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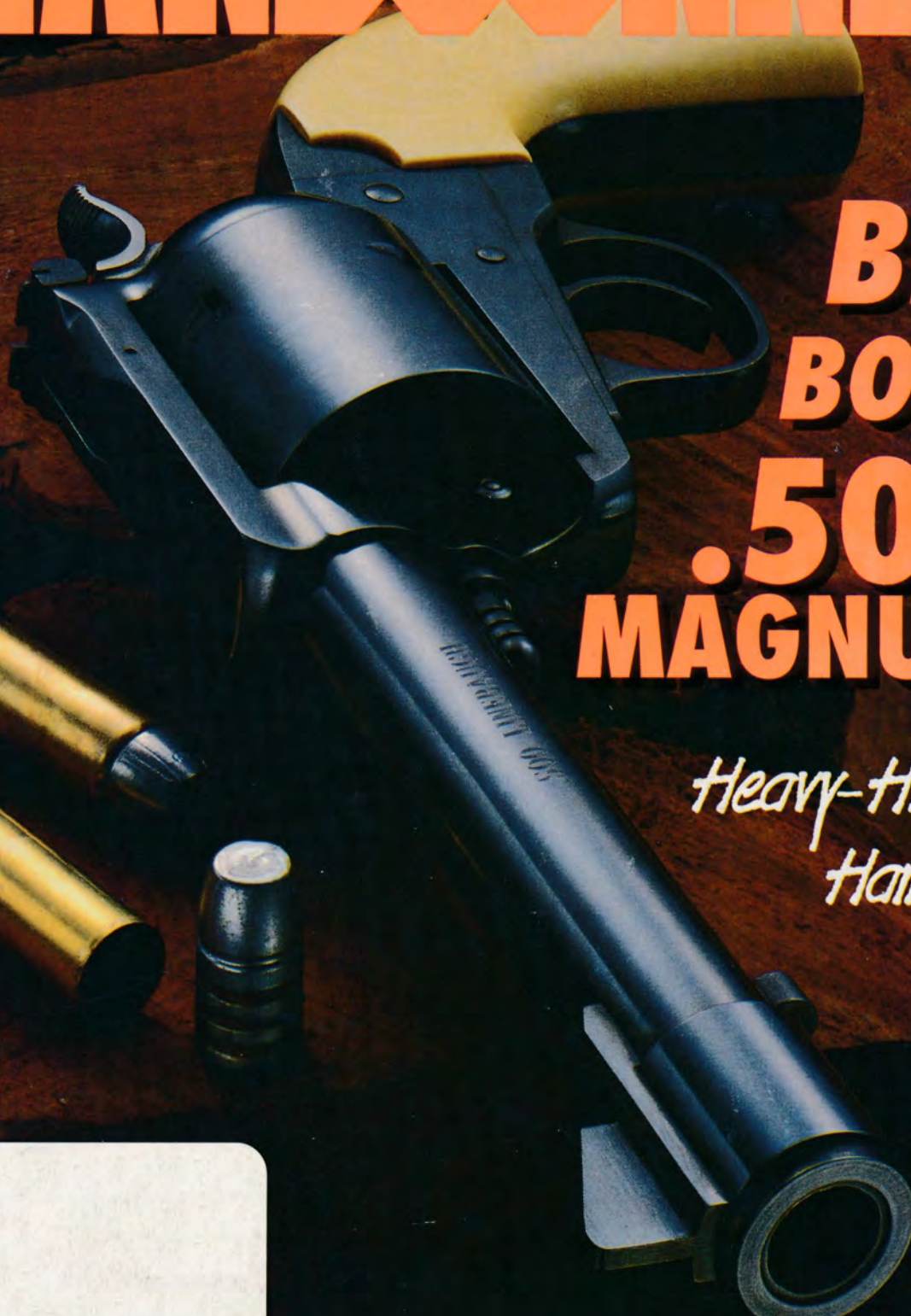
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JULY/AUGUST 1990

HANDGUNNER

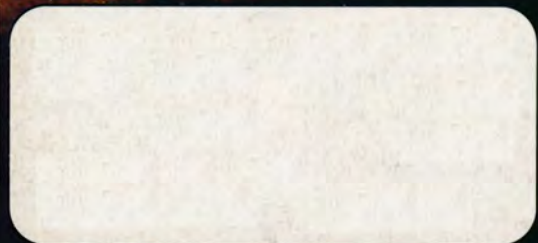
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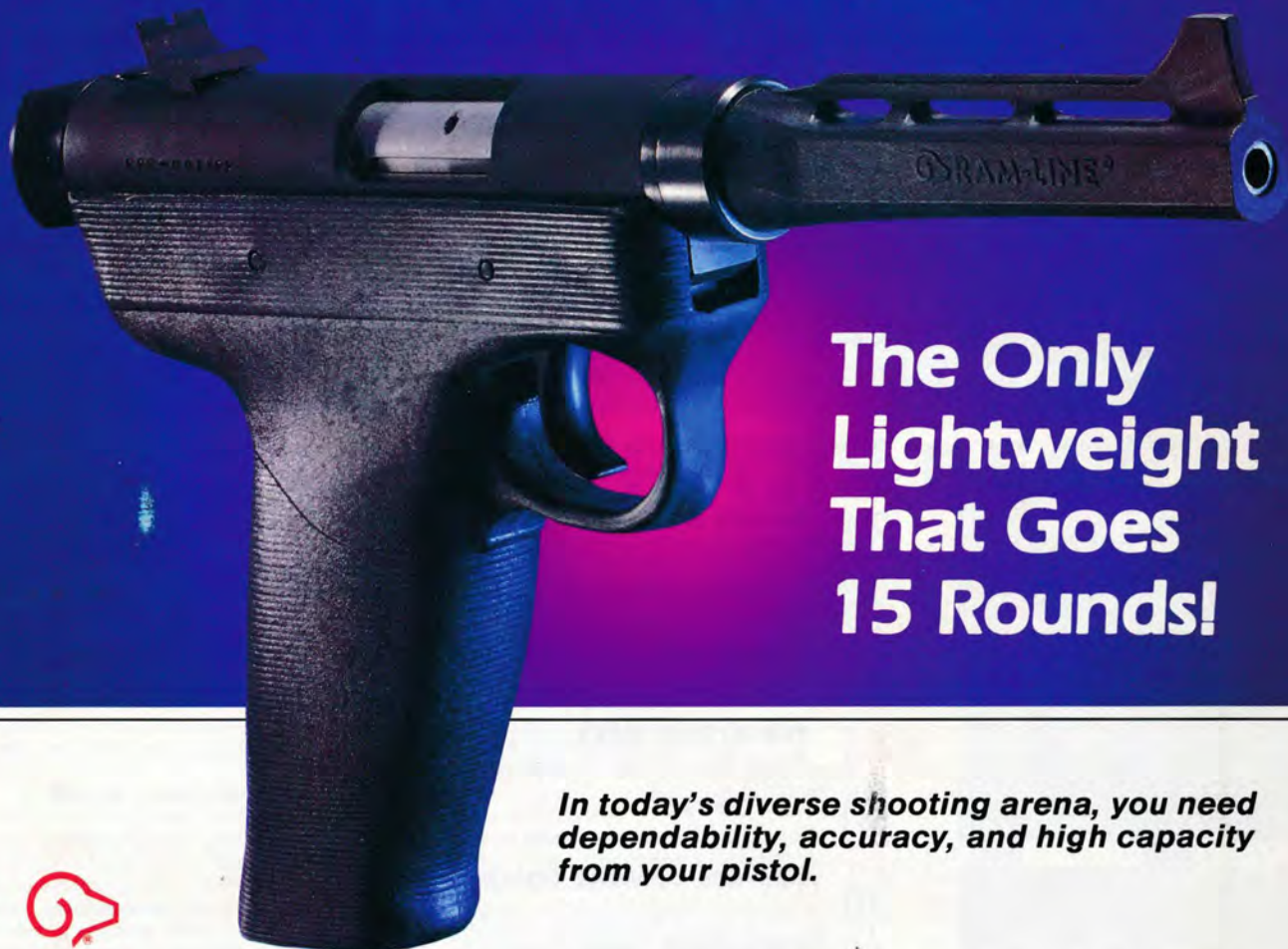


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*Patent #4,509,283,
#4,769,938



John Linebaugh's .500 Magnum is a highly customized Ruger Bisley revolver designed for maximum power. Photo by Ichiro Nagata.



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JULY/AUGUST 1990

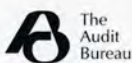
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\$279.00

TRAIN WITH THE BEST

The \$64.00 question

What do shooters like **Rob Letham, Jerry Barnhart, John Pride, Charles Grabbatin, Brian Enos and Chip McCormick** have in common, besides winning a pistol match or two? They all train with PACT Championship Timers. Now let's face it, these guys can have any timer they want. So maybe there's a reason why they choose PACT, over all others, for their vital practice sessions.

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The PACT MKIII features an **advanced 32 character display** instead of the four digit display commonly found on other timers and cheap alarm clocks (sorry guys, but facts are facts). This display allows the MKIII to display **all** of the information about a given shot (shot number, split time, total time) at a glance and eliminates the hassle of having to "toggle" back and forth between functions in order to review your shot string.

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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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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.

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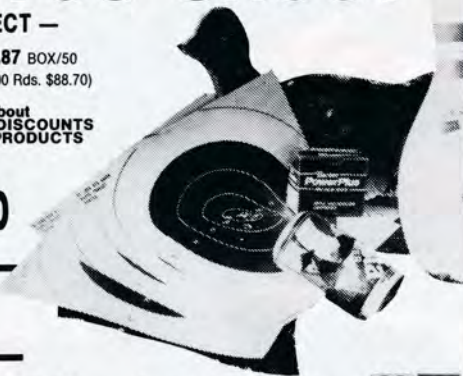
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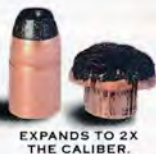
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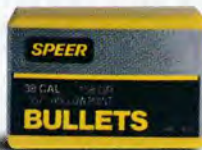
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Beware Of Holster

Dear Editor,
4 to 6 week delivery...no hassles...no delays. That's what the ad said.

On July 3, 1989 I ordered a 32-20 holster from Cattle Baron Leather Co. of San Antonio, Texas. As of March 27, 1990, I have no holster.

One excuse after another followed my numerous inquiries. I have now given the matter to the San Antonio Better Business Bureau. They have informed me that Cattle Baron ranks in the "top three" of their constant complaints. I have given this matter over to the Attorney General of Texas.

Advertising usually accounts for approximately 37% of a magazine's revenue and subscriber's the remainder. I do hope *American Handgunner* will see fit to publish this letter and cease from accepting advertising from a less than honest company.

Final point: on the same day in 1989 I ordered a holster from American Sales & Mfg. of Larado, Texas, and I received same in three weeks.

Jack Young
W. Lafayette, Ind.

Editor's Note: Recently we have received a disturbing number of complaints about Cattle Baron Leather. We have attempted to assist our readers by contacting Cattle Baron, and as soon as we have received a satisfactory response, it will be published in this column.

One Bare Breast

In her May/June *Speak Out* letter, Suzan Cooper gives the impression of being quite upset about the exploitation of women's bodies in advertisements and in my tongue-in-cheek encounter with a sex kitten. I hope that I can call a few things to her attention without arousing further anger.

Half a century after the battle of Thermopylae, Greece was embroiled in civil war. So many young men were slaughtered that the population declined markedly.

Greek women—Spartan and Athenian alike—prevailed upon the civil authorities to pass a law, with severe penalties for non-compliance, that all Greek women must dress in public with one breast bare.

This eventually had the desired effect of promoting more unions, but the most important thing about it is that it was the first time that the semi-nude female body was used in public advertising. *And it was forced through the legislature by feminist women!*

This is a matter of history and easily confirmed in history books and old drawings of women's fashions. So, I don't really think that a few words spoken in anger or consternation will change the course of human nature.

And, as Theodore Reik observed, "It's easy to see who the bottle-fed babies were."

John Lawson
Pistolsmithing Editor
American Handgunner

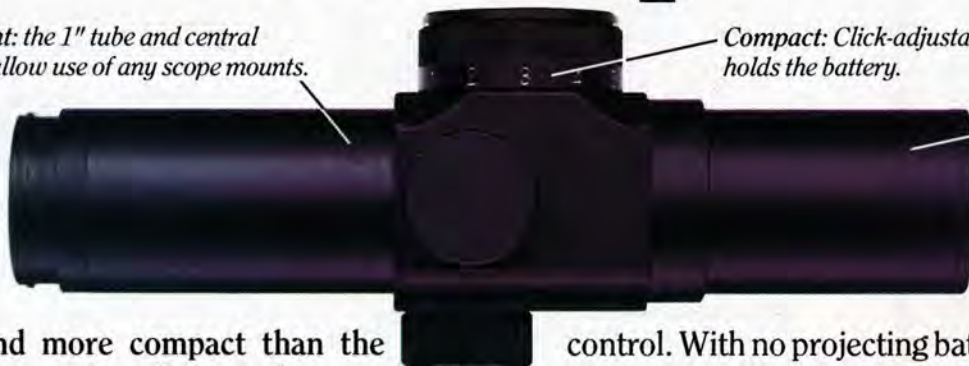
Saturday Night Racist

After reading of Maryland's "Saturday Night Special" ban, I recalled that in my teenage years in Dallas, Texas, pistols of this class were called "East Dallas Specials" because they were used by poor black people in that area for both self-defense and crime.

At the same time a racist joke was circulating that said blacks have eight days of the week: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Saturday Night. A local reporter apparently picked up on this joke and changed the term for inexpensive pistols to "Saturday Night Special."

The Ultra-Dot Sight: Counterpoint

Easy to Mount: the 1" tube and central adjustments allow use of any scope mounts.



Compact: Click-adjustable brightness control holds the battery.

Lightweight: the whole sight weighs just 4 ounces and is just over 5 inches long.

Lighter and more compact than the other "point" sights, the new Ultra-Dot Sight presents a superior point of view.

The Ultra-Dot is the smallest and lightest sight Action Arms has ever offered. It's so compact that you'll wonder where the battery is.

The Ultra-Dot has its battery pack incorporated into the small, click-adjustable brightness

control. With no projecting battery pack, it mounts easily with standard 1" rings on virtually any firearm. Write for the Action Arms full line catalog.

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Kleen-Bore's Saf-T-Clad cleaning rods combine the strength of steel with a bonded nylon/epoxy red coating to protect barrels from scraping and scarring.



There's a one piece, 33-inch Saf-T-Clad rod and a five section, 30" breakdown version in a reusable clamshell or the Saf-T-Clad Universal Cleaning Kit.



Wherever quality Kleen-Bore gun care products are sold.



Northampton, MA 01060

This is the first time I heard this term and it had very racially biased meanings. I am surprised that the NAACP and other black organizations have not heard of the term's origin.

I believe that if blacks in Maryland discovered the racist derivations of "Saturday Night Special," there would be a rapid change of elected personnel in Maryland.

Tully Strong
Ormond Beach, Fla.

10mm Giraffe

I have been following the debate on the FBI 10mm pistol and load, and I have a question. Has anyone looked at the current sidearm and its proposed replacement and noticed a certain similarity? And I don't mean that both are made by Smith & Wesson.

In both cases the pistols are made in fairly potent calibers, yet issue ammunition is not. The Bureau requires the .357 Magnum service pistol to be loaded with .38 Special +P. The new 10mm autoloader will be carried with specially down-loaded ammunition.

When viewed in this light, would it be safe to assume that the Bureau has *another* criteria for a sidearm? That any issued pistol be able to handle ammunition that is ballistically more powerful than standard issue?

Otherwise, why buy a .357 Magnum and shoot .38 Special? Why downgrade the 10mm Auto to 10mm Lite?

The only answer I can see is that they want the capability of more power available for their issue weapon for those times when nothing else will do. I haven't the foggiest idea when those times are, but I hope the Bureau does.

Meanwhile, like many a long suffering taxpayer, I hope that we don't get stuck with a giraffe.

Michael S. Dowling
Dalton, Mass.

P.S. A giraffe is the result of a bureaucratic committee's attempt to design a cow.

Miami Cop Blasts FBI

I just finished reading the article *The FBI's 10mm Lite* and I applaud the person who wrote it for coming forth to expose the facts of the horrendous semi-automatic pistol study published by the FBI last year.

Being the Range Master of the Miami Police Department and having converted to the Glock pistol and the 9mm round, I was called on the carpet to explain to my superiors how I could recommend a pistol that the FBI said was not much more than a Saturday Night Special.

The FBI test's many inconsistencies and unexplained double-standards were evident in your article. This report is truly below the FBI's usual superb standards.

Sgt. Paul J. Palank
Supervisor, Firearms Training
Miami Police Department

Truth And Gun Magazines

Wow! I loved your article (*Handgun Hunting* by J.D. Jones, May/June 1990) on the S&W 625. I had come to believe that truth and gun magazines were mutually exclusive.

Thanks for letting a little light and truth into the gun writing world.

Frank J. Horne
Hartland, Wisc.

'Gunner Guts

J.D. Jones' article on a bum M-625 and the "Walter Walsh" story on the FBI 10mm Lite (May/June) were, in a word, terrific.

You guys have guts; you tell it like it is, and that's why the *'Gunner* is one of only two gun magazines I choose to let land in my mailbox (the other is the *NRA Rifleman*).

Chal Green
Orland, Calif.

Wheelbarrow To Walk

Congratulations! Enclosed is my check for a subscription to *American Handgunner*. Any magazine with the guts to print the article by J.D. Jones in the May/June issue deserves my support.

Don't ever let this guy get away, he's a real gem. I've never met Mr. Jones—I can only assume he needs a wheelbarrow to walk around.

Please keep the readers informed of Smith & Wesson's reaction to this article. At the present time, approximately 95% of the handguns I own are S&W's and I have designs on several more.

I am going to hold off buying any more until I see whether S&W tries to bring corporate pressure to bear by withholding advertising dollars.

Incidentally, I've never experienced any of the nightmares that Mr. Jones described. I've been extremely pleased with all my S&W handguns.

Earl F. Hawkes
Pt. Mugu, Calif.

Tell It Like It Is

I read J.D. Jones article (on the S&W 625) in the May/June issue. It's about time! It's great to hear someone tell it like it is.

Now, keep it up!

Nick Dalio
Bryan, Texas

Love That 625

I just finished reading J.D. Jones' article on his saga with the Smith & Wesson 625-2. Like he did, I purchased a Model 625 from a distributor at a gun show for a fraction over dealer cost. He evidently got a dud, but I sure didn't!

My 625 has a .004" cylinder gap and it has *no* end-play and very little side play on the cylinder. Crane fit of my 625 is typical of any stainless S&W revolver.

Continued on page 13

Presenting

AN AMERICAN CLASSIC

Now you can own the most spectacular version of the Ruger "Standard Model" ever created in a limited edition: the 40th Anniversary Commemorative Ruger!



Overall Length: 7 1/2" Barrel Length: 5 1/2" Weight: 23 1/2 oz. (Gold Limited Edition)



"The .22 Ruger Pistol represents the first overall improvement in automatic pistol design since the Browning patent of 1905. For simplicity, strength and hand-someness, it has no equal."

1949 Ruger Advertisement

Americans have always been known for innovation in firearms. Sam Colt designed his Paterson. John Browning developed his Model 1900. And Bill Ruger created his Standard Model .22. Each represented a major milestone.

In fact, the Ruger Standard Model set a new measure by which autoloading pistols of the world would be judged when, in 1949, it launched Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc. into the gun business. Over the past forty years the Standard Model .22 has become one of the most famous handguns among civilian shooters, target competitors and even, in its silenced form, Special Forces teams in Vietnam.

Now, to mark the 40th Anniversary of this famous pistol and the founding of Sturm, Ruger & Co., Inc., The American Historical Foundation is proud to salute this classic American firearm—and the men and the company that made it famous.

The design for this special Commemorative is based directly on the one-of-a-kind Ruger Serial No. 1,000,000 Standard Model, which earned national fame in 1979 when it was created to mark the company's 30th Anniversary—and which brought \$27,200 at auction 10 years ago!

Each Pistol in this limited edition features spe-

cial distinctions, as commissioned by The American Historical Foundation only for these guns.

24-Karat Gold

Nine components are mirror polished and plated with 24-Karat Gold for lasting beauty and value: the trigger, trigger pivot, hammer pivot, four grip screws, bolt handle, and bolt stop thumb piece. Additional 24-Karat Gold selectively plated in precise scrollwork across the mirror-polished and blued receiver, barrel and front sight represents some of the most detailed handwork in plating ever done on a commemorative firearm.

Red Medallion/Black Medallion

Custom-made, 24-Karat Gold plated cloisonne medallions are inset in both grips. What is most unusual and highly symbolic is that the two medallions are different. The right grip medallion is red, recalling the early days of the company and Alex Sturm who Bill Ruger memorialized by changing the red medallion to black, when his friend and partner passed away in 1951. The medallion in the left grip is black, symbolic of the company today.

Even the grips are special, custom made of ivory combined with polymers for split resistance.

Limited Edition: Only 950

This edition is strictly limited to only 950, worldwide, to assure rarity and collector value. Each bears a special collector edition serial number between 1 and 950 with the prefix "40th," and this number is also inscribed on the Certificate of Authenticity which accompanies each Pistol. Serial No. 1 is being presented to the Ruger Collectors' Association, Inc.

Each Commemorative Ruger fires .22 LR ammunition, and a 10-round magazine is supplied.

Satisfaction Guaranteed

This is available exclusively from The American Historical Foundation. Place your reservation with a deposit of only \$95. Call Toll Free (800) 368-8080 or write. When you reserve, you will be made



To safely display your Commemorative, a custom-designed American Walnut Display Case, lined in crimson velvet, is available. The locking glass lid protects your investment from dust and unauthorized handling. Suitable for wall mount, shelf, or table top display, this Display Case measures 15" x 9" x 3".

a Member of the Foundation. Satisfaction is guaranteed or return within 30 days for a full refund. If you do not have a Federal Firearms License, we will coordinate delivery with you through your local firearms dealer after we receive your reservation here. If you have an FFL, send a signed copy and your Ruger will be delivered directly to you. An FFL is not needed at the time you reserve.

Due to the low edition limit—only 950—prompt response is suggested to avoid disappointment for this important American firearm.

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Please respond by 31 August 1990

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Yes, I wish to reserve the firing, 40th Anniversary Commemorative Ruger with nine 24-Karat Gold plated parts and selective gold plating. I will also receive a Certificate of Authenticity and membership in the Foundation. Satisfaction guaranteed. Personalized engraving available (see below).

My deposit (or credit card authorization) of \$95 per Pistol is enclosed. Please charge or invoice the balance due... in five equal monthly payments of \$180. in full.

Please also send the optional American Walnut Display Case adding \$149 to the final payment selected.

My payment in full is enclosed (\$995 per Pistol; Display Case add \$149).

Also, please personalize my Pistol, engraving my three initials in the right grip for \$19:

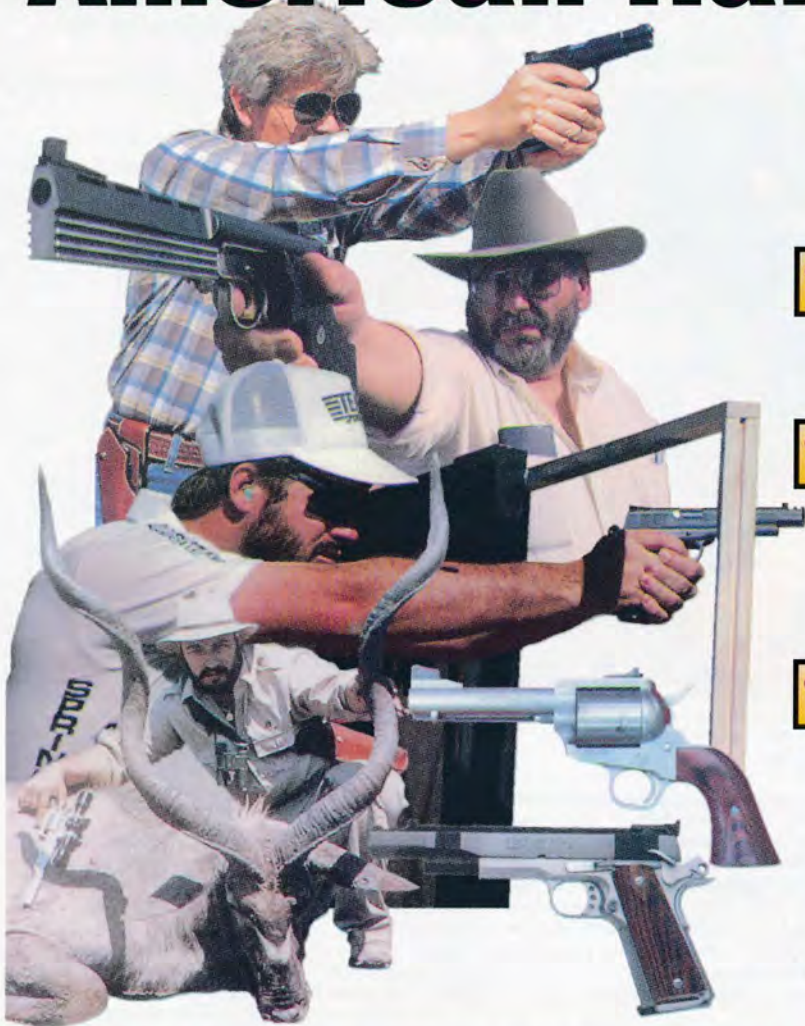
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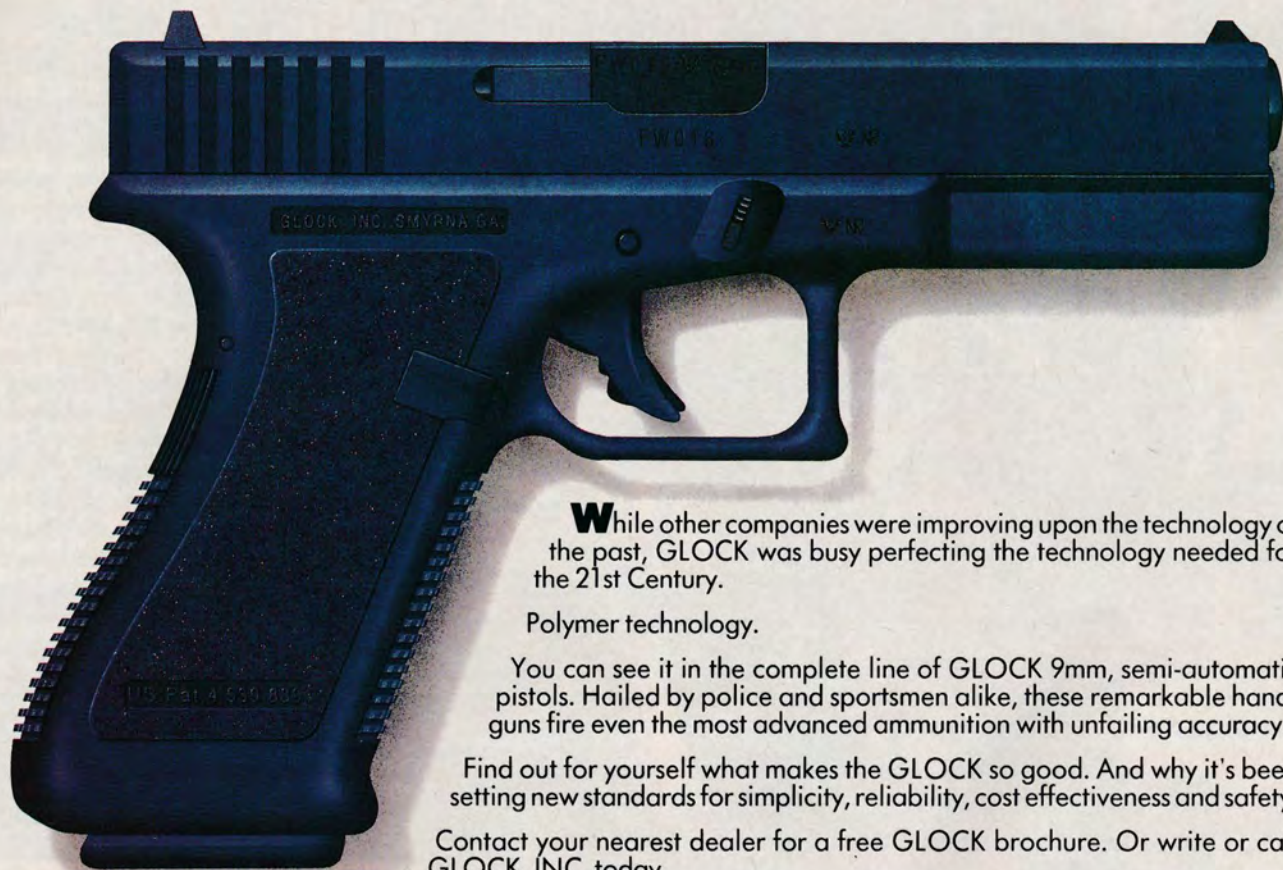
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Firing my 625 over the sandbags at 25 yards, I was very pleased with the results. The first group of five shots was 2 1/2" with a flyer from four shots at 1 3/4". I was using WW match hardball.

I had no problem with the half-moon clips and I even fired one cylinderful without the clips. No "snaps"! From then on for some 100 rounds, my groups ran from 7/8" to 1 1/4" with iron sights. I just wanted to share with him my experiences with the Model 625.

Teddy Buff
Valdese, NC

Over-The-Counter

A very sincere thank you for your (tell it the way it really is) article "Saga of a .45 ACP Revolver." It's about time a gun scribe wrote about the product we purchase over-the-counter instead of the slicked-up versions they receive direct from the manufacturer.

I also experienced the S&W 625 frustration, not to mention the cylinder scoring on a factory-fresh, out-of-the-box Model 29 Classic Hunter. Then there's the failure to feed and function problem with a 745 and the cylinder binding problems with a 686.

Funny how these problems failed to surface while being tested by very knowledgeable gunwriters.

I sincerely hope you will continue writing about products purchased over-the-counter. Maybe Smith & Wesson (and Colt) will get the message. If not, Taurus and Beretta will be laughing all the way to the bank.

Jeff Stanley
Montpelier, Vt.

S&W Responds

You can probably imagine how concerned we were here at Smith & Wesson when we read J.D. Jones' saga of his Model 625-2 in the May/June issue of *American Handgunner* ("Saga of a .45 ACP Revolver and How S&W Just Couldn't Fix It.")

We were especially disconcerted to read that a revolver to which we've had such positive response should have caused Mr. Jones so many problems, problems our Service Department— frequently cited as exemplary by both press and consumers— could not seem to correct to his satisfaction.

As our Lifetime Service Policy affirms, we stand behind our products and service. Typically our handguns leave the factory free of the flaws Mr. Jones encountered— and with no need to return.

So we are particularly upset when any customer of ours has problems with one of our products, and can only do our best to rectify them.

Equally, we're aware that occasionally our Service Department exceeds its nor-

mal ten-day turnaround on routine repairs, as it did in Mr. Jones' case. It happens, as it happens to every company sooner or later—but there's no excuse.

Beyond that point, however, Mr. Jones is basing his displeasure with the Model 625-2, Smith & Wesson in general and— apparently— the rest of the industry press on an incorrect assumption.

The assumption is that the 625-2 was designed to headspace on the case mouth rather than on full- or half-moon clips. It was *not*, as he was told explicitly in his first conversation with John Mack, our Product Service, Sales and Repair Manager.

Ironically, he could have learned the same thing had he read the cover story, "Stainless Thunder," in the November/December issue of *American Handgunner*.

A thorough look at the background of the .45 revolver coupled with an exhaustive test by the meticulous John Taffin, this article left no room for doubt on the question of the need for moon clips— although Mr. Taffin's conclusions about the value of the 625-2 were considerably different from Mr. Jones'.

Mr. Taffin also recognizes that the serious modern shooter appreciates the loading speed that moon clips afford, and has little patience with the "nuisance" of picking fired ACP brass out of the chambers a case at a time. It was our recognition of the desire of our customers for this convenience that led us to design and build the

625-2 specifically for use *with* clips.

It's simply unfortunate that Mr. Jones didn't make the effort to ascertain what our specifications for this revolver actually *are* before criticizing us for not "correcting" them to specifications that date from the immediate post-World War II era.

I'm afraid I can't help but wonder whether he had a similar experience with the manufacturer of his last automobile when he found there was no place to insert the crank.

Manufacturing techniques and product designs, for better and worse, do, inevitably, change over time. We at S&W have a considerable body of evidence upon which to base our belief that the technological advances in the last few years have been for the better.

Finally, although it seems out of context here as it did in Mr. Jones' column, I feel I must address Mr. Jones' concerns about "skipping" in the Model 29 series.

Fact is, "powers that be" woke up well over a year ago to the fact that the Model 29 needed to be updated to meet current customers' needs, although it seems unlikely we'll be converting it to a real single-shot "hand cannon."

The steps we've taken— and will be taking in the future— are detailed in the September, 1989, issue of *Shooting Times*.

Of course, we would have been pleased to discuss them in depth with Mr.

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Jones— had he asked.

We at Smith & Wesson can only regret that a writer of J.D. Jones' reputation has taken the occasion of a single bad experience with our company to call into question our entire product line, the attitude of our employees, and the credibility of every other writer in the industry.

I hope this letter will serve to clarify the majority of the issues he has raised.

Christopher J. Killoy
Director of Marketing
Smith & Wesson

Six Second El Prez

I enjoyed the *Insights Into IPSC* column in your May/June issue. Possibly some past statements have been misunderstood or misquoted, so in the interest of historical accuracy, I thought a few comments were in order.

First, no one bought me a "warehouse full" of ammunition for shooting *El Presidente's* or any other purpose. In fact, the sum total of ammunition not bought by myself was three cases in my entire competitive career, one from Steve Hornady to win the world championship in 1981 and two others from Federal.

That was still in the good old days when I hunted coyotes and worked in the oil field just to buy primers, powder and lead. Rest assured any factory ammunition that passed through my hands went to a higher deed than *El Presidente*.

As for the El Prez itself, I considered six seconds my par time, holding not more than 10 points down. I shot the drill *occasionally* as a yardstick. If I fell below my standard, it was time to practice some basics again.

When I pushed it, mid- to low-five's were possible. I suspect I still have six seconds in me today and I haven't tried

for six years!

I was, of course, one of the slower shooters when ultimate speed was the question. I only managed to win by being too bull headed to lose. There were men at that time (pre-1983) who regularly got into the four's, and there were rumblings of sub-four second runs, but I did not see them.

Remember, lots of us were still shooting pistols with appreciable recoil and horsepower, too. Mr. Anderson must have been absent 10 years ago when the likes of Campbell, Von Sorgenfrei, Plaxco and a fellow named Leatham turned on the speed.

Not to take anything away from today's speed demons and pistols almost perfectly suited to the task, but it seems we shouldn't make the IPSC teams of 1981 and 1983 seem like slugs. There were people nine and 10 years ago who could push almost anything being done today. If you look around, some of them are still here and still a threat in any match.

Ross Seyfried
Roggen, Colo.

Editor's Note: The comments in question are direct quotations from Col. Jeff Cooper who was the president of IPSC then. Any errors of fact in this regard are Col. Cooper's, not Dave Anderson's.

Rugerist Overtones

I realize J.D. Jones' column is primarily about hunting, but I found the Rugerist overtones disturbing. Everyone should be able to recite the Rugerist litany by now:

- 1) Only Bill Ruger or his safari buddies will decide what firearms we will own.
- 2) If Bill doesn't make it, we don't need it.
- 3) Five rounds in rifles, 15 in pistols. (Repeat three times.)
- 4) Those who dare to disagree with

Bill will be branded as "irresponsible."

J.D. states that he can't see any use for service-grade handguns. The only useful guns must be capable of 1 1/2" at 25 yards. Maybe for hunting, but I don't hunt with a handgun.

For me, handguns are for recreation and defense. I'm not ashamed to say that I can't shoot a handgun, unsupported, into less than 2" at 25 yards.

Just for the record, I don't see much use for the .50 caliber blackpowder handgun that J.D. was so proud of. But I'm not going to suggest that he should not own it. Maybe I'm just too tolerant.

John Miller
Hubbard, Ore.

Respected Plastic

I was disappointed to read Cameron Hopkins' comments on the Ram-Line Syn-Tech .22 pistol in the May/June *Industry Insider* column. His opinion is his own and he is certainly entitled to it, but he should get his facts straight.

First, he refers to the pistol twice as "all-plastic." If he had read the company's literature, he would have known that the barrel liner, bolt, receiver and several internal parts are steel or aluminum.

Second, he refers to it as a "gooey glob of molten plastic that's poured into a mold in the shape of a gun." The polymer pieces are injection molded, which is a much more complicated and precise process.

Third, he says that the gun is made out of the "same stuff as Hefty bag." Hefty bags are made out of linear low density poly-ethylene (LLDPE). The polymer used in the Ram-Line pistol is glass-reinforced polycarbonate, a very strong and respected material in the plastics industry.

Mike Knepley
Evergreen, Colo.


Ugly Is As Ugly Does

I just finished reading your *Industry Insider* in your May/June issue. Thank you for mentioning our new Syn-Tech pistol.

And contrary to what you were alluding to about its looks, it's not really so ugly as it is, well, different. It just takes awhile to get used to it.

I'm a traditionalist also, but the first time I held the prototype, I changed my mind. Well-balanced and light, it's a completely different feel.

Heather Petrone
Ram-Line, Inc.
Golden, Colo.

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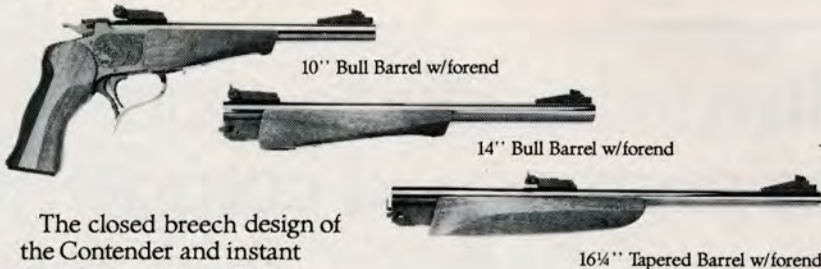
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160 lb. (dressed weight) Whitetail taken by Bill Aurand in central Pennsylvania. The 10 pt. buck was shot at 55 yds. with a 35 cal. T/C Contender. It scored 140 6/8 B&C points.



Bruce E. Neva with a 200 lb. (dressed weight) Whitetail taken in Steele County, N.D. Bruce shot the deer at 100 yds. with a T/C Contender.



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Most of us, however, don't have much money and time is *still* in very short supply. Dillon Precision Products, Inc. has recognized this simple fact of life for shooters better than any other manufacturer in the shooting industry. You can't buy time, but the net result from using a Dillon product or reloader is the same—more free time to go shoot!

The fine folks in Scottsdale who worked so valiantly to protect our rights to own semi-automatic rifles just intro-

duced a new item that is extremely time-saving, the Dillon Case-Media Separator.

I like to polish all of my brass for a number of worthy reasons. Clean brass doesn't wear the dies as rapidly as dirty brass. Clean brass is easier to crimp correctly. Clean brass builds a reloaded round that chambers easier and is more reliable in terms of functioning the gun.

But clean brass just plain *looks better* and is probably the single biggest reason why I try and polish to a brilliant finish every round I reload.

There are a number of good case polishers available on the market today from a wide variety of reloading manufacturers, but by and large they ignore the problems that arise after the brass has been polished. How do you *quickly and cleanly* separate the brass from the media?

For years I have used a wide mesh wire screen over a deep-bowl rubber tub and poured the contents over the screen.

This allows most of the media to pour through the screen and is captured in the tub underneath, but you still have to empty each individual case laying on the screen of the media trapped inside.

This is a time consuming job. It is also messy because I use a corn cob media that has been mixed with a red polishing rouge compound and it turns my hands and clothes to the color of a red-oxide. (You can guess this is a job that is high on my list of things I like to do.)

The Dillon Case-Media Separator eliminates all that mess and completes the job in the time it takes to turn a crank. It is a simple idea and one that works so well you wonder why it took this long for someone to build it. It is available factory-direct for \$44.95 from Dillon Precision Products, Inc. and worth the price—after all, time is not cheap.

Cartridge Counter

Another simple idea from Dillon that is long overdue is the Cartridge Counter. This is an actuator-operated counter that mounts on the crimp die and counts the number of rounds reloaded.

I used to keep meticulous records of every round I reloaded on my single station press, including a reference to not only the powder charge, type of primer and projectile, but also the brand of case reloaded and the number of times each

Continued on page 96

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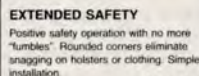
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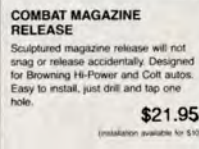
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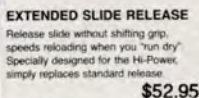
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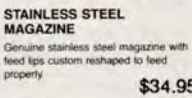
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King's Gun Works

Need a set of custom grips, a thumb-guard, and a magazine loading chute for your 1911 pistol? King's Gun Works (1837 W. Glenoaks Blvd., Dept. AH, Glendale, CA 91201) makes an accessory



Ed Brown Products

With the announcement of a factory shooting team and custom gun performance shop, Smith & Wesson is going after a bigger share of the competition market. One of the first off the mark with accessories for S&W autos is Ed Brown, who makes an extended stainless steel slide stop for several models—the 5904, 6904, 3906, 5906, 4006, and 1006.

An ambidextrous safety for the same models is available this year. Brown also has an oversize thumbblatch for K, L, and N frame revolvers that should speed reloads for IPSC and bowling pin shooters who use wheelguns.

Brown keeps adding to his line of high-quality parts for the 1911 pistol as well, most recently adding oversize thumb safeties in both ambidextrous and left-side only models, both blue and stainless. The safety is wide enough to serve as a thumb rest, made with a compound curve to match the shape of the thumb. For a current price list write Ed Brown Products, Dept. AH, Route 2, Box 2922, Perry, MO 63462.

New Wilson Products

Wilson's Gun Shop is one of the biggest distributors of handgun parts and accessories. Their 57-page full color catalogue (\$3, refundable on first order), shows hundreds of items of interest to handgunners.

Some of the new products include two styles of ballistic nylon equipment bags; and ultra-light match trigger (which is lighter than the popular Wilson Match model); a high-grip beavertail grip safety, a Commander-style hammer, and dual-port compensator kits in both .45 ACP and ramped .38 Super. The address is Route 3, P.O. Box 578, Dept. AH,



that does all three jobs. Called the "Speed Grip," the left side panel incorporates a thumb guard that prevents rubbing the slide for those who carry the thumb on the safety while shooting, while the bottoms of the two panels are shaped to form a mag loading chute.

Suggested list price as this is written is \$49.95, which is much less than you would pay for all three items individually. King's make and distribute a full range of parts for the 1911 pistol; their 130 page catalogue costs \$2.50.

Prolix Lube

One of the most useful cleaner/lubricant/preservative products I've found is called "Prolix." The makers say it contains no petroleum, teflon, graphite, silicone, or greases. They don't say what it does contain, but whatever it is, it works very well.

From the bottle, Prolix is a clear blue liquid, but the liquid is only a carrier to distribute the lubricant evenly. Once that's done, it evaporates, leaving the surface dry. The makers claim that Prolix flows away oil and grime, and bonds with the pores of the metal to form a protective skin that will not flash or burn off, and will lubricate over a temperature range of -80° to +460° F.

While I can't substantiate those claims, I found that in extended strings of

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rapid fire, when my .38 Super got much too hot to touch the barrel, the Prolix kept on providing proper lubrication. Also, the gun seemed to stay clean much longer than I was used to, and was easier to clean when it did get dirty. The Prolix seems to give such a slick finish that dirt doesn't want to stick to it.

Prolix's dry lubricating qualities make it outstanding for use with progressive loading machines. All progressives work better with a touch of lubricant, but oil isn't such a hot idea for this purpose. For one thing, it can contaminate primers, and for another it combines with spilled powder and debris from spent primers to make an abrasive paste.

I disassembled my Dillon 550, cleaned and lubed it with Prolix, and after reassembly found it worked more smoothly and with less effort than ever before. And, I could load twice as many rounds as before without the need for cleaning!

Prolix will not affect wood or any metal finishes, but the makers warn that some types of plastics may be affected, so test on a small area before use. Remember that before using it on your Glock; while 83% of the Glock pistol is metal, I'd really hate to dissolve the 17% that isn't. Check with your dealer for Prolix, or write MP Research, Inc., P.O. Box 1348, Dept. AH, Victorville, CA 92392.

JPR Custom Comp

At the 1990 SHOT Show, a business called JPR Custom (24715 Lynn Circle, Dept. AH, Hemet, CA) displayed expansion-chamber designed compensators for the Beretta 92F and Glock 17/19 pistols.

These comps use the gun's existing



barrels; the units displayed showed good workmanship and fit of slide to comp.

I wasn't able to test fire these guns, but the expansion chamber technology has been well proven in competition. The comp incorporates a cone that threads over the barrel and locks into the slide, so that the barrel is supported both front and rear.

The comp unit can be installed by your gunsmith, or JPR will install it for you. For current prices write JPR, or call them at (714) 927-1250.

McCormick Trigger

One of the problems in getting a light trigger break on 1911 style pistols is the trigger itself. In this design the trigger is

Continued on page 98

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 - 200gr SWCLHARDCAST(10 MM)
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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER'S OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS OF HANDGUNS IN THE EIGHTIES

By Massad Ayoob

The Eighties were a dynamic decade in the world of the handgun. The editors feel that applause is due for the many who made a difference.

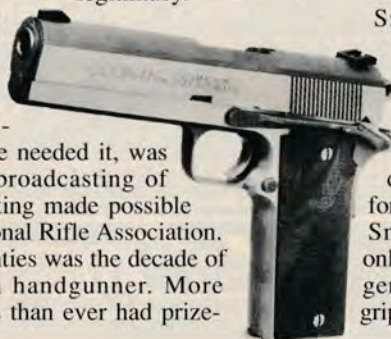
What had only been a promise in the Seventies blossomed into reality in the next decade, when sport handgun shooting became a recognized professional sport. Led by the Bianchi Cup conceived by John Bianchi; the Steel Challenge originally conceptualized by Mike Dalton and Mike Fichman; Rich Davis' Second Chance match; and the Masters event sponsored by Smith & Wesson and ramrodded by S&W's Roy



Jinks. All combined to give handgunning a new aura of responsible legitimacy.

The final proof of the belt-gun's new respectability, if anyone needed it, was the ESPN broadcasting of action shooting made possible by the National Rifle Association.

The Eighties was the decade of the woman handgunner. More tournaments than ever had prize-



rich categories for High Ladies. Sonny Jones' magazine *Women & Guns* was an instant hit, and so was Paxton Quigley's book *Armed and Female*, distributed widely by mainstream publisher E. P. Dutton and an absolute manifesto for women prepared to complete the final step of the feminist movement and take control of their own destiny.

At the end of the decade, the tragic rape and maiming of an unarmed female jogger in Central Park rallied a nation of angry women who were tired of being victims.



Smith & Wesson took the bold step of producing the first gun in decades designed expressly for women, the Lady-Smith. Okay, okay, it was only a Chief Special with a lighter trigger return spring, hideous "feminine grips," and a matte finish now designat-

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER'S DUBIOUS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS OF HANDGUNS IN THE EIGHTIES

By Massad Ayoob

We've borrowed brazenly from *Esquire* magazine's classic "Dubious Achievement Awards" annual issue, right down to the eight worst movies of the year listed as "Now Playing at Hell Plaza Octoplex."

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, *Esquire* is a good magazine to flatter; unlike *Time* and some others, they covered the gun control issue objectively in the Eighties, balancing an anti-gun column with the first-person account of a Yuppie who carried a gun in a place where there were no permits available and wound up using it to shoot a would-be mugger.

And now, with no further ado...

The Bic Award

Grendel introduces a light, cheap, double action only .380 that loads ten rounds through stripper clips. Even most gun writers admit that they jam epidemically and frequently break.

Grendel may have earned the Bic Award for creating the first cheap, disposable semiautomatic pistol. The difference is, the Bic lasts longer and usually works.

Hollywood Can't Be Wrong Award

At least two well known gunwriters, both of whom had previously stated that muzzle energy tests formulated mathematically or tests done in ballistic gelatin were totally irrelevant to gunfighting reality, now state publicly that the brilliant new 10mm Auto is "the ultimate manstopping cartridge."

Every adoption of the 10mm by a police agency thus far has been based on mathematically formulated energy tests and/or performance in ballistic gelatin.

At this writing, no documented case exists of a human being actually shot with a 10mm bullet. Unless one counts *Miami Vice*.

Elephant Pregnancy Award, First Place

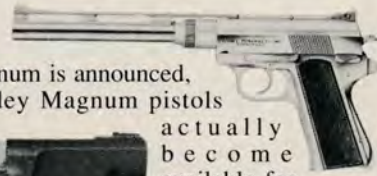
Perhaps a decade after the Wildey

Magnum is announced, Wildey Magnum pistols

actually become available for sale in gunshops.

Elephant Pregnancy Award, Second Place

Holding up production until he thinks the gun is perfect, Bill Ruger follows the



ed as "frosted" to go with its laser-engraved logo.

But it was also an ideological statement, and one of social responsibility when S&W published a

toll-free number women could call to find gun training near them.

When the Conde Nast group of women's magazines refused to carry the ads for the LadySmith, S&W's Sherry Collins managed a mass-media coup that got S&W millions of dollars worth of free

publicity. Meanwhile, a number of women's magazines had already run Beretta's ad that tastefully showed just a loaded cartridge "clip" for their .25 auto, with the lead line, "Women's Magazine." Maybe the people in advertising just didn't read the copy.

Glock, Inc. weathered the BS storm that accused their polymer framed 9mm of being "a terrorist pistol designed to pass



through metal detectors."

The novel "safe action" Glock achieved instant mass acceptance among conservative police and gun enthusiasts more rapidly than any radically new handgun design in memory. The Glock people proved that their pistol could be competently learned faster than any other handgun.

The Eighties saw handgun design giant Bill Ruger take a couple of beatings he didn't deserve. Consumers were angered when the "economy 9mm for Everyman" that he had announced in 1985 didn't become readily

available until four years later.

No one bothered to learn that Ruger had delayed production intentionally to make it an even better gun than originally designed, knowingly costing himself millions of dollars in potential profits to do so.

When Ruger lobbied Congress to restrict high capacity magazines instead of semiautomatic firearms, thousands of gun owners felt so betrayed they swore never to buy another Ruger product. Few asked for Bill's side of it.

Ruger says, "I know a helluva lot more Congressman than most people do, and they were almost unanimously telling me

that they saw the gun lobby as fanat-

ics who never gave an inch. It was turning them off to our side of the issue. I felt we had to show that we were willing to compromise somewhere, and the magazines seemed the least painful alternative to

Continued on page 90

1985 announcement of his 9mm P-85 ("Pistol of 1985") autoloader by not putting the gun into mainstream of commerce until 1989.

Oklahoma Beach Property Award

A California firm offers all-titanium revolvers in .357 Magnum. The catch is, you have to send the money first, and they'll send you the gun later.

They tell you they won't ship COD because "they're not set up for it." We can find no one who actually got the gun, and can't estimate how many were fleeced of their money and are too embarrassed to admit it. California Attorney General's office is reportedly investigating.

Testosterone Award

The American Derringer Corporation introduced a two-shot pistol of Remington derringer pattern, chambered for the .45-70 buffalo rifle cartridge.



What's In A Name Award

Charter Arms announced a pair of revolvers named after two vicious cop-killers who robbed Piggly-Wiggly stores and occasionally shot down unarmed victims.

Introducing the "Bonnie and Clyde," matched .38 Special and .32 Magnum "his n' hers" snub-noses, a Charter Arms executive explained that targeted buyers have seen the Warren Beatty/Faye Dunaway movie (which glamorizes the kidnapping and killing of police officers) and identify with the freewheeling, independent, exciting way of American life that the film *Bonnie and Clyde* depicted.

Coming Soon: The .44 Bulldog "Son Of Sam" Commemorative.

Love Those Lawyers Award

Colt Firearms begins the decade with the improved Series 80 autoloaders with firing pin lock. For the first time, this classic handgun is drop-safe with a live round in the chamber.

Naturally, the civil liability attorneys of Colt Industries simultaneously have the owner's manual changed to read, "CAUTION: ALWAYS KEEP AND CARRY YOUR PISTOL EMPTY, WITH THE HAMMER FORWARD EXCEPT WHEN YOU INTEND TO SHOOT, SO THAT YOUR PISTOL CANNOT BE FIRED WHEN YOU DO NOT MEAN



TO FIRE IT."

Candy Colored Tangerine Flake Streamlined Baby Award

Springfield Armory announced that, on special order, they can produce model 1911-A1 pistols finished in assorted designer or pastel colors, including camo.

Guns For Me, None For You Award

Washington, DC, columnist Carl Rowan, who is fond of depicting all gun owners as vicious troglodytes, shoots one of several local teens who made the mistake of trying to swim in his pool.

Freed by the criminal justice system, Rowan states publicly that he kept that unregistered Smith & Wesson .22 because no one was going to remotely threaten his family.

He practices on a Duelatron target of a Yuppie white kid in skivvy shorts armed with a jagged Perrier bottle.

Curious Example Award

A Miami taxi driver, newly able to carry a gun thanks to the Florida reform

Continued on page 72

WAITING PERIODS ARE A BANDAID SOLUTION TO A SURGICAL PROBLEM

The best argument against waiting period laws is the one most evident: they just don't work. Yet those who want to wait to purchase a firearm argue all around this essential fact, never daring to confront statistics and actual law enforcement testimony confirming the utter uselessness of making honest citizens wait.

One of the deceptive tactics of this point of view is the unfulfillable expectations created by people whose goal it is to ban the private ownership of firearms. They promise waiting periods will stop crime, but they don't—and never will.

Proof is everywhere. Let's turn our attention to California, a state where trendy firearms laws have become fashionable, much to the chagrin of its many, decent pro-gun citizens.

California was a pacesetter in waiting period legislation, enacting a law way back in 1965, a time when anti-gun fever

was boiling the political tar out of this West Coast melting pot.

Passage of the California waiting period law was, as we predicted, followed by an eruption of lawlessness. Violent crime zoomed up 138% in the ensuing decade, and still soars far above the national average.

California continues to be trendy in passing gun laws, just as it continues to be an epicenter for violent crime. Something is out of kilter in the Golden State.

Could it be that these laws are off target? Should the emphasis be placed on curtailing criminals, instead of ownership and access to guns?

Every U.S. Department of Justice statistic, every serious study conducted by professional criminologist, says yes. Even interviews with incarcerated violent felons confirm what the statistics and studies reveal: Criminals don't obey gun laws.

Law enforcement officers point out that

criminals steal firearms or obtain them on the black market. Why should they wait, stand in line, or fill out forms when illegal guns are available elsewhere?

Obviously, the burden of waiting periods falls upon citizens who obey the law. They are the ones subjected to the endless red tape, the bureaucratic bungling, and the restrictions placed upon rights guaranteed by the Constitution.

In large metropolitan areas with restrictive firearms provisions, crime continues unabated while good citizens are oftentimes left unprotected. Waiting periods, according to their champions, are supposed to protect us from criminals. Instead, they only restrict access to guns by those who may need them the most.

Let's look at some other fallacies associated with waiting period laws. Proponents say that background checks could easily be accomplished in 10 to 14 days.

The FBI, however, admits that criminal record-keeping in this country is dismal to say the least. Officials say it might take months to adequately process any one of the many thousands of anticipated applications, if they get processed at all.

The actual legwork would fall upon local police authorities, who would find themselves buried by mounds of additional paperwork. Our police are already overburdened by endless reports. Add to this additional time spent on the personal

Continued on page 102



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A DECADE OF EVOLUTION: COMBAT PISTOLS I HAVE KNOWN AND SHOT

Sitting in front of the ol' RL-1000 the other day cranking out a few thousand rounds to practice with, I found myself reminiscing about the good old days. How things have changed!

All the hub-bub about today's amazing equipment, miraculous new this and fantastic new that, it made me think of how simple guns used to be. When I started practical shooting, the .45 ACP was the round of choice fired out of a Government Model or sometimes a Commander. These guns were pretty much decked out like now except for compensators, or the lack thereof. Checkering, Bo-Mar's, beavertails, bevelled mag well, and so forth.

In 1979 or thereabouts I shot my first match. I used the only centerfire handgun I owned at that time, a Model 27 Smith with a six-inch barrel. This is a *revolver* but I quickly traded it off for a more suit-

able .45 auto.

That first .45 auto was a Colt Government Model that I had suitably modified by several of the local gunsmiths. One detail I remember is that the trigger guard was squared and checkered. Back then I hooked my weak-hand index finger around the trigger guard, a practice I have since stopped.

My first .45 lasted me through roughly 1980 at which time the bowling pin guns were becoming all the rage. So, I sold or traded that gun— don't remember which— and began construction of the next one which, of course, was to be the Gun To Beat All Guns.

First Pin Gun

You have to remember that in 1980 if you wanted one of these new "pin guns," you had to send your gun off to Wilson's or Clark's. There weren't any others! Your only other choice was to get your

local guy to figure it out and do the job.

With the help of a good friend of mine and gunsmith Guy Hammond, we proceeded to build our first pin gun. This was all pretty new at the time and the hot tip was to use a six-inch Bar-Sto barrel with Mag-Na-Porting.

We spent a couple of long nights after work building the first of many pin guns that Guy would produce for another friend, Mike Henry, who was the guinea pig of our experiments. This was a scant two weeks before the 1981 IPSC Nationals in Virginia and if the thing didn't work, I didn't want to get stuck without a gun so Mike got the prototype!

The gun turned out fine so the next two nights were spent building mine. I still don't know how we convinced Guy to do this, but somehow we did. Near as I can remember, I don't think I ever paid him for any of this work. Oh well!

The Hammond Pin Gun was no raving beauty as we ran out of time before we had it refinished, but it shot beautifully. It had a six-inch barrel with the sight right on the barrel's "pin gun" weight. The Bo-Mar rear sight was low-mounted by none other than Mike Dillon. Yes, the Mike Dillon of reloader fame, another one of the benefits of my father's acquaintances.

It also had a long aluminum trigger, a Rogers plastic magazine funnel and a custom home-cold-blued finish. I believe it had a Safari Arms grip safety and a



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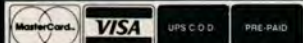
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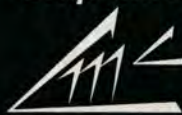
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Commander hammer, but that's about it. This gun took me to 10th place in the '81 Nationals, my first big match.

Wilson Combat

In 1982 I broke down and bought a Big Buck Name Brand competition pistol, a Wilson Combat in the customary .45 ACP. This was one of the early models before expansion chambers or such nonsense and was a fabulous gun. It shot a few two-inch groups and was used at the Steel Challenge, IPSC Nationals and Bianchi Cup. This thing had all the whistles and is pretty similar to what I use today.

Then came the big one— 1983 was a banner year for me when I won the IPSC National and World titles using that same .45 ACP Wilson Combat pistol only with a few changes. Once again Guy Hammond was called into service as I wanted a chamber with a vertical port. This would then serve as a "compensator"— radical new idea at the time— and be installed on my trusty blaster.

Guy again did a fine job and produced what would become a standard design for many years— one large expansion chamber with a large vertical exit port ahead of the front sight. Up until now the front sight was generally on the end of the barrel assembly to allow an increased sight radius.

My 1983 gun that would later become known as the Wilson Accu-Comp "LE" (for me and Brian Enos) had another little gimmick. This particular pistol had a hole drilled into the comp on either side of the front sight, which probably did little more than get it dirty but it sure looked trick!

This gun was also the end of the .45's.

First .38 Super

I read with amusement in a competing firearms publication that I have used the .38 Super since 1982. Where that info came from I'll never know, but the Steel Challenge in 1984 was the first major match where I used a .38 Super.

Nick Pruitt won the match with a .45 ACP and I was second. My gun was identical to the .45 except for caliber. My new Wilson Accu-Comp sported a comp with a large chamber and one large exit port in front of the gun, like that Hammond prototype.

This particular gun was interesting because the entire piece was hard chrome plated by Metaloy Industries except the top radius of the slide. This supposedly allowed the non-reflective benefit of a blued slide while also giving the advantages of scratch-resistant hard chrome. For a lot of extra work it seemed to offer few real benefits so I ceased to include this on a gun since.

My 1984 pistol was the first Wilson .38 Super and, interestingly enough, Bill Wilson himself was somewhat skeptical of building the thing. Not from the safety factor so commonly noted, but from a

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reliability standpoint. Due to Bill's persistence, excellent workmanship and faith in my screwball idea, this caliber and his Accu-Comp have become something of standard among competitors.

The rest of the industry recognized a good thing and followed suit.

At the mid-decade point, 1985 marked the year of common acceptance of the .38 Super compensated combat pistol as the Top Gun. The increase from 1984 to 1985 of shooters using a Super was staggering. Not since the "pin gun" hit the scene has such a mass change of equipment been noted in the practical shooting arena.

In 1985 at every event, from the Steel Challenge to the IPSC Nationals where the power requirements are drastically different, you would find a .38 Super in virtually every serious shooters' holster.

The gun I campaigned in 1985 was exactly the same as my 1984 gun. The two were interchangeable which allowed me to switch without having to learn a new gun. Thus I could have two guns which felt and handled identically, but one set-up for light loads and one for major.

Nothing new really happened in 1985 as far as equipment went, but all the gunsmiths were learning the in's and out's of building .38 Supers while the competitors experimented with different loads.

The 200 grain cast lead semi-wadcut-ter bullet had been the mainstay in .45

ACP, but the Super was a whole new story. For the time being we simply used the standard .38 Special bullet, a 158 grain lead roundnose, but soon new developments would surface.

Enter The Armory

Springfield Armory emerged in 1986 as a major supporter of practical shooting and its 1911-A1 became an immediate success. I came into contact with the Armory and immediately saw a young, aggressive company that was willing to



listen to a combat shooter.

By the World match in Orlando of 1986, I was using a Springfield Armory .38 Super Wilson Accu-Comp LE with 170 grain Sierra's. This load was astonishingly accurate and reliable, but when I tried a new powder that I won't name here, I got quite a shock.

Much to my surprise, I learned that all powders do *not* lose pressure as they get colder. Example: in Mesa, Ariz., I loaded up my match ammo to around a 180 factor. The temperature was in the high-90's

to low-100's. When I pitched up to the Nationals in 1987 in Barry, Ill., a couple of real cool days were waiting for us.

When my 180 factor ammo was fired in 40° to 50° weather, well, the pressures went through the roof. Those loads were blowing primers and any chance I had of retaining my national title. Oh well, at least I learned something from it. You must test and prepare for everything.

Exciting Year

Maybe the most exciting year of my shooting career, 1988 saw me in Venezuela for the IPSC World Championships—and I had a secret weapon!

The new Wilson double-comp was it, once again built on a Springfield Armory 1911-A1. The double-comp had two separate chambers with an exit port for each.

The new Wilson compensator, while not new, was instrumental in the development of the now-favored .38 Super loads using light bullets and greater volumes of slow burning powder. Dubbed "pocket rockets," these loads allow the double-chamber comp to work much more efficiently.

However, I doubt if this type of compensator is as beneficial for heavy-bullet Super loads or .45 auto loads as it is with 130 to 140 grain Super loads. When properly loaded, this set-up is the best compromise available yet today. The larger port area combined with the higher gas pressures make this new comp design function in way the old stuff could never even dream of.

My 1989 gun was identical to that used in 1988. The same Wilson double-comp, the same Springfield Armory 1911-A1, the same .38 Super caliber. We were still working on new things in 1989, but for the most part the basic specifications are current today.

Now we're messing other gun types and experimenting with increased magazine capacity, but still the Wilson double-comp on a 1911-A1 is the standard by which all others are judged.

Starting in 1990 I have begun a new association with Springfield Armory culminating a long-term friendship with a multi-year deal to use and develop new products and equipment for the competitive shooter. (See the *Industry Insider* on page 110 to find out how much Rob is pulling down on this deal. Editor)

The gun I use now in 1990 will be the current double-comp design built on a 1911-A1 .38 Super by the Springfield Armory Custom Shop. I am experimenting with .41 Action Express and 9x19 and will keep you abreast of all developments in my *American Handgunner* column.

From stockish .45's to totally trick .38 Supers, I have seen a lot of really neat guns. If the equipment of the Nineties turns out to be half as good as the Eighties—and all indications say that it should be—then we will have one heck of good end to this century.



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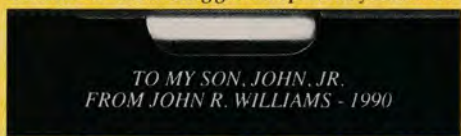
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Is .22 Silhouette development complete? I think not." Those words were printed in *Siluetas* for September/October 1989. The ink had barely dried when I received a new .22 Unlimited Silhouette Pistol.

For the first time, Unlimited competitors have a bolt-action .22 pistol that will probably sell for less than most single-shot and semi-autos that are suited for silhouette competition. The new pistol is the Model 722TP made in Brazil by CBC (*Companhia Brasileira de Cartuchos*) and imported by the Florida-based FIE firm.

The 722TP itself is a 6- or 10-shot bolt-action (bolt on the right side) and is furnished with magazines of both capacities as well as blocks for mounting a scope using standard .22 dovetail rings.

It is only natural to compare the 722TP with the other bolt action .22 import, the fine Anschutz .22 Exemplar. The Exemplar is considered by this writer as one of the real bargains in the hand-gunning world with its \$399 price tag.

The 722TP is nowhere near as nicely finished nor fitted as the Exemplar. That is the bad news. The overwhelming good news is that it will sell for about half as much!

Fit And Finish

The bolt of the 722TP does not have the glass smooth operation of the Exemplar—in fact, it felt quite rough in the beginning. It has, however, smoothed out with use and the operation now feels quite good after hundreds of rounds fired.

The bolt is easily removable by pulling a spring loaded knob on the left side of the receiver. The trigger of the 722TP is of a welcome straight shape, also fully adjustable as to position and weight of pull.

Barrel length is 10-inches and .700" in diameter. Weight of the unloaded 722TP is three pounds six ounces.

A cocking indicator protrudes from the back of the cocked bolt and a safety rides on the right side of the bolt. A safety that operates easily but is quite sharp and uncomfortable.

Speaking of sharp, the magazines are real finger killers especially in cold weather. The bottoms are very sharp and will do a real number on fingers if not inserted with care.

Sights of the 722TP are the best I have ever encountered on any handgun in this price range. The rear sight adjusts easily

with knobs, not screws. It's somewhat confusing at first as the rear sight adjusts backwards—that is, lowering the elevation knob raises the rear sight.

The rear sight notch is too shallow for my tastes, but since this is an Unlimited .22, the sight can be changed to suit one's personal preference.

The front sight is perfect—a globe type with a post insert, and provision for replacing the post with different widths and heights as the shooter desires, like on the popular Lyman #57 Front Sight. This is my personal favorite for a front sight and it sits on all of my Unlimited "Super Fourteen" Thompson/Center Contenders. The hood works to completely eliminate glare on the front sight, greatly improving the sight picture.

"Artistic" Stock

The stock appears to be walnut, but is probably another hardwood stained to look like walnut. According to the advertising from FIE, "the one piece anatomically shaped stock is kiln dried and cut on special lathes then hand finished to obtain artistic, smooth flowing lines that creates a shape ideal for competition shooting!" Exclamation point is their's, not mine.

Upon first reading this, my first thought was that their idea of "artistic, smooth flowing" and "anatomically shaped" were quite different than mine.

The stock appears, well, clumpy and clumsy. The butt portion, especially, feels and looks square, but with the familiarity of much use I have eventually grown to really like the feel of the butt portion. I did not expect this to happen.

This proves one of two things: either they did it right or that wonder of engineering, the human hand, is capable of conforming to any reasonable shape. Perhaps it is a combination of both.

A Strange Shoot

One would think that by now I would realize not to take anything for granted. Twenty-six years of teaching and thirty-plus years of shooting should have firmly entrenched that in my mind.

But I forgot it for the moment and grabbed a "proven" load, snatched up the 722TP and headed for a silhouette match.

The 722TP had yet to be fired and I had simply de-gunked it and ran a cleaning patch or two down the barrel. The load chosen was the normally accurate CCI Green Tag ammunition.

To say that I became frustrated would be putting it quite mildly. Just say I never made it past the sighting-in targets.

I would have a couple of good shots and then one completely off target. Either my eyes were not working properly, which often happens, or I had a poor pistol. I should have put it on paper first.

The culprit turned out to be neither my eyes nor the 722TP. Every handgun has its own personality and this one simply would not shoot Green Tag.

This was born out completely when I put it on the sandbags and shot paper targets. Quite strange, though, as silhouetters have obtained remarkable accuracy with other 722TP's using Green Tag ammo. Someone forgot to tell my gun!

The FIE 722TP was sandbagged at 50 yards with nineteen different types of .22 ammunition from CCI, Federal, PMC, Remington and Winchester. It is easy to see why I don't buy lottery tickets. Every type tested provided adequate and in most cases astounding accuracy except the load I picked to try in a match. Green Tag .22's simply would not shoot in the 722TP, delivering five shot groups at 50 yards of nearly four inches. All other CCI .22 ammo tried provided match winning accuracy. Strange, what?

The Federal High Velocity Hollow-point proved to be the most accurate load, shooting into one-half inch at 50 yards, which allows the 722TP to do double duty as both a silhouette pistol and when mounted with a scope, an excellent small varmint hunting handgun. Test results with the 722TP are groups shot with the Redfield 2X-6X set at 3X.

50 YARD ACCURACY RESULTS

Ammunition	Velocity	Group Size
CCI Minil-Mag	1180 fps	1 1/4"
CCI Stinger	1499 fps	1 1/8"
CCI Pistol Match	1081 fps	1 1/8"
CCI Green Tag	1062 fps	3 3/4"
CCI Blazer	1203 fps	1 3/8"
Federal High Velocity	1202 fps	1 1/4"
Federal High Velocity HP	1233 fps	1/2"
Federal Silhouette	1118 fps	1 3/8"
Federal Champion	1101 fps	1"
Federal Spitfire	1268 fps	1 1/8"
Federal Spitfire HP	1331 fps	2"
PMC Zapper	1196 fps	1 1/8"
PMC Predator	1308 fps	1 1/4"
PMC Match Rifle	1042 fps	1/8"
PMC Sidewinder	1194 fps	1/8"
Remington Thunderbolt	1203 fps	1 1/4"
Remington Yellow Jacket	1390 fps	3/4"
Winchester Super X H Vel.	1148 fps	1/8"
Winchester Super X Target	1124 fps	3/4"

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Photo by Roger Andrews



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CALIBER 44 mag
RANGE 50 yds
275 yds
JHP POWDER
CASE
DATE 2/25

MAKE
SN 47-1
METHOD Ransom
Rem-2409
BULLET
PRIMER

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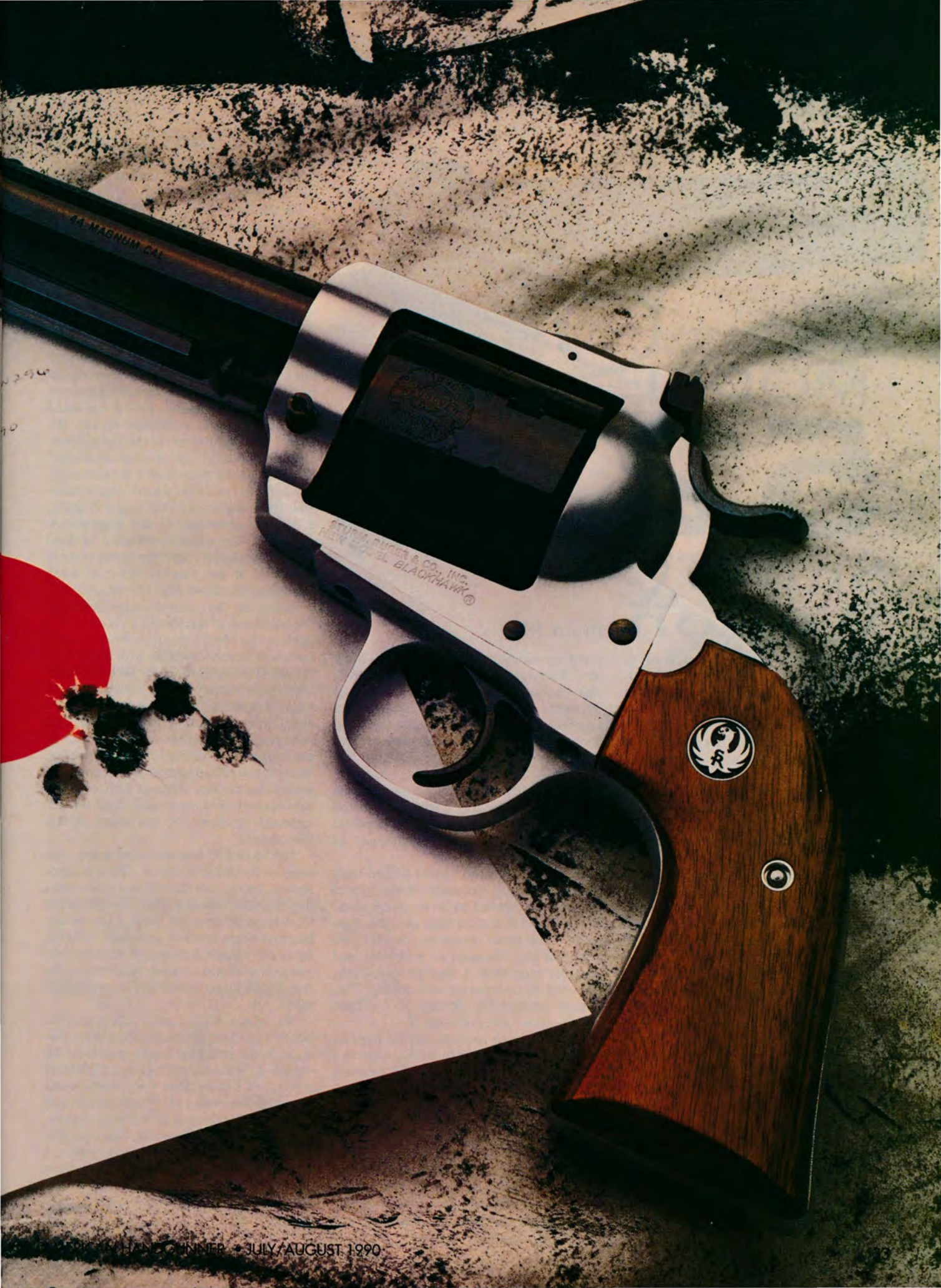
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44 MAGNUM CAL

SMITH & WESSON & CO., INC.
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MODEL 52 Smith & Wesson

By J.B. Wood

In the recent re-design of the Smith & Wesson family of centerfire automatics, one model was unchanged—and a generation of serious target shooters was not disappointed. They wouldn't want the Model 52 to be different. For a pistol that has been around for 27 years, that's quite a testimonial.

The Model 52 had its beginning in a small group of Model 39 pistols that were altered in 1960 at the request of the Army Marksmanship Training Unit at Fort Benning, Georgia. These were chambered for a special cartridge, a rimless .38 Special round called the .38 AMU. These guns soon evolved into a target pistol designed to use the regular .38 Special Midrange Target cartridge, popularly known as the "wadcutter."

Feeding these rounds in a semi-auto action was like feeding empty cartridge cases. In solving this mechanical problem, the Smith & Wesson engineers performed quite a feat. One factor helped a little: The capacity was limited to five rounds, the usual number for a target group. This minimized the "crescent effect" of stacking rimmed cases. When you look closely at a Model 52 magazine, you can see that it's very different from a regular single-line type for rimless or semi-rimmed rounds. The design was well-done, and it works.

The true Model 52 was introduced on the 28th of September, 1961, and it was

given an additional name, the ".38 Master." Early-production guns used the regular double action trigger of the Model 39, with a "lockout screw" to restrict it to single action. Some shooters complained about the "feel" of this arrangement, and about two years later it was changed. Beginning on May 13, 1963, the Model 52 was made with a specially-designed single action trigger system, factory-adjusted for slack and over-travel. At this point, the official designation was changed to Model 52-1.

From the start, the Model 52 had used the original long extractor of the Model 39, a part tempered to be its own spring. It was found that after long use, this type could cause some problems. In 1971, the extractor was changed to a shorter and stronger type with a vertical pivot pin, powered by a separate coil spring. This change created the Model 52-2. There have been no other changes.

There are two reasons for the impressive accuracy of the Model 52. One is a carefully-fitted screw-in muzzle bushing that is mated to a raised ring on the barrel. The other is a fine set of target sights. The front is a Patridge-type, 1/8 of an inch wide, on a serrated ramp. The rear sight has a 7/8-inch-wide leaf on a sturdy base, micrometer-click adjustable for windage and elevation. Each click of the adjustment screws moves the point-of-impact about 3/4 of an inch in elevation and

1/2-inch in windage at 50 yards, and half of that amount at 25 yards.

On the new Model 52-2 that I test-fired for this article, the trigger pull was a clean and crisp three pounds. Using Federal cartridges, I tried the pistol on standard targets at 25 yards, firing from a sandbag rest. It consistently grouped into two inches, and after a slight sight adjustment the groups were perfectly centered in the black.

I should point out that I am not a serious target shooter. Those who participate regularly in that sport can easily duplicate these results, standing, with a one-hand hold. The point is, if it's held steady, the Model 52 will put them in the right place.

With the mild .38 Special wadcutter load in a gun of this weight, the felt recoil is very light, and the muzzle rise is minimal. Re-acquisition of the target is quick, a definite advantage if the sequence is rapid-fire. The ejection distance of fired cases is moderate, and the cases are not deformed in any way, a factor of some importance to those who reload.

Except for the screw-in barrel bushing, the takedown of the Model 52 is much the same as the Model 39, an operation well-known to anyone familiar with the S & W pistols. It is necessary to remove the bushing before taking out the barrel, and a spanner wrench for this purpose is provided with the gun. Also included with new pistols are Allen wrenches that fit the trigger adjustment screws. However, both are well-adjusted when the gun leaves the factory. Unless someone has subsequently fooled around with the adjustment, it won't be necessary to use these tools.

The Model 52 has the same safety systems as the other Smith & Wesson automatics, except that the manual safety does not drop the hammer. The manual safety shields the head of the firing pin from the hammer when applied, and also locks the firing pin against forward movement. An automatic internal system disconnects the trigger linkage when the magazine is taken out.

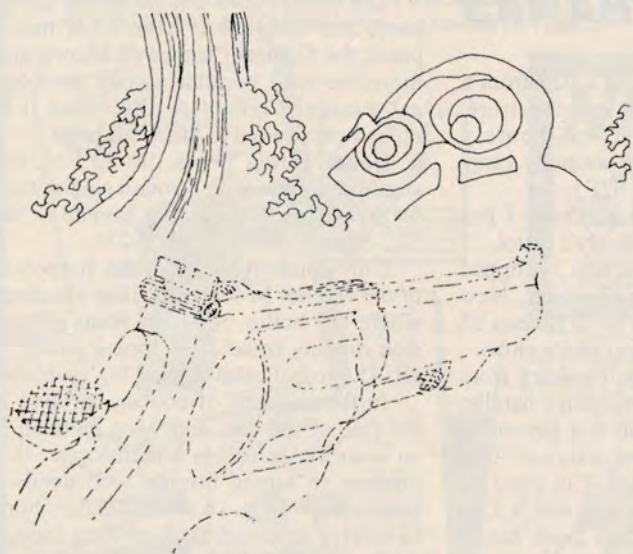
The Model 52 has good balance in the hand, with a slight muzzle-heaviness that is preferred by many target shooters. All Smith & Wesson pistols are carefully made, but I think they take a little extra care with the Model 52. The fit, finish, and functioning of the one I tried were superb, and it was not a "specially-selected-for-gun-writer" piece. As I noted earlier, I am not a serious target shooter. Still, I can easily understand why those who follow that sport think so highly of it.



HANDGUNNING HINTS

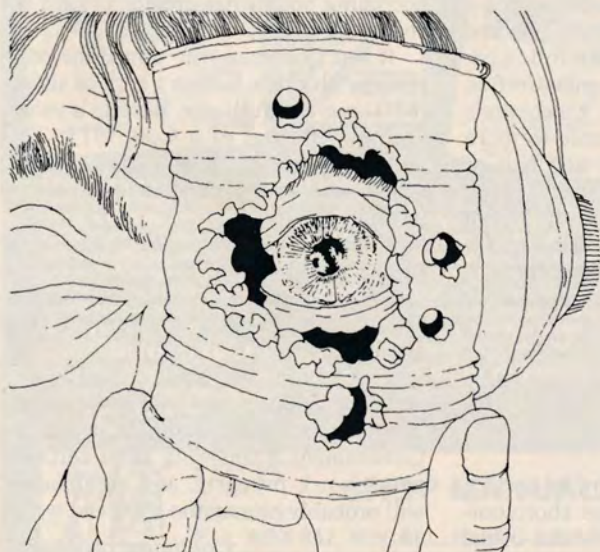
Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton

Raising Your Sights



1. Shooting a handgun accurately is not a simple skill, and the further you are from the target, the more difficulty you may have with accuracy. That's why it's a good idea to get into the habit of bringing your sights up to the target.

2. This will enable you to continue recognizing the target through the moment when your focus shifts from the target to your sights.



3. While you may not be a long-range shooter, even plinkers will be rewarded with a surer, safer, more reliable sight picture as well as a target that never leaves the eye.

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WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT BERETTA? MY SLIDE WORKS JUST FINE, THANKS

Ah, the controversial Beretta. Several months ago, I wrote a *Cop Talk* column defending this much-maligned pistol. I explained why the stories about a one ten-thousandth of one percent slide failure rate, and of mythical Crips and Bloods who were ripping LA cops' Berettas in half with "slide disassembly disarms," should not deter anyone from owning what I considered a fine, street-proven pistol.

I added that if any Beretta owner really believed that crap, since you can't morally sell a bad gun to a good guy or any gun to a bad guy, they should donate their gun to the Home for Orphan Berettas, which happened to be located at my house.

Something over 100 readers wrote in saying that if anyone was actually dumb enough to send me an orphan Beretta, they'd be delighted to adopt it and give it a good home.

I got about one-fourth that number of nastygrams accusing me of complicity with everything from industry to comics to bureaucrats for endorsing that death-trap slide separator to our boys in uniform. Interestingly, none of those gave any indication of ever having actually owned a Beretta 92.

Several Beretta enthusiasts sent letters of support, often with plastic "just kidding" toy Berettas. The best was Border Patrol Pistol Team member and Bianchi Cup Top Twenty regular Ed Duda, who put a brick in a Beretta box so I could open it and find the note that said, "Gotcha!"

It seems that people who actually own Berettas don't want to give them up.

Along about last quarter '89, I picked up a fat envelope of tickets that would take me about 12,000 miles over seven weeks of teaching the gun. Smack in the middle of that tour would be a week at Ft. Benning, training instructors of the US Army Marksmanship Training Unit to teach *StressFire*, the combat shooting system I'd developed in the early '80s and which the Infantry Board had adopted into their pistol doctrine a short time ago.

Benning meant Beretta. Sure, they could just issue me an M-9 to teach with when I got there, but it struck me that a few weeks teaching with the gun beforehand would sharpen me up for that week.

I could have taught with a different gun, for that matter, but when in Rome...

No problem. I borrowed a 92F from a buddy a few days before my departure. On the range with it, I was acutely reminded of why I don't normally carry this weapon: the full-size 92F is *big*.

I am an average size guy, and I felt like a little boy holding Daddy's pistol.

Two days before departure I dropped by Riley's Gun Shop in Hooksett, New Hampshire, and asked to see a Beretta 92 FC Compact. It fit my hand like a glove.

The drop in magazine capacity from 15 to 13 was nothing I couldn't handle; my overseas teaching-gun is a Browning Hi Power and like most users of that weapon, including SAS, I'm used to packing it with 12 in the mag and a 13th in the chamber, one down from stated capacity, for max reliability.

I left the store with the pistol, two 13-round spare mags and an extended 20-round stick.

Shooting In

None of my students had ever demonstrated or described problems getting new Berettas up and running. Naturally, mine had to be the lemon.

I couldn't get a magazine of anything from hardball on up through the beast without a feed failure. This was the last Compact in stock and I didn't have time to send it back to the factory, so I laid the gun in the capable hands of pistolsmithing wizard Nolan Santy of Sanco Guns, River Road, Dept. AH, Bow, NH 03301. He told me to come back the next day.

This I did, acutely mindful of a next-morning departure. Nolan had deburred the feed lips of the magazines and removed a burr from the feed ramp. Several hundred rounds of marathon shooting followed, with everything from +P 115-grain CorBon at a screaming 1300+ fps to Winchester's police-only 147 grain subsonic to more conventional hollowpoints and ball of WW, R-P, and Federal persuasion.

The gun shot a tad high-left. Nolan drifted the sights until I was dead-on for windage and holding six o'clock for center hits at 25 yards. There was no time for precise accuracy testing.

I did notice that most all the hollowpoints were grouping in two to two and a half inches at 25 yards.

Shortcomings

As the Yuppies say, there is no free brunch. Yes, the Beretta has shortcomings. Chief among these is the size of the

pistol, and I wonder why people who want the Armed Services to buy something else in a Nine never mention this one valid criticism.

An increasing number of females and small-statured males now serve our nation in uniform. If their MOS requires a pistol, it most certainly requires one that fits their hands.

The Army does not issue the Compact, and because it hasn't got much press, the Compact isn't well known and therefore isn't popular among the cops and civilians either. A pity, since it is much better suited to the small hand.

Better suited yet is the 92 FM, the slimline version with 8-round single stack magazine that is to the big Beretta as the SIG-Sauer P-225 is to the P-226.

Unfortunately, it lacks the firepower of the 16-shot M-9. In a civilian situation, where hot hollowpoints of 9mm persuasion roughly equal the stopping power of GI .45 hardball, that is not a big problem.

In the military, of course, hardball is the rule of the day, and 9mm hardball is so notoriously feeble a manstopper that anyone so armed bloody well needs a reservoir of 14 to 16 rounds if they hope to survive an armed assailant long enough to change magazines.

Let's talk about that first double-action shot, little as we'd like to.

Even for someone with big hands, it ain't perfect. Few shooters have bigger, stronger hands than former world combat pistol champion Ray Chapman, a long-time Beretta 92 fan, and even Ray was less than thrilled with the double-action trigger stroke of the issue Beretta 92.

My own experience is that it's literally "fair to middling"—better than the P9S or Ruger P-85 or Colt Double Eagle or any S&W automatic that doesn't have four digits in its model number, but not as good as the new-generation Smiths or the SIG or the costly Walther P-5 or P-88.

The Beretta's DA stroke "stages," with a distracting and surprise-surrendering "click" as it passes the half-cock notch, and "stacks" with the resistance becoming somewhat greater toward the end of the stroke.

It was Chapman who turned me on to pistolsmith Eddie Brown's trick of simply replacing the full-size Beretta's mainspring with that of a Colt 1911. This gives a lighter, smoother, more consistent stroke and in my experience does not result in misfires.

Chapman and his colleagues swear by the modification. Beretta, of course, swears at it, and will void your warrantee in a heartbeat if you replace their mainspring.

Consider my warrantee voided as soon as I find a spring that will do this in the shorter frame of the Compact, in which a Government mainspring most certainly won't work properly, and an Officers' will probably be way too short and weak.

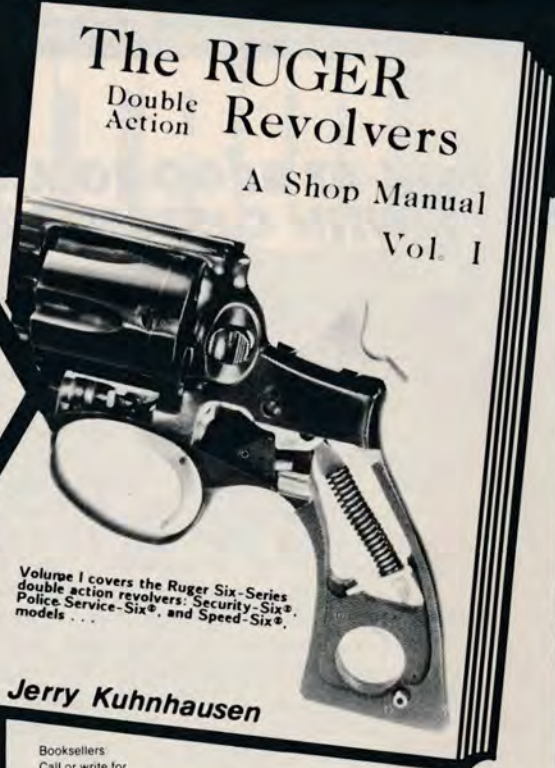
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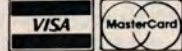


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A LOOK AT ERGONOMIC FIT OF THE 1911 WITH CUSTOM COMBAT PARTS

Avital, yet often neglected, area of pistolsmithing is fitting a handgun to the shooter's physique and habitual *modus operandi*. With the endless possible combinations of today's aftermarket parts, this seems an opportune time to shed light into this dark corner of our trade.

The problem is that most people will draw and assume a properly aligned, yet strained, firing stance with an ill-fitting handgun by, perhaps, bending their wrist or using an awkward grip to finally bring the sights to bear on the target.

The phyletic descent of aftermarket, from original issue, parts for handguns has offered a ready solution to this ancient vexation: a shooter can have a custom handgun at a moderate price.

The best way to determine whether a handgun fits you properly, and therefore points naturally, is to look at a target, close your eyes, draw your handgun and try to interpose the sights exactly on the target from memory of its position, then open your eyes and note the sight picture without moving the weapon.

Several possible sight pictures are possible. If the sights are aligned perfectly, you need not take corrective action. If they are aligned above, below or to one side of the target, you should determine the reason.

Sight Picture

First, determine whether the handgun is too thick for your shooting hand by using this formula I've found to be effective: Using an accurate caliper, measure the distance from the base of your shooting hand's long (middle) finger to the bend crease on your wrist.

(If you measure using a fraction, convert the fraction to a decimal by dividing the numerator by the denominator.)

Divide this result by π (3.14) for the optimum maximum thickness of the grip frame at its widest point.

If your handgun has a thickness that coincides with, or is smaller than, this figure, you can use the Weaver stance. If it is larger, you must use the Isosceles stance.

The reason is that Weaver utilizes a "straight with the arm grip" while the Isosceles grip is turned to the right in a right handed shooter. Corrective grips may help further.

Grip Measurement

The next measurement with the caliper

should be from the crotch of your shooting hand thumb to the center of your trigger finger, which should be crooked 90°. This is your individual "pull." If the caliper tells you that the distance between the backstrap of your weapon to the face of the trigger is greater than your pull or much less than your pull, you need to lengthen or shorten your trigger to as close to this optimum figure as possible.

Next, grip the handgun in your normal manner with the sights properly aligned on a distant target. Without changing the grip, note whether your palm is in firm, or too tight, contact with the lower grip frame and whether the area to the rear of the crotch of your thumb is in firm contact with the grip safety or rearward frame bulge.

This particular area of fit is critical to uniform point of impact. Some possible corrections are: different grips, different grip safety or custom alteration to frame



Beavertail grip safety is one of the first ergonomic touches to add.

or grips. Whatever is necessary should be done because this area fit can change results dramatically.

Grip Safety Shift

The Brown high-grip safety for the GM frame is a case in point. The horns of the GM grip frame control the maximum upward positioning of the thumb crotch. This, of course, insures a parallel couple with the trigger.

Shooters with large hands encounter a regular-dimension grip safety and find

that the sights align below the target's X. The result is an awkward upward bend of the wrist. With the Brown grip safety installed on the frame, pointing is natural and unstrained for these shooters.

(With my own small hand, crowding the curve of a Brown grip safety results in the sights aligning over the target.)

This is an excellent solution to a shooter problem, but this part should be regarded as a prescription for large hands, not a "gotta have" addition without a reason.

Hammer, Sear Combos

The current offerings of pre-finished hammer and sear combinations for the GM frame are a good solution to the problems of uninspired hand work: Improper angles leading to a fall to half-cock when the slide drops on an empty chamber.

Despite what cucumiform members of our trade insist, a GM slide should not drop the hammer to half-cock when released on a dry chamber with no magazine present. This is why the lightweight triggers and pre-finished hammer/sear combinations were developed.

A loose, heavy steel trigger will rap the sear hard enough to dislodge it in the above situation. The lightweight trigger will not. An improperly shaped hammer notch has been known to release from the sear at slide impact.

A good buffer helps, but pre-fabricated trigger jobs of the McCormick, Brown and SGW hammers and sears are done to the proper geometry, and all have the hammer strut pin hole relocated as per the Gold Cup, for better drop time.

Custom Triggers

The wider aftermarket GM triggers and those for some revolvers are an excellent prescription for shooters suffering from Diabetic Neuropathy or other loss of fine motor control or sensitive feel. The wider contact area helps shooters suffering from these disabilities to regain their old "surprise break" groups.

Muzzle Weight

At a recent range session when I had to qualify a class of Security Officers, I noticed that most were shooting Model 10 Smiths, since that was the staple department issue for the group. Some shooters who were shooting large groups began to fire tight groups when I loaned them a heavy-barrel Model 10.

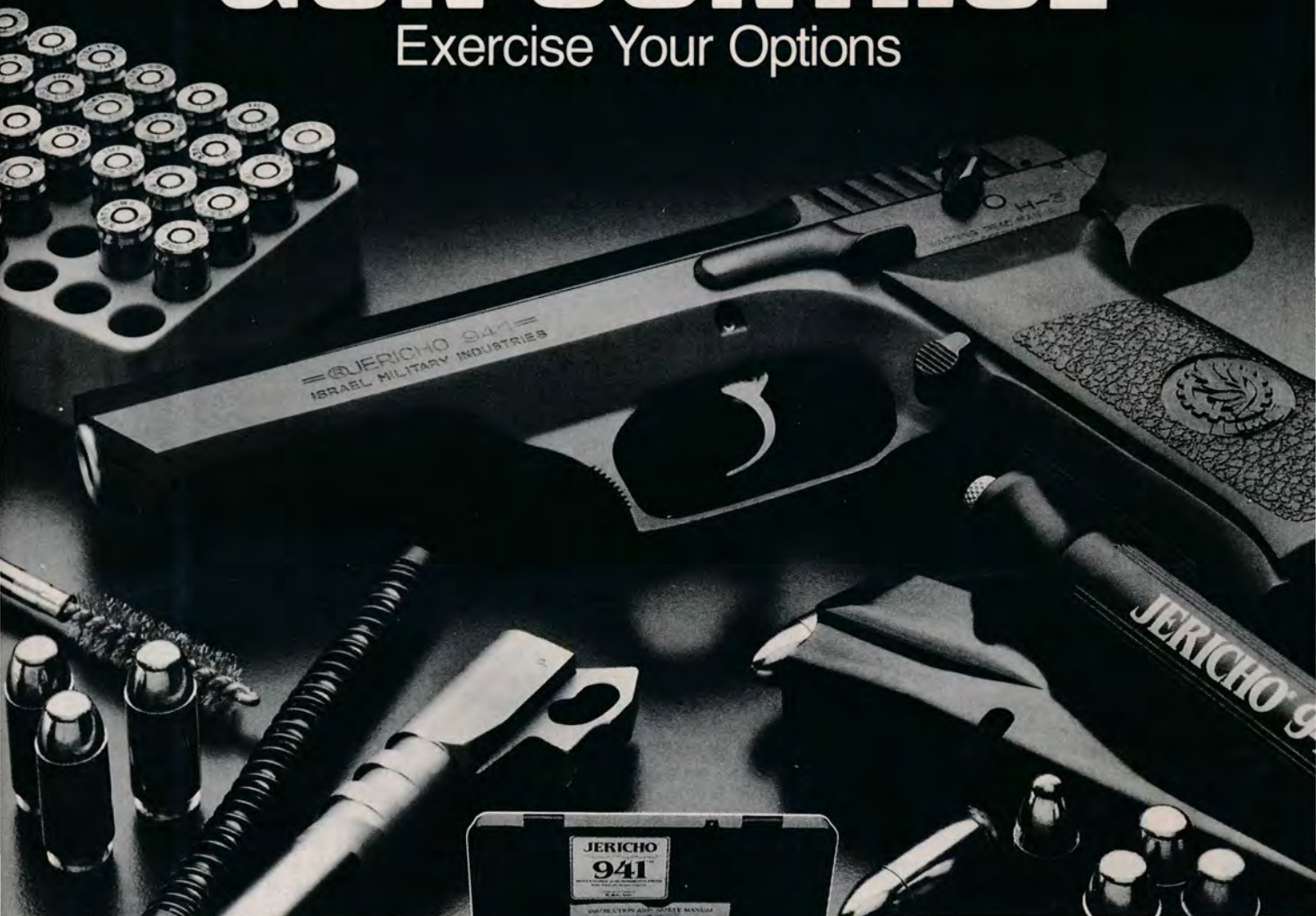
The added muzzle weight made a profound difference in their qualifying scores. You might want to remember that if you are contemplating a heavy-barrel PPC gun. The under-barrel ribs are for a purpose, not for decoration.

If you haven't tried the near-effortless shooting with a properly fitted handgun, you should discuss the possibility of having one built with your pistolsmith. You'll be amazed at the difference in your target groups.



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JERICOHO®
941

GO PLINKING! IT'S CHEAP, IT'S FUN, AND THERE'S LOTS OF GOOD GUNS

In a large part of the country, spring has sprung and summer is upon us. The shooting sports are in full swing, as are many others. In addition to the usual lawn, automobile and spring cleaning chores, we need outdoor recreation—as opposed to indoor, which we can participate in anytime.

(I hope that isn't too controversial as I'm hoping to cut down on reader mail this issue. Since I answer all letters except those from a few whackos who I figure are too far around the bend to waste my time on—and some of *them* even get answers.)

In this issue, let's stick to the basics of having fun. Recreational shooting, as opposed to organized or competitive, is the type of shooting that should be both enjoyable and safe.

It should also be easy to do. Shouldn't require a lot of work loading ammo or break you financially paying for the store-bought stuff.

Plinker's Fun

Plinking fits the bill perfectly.

Plinkers have more fun. Targets can be almost anything. Nice, lightweight, low recoil, accurate, easy and inexpensive-to-shoot pistols are numerous in this caliber. The universal .22 LR comes in a wide range of prices within anyone's buying ability.

Many of you probably have at least one or more plinkers laying around somewhere that hasn't been shot in years. Why not break it out and just go out for a couple hours of just plain fun someday?

If you don't have a decent .22, a "plinker" can be anything. The main point is to get out and do some "fun" shooting. If you don't have a decent .22, there are plenty of them out there starting in price from around a hundred bucks to over a couple grand.

Looking through the *1990 Gun Digest* to see just what was available in .22, I found the numbers and varieties had increased considerably since I had last looked into them. However, a good recreational gun should have a few specific attributes if you are going to purchase one.

One: it should have adjustable sights. It isn't much fun to miss all the time.

Two: it should have a good trigger (or have the trigger worked on by someone competent to give a smooth, fairly light yet safe trigger pull).

These two factors are very important to hit something—which is the purpose of shooting, even in plinking.

Ordinarily, most small semi-auto "pocket" or defensive pistols are useful plinkers at only very short ranges.

Try bouncing empty shotgun shells on the ground with one of them and you'll see what I mean. Sights are usually fixed, with the gun shooting at some random point which has little to do with where the sights look. Rarely have I found one that shot to where the sights looked.

Accuracy First

Some pocket pistols are inherently capable of surprisingly good accuracy, though. However, many of them have barrels so short that the cup base of the .22 caliber bullet is expanded by the pressure of powder gasses as it exits the gun muzzle, which is usually somewhat detrimental to accuracy.

I've seen some ammunition exhibit this tendency with barrels in the four to five inch range. Many will do it from shorter barrels. Normally, a five-inch barrel is all it takes to deliver excellent accuracy from most ammunition, as muzzle pressure has dropped enough to prevent flaring the base of the bullet. Most full-size revolvers, regardless of short barrels, seldom exhibit this tendency because enough pressure is lost through the barrel-cylinder gap to lower muzzle pressure adequately.

The recreational pistol should have what basically is target-quality sights or you are going to be disappointed in the accuracy you will get from it. Revolvers with a shallow groove cut in the rear of the frame or autos with small V-notch rears and inverted-V front sights are near useless.

A reasonable distance between the front and rear sight also helps. Add a decent trigger and several of the higher-quality auto pistols, revolvers and single shots will fit the description.

J.D.'s Favorites

My personal favorite is the S&W Model 41 Target with the 5½" barrel. Cost is now a whopping \$549.54, which is a lot of money for many people to pay for a plinker.

Second favorite would be the Ruger MK II 5½" bull barrel target model available in blue for \$260 and \$329 in stainless. That's more in line with what a

plinking pistol should cost.

Another I particularly favor is the Browning Buckmark Varmint Model on which I chopped the barrel to seven inches and put on an electronic sight. It's a bit large for a carry-around plinker, but it sure gets the job done and I can hit with it far better than I can with plain iron sights as ranges increase.

I like autos as plinkers as I usually carry a few extra loaded magazines for those occasionally necessary long bursts useful for driving tin cans and empty shotshells downrange.

I don't care much for single-action .22s as I find them awkward and slow to load and unload. I'd rather shoot a T/C as it's far easier and quicker for me to load and unload.

Double-action revolvers with swing-out cylinders and simultaneous ejection of the empties are fine too, although most of them have occasional problems with powder grains finding their way under the extractor star.

This causes difficult cylinder rotation. (Not much of a problem—just lift the extractor and clean out the powder grains.) Pointing the barrel straight up when extracting the empty cases seems to reduce this problem.

My all-time favorite .22 caliber revolver is the S&W four-inch Combat Masterpiece. Thirty years ago they didn't even need a trigger job as they came from the factory. After reading Ed McGivern's *Fast and Fancy Revolver Shooting*, I wore one out in a couple months with 50,000 fast-double action rounds at aerial targets.

Nope, 50,000 wasn't enough shooting to come close to equalling Ed in any way, but I found I could consistently hit a tin can five times in the air. Hitting empty shotshells quite regularly and pennies about half the time came with the practice.

The Dan Wesson .22 is also a good DA that I've found to be reliable and accurate. It will also respond to a little gunsmithing with enthusiasm. There is certainly nothing wrong with the high quality single-actions as recreational guns except for being slow to load and unload. Face it—plinkers burn a lot of ammo. Several SAs are equipped with extra cylinders chambered for the .22 Magnum cartridge. I've never found these guns to be quite as accurate as the standard .22s, but if I wanted the .22 Mag capability, I wouldn't let the accuracy difference deter me.

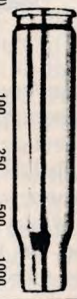
Chuck The Target Pistols

Generally speaking, several of the less expensive guns will give a great deal of good service as recreational guns. Many of the very expensive target pistols aren't really much fun as plinkers. Some only have five-round magazines. Some just don't do much for me except for punching paper and I find that about as exciting as watching eggs fry.

Continued on page 101

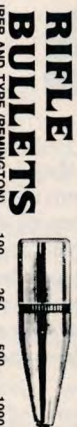
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Remington.



UN-PRIMED (REMINGTON)	100	250	500	1000
17 REMINGTON	20.50	47.50	87.25	162.00
6MM REMINGTON	21.00	48.00	88.50	168.00
6.5 REM. MAG.	21.25	48.00	116.00	220.00
7MM BR (BENCHREST)	28.75	66.50	127.00	241.00
7MM REM. MAG.	23.00	52.50	98.50	185.00
7MM REM. (7X57)	27.25	62.50	117.00	222.00
7MM-08	22.75	51.50	97.50	182.00
7.62X39	22.50	50.00	94.50	178.00
8MM MAUS. (8X57)	23.00	52.50	98.00	184.00
8MM REM. MAG.	30.25	68.00	129.75	247.00
250 SAVAGE	22.75	51.50	97.50	182.00
25-50 WIN.	12.50	29.50	52.75	98.00
25-06 REM.	23.00	52.50	98.50	185.00
257 ROBERTS	21.00	48.50	88.75	163.00
264 WIN. MAG.	28.00	60.50	112.00	212.00
300 WIN. MAG.	23.00	52.50	98.50	185.00
300 SAVAGE	23.00	52.50	98.50	185.00
300 WEATHERBY MAG. (AUGUST)	35.00	80.00	155.00	307.00
30-30 WIN.	16.50	39.00	71.00	134.00
30-40 KRAAG	19.75	46.50	88.00	164.00
303 BRITISH	20.00	46.00	85.00	159.00
308 WIN.	21.50	48.50	92.50	173.00
32 WIN. SPL.	16.50	41.75	78.75	142.00
32-20 WIN. MAG.	12.50	29.50	53.00	99.00
38 WIN. MAG.	28.50	64.00	121.50	230.00
38 REM.	22.75	51.25	97.25	182.00
35 WHELEN	23.00	52.50	99.50	185.00
37S HAWK MAG.	30.25	72.50	141.50	270.00
444 MAULIN	27.25	60.00	115.00	216.00
45-70 GOVT.	30.25	66.75	128.00	236.00
416 REM. MAG.	35.00	80.00	155.00	307.00
458 REM.	33.00	71.50	141.00	277.00

CALIBER AND TYPE (REMINGTON)	100	250	500	1000
17 REM. 25 GR. PLP	6.75	16.25	29.50	51.75
22 HOR. 45 GR. S&T	6.75	16.25	28.50	53.00
22 HOR. 45 GR. H&T	7.00	16.50	28.50	53.00
22 CAL. 55 GR. PLP	7.25	17.00	31.00	57.75
22 CAL. 55 GR. P&P	5.50	13.00	25.25	46.00
6MM-243 80 GR. PLP	7.75	17.75	32.75	61.00
6MM-243 100 GR. P&P	9.50	21.75	39.75	74.25
6MM-243 120 GR. P&P	8.75	20.50	37.00	69.50
25 CAL. 87 GR. PLP	8.75	21.25	39.50	69.75
25 CAL. 100 GR. P&P	8.75	20.50	37.25	69.50
25 CAL. 120 GR. P&P	9.50	22.00	40.25	76.25
270 150 GR. P&P	10.25	23.75	44.00	82.25
7MM 150 GR. P&P	10.50	24.50	45.50	84.00
7MM 165 GR. S&P	11.00	25.25	47.00	88.00
30-30 170 GR. R&SP	9.75	23.75	44.25	79.25
30 CAL. 128 GR. P&P	9.50	22.00	40.50	76.00
30 CAL. 150 GR. P&P	10.00	23.50	44.00	82.00
30 CAL. 165 GR. P&P	10.50	24.75	45.50	85.00
30 CAL. 180 GR. P&P	11.25	25.50	47.75	89.50
30 CAL. 150 GR. BRONZE POINT	11.25	25.50	47.25	89.00
30 CARB. 110 GR. S&T	7.50	17.00	32.75	61.50
30 CARB. 110 GR. S&P	10.00	19.75	35.50	66.50
32-20 100 GR. SOFT POINT	13.50	32.75	61.50	115.00
45-70 405 GR. S&P	15.00	34.75	65.75	123.00
303 CAL. 180 GR. S&P	11.00	25.50	48.00	89.75
8MM 170 GR. P&P	12.75	28.00	47.00	88.00
8MM 220 GR. S&P	11.75	30.00	54.75	102.50



CALIBER AND TYPE (WINCHESTER)	100	250	500	1000
224 DIA. 55 GR. P&P	4.25	10.00	18.00	33.00
224 DIA. 55 GR. PSP	5.50	13.00	25.25	46.00
30 CAL. 147 GR. FMJ	9.50	22.00	41.25	76.00
X 30 CAL. 150 GR. POWER POINT	10.00	23.50	44.00	82.00
380 AUTO 96 GR. FMJ	5.25	12.50	23.00	43.00
9MM 115 GR. FMJ	6.00	14.50	25.50	48.00
9MM 124 GR. FMJ	6.25	14.25	27.50	51.50
38-357 110 GR. JHP	6.00	13.50	25.50	48.00
38-357 128 GR. JHP	6.25	14.00	27.00	50.00
38-357 158 GR. JHP	7.50	17.00	32.50	61.00
45 ACP 230 GR. FMJ	9.75	23.00	43.00	80.00



CALIBER AND TYPE (WINCHESTER)	100	250	500	1000
224 DIA. 55 GR. P&P	7.60	23.00	43.00	80.10
224 DIA. 55 GR. PSP	7.60	23.00	43.00	80.10
30 CAL. 147 GR. FMJ	2.80	19.00	36.00	69.23
30 CAL. 150 GR. P&P	2.80	19.00	36.00	69.23
30 CAL. 150 GR. P&P POWER POINT	2.80	19.00	36.00	69.23
9MM 115 GR. FMJ	4.30	17.00	32.00	58.83
9MM 115 GR. FMJ	3.60	16.00	31.00	56.83
9MM 124 GR. FMJ	3.60	16.00	31.00	56.83
9MM 124 GR. FMJ	3.90	16.80	32.00	58.61
38-357 110 GR. JHP	3.80	15.00	28.00	53.19
38-357 128 GR. JHP	3.60	15.00	28.00	53.19
38-357 158 GR. JHP	2.60	14.00	26.00	50.26
45 ACP 230 GR. FMJ	1.80	13.00	24.00	46.69

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38 SPECIAL	9.00	20.00	37.75	70.00
357 MAGNUM	9.00	20.50	38.75	72.00
44 MAGNUM	11.25	25.25	53.50	99.50
45 ACP	11.75	27.00	50.25	93.50

FACTORY PRIMED (WINCHESTER) (LAQUER SEALED PRIMER)

UN-PRIMED (WINCHESTER)	10.00	23.75	44.50	81.50
9MM	9.50	22.75	42.50	78.00
38 SPECIAL	10.00	23.50	43.25	81.00
357 MAGNUM	10.25	24.00	45.00	83.00
44 MAGNUM	14.25	33.50	63.00	118.00
45 ACP	14.00	33.25	60.50	113.00
44 MAGNUM	13.50	32.50	59.00	111.00

45 ACP SALE PRICE 12.75 29.75 55.50 101.00

45 LONG COLT 14.00 33.00 60.75 112.00

10MM 13.25 32.50 60.00 116.00

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32 AUTO	8.50	19.50	38.25	67.50
32 S&W LONG	8.50	19.50	38.25	67.75
380 AUTO	9.00	20.25	39.00	70.75
38 SUPER-P (BRASS)	9.25	21.00	39.50	72.00
38 SUPER-P (NICKEL)	9.75	23.00	42.00	77.50
357 MAXIMUM	11.00	26.00	50.00	89.00
41 MAGNUM	13.00	29.25	55.75	103.25
44 SPECIAL	13.00	29.25	55.75	103.25
44-40 WIN.	13.25	31.25	61.25	111.50
45 ACP	11.75	27.00	50.25	93.50
45 LONG COLT	12.50	29.25	54.25	101.00
30 CARBINE	10.75	22.50	41.25	74.00
10MM (AVAILABLE JUNE-JULY)	12.75	30.00	54.75	105.00

FACTORY PRIMED (REMINGTON)

UN-PRIMED (WINCHESTER)	10.00	23.75	44.50	81.50
380 AUTO	9.50	21.50	42.50	78.50
9MM	10.00	23.75	44.50	82.00
38 SPL + P (NICKEL)	10.25	24.00	45.00	89.00
357 MAGNUM	10.25	24.00	45.00	83.00
44 MAGNUM	11.00	26.25	50.00	90.00
45 ACP	13.50	30.75	57.50	105.00
30 CARBINE	13.25	29.00	47.50	89.00
10 MM (AVAILABLE JUNE-JULY)	12.25	29.50	50.00	116.00

CASE QUANTITIES AVAILABLE - PLEASE INQUIRE

HANDGUN BRASS BULLETS

CALIBER AND TYPE (REMINGTON)	100	250	500	1000
25 ACP 50 GR. FMJ	5.25	11.00	21.00	39.00
32 AUTO 71 GR. FMJ	6.00	13.50	26.00	48.50
380 AUTO/9MM 95 GR. JHP	5.25	12.50	23.00	43.00
380 AUTO/9MM 95 GR. FMJ	6.25	14.00	26.50	50.00
9MM 115 GR. FMJ	6.25	14.00	26.50	50.00
9MM 115 GR. FMJ	6.25	14.25	27.50	51.50
38 CAL. 148 GR. HBVC LEAD	4.75	11.25	21.00	36.50
38-357 158 GR. SWC LEAD	5.00	11.75	21.50	37.00
38-357 125 GR. JHP	6.25	14.00	27.00	50.00
38-357 125 GR. SOFT POINT	6.50	14.50	27.50	51.00
38-357 140 GR. JHP	6.75	15.00	29.00	54.00
38-357 158 GR. JHP	7.50	17.00	32.50	61.00
38-357 158 GR. SOFT POINT	7.75	17.50	33.00	62.00
38 SUPER 130 GR. FMJ	6.50	14.25	27.50	51.50
41 CAL. 200 GR. JHP	9.50	22.50	41.00	77.00
41 CAL. 210 GR. SOFT POINT	9.75	23.00	42.25	79.00
44 CAL. 180 GR. JHP	9.25	21.50	40.50	75.00
44 CAL. 240 GR. JHP	10.50	24.00	47.00	85.00
44 CAL. 240 GR. SOFT POINT	11.00	25.00	48.00	87.00
44-40 200 GR. SOFT POINT	10.25	23.50	44.50	83.00
45 ACP 185 GR. SWC (JACKETED)	10.00	23.00	44.00	82.00
45 ACP 185 GR. JHP	10.00	23.00	44.00	82.00
45 ACP 230 GR. FMJ	10.25	24.00	45.00	84.00

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RIFLE BRASS

UN-PRIMED (WINCHESTER)	100	250	500	1000
22 HORNET	12.25	25.50	46.00	88.00
222 REMINGTON	14.75	34.50	60.50	109.00
223 REMINGTON	16.25	37.00	65.50	122.00
22-250 REMINGTON	18.00	41.75	76.75	142.00
220 SWIFT	22.25	51.00	95.00	172.00
243 WINCHESTER	18.75	43.50	80.00	148.00
270 WINCHESTER	19.75	47.00	84.00	155.00
30-06 SPRINGFIELD	20.25	48.50	86.50	159.00
FACTORY PRIMED (WINCHESTER)	23.75	54.00	99.00	184.00

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UN-PRIMED (REMINGTON)

UN-PRIMED (REMINGTON)	100	250	500	1000
25 AUTO	8.25	18.50	36.25	67.50
32 AUTO	8.50	19.50	38.25	67.50
32 S&W LONG	8.50	19.50	38.25	67.75
380 AUTO	9.00	20.25	39.00	70.75
38 SUPER-P (BRASS)	9.25	21.00	39.50	72.00
38 SUPER-P (NICKEL)	9.75	23.00	42.00	77.50
357 MAXIMUM	11.00	26.00	50.00	89.00
41 MAGNUM	13.00	29.25	55.75	103.25
44 SPECIAL	13.00	29.25	55.75	103.25
44-40 WIN.	13.25	31.25	61.25	111.50
45 ACP	11.75	27.00	50.25	93.50
45 LONG COLT	12.50	29.25	54.25	101.00
30 CARBINE	10.75	22.50	41.25	74.00
10MM (AVAILABLE JUNE-JULY)	12.75	30.00	54.75	105.00

FACTORY PRIMED (REMINGTON)

UN-PRIMED (WINCHESTER)	10.00	23.75	44.50	81.50
380 AUTO	9.50	21.50	42.50	78.50
9MM	10.00	23.75	44.50	82.00
38 SPL + P (NICKEL)	10.25	24.00	45.00	89.00
357 MAGNUM	10.25	24.00	45.00	83.00
44 MAGNUM	11.00	26.25	50.00	90.00
45 ACP	13.50	30.75	57.50	105.00
30 CARBINE	13.25	29.00	47.50	89.00
10 MM (AVAILABLE JUNE-JULY)	12.25	29.50	50.00	116.00

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BY JOHN TAFFIN

TAFFIN TESTS

The modern beginnings of the 10mm go back to the early 1970's with the creation of a little known wildcat called the .40 G&A.

At the time, there were three semi-auto cartridges of any serious consequences available, the 9mm, .38 Super and .45 ACP. The idea was to come up

the 10mm

with a cartridge that combined the best qualities of the 9mm and .45 ACP.

With the creation of the new .40 semi-auto cartridge, the statement was made that "...the .40 caliber was chosen because it can be shown mathematically that it takes about this size projectile to provide the cross-sectional area to

achieve adequate stopping power at reasonable pistol velocities."

There are any number of experts, men who have first-hand knowledge of bullet performance in both hunting and defensive situations, who would dispute that there is any such thing as stopping power. Penetration combined with hitting vital areas seem to be much more important and the .40 G&A would certainly offer excellent penetration capabilities by combining the speed of the 9mm with the bullet weight of the .45 ACP.

The larger the caliber, the better the chance of hitting vital areas. The .40, while not as good as the .45 in this respect, is certainly better than the 9mm, speaking strictly from the standpoint of the cross sectional area offered by each

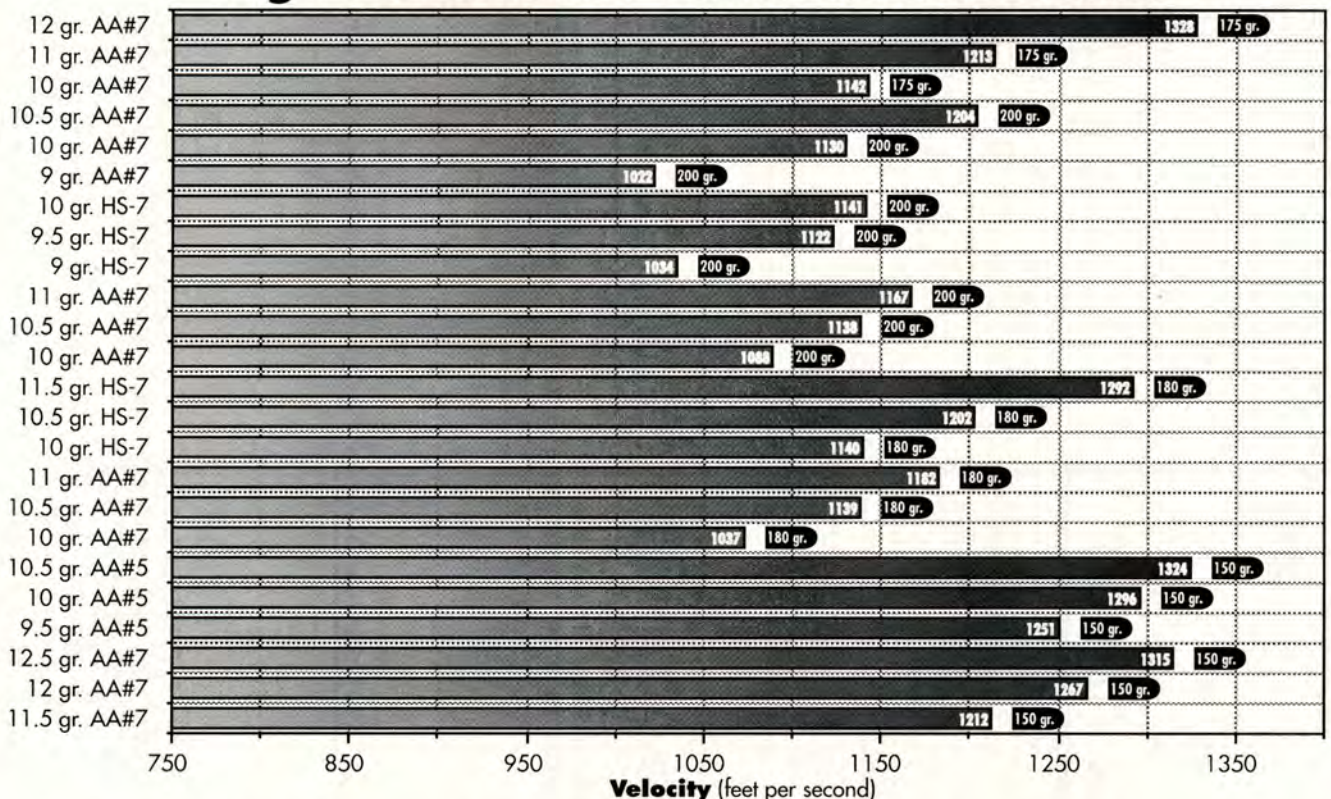
cartridge. The .40 G&A was wildcatted by using cut-down .224 Weatherby brass and 180 grain .38-40 bullets. Chambered in a Browning Hi-Power, maximum velocities were right at 1250 fps. The .40 G&A went nowhere but it opened the doors for the 10mm.

Now enters the Bren Ten. In 1984, Jeff Cooper put his stamp of approval on a new semi-automatic pistol from Dornaus & Dixon, the mutation resulting from putting a larger hole in the barrel of a CZ-75 9mm pistol.

The amazing thing is that Chairman Jeff took to heart a semi-auto that was not chambered in .45 ACP and was a *double-action*. The new caliber was a redrawn .40 G&A called the 10mm Auto, and the new semi-auto, while a double action, could be carried cocked-and-locked.

Cooper named the new handgun the Bren Ten, *Br* for the *Brno* factory in Czechoslovakia and *en* for the British

High Performance 10mm Favorite Loads



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



Enfield factory. Bren Ten made a catchy name for the new 10mm. Unfortunately, by 1987 Dornaus & Dixon had gone into bankruptcy.

The gun died, but the cartridge did not. Colt resurrected it by chambering the Government Model and renaming it the Delta Elite. Now 10mm handguns are also available from Springfield Armory (The Omega), Irwindale Arms (Javelina Hunting Model of their Long-Slide), LAR (The Grizzly), Thompson/Center (The Contender), Glock (Model 20), Colt (Double Eagle) and Smith & Wesson (Models 1006 and 1016). I can think of no other instance in history whereby the original handgun died so quickly, and yet the cartridge lives on in so many persuasions.

American Handgunner first reported the rumor (now fact) that a down-loaded 10mm is to be the official FBI cartridge in a full-size semi-automatic, probably the Smith & Wesson 1006. The Fat Boys Institute has called for specially powder-puffed loads that are the equivalent of .45 ACP target wadcutters.

One has to wonder why. A full-sized gun? With target loads? When they could have chosen the more compact Smith & Wesson 4516 in .45 ACP which could be used with loads that are already battle proven?

Reloading the 10mm proved to have a few glitches. While waiting for the arrival of two Colt Delta Elites from custom Gunsmith Steve Woods (3840 Dahlgren Court, Dept. AH, Ellicott City, MD 21043, phone: 301-465-7979), I loaded 500 rounds of 10mm ammunition using various available bullets both cast and jacketed in Midway brass.

I am not a great disciple of overall cartridge length as it can vary so much from gun to gun and magazine to magazine, but in this case I decided to load up ahead of time and be all prepared when the 10mm's arrived.

Yep, you guessed it. All the loads

proved to be too long for the magazines and the chambers of the Colt Delta Elites and I spent a pleasant evening in front of the TV seating all the loads to proper length with a Lee hand press. No harm done.

Later the same loads which worked perfectly through the magazine and into the chambers of the Colts would prove to be too long to function in a IAI Javelina 10mm. So much for overall cartridge length.

Cartridges must be tailored to individual guns unless bullets chosen have no shoulders to hang up in chambers and no broad noses to hang up in magazines.

Other than the above problem, loading the 10mm proved to be sufficiently easy with the use of RCBS carbide dies. I always like to leave about one-sixteenth of an inch of the shoulder of any semi-auto bullet exposed. This works with some bullets in the Colt 10mm but loads for the Javelina must be seated with the shoulder flush with the case mouth.

Four jacketed bullets were shot extensively in the Colt and Javelina. Those bullets were Sierra's 150 and 180 grain JHC's, Speer's 190 grain FMJ, and Hornady's 200 grain FMJ. A fifth jacketed bullet, Hornady's 170 grain JHP was used in the Javelina alone.

The 10mm proves to be quite fussy about the jacketed bullets and load combinations it is being fed. The Speer 190 grain slug would not group at all with either of the Colts with any of the loads tried.

Switching to the Javelina, the same Speer 190 would shoot into less than two inches with the right load. I called Speer and they related that they too had had problems in the Colt Delta Elite and others have reported that the Delta Elite is no great shakes accuracy-wise with any loads tried.

Both Colt Delta Elites I used for testing the 10mm had been worked over with

slide tightening, trigger jobs, etc, but had stock barrels.

Many jacketed loads proved to be exceptionally accurate in the Colt Delta Elites and the Javelina with many loads grouping under two inches or less at 25 yards when fired using the Outer's Pistol Perch as a rest. A sandbag is placed in the barrel notch of the perch and another is placed on the platform that serves as a hand rest. This proved to be the best way of using the Pistol Perch for accuracy testing.

Some excellent loads surfaced as the testing progressed. With jacketed bullets in the 180 to 200 grain category, 10.5 grains of AA#7 gave velocities in the 1100+ fps range and consistently grouped in two inches or less with both the Delta Elites and the Javelina.

This same load gave the same excellent results with the RCBS #10mm-200 cast bullet in the Colt Delta Elites. Groups ran in the one and one-half inch range with velocities at 1200 fps. Switching to the Javelina, 11.0 grains of AA#7 gives 1281 fps and groups right at one-inch.

An excellent practice or competition load for the 10mm with the RCBS cast bullet proved to be 5.5 grains of WW231. This load goes 1000 fps from the five-inch barrel of the Delta Elite and 1075 fps from the seven-inch barrel of the Javelina. Accuracy is so good, I would search no more. This load makes major with plenty to spare, is easy to handle and consistently groups under one and one-half inches.

For a lighter cast bullet, I use the Bull-X (102 S.Main St., Dept AH, Farmer City, IL 61842) 175 grain semi-wadcutter. The same 5.5 grains of WW231 gives velocities of 1050 in the Delta Elites and 1100 in the Javelina. Easy shooting and easily makes major for action shooting competition.

Is the 10mm a hunting pistol? With qualifications, yes it is. The qualifications are the proper ammunition and especially discretion. Pushed to the limit, the 10mm is better than the .357 Magnum but still quite a bit below the .41 Magnum. I have been using the 170 Hornady JHP and have developed a *warm* load of 13.0 grains of AA#7 for 1374 fps from the seven-inch Javelina. This should do the job on small deer without any problem. This load should also be worked up to carefully starting at around 11.0 grains.

The jury is still out on the 10mm. Since it is the only "magnum" type cartridge available in standard-sized semi-autos, it has received a great deal of attention. Properly loaded it should prove to be an excellent choice for action shooting, Hunter/Field Pistol, self-defense, and hunting within limits.

While I would not rush to trade in my .45 ACP for one, it certainly deserves room in my gun collection and on my reloading bench. I like it.



The AYOOB FILES

FAST .38 BEATS SLOW .45: THE PAUL HUEBL INCIDENT

Situation: Serving a warrant, you're suddenly attacked by an angry man with a .45 pistol.

Lesson: Post-shooting response is just as important as tactics in the actual gunfight.

October 18, 1987. Even pitch black night is hot this time of year in Paradise Valley, Arizona. It is the darkness that makes process server Paul Huebl's Smith & Wesson 649 stainless Bodyguard discreetly invisible, despite its Art Jewel stag grips and despite the fact that it's worn exposed in a Galco open-top scabbard on his right hip.

Arizona is one of those states with no provision for a license to carry a handgun concealed, yet which theoretically permits citizens with clean records to carry one exposed. That logic stands up right until you wear one into a downtown shopping mall in Phoenix, at which time little old ladies in tennis shoes will start screaming and you may be arrested for breach of the peace.

For Huebl, it is a particular concern. A recent court ruling has stated that process servers are not to carry guns. Huebl, a Chicago and Cook County cop before he removed himself to the Sun Belt and found out he could make more money working for himself, is in the forefront of a vocal movement that challenges a judge's authority to deprive an Arizona citizen of his right to go visibly armed just because he happens to serve legal papers as an officer of the court.

His carrying of the hammer-shrouded, five-shot .38 Special snubnose is something he perceives as an act of righteous civil disobedience.

He sees it also as an act of self-preservation. He has testified to the appropriate bodies that people who are being sued or divorced, or are having their prized property repossessed, do not take it well when the process server hands them the document that goes with the act. They tend to punish the messenger because they don't like the message.

Tonight, Paul Huebl, who never had to shoot anyone as a cop, is about to find out just how correct his prediction was.

Huebl has been dispatched to the home of one James Robert "Bob" Lyne, age 52. Lyne is a businessman who has previously been charged with fraud, and who is about to be evicted from the sumptuous two-acre home in Paradise Valley that he hasn't paid the rent on in months.

Noting that the area is virtually pitch-black, Huebl takes from his car the 10-year-old Kel-Lite flashlight he once carried as a cop. Its four C-cell batteries are drained almost out, and the torch casts only a dim yellow glow. He makes a mental note to replace the batteries soon.

He serves the papers to Mrs. Lyne, turns, and strides down the darkened walkway toward his car. No problem yet.

Until now.

A large figure looms in front of him: Bob Lyne, six-feet-one and 235 pounds. Huebl is six-feet and a bit over 200, and his first perception is of a bigger man. In the dim beam of the weakened flashlight, he can see that the man's right hand is

Continued on page 66

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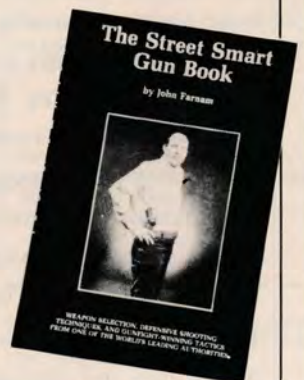
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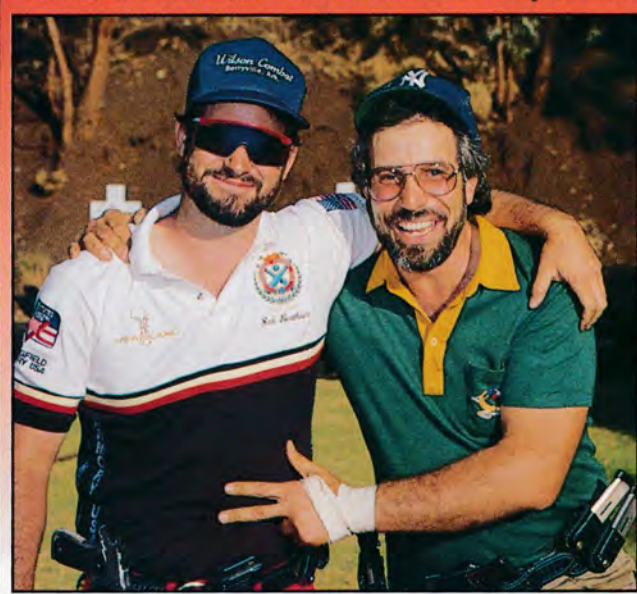
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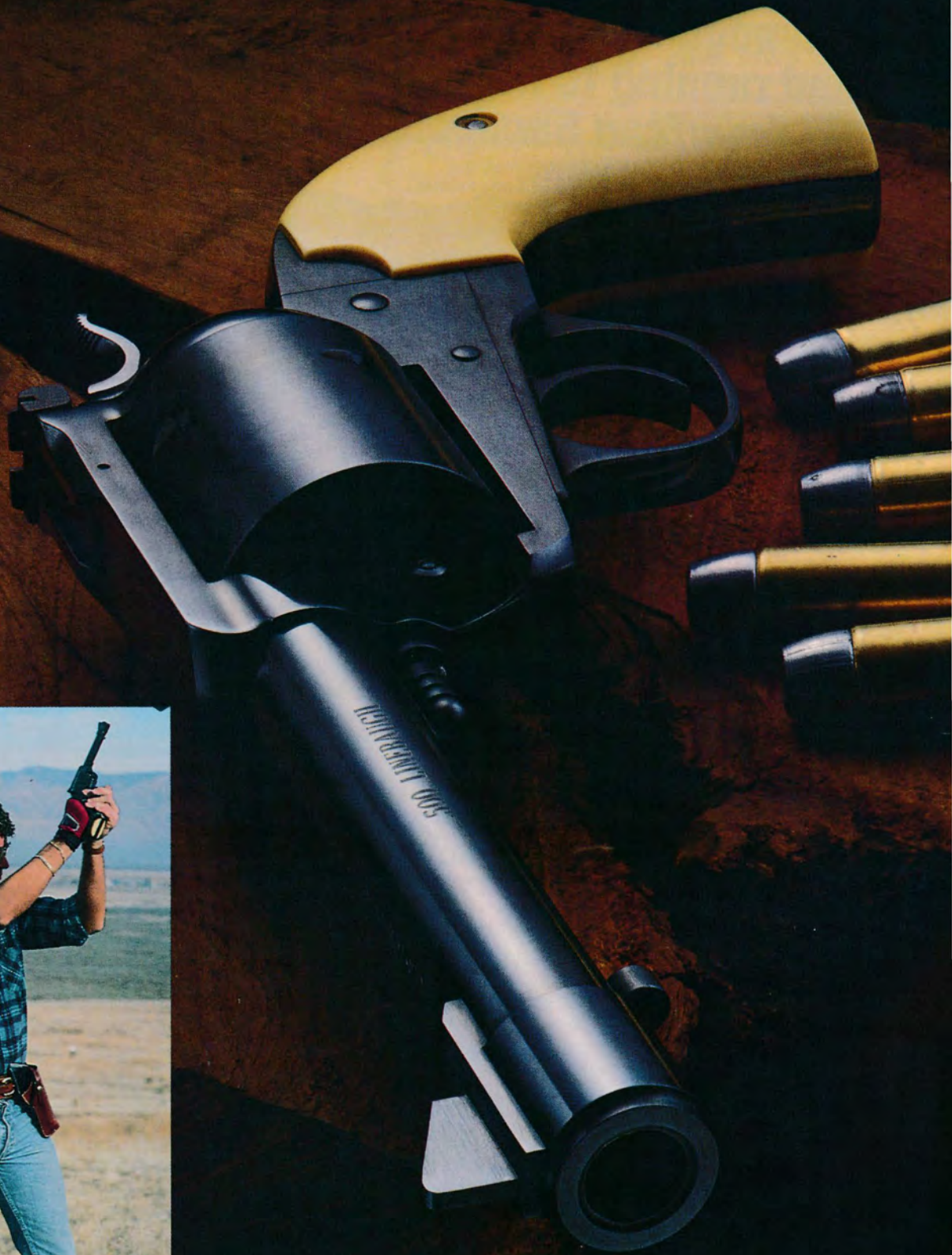
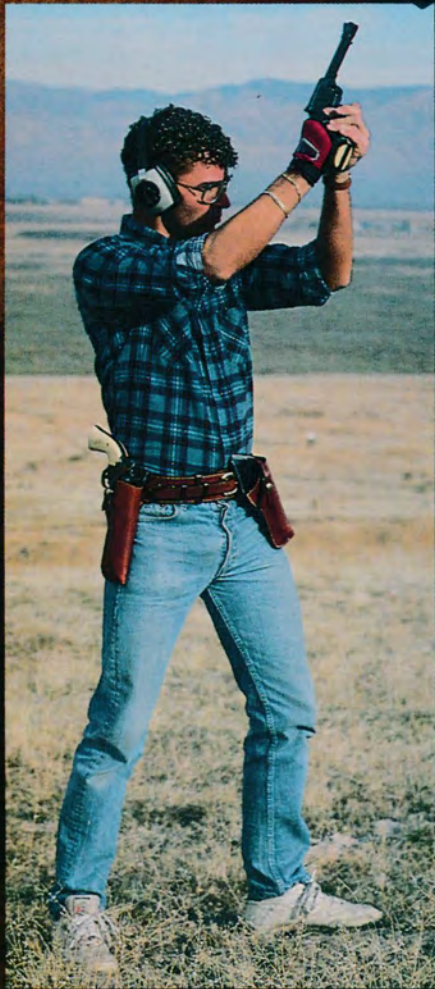
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BIG BORES

**Wyoming gunsmith
John Linebaugh puts
horsepower into a
handgun.**

By John Taffin

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

The day had been a rather quiet Fourth of July, ending by my relaxing at home, when the phone rang. It was a young man calling from Cody, Wyo., to tell me about custom .45 Colt sixguns he was building and to relay the fact that he wanted to send me a test gun.

His claims were, at least at that time, unbelievable. A .45 Colt that would shoot 250 grain bullets at 1,700 feet per second! Come on, now.

The caller was custom gunsmith John Linebaugh and he claimed 50% to 90% increase in muzzle energy over a .44 Magnum in barrels of seven and one-half inches or longer; that is, 1,500 to 2,000 ft/lbs. of energy.

That was quite a claim John made to me in 1983 and everything he said turned out to be true.

I had been a fan (fanatic?) of the .45

Colt for a long time, having purchased one of the first Second Generation Colt Single Actions as a teenager back in 1957.

But 250 grain bullets at 1,700 fps in a .45 Colt? The same old .45 Colt that writers had been deriding for its "weak brass" for years? John Linebaugh did send me one of his custom .45's built on an El Dorado frame with a custom ten and one-half inch barrel and a custom oversize cylinder. The cylinder was made oversize by utilizing all of the frame window and also by fitting it with no excessive gap between the front of the cylinder and the frame. That particular gun and loads were written up in the January/February 1985 issue of *American Handgunner*, in fact it was the first article I did for the *Handgunner*.

When I made my first trip to the range with the Linebaugh .45 Colt, I went prepared. Prepared, that is, with a nylon mal-



John Linebaugh chose the Ruger Bisley as the platform for his massive .500 caliber wildcat because of its recoil-handling grip frame and inherent strength.

let and proper sized wooden dowels to pound fired cases out of the cylinder.

Big Bore Believer

Perhaps I should have had more faith in Linebaugh but at the time I did not know him. Since then he has become a good friend and also proven to be a top gunsmith, and a man that can be believed when it comes to big bore single actions.

In those first testings of a Linebaugh custom revolver, I used .45 Winchester-Western brass that was heavily loaded five times. Bullets of 260 grains, both cast and jacketed, were driven over 1,700 fps; 310 grain bullets to 1,565 fps; 325 grain bullets to 1,600 fps; and 385 grain bullets to 1,300 fps.

At no time did I experience stuck cases nor did any of the WW .45 Colt brass split. In fact, that brass is still regularly being reloaded and has not been separated from other .45 Colt brass used with standard loadings.

That experience made me a believer in John Linebaugh and his custom guns. John explained that one of the reasons he was able to get such dramatic results is the fact that he maintains close tolerances.

Factory .45 Colt loads expand .004" in both Colt Single Actions and Ruger Blackhawks of recent manufacture in .45 Colt chambering. John's custom .45s, even with heavy loads, expand only .001" in diameter above the base of the cartridge.

The pressure is contained by the tight

cylinder and consequently brass lasts a long time.

Sixgun Traditionalist

John Linebaugh is a traditionalist when it comes to sixguns, or in the case of many of his conversions, fiveguns. He believes in packin' pistols. Guns that can be carried comfortably all day in a hip holster and then slipped under a bedroll or pillow at night. A handgun that is always available, always ready. A feature that made the Colt Single Action Army such a popular sixgun.

Linebaugh is about as likely to scope a handgun or use a nylon holster as he is to vote liberal or take the name of Elmer Keith in vain.

Simply put, John is a 19th Century man building guns with 20th Century technology. Yep, he uses a progressive reloader but to load big-bullet, time-proven loads.

Linebaugh's philosophy of handguns is found in the following quotation:

We are a custom sixgun shop dedicated to the old school sixgunner. We follow the theories of Elmer Keith and John (Pondoro) Taylor. Theirs was one of big bullets, so is ours.

Bullet weight and caliber are constants in external ballistics; velocity is a constantly diminishing variable. I believe high velocity to be a superb killer if placed with exact precision, and if it reaches the inside of the animal. But without exact placement, it lacks the penetrating qualities and thus it wastes its energy in flesh wounds.

The big bullet does not have these shortcomings. It will penetrate fully from any angle, thus letting the hunter take shots with confidence that he would otherwise pass up with a "little gun".

I for one do not like big guns, just big bullets. With this in mind we offer models and ideas to the old school sixgunner.

Remember, old school to us is powerful, practical, and packable.

That then is exactly what John Linebaugh strives for in every handgun he builds. Three things:

Power: The .45 Colt is the smallest gun Linebaugh builds.

Practical: These guns are designed with the hunter of big game in mind.

Packable: Every sixgun John offers packs easily in a hip holster.

Linebaugh's .45 Colt

At the present time, Linebaugh Custom Guns offers five levels of handguns.

First are the Colt Single Action and New Frontier Models. These guns as they come from the factory have notoriously oversized chambers and give continued, albeit false, credence to the myth of weak .45 Colt brass.

Linebaugh installs Colt .45 cylinders that have been re-chambered tightly from .357 Magnum or .44 Special chamberings. By installing properly chambered

.475 LINEBAUGH

BULLET	LOAD	VELOCITY	GROUP
NEI #390.477 (380 GRAIN)	28.0 gr. H4227	1276 fps.	1 5/8"
	27.0 gr. #2400	1371 fps.	1 3/4"
	21.0 gr. BLUE DOT	1310 fps.	1 3/4"
	31.0 gr. WW296	1408 fps.	1 5/8"
LBT #476.370LFN (350 GRAIN)	28.0 gr. H4227	1255 fps.	1"
	28.5 gr. #2400	1460 fps.	2"
	21.5 gr. BLUE DOT	1358 fps.	2 1/4"
	33.0 gr. WW296	1534 fps.	2"
LBT #476.420LFN (395 GRAIN)	27.0 gr. H4227	1251 fps.	1 3/4"
	25.5 gr. #2400	1355 fps.	1 1/4"
	20.0 gr. BLUE DOT	1285 fps.	1 1/4"
	29.0 gr. WW296	1394 fps.	1 3/4"
LBT #476.440LFN (405 GRAIN)	25.0 gr. H4227	1177 fps.	1 7/8"
	24.0 gr. #2400	1312 fps.	2 1/4"
	19.0 gr. BLUE DOT	1253 fps.	3/4"
	29.0 gr. WW296	1427 fps.	1 3/4"

FIREARM: BISLEY 5 1/2" BRASS: .45/70 TRIMMED TO 1.400"
PRIMER: CCI #350 CHRONOGRAPH: OEHLER MODEL 35P
TEMP: 35-45 DEGREES
GROUPS: 5 SHOTS AT 25 YARDS, BRACED STANDING.

cylinders and with close tolerances maintained throughout the sixgun, a Linebaugh .45 Single Action Colt or New Frontier with a seven and one-half inch barrel is capable of 1,300 fps with 225 grain jacketed hollow points, 1,250 fps with 260 grain cast Keith bullets, and 1,150 fps with 300 grain cast bullets.

That is a lot of practical power from such a relatively small sixgun, a sixgun that was originally built to handle 255 grain bullets with black powder loads of 850 fps.

I sent John a Second Generation .357 New Frontier along with an extra .357 Magnum cylinder and a four and three-

The custom five-shot cylinder is a "beautifully crafted part" according to author Taffin. It is precisely machined and then meticulously fitted. The test gun came with a .002" cylinder gap!



quarter inch .45 NF barrel a few years back.

I got back a .45 New Frontier with a tight cylinder that shoots one-hole groups at 25 yards and I still have the original barrel and cylinder should I ever want to change back to the original chambering. As accurate and packable as this little sixgun is, changing back is not very likely.

The "Small" .45

Moving up the line we come to what Linebaugh calls his *small* .45 Colt. This is built up by starting with a Ruger of .357, .41, or .44 caliber. The cylinder is re-chambered to .45 Colt, the gun is tightened up, and a special slow twist Douglas barrel installed.

With the "small" .45 Colt, the sixgunner can expect 260 grain cast bullets to achieve 1,400 fps, and 310 Keith cast bullets will go 1,300 fps.

I have a "tiny" Linebaugh .45 Colt built up on an Abilene that was a .44 Magnum. With its .45 Colt chambering and five and one-half inch barrel it is definitely powerful, practical, and packable.

Now we start to come into Linebaugh's really big sixguns with the third conversion offered, the *big* .45 Colt. This sixgun is built on a Ruger Single Action and rather than re-chambering the Ruger cylinder, the frame is fitted with an oversized cylinder, slow twist Douglas barrel. The gun is rebuilt throughout, tightening and minimizing tolerances in the process.

With this .45 Colt conversion, sixgunners can expect 1700 fps with 260 grain Keith bullets, and 1500 fps with 310 Keith bullets.

The Real Power

Now we enter the real power level of Linebaugh's Custom Guns, the big bore five-shooters. Linebaugh builds these on the Ruger Bisley Single Action which is a very strong sixgun to begin with and offers a grip that is the most comfortable for the big loads.

When the Bisley was introduced, comments such as "If the grip was so good why did Colt drop it?" and "The Bisley grip is the answer to a problem that doesn't exist!" were heard.

I disagree completely. First, the Bisley grip as offered by Ruger is not the same as that found on the Colt Bisley. It is much closer to the old Number Five Single Action Grip that Elmer Keith promoted after it was designed by gunsmiths Harold Croft and J.D. O'Meara in the 1920's.

Secondly, for some of us there is a definite problem with heavy loads and standard single action grip frames. For me, the Super Blackhawk is especially punishing with heavy loads and catches my knuckle, and bangs my palm as well as the top of my trigger finger. Detractors to the contrary, I will offer my personal opinion that the Ruger Bisley grip is the finest ever put on a factory single action. The grip is nearly perfect.

The trigger is not. The trigger is thin and curved and the tip of it catches the bottom of my trigger finger and will cut it open under prolonged firing and after 200 rounds through one of Linebaugh's big fiveguns in two shooting sessions, the bottom of my trigger finger had a pronounced swelling.

The answer would seem to be a straighter, possibly wider trigger.

Linebaugh did not choose the Bisley as the basis for his big-bores for its trigger, but for its recoil handling grip frame and its inherent strength.

As an extra added bonus, the Ruger is one fine lookin' sixgun to start with. Linebaugh calls the Bisley grip frame "superior for accuracy and comfort." After nearly 35 years of shooting single actions in virtually every big bore caliber

imaginable, I agree with him wholeheartedly. It is simply the finest factory single action grip ever offered.

Knock Out Power

I rarely ever quote muzzle energy figures as I put very little stock in them. They are skewed against relatively slow moving heavyweight bullets and for lightweight bulletted, fast stepping loads.

Linebaugh uses a different formula for figuring "true sixgun power and punch" as he puts it—namely, Pondero Taylor's Knock Out Formula. Caliber (in inches) times Bullet Weight (in grains) times Velocity (in feet per second) divided by 7,000 equals Knock Out.

Muzzle energy figures do not take caliber into account and for Linebaugh, caliber is everything. That is why he does not stop his sixgun work with the .45 Colt.

Looking at the figures of the Taylor Knock Out calculations, we see the following. The standard .44 Magnum loading of 240 grain bullet at 1,400 fps is rated 21 TKO. Linebaugh's .45 Colt loads of 260 grain bullet at 1,700 fps and 310 grain bullet at 1,500 fps are rated 28.5 and 30 Knock Out respectively. Loading the .44 Magnum with a 300 grain bullet to 1,400 fps gives a 26.6 KO, still behind the old .45 Colt.

Fifty Caliber Leap

Linebaugh's first step into the really big bores was a giant leap from the "small" .45 caliber all the way up to .500 caliber with his .500 Linebaugh.

The .50 caliber revolver is not original with John Linebaugh. He tells me that Neil Wheeler and Bill Topping came up with the .50 WT Super quite some time ago and Elmer Keith shot their gun and cartridge. What Linebaugh has done is to take the .50 caliber and run with it.

The .500 Linebaugh is based on the .348 Winchester case trimmed to 1.400". At .50 caliber, the .500 Linebaugh is the outer limits of caliber size in a packable pistol. To get the .500 into a packin'-sized gun, it is necessary to discard the standard-sized Ruger Bisley cylinder and go with an over-sized five-shot cylinder for two reasons.

First, six .50 caliber holes will not fit in a standard sized cylinder and allow enough metal between chambers for safety and, secondly, five shots allow the bolt cut to be placed between, rather than under, cylinder chambers.

Many .45 caliber sixguns can be found with bolt cuts that are literally paper thin.

The .500 Linebaugh dwarfs a .45 Colt. Brass is made from .348 Win. cases trimmed to 1.400". The bullet on left weighs nearly 450 grains while the "small" one only goes a mere 400!

The .500 Linebaugh thrives on 400 to 440 grain bullets and large doses of slow burning pistol powders. Both a heavy crimp and a strong neck tension on the bullet are necessary to get the powders in the .500 ignited and burning properly. Magnum pistol primers also are a great help here, spelled *mandatory*.

Taylor Knock Out with the .500? A 400 grain bullet at 1,300 fps gives a TKO rating of 38 and a 440 grain bullet at 1,250 comes in with a TKO of 40 or right at twice the TKO of a standard .44 Magnum loading.

Bring Out The Big Guns

These are big guns, make no mistake about it. Big in power, not size. A .500 Linebaugh in a five and one-half inch Bisley weighs only 47 ounces.

While Linebaugh starts with the Bisley as the basis for his conversions, the finished product, upon close examination, is radically changed. The unfluted, over-size cylinder is full length, the barrel is now much heavier, and the geometry has been changed to make this sixgun into a fivegun.

Open the loading gate and the new cylinder spins freely like the beautifully crafted part that it is. Literally no end play and the cylinder gap is set at .003" or less. Neither of the Linebaugh test guns used for this article would accept a .002" gap tool. The complete gun is rebled and marked .500 LINEBAUGH on the barrel.

The .500 Linebaugh is for reloaders only as no factory ammunition, at least as this is written, is available.

When I was given the assignment of covering the Linebaugh custom revolvers, everything seemed to fall into place almost miraculously. A local sportsman, Shawn

Daniel, was in the process of having John Linebaugh build him matching revolvers in .475 Linebaugh and .500 Linebaugh. A call to John Linebaugh soon resulted in the welcome news that both guns would be ready and could be sent to Ichiro Nagata, our staff photographer, and be back to me for testing in plenty of time to meet my deadline.

It did, however, take tremendous cooperation on the part of John, Shawn, and Ichi to make everything come together.

Knowing that I would be covering the Linebaugh revolvers, three other men whose assistance would be invaluable were contacted immediately. Those men are Jay Postman of RCBS, Veral Smith of Lead Bullet Technology (LBT), and Brec Nelson of NEI. All three men saw to it that I had the necessary loading dies, lube/sizing dies, and bullet molds for the project.

Custom reloading dies for both the .475 and .500 are available from the RCBS Custom Shop, 605 Oro Dam Blvd., Dept AH, Oroville, CA 95965. They do some of their best work on these dies and I had no trouble assembling .500 Linebaugh loads whatsoever.

Bullets are also a custom proposition, spelled c-a-s-t, with excellent moulds available from both LBT (P.O. Box 357, Dept AH, Cornville, AZ 86325) and NEI/Toolodyne (9330 NE Halsey St., Dept AH, Portland OR 97220).

Linebaugh Handloads

In loading the .500 I used LBT's #512.400LFN and #512.440LFN, LFN standing for long flat nose. These are both plain-based bullets with three grease grooves and one crimping groove. NEI's #420.511, a 440+ grain Keith style bullet with two grease



.500 LINEBAUGH

BULLET	LOAD	VELOCITY	GROUP
LBT #512.400LFN (404 GRAINS)	28.0 gr. #2400	1277 fps.	2"
	31.0 gr. WW296	1201 fps.	1 5/8"
LBT #512.440LFN (445 GRAINS)	26.0 gr. #2400	1179 fps.	1 1/2"
	29.0 gr. WW296	1171 fps.	2 1/4"
	30.0 gr. H4227	1149 fps.	1 3/4"
	20.0 gr. BLUE DOT	1123 fps.	1 3/4"
NEI #420.511 (444 GRAINS)	25.0 gr. #2400	1114 fps.	1 5/8"
	29.0 gr. WW296	1256 fps.	2 1/2"
	28.0 gr. H4227	1102 fps.	1 5/8"

FIREARM: BISLEY 5 1/2" BRASS: .500 LINEBAUGH
PRIMER: CCI #350 CHRONOGRAPH: OEHLER MODEL 35P
TEMP: 35 DEGREES
GROUPS: 5 SHOTS AT 25 YARDS, BRACED STANDING.

grooves and one crimping groove was also used in loading the .500 Linebaugh. Both LBT and NEI offer top quality aluminum mould blocks with numerous designs available in all calibers.

All bullets for the .500 were sized to .512" using an RCBS sizing die and bullets were lubed with Thompson's Bullet Lube and crimped heavily. At no time did any bullets jump their crimp.

Shooting the .500 is stimulating to say the least. I have fired the big .500 many times over the past few years but this is my first time at really seriously testing it both as to accuracy and muzzle velocity.

After two days of firing 100 rounds each, I had some soreness in my shooting arm from wrist to elbow. The Bisley grip lessens the felt recoil in the hand, but the shock extends into the arm. Both days the temperature was 35 degrees which did not help matters in the least.

The first 100 rounds of 400 and 440 grain bullets out of the .500 Linebaugh were off the bench and did the most damage. It was very difficult to concentrate on all five shots knowing what was coming. The fifth shot in each string was especially punishing on the wrist.

This position, however, protected my trigger finger from the Bisley trigger. Switching to a standing braced position for the next 100 rounds, gave less felt recoil in the arm, but on the 75th shot, the trigger cut a deep gash in the bottom of my trigger finger.

Heavy Kicker

Recoil is a subjective matter and recoil is normally felt more between the ears than in the hands and arms. In all fairness to the .500 it must be stated that with loads of 400 grain bullets up to 1,200 fps and 440 grain bullets to 1,100 fps, the felt recoil is no worse, perhaps even less, than standard .44 Magnum loads.

Or so it seems to this sixgunner, having very strong arms and hands.

Go above these levels and the .500 is in a class all by itself. Of course, 200 rounds of .500 Linebaughs in two days is

not something that anyone would normally do except in a testing situation.

Accuracy with the big .500, especially when viewed under the testing conditions, borders on the fantastic. Shooting a big gun like this, in cold weather, and from a standing braced position, is not the best way to wring top accuracy from any handgun. Nevertheless, most handloads shot through the .500 resulted in five-shot, 25 yard groups of two inches or less, with some getting down very close to one inch.

This from a revolver that recoils stoutly, to say the least!

The accompanying loads should be regarded as maximum in the .500 Linebaugh. Velocities will be higher in warmer weather especially with WW 296. More complete loading data on the .500 will be given in a future *Taffin Tests*.

Linebaugh's maximum recommendations for the .500 with a seven and one-half inch barrel are 31.0 grains of H110 or WW296 under 400 grain bullets for 1,320 fps and 29.0 grains of the same with a 440 grain bullet for 1,270 fps. I did not achieve these results with the 400 grain bullet in a five and one-half inch barrel in cold weather, but the big 440 grain bullets coupled with less powder capacity saw the powder work at its peak and give over 1,250 fps velocity.

Seasoned Sixgunners

Linebaugh's Custom .500 is a masterpiece of workmanship and design. It is not a target pistol by any means, but it sure gives real rifle-power on the belt. It is designed for one thing— hunting the biggest of game. What a great close range elk-moose-big bear gun this is!

This is not a gun for beginners, but for seasoned sixgunners who have worked their way up with much experience with heavily loaded .45 Colts, .44 Magnums and .454 Casulls. It will not hurt you when used normally; 200 rounds in two days is not normal by any means.

I went on to shoot another 100 rounds later in the week coupled with 300 rounds



The business end of a .500 Linebaugh is milled from a solid Douglas blank, one of the finest match-grade barrels extant. The front sight assembly is entirely custom made by John Linebaugh.

with John's other big bore five-gun with no lasting (hopefully) ill effects.

If you like such big bore sixguns as the .41 Magnum, .44 Magnum, .45 Colt, .454 Casull, you will love the Linebaugh .500. Just go into it with your eyes wide open.

Hunting Revolver

The .500 Linebaugh has proven to be an excellent hunting revolver for thin-skinned game, but it lacks something. Would it be possible to combine the muzzle velocity and penetration of the .44 Magnum and .454 Casull with the bullet weight of the .500 Linebaugh?

This was Linebaugh's next step and the result is the other big bore five-gun, the .475 Linebaugh.

The .475 is not a step backwards from the .500 by any means. Optimum bullet weight for the .475 seems to be in the 350-400 grain weight category, while the .500 is at its best with 400-440 grain bullets. Using bullets of the same weight, namely 400 grains, the .475 picks up 100-150 fps over the .500. And since the diameter of the .475 is 7% less than the .500— .476" compared to .512"— penetration is better.

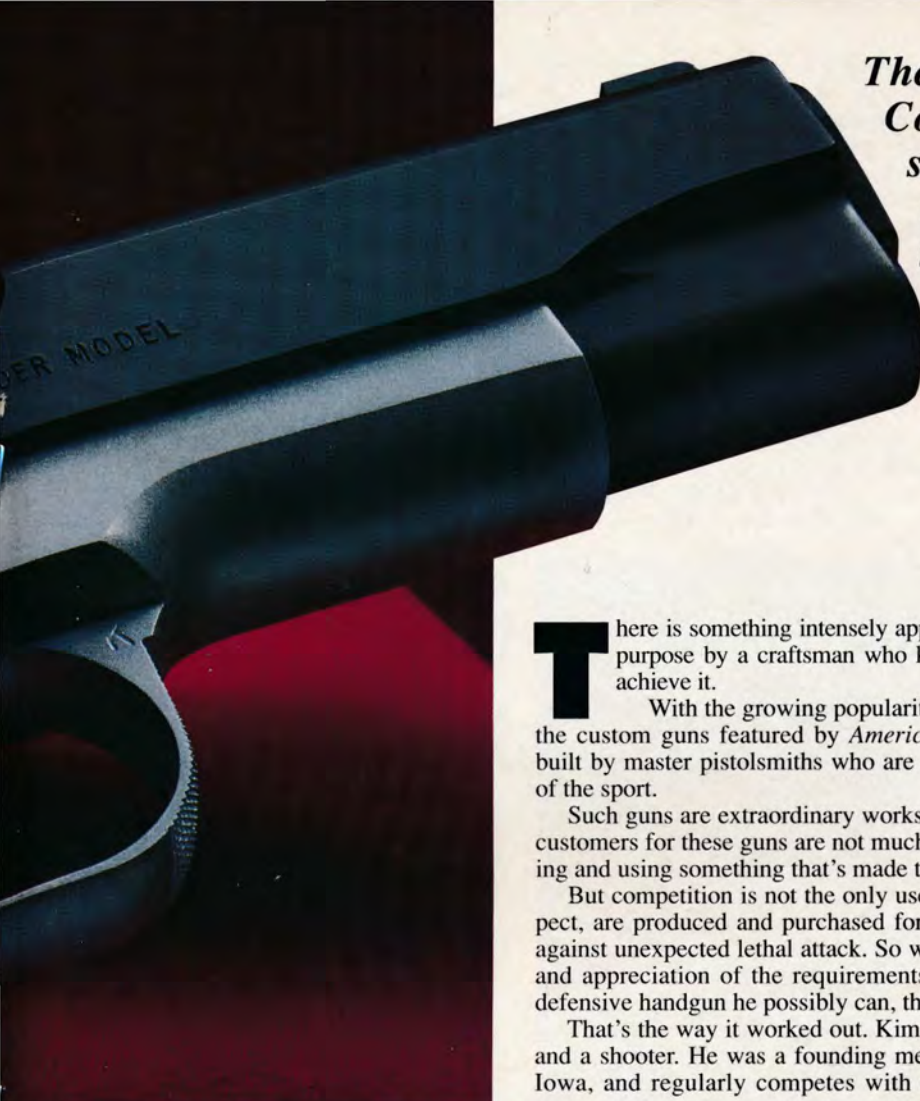
Cross-sectionally, the .475 is 14% less than the .500, again giving better penetration with the same weight bullet. This makes the .475 the better choice for really big, tough game.

The .475 is made by trimming .45-70 brass to 1.400" and reloading with RCBS Custom .475 dies. Calling upon my local gunsmith, I had him trim WW .45-70 brass to the proper length, ran the trimmed brass through the RCBS full-

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CUSTOM COMBAT COMMANDER





The new stainless steel Colt Commander. A tough gun, a solid gun. Tune it up, slick it up. Now the .45 caliber Colt is an even more rugged and reliable state-of-the-art fighting pistol.

By Dave Anderson

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

There is something intensely appealing about a custom gun, one built for a specific purpose by a craftsman who knows what he's trying to accomplish and how to achieve it.

With the growing popularity of practical and action shooting sports, many of the custom guns featured by *American Handgunner* have been competition models, built by master pistolsmiths who are also active competitors and understand the needs of the sport.

Such guns are extraordinary works of functional art. I'm convinced that many of the customers for these guns are not much interested in competition, but simply enjoy owning and using something that's made to the highest standards of quality.

But competition is not the only use for a handgun. The majority of handguns, I suspect, are produced and purchased for a more serious purpose—to protect human life against unexpected lethal attack. So when a talented pistolsmith, with an understanding and appreciation of the requirements of personal defense, sets out to build the best defensive handgun he possibly can, the results are likely to be equally impressive.

That's the way it worked out. Kim Ahrends is the pistolsmith: a craftsman, an artist, and a shooter. He was a founding member of an IPSC club near his home in Clarion, Iowa, and regularly competes with such well known Master class shooters as Bob



Denny and Barney Niner.

He holds a concealed carry permit; the .45 auto he uses for IPSC matches is the same gun he carries every day. And he customizes the Colt .45's that are issued to members of the Clarion County Sheriff's Office. Kim Ahrends understands the requirements of a defensive pistol and how to achieve them.

Customizing a handgun intended for self-defense raises the hackles of some people, and there are indeed some important factors to consider.

Massad Ayoob was the first writer to explain that a defensive situation does not end with the last shot fired; you still have to survive the legal aftermath. Should a criminal or civil court action arise, a

Having agreed on that point, I think it's possible to agree also that the effort and cost involved in building the most effective possible defensive sidearm is a worthwhile endeavor.

Against these factors is one compelling consideration in favor of the custom pistol. It is this: if a situation arises in which you have to use a handgun to protect your life, you will need every advantage you can possibly get.

I know this is heresy coming from a handgun editor, but the fact is handguns really aren't very good weapons. They don't have enough power. So many of our perceptions come from TV, where the bad guy takes a hit from a snubby .38 and goes flying 30 feet through a plate glass window.

But those guys aren't really criminals and they weren't really shot. They are professional stuntmen playing a part. In the real world, criminal assailants have taken solid hits from all manner of firearms and still remained on their feet and kept fighting.

Ask any peace officer— if circumstances permit, they will always select a rifle or shotgun over a handgun. The great value of the handgun is its size and portability, the fact that it's there when needed.

Building a gun that may someday be used to protect its owner's life is a responsibility Kim Ahrends takes seriously. He says, "The packages I offer are based on modifications that have proven



modified gun might be used as evidence against its owner:

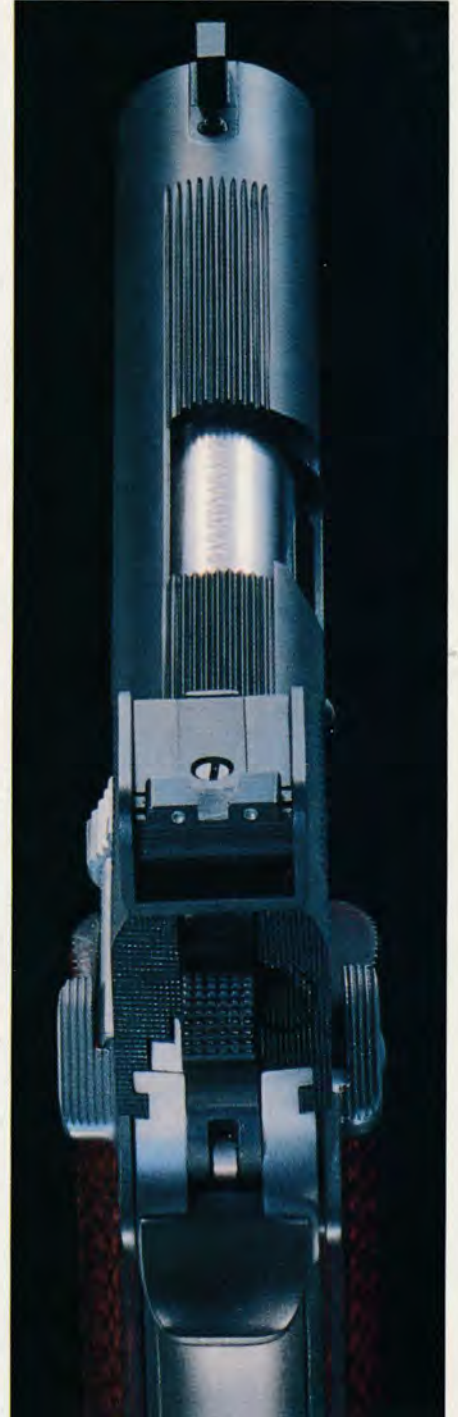
"This guy was obviously just looking for an excuse to try out his deadly custom-made weapon on somebody."

But Ayoob has also pointed out that modifications can be defended provided some guiding principles are followed: (a) no deactivation of any of the gun's safety features, (b) any changes made to the gun must be defensible as "neutral" (e.g., rustproof finishes), or (c) intended to make the gun safer, less likely to discharge accidentally, more capable of hitting the intended target and thereby not endangering bystanders.

Some self-defense instructors decry the need for customizing, pointing out that other factors are much more important than the type of gun used, and that one is better off to buy a stock gun and spend the money saved on practice ammunition.

Now there is a lot of truth to this. Certainly things like use of cover, tactics, shooting ability, coolness, courage, and determination are more critical than the type and caliber of the gun.

Proven combat modifications and accessories of the Ahrends Commander include: Swenson ambi safety, protected rear sight, checkered trigger guard, beavertail grip safety and more.





Collet barrel bushing is replaced with solid bushing (above) and front sight with tritium night-sight insert is dovetailed into the slide. The "wings" on the S&W rear sight (right) lend rugged durability to the tritium-inserted adjustable blade. Note the precise checkering on the rear of the slide.

themselves over time. What I offer is not a space-gun but a traditional weapon individually modified to the highest standards possible."

The gun that appears here is his top-of-the-line Colt tactical conversion. He stays with the proven John Browning 1911 design because he feels there is simply no better defensive handgun made.

We have lots of more modern designs, with plenty of defenders who insist on the superiority of the new pistols. Asked why, their arguments usually boil down to two points: the modern designs are more foolproof in the hands of the average user, and they hold more shots.

There is a grain of truth to the first point, for even staunch 1911 advocates agree it's not for everyone. On the other hand, operating a 1911 is not exactly like flying a space shuttle. Surely anyone with enough skill and coordination to drive a car can learn to handle something as simple as an autopistol. And the advantages of the 1911, especially the crisp, short trigger pull from start to finish, are worth the effort involved.

As to the second point, the craze for firepower has become just about irrational. A few years back I read through 15 years of the "Armed Citizen" column in *American Rifleman*, looking for scenarios for some IPSC matches, including the 1986 World Shoot for which I co-designed the course of fire.

And, like most *Handgunner* readers, I read *The Ayoob Files* in every issue. Having read through hundreds of actual defensive situations, I was struck by the fact that probably 99% could have been settled with one to three shots. When

more shots than that were fired, usually a lot of them were misses.

Accuracy wins, not lots of near misses. I'll agree that all things being equal, more shots in the gun isn't a bad thing.

But all things aren't equal. High capacity guns are hard to carry concealed for the licensed citizen or plainclothes officer, their wide grips feel like holding the fat end of a baseball bat, and they need hands like Godzilla's to reach the trigger.

Series 80 Is Best

Kim prefers to build his guns on Series 80 Colts. This is not because of any qualms about the quality of earlier guns, or of other makes such as Spring-

field Armory, but because of the firing pin lock.

Ahrends knows that duty-sidearms lead a hard life. The positive firing pin lock is added insurance against accidental discharge if the gun is dropped or struck severely, and in his experience it does not affect reliability or trigger quality.

Most of the guns he works on are Government Models, but he'll build his custom package on Gold Cups, Deltas, or Commanders as well. He used to do a lot of Browning Hi Powers and still enjoys working on that fine pistol, but says there doesn't seem to be much demand any more.

He will work on whatever caliber the
Continued on page 82





Duelling!

Duelling predates the duelling pistol by many hundreds of years. We need not trouble ourselves with its history, save to say that it was an ancient practice whereby gentlemen (then defined as those entitled to use heraldic coats of arms) settled their quarrels by fighting between themselves, very often to the death.

The fight had to be fair and formal. Mere brawling was not a duel. The fairness was ensured by the seconds. By the Eighteenth Century a strict code had been established for sword duels, and soon similar codes were devised for the pistol.

One must also remember that the rules for the conduct of a duel were *roughly* the same throughout Europe and wherever peoples of European origin had

settled. In Ireland the Clonmell Rules (for a duel, not for trying the participants) were drawn up by the Barristers and local gentry attending Clonmell Summer Assizes in 1777.

They covered the proper procedure for duelling with both sword and pistol, ordaining when and how a gentleman had to fight. They were intended for use in all Ireland, though certain counties had their own usages. (Life at the Irish Bar in those days must have been pretty adventurous as I

will relate later.)

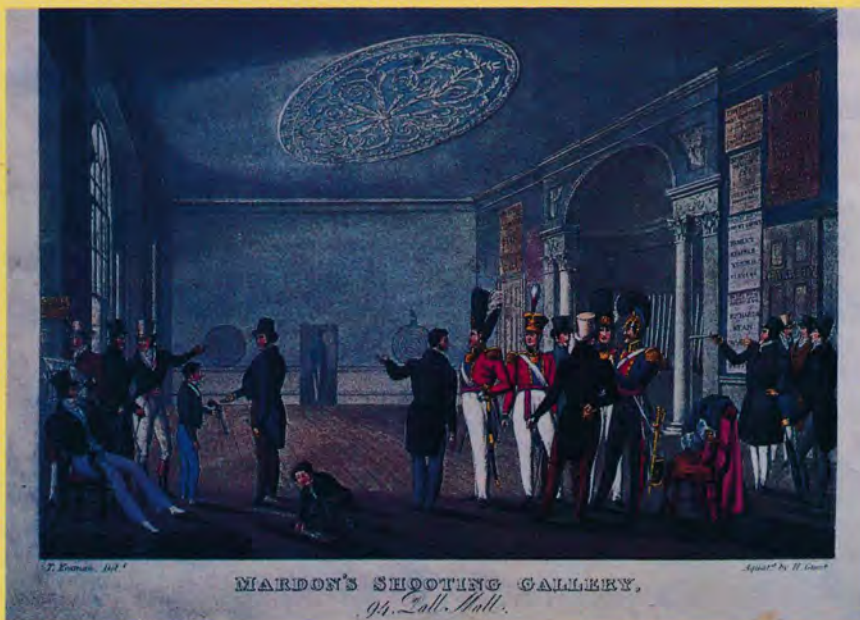
In England the *British Code of Duel* appeared in 1824, and *The Art of Duelling* in 1836.

After the 1750s swords were not worn as generally as they had been, and duels began to be fought with pistols, though both methods of combat continued





Cartoons like this were strong propaganda used by anti-duelling factions in England.



MARDON'S SHOOTING GALLERY,
94, Pall Mall.

together for some time.

In France, irate newspaper editors continued to cross swords, literally, until the 1960s. How far such encounters were intended seriously and how much for the photographers is a different matter, but there was a serious prospect of being shot dead in a French duel well into the present century.

A Fair Fight

Because the duelling pistol evolved rather than being suddenly made, many duels were fought with whatever pair of pistols was available. The important thing was not their design, but their availability and uniformity. The duel had to be fair, and fairness was interpreted as equality of opportunity.

The party challenged had the choice of weapons, though a combatant who stated upon his honour that he was no swordsman, when his opponent had chosen swords, was allowed to use pistols. Strangely, I have never encountered the reverse, though perhaps such indulgence was negotiated between the seconds.

The second acted as a kind of business manager, or a Best Man at a wedding; it being realized that in moments of stress a man does not remember everything and sometimes does not make good decisions.

The task of the seconds was not only to ensure fairness, but also to look to the practical issues such as the provision of a surgeon, a carriage and the pair of pistols.

What is frequently forgotten about the seconds is that their paramount duty was to settle the quarrel amicably, which they quite often succeeded in doing.

As the circumstances of each duel were different, so were the details of how it was conducted. Generally the position of each duelist was marked with wands after the distance had been agreed. The exact line behind the firers was important, since if one party was silhouetted against the sky, and the other well camou-

An indoor range in 1824 featured a realistic "humanoid" target of a Cossack for duelling practice, vaguely similar to the "anatomically correct" human silhouettes used in IPSC's "pretend gunfights" of 1990.



A cased pair of John Manton & Son duelling pistols (1819). This pair of pistols belonged to Lord Ellenborough and represent the finest flintlocks by Manton.

flaged against a copse, the former was at considerable disadvantage.

Much depended too upon the actual distance chosen. Mr. Best and Lord Camelford were set 30 yards apart when they fought in 1804 because they were both famous shots. Despite the former's continuing efforts to avoid the duel, Camelford insisted and died in consequence.

The normal British distance was about 12 yards. On the Continent it was 25 metres. If one party was a poor shot, his seconds would press for the shortest range possible to nullify his opponent's advantage.

Sometimes this was carried to extremes, and duels were fired over a dining room table. The seconds stood at right angles to the line of fire. Instances are recorded when they fought too.

Followers of Conan Doyle's Brigadier Gerard will remember that he got into one such situation. Having been missed by an amazing piece of luck, he still had to fire his pistol.

Beseched by his opponent's wife to spare her husband, the Brigadier, who mistakenly believes her to be in love with him, wishes to do so but cannot in honour refrain from firing.

Accordingly he must "delope" (i.e., fire his pistol, but not at his opponent) and looking for a suitable mark, he seeks to trim the ash of the seconds' long cigar. He nearly blows it out of his mouth and there is almost another duel!

Gerard, who elsewhere describes himself as "a man singularly free from conceit," apologized saying that he was "betrayed by his pistol" and all was well. Wonderfully humorous stuff.

Anatomy Of A Duel

Writing near the turn of the present century, the duel was still sufficiently alive for Doyle, like Lever before him, to paint an entirely accurate picture. ("How He Triumphed in England" from *The Adventures of Brigadier Gerard*).

Both historians and authors of fiction

are assisted by the fact that at the conclusion of every duel it was the duty of the seconds to draw up a written account of the affair, and to sign it. Such accounts were then retained and used in the event of a trial.

I have examined such an account of the duel between The Earl of Shelburne and Colonel Fullarton which took place in 1780, through the kindness of the present Earl. This not only gave insight into the tremendous courage of those days, but a quite uncanny feeling of connection with the events of 200 years ago.

In earlier duels the parties tossed for first shot. It had to be a swift, unaimed shot. Later both parties fired on a given signal, usually the dropping of a handkerchief.

One could not test the weight of trigger



A magnificent pair of Purdey duelling pistols that were reunited with their original case thanks to the author's efforts. The author is a collector of duelling pistols and is acknowledged as the foremost expert in the field.

(Little wonder that Queen Victoria set her face against duelling and, eventually, was able to end it by refusing to receive at Court those who had duelled.)

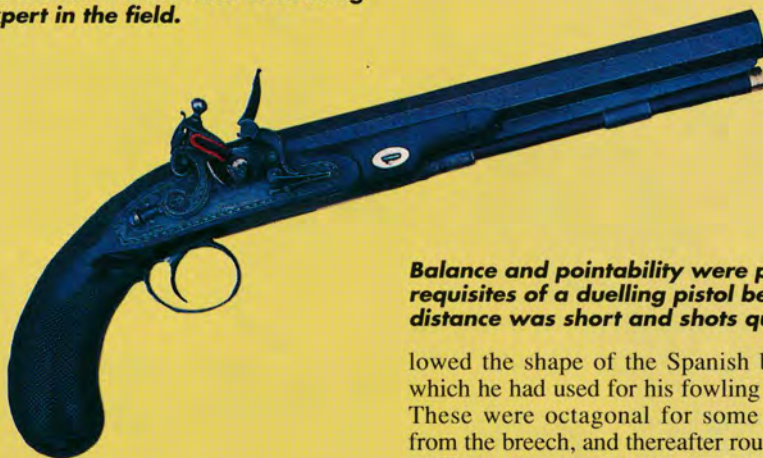
The Duelling Pistol

The physical origins of the duelling pistol lie in the holster or military pistol. These are often ugly, heavy, and have poor lock mechanisms, but both usually have the great quality of *pointability*.

In other words, when you hold it naturally, the chances are that at close range it will point at your target.

If one experiments with most pistols of these types, one will find this is still the case today. The difference between the two holster and military styles of weapon will be found to be almost invariably quality, not good handling characteristics. Their success as weapons depended on the degree to which their makers retained or improved upon this quality of pointability.

When one puts many of the pistols or revolvers made in the last hundred years to the test of *natural pointing*, one sees just how far the modern pistol maker has got from the true fundamental principle, and what a lot he has to learn from his



Balance and pointability were prime requisites of a duelling pistol because distance was short and shots quick.

predecessors. followed the shape of the Spanish barrels, which he had used for his fowling pieces. These were octagonal for some inches from the breech, and thereafter round.

There was usually a bead foresight and sometimes a very simple backsight. The locks, however, were slow. When one remembers that even the fastest flintlock ignition was slow, it will be appreciated that there was ample scope for improvement.

Although in later years a certain coyness precluded reference to "duelling" pistols on gunmakers' accounts, the weapons were so known and it became a distinct classification. In considering it we must not fall into the trap of forgetting that duels were *immediate* affairs, normally to be settled next morning or as

predecessors.

Once a need was recognized, the gunsmiths began to produce pistols specifically for duelling. The early versions of these are hard to distinguish from a good holster pistol of the time.

Griffin, one of the most distinguished makers, was probably the first to do this. He was a great maker of fowling pieces, and Master of the Gunmakers Company in 1762-3.

His early duelling pistol barrels fol-



Cartoon of the day often spoofed the "art of duelling" as political satire. The Duke of Wellington's duel over Catholic Emancipation (R) shows the Duke as a lobster.

soon as possible. If the ideal pistols were not to hand, those that were usually had to suffice.

With hindsight we can define the true duelling pistol of about 1800 as usually having the following characteristics

A 10-inch octagonal smooth bore barrel of one-half inch diameter with simple foresight and often, though not invariably, a backsight. Frequently the flint lock was fitted with a hair trigger, which gave a very easy discharge.

Fashions change, and this was particularly true of the duelling pistol. Thus the barrel shape in the 1770s was to pass on from Griffin's imitation of the Spanish form to the octagonal.

A little later Henry Nock introduced his own shape known as Nocksform. This



Magnificent silver mounted John Manton pistol (1793) shows considerable wear.



Two Durs Egg barrels contrast Nocksform (below) and octagonal styles.

incorporated a flat sighting surface upon the top into which the bar backsight and foresight were inlet. The remainder of the barrel was rounded, but got thicker towards the breech.

As the illustration shows, this was quite a delicate form for a small bore duelling pistol. It was also used for heavy officers' pistols upon which its popular-

ity continued much longer than in the comparatively light versions. Its abandonment for the duelling pistol after about 1785 was probably because the tendency was towards heavier target type barrels.

Stocks

To start with, the duelling pistol stock (called the handle then) was virtually that of the carriage pistol. Gradually the shape became more rounded as will be seen from the illustrations.

In an effort to produce a lighter weapon, by about 1795 the wooden stock was reduced from running the full length of the barrel to about two thirds of its



length. These forms were known as full-stocked and half-stocked respectively.

Some makers had their own particular features. H.W. Mortimer tended to produce weapons with very large bores, with a view to their being used as dual purpose holster/duelling pistols, and his products often had very rounded handles like walking sticks, finishing not with a butt cap but a swirl of carving. His work was often bought by Army officers.

John Manton followed the style of Twigg, providing slab (flat) sided grips from as far back as the 1780s. Though fashion and other gunmakers changed the shape of the grip, Manton maintained his idea with a strip of flattened grip on each side of the pistol.

Durs Egg used distinctive chequering for much of his career. This, which was not unlike skip chequering, was probably also inspired by Twigg, for whom he worked during his early days in England.

Two aspects of stocking are most important. The earlier of these is the addition of a spur to the trigger guard. Filling the hand with the grip is essential if the shooter is to be able to grip his pistol properly. Mere bulk can, however, remove the sensitivity of a grip.

Continued on page 104

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AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 44

behind his back.

That triggers a warning in the ex-cop's mind, but consciously, he doesn't think that a 52-year-old businessman would do anything unpleasant to a 39-year-old like himself.

He doesn't realize that Lyne is returning from Huebl's car. After circling around outside the property, he has tried to deflate Huebl's tires with a pair of metal nippers.

They are somewhere between five and eight paces apart. Huebl tries to move to the side. Lyne sidesteps to block him. Huebl moves further to the side and runs out of room: he has hit the cactus and bushes that thickly border the walkway.

Huebl tries to be conciliatory. "Hey, pal," he begins almost apologetically, "I'm just an officer of the court doing my job. Why don't you leave me alone?"

The answer is a blow.

Fighting Fury

It comes from nowhere, the right hand slashing out of the darkness and smashing something hard against the left side of Huebl's forehead, level with the left edge of his left eyebrow and high, striking at the hairline.

Stunned—and suffering from a brain concussion, doctors will say later—Huebl staggers back, trying to get out of the way. Spiny cactus digs into his left arm, and he drops to one knee.

And then he sees the outline of what's in the other man's right hand.

The message comes across his mind like a digital readout. "BLUE STEEL AUTOMATIC, RIGHT HAND! BIG! LOOKS LIKE COLT .45!"

Lyne is moving toward him, the pistol still pointed to the ground. Huebl's own right hand flashes to his hip and draws the snubnose .38 revolver.

He remembers his police training, and the importance of witnesses hearing the commands, as he shouts, "Drop your weapon! Drop your weapon! Drop your weapon, or I'll blow you away!"

He sees the shadowy figure dance sideways, out of the feeble beam of the weakened flashlight, the gun still in his right hand. And he hears the chilling voice come back, "I'll kill you first!"

Police Training

The other man is edgeways to him, and Huebl has time to think, "Camp Perry Position."

And Lyne's gun begins to rise up toward him.

Paul Huebl opens fire.

The revolver is in his right hand, the flashlight in his left. He cannot find the sights, so he shoves the gun toward the man five to eight steps away and pulls

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the trigger.

In his re-enactment of the sequence of fire with me, Huebl went through five pulls of the trigger in four seconds. *Blam...Blam...Blam...Blam...Blam.*

The man was moving during the firing, but there was no reaction like a jerking response to a hard hit. The man did not fall. He was still up.

And Huebl's gun was empty.

Huebl did the only thing that seemed logical to him at the moment. He ran. As he sprinted blindly toward his car, he would tell me later, his mind correlated the shape of the gun he'd seen to a Colt .45 auto.

And he could mentally *feel* 230 grain hardball slugs ripping into his back.

But there were no impacts. There were no more shots. Huebl jumped into his car and tore away from the scene, heading for the nearest hospital.

But the incident would not end there. As a local newspaper stated later, "On October 20, Paradise Valley detective McFarland yanked (Paul Huebl) out of his hospital bed to book him for aggravated assault, a Class 3 felony with a mandatory sentence of seven to fifteen years."

Four Wounds

Medical reports stated that Bob Lyne had been hit by four of the five Winchester Silvertip .38 Special hollowpoints fired by Paul Huebl.

One struck the right lower mandible directly below the right corner of the mouth, shattering the jaw and blowing out three teeth. This bullet lodged in subcutaneous (under the skin) tissue in the left side of the neck, without penetrating anything vital in the neck structure.

Another bullet had entered the outer part of the upper right arm just above the elbow, exited the inner portion of the upper arm at a higher point, and then entered the chest. It coursed across the thorax, missing the cardiovascular center, and lodged in the left lung.

Another bullet entered fatty tissue on the right side of the abdomen between navel and ribcage. It tore through the intestines and made its way toward the left side of the abdomen.

A fourth bullet, according to reports, struck the upper right thigh on the outside and exited the inside near the groin.

Photos taken of Bob Lyne 11 days after the shooting show a swollen face with a "chipmunk-cheeked" look from the jaw wound. Clean entry and exit holes are visible on the right arm. From sternum to pubis is a curving surgical wound from where the MD's had to open up his belly and repair the torn loops of intestine.

The leg wound, within an inch of castration, evinces a clean entry in the outer leg and a swollen exit wound near the pubic hair large enough to encompass a human thumb.

Lyne's story would vary. Initially, he

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stated that the first shot hit him in the jaw and "numbed" him, and he didn't feel the others hit. Later, he would say that he was first shot in the back, even though no bullet entered, exited, or traversed that part of his body.

The belly wound was the most life threatening, but was very well tended to by attending physicians. Lyne recovered from it fully.

The bullet that saved Huebl's life, Paul thinks, is the one that struck Lyne in the upper arm. Doctors told him that it cut the nerve that controlled the thumb and index finger. This, Paul Huebl is convinced, is what kept Lyne from killing him with his .45 automatic.

End Of A Gunfight

Too many people believe that the gunfight begins with the draw and ends with the last shot. Many of my Lethal Force Institute students are reluctant to accept that even a clear-cut self-defense shooting can put you in jail, and leave you fighting for your freedom. The Paul Huebl incident is living proof.

Huebl went straight to the hospital. That's a severely injured man's first reaction. Remember, he had been clubbed on the head.

At the same time, whoever reports the incident first and says "Someone attacked me" becomes the Complainant. That makes the other "someone" the Perpetrator.

Throughout the aftermath, the justice system treated and referred to Bob Lyne as The Victim, treated and referred to Paul Huebl as The Suspect.

Shortly after the incident, a search of the Lyne home showed loaded guns in many rooms and vehicles, including a cocked Colt Gold Cup .45 auto in an unsnapped holster near a bed. The loaded, blue steel autoloader showed signs of recent handling.

An investigator went to the hospital where Bob Lyne lay and according to newspapers told Lyne, "What I would like to be able to do, is collect (your) guns and send them over to the Department of Public Safety to make sure there isn't any blood or tissue matter or something so we can say, yes, we checked those guns..."

"What (Huebl is) going to be alleging is a self-defense. That you attacked him and possibly pistol whipped him. Ah, and then he's probably going to try to convince people that you had a gun in (your) hand..."

"And you shot him or you were turning to shoot him when he shot you...I am going to work with you. I am going to do what I can to make sure this guy goes away, hopefully we won't have him squeeze through the cracks on us here."

Now, quite apart from a detective saying this to someone who may be the good guy or may be the bad guy, giving a day's warning that the detectives are coming to pick up evidence is not exactly textbook

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police procedure.

It is, in fact, only a couple of steps from saying, "Hey, would you like me to drop the guns you might have hit this guy with in the river or something?"

Police "Investigation"

By the time the guns were picked up and analyzed with Luminol, five showed no signs of blood, but the sixth, the Colt Gold Cup, showed a reaction. The lab technician considered the reaction inconclusive, and instead of keeping it for more intensive testing, allowed the detective to return all the guns to Mr. Lyne.

If there is ever a police textbook written on "How NOT To Handle Evidence," this incident is worthy of consideration as a chapter.

Victim On Trial

Arizona v. Paul Huebl came to trial. Says Huebl, "Bob Lyne testified under oath that all the guns in the house at the time of the shooting had since been sold and he didn't know where they were."

However, when his young son was cross-examined, the son said Lyne had given one of the guns, a Colt .25 auto, to his daughter Kathleen, 19. When Lyne found out what the kid said, he may have figured he had to do something.

"The testimony the next day by Kathleen," Huebl continues, "was that her .25 automatic wasn't the Colt, it was a Beretta 950BS that she said her dad had given her for protection a year and a half before.

"A couple of hours after the defense rested, I was able to find the dealer who had sold the Beretta in question. He had sold it to Bob Lyne the day before."

The judge allowed this new evidence to be presented. On summation, even the prosecutor who was trying to convict Paul Huebl admitted that Bob Lyne and his daughter had perjured themselves.

It didn't take the jury long to find the path to justice; they paused only to send a note to the judge asking if they could convict Lyne of perjury.

Told that they could only act upon Paul Huebl, the jury found him Not Guilty and stated for the record that they felt Bob Lyne should be charged with lying under oath.

Justice Is Served

Huebl was acquitted. The system had worked.

Paul Huebl, who had been plagued with sleeplessness and nightmares by the incident, had been vindicated and freed.

His attorney, Richard Gierloff, told reporters "Paradise Valley better get out its...checkbook," because Huebl intended to sue the town for charging him after a police investigation that, Gierloff said, was "inept, at best."

Huebl himself, after thanking the jurors, told the press, "If I didn't have the benefit of my own skills and ability (as an

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investigator) and the efforts of my lawyer and other investigators, I probably would have been sent to the penitentiary."

Aftermath

Today working as a private investigator licensed by the State of Arizona, Paul Huebl has implemented into his daily procedure some lessons he learned from the night of October 18, 1987.

"I think one of my biggest tactical errors was not taking care of my equipment, and using that flashlight with batteries I'd allowed to run down." Today, he carries a SureFire-6 from Laser Products Corporation, a compact flashlight that throws a beam virtually as powerful as the big units that generally have to be kept in dashboard chargers.

Paul told me that the most chilling part of the incident was when he emptied his weapon and saw no reaction: "He didn't fall, he didn't drop his gun. I thought I had missed."

Silvertip .38 Special is not famous for stopping power.

Winchester's Silvertip line is pretty good in .45 ACP, very good in the large-bore revolver calibers, and maybe 50/50 for stopping power in .357 Magnum in the cases I've reviewed.

In .38 Special, however, both the 95 grain and 125 grain versions have been losers as manstoppers, barely better than the infamous widomaker, the 158 grain roundnose lead.

Change Of Guns

Recognizing this from his hard-earned experience, Paul Huebl now loads his Bodyguard with a load he thinks should perform better, the Federal Hydra-Shok. That's a moot point, though, Huebl no longer carries the gun.

Instead, there's another Galco holster on his right hip, the Combat Master scabbard, and it carries a Colt Officer's Model automatic loaded with Remington +P 185 grain .45 hollowpoints.

In his left hip pocket is a Bianchi Clip Grip, adjusted, he says, so that either of the two spare magazines will come free without bringing the whole carrier with it.

Could he have reloaded his .38 revolver that dark and dangerous night?

"I might have tried if I'd had a speed-loader," he told me, "but I just had six rounds in a belt pouch, and I knew Lyne still had a pistol I assumed was loaded. I thought the better part of wisdom was to get the hell out of there."

Shooting Lessons

No, the hits weren't dead center. That's why Lyne stayed up and running.

The Silvertip to the jaw had mushroomed flawlessly, and two deformed not at all, according to Paul, with the fourth exiting unrecovered.

Chicago PD had given him no night-fire training, and he recalls that during the incident a dim part of his mind was flash-



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ing back to a Phoenix PD nightfire course: "Identify your target, take your time..."

Paul plans to install Trijicon night sights on his Colt .45 compact. He has also spent more time on the range since the shooting, and gone from an average 275 out of 300 to 300 out of 300 on the police combat course. "There's a motivation factor," he says dryly.

Better Part Of Valor

Was his retreat under the circumstances tactically sound? Paul has spent a lot of time thinking about it, and replies, "I found out later that Lyne's friend and neighbor had grabbed a .38 and come running to help him, and that his oldest son heard the shots and grabbed a loaded shotgun and came running out the front door just as I left. All things considered, I'm glad I got out of the line of fire when I did."

Based on what this writer has seen, the investigation was handled horribly. Perhaps if Huebl could have gotten on line with a mobile phone or reached a phone booth in time to phone in first, he would have become The Complainant instead of The Scumbag and would have been spared his nightmarish courtroom ordeal.

Huebl did not say that he felt his pro-gun activities had brought extra heat on him, but did state that since a lead detective had been sued numerous times for divorce, car crashes with injury resulting, and civil rights violations, that he might have had an antipathy toward process servers who had so many times served *him*.

Vindication

Perhaps the main lesson is that even when you are wrongfully accused, the system will work to free you, *if* you have a good lawyer and *if* you don't just sit back and wait for justice to happen by itself.

No one cares more about the outcome of the trial than the wrongfully-accused defendant, and seldom does anyone know more about what is happening.

Paul Huebl's own aggressive investigation helped to find the truth that set him free. As this is written, a special prosecutor has been appointed to bring perjury charges against Bob Lyne, says Paul Huebl triumphantly.

Huebl can even today reach up to his left forehead and feel the two dents in his skull from the blow that was dealt him moments before he emptied his .38 Special. The injuries correspond exactly to the front edge of the trigger guard and the front edge of the frame of the Colt Cold Cup .45 auto, which is now in his possession as evidence, he says.

No one paid him back the price for being proven not guilty. His lawsuit filed September 21, 1989, alleges over \$80,000 in legal fees and over \$12,000 in court and medical costs.

But Huebl can remember the first



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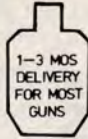
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morning he woke up in the Maricopa County Jail, charged with aggravated assault for having defended himself against an armed man who had pistol whipped him, and looking in the greyish jailhouse mirror in his cell.

"I saw myself crack a smile in the mirror," Paul Huebl recalls, "and it was a smile that said, 'I'm alive!'"



COP TALK

Continued from page 36

Thanksgiving week found me at Benning with a couple of dozen of the Army's top instructors. Though some used Colt match guns tuned by the marksmanship training unit, and a few occasionally fired their CZ and Browning 9mms which are bought in droves at cheap PX prices by any smart GI who was ever stationed in Germany, most of the firing was done with M-9 Berettas. Ammo was GI issue.

During that intense week, with more than 15,000 rounds fired from the M-9s, I did not see a single Beretta jam or break, save for one that choked with an after-market magazine one of the instructors was trying out.

The class, which included the chief instructors of every single MTU squad in the Army, stated unanimously that the M-9 had exceeded their expectations of reliability in the field.

One team did note that after heavy testing with a hot Israeli load, cracks were noted on the locking blocks of about half the test pistols. None of these ever sheared, they just cracked.

These instructors suggested that the squared areas be rounded for stress relief, a point other pistol masters have made and one I herewith pass on to Beretta.

By the time I left Benning, the M-9s were still going great, almost half of the badly worn, leftover Colts had jammed at some point, and the instructors had made it clear to me that they thought the Beretta was an excellent battle pistol for its caliber.



DUBIOUS

Continued from page 23

concealed carry permit law, is robbed by a Marielito with a stolen S&W 9mm.

The felon, released early from prison where he was supposed to serve 12 years for shooting at two Florida cops, tries to shoot the cabbie but can't because his stolen double action automatic is on safe. The good guy, who knows where his safety is, draws his Colt .45 auto and shoots the suspect six or seven times, fatally.

A West Coast gunwriter cites this case

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as a classic example of why double-action auto pistols should always be carried or stored in an off-safe condition.

Great Moments In Handgun Design #246 Award

Randall Firearms, shortly before going bankrupt, introduces their left-handed 1911A1 pattern .45 auto, with its controls in mirror image to the standard pistol.

Market research has failed to show that one reason the regular 1911-type guns are so popular among southpaws is that they can operate the pistols more easily than right handers, the magazine release and slide stop lever being literally at their fingertips.

Before right-handers can catch on to the fact that a more ergonomic single action .45 is available to them, Randall has gone chapter 11.

Fine Legal Minds In Action Award

Taking civil liability paranoia to the limit, Sturm, Ruger & Company— which pioneered the concept of stamping "don't shoot this gun 'til you read the owner's manual" on the barrel of their revolvers—glues a similar warning on a Day-Glo orange sticker to the side of each P-85 9mm magazine.

Unfortunately, the sticker begins to roll up and peel off each time it goes in and out of the magazine well, leaving little balls of gluey paper inside that can jam the pistol and cause the gunfighting death of the police officer carrying it, paving the way for the widow to become a significant stockholder of Sturm, Ruger Inc.

D.U.M.B. Award

The '80s see the death of the C.O.P. ("Cop On Patrol") pistol, a hideous four-shot .357 Magnum larger than a six-shot Colt Detective Special, with a trigger pull heavier than a Swingline staplegun's, and none of whose four barrels shoot anywhere near the rest.

After the manufacturer's failure, the guns are sold off through *Shotgun News* at a fraction of their retail price, mainly to gun enthusiasts who didn't think their grandchildren would believe that a gun so horribly designed could ever have been manufactured if they didn't keep the proof to show them.

It Seemed Like A Good Idea At The Time Award

Shortly after the massacre in the Stockton schoolyard that triggered massive "anti-assault rifle" hysteria in 1989, Colt Industries in New York over-ride the strident objections of the Colt Firearms Division executives and unilaterally ban the sale of AR-15 rifles to private citizens as a matter of company policy.

This comes shortly after Colt Firearms has lost its meat-and-potatoes US Armed Services contract for M-16 rifle manufac-

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ture to FN of Belgium, and shortly before a court order rules against Colt and in favor of the union in a multimillion dollar lawsuit.

The parent company has thus shut off one of the most profitable commercial product lines, and overwhelmingly alienated the entire gun-buying public, at exactly the time in the division's history when Colt Firearms most desperately needed the continuing support of the American gun owner.

Sportsmanship Award

Shortly after manufacturer Freedom Arms refused to give a special deal on .454 Casull revolvers to Elgin Gates, the Manuel Noriega of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association, (IHMSA) prohibited the .454 Casull from competition in any of their tournaments with a cute new "price ceiling rule."

Don't Confuse Us With The Facts Award

After successfully blaming the tragic defeat of eight FBI agents (two killed, three crippled for life, two more recovering from their gunshot wounds) on the failure of a single Winchester 9mm Silvertip that fatally wounded the copkiller but not quickly enough, the Federal Bureau of Investigation finally authorized the .45 automatic two years later.

In any case, the approval of the .45 was only an interim answer until FBI had acquired the new gun it had adopted sight unseen: a 10mm autoloader firing a .40 caliber projectile at 950 fps and weighing 180 grains.

Never mind that the 185 grain .45 hollowpoint at 935 to 950 fps had already proven somewhat overpenetrative but still an excellent manstopper—that would be admitting that the answer had been there before FBI found it.

Never mind that the .45 Auto, as Jeff Cooper has long stated, offers 56% more cross-sectional impact diameter than that nasty 9mm, and the reduction to 10mm was about cutting that advantage in half.

Never mind that the same bullet weight in a narrower-diameter projectile created significantly greater sectional density, and therefore virtually guaranteed more penetration than a ballistic combination that was already somewhat overpenetrative in .45.

Reinventing The Wheel Award

During the period when handgun sales went into the doldrums, Federal Cartridge created the .32 Magnum. It was first called the ".32 H&R Magnum" because Harrington & Richardson first created the guns for Federal's cartridge, but the "H&R" part went by the wayside when that firm went out of business.

Ruger, Thompson/Center, and Charter Arms filled the void with guns chambered for the caliber. At least two gunwriters dubbed it an "excellent manstop-



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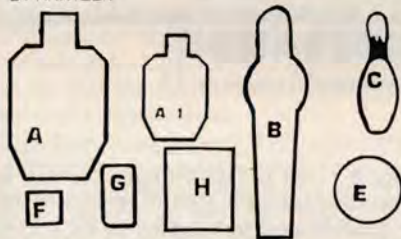
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per," even though no human being has been shot with a .32 Magnum to my knowledge.

It was only after the introduction of the .32 Magnum that pistol competitors picked up on the inherent accuracy of the original .32-20. Soon, almost every NRA Hunter Pistol match in sight had awards being won by shooters with T/C Contender pistols in .32-20, though interestingly, we've not heard of a single match of any kind won with a .32 Magnum.

Ironically, the "new" cartridge regenerated interest in the supposedly obsolete round that inspired it.

Open Mind Award

Windle Turley, the Texas lawyer who has made a career out of suing gun manufacturers for atrocities committed by armed criminals, writes a book for other lawyers titled *Firearms Litigation: Law, Science, and Practice*.

Turley opens volume one with this classic doublespeak, on the first page of the preface: "We are not attempting here to advocate any particular social or legal philosophy...we believe that firearms in general have outlived most of the usefulness they may once have had, and that handguns in particular have no useful place in modern American society."

Robber Baron Award

Dornaus & Dixon introduce the much-heralded Bren Ten pistol, shipping many if not most of them without magazines. When the undercapitalized firm goes bankrupt, a significant number of their customers are left with unshootable guns.

Magazines subsequently become available from another source, advertised at \$135.00 apiece.

Rampant Lemon Award

Numerous gun magazines simultaneously herald the introduction of the double-action Colt Double Eagle on their covers. Only one even hints at the fact that if the trigger doesn't come all the way back after the sear releases, the hammer will fall to the safety shelf and go "click" instead of firing as it should. The other magazines don't mention it at all.

Upon learning that *American Handgunner* is about to publish the full story, Colt announces a "voluntary product upgrade" to correct the problem.

Spittin' Image Award

The Eighties see the introduction and subsequent discontinuance of the Steyr GB, a big, bulky double-action 9mm that holds 19 shots, works perfectly, and is amazingly accurate. Unfortunately, it is also the spitting image of the Rogak pistol of the Seventies, which set an all-time record for horrible workmanship and frequent malfunction.

The story goes that the Rogak was a ripoff of in-progress designs for the GB. The failure of that abysmal Rogak was

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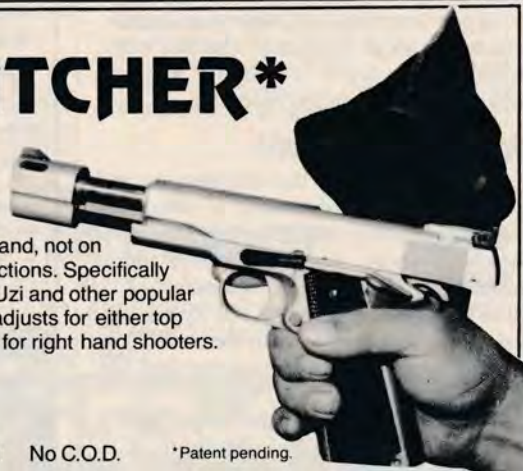
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one of execution, not design. The GB itself worked perfectly. Alas, a generation of handgunners had learned to associate that distinctive silhouette with the worst handgun of all time.

Double Standard Award

New York Police Department's firearms licensing unit, reacting to BS press reports about "plastic terrorist guns," refused to authorize the Glock on a permit. Shortly thereafter, NYPD Commissioner Benjamin Ward was asked by reporters if he carried a handgun. "Yeah, I carry this machine gun," he replied, opening his coat to reveal a Glock 9mm.

The Glock pistol was approved by the embarrassed licensing unit within a week.

Leona Helmsley Award

Jane Fonda and her soon to be ex-husband Tom Hayden always contributed heavily to gun-banning efforts and worked strenuously on behalf of anti-gun groups.

When a burglar entered their home, however, both grabbed loaded guns to defend themselves. When reporters asked her how this squared with the couple's public opposition to private ownership of guns, Hanoi Jane snapped, "That's for other people, not us."



LINEBAUGH

Continued from page 55

length sizer die and expander die in sequence, seated bullets over large doses of selected powders ignited by CCI #350 primers and I was in business.

The brass used had been loaded numerous times in various .45-70's and now has gone through three loadings in the .475 Linebaugh.

Everything that I have said about the .500 also applies to the .475. Workmanship is superb. And when it comes to shooting, both of these are *heavy* recoiling revolvers, but after 600 rounds through them in five testing sessions, I have no great after-effects. This is probably more rounds than would normally be fired through these fine hunting guns in a year.

I would say that anyone that can handle a .44 Magnum well, especially the relatively lightweight Model 29 Smith and Wesson or Ruger Super Blackhawk, should be able to handle a .475 or .500 Linebaugh Bisley with a little practice and working up starting with below full-bore loads.

One caution. Do not try to assemble light loads with WW296 nor H110. Use #2400, Blue Dot or H4227 for lighter loads and HS-6 or WW231 for "practice" loads in the 800 to 900 fps range.

.475 Linebaugh Loads

Let's look at Knock-Out values for the .475 with Linebaugh's recommend-

ed top loads. These, both chronographed with a seven and one-half inch barrel and using H110 powder, are a 350 grain bullet at 1,570 fps, and a 385 grain bullet at 1,480 fps.

These figure out to TKO values of 37 and 39 respectively. Remember, a standard .44 Magnum has a TKO value of 21. My top loads, with two inches less barrel coupled with cold weather, were 350 grain bullet at 1,534 fps for a TKO of 36.5, 380 grain bullet at 1,408 fps for 36 TKO, 395 grain bullet at 1,394 for 37 TKO, and the 405 grain bullet at 1,427 fps for a Taylor Knock Out value of 39.

Believe me, a 405 grain bullet at 1400+ fps from a forty-nine ounce revolver provides high KO at both ends of the muzzle!

Accurate Big Bores

I was particularly impressed with the accuracy of these really big bore revolvers. Even though both the .475 and .500 were fired with full horsepower loads in cold weather, all loads gave five-shot groups at 25 yards that surprised me to say the least.

Fifty-four different loads were tried in the .475 and thirty-six loads in the .500. Most groups were two inches or less, this from a braced standing position utilizing the spare tire on my Broncho as a "rest."

As stated earlier, bench resting was just too punishing for this much firing. About half the groups fired were in the one-inch neighborhood.

Bullets used in the .475 were three LBT designs cast from their excellent double cavity moulds, #467.370LFN (350 grain), #476.420LFN (395 grain), and #476.440LFN (405 grain); and NEI's beautiful flat-nosed 380 grain .475 bullet, #390.477.

All .475 bullets were sized to .476" using an RCBS sizing die and at the same time they were lubed with Thompson's bullet lube.

Casting these big bullets requires a lot of alloy. The Lyman Mag 20 Melting Pot empties quickly when running two double cavity moulds in tandem with 400+ grain bullets dropping from each. With bullets this large, extra cooling time is needed for each mould also.

The accompanying chart gives some reloading information for the .475. As with the .500, more complete reloading information and loading data, including less than full-bore loads, will be given in future editions of *Taffin Tests*.

Both the .475 and .500 revolvers were test-fired from start to finish with no cleaning until all testing was finished. Leading was minimal using bullets cast of three parts pure lead to four parts type metal, and each gun could have gone hundreds of rounds more if the base pin and center hole in the cylinder were both cleaned from time to time.

Linebaugh maintains less than .003"

Continued on page 82

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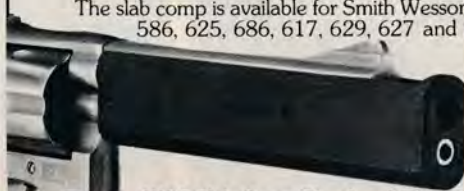
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Continued from page 77

cylinder gap and no binding occurred at any time during the firing of hundreds of rounds through each gun.

Neither the .475 nor the .500 are target revolvers by any means, nor are they the first choice for silhouetting or self-defense. What they are are small packages offering big power for outdoorsman, guides and handgun hunters. Powerful. Practical. Packable.

Got To Have A .500!

I had to give the matched pair of custom five and one-half inch barreled .475 and .500 Linebaughs back to Shawn Daniel after my testing time. However, this is not the end.

Loving big bore revolvers as I do, I must have my own .475 and .500. First the .475, then the .500, for the simple reason that brass for the .475 is so easy to make. The .500, if one does not use .500 Linebaugh brass, must be made by trimming .348 Winchester brass to length and then inside neck reaming; .475 brass made from Winchester-Western .45-70 brass does not need to be reamed. Just trim and load.

For complete information on the Linebaugh line of Custom Sixguns, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to John Linebaugh, P.O. Box 1263, Dept AH, Cody, WY 82414 (phone (307) 645-3162).



AHRENDS

Continued from page 59

customer sends in— 9mm, 10mm, or .38 Super— but he notes that 99% of his guns are in .45 ACP. Evidently lots of people aren't impressed with the .38 Super's dominance of practical pistol competition or recent studies showing that the 9mm is the equal of the .45 in effectiveness.

Stainless Commander

The stainless steel Combat Commander is a recent addition to the Colt line and was used as the base for this custom gun. Some 1911 fans, including no less an authority than Jeff Cooper, feel the Combat Commander is a pointless firearm, since we have the lightweight Commander for concealed carry and the Government Model for heavy-duty use.

On the other hand, it could be argued that since we have the Combat Commander, there's no need for the full-length gun. The shorter gun is easier to conceal in a belt holster or horizontal shoulder holster, it's a couple of ounces lighter, and it's hardly more difficult to shoot. It's a handsome gun too—the proportions of the Combat Commander somehow seem right, aesthetically pleasing and fast handling.

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Reliability Is Job One

Let's examine the work Ahrends does, separating it into five categories in what I believe are the order of importance: reliability, shootability, handling, accuracy, and appearance.

I don't think there will be any argument that *reliability* is the primary quality in a defensive gun. Factory 1911 pistols usually feed ball ammo reliably. After Kim has worked his magic, the little Colt would feed anything stuffed into the magazines, including empty cases.

He starts by giving the cartridges the smoothest possible trip from the magazine into the chamber. The barrel is throated, then fitted so it matches the feedramp in the frame. Barrel throat and feedramp are given a glass-smooth polish, as is the breechface area of the slide.

The extractor hook is relieved slightly on its lower edge and polished, and extractor tension is adjusted. The result of all this fitting and polishing is that each round meets as little resistance as possible as the bullet nose glides up the feedramp and into the chamber, while the case head is released from the magazine and slides up the breechface and the extraction groove slips under the extractor hook.

Okay, we've got the live round into the chamber; now we have to get the empty case out. The properly tensioned extractor yanks the empty out, then the frame-mounted ejector strikes the case head and flips it out the ejection port.

Some smiths fit long ejectors that give the empties an extra hearty whack. There are a couple of problems with this, though. One is that an overlong ejector won't allow a live round to clear the chamber and ejection port.

In the event of a dud round—unlikely, but possible—it then becomes necessary to dump the mag and use a finger to push the round down the mag well. The other problem can occur when unloading the gun; yanking the slide back briskly can cause the long ejector to strike the primer of the round in the chamber.

On two occasions I know of this has caused the round to ignite, cutting the shooters' hands with bits of brass, though fortunately in both cases the injuries were minor.

Kim fits an ejector that could be called semi-extended. It's long enough to give an extra margin of insurance for ejection of empties, while avoiding the danger of firing a live round and allowing a dud round to be cleared by a simple tap-rack-bang drill. Ejection is further enhanced by lowering and flaring the ejection port.

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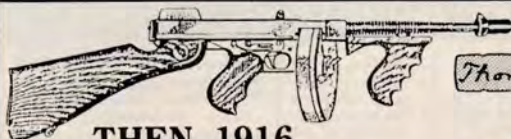
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bushing, Kim replaces this part with a solid match bushing. The breakage of fingers on the collet bushings isn't exactly the epidemic some would have you believe, but it does happen, and if it does the gun is almost certainly out of action, probably needing a rubber mallet just to disassemble.

Ahrend's position is: why take the chance when a properly fitted solid bushing works just as well?

On Commanders he fits a 20 lb. recoil spring (full-length guns get an 18 lb. spring) plus an 18 lb. mainspring and an extra power firing pin spring.

Finally, he checks that the rest of the gun's parts are properly fitted. He insures that the magazine catch holds the mags in proper position and releases them cleanly when pressed. He verifies that the firing pin stop is a snug press-fit in its recess and that the grip screw bushings are tight, but not protruding into the mag well.

He also checks that the plunger tube is properly staked to the frame and that a detent is cut in the slide stop to prevent it from engaging accidentally.

Shootability

Next in order of importance are modifications that improve the shooter's ability to hit the target. Here a quality trigger pull is the first order of business.

Unless the owner has small hands and requests the standard short trigger be retained, Kim starts by fitting a Videki

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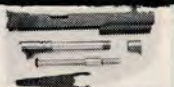
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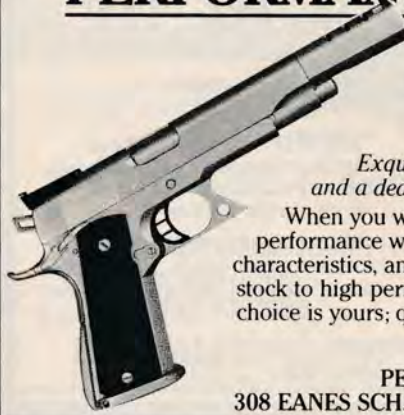
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long match trigger. Adjustment pads on the trigger allow it to be fitted without excessive vertical or horizontal play, though not so tight as to affect reliability.

The hammer is Wilson's new #299 Deluxe Commander model with narrowed sides and slotted spur. It not only looks good, but also its light weight makes for a fast lock time and positive ignition.

The trigger pull is adjusted to the owner's specifications, between three and four pounds. Personally, I wouldn't want a pull under four pounds on a defensive gun. Kim patiently adjusts the firing mechanism to give a consistent, crisp, creep-free trigger break.

One way to check the quality of a trigger job is to closely watch the hammer while dry firing. If the sear and hammer angles aren't properly matched, the hammer will cam back slightly (or worse yet, slip forward slightly) as the trigger is pressed. On this gun there was absolutely no hammer movement, nor was there any trigger creep.

For a defense gun, the Ahrends trigger is virtually perfect. There is just enough takeup that the shooter is in no doubt when the actual pull begins, then there is no further movement until the sear breaks cleanly at four pounds pressure. (Pull was checked with a set of gunsmith's weights and it released at precisely 4 lbs., every time.)

An overtravel stop is fitted but Kim doesn't try to eliminate every bit of over-

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travel, nor should the owner. A bit of unburned powder, a speck of dirt in the wrong place, and the trigger might not be able to move enough to fire the gun. When the target is a knife-wielding ghoul at five feet, a little extra overtravel is better than a gun that won't fire.

A high visibility ramp front sight is silver soldered in place, while the customer's choice of rear sight is dovetailed into the slide. For adjustability and quality sight picture on a dual purpose match/carry gun, Kim recommends the Wichita sight.

For the utmost in durability under the most severe conditions, he feels nothing surpasses Richard Heinie's fixed sight. And for a snag-free carry and quick interchangeability between standard black sights and tritium night sights, he recommends the S&W autopistol sights.

The test gun came with the last option. The front sight is dovetailed into the slide and secured with an Allen screw. The gun came fitted with the famous Trijicon three dot tritium night sights, along with an extra plain black front sight and standard black S&W rear sight insert.

Changing sights takes only a few seconds, but be careful not to lose any of the springs in the rear sight. Frankly, I don't see much reason for changing sights. The Trijicon sights provide a perfectly acceptable sight picture in bright light; under dim light conditions they are so superior that there is simply no comparison.

Maybe this is just the zeal of the newly converted, but in my opinion a defensive handgun isn't complete without tritium night sights. They really are that good.

Gun Handling

Handling modifications, which allow the shooter to use the gun with greater speed and confidence, are the next priority.

The frame is meticulously contoured to accept a Wilson beavertail grip safety. Wide grip safeties are one of the most useful accessories available, channelling the hand into position for a smoother and more consistent draw, preventing hammer bite to the web of the hand, and spreading recoil over a wider area for more comfort.

I wouldn't have a 1911 style pistol without one. I know some he-man types insist the wide grip safety isn't needed, but I suspect they're just into pain. Kim modifies the Wilson grip safety by shortening and reshaping it, making it less likely to snag when drawing from under a coat.

On his standard conversion Ahrends builds up and extends the stock thumb safety by welding, but on this top-of-the-line model a Wilson ambidextrous safety is fitted. The Wilson safety resembles the famous Swenson design, but with a slightly wider shelf on the left hand side for more positive handling.

The stock Colt magazine catch and spring are retained. Kim feels extended mag buttons and reduced power springs



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have no place on a defense gun, since the somewhat greater speed provided doesn't justify the increased risk of releasing the mag inadvertently.

The Colt button is sharply checkered to give the thumb more traction, while the custom Ahrends grips have a dished out area behind the button to give the thumb easier access.

To facilitate insertion of magazines, the back of the mag well is relieved and the sides of the well are bevelled. Kim doesn't believe in overdoing this beveling. If the bevel is carried right out to the edges of the well, a sharp edge results that can catch and snag a magazine that is not correctly aligned during a speedload.

Hand-cut checkering, 20 lines per inch (lpi), graces the frontstrap and mainspring housing, while the front of the trigger-guard is checkered 30 lpi. This checkering is both aesthetically pleasing and functional.

For years we've seen factory guns with slippery smooth front and back straps and checkered grip panels, which

Kim's ability to checker metal is even more evident when you consider that this is a stainless gun.

is just the opposite of what is needed. For maximum recoil control, the gun is gripped by the front and back, not the sides.

(Note that the innovative Glock automatic is checkered on the front and back of the grip, not the sides.)

Kim's checkering is beautifully done, with all rows straight, all diamonds the same size and sharply pointed. Checkering this sharp would be uncomfortable on a match gun that's shot a thousand rounds a week, but on a defense gun it gives a sure grip under any conditions, cold, heat, or rain.

Kim's ability to checker metal is even more evident when you consider that this is a stainless gun, far more difficult to checker than carbon steel. Some pistolsmiths refuse to even tackle a stainless steel gun.

Accuracy

Some readers will disagree with the relatively low priority I give to accuracy work, but in the context of a defense handgun I'll stick by my opinion.

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same time, I think most people will agree that more accuracy is better than less, provided reliability is not compromised.

Ahrends performs a "combat accuracy" job on his tactical conversion. A Bar-Sto barrel and match bushing are fitted. If there's one thing that top pistolsmiths agree on, it's that Bar-Sto barrels are the best available.

The bushing is fitted and polished so that it is finger-tight only and can be removed if necessary without the use of a bushing wrench. The barrel muzzle is given a 45° chamfer cut to protect the rifling should the gun be dropped.

Barrel locking lugs and slide stop lugs are meticulously hand fitted to the slide and slide stop. With the gun in battery, absolutely no play can be detected when pressing on the barrel hood.

Then the slide/frame fit is tightened. This is an area that is easy to over-do on a defensive gun. Ahrends adjusts the fit by peening the four "corners" of the frame rails, machining the tops of the frame rails to a glass-smooth finish, then polishing and hand-lapping the slide and frame

rails to a matching fit.

The fit is tight in battery for maximum accuracy, but as the slide retracts there is enough tolerance in the fit to provide reliability even when the gun is dirty.

Hand cycling the Ahrends gun shows how well the work was done. The slide moves back and forth slick as grease, while the barrel locking and unlocking is so smooth as to be almost undetectable. Yet with the slide in battery, there is virtually no discernible play either vertical or horizontal.

Proud Gun

The balance of the modifications are primarily intended to enhance appearance and pride of ownership. A set of Ahrends hand crafted combat stocks in the customer's choice of exotic woods is included.

Any tooling or machining marks left by the factory are polished out. Ahrends serrates the top of the slide (20 lpi) and checkers the rear of the slide at 40 lpi. The checkering on the rear of the slide really is something to see. Not only is it

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beautifully done, but the checkering lines on the slide match perfectly those on the extractor head.

Workmanship like this is impressive enough on a carbon steel gun—on a stainless gun it's even more amazing.

It's a job a lot of gunsmiths wouldn't even attempt. Even the rounded spur of the Wilson hammer is hand checkered, certainly not an easy job.

On blued guns Kim Ahrends has the frame and related parts hard chromed for appearance and durability. On the stainless guns, the slide goes to The Robar Companies (21438 N. 7th. Ave. "B", Dept. AH, Phoenix, AZ 85027) for a black oxide finish. This superior finish looks good, provides even greater corrosion protection, results in virtually no dimensional changes, and helps prevent galling which can occur with tightly fitted stainless guns.

For anyone who likes stainless guns but prefers a dark finish, Robar's black oxide is the answer.

Shooting Test

Shooting the little custom Colt was a delight. When the first round (a Blazer 200 gr. JHP) was chambered by hand cycling the gun, the slide stopped just short of going into battery and needed a nudge with the thumb to close.

That was the first and only malfunction that occurred.

Hollowpoints, match wadcutters, lead semi-wadcutters, roundnose, truncated cone, factory or handloads—the Ahrends gun chewed them up and spit them out.

Accuracy was phenomenal. Over a sandbag rest, Remington's 185 gr. match wadcutters shot into a one-inch group. More serious ammo, like Speer's 200 gr. JHP's and Winchester's 185 gr. Silvertips, easily shot into an inch and a half at 25 yards.

The acid test came when a friend wanted to try the gun with some grotty reloads he'd been saving for bad weather matches when he didn't want to worry about recovering the brass. The rounds had case mouth splits, dented and burred extractor grooves, and headstamps virtually illegible from dozens of firings.

I decided in advance not to hold it against the gun if it choked on this stuff, but I needn't have worried. The Colt ran it all through without a bobble, and when we decided to benchrest five rounds, it put four of them in one ragged hole with the fifth round an inch out.

Because of the precise tolerances of the four-inch Bar-Sto barrel, velocities were not far behind those of a stock five-inch barrel. The Silvertips, rated at 1,000 fps, clocked at 963 fps through the Bar-Sto. The Speer 200 gr. JHP, rated by Mas-sad Ayoob as the most effective .45 ACP load (though he also notes they can be fussy about feeding) averaged 914 fps in the Ahrends gun, versus a claimed 975 in a 5" barrel.

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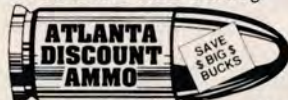
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The remainder of the rounds fired (over 1,000 in all) included Federal match hardball and reloads with 200 gr. lead SWC's, Speer's 200 gr. TMJ bullets, and Hornady's 230 gr. truncated cone and 200 gr. C/T match bullet. None grouped worse than 2", with the majority of groups under one.

Suitable Leather

As a carry gun for the plainclothes peace officer or licensed civilian, the Ahrends custom Commander could hardly be improved. Its slim profile and short length make it easy to conceal in a quality belt or shoulder holster.

Kim personally uses and recommends the Davis #453 Liberty Model, which can be worn for either a strong side or cross draw. In the early '80s when IPSC had a concealed carry rule, I used this holster in matches and managed to win a few with it. Davis quality is first rate.

While testing this gun, though, I decided to set aside the prejudices of a lifetime and try a shoulder holster. Most shoulder holsters I've tried have been so uncomfortable and constricting they make getting mugged look like a viable option.

The "Miami Classic" from Galco International (2019 W. Quail Ave., Dept AH, Phoenix, AZ 85027) opened my eyes. The gun is carried horizontally, with a double magazine case on the opposite side balancing the load.

The soft leather "spider" harness carries the load comfortably, without binding or restricting arm movement. (I suspect the wider SSII harness would be even better.) Materials, design, and workmanship are all first rate in every respect.

Unique Quality

Ahrends charges \$1,400 for his tactical conversion on the customer's blue steel gun, including hard chrome on the frame and related parts. The tritium night sights complete with interchangeable standard sights is a \$200 option, and he charges an extra \$200 for a stainless gun because of the considerable extra work involved in checkering and fitting.

This sounds like some serious coin, and it is. Consider, though, that the \$1,400 price includes premium quality parts and hard chroming with a retail value of at least \$500. Consider too that the price includes 30 to 40 hours of the most painstaking hand craftsmanship.

Custom work of this quality will always be in demand.

Kim Ahrends doesn't employ a bevy of gunsmiths turning out "production custom" guns on an assembly line basis. He builds true custom guns, one at a time, doing all the work himself—with the exception of the hard chrome or Robar finish.

Considering the number of hours spent on each, it's easy to see that there will never be a great number of full house

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OUTSTANDING

Continued from page 23

our guns being legislated away."

Meanwhile, the '80s saw Ruger introduce the lowest-priced reliable high capacity 9mm on the market, the sturdiest and easiest to shoot .38 snub, and the toughest .357 Magnum double action.

William Batterman Ruger, Sr. even brought back the most comfortable single-action design, the Bisley, and the handiest .44 Magnum ever, the original 1956 format flat-top Blackhawk. But most people were too busy yelling at him to notice.

Bernard Goetz struck a chord across America when he shot four convicted criminals, all of whom later admitted they intended to mug him, in a New York subway.

After a mediocre legal defense that never addressed New York's "doctrine of necessity" principle that could have excused his carrying the gun after being arbitrarily turned down for a concealed carry permit he should have received, he served the better part of a year in jail for possession of the weapon.

A sympathetic jury that acquitted him for aggravated assault had been given no good reason not to convict for illegal possession of the nickel-plated Smith & Wesson Model 36 he'd used, a felony in that city.

In the last few weeks of the decade, it was learned that Goetz was stoically suffering from cancer. The crime victim wrongly branded a "subway vigilante" had consistently proven himself a stronger man than he looked.

Ronald Reagan proved himself the strongest friend of gun owners ever to sit in the White House. Few gun owners found themselves feeling the same about his successor.

George Bush gave early warning signals we didn't want to hear when, during the primaries, he told the assembled Gun Owners of New Hampshire that there were certain guns he'd be comfortable banning. This was the speech in which he waved a tiny Freedom Arms mini-revolver, thus making history by becoming the first politician to pull a gun on the audience.

After vacillating on the assault rifle



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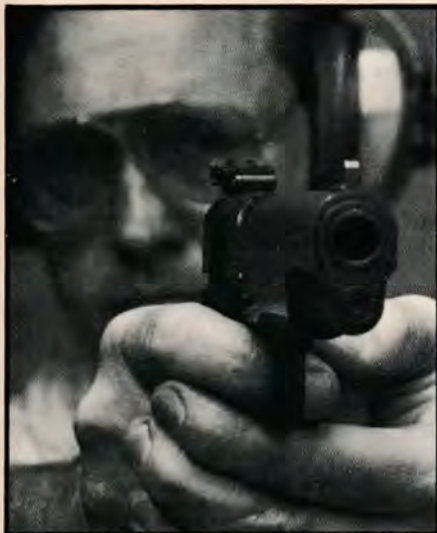


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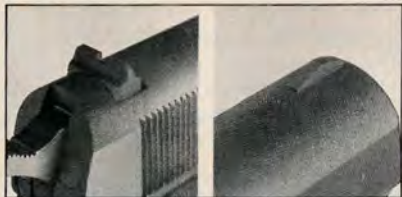
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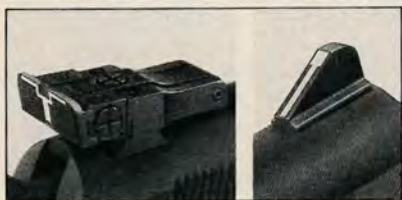


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issue, he closed 1989 on notes that indicated he might be fed up with the BS and ready to support the gun owners after all.

Anyone angry at Bush should consider the alternative: had Dukakis been elected— as he almost certainly would have been without the cohesive gun owner support Bush received—we might *all* have been driven to swallowing rubbing alcohol.

*Springfield Armory,
another enthusiastic
supporter of the
handgun sports,
established itself as
the most successful
manufacturer of
Government Model
clones.*

Sales of semiautomatic pistols surpassed those of the traditional revolver late in the decade, for the first time in the nation's history.

Meanwhile, die-hard wheelgun traditionalists found a new champion in Jerry Miculek, the soft-spoken Louisiana shooter who used a worn, factory stock S&W Model 27 sixshooter to beat all the champions with \$3,000 semi-automatic space guns at both Second Chance and the Masters action event.

More than one admiring gunwriter suggested that Miculek might be a reincarnation of Ed McGivern.

Proving once again that classics endure, the 1911 pattern pistol probably saw more sales to the public during the Eighties than in any decade since its introduction.

Colt produced the best .45s in the history of its existence: the improved Series 80 guns with firing pin locks, the stainless Governments and Combat Elites that were factory throated and fitted with good sights, and the Delta Elite pistol that almost single handedly popularized the 10mm Auto round with sport shooters.

Meanwhile, the Colt Firearms supported sport shooting more enthusiastically than at any time in the company's history.

On the competitors' side of the fence, Springfield Armory, another enthusiastic supporter of the handgun sports, established itself as the most successful manufacturer of Government Model clones.

Assault weapon hysteria in 1989 forced firearm sportsmen and the companies that serve them into a new cohesiveness. Many gun firms made their deepest commitment of dollars and efforts toward gun freedom, with Dillon Precision,

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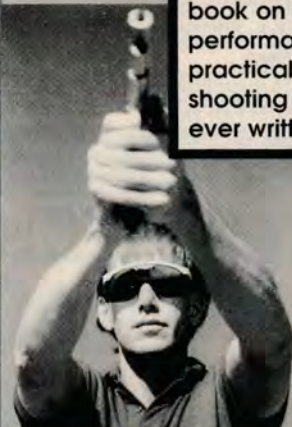
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In the Seventies, most police chiefs considered we cops who carried auto pistols on patrol to be radicals, and would have considered the issuing of imported handguns to be unthinkable madness. By the close of the Eighties, however, some half of the nation's cops were estimated to be carrying autoloaders, and a hefty percentage of these were the Austrian Glock, the Swiss-designed and West German-built SIG-Sauer, the German Heckler & Koch, and the Italian (or at least, Italian-designed) Beretta.

One reason for the 180 degree turnaround in police attitudes had little to do with guns and everything to do with another issue of the Eighties: crime.

As national polls indicated that fear of crime was the single biggest social concern of the average American, the cops saw the rise of two quick, cheap, super-addictive forms of cocaine and speed: crack and ice, respectively. Both were so addictive they turned users into money-desperate monsters, and both released so much adrenaline into the user's body that they became bullet sponges who could soak up six .38 slugs and keep coming like the Moro warriors of old.

Meanwhile, criminals were wearing bulletproof vests more often than in the days of Dillinger, and were frequently operating with multiple partners and using urban guerrilla warfare tactics.

Thus it was that criminals, not gun experts, finally got American police to cashier the obsolescent service revolver for the high-capacity, quick-reloading semiautomatic service pistol that will probably be the universal police handgun in this country by the Year 2000.

When the first trial found *Soldier Of Fortune* magazine and its publisher Bob Brown liable for millions in a case where someone was murdered by a hit man solicited from an *SOF* classified ad, Brown appealed. In 1989, the higher court ruled in Brown's favor, proving that justice does exist in America, you just have to wait for it sometimes.

Many of the same newspapers that editorialized against Brown and those nasty Rambo types who read his magazine, ran the same ad themselves when it was submitted to their classified pages.

Bob Brown, who is on the NRA Board, has always been a staunch and tireless friend of the American gun owner, and his magazine is to our generation what *True* and *Argosy* were to our fathers—a men's adventure journal with hair on its chest. We wish Brown well in the Nineties.

Smith & Wesson's 1988 announcement of the excellent Third Generation pistols realigned the semiautomatic market, especially in the police sector. More significant, though, was the 180 degree turnaround in company policy by new



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corporate overseer Tompkins, Ltd.

Under previous management, which saw S&W as a cash cow to be first milked and then slaughtered, the new administrative team under president Steve Melvin admitted S&W's past mistakes and committed the firm to fairer policies inside and

There was some good news in the Eighties from the gun law front. Numerous states passed "castle laws" specifically reinforcing a homeowner's right to use deadly force

out, better workmanship, and a more consumer-oriented stance in general.

Melvin answers his own letters from end-users, and proves weekly that they meant it when they said S&W would clean up its act. Now, if Tompkins could only take over a few more gun companies and do the same...

There was some good news in the Eighties from the gun law front. Numerous states passed "castle laws" specifically reinforcing a homeowner's right to use deadly force to protect their dwelling from criminal invaders.

A California law expressly prohibited lawsuits against residents who used guns to protect their home from lawbreaking intruders.

Florida passed its model reform concealed carry permit act. Before, CCWs were available only to the rich and privileged, and good only for the county of issue.

The new permits were available to any citizen who (a) passed a criminal record check and (b) showed evidence of four hours of safety training. Many believe that the training provision was the key to its passage.

Tens of thousands of citizens took advantage of the new privilege. In the time since, numerous criminals have been shot by holders of the new permits, more have been captured or driven away without a shot fired, and there has not been a case of criminal use of the gun by any of the new permit holders.

Handgun Control Inc. types who loudly warned of bloodshed in the streets and gunfire at every traffic dispute have not been heard from on the issue of late.

The National Rifle Association produced a home firearms safety coloring book for young children. Liberals and

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media types reflexively wailed that NRA was trying to infiltrate the schools and brainwash the children to love guns.

Those who actually read the coloring book saw that it actually taught them to avoid weapons. Widely distributed by numerous educators who actually use their minds, and by countless civically-oriented gun clubs, the NRA coloring books have doubtless saved lives already.

We lost some of handgunning's true greats, men like Elmer Keith and Skeeter Skelton and Elgin Gates. They will long be missed. So will some firms no longer with us.

Elmer Keith told it like he saw it, and literally created guns and calibers that are among the most popular as the Nineties begin.

Skeeter Skelton was an even better raconteur in person than on the printed page, and a true gentleman. His son Bart succeeds him as a second generation gun-writer of great promise.

Elgin Gates distinguished himself in twin careers: the master among big game hunters, and the man who single-handedly ramrodded the new sport of metallic silhouette handgunning into being.

All were fine marksmen—and fine men.

Harrington & Richardson made good, sturdy handguns—cheap. Their loss left a void in the market. Company president Ted Rowe went on to become CEO at SIG-Sauer.

Sterling Arms died as the result of a monster lawsuit that never should have been brought. Their guns were mostly jam-amatics, but no one ever sued them over that.

RG went under, leaving the cheapest end of the handgun market to companies like Davis and Raven; well-off gun sportsmen often forget that those who need handguns most are often those who can afford them least.

Dan Wesson came back from the edge of the Chapter Eleven void to create the most accurate largebore revolvers ever made, to dominate IHMSA, and to become more financially successful than at any time in the still-young company's history. Dan Wesson himself, whom we lost before the Eighties began, would have been proud.

We lost Dornaus & Dixon, whose 10mm Bren Ten pistol was styled after the CZ75 and was the embodiment of what Jeff Cooper thought a pistol should be.

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They left behind a few samples of a fine pistol that should have been hugely popular, and left the industry with the

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knowledge that they'd made their mark.

The copied design exists today in the Tanfoglio and other pistols, some of them in .41 Action Express, sort of a watered-down 10mm.

The cartridge they convinced Norma to produce, the 10mm Auto, became the

The American handgunner enters the last decade of the Twentieth Century with his basic rights under more savage and coordinated assault than ever before

commercial success story of the Eighties, albeit in pistols produced by Colt.

Other entrepreneurs survived. Wildey Moore fought financial adversity (and jokes about non-delivery from gunwriters) for a decade, but finally managed to put his Magnum semi-automatic into the mainstream of commerce before 1990.

LAR quietly made a success of their Grizzly pistol, a big 1911 using Wildey Moore's .45 Winchester Magnum cartridge, and created the thinking man's ultra-powered semi-automatic.

With much more financial might to work with, Israeli Military Industries was even more successful with its .357, .41, and .44 Magnum Desert Eagles, and by the end of the decade had a Mark II version with a safety you could actually operate without an extra hand, and a good trigger.

The big gun/small company concept also survived in the Coonan .357 Magnum autoloader, still commercially viable by the close of 1989.

The American handgunner enters the last decade of the Twentieth Century with his basic rights under more savage and coordinated assault than ever before. At the same time, his own allies are more strongly aligned than at any time in the past, and the trend from the Eighties may well start to bring the powerful women's rights movement to his side.

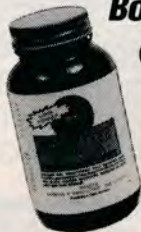
On a happier note, he has more guns and finer guns, more accessories and better accessories, than ever before.

For those who accept defeat, the future is dim, but for those who are willing to work within the system and fight for their rights, the Eighties close with a handgun future that is probably brighter than it looks.



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HANDLOADING

continued from page 16

case had been reloaded.

I then started using military ammo cans and empty milk jugs to hold my bulk pistol ammo. I no longer counted my ammo by the round, but by the gallon and as a result I had only a vague idea as to the exact count of the rounds I reloaded.

The Dillon SFCC90 Cartridge Counter will still allow me to use volume containers for the ammo supply without going to the trouble of counting each round. It does it automatically for you.

If you are using dies from another manufacturer and don't use a crimp die, the SFCC90 can be mounted on a Dillon Powder Die at the crimping station.

RL-1050 Upgrades

For owners of the Dillon RL-1050 top-of-the-line progressive press, the peo-



ple at Dillon have not been content to sit on their laurels. They have improved the decapping assembly by going to a spring loaded decapping pin. The advantages of the spring loaded decapping pin prevents the plucking, or pulling back, into the case the decapped primer.

The fixed decap pin had a tendency to do this and the spent, but partially decapped primer would bind on the shell plate at the swaging station.

The spring loaded decapping assembly is available to 1050 owners for \$14.95.

New "Junior" Press

For those shooters who are just starting out, Dillon has recently introduced the RL-450 Jr.

Many writers and commentators in the shooting industry, myself included, feel it is not the most prudent thing for a beginning reloader and shooter to purchase a progressive reloader for his first machine.

The problem, of course, comes later when the reloader becomes accomplished in the science of reloading and now wants to move on to a machine with a higher rate of production, what is he supposed to do with his old single station beginner machine?

He is more or less forced to seek out another beginning reloader and sell all his limited production equipment to the new guy, so he can regain his initial investment and re-invest it in more advanced machines. Dillon has recognized this dilemma and created the RL450 Jr.



It is a dual purpose machine that can be operated as a single station press or as a progressive machine with the "B" conversion. It uses standard reloading dies and comes with one set of pistol dies in your designated caliber.

The RL450 Jr. is a small frame "O" type press with a rotary shell plate. When used as a single station press the reloader rotates the single case to be reloaded between stations and pours the powder charge down a funnel tube positioned at the second station.

This same machine can be used as a progressive with the carbide pistols dies that come with it and the addition of a "B" conversion. This conversion consists of a manual powder measure, a loaded cartridge ejector, and a loaded cartridge collection box and bracket. The shell plate is turned manually between

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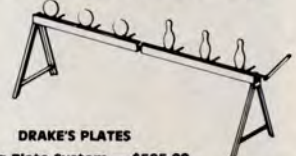
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stations and the shooter must insert each individual primer.

The total cost for the RL450 Jr. is only \$94.50 or \$119 with the "B" conversion included and it is a good system for the beginning reloader because it is not extremely complicated.

Lee Speed Die

Speaking of conventional single station reloading presses, Richard Lee of Lee Precision Inc. sent me one of his new Lee Speed Dies in .45 ACP. This is a single die that literally does everything.

It consists of a die body, a screw-on carbide sizer, a drop-in decapper and expander plug, and a screw-in bullet seater. My RCBS Rock Chucker didn't work with the die, but if you have a Lee Press it is an advancement in design and the cost is extremely reasonable with a suggested retail price of \$19.98.


Blount On Center

Finally, do you know the difference between "Center of Mass" and "Center of Pressure"?

Allan Jones, Technical Services Manager of Blount, Inc., used these two terms in explaining the reasons for their new Speer 147 gr. 9mm bullet's enhanced accuracy.

The center of mass of an object is the point at which the entire mass of a body is concentrated, but the center of pressure is a theoretical point based entirely on the shape of the nose of the bullet.

The hypothesis runs that a roundnose bullet has a center of pressure placed further back in the bullet while a corresponding flat nose bullet of the same weight and diameter has a center of pressure further forward in the bullet.

The rule governing accuracy of a bullet states "that the further apart the center of mass is from the center of pressure the more accurate the bullet is." And this is the reason the people at Blount feel their new Speer bullet is among the most accurate bullets available in 9mm. Check it out. 

IPSC

Continued from page 20

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not connected to the sear, but is free to move back and forth in the frame.

The inertia of a heavy trigger can cause it to strike the sear during recoil (what pistolsmiths call "trigger bounce"). In extreme cases the hammer can follow to half cock, or even miss the half cock notch and cause the gun to fire. A light



trigger/trigger bow mechanism can reduce or remove this problem, which is the reason (other than aesthetics) for the holes you see drilled in long match triggers.

Chip McCormick Corp., makers of the excellent CMC hammers and sears, uses modern technology to attack the problem. The CMC match trigger is made from carbon fiber and titanium.

Let's compare some weights: a steel Colt Gold Cup trigger weighs 258 gr.; a short Gov't. model trigger, 162.5 gr.; a Wilson match trigger weighs 106.5 gr. The CMC trigger weighs an astonishing 47.5 gr.

The bow and trigger shoe have slightly oversized gunsmithing pads which can be polished down to give a precise fit. I've used one of these triggers to fire some 5,000 rounds through my match gun now with no problems.

Suggested list price is \$29.95. Incidentally, the CMC hammer and sear in that gun have now gone some 20,000 rounds and the pull is still 2 1/2 lbs., which is the same as when the parts were new. The address is 7506 Bender Dr., Dept. AH, Austin, TX 78749 or call (512) 280-3320.

Mag Buffs Pads

Magazine base pads help ensure the mag will be seated and locked during a fast reload, and are essential if an extended mag chute is fitted to the gun.

The nicest plastic base pads I've seen are called Mag-Buffs and are available in several colors (red, blue, yellow, green, orange, black, watermelon and hot pink), so when you get a three-color Armory Coat finish from Springfield Armory, you can pick the base pad that will set off the



colors just right.

Seriously, the Mag-Buffs are a convenient means of color-coding your match and practice mags, or distinguishing between .45 ACP and 10mm mags, or between .38 Super and 9mm mags.

These pads are made for all 1911-design pistol magazines, they attach with self-tapping Phillips head screws, and are a hefty half-inch thick to ensure positive seating. They're available from Red Buffs, P.O. Box 99, Dept. AH, Mountaintop, PA 18707 or call (717) 474-9904.

Caspian Arms

Caspian Arms, makers of 1911-style frames, slides, and accessories, now have available 10mm slides in standard design or already cut for the popular low-mount Bo-Mar sight. They also make Commander-length slides in .45 ACP. Both slides are

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made from 4140 tool steel. Receivers are made in both 4140 and 17-4PH stainless.

Other new parts from Caspian include a high-ride grip safety that will fit frames cut for the Wilson beavertail grip safety, a



hammer made by the electron discharge machining (EDM) process, and a light aluminum trigger. For a flyer showing all the parts available, write Caspian Arms at 14 North Main Street, Dept. AH, Hardwick, VT 05843.

Eagle's Alpha Mags

High capacity Alpha-Mags for 1911 pistols have been available for some time, but because part of the mag extended out of the gun butt, they have not been allowed in sanctioned IPSC matches, which don't allow extension mags.

The makers, Eagle International Inc., have managed to modify the design to work without extending from the gun. Called the low-profile model, the first ones will be 9-round capacity models in .45 ACP. As this is written, the new design still has to be approved by the IPSC regional directors, and I understand that samples have been provided to each RD. It seems certain they will be approved, but it wouldn't hurt to check before ordering 10 or a dozen.

Suggested retail is \$31.95. If they are approved as expected, I imagine that 10-shot 10mm and 11-shot .38 Supers won't be far behind. For information write Eagle International, Inc., 5195 West 58th. Ave., Dept. AH, Arvada, CO 80002.

Browning Pistol Vault

Finally, to keep your expensive handguns and optical equipment protected while travelling, Browning distributes a high-quality hard case called the Pistol Vault. Measuring approximately 23x21x9", the case has a foam insert that can be custom fitted to your equipment.

It's made of some sort of modern miracle product that Browning claims to be virtually unbreakable. An O-ring provides a positive seal; the case will float when fully loaded and is so airtight that a purge valve is fitted to the case to release air when elevation changes occur, such as in the unpressurized cargo hold of an airplane.

The case can be locked with two padlocks (not included) and meets airline regulations when locked. For the competitor travelling on the pro shooting circuit, or the handgun hunter bouncing around by four wheel drive on rough, dusty back

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HUNTING

Continued from page 40

Some are so "European" in design and so specialized, they aren't much good for anything but exactly what they were designed for—UIT competition. A number of years ago in England I met a manufacturer of a new target pistol who was looking for a U.S. distributor. The gun was obviously of very high quality and the price was right.

I was on the bait—but not quite hooked. I suggested several minor changes for an "American" model that I felt would make the gun far more saleable in the U.S. The manufacturer was insulted. His pistol was *perfect* as is and even the stupid Americans (that's the way a very large number of Europeans think of us) could see that and would buy all the guns they could get.

Since then the gun was tried and dropped by at least four importers and I think the company is now out of business. In its original configuration it didn't stand a chance here, but with a change of stocks, different muzzle crown, higher magazine capacity and click-adjustable sights, it could have become a factor in the high-quality .22 market.

And what *is* the ultimate plinker? I'd have to say my favorite is a water-cooled .50 caliber Browning in the AA mount.

Whatever it takes—get out and do some shooting!—you owe it to yourself.

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If by chance you are thinking of an antelope hunt, it's not too late for New Mexico. No license draw is required. Robert Wilson welcomes handgun hunters, (HBR 77, Box 224, Grendville, NM 88424) promises a good fair-chase fair-price hunt with decent bucks in the 13" to 15" range. You will essentially be on your own on his ranch. If you need information in a hurry call him at (505) 278-2700 before daylight or after dark.



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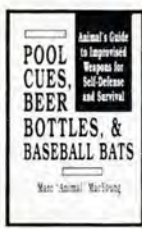
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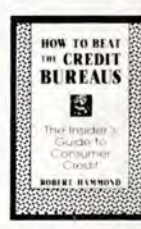
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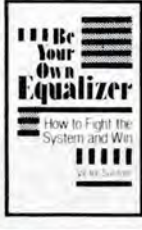
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DUELLING

Continued from page 65

About 1790 the trigger spur was introduced. This hooklike projection was either added to or incorporated onto the trigger guard when it was made. The shooter coiled his middle finger around it taughtening his fingers, thereby achieving the effect of a filler, without the disadvantage of great bulk.

Following the introduction of the spurred trigger guard, a similar device directed to achieving a better grip on the pistol appeared. This was the saw handle butt.

In this we have the origin of the fitted grip and the palm rest. Such grips were particularly popular in Ireland.

The wood of the grip came back over the web of the hand thereby making movement within the grip less likely, whilst a swelling at the bottom of the grip achieved a similar result from below. If there was any looseness in the hand it was taken up by the use of the trigger guard spur.

It was with such a pistol by Tatham and Egg that Lord Camelford was shot by Mr. Best in 1804. From it, via the Continent, one can also trace the ancestry of the modern Free Pistol used in bullseye matches today.

One could produce many more examples relating to the external appearance of the pistols. Some of these, such as Manton's slab sided grips, probably did assist the shooter by helping him to align himself and his pistol consistently.

Good chequering was as important in 1785 as it is today. Again the flat sighting base, offered by either the octagonal (introduced by Twigg) or Nocksform shape of barrel, must have been of assistance to shooters.

As in every trade there were the uninspired and the optimistic and sometimes the effects of the so called improvements were illusory.

Pistol Weight

One entirely understandable change, which has been repeated in modern times, is unending increases in the weight of the pistol. There is no doubt that for target shooting, within reason, such increases will improve accuracy. But even for target use there must be a limit.

Many gunmakers followed Joseph Manton's example and increased weight; some did so to such an extent that it was counterproductive. It is entirely understandable that a purchaser should think of tight groups rather than quick shots.

The later gunmakers lost sight of the fact that all that needed to be done was to place a fast shot in an area 15x30 inches at 12 paces. To do this, they produced pistols capable of hitting drawing pins at the same distance. If the expression is not unfortunate, this was overkill to a great degree.

Successful quick shooting with such weapons necessitated frequent practice. With hindsight we can see that the use of what were really target weapons was a mistake. However, this did not stop some very good shooting being done with them.

Likewise we remember that although some service pistols may be very accurate, to pursue accuracy too far can impair their reliability.

"Secret Rifling"

The earlier barrels were light and not designed for accuracy, but the changes went too far the other way. The new style pistols were as accurate as a modern pistol.

The increased weight meant the duelist had to train more or risk slowness. As the pistol duel became established, the gunmakers produced specialized weapons for it.

Some even went outside the rules. The best example of this was the introduction of "secret rifling."

In British duels, rifling was forbidden in a duelling pistol, but in this form it was hard to detect. Either the rifling started well away from the muzzle and so was not visible by ordinary examination. Alternatively it was scratch rifling, so fine that it too was nearly invisible.

At the distances involved this cannot have made the slightest difference to the flight of the ball. Nonetheless, it leaves a nasty taste of cheating from an institution which was meant to be about honour.

Locks And Ignition

Improvement in the quality of gunpowder available had allowed barrels to be of more manageable lengths, though one will encounter duelling pistols with 12 inch barrels or longer.

Even so, the trade was well aware of the need for faster ignition. This was as important to shotgun users as to pistol shots, and the resulting lock improvements are parallel in the two weapons. Its pursuit continued from the inception of the earliest transitional duelling pistols through to the percussion era.

Griffin appreciated its importance and introduced the roller on the pan cover of the flintlock. Before long the roller was transferred to the frissen spring, speeding the action of the lock even further.

Nock's false breech was a great internal advance. Finally John Manton realized that if the force of the explosion of the priming could be brought to the centre of the main charge by the shortest route, ignition would be even faster.

This produced the fastest of the flintlocks, which was very nearly as fast to fire as the newly invented percussion system.

Percussion ignition had been introduced in Britain by a Scottish minister, the Rev. Alexander Forsyth.

To start with, the system was not

much used for duelling pistols, but gradually as it was perfected, it was adopted. By the 1820s it had almost completely superseded the flintlock.

Many varieties of lock were produced, but when the copper cap was introduced, ignition, as opposed to reloading, was as fast as that in a modern revolver. Although this change was to be as fundamental as any in gunmaking, it caused little alteration to the pistol apart from the lock and the breech end of the barrel.

Sights

Although some would say that duelling pistols did not get proper sights until 1890s, when Gastinne Renette

equipped Walter Winans and his contemporaries, sights of a kind had been fitted since the 1770s.

These, with few exceptions, were of a very basic nature. Some were confined to foresights, as for a shotgun, though lower and longer. Others were a very low bar with a U or V shaped indentation in it, inlet into a dovetail.

Lateral adjustment was by tapping the sight. Vertical adjustment necessitated a higher or lower bar. Primitive, the reader may think, but only marginally different to those pictured in Himmelwright's *Pistol and Revolver* (1904), or those used by Walter Winans at Bisley in the 1890s.

What is the lesson in relation to

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sights? Gastinne Renette did not introduce click sights, but merely enlarged the bright metal foresight to make it easier for the shooter to see it.

(Winans, of course, duelled in a pale blue coat rather than the traditional black, but wise men did not fight him!)

McGovern, who always swore that he used his click sights no matter how fast he was shooting, followed the same line by enlarging foresights. Perhaps part of their secrets lay in a combination of amazing speed of hand and eye and the instinct method. One thing is certain, and that is that both of them would have been very dangerous opponents *without sights at all*.

It is probably fair to say the earliest duelists were nearer to using their pistols as they should have been used, i.e. as combat weapons, and that as the accuracy of the duelling/target pistol increased the technique was adapted to its form.

The shooting demanded of the target shooter of those days was probably much more directed to that needed for the duel than anything followed today. Evidence is scarce, but my illustration of Mardon's Shooting Gallery in 1824 gives us a valuable insight into the disciplines of the period. Sadly the artist could not draw pistols, or we might know even more. As well as a figure target, akin to the metal Duke of Wellington target used by

Gastinne Renette until the 1960s and in paper form today, there is a normal round bull, and a round bull divided vertically, the last clearly to improve one's horizontal line for duelling.

We know that at least John and Joseph Manton had their own shooting ranges, and there were probably others.

Gronow gives us some information here. Few of his passages are more amusing than when he reveals Joe Manton's opinion (surely in breach of professional confidence) that Lord Byron was not nearly as good a shot as he considered himself. It was in Manton's Davies Street Gallery that the poet confided to Joseph Manton that he thought himself to be the best shot in London.

"No my Lord", replied Manton, "not the best; but your shooting today was respectable". Whereupon Byron waxed wroth, and left the shop in a violent passion.

Gronow goes on to list the noblemen who participated in competition at the gallery in 1814. The list includes Lord Yarmouth, later to become Lord Hertford. In passing it is related how on one occasion Gronow, whom Manton always backed to win, hit the wafer nineteen times out of twenty. In Paris, in 1822, he also was a frequent visitor at le Page's gallery. There Gronow hit a chalk spot on a picture of a Cossack 40 times out of 40 at 20 paces, *in duelling time*.

A famous duelist, against whom Gronow had been warned (lest he tried to provoke Gronow to a duel) shrieked out, "*Tonnere de Dieu, c'est magnifique!*" when he saw the shooting. After that the two dined together and were firm friends.

It will be seen that Gronow, like Gerard, was not one to hide his light, but he must have been an amazing shot. These men were the elite of Society who took their shooting extremely seriously.

What of the requirements of the ordinary gentleman who might become involved in a duel? The day had not yet arrived when even outstanding pistol shots of proven reputation could refuse to fight, as Captain Ross was to do in later years. The answer was to train and train and train.

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Continued on page 109

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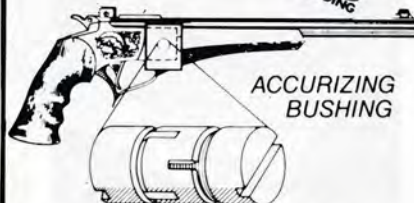
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Continued from page 106

upon the iron plate. After retiring to 14 or 15 paces he must pick them off regularly, one after the other.

The following instructions are then given for the first stage of his training:

1) Never hesitate more than two or three seconds before firing, *for unless a man fires quickly, he never fires well.*

2) Endeavor to *raise the pistol in a line with the object.*

3) Do not hold the pistol too tightly; for if grasped very tightly the hand trembles.

4) Fix the forefinger inside the guard, and lay it loosely against the trigger.

5) When the trigger is pulled, move only the knuckle joint, and that not more than necessary, *lest the motion disturb the muscles of the hand and arm and shake the pistol.*

A "Young Practitioner" is advised to get up and pick off five or six dozen wafers in this way every morning before breakfast; and in three months, if a clever fellow, he will become quite *au fait*.

Later we are enjoined:

"To acquire the habit of firing briskly is of the greatest importance. Young persons should be cautious by their over anxiety to hit the mark, that they are not led into a slow, slovenly, hesitating way

of firing.

"Until a man can cull 12 wafers, at 14 yards, in six minutes, loading the pistol himself between each discharge, I do not consider him proficient in pistol practice."

Then we are told of the devices which the really serious duelist, the author, equipped himself with in preparation for any chance encounter, both of them ideal systems for the learning to control match nerves.

Simulated Duelling

The first was to counter-act the lack of



An early sliding primer ignition percussion duelling pistol made by Forsyth in 1823 for the Earl of Fife.

confidence which even an expert fencer might feel when facing an opponent's blade instead of the buttoned foil.

A cone shaped spring was fixed to a metal plate, and the rapier blade was inserted into the top of the spring. The device was then fixed to the wall and "A Traveller" would fence with it.

"Frequently for an hour at a time I have stood before it with my foil, thrusting, parrying, and keeping it constantly in motion."

Such perseverance produced an even more attractive method of practicing for a pistol duel. A wooden figure target was prepared, with a strong bracket attached to the shoulder. The pistol was tied to the bracket with leather straps.

The pistol was loaded with powder and wadding. A copper wire went from the trigger to a piece of whipcord and the duelist retired 12 yards. The cord was then tied firmly around the shooter's waist.

When all was ready the firer drew himself up, raised his pistol, and as he was about to fire leant backwards; thereby firing both pistols almost simultaneously.

The author knew some trainees who took some months to overcome their nerves at being fired at, but considered that "constant practice would overcome it sooner or later."

Emphasis used to be placed upon the making of interruptions during practice shoots for would-be internationals. Perhaps the coaches should consider simulated gunfire like this as a steadying

influence.

One could continue to consider the instructions in this and other works. There is no doubt, making allowance for the state of development of the single barrelled muzzle loading weapon, that our ancestors both understood it and performed great feats with it.

Gronow shot sparrows at the Tower of London, Ross his hundred starlings; the latter on the wing.

In the 1870s Commanding Officers setting out for outposts of Empire and their wars would lament that the standard of pistol shooting in their commands had

declined from those duelling days.

Probably expertise with the pistol has never been, and never will be, greater than in the days of duelling. Assuredly our ancestors were truly great pistol shots, and their ways teach us much.

My last lines are of their courage—"bottom" as they would have called it. A Traveller sums it up.

Having instructed on questions of stance for taking (and receiving) the shot, he continues that if the pupil is hit he should submit to the examination of the surgeon, and:

"I cannot impress upon an individual too strongly, the propriety of remaining perfectly calm and collected when hit: he must not allow himself to be alarmed or confused, but summoning up all his resolution, treat the matter coolly; *and if he dies go off with as good grace as possible.*" (The italics are mine.)

Perhaps we can learn something, too, from the words of Cecil, as he fell dying from Stacpole's ball. Cecil's last gasp betrays the intensely brave, Devil-may-care attitude of those times and the men who fought in them:

"By George, I've missed him."



Acknowledgements

I record my thanks to those who have supplied or permitted me to take photographs of their pieces. For the most part they go unacknowledged, save that when they see my photographs they will know of my gratitude.

LIES, DAMN LIES AND MAGAZINES: WHO IS TELLING YOU THE TRUTH?

Colt Firearms has been sold by Colt Industries to the newly formed **Colt's Manufacturing Company, Inc.** for \$100 million. The State of Connecticut joined with a group of investors and 1,000 striking Colt workers to consummate the deal.

The purchase price consisted of \$50 million in cash and \$50 million in assumption of debt. In 1986 **Smith & Wesson** was sold for \$112 million in cash.

The State owns 47% of the new Colt, a much higher percentage than had been previously speculated, by putting up \$25 million in cash. The new company's first official act was to cut a check for \$10 million in back pay for the striking workers who had been out since 1986.

And another of the new Colt's fresh decisions was to announce that it will *not* sell "assault rifles" to civilians. However, Colt *will* sell a sporting version of the AR-15 to sportsmen.

When pressed to define "sporting version," a Colt spokesman said the sanitized model would be identical to an AR-15 except for a 5-shot magazine and no bayonet lug.

Before you waggle your finger too sharply at the Army's **Beretta** pistols for "slide failure," consider the venerable Model of 1911-A1. Only one slide conformed to Government specifications out of a random testing of 229 Government Model slides pulled from 13,000 in stock at Anniston Army Depot, according to government documents. *Only one!*

The slides were supplied by eight manufacturers during World War II including **Ithaca, Remington and Colt.**

"The inspection results at Anniston are so extraordinary in these dimension failures as to make any attempt to explain this by possible SQAP (Supplemental Quality Control Assurance Procedure) differences very unconvincing," the government report scoffs.

The right index finger of *Handgunner* Competitions Editor Rob Leatham is worth one million dollars. Rob recently signed a 10 year contract with **Springfield Armory** to represent the forward-thinking Illinois gunmaker in matches, trade shows and other promotional venues.

Rob terminated his association with **Wilson's Gun Shop** and agreed to shoot competition pistols modified by the **Springfield Custom Shop** as part of his seven-digit compensation.

Bill Wilson said, "We really wish

Robby good luck. He's been a good friend over the years and it's great to see him move up and sign the first million dollar contract. He's a great competitor and no one deserves this more than Robby."

"The Gun That Ate Cincinnati" is what Massad Ayoob called a monstrous four-pound .38 Special revolver shot by John Pride in the Bianchi Cup several years ago. Knowing that the spirit of P.T. Barnum walks among us, John is now offering this L-frame tent-peg-driver as the "John Pride Limited Edition Action Master" which the advertising hoopla proclaims "...will give competitors in NRA Action, Bianchi Cup and bowling pin shooting a state-of-the-art handgun that is match ready right out of the box."

For only \$1,295, you too can own a S&W Model 686 that weighs 4 lbs., 2 ozs., fully customized by noted custom revolversmith **Bill Davis.** Rush your order to guarantee delivery of the gun with John Pride's portrait and signature etched on the sideplate. Call Bill Davis at (916) 369-6789 for more information.

Wow, you folks sure got stirred up over J.D. Jones' "Saga of a Model 625" in last issue's *Handgun Hunting* column. I haven't received such a flood of reader mail on any one article since a couple of years ago when the Boilershop Boys led a pack of letter writers to toss brickbats at Massad Ayoob for killing an impala with his four-inch .44 Magnum.

You can see a few of the many 625 letters we received in the *Speak Out* column beginning on page 7. But I'd also like to share Kingwood, Texas, reader James D. Conyers' letter with you here because it brings up a disturbing point.

Conyers remarks incredulously, "Will wonders never cease. Finally, do we, the shooting public, have a gun writer who has the guts to raise hell and tell it like it is. Bravo and congratulations."

It bothers me to see that the credibility of firearms periodicals has degenerated to the point that it's *expected* for a writer to fluff a gun. According to a think-piece in *The Washington Post*, "...gun magazines tend to be shills of the gun companies."

It's disturbing to think that some readers don't recognize that *American Handgunner* is different—we really do tell it like it is!

It was here, in 1978, that you read Massad Ayoob's definitive piece on the problem-plagued S&W Model 59 that was subsequently re-designed based in part on the what *American Handgunner*

pointed out.

In these pages were the Army's problems with **Beretta** slides reported, a story that *only* this magazine had the testosterone to stand by.

A few issues ago, *American Handgunner* criticized Bill Ruger's call for a ban on high-capacity magazines. Even the NRA's *American Rifleman* refused to touch that hot potato because, according to an NRA insider, "Ruger spends a quarter-million a year with us on ads... we *can't* nail him on the magazines, as much as we'd like to."

We honestly reported on the trigger problems of the **Colt Double Eagle**, problems that were fixed with a factory recall. It has been suggested that our plans to publish our critical article on the Double Eagle's unsafe trigger prompted the recall.

On the other hand, I quite understand *The Post's* point—most other gun magazines are lackeys for the gun companies.

And it's not necessarily a matter of *American Handgunner's* hard-hitting exposes. Like the old PR adage goes, "Bad press is better than no press." Advertisers get steamed because we don't say *anything.*

This is a true story—a gunmaker whined that it was cancelling its entire advertising schedule because it had been "totally ignored editorially."

The company in question then cancelled about \$54,000 worth of advertising because *American Handgunner* refused to sell out our readers and compromise our editorial integrity.

But other magazines were there to brown-nose these hombres, figuring you readers are dumb enough to believe that junk guns are good guns if they just tell you often enough. There was that slick cover picture of El Cheapo's new blaster—along with that juicy ad!

A reader should look at what we *don't* write about too. What's wrong with this picture? Why are all the other magazines fawning over El Cheapo Guns with page after page of hype? Why do these money-grubbing magazines sell *you* out with all this fanfare over a shoddy clone of a name-brand gun? I'll tell you why—El Cheapo's pricey ads.

Then look in *American Handgunner* for what *isn't* there. No fluff-piece on the Taco Magnum and—who would've guessed?—no El Cheapo ads either!

Conversely, I'm glad to see that many companies still appreciate a fair review of their products. Smith & Wesson *didn't* cancel their ads because of J.D.'s hatchet job on their 625.

S&W and many other gunmakers are savvy enough to know that a credible gun magazine attracts *serious shooters*, and serious shooters are—forgive a pun—the target audience of their advertising.

Keep the faith, guys. We still care about ethical journalism and you'll find it right here in every issue of *American Handgunner.* That's a promise!



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