countries.

I wouldn't be surprised if the true attitude in the countries opening up isn't to get the bucks while they last. It's time to seriously consider if you ever want to experience some of these adventures. Don't put it off very long if you want to do it.

True, not every one can afford to do it now, but a very large number of Americans can if they really want to. Vacation loans are common today. Most individuals can make that life long dream trip come true if they really want to. What it really amounts to is perhaps driving the current car another year.

At this point figure eight to ten grand to cover all costs of quite an adventure. Normally it's not possible to hunt any of the Big Five for that kind of money; however I'm working on an adventure for next year where it may be possible to take two Cape buffalo for that money in a rather primitive area. Anyone interested in this outing, or a less expensive plains game safari next year should contact me at SSK, 721 Woodvue Lane, Wintersville, OH 43952 (614-264-0176)



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This is one you shouldn't miss. The bulls are there—great animals and great photography. Pam takes her trophy bull with a .454 Casull revolver in an exciting, clearly photographed and very tastefully done kill scene.

After that it's Pam's husbands turn for another trophy bull and when that's over so is the tape. Then you'll wish for more.

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## COLT GOES ON THE AUCTION BLOCK AND RUGER WANTS TO BAN MAGS



Colt "Double Eagle" .45 ACP bears a strong resemblance to old Seecamp DA conversion of a Government Model.

**T**he military procurement test to obtain 56,705 new 9mm pistols is complete and the winner is the Beretta Model 92F. This latest round of testing, called XM-10, was prompted by a lawsuit over the previous test, XM-9, in which Smith & Wesson claimed its guns had been unfairly eliminated.

Beretta won XM-9 and their Model 92F became the M-9 pistol in the Pentagon's arsenal with the 1985 contract award for some 320,000 pistols. The winning Model 92F from the latest XM-10 test is now dubbed M-10.

The army has yet to release the results of the XM-10 test in which Beretta, Ruger and Smith & Wesson competed. However, a Beretta spokesman said that the Ruger P-85 and the S&W Model 59 both failed mandatory test requirements. A spokesman for S&W acknowledged that their guns failed parts of the test.

The new M-10 will be fitted with a "slide retention device" and the M-9 will be retrofitted with the same device that serves to capture the slide in the event of a slide separation. The purpose of this device is to prevent injury to the shooter in case the slide ruptures during firing. There were isolated instances of slide failure with M-9, however, no such failures have occurred with M-10.

At the NRA Show in St. Louis, Colt issued a press release saying that parent company Colt Industries is offering the Firearms Division for sale.

Likely buyers? One good prospect is Fabrique Nationale, the huge Belgian gunmaker that recently won our military's contract for the M-16 rifle. FN already owns over 50% of Browning and some 40% of Beretta. It would make sense for FN to purchase Colt in order to obtain the tooling and manufacturing facilities that are already geared to producing the M-16.

It's been reported that Ruger is interested in Colt and probably will tender an offer. Other interested parties include Mossberg and Smith & Wesson.

Also at the NRA Show, Colt displayed its new double-action pistol which differs significantly from what my suspicions about the new gun had been. I reported in the last issue that I thought Colt would introduce a DA pistol that's been knocking around the plant in prototype form since the early '70s, and it would be in 9mm. Wrong, gypsy breath!

It's—remain calm, folks—a double-action Government Model! Caliber is .45 ACP.

In the press release on the new Double Eagle Colt says, "The barrel, barrel bushing and recoil spring are the same as those found on the Government Model Series 80. The slide assembly is similar. Many of the operating characteristics have also been incorporated in the Colt Double Eagle."

Other "new" features listed in the press release include:

"A familiar slide stop like that found in many Colt autos."

"Traditional magazine release."

"High profile, 3-dot sight system."

"The newest Colt operates on the Browning/Colt short recoil, link-pivot locking system proven in the Government Model."

Get a grip on yourselves, I see a lady fainting from excitement in the front row there. Really, I understand the panic of exhilaration over what Colt calls a "new state of the art double-action pistol," but please try to stay calm.

The Double Eagle has a decocking lever that "allows the hammer to be decocked with a round in the chamber in one easy motion, without using the trigger." That's a relief, I always knew that squeezing the trigger is one way to

decock, but it's not the one I favor in my living room.

Let's see, what else is new about the new Double Eagle double-action Government Model of 1911?

It's made of matte stainless steel, the grips of plastic. Actually, the press release says "impact resistant, non-slip Xenoy thermoplastic" which sounds a lot more racy than just plain plastic.

Handgunner reader Frank Stancliffe has had a few problems with his S&W Model 586. Cylinder out of time, crane wobbly, that sort of thing. A warranty station should correct these problems for Frank, but he writes to tell us that he should have known something was amiss when he bought the gun—the serial number is BAD 4956.

In the continuing saga of the assault rifle furor, Bill Ruger, chairman of Sturm, Ruger and Co., has written a letter to every member of Congress proposing a national law that places— I quote from Bill Ruger's letter—"a simple, complete and unequivocal ban on large capacity magazines."

In calling for "strict regulation of magazines," Ruger explains that "the concern today as it relates to illegal misuse of firearms should be viewed as one of firepower rather than trying to define the type of firearm from which bullets emanate." Ruger concludes, therefore, that since "firepower" is the problem, the solution is to ban magazines.

I respectfully differ with Mr. Ruger. The problem with the illegal misuse of firearms is not magazines, it's not guns, it's not caliber, it's not action type. The problem is the criminal. Criminals that steal guns, criminals that waltz through the revolving door of our wrist-slapping court system.

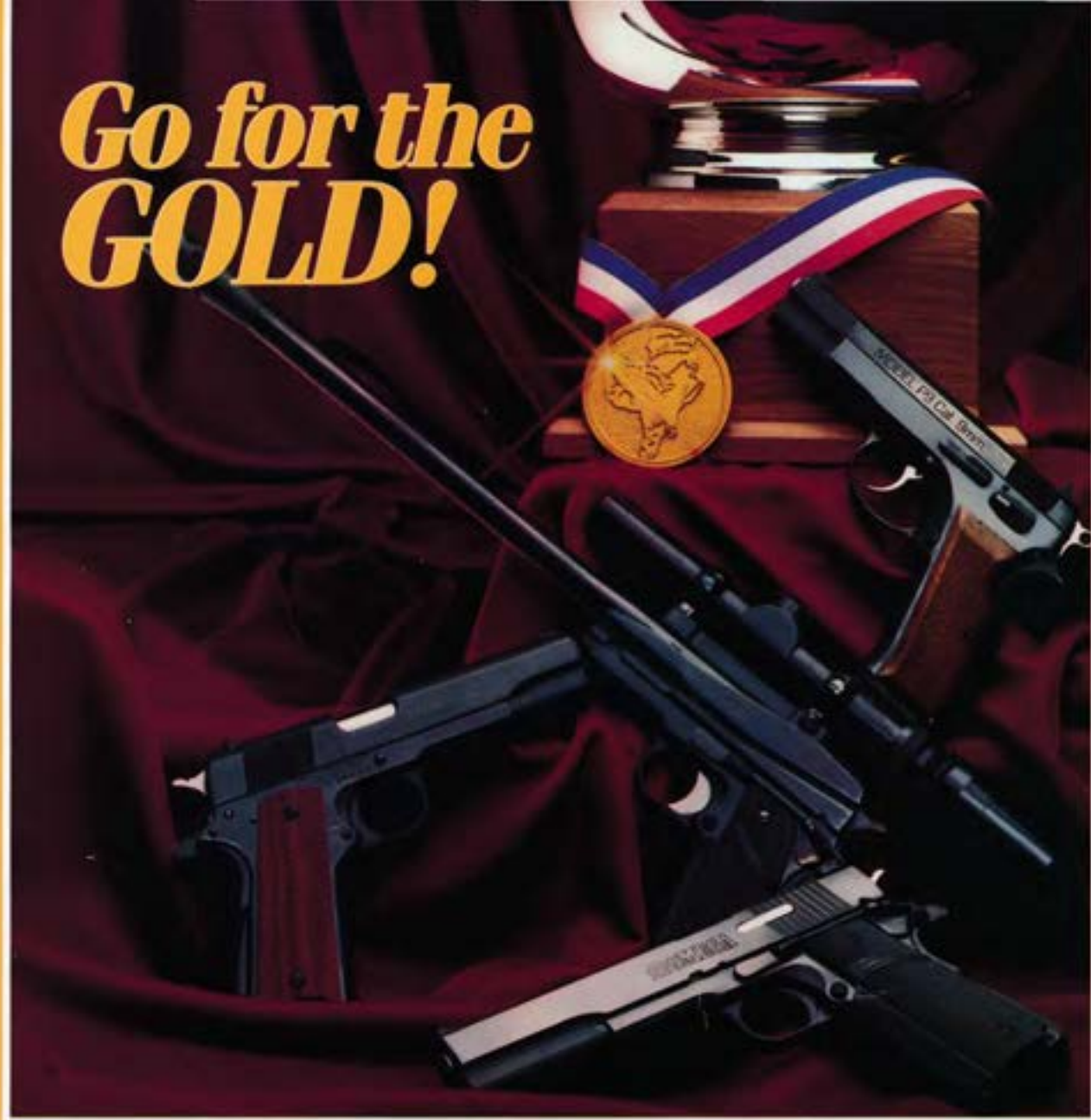
A few issues ago I mentioned that a pistolsmith was working on converting a Ruger Redhawk to .454 Casull. At the time the project was still in the R&D stage, but now I've learned that the conversion has proven successful. This is the first double-action revolver chambered in the "world's most powerful revolver cartridge" of which I am aware.

The trick in making any gun handle the 50,000+ psi pressure of the .454 Casull is, this pistolsmith learned, not so much a matter of the steel's strength as it is of precise tolerances. The barrel/cylinder gap, the alignment of the cylinder's chambers with the bore, the chamber dimensions, the fitting of the cylinder to the frame—all must be exact.

Having fired thousands of rounds through the prototype, the pistolsmith is waiting only for the results of two independent labs' metallurgical tests before releasing the product. American Handgunner is closely following the progress of this innovative project. Assuming the tests are positive, we plan a major feature story in an upcoming issue. Stay tuned!



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Shown at top: S&W Model 29, 8 1/2" barrel, optional scope mount system (scope not included), combat stocks. Shown at bottom: S&W Model 629, 6" barrel, adjustable rear sight, target stocks. See all the S&W MAGNUMs® at your Smith & Wesson dealer.