

AMERICAN

HANDGUNNER

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

67522 T&E

EXCLUSIVE

HIGH STANDARD'S GOLD MEDAL PISTOLS

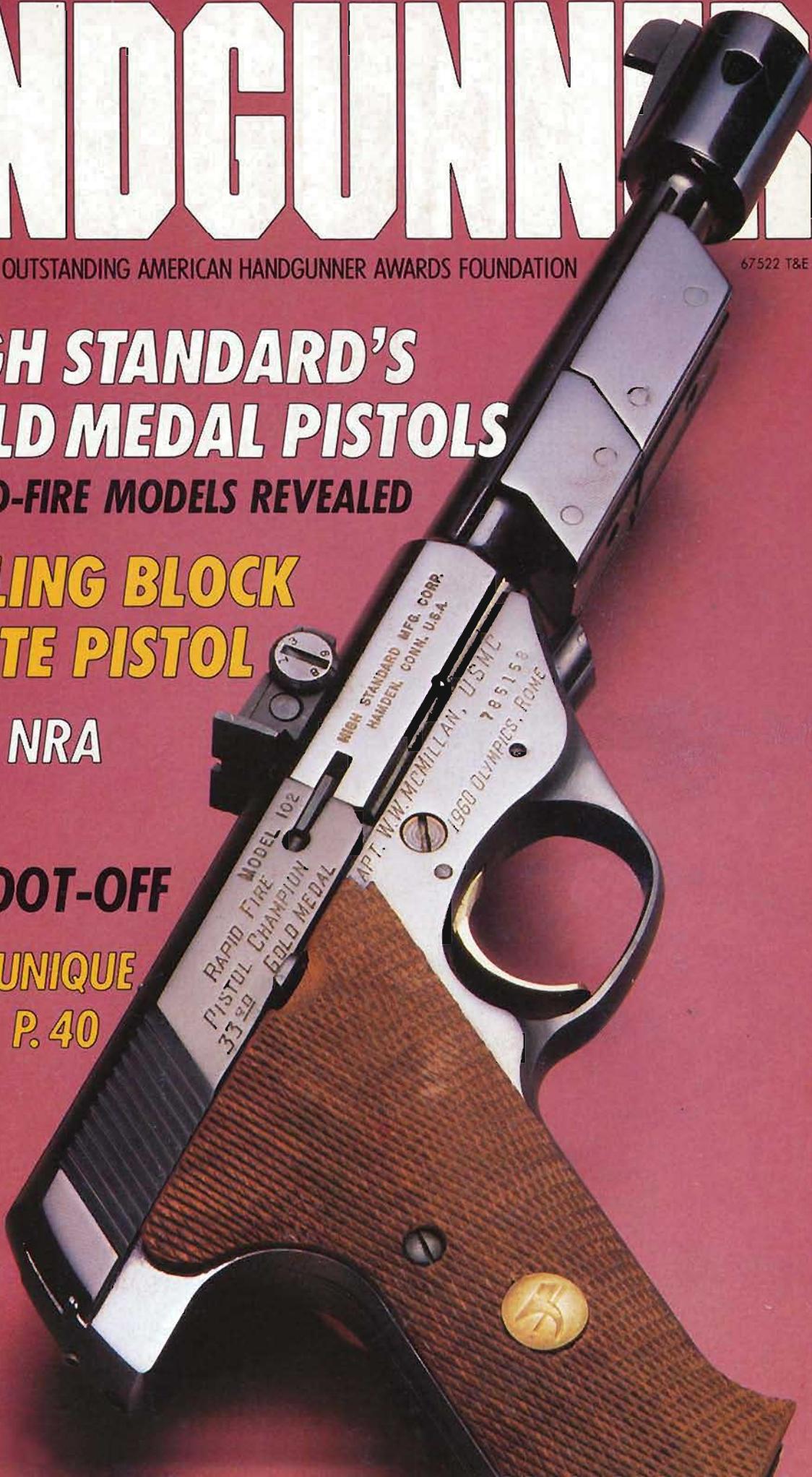
EXPERIMENTAL RAPID-FIRE MODELS REVEALED

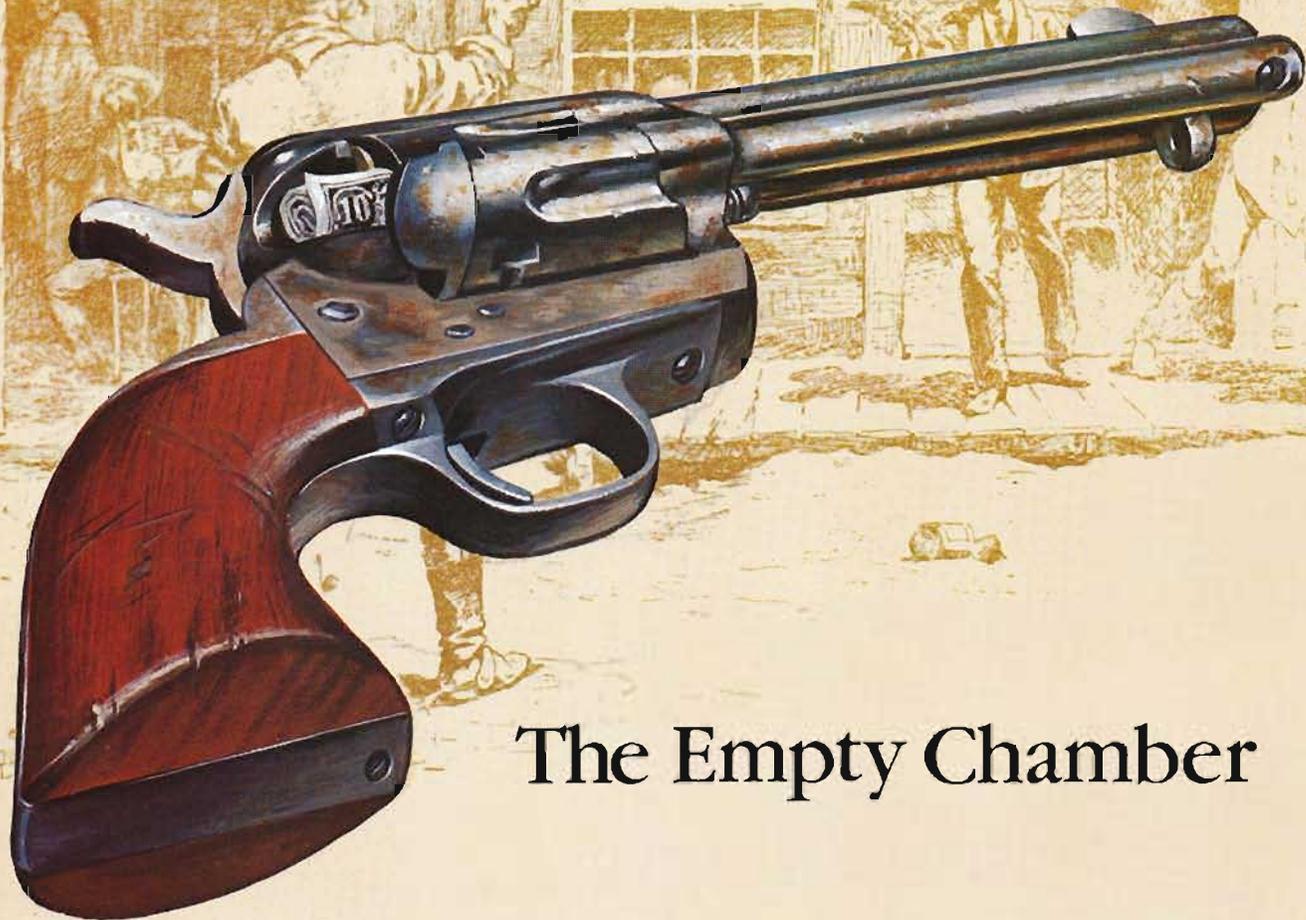
WHY NOT? ROLLING BLOCK SILHOUETTE PISTOL

SHOOTING THE NRA
SCOPED PISTOL

FIREPOWER SHOOT-OFF

WIN IT! C. WARD UNIQUE
.45 REVOLVER P. 40





The Empty Chamber

From the earliest frontier days of the old west, the mechanical characteristics and limitations of the single-action revolver have been well understood, as the writings of the day amply demonstrate. The safety precaution of loading the "six-shooter" with only five cartridges and resting the hammer on the empty chamber was universally practiced. According to folklore, some cowboys habitually carried "burying money" or their last bank note rolled up in the empty chamber. These old-timers understood that the notches in the hammer provided only limited protection, and that an accidental discharge could result if a fully loaded revolver were to be dropped, or if the hammer were to receive a sharp blow.

Despite the lessons of history, there are still

people who get themselves in trouble by ignoring the following common sense rules of gun handling:

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2. The safest way to carry any old style* single-action revolver is with five chambers loaded and the hammer resting on the empty chamber.

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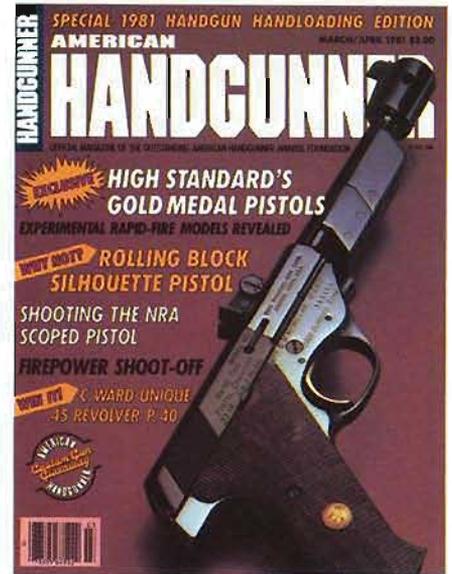
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COVER: A close-up of the gun that won the 1960 Gold Medal In Rapid-Fire for the U.S. shot by Col. Bill McMillan

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

S&W DESIGNING NEW AUTO SAFETY; SERVICE 9MM NARROWED TO THREE

Flashback time! Let's roll back the pages of past "Industry Insider" columns and update the stuff we predicted, and where it has gone, and where it may be going for 1981.

One of our continuing stories has been the third-generation Smith & Wesson 9mm autoloaders. The new guns, designated 439, 539, 459, and 559 have been built in limited runs, but are not yet on the civilian market. The reason may be that the company is having second thoughts about the new safety design.

One great thing about the design is that, for the first time, the gun is totally safe against accidental discharge if dropped. Another plus, as far as gun buffs are concerned, is that, for the first time, these guns present the option of being carried cocked and locked.

On the other hand, the new design eliminates the fumble-proof hammer-drop feature which worked off of the thumb safety. This means that one applies the safety, then pulls the trigger to safely lower the hammer. Pulling the trigger of a gun with a round in the chamber to make it safe does not sit well with some people. We've heard rumors of a new safety which would be accident-free—dropping the hammer independently and safely, and (according to some reports) still allowing cocked and locked carry. Time will tell.

Another of our continuing handgun soap operas has been the JSSAP tests in Florida to select a new 9mm parabellum service auto for U.S. troops. They haven't yet formally released which models are among the three finalist guns, but it is generally accepted that there are three: the Beretta model 92, the S&W model 459, and possibly the Browning P-35 in either the special "fast action" model, or the double action version, both built exclusively for the JSSAP tests.

Insiders at this time say the Beretta did far and away the best in the tests, but that S&W has the inside track because they can build pistols in this country sooner. The rumor persists, however, that certain brass hats would just as soon wait until the gun can be produced in this country under license.

If that happens, according to the rumor mill, Colt may be the most likely to get the contract. Rob Roy, Colt's executive in charge of military sales, was not available at press time to confirm or deny the rumor,

so take it as such. We've heard that the Air Force was so impressed with the Beretta 9mm that it has already ordered a number of them from the Italian factory.

We were the first to break the stories on two Dan Wesson guns, the .44 Magnum and the .22 revolver. The .22 has been out for a while, and experienced some serious extraction problems. Fred Hill of DW says this has been squared away. The company, always deep into quality, has gone a step further and installed a new quality control director with full Department Head powers.

As for the .44, Fred is hoping that some distributors will have received their first ones prior to 1981. By the time you read this, you'll know for sure. The recoil reduction system (patented) will be called "Power Control," and we've worked with it enough to know that it works. An improved rear sight, too (finally!) which we hope will find its way onto the .357 and .22 as well.

Two other Dan Wesson developments are in the offing. When Dan himself was alive, he swore he'd never make a gun out of stainless; he just abhorred the stuff. Still, there's a great market for it, and DW execs are quietly doing a study of the possibilities. Also, even though the company has a healthy back listing of sportsmen's orders, some look longingly at the bustling police market. Look for Dan Wesson to establish a blue ribbon committee of top police gun experts sometime in 1981, to help guide their policies in that market.

The Wildey pistol appears to finally be a reality; look for an early test in these pages. You might also keep your eyes open for an S&W model 520, a fixed-sight variation of the Highway Patrolman .357. A small number were apparently made for an eastern State Police, which went to the standard model 28 instead. It's not likely that they'll be produced on full scale, which should make them primo investment revolvers if you can find any.

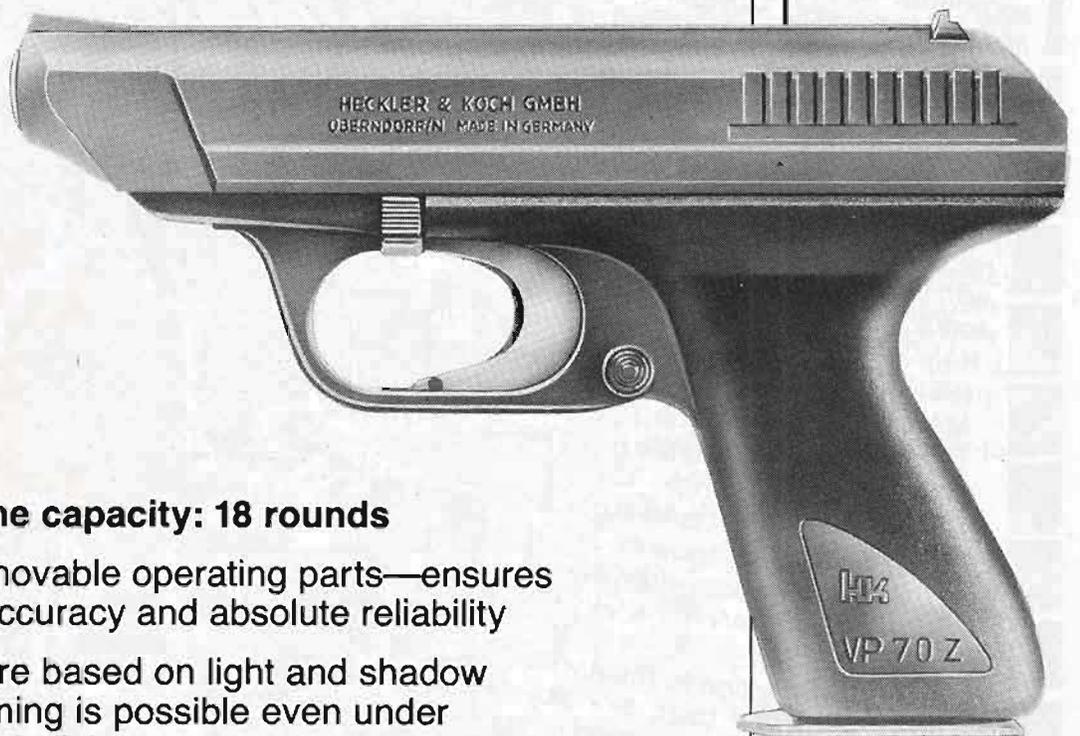
The big news at the IPSC Nationals (other than the new controversial holster rule, which will be the subject of a full report in the next issue) was the premier showing of Jeff Cooper's "Bren Ten." This auto pistol looks a lot like the Czech 75, but with a 10mm, .40 caliber, bore. The

(Continued on page 31)

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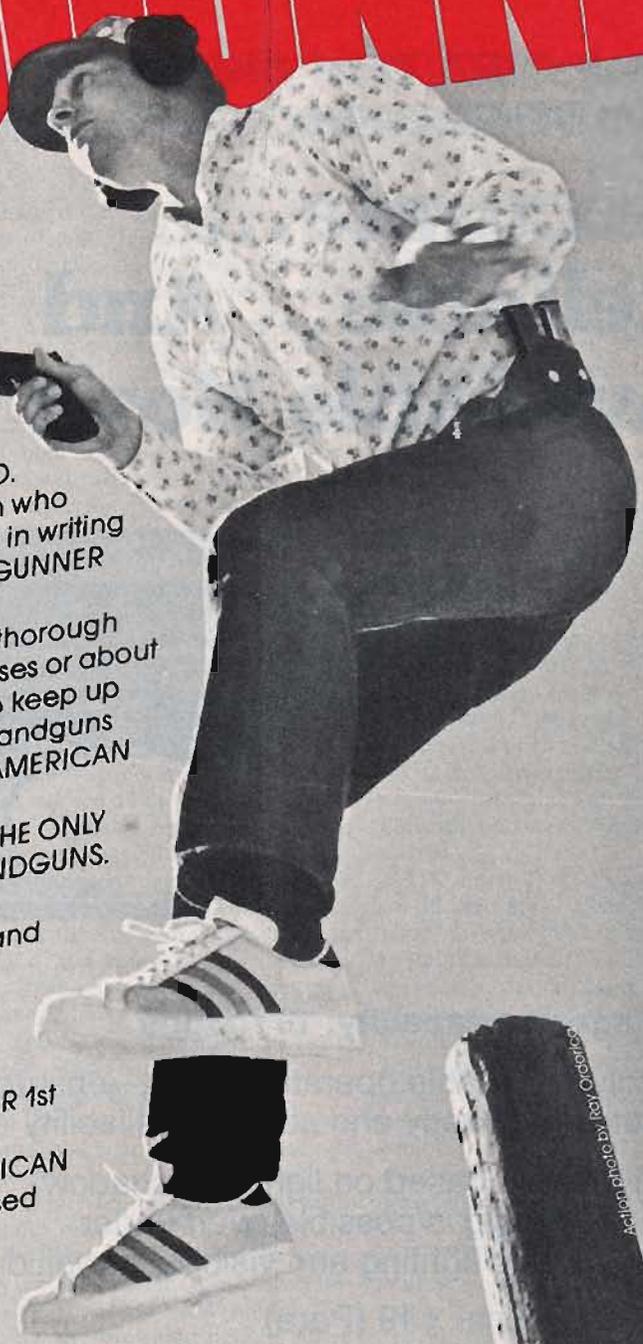
The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine is written for the competitor, sportsman, collector, hunter, combat shooter and lawman. If you're one of these or just enjoy fine handguns, you can share in the knowledge and experiences of men like Massad Ayoob, Mason Williams, J.D. Jones and James Mason. They're men who really know handguns and who excel in writing about them in The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine.

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Action photo by Terry O'Connell

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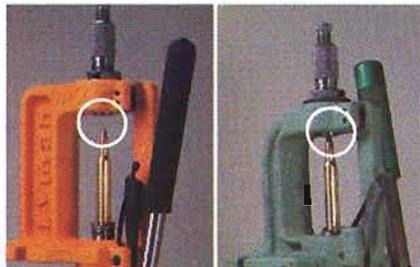
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SILUETAS

PHILIP C. BRIGGS

LIGHTWEIGHT FIBERTHANE MATERIAL FOR A STRONG, COMFORTABLE STOCK

Something that those of us who have built budget unlimited guns have learned, and those thousands who will buy Remington's new silhouette pistol will learn, is that the ambidextrous imitation wood, lightweight, dimensionally stable, nylon factory stock is damn uncomfortable to shoot with anything above mild loads. Besides that, it's ugly.

The recoil from, say, a .308 at full snort, grinds that scallop at the bottom of the grip into the heel of your hand, and as the grip is smaller at the top than the bottom, it slides through your hand to stop with a crash as the overhang bangs into the first knuckle of your thumb.

More modest cartridges, like those on the .223 or .222 Mag. cases, or the new 7mm BR aren't as hard on the hand, but they'll still beat up your thumb.

And then there's ugly. That's subjective of course, but I submit that if it was a thing of beauty the pistol wouldn't have languished on dealers shelves for the dozen years or so between introduction and the birth of the handgun silhouette sport.

BETTER STOCK FOR XP

Whatever the reason, most of us have switched to a better stock on our XP's, as soon as we could afford it, and I expect most of the oncoming thousands will do the same. Better looking means wood, and that can be expensive, and to a weight conscious competitor, too heavy. Better handling can be wood, but for most it's synthetics. Fiberglass was the first option, built by the same firms that had been building fiberglass rifle stocks for benchrest, varmint, or silhouette guns. They're not cheap either, but depending on who builds them, and how, they are lighter, although not always by a lot. And unfortunately, some I've seen aren't that much more comfortable to shoot than Remington's; and reshaping the accessory stock by filling adds weight, or by filing removes strength.

There's a second generation of replacement stocks coming out now though, and one of them, a foam stock from H-S Precision (Box 512, Prescott, AZ 86302) has been designed to eliminate these problems.

The stock is injection molded of polyurethane foam that is reinforced with chopped fiberglass fibers. Called "Fibertthane," the foam mix is one of a family of structural foams that are com-

monly used to mold large, complex items, such as snowmobile hoods. It's light, but a lot denser than the foams that most of us are used to seeing. Cut one apart and you'll find it will dent with a fingernail, but not a lot, and it's the same density throughout, except for the hard, very smooth skin that forms against the mold. This outside surface comes out nearly flawless, requiring only minor filling of gas bubbles before painting.

The primary advantage of the foam stock is weight, or rather the lack thereof. The stock I've been testing, bedded, with trigger guard and paint, weighs 11 ounces, the same as a factory original nylon one.

Cost was \$60 last I asked, but I wouldn't



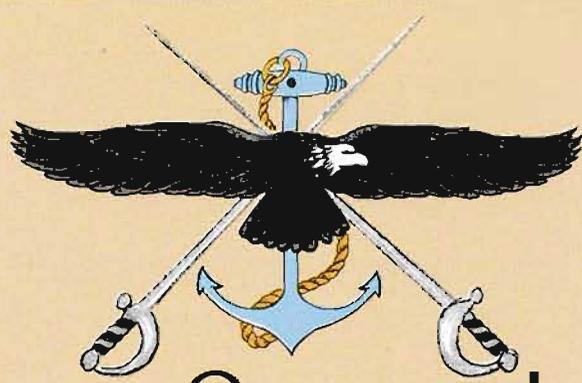
The foam stock with an H-S Precision custom barrel and a completed model.

be too surprised if it's more by the time you read this, what with the general rate and direction of petrochemical prices. That's for an inletted, primed stock, ready for bedding and painting. They'll bed one to your action using their own Accu-Bed compound for another \$40.

They've been making rifle stocks with this material for about two years now, and the pistol stocks for over a year. Complex shapes are easily formed with this process, and they've taken advantage of that property to incorporate finger grooves and a thumbrest on the pistol stock.

The foam is readily shaped with wood-working tools, so that carving clearance for a thumb knuckle takes but a few minutes with a rasp, and there's no need to worry about weakening the stock by cutting through the shell. Refinishing the carved spot is easily done with epoxy or lacquer putty. Putty can also be used to add material where needed to get that custom fit necessary to comfortably shoot the arm-

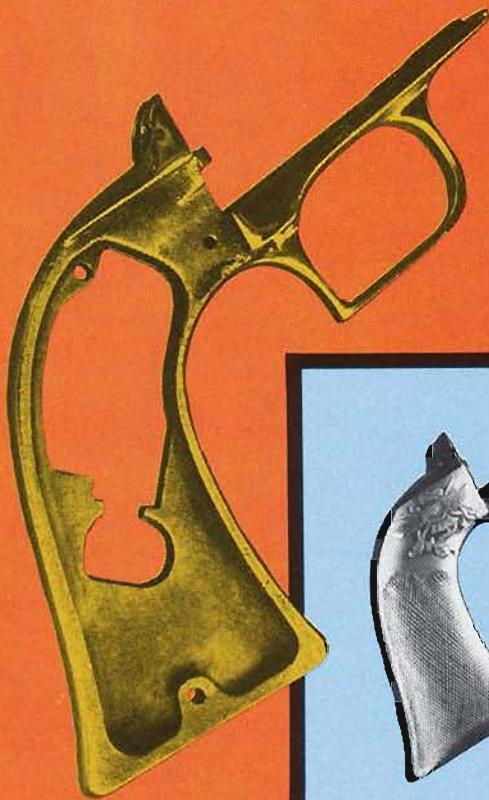
(Continued on page 13)



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OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS

NEWSLETTER

★ O.A.H.A. FOUNDATION, INC., P.O. BOX 45-70, BLOOMINGDALE, OHIO 43910 ★

The OAHA Foundation has selected the Top Ten Nominees for 1981. This year's Nominating Committee was chaired by the 1976 winner, Bill Jordan. Nominees for this year were solicited from all previous winners and from the general public through the pages of AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine.

The 1981 Top Ten Nominees represent nearly all aspects of handgunning. In previous years, the criteria for nomination included only "a significant contribution to the sport of handgunning." Recently, this has been expanded to consider both service and achievements in the handgunning field.

The Awards presentation and dinner will be held at the Denver Hilton on May 1, 1981.

If you wish to express your opinion of who should win the 1981 Award, write to: OAHAF, Box 45-70, Bloomingdale, OH 43910.

The Top Ten Nominees for 1981: Col. Rex Applegate is an author and world authority on counter terrorist tactics whose research and training programs have saved the lives of many military and police personnel.

Lucy Chambliss is a police officer who has won Gold and Bronze Medals on the U.S. International Shooting Team. Besides being on the NRA Law Enforcement Assistance Committee and NRA Board of Directors, Lucy writes a popular monthly column in AMERICAN HANDGUNNER.

Jimmy Clark is a widely respected pistolsmith whose guns are in demand by top competitors. Also a shooter, he has set a total of 64 national records, including winning the .22 National Championships five times.

Elgin Gates, the International Executive Director of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette

Association, has bagged more than 200 big game hunting records along with the Weatherby Trophy and the International win in '75 and '76 in the Grand American for trap shooting.

Steve Herrett is responsible for the .30 and .357 Herrett cartridges so popular with hunters and silhouette shooters. His handgun stocks are world-respected.

Roy Jinks is Services Operations Manager at Smith & Wesson and has authored numerous historical books and articles on S&W. He has actively participated in shooter education programs at high schools and colleges.

Larry Kelly invented the highly successful Mag-na-port gas venting system that reduces muzzle jump and recoil. He has supported and promoted handgunning for many years, and was once Chairman of the OAHAF. He is an avid hunter.

Frank Pachmayr was a pioneer in development of .45ACP accuracy. His innovations and patented inventions, including his popular handgun grips, have been of great help to handgunners.

Harry Reeves won his first championship in 1936 and since has won over 70 state and regional championships including being National All-Around Champion six times and World Centerfire Champion in 1952. In International Competition, he holds 4 Gold, 5 Silver, and 2 Bronze Medals, and has twice been Team Captain-Manager of the Pan-Am Olympic Shooting Team, and 1968 Captain of the U.S. Olympic Team.

Hal Swiggert is a firearms writer who was instrumental in Remington's introduction of the .44 Magnum standard velocity round. His expertise has been used by handgunners and manufacturers alike.

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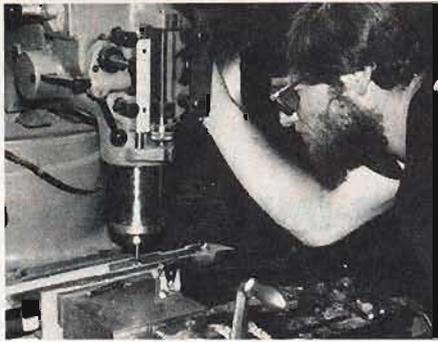
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Dave Yehl of H-S Precision mills out excess compound after bedding action.

wrenchers. Duratite wood dough (by DAP Inc.) works well, as it's light, and will stick to the stock, but not your hand while you mold the mess to fit.

The strength of the foam stock is less than that of a wood or fiberglass version. You could break it if you used it for a hammer, and I expect you wouldn't have to strain too hard to bust it in half with your bare hands. Still, it wasn't designed for that sort of abuse, but rather for the forces exerted by the recoiling action and the resisting hand. There's a piece of aluminum tubing in the grip for reinforcement and recent stocks incorporate a strip of fiberglass cloth around the recoil lug.

I've heard of two stocks that were broken in that area, the thinnest and hence

weakest portion of any stock. One was broken in the struggle to remove the action from the bedding compound, the other on a friend's 7mm-08 failed while we were chrono'ing some loads. However, as the crack propagated from the top of the stock down I suspect it was damaged by prying the rear of the action out of the compound first, which forces the barrel down on the forend.

I took that stock back to H-S owner Tom Houghton, and although they probably weren't responsible, he replaced it. That's nice, but more importantly for the rest of us, Tom decided on the spot to add some glass cloth to that area to eliminate the problem.

WHAT PRECISION MEANS

I had my stock bedded to my 8mm IHMSA by H-S, and they do nice work. Myself, I'm prone to clean out the excess bedding with a Dremil and a chisel, but they use a mill. Even though most customers wouldn't know the difference Tom feels that's the best way to do it, and I guess that's what "Precision" means.

I've shot the stock for six months or so, around 500 rounds. Visibly neither the stock nor the bedding show any sign of distress, but the tail of the stock is now floating off of the bedding.

I don't know for sure that it hasn't been that way from the start, but I suspect it

hasn't. I'm prone to snug the action in extra firm, and as I had only a half inch or so of the barrel bedded I expect that with this limited support I've over stressed the foam in this area. As you can't pillar bed an XP because of the trigger bar, I'd recommend that the bedding extend down the barrel a couple of inches, and that the inletting be opened up so that a lot of compound can be placed around the recoil lug to spread the clamping force over a larger area. That, and drilling and tapping the action for a rear action screw should eliminate the problem of the over zealous wrench.

At least, that's what I'm going to do to mine. No way I'm going back to that nylon stock.



Roughing up the stock before compound.

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SIGHT SETTINGS

LUCY CHAMBLISS

NRA COMBAT REVOLVER IMPRACTICAL; BIANCHI CUP BARRICADE WORTHWHILE

NRA Combat Revolver scores continue almost perfect and the course of fire for those above the Sharpshooter class continues to be mechanical. David Wiegel, Orlando, Fla., fired a 1496-110X last July, dropping 4 points only in the 50 yard match. His groups all looked like they had been fired from 7 yards. Dave's been a 1480 shooter about 3 years, but finally with the help of his Travis Strahan revolver, put together this outstanding score in the wilting Florida heat and humidity. It is not my intention to detract from the magnificent scores being fired now by men such as David, however, NRA Combat Revolver matches at present, many police believe, have all the training value of bench-rest shooting. It seems those who speak the loudest, and most often, want the possible scores and absolutely no change in course of fire. Well thought-out, sincere competitors suggestions continue to be ignored. Time will tell how badly no updating of time or positions will decrease entries in the future.

Entries have declined already in many combat matches, maybe due to budget cuts, lay-offs, or an expensive, not too practical course of fire. Meanwhile, a match such as the Bianchi Cup Match, covered by most shooting magazines, including the NRA's, grows and seems to be inspiring imaginations of shooter and gunsmith. It is an honor to even be invited to shoot the Bianchi. The \$9,200 to the winner in cash and merchandise, as well as cash to 6th place, gives the incentive and means to shoot, even if not subsidized by a department.

BIANCHI CUP BARRICADE

One detail I noticed in the Bianchi Cup match, is the type barricade used, it solves the problem of training the shooter to keep feet and body behind cover. If it is not too expensive, and doubt if it's much more than keeping those lines painted, that boarded-in square trains the shooter to lean around his protection.

For the past several months, I have averaged a call a day from women who want to learn to shoot. They either did not live in our town when our police department offered at least two such courses annually, or they were playing golf or tennis. Too bad, as our city no longer provides such shooting courses. Many Americans are beginning to regret shooting has not been one of their sports and a

required skill they disciplined themselves to learn for their protection. The popularity of running makes you wonder if they hope to outrun the aggressor rather than taking a defensive stand.

The fear of lawsuits for anything has affected the use of many fine military shooting ranges in the U.S.—ranges built with our tax dollars and facilities we enjoyed in the past. I understand fewer and fewer base commanders can accept the liability connected with letting civilians use the ranges. It does seem, however, given the right priority and exposure, the NRA could find a pressure point or a legal solution so again we all could enjoy these ranges so well located geographically and of superb competition quality.

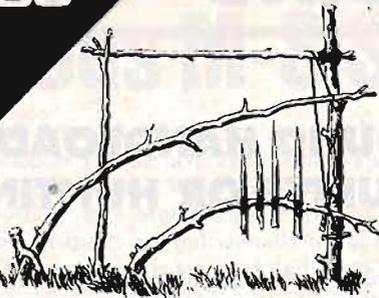
30'S HANDGUNNERS

Reading Lee Echols' "Handgunners of The 30's" in the November-December issue was like a visit with this shooter-comedian. I did not meet Lee until the Mid-Winter Matches of 1951, where he was the NRA Referee. Smitty Brown, of Tampa, a neighbor of only 50 miles away, had told me about Lee, but nothing could compare with meeting the gentleman in person. Lee, Charles Askins, Smitty, and Harry Reeves, (though Harry had to be more serious to keep his national-international champion edge for the Detroit P.D.), they *knew* handgunning. Don't ever sell them short on mental training, perseverance and contagious enthusiasm for their sport. Their personalities and friendliness attracted hundreds to pistol shooting. Also, never forget, these men were probably the best one-handed .38 revolver shots this country ever produced. They cocked that standard action job revolver, for the 5 shots in 10 seconds rapid-fire match, so fast you almost couldn't see their thumb move. Try that if you don't think their scores were remarkable!

ROBOT PROFESSIONALS

When this likeable type drifted from the matches and ranges and the robot professional came, I think that's when amateur handgunning started to die a little. That's when many stopped going to the club range for an afternoon of relaxation and fun. Golf or tennis claimed them, and most damaging to our sport, their youngsters along with them. Pistol silhouette matches have brought some of the fun back, but are

(Continued on page 26)



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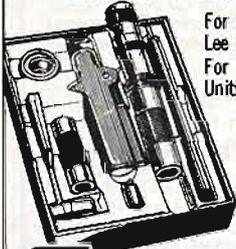
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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

.41 MAGNUM ROUND HANDLOADING IDEAL FOR SILHOUETTE OR HUNTING

In the spring of 1964, there blossomed an all-new round, the .41 Magnum. Proponents hailed its introduction by saying that it was the police cartridge of the future, a statement that was preceded (and followed) by extensive tests involving police departments—and a sizeable thatch of interested observers—throughout the land. It was, however, doubtful that a major police changeover would take place, even with a special purchase price that would lop a few bucks off the price of the also-new Smith & Wesson Model 57, which was specially chambered for the .41 Magnum. Full retail, by the way, was a mere \$140, the same as you'd have paid for the S&W Model 29 in .44 Magnum.

Reduced recoil, combined with stopping power that is superior to that of the .357 Magnum, render the .41 Magnum nearly ideal for silhouette shooting or hunting purposes. With these advantages in mind, it makes little difference that the round has had small success in the matter of being adopted by police departments. Furthermore, the fact that the .41 Magnum, standing as it does between the .357 and the .44, exists as the "16 gauge" of magnum handgun cartridges should take nothing from its merit. The .41 Magnum is rewarding to handload, and, because of its in-hand tractability, it is a joy to shoot.

A JOY TO SHOOT

My handloading of the .41 Magnum has been for a Model 57 with a 6-inch barrel. Prior to beginning, it was noted that the case's rim, which is approximately .488- to .489-inch in diameter with a thickness of .055- to .060-inch, will fit shellholders normally intended for .30-30-class rims, although there is a separate shellholder for it these days.

Before chronographing the following handloads, I wanted to check the bullet speeds on factory-loaded ammo. Five-shot strings in my gun resulted in an average velocity of 1415 fps for the jacketed soft-point load, and 1030 fps for the lead bullet load. These figures represent a moderate increase over velocities obtained in the original factory chronographings with a barrel of similar length.

Bullets in these handloads were swaged using half-jackets and were hollow-pointed. The idea behind hand-swaging bullets was to experiment with weights not commercially available to the handloader. Much more could have been done toward

obtaining higher velocities with the lighter bullets, but little would have been achieved beyond the sensational figures themselves. With both feet firmly on the ground, it is reasonable to recommend nothing lighter than 200 grains for the .41 magnum. The only exception might be noted in the case of the 150-grain load, which might be used as a light plinker. But, it's not adequate for serious shooting.

EFFECTIVE HANDLOADS

More effective handloads will result from the use of heavier bullets. For example, if you're into casting bullets, Lyman's No. 41026, cast of wheel-weight lead and sized to .410-inch diameter, will weigh out at about 240 grains. Propelled by 19.5 grains of 2400 and a CCI 350 primer, velocity will come to 1170 fps with a foot-pound energy rating of about 730.

If you prefer to stick with over-the-counter swaged bullets, Speer offers an excellent 220-grain semi-jacketed soft-point. This bullet, ahead of 19.5 grains of 2400 and the CCI 350 primer, will clock an average velocity of 1320 fps from a 6-inch barrel for about 850 foot pounds of energy.

Remember, with these or any handloads, that safety calls for reducing all charges by at least 10 percent. The load that may be tolerated by one gun can be excessive in another.

NOTE SLIGHT TAPER

It should be noted by all who handload that, especially in magnum calibers, resizing dies for straight-sided cases are machined internally so as to introduce a slight taper in the case wall. An example of this can be noted in average measurements of a group of six resized .41 Magnum cases. The diameter of the walls just ahead of the rim averaged .434-inch, while the average at the mouths was .429-inch. This represents a sizing reduction of .005-inch at the mouth, and .004-inch back near the rim when compared to measurements taken after the same group of cases was fired.

Also demonstrated is the existence of a .005-inch taper. As I have already suggested, the taper is intentional, for without it the loaded round would tend to lie on the bottom of the chamber and therefore bulge irregularly when fired. The taper also is necessitated by the fact that there is more resistance to resizing in the web area than at the mouth. If dies were machined

(Continued on page 30)

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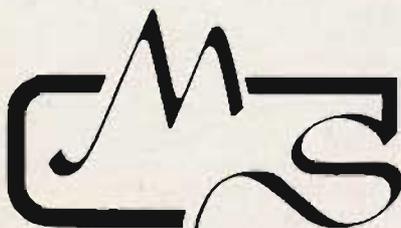
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HANDGUN LEATHER

BOB ARGANBRIGHT

DETERIORATING EFFECTS OF WATER STOPPED WITH PROPER LEATHER CARE

Twenty years ago, when I first became aware of the need for special leather for my new shooting sport of Fast Draw, the best competition belt and holster rigs could be purchased for approximately \$40. Later, the very popular Alfonso fast draw rigs were introduced at under \$50. In this day of \$1.30 gasoline, comparable rigs cost approximately \$150. Specialized leather for the increasingly popular practical pistol sport is becoming a major investment.

Bianchi's popular Pistolero rig is currently priced at \$149.90. The last price I have for the excellent practical rigs by G. W. Davis are in the \$90 to \$130 range, and the classic Sparks Hackathorn Special is \$107. Bianchi's Chapman rig is a bargain at \$74.40. In the PPC field, Bianchi offers a new steel-lined swivel holster for the bull barrel PPC guns for \$59.95 plus the cost of a belt, speedloader pouches, etc. The average field holster, of best quality, will set one back \$25 to \$50. With such investments as these, proper leather care becomes of major importance.

IPSC & PPC LEATHER

Of the rigs used by sportsmen today, the practical pistol shooters and the PPC shooters probably use their leather the hardest. This is mainly due to the matches being held outdoors in all types of weather. I have shot in a number of combat matches while it was raining. One tends to rush home and wipe the gun down and carefully oil it to prevent any rust damage, while tossing the competition rig in the corner until the next time it is needed. This is a mistake.

While age will cause leather to lose its natural oils and deteriorate, its biggest enemy is water. Water will tend to leach the natural oils out of the leather, also causing it to stretch and lose its proper shape and fit. Wet leather should *never be force dried!* Richard Nichols of Bianchi Gunleather told me they regularly receive samples of their holsters that are shrunken, shrivelled, twisted, wrinkled wrecks from being dried in the kitchen oven. This will destroy any holster. When thoroughly soaked, leather is soft and pliable. Belts should be laid out flat and left to dry slowly at room temperature. Leather should be handled carefully, as wet it is easily scratched. The holster, if wet to the point that it loses its proper shape, should be reshaped to the gun and then allowed to

dry naturally. Remember, once dry, it will retain whatever position or shape it was in when wet.

Once dry, the leather should be treated with a proper dressing. Traditionally, this has been neats foot oil. This is an oil made from the bones of cattle. I personally do not like to use neats foot oil repeatedly, as it darkens the leather more than I like. Whatever dressing is used, a little goes a long way.

Available today are leather care kits from such holster manufacturers as the



A good quality leather care kit is a must for taking care of fine leather.

George Lawrence Co., Safariland, and Bianchi Gunleather. I have used all three and they all do an excellent job. The Lawrence kit consists of their own neats foot oil formula and a dressing for a final finish. This will do a fine job, but I personally do not care for the dark brown color produced by their neats foot oil.

The Safariland kit is similar, containing a conditioner and a dressing. The conditioner is for use on very dry, deteriorated leather. I have used it successfully on a number of very old single action holsters. For maintenance of modern leather, the dressing is excellent. This kit comes packaged in an attractive box with two sheeps wool applicators. A "professional tip" from the instructions is to allow the leather and the dressing to warm in direct sunlight for a few minutes before application. This causes the conditioner or dressing to better penetrate the leather.

Of the three kits, I prefer the one from
(Continued on page 30)

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AMMO SCENE

BY JIM WELLER

HANDLOADS LACK MATCH ACCURACY ATTAINED BY FACTORY RELOADING

In the three or four years that I've been a competitive police shooter, I've acquired an amazing amount of shooting doo-dads, thingajigs, and whatnots, all for the purpose of giving me, (hopefully), just a little more edge and a few more points. One thing I learned, though, is that one of the most important decisions you can make as a competitive shooter is in your choice of ammunition. For the longest time, I fired my own reloads in matches, and although my 25 yard tallies were fair, my 50 yard scores still left something to be desired. Towards the end of the 1979 shooting season, I began using commercially reloaded ammunition from Precision Ammo Co. and right away there was a noticeable decrease in group size, along with the inevitable increase in score. Up until that time, I had used my reloads with my own cast bullets, but as you will see, there are some places you just can't cut corners.

TESTING VS THE COST

I decided to test various handloads and bullets, along with several types of factory match and commercial reloads, to prove to myself whether or not the extra expense justified itself. I receive no departmental backing in my shooting, so factory match ammo was pretty much out of the question. Factory fodder is presently averaging somewhere around \$12 per box, although somewhat cheaper by the case, while the better quality commercial reloads are running about \$50 per thousand rounds on the shooter-supplied brass. My own handloads, using wadcutters cast from wheel-weights, cost about a buck or so per box, not counting my time used in making them up.

The actual testing took place at 50 yards, since any NRA 1500 match includes 48 rounds from this distance. Not wanting to do this from a sandbagged rest, I enlisted the aid of Lee Custom Engineering, 46 E. Jackson St., Hartford, WI 53027 and procured one of their excellent Lee Pistol Rests. This little device is worth its weight in gold. It's small, light, and easy to set up. I have mine bolted to a piece of scrap wood, and I just C-clamp it to the shooting bench. Cost is minimal when you consider the alternative. Sixty bucks will get you the rest and one adaptor for the handgun of your choice, with adaptors available for all popular makes of handguns. It's really a bargain with today's inflated dollar.

With all the different brands of ammunition available today, it would have been impossible to obtain and fire all of it. Aside from the major ammo makers, there are countless numbers of places doing commercial reloading. I settled on match ammo from Federal, S&W, Frontier, and Winchester, while the commercial reloads were represented by Precision and Zero.

My handloads consisted of W-W once-fired match brass, filled with 3.2 gr. of W-W 231 powder and lit by that company's

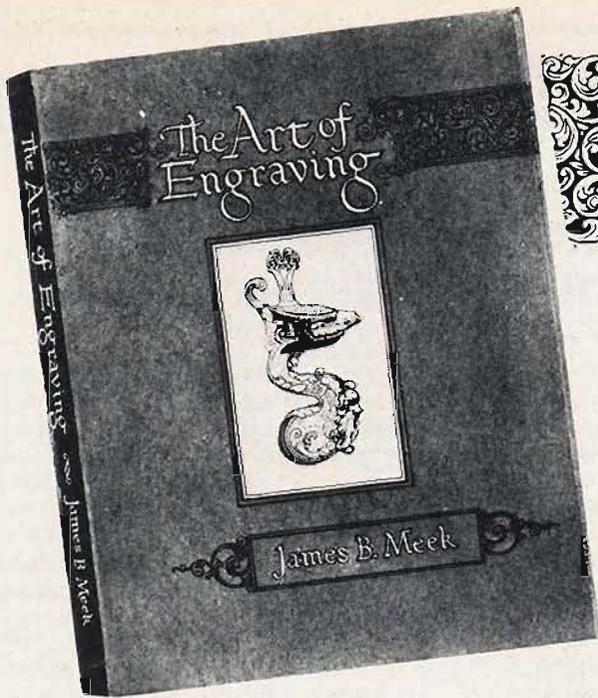


That edge you may need to win might come from using the right ammunition.

standard small pistol primer. This combination had proved to be the most accurate in my Colt handguns while using the home-cast wadcutters. These, incidentally, are DEBB slugs, which are sized to .357 and lubed with Micro-lube. I also tried some loads using the Hornady and 3-D HBWC, both .358 in size, and lubed with a very slippery dry lube. Powder was dropped from the Bonanza pistol measure with pre-drilled rotor. A light roll crimp was then placed on the case mouth after bullet seating.

Since I was interested in match accuracy, my Douglas-barrelled Colt with 1-10 twist was used. Fifty shots were fired from the Lee rest, with the barrel and cylinder receiving a thorough scrubbing between bullet brands. The forcing cone was also cleaned using a Lewis Lead Remover after every 50 shots. There was one exception to this which I'll get to later. I put up a clean backstop and fired one shot to find the point of impact, then placed a piece of white paper over the hole, and

(Continued on page 52)



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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

WHEN HUNTING SEASON ARRIVES THAT'S NOT THE TIME FOR NEW GEAR

With hunting seasons either approaching or in full swing, it's tempting to buy new equipment. Sometimes even desirable. Most of the time you are better off staying with the familiar and reliable that you've been using. When reliability suffers—that's the time to get it fixed or get into new gear in a hurry.

Swapping guns, particularly to go from one caliber to another or from a revolver to a single shot at the last possible minute is common. With season close we start daydreaming about getting the sights on hair. Anxiousness increases our willingness to buy. This malady is more of a problem with novices who are prone to believe they can buy their way to success. Just isn't in the cards, Charlie, it's still the guy behind the gun that has to locate the game and point the pistol.

THE NEW-GUN BUG

Obviously the shooter with a lot of experience can get the "new gun bug" too. But, he usually knows what he's doing and will make his buy in time to get set up right before hunting. If he doesn't find things to his liking, he'll simply use his other equipment. Compare that to the novice who practices with .38 wadcutters in his .357 and suddenly decides he needs a .44 Magnum. He rushes out and trades his M-19 for a Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum complete with dies, bullet mold and powder three days prior to season's opening. Chances are slim that this guy is going to have it together in three days. He obviously would have been better off practicing with his .357 for three days rather than trying to buy his way to success.

TEMPTATION TO SWITCH

Another temptation is to switch from iron sights to scopes. True, you can't shoot any better than you can see and a scope certainly enables you to see better—after you are familiar with using it. Time after time, I've had shooters ask to look through a scoped handgun and never get it positioned so they can see through it. That's not a slam at scoped handguns or at the shooters. It's simply a fact of life that shooting rapidly and accurately with a scoped handgun doesn't happen automatically when you bolt one to your gun. It simply takes practice to become comfortable and "automatic" with a scoped handgun. Personally, I find I'm at least as fast; and probably considerably more accurate

with a scope than I am with iron sights. I've also been shooting scoped handguns about 20 years. It doesn't take 20 years experience to become familiar with using scopes on handguns, but it does take a good bit of practice. You still have to give a little thought to mounting systems in order to find one that will stay on the hard kickers but scopes by Bushnell, T/C, Redfield, Leupold and Hutson all seem quite reliable in the field. If I had to pick the toughest of them I'd have to go with the Redfield. The Hutson is the smallest. Leupolds are lighter than Redfields. The T/Cs are in between on weight. The new Bushnell has a power booster to instantly change from 1.5 to 2.5 power.

BETTER MOUNT SCOPE RIGHT

Each scope has its specific advantage and all had better be mounted right on any hard kicker or they aren't going to stay on the gun very long.

I very vividly remember getting a very nice press release on a base and rings 6-8 years ago. It looked fairly good so I called and listened to the spiel. I was assured a 10" T/C .30-30 posed no problem to this rig's reliability. After voicing my doubts, I reluctantly agreed to put it on a T/C .30-30 as directed. On the eighteenth shot, scope, base, rings and all came off. Cut me three times going by (hairline, side and back of the head) and crashed into the window of the station wagon. I still hear of similar occurrences and they are still unnecessary. Unfortunately when recoil exceeds that of the .357 Magnum some of the over-the-counter bases give problems. The Redfield base seems about the best over-the-counter base if it's properly installed. It still depends on four 6 x 48 screws to affix it to the gun. Now this is fine on one 14" .357 Herrett T/C I've used quite a bit with the Redfield rig, but I wouldn't trust it on several calibers I've developed—such as the .338, .375, .411 and .439 JDJ or the .45-70 that are capable of generating considerable recoil. For those, I've developed a base that uses six screws and three Bushnell rings. Installed by SSK (Rt. 1, Della Drive, Bloomington, OH 43910) it runs \$50.50.

SIX MONTHS AHEAD

The time to experiment with new equipment is six months before hunting season; not six days before. When you hunt you
(Continued on page 48)

NEW CHARTER EXPLORER II TARGET PISTOL

Take hold of the most exciting new handgun on the market...the new Explorer II by Charter Arms!

The Explorer II is a semi-automatic, clipped target pistol...functionally proven from design to performance. It has a style all its own! This highly accurate .22 LR pistol comes with 8-round magazine and standard 8" barrel which can be interchanged with other barrel lengths to be announced soon.

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The Explorer II features a new adjustable rear sight with square notch, elevation reference line and definite *click* indication. Has snag-free

blade front sight, convenient thumb safety and heat-cured, semi-gloss, textured black enameled finish.

Accessories available: Explorer II scope mount which accommodates any standard 1" dovetailed ring, extra 8-round magazines, optional barrels (available soon) and handsome black vinyl gun case with humidity-proof padding.

Note: All Charter Explorer II's are tested for functional reliability and are sighted in at the factory. Each gun is covered by a Charter Arms' one year full warranty.

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Shown: Explorer II with standard 8" barrel (6" & 10" bbls. available as later option), standard 8-round mag. & extra mag. (optional). Explorer II scope mount is an optional accessory and naturally does not come with scope.

PISTOLSMITHING

BY CLAUD S. HAMILTON

LATEST RECOIL SYSTEM FOR COLT .45 LOWERS GROUP SIZE IN RANSOM TEST

D.B.P. Engineering of New Orleans, has recently started production of a new recoil system for the Government Model Colt and the Commander.

The D.B.P. system is really quite simple. It substitutes two stainless steel parts for standard Colt parts: a long recoil spring guide and an open-ended recoil spring plug. These differ from the Colt parts in that the guide extends all the way to the muzzle and controls the spring throughout its entire travel. The open-ended plug serves to provide better control of the recoil spring in compression and to prevent kinking and buckling. More consistent and even spring performance from shot to shot, says the company, should give better functional reliability. Felt recoil is reported to be more manageable for the shooter, and better groups are possible off the Ransom Rest.

WATCH RECOIL SPRING PLUG

The D.B.P. System was tried in a new Series 70/Mk IV .45. As always with these pistols, care is required to assure that the recoil spring plug is kept under control and pointed away from the face as it is removed. This plug is under considerable pressure and can easily put out an eye if you get careless.

After disassembling the pistol in the usual way, and removing the slide from the receiver, and the recoil spring, guide and plug, place the slide upside down with barrel and bushing in locked position. D.B.P. advises that all parts be well-oiled at this point. The new long recoil spring guide is placed in position first, resting on the bottom of the barrel and with its base against the barrel link. Next, the recoil spring is inserted from the front and seated all the way home on the guide. This is not as easy as it sounds; the guide has a specially made enlarged seat at rear to tightly control the spring and it takes a bit of doing to get the spring onto this seat.

Next, the slide is assembled to the receiver in the usual manner and the slide stop pin is inserted and locked. Cock and lock the hammer with the thumb safety to hold the slide securely in position. Place the new, open ended plug over the recoil spring. Keep forward the end which has the retaining cut inside to catch the spring and the groove on the outside which mates with the barrel bushing. This plug is more difficult to seat than the original because of its sharp edge. I found it wise to use a flat

wooden surface to force the plug home and hold it 'til the bushing could be swung into the locked position.

Once assembled, there is no detectable difference in the way the pistol operates manually. A friend and I took the pistol to the range to see how it might perform with the new system and the old.

Over the years I have learned that I do not do very well until I have shot a few groups, so we took along a .45 to which I have recently added a fine Bar Sto stainless steel barrel which fits so tightly that the gun will not yet cycle properly. We each fired it a magazine or two and got "warmed up."

TEST FIRING GROUPS

Then we moved to the new Series 70/Mk IV, "as issued," and fired two groups, each, standing, two hands, and sitting, two hands off of a sand bag rest. I broke the gun down and inserted the D.B.P. recoil parts and we repeated the drill. All groups were fired using Super Vel 190 JHPs, and there were no malfunctions of any kind. Our impressions were completely subjective, of course, but here's what we found:

a. We agreed that we did a little bit better shooting in terms of accuracy, with the new D.B.P. recoil system. I could not prove this from an analysis of the targets; it was just a clear impression we shared.

b. We were both surprised to note what seemed to be a little bit sharper recoil with

(Continued on page 26)



Comparison of longer DBP spring guide (top) and standard Colt part (below).

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PISTOLSMITHING

(Continued from page 24)

the D.B.P. system. It was as though a "hotter" load had been substituted, which of course we had not done.

c. Martha Penso, my companion, felt that she sensed less of the characteristic "twisting of the wrist" the .45 is famous for. I didn't share her impression and my observation of her hands in firing tends to confirm my belief that there is no less twist with the new system. This seems to make sense to me; after all it is the starting of rotation of that heavy 230 grain ball to the left that makes the gun want to rotate around to the right, and that has nothing to do with the recoil system as far as I can see.

D.B.P., in their literature, state that they were able to get better accuracy off the Ransom Rest with their new system. Our next step was to mount the Series 70/Mk IV Colt on the rest and see what sort of groups we could get with the early morning "Coffee shakes" eliminated. Here we did get a clear difference. I fired several groups using a splendid lot of old Norma 230 grain JHPs and some Super Vel 190 JHPs and got distinctly better groups using the D.B.P. system:

Nothing to write home about? I agree.



Muzzle view of the two systems. Colt is on the right and DBP on the left.

But, remember, please, that this gun was not tuned in any way and was in fact "right out of the factory box."

D.B.P. rests their cast for improved performance on their claim that the long recoil spring guide keeps the spring under better control and makes slide action more consistent round to round. I am not equipped to test out this claim in depth, but my clear impression is that they are correct. Installing this system won't give you a "tuned" gun, but it has a definite contribution to offer. D.B.P. offers the system for the Government Model for \$28.50 and for the Commander for \$33.50. D.B.P. Engineering, 7821 Willow Street New Orleans, LA 70118.

RANSOM REST TEST

RECOIL SYSTEM
Colt "As Issued"
D.B.P. System

BEST GROUP
2.41 inches
1.12 inches

AVERAGE GROUP
2.707 inches
1.505 inches

SIGHT SETTINGS

(Continued from page 14)

they available to the apartment dweller in D.C. or Miami, as the fun bullseye used to be?

Had Smitty Brown lived beyond 1957, he would probably now have shooting on equal status with tennis, both money and prestige. Along with his clowning and laughing at himself and with others, were some very futuristic promotional ideas for tournaments. Even in the '50's, he was working on having television screens behind shooters so spectators could watch their targets, knowing that from spectator interest, acceptance and participation would come growth for the sport.

Unfortunate for shooting that television is such a big part of youngster's lives. For a week after McEnroe beat Borg at the U.S. Nationals, I saw boys and girls rushing to our city tennis courts. They might have headed to the ranges had they seen shooters winning at Camp Perry. Expenses for those parents will be more for tennis coaches and high entry fees than they would be buying a Feinwerkbau air rifle for their son and daughter and seeing them

shoot for the next Olympic team. However, after the Olympics what? Unless shooting is made a television sport, we'll never have the tournament prize money needed to attract millions to shooting. It was not done in tennis and golf until 10-20 years ago. I will always believe with the proper emphasis by the NRA, it could be done for shooting.

When the NRA gets that rare television time now, I regret seeing our spokesmen get sidetracked on self-defense issues and crime statistics. The NRA is the National Governing Body for a sport—shooting. Take the offensive, not the defensive, with how many Olympic, Pan American and World Championship shooting teams there are and how many medals they have won for the U.S. A sport will be much harder to outlaw, (kick boxing even gets TV time); don't get involved in laws and crime stories. Brag about how many American women are NRA members, instead of not knowing that figure, and how many youngsters are in training for the Olympic shooting teams. Promote the sport, and the means for performing that sport will have better chance to survive its critics and enemies.

Next issue, what ever happened to NRA PPC Match I?!

LUCY

SPEAK OUT

SATISFIED CUSTOMER PRAISES GRIP MAKER

In simple gratitude I would like to relate to you an experience I had with Ted Schiermeier.

I ordered a set of his two-handed grips for an improved Blackhawk frame. When the grips arrived, there was a small chip in one panel at the trigger guard filler and a tapered gap was evident at the front seam of the grips.

Not being particularly upset, I stuffed the grips back in the jiffy bag in which they had been shipped and returned them to Schiermeier, along with a note explaining the problem. I also enclosed a check for the difference in price between the grips for the Ruger and plain walnut forend and grip for a Contender, which I had acquired in the meantime.

Well, the other night upon returning home from work, I noticed a jiffy bag propped up against my door left there by the mailman (all this takes place through first class mail and so Mr. Schiermeier's response time is quite short) and, sure enough, upon opening I discovered the forend and grip for my Contender. The darndest looking walnut I ever saw in my life. Sure looked a lot like myrtle.

A phone call to Schiermeier the next day confirmed my suspicion that the two pieces were well-matched dark myrtle. When I inquired as to whether or not he had made a mistake because, after all, the myrtle is significantly more expensive, he informed me that he had not made a mistake but that this was his manner of assuring that I would be a satisfied customer.

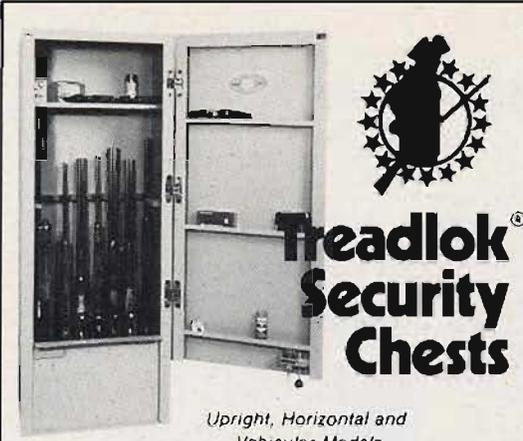
Subsequently, Ed Harris from the NRA mentioned that an acquaintance of his had received similar service from Schiermeier.

David M. Croyle
Lake Ridge, Virginia

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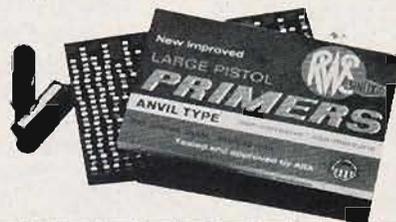
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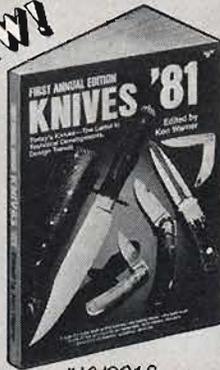
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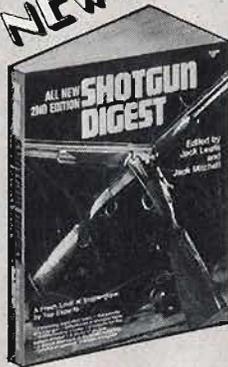
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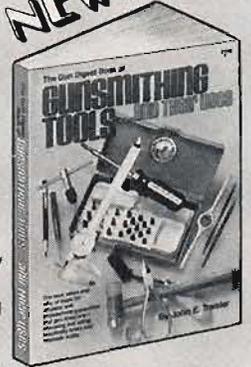
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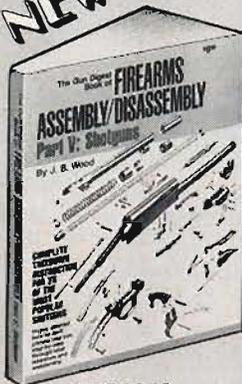
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Originally scheduled for four parts, this highly regarded series has now been expanded to five with this volume on shotguns. In Parts I and II, the author broke down automatic pistols and revolvers; in Parts III and IV, rimfire and centerfire rifles. Here he dismantles and reassembles shotguns with the same expertise and meticulous detail. He covers most modern guns, includes a broad selection of the older, more popular guns and adds some not-so-popular, tricky ones. Disassembly takes you step-by-step to the "field strip" level, cautioning about proceeding further without having developed a basic mechanical aptitude. With that note of advice, Wood continues to describe the

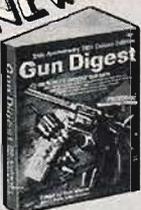
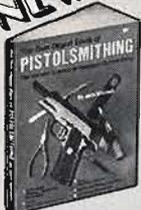
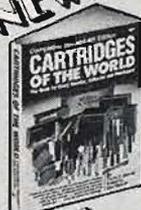
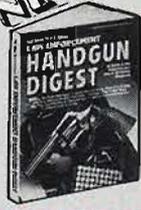
complete disassembly procedure, down to the last pin, spring and screw. Accompanying the text are hundreds of close-up photographs showing the most intricate detail. Where reassembly involved more than just reversing the order, Wood illustrates the more complicated steps to "avoid an embarrassing trip to the gunsmith carrying a box full of parts". Each volume also includes an illustrated section on tools, and a list of sources for specialized items. All told, this series gives the most comprehensive, uniform and professional presentation available to either hobbyist or gunsmith. Each book contains 288 to 320 8½" x 11" pages.

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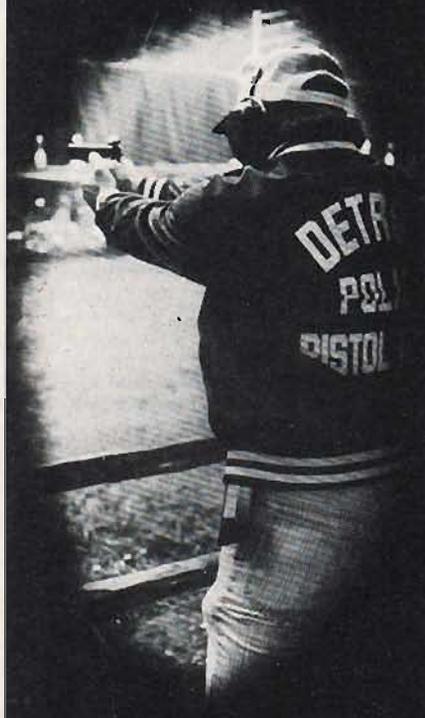
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'81 COMBAT SHOOT, BOX 578
CENTRAL LAKE, MI 49622
or call 800-253-7090

HANDLOADING

(Continued from page 16)

so as to attempt to squeeze the walls of the fired case to an equal diameter from mouth to rim, a bulge would probably appear at the junction of the case wall and the web.

And, finally, without the taper introduced in resizing, there would be a situation wherein the cartridge would rest at the bottom of the chamber so as to cause the bullet to be positioned out of alignment with the forcing cone. The result, of course, would cause needless bullet deformation and lost accuracy.

There is a constant effort on the part of reliable, established die manufacturers to make resizing dies that will enable the handloader to turn out the most accurate ammunition possible. Those of you who have magnum pistol resizing dies for straight-sided cases should be aware that the properly resized case creates a most desirable foundation for maximum accuracy. However, if you find that you have a resizing die that does not produce a slight taper in your straight-sided magnum revolver brass, it is best to resize no more than a distance equivalent to the depth to which the bullet is seated. If irregular chamber diameters within the cylinder of your gun prevent this practice, deeper resizing with a die that introduces the

necessary taper will be unavoidable.

A slight rolled crimp at the junction of the copper half-jack and the lead on swaged bullets, and at the crimping groove on cast bullets, is recommended. This crimp is necessary, especially with the .41 Magnum and other magnum revolver rounds, to prevent bullets from becoming dislodged. The correct amount of crimp can be set through careful adjustment of the bullet-seating die in two-die sets, or somewhat more easily with a separate crimping die in three-die sets.

My observation over the years has been that many handloaders tend to set too heavy a crimp in apparent compliance with the idea that more is better. Actually, overcrimping will cause unnecessary bullet damage, increased pressure, and will succeed in shortening the life of cases. The correct amount of crimp should therefore be no more than is needed to hold the bullet firmly in place, and you will find that this can be accomplished with moderate pressure applied to the press handle.

The .41 Magnum is not to be overlooked for being underpowered. It is equally illogical to classify it as an oddball simply because it generally failed acceptance by a majority of police departments. It makes a lot more sense to regard this quiet useful cartridge on its merit. It is, in this light, possessed of excellent balance in terms of reloadability, and outstanding potential in terms of effective power. 

.41 MAGNUM

Bullet	Powder	Amount	Primer	Velocity	Energy	Remarks
210 gr.	2400	21.0	CCI 350	1425	946	Maximum
210 gr.	2400	20.0	CCI 350	1305	794	Normal
190 gr.	2400	22.0	CCI 350	1458	897	Maximum
165 gr.	2400	23.0	CCI 350	1543	871	Maximum
150 gr.	Unique	12.0	CCI 300	1241	512	Normal

HANDGUN LEATHER

(Continued from page 18)

Bianchi Gunleather. It contains mink oil conditioner, saddle soap, a silicone solution, and a dressing (Gunleather Lotion). Included are four sheep's wool applicators and an informative booklet on proper leather care.

One of my prized possessions is an Andy Anderson Walk & Draw Western fast draw rig purchased in the mid 1960's. Being one of my favorites, it gets a lot of use. When not being used, it hangs in the basement, not the best place to store leather articles, due to the dampness. The belt was beginning to show the first signs of deterioration with surface cracks from dryness. Here was the perfect subject to test the Bianchi kit on.

Since the rig wasn't dirty, I skipped the saddle soap and went directly to the mink oil conditioner. "Oil" is a misnomer, as this

is a thick cream. Following the instructions, I rubbed a small quantity of the mink oil into the dry leather with my finger tips, replacing the vital oils which had been lost over the years. Leaving the rig overnight so it would absorb a maximum of the cream, the following morning I wiped it off with a soft paper towel, bringing it back to a rich, soft luster.

The mink oil was followed by a treatment with the Gunleather Lotion. Being a liquid, it gets into any areas which might have been missed with the mink oil. Quoting from the booklet supplied with the kit: "Gunleather Lotion is a treatment that provides some nutrient value to the leather, softening and preserving for longer life and vitality. It also gives a deep luster and shine to a treated article." The Lotion was allowed to dry overnight also, and the rig was then buffed with a soft paper towel. This combination of mink oil and Gunleather Lotion applications brought my favorite Anderson rig back to its original condition and beauty.

Another leather care product I have tried is Lexol. This is a liquid leather preservative using neats foot oil as a base. It is easily available, often seen wherever shoe polish is sold. While Lexol works well in preserving leather, I have had trouble with it becoming contaminated. It appears to become contaminated from rust forming in the metal can it comes in. While not a problem when used on dark brown or black leather, I often used Lexol on new natural leather, and the finished article would have dark streaks in the finish. Lexol has recently appeared packaged in plastic bottles. This should prevent the rust problems.

If you have a favorite belt and holster rig, give it the proper care and it will last a lifetime. Any of the above products will keep it like new for you.



INDUSTRY INSIDER

(Continued from page 6)

West Coast outfit that will make the gun tells us that a production model is at least a year away, and that no magazine writers will get prototypes, only Jeff.

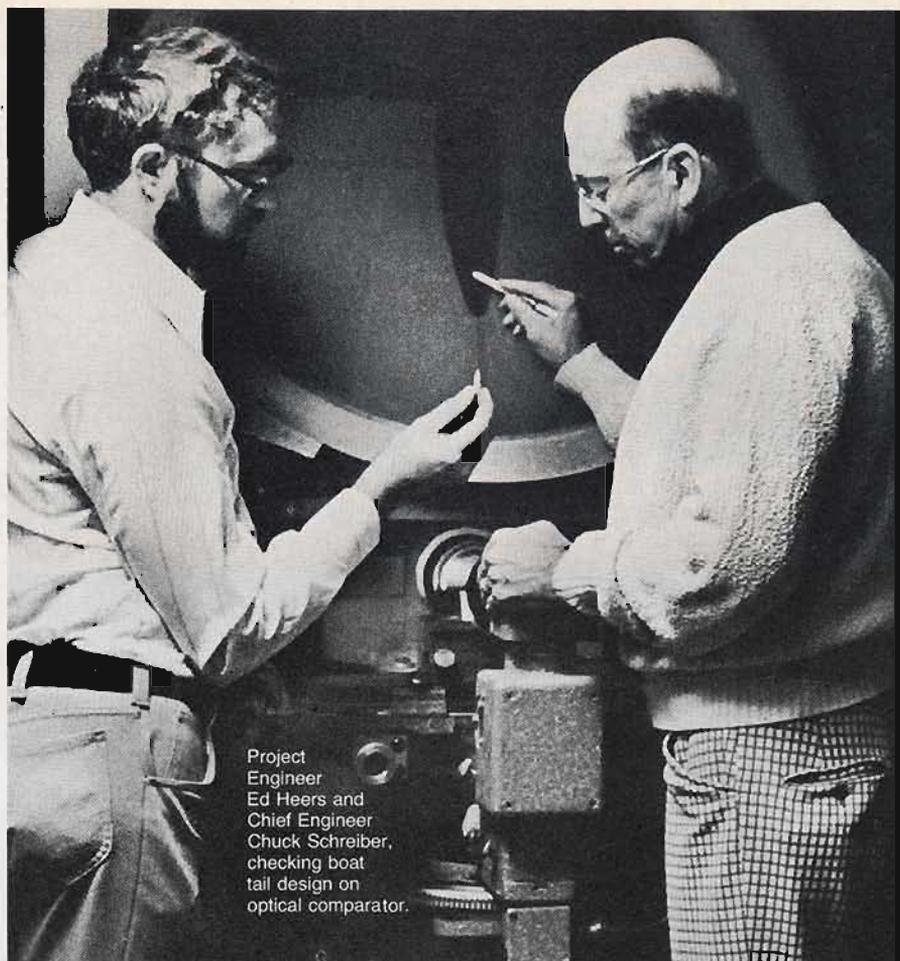
The first stainless steel guns from **Charter Arms** are now being produced. These are special limited edition guns with only 500 being made, but they are sure to be forerunners of things to come.

The .25 auto from **Sile/Seecamp** should be in production and hitting the market by the time you read this. The delay, we hear, was caused by a decision to up production—better the customer should wait a bit so that dealers would have a continuing flow after the initial shipments.

The .357 Magnum auto by **Coonan Arms** may be in production by the time you read this, but this is based on some additional financing. Bill Coonan is hoping for a February start-up, and advises that the second prototype is functioning beautifully.

We have, on the desk, no less than three separate drawings of **prototype .45 auto** pistols. All are just paper guns at this time, and only one is what could be called revolutionary in design. One is from a very talented designer in Canada who is working to get a job in the U.S. Another is from a Californian who spent a lot of time and money testing more than two dozen autos in both .45 and 9mm and concluded that a design utilizing the best points of many of the test guns could be worked up; nothing startling here, and from the drawing it seems that from twenty feet it would look just like a Colt Government Model 45.

In the "Anything is possible" Department, watch for a report on a **.375 Win. Mag. revolver** in a future issue of *American Handgunner*.



Project Engineer Ed Heers and Chief Engineer Chuck Schreiber, checking boat tail design on optical comparator.

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WHEN you open a box of Hornady Match bullets, you'll find not only a premium match bullet, but a lot of care and confidence as well. It's put there by the "Matchmakers" at the Hornady plant in Grand Island, Nebraska. They're dedicated shooters, too...interested in helping you score better and keenly aware of what it takes to do the job. They know that uniformity is the key to accuracy in bullet production...and that every step in the Hornady bullet making process must be performed with unvarying precision. Every jacket must be drawn to the exact same thickness...every tiny point must be carefully formed and the concentricity of the projectile must be maintained.

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Shooting NRA with the SCOPED PISTOL

By William F. Krentz

Since the advent of the cartridge revolver and the auto-loading pistol there has been very little real change in the handgun. Along about the turn of the century a man by the name of E. Patridge introduced what we know today as patridge sights, i.e., square front sight post and square rear sight notch. This was a big step in the development of the accuracy potential of the pistol. Except for some sophistication of windage and elevation mechanisms, progress stopped right there. There has been many new developments in most areas of firearms and ammunition interest, but sighting equipment on target handguns has been, for the most part, at a standstill.

Within the last decade however, the scope-mounted pistol has appeared on the scene in increasing quantities. Hunters were the first to use a scope on a pistol and more recently shooters are discovering the advantages for bullseye tournament shooting. Optical sights are allowed in NRA competition, (rule 3.2, 3.3, 3.4). At the 1978 U.S. National Championship Pistol Matches at Camp Perry Ohio, approximately 6 percent of the competitors were using some kind of an optical sight. One year later at the 1979 National Matches, 13 percent of the shooters were using scopes.

Since the scoped target pistol is relatively new, there is much to learn about equipment, methods of mounting and shooting technique. Conversation with prospective scope shooters at Camp Perry and some of the Regional Matches indicate that shooters are having difficulty getting a scope

Learning about new equipment, shooting, and mounting technique can bring added accuracy





Above, High Standard Military .22LR below Leupold Model 8 2X on Weaver 1" extension rings and #16 bases.

properly mounted on their target pistols. This is especially true with the .45 ACP. Like any new idea, there are few instructions on "how to" information available.

The basics of firing an accurate shot with an iron sighted pistol demand that the sights be aligned perfectly, the trigger pressed smoothly and straight to the rear without disturbing that sight alignment until the pistol is fired and the bullet gets out of the barrel. It doesn't sound like much, but a multitude of errors can occur, and usually do, in this seemingly simple process. One of the greatest of these errors is improper sight alignment. A misalignment of 1/100th of an inch will move the point of impact 3 inches at 50 yards. With an optically sighted pistol "sight alignment" is accomplished with the scope; and all of the shot dispersion (error) ordinarily attributed to faulty sight alignment with iron sights is eliminated. A shooter need only to look thru the scope, placing the reticle as close to the desired point of impact as he can hold, and squeeze the trigger straight and smoothly to the rear until the shot breaks. All of

Above, Ruger Mark I with bull barrel sporting Leupold Model 8 2X mounted with Weaver 1" rings and Weaver No. 32 bases.

those ugly sevens and eights normally due to the front sight being over to one side or slightly high in the rear sight notch as the shot is fired, will now be nines and tens. All of the concentration directed to perfect sight alignment with conventional iron sights can now be placed on holding ability, trigger squeeze and follow thru.

Some new scope shooters are at first deterred by the more apparent wobble or movement of the scoped pistol. For those willing to go back to the disciplines of
(Continued on page 48)

Below, Colt .38 Special conversion equipped with grip mount and adapter for Bushnell 1.3X Phantom Scope.



Above, close-up of altered Leupold Gold Cup slide mount as described in text. Scope was raised with welded shims to insure clearance for cases.

Left, accuracy improves dramatically when the scope is added on the pistol. On the .45, good mounts are a must to insure scope will not come loose.



Colt National Match .38 Special midrange with Bushnell Magnum Phantom 1.3X mounted on a Custom Grip Plate Mount by D. W. James solves problem of the slide with scope and mount attached that becomes too heavy to function right.

HIGH STANDARD'S Rapid-Fire PISTOLS

By Charles E. Petty

A company policy decision made by Carl Swebelius, founder of High Standard, and George Wilson Sr., chief engineer, in the late 1930s, determined that High Standard would "cater to the target shooter." Nowhere in their history is the application of this policy more evident than in their efforts to produce a pistol for International Rapid-Fire pistol competition. This is a highly specialized branch of the shooting sports that is little known in this country, but widely practiced by shooters in the rest of the world.

From a range of 25 meters the shooter faces a bank of five silhouette targets. Upon his command the targets turn, and he must fire one shot at each target in the allotted time. The customary 600 point aggregate is fired in two half-courses of 30 shots each, and in Olympic competition the match is fired on two consecutive days. The shooter fires two five-shot strings at each time interval for the 300-point match.

These High Standard guns include the experimental model at the top, and the long slide and short slide versions with milled porting.

High Standard spared no cost or effort to design the ultimate pistol for Olympic shooting





Rapid-Fire

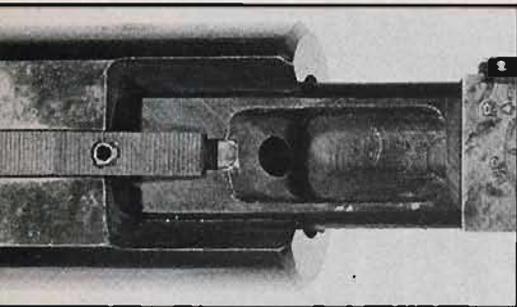
Since the shooter is required to begin with his arm down at a 45 degree angle, and not raise it until the targets are faced, he has only about 3½ seconds for a fast string. Given these circumstances a very special handgun is required. The .22 Short is the standard round, for even the mildest

of .22 Long Rifle loads would cause the shooter to lose sight of the target in recoil, and there just isn't any time for recovery.

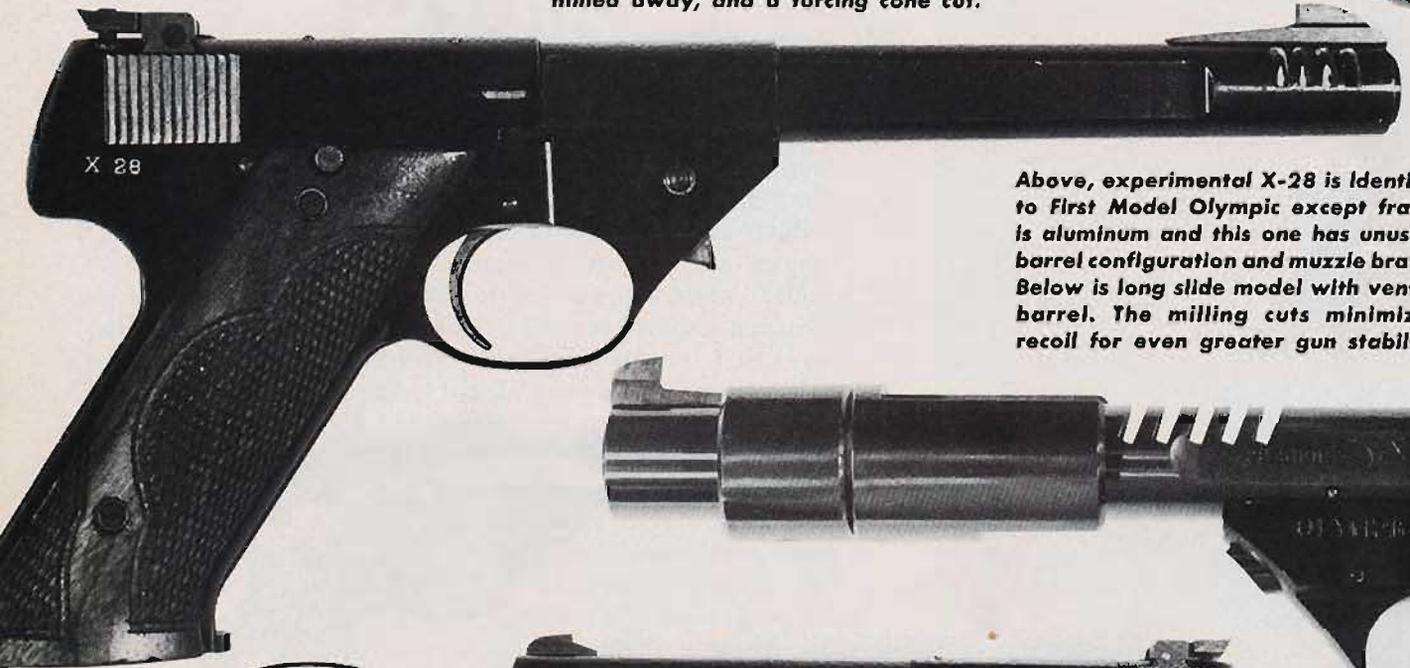
When International Rapid Fire became an Olympic event in 1948, the competitors all used special Hammerli and Walther guns. American shooters used them too, for there was no suitable American-made gun. High Standard was quick to recognize the situation, and the Olympic name first appeared on a High Standard gun in late 1949.

Their First Model Olympic was simply an adaptation of their Model G-E to .22 Short. In what is believed to be a first, the company used aluminum for the slide. The

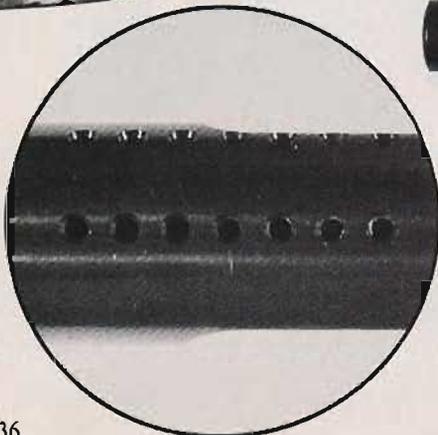
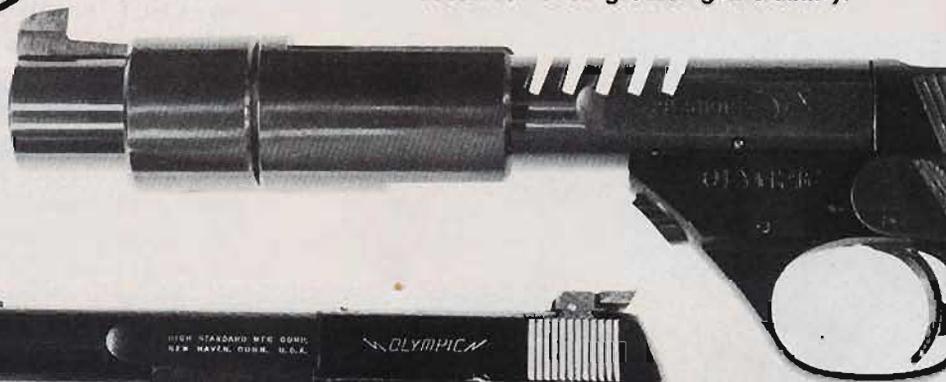
light metal provided more reliable functioning with the Short round. A special magazine was also needed, and the First Model Olympic was furnished with a peculiar curved design. Functioning wasn't very reliable, primarily due to the magazine, and sales were slow. Only 1200 of the First Model Olympic were sold before it was discontinued in 1950 along with all the other guns of the "G" series. Available evidence suggests that High Standard continued to try to improve its Olympic model. I have an experimental First Model Olympic with aluminum frame and an unusual muzzle brake, which appears to be a transition piece between the First and



Above, short slide identical to pistol used by Col. W. W. McMillan when he achieved Gold Medal for U.S. in 1960. Left, the only remaining example of a "jump" barrel. Entire bore has been milled away, and a forcing cone cut.



Above, experimental X-28 is identical to First Model Olympic except frame is aluminum and this one has unusual barrel configuration and muzzle brake. Below is long slide model with vented barrel. The milling cuts minimized recoil for even greater gun stability.



Left, barrel with 14 parts. Row on right side used escaping gases to help shooter to swing the gun to the right. Above, Standard First Model Olympic only model to use the curved magazine.

Second Model Olympics.

When preparations were begun for the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki, High Standard was determined to compete. According to Harry Sefreid, a High Standard engineer at the time, the company prepared a special group of ten guns similar to their Second Model Olympic. These had an aluminum frame and a muzzle brake similar to the author's experimental gun. The curved magazine had been replaced by an improved design with the same external dimensions as the Long Rifle type.

For some reason High Standard did little work on the rapid fire guns between 1952 and 1967. Instead, the focus shifted to the military. Competitive shooting during this time was almost completely dominated by the service teams. The Army and Air Force became the power-houses of shooting with the Navy and Marine Corps following. Each produced their share of champions, and it was a Marine, Capt. W. W. McMillan, who lit up the shooting world with his gold medal performance at Rome in 1960. Using a High Standard Model 102 Supermatic modified by Marine armorers at Quantico, Virginia, McMillan found himself in a three-way tie for the gold at the end of the match. A shoot-off was conducted by firing three five-shot strings at the four-second time. McMillan dropped only three points to give America her first, and only, Rapid-Fire win. McMillan's feat provided a real boost in interest in the sport, and the various military units began serious research. Their efforts were directed toward the modification of production guns. If this was a handicap, it was certainly not acknowledged, and was outweighed by the ingenuity of the gunsmiths and shooters who worked closely together.

At the Air Force Marksmanship School, a number of gunsmiths and shooters worked on the developments of a rapid-fire gun based on the High Standard. Among these were shooters Sgt. Edwin Teague and Maj. Franklin Green, and gunsmiths Sgt. Lou Willing and Sgt. Bob Day. The result of their work were several successful modified guns and a wealth of experience.

As late as 1967 however, there was no American production-made gun suitable for International competition. In a daring move High Standard independently committed to produce a high quality rapid-fire gun for American shooters. This was a risky venture with little chance of profit. Perhaps profit wasn't their motive.

Beginning in June, 1967, High Standard assigned George Snyder, Carl Leidke, and four modelmakers to the project full time. Their goal was a Gold Medal at Mexico City in a year. No expense was spared, and Leidke and Snyder made frequent trips to Lackland, Ft. Benning, and Quantico to discuss and test various ideas. The Air Force co-operated extensively, even to the

(Continued on page 54)

Olympic Gold for U.S. hope lies in future



In the Olympics held in Rome, Italy in 1960, U.S. Olympic Shooting Team member Col. Bill McMillan won the Rapid-Fire event, giving the U.S. a Gold Medal. The U.S. has not won the event since then. Reasons vary as to why.

For one thing, scores are up. In 1948, the first time the Rapid-Fire event was held, the winning score, by Hungary, was 580. By 1960, it took Col. McMillan a 587 to win. The Olympic record was set in 1976 with a score by East Germany, of 597. Although this score has yet to be beaten in Olympic competition, the event's current winning ticket still has not dropped appreciably—the 1980 Gold Medal went to Rumania for a 596, just one point below the record. But not only is the winning score higher, now it takes a higher score than ever just to make the team. Col. McMillan calls the score needed to win in 1984 "awesome." It's not getting any easier.

But so are the shooters getting better, and U.S. shooters are better than ever. So why can't we produce a winner?

One Shooting Team member, Chief Hubert H. Legg, USAF, who won the Bronze Medal for Standing Pistol in Mexico City in 1973, says the problem lies in part in the attitude of Americans towards its shooters. "We don't practice it on a large scale like they do in Europe, it's not popular here," says Chief Legg. "In Europe, shooting competition is a national occupation, like our baseball and football—it's a national sport.

Another obstacle to an individual wanting to become proficient enough to shoot the Olympics is the high cost of practice equipment. The target mechanism, which is officially of a mechanical turning design, would be very costly for an individual to own. Plus, it is well known that target guns of International target capability are not cheap, but run into four figures on up.

Also along with the lack of public support and lack of popularity comes the related problem of no competition. An individual may practice as much as he wants, but without the benefit of competitive shooting experiences, he has little chance against the competition-proven Europeans. For the U.S. to scoop its second Gold Medal in Rapid-Fire in 1984, says Chief Legg, who's seen what it takes, the shooter will have to have been experienced in shooting under the pressure of competition.

Col. McMillan thinks there is hope yet for the U.S. "Our Juniors Program is off and running," he says, "and that's where the talent lies for the future." The problem with the older members, says McMillan, is that "they don't specialize." They are proficient at shooting four or five different guns, and won't settle on one to excel with. Hopefully, some of the Juniors will settle on Rapid-Fire as a specialty and the U.S. will have a chance to win a second Gold.

The only thing then, says Col. McMillan, is to concentrate on the two essential techniques: coordination and timing. We know Americans are capable of winning. They have won in the Pan-American games and in Rapid-Fire, and a couple of 600's have been shot in practice sessions, according to Mike Tipa, NRA Asst. Director of International Activities.

The past shows the U.S. can do it, the future is encouragingly ahead of us, and the junior talents are being mined. We'll make it yet.

HANDGUN FIREPOWER



If a large caliber has one-shot stopping power, but a small bore can put more rounds in the target with less recoil, thus greater accuracy—which is better for you?

By Claud S. Hamilton



Webster defines "firepower" as the capability of a ship, tank, gun or aircraft to deliver shots or missiles against a target. For the layman it is usually a comparative term by which military items competing for dollars can be compared. A "bigger bang for the buck."

For the professional field artilleryman, however, firepower means a great deal more. It is the very practical business of management applied to artillery fires. The objective is always to apply *measured* force of the *most effective kind* to each target. And, as in all other human endeavor, economy is an ever present concern; this time economy in the use of ammunition.

What does all of this have to do with handguns and handgunning? Well, the essential difference between artillery and handguns isn't really size as one might think. It's the human element. Firing artillery is much like shooting handguns off the Ransom Rest—the gun carriage, like the rest, pretty much takes the human element out so that you can concentrate on the performance of the gun and its ammuni-

tion alone. Not so with handguns. With them, you must consider the gun and shooter as a team, or a "system" as the engineers like to say these days. Effectiveness for handguns can't be judged simply by the nature of the targets anticipated; the ability of the user to use each gun has also to be considered.

Who are these users and what sorts of targets can they logically expect to have to confront? I think they include law officers, small businessmen, homeowners, handgun hunters and some military personnel, among others. And the targets they most probably face? Well, with but one exception it seems that human targets would probably be limited to two, at most three, prowlers or other criminals. The exception, of course, is military personnel armed with handguns. Such personnel usually work in headquarters or logistical installations and can expect raids by guerrillas or airborne personnel involving considerable numbers of potential targets. Lawmen and handgun hunters share a need for special power and range ca-

pability; motor vehicles can take a lot of stopping, and so, for that matter can some of the wild boar running loose in the hills! All users share a need for simplicity and reliability.

Just for the sake of comparisons, let's consider the following as "light, medium and heavy" handguns:

Light: 9mm Parabellum as fired in modern pistols of large magazine capacity.

Medium: .357 Magnum revolvers.

Heavy: .41 Magnum, .44 Special and Magnum, .45 ACP and .45 Colt fired in both pistols and revolvers.

Let me further limit the discussion by selecting just four specific guns:

9mm Parabellum: Smith & Wesson Model 59.

.357 Magnum: Colt Python.

.41 Magnum: Smith & Wesson Model 57

.45 ACP Colt Government Model

What do these have "going for them"? The 9mm has light recoil and a large number of available shots without reloading, quick recovery between shots and the

(Continued on page 60)



Above, modern expanding bullet design has helped boost the effectiveness of smaller bore firepower, such as 9mm.

Above, S&W Model 57 .41 magnum revolver is in the "heavy" caliber category and in the tests showed the slowest rate of recoil recovery of all four guns.

Left, S&W Model 59 9mm parabellum (Luger) auto delivered more "weight of metal" in 60 seconds time than other pistols tested because of low recoil.

Right, Colt Government Model .45 auto took test shooters twice as long as 9mm to fire same number of successive shots. But, .45 packs a bigger punch.



AMERICAN HANDGUNNER CUSTOM GUN GIVEAWAY

S&W 25-2 .45ACP CUSTOM CONVERSION





CUSTOM WORK BY: C. Ward
Conversions, Box 610, Raymore, MO
64083 (816) 331-3857

CUSTOM FEATURES: Douglas 4" barrel
with 1-14" twist; Full-length underlug
with true front lock; Hand-detailed
finish; Re-contoured backstrap;
Goncalo Alves grips with Urethane
finish; Stainless steel butt plate;
3/4 wide smoothie trigger with stop;
Tool steel front sight; Stainless steel
endshake bushing; Class A action

ACCURACY: Guaranteed X-ring at 50
yds. (Federal Match SW
recommended)

RETAIL PRICE: Free (if you win
contest); \$525 (on customer's base
gun)

TO ENTER CONTEST: Use a postcard,
follow sample: include name, address,
HOM-M/A, local dealer name &
address. Mail before April 1, 1981.
Send to: American Handgunner,
Box 16025, San Diego, CA 92116.

Name _____
Address _____
City & State _____ Zip _____

HOM-MAR/APR
If I win, please ship my gun through the following dealer:

Dealer _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Contest void where taxed or prohibited by law. No purchase
necessary. Winner must comply with all federal and local laws.
Employees and agents of Publisher's Development Corp. not eligible

EDITOR'S NOTE:

I just got through talking with
Chuck Ward, who made this con-
version, and he told me a few
things about this good looking
revolver.

Chuck calls it his "Cadillac"
model. That's appropriate. And
this is typical of the type of job he
enjoys working on most. With the
higher-priced conversions, he can
take the time to do all the "little"
things inside that make for a truly
high-quality custom. The list of
things he details inside—the
workings that aren't apparent
outside—are just too numerous to
list here, that's how many there are.
But, if you're interested, you can
write to Chuck at the address in our
contest rules.

Chuck likes working on the
"Cadillac" conversions the most;
however, he also does a whole
range of other work. On your re-
volver, besides the full custom, he
offers action work, distinguished
class, 3" street conversions, PPC,
and police utility grade work. On a
customer's Model 10, his basic
"super tune" job runs about \$185
with Pachmayr grips included. For
a little more, you can get wood
grips. You can get as much work
done as you want or the whole
package: barrel shortening, round-
ing the butt, complete tune-up with
Class A action, and hand-detailed
finish. He even does some work
other pistolsmiths don't, such as
expanding the yoke shaft for a
tighter fit and better cylinder align-
ment, if you want that.

If our custom giveaway gun
seems a bit out of financial reach
for you, you might be interested in
knowing that the same conversion
(on your M25) can be had for less
because Chuck can fit it with an
Apex barrel instead of the higher-
priced Douglas. Of course, if you
want top quality . . .

So, if you want your revolver
tuned about as finely as it can
be—or, if you're looking to convert
your out-of-the-box S&W (Chuck
prefers working on Smiths) into
"Cadillac" quality—check into
C. Ward Conversions, and tell 'em
AMERICAN HANDGUNNER sent
you.

custom rolling block SILHOUETTE

By Philip C. Briggs

Converting the rolling block pistol into a superior silhouette competitor

"Howdcha do?" I'd spent over two months testing the custom rolling block and had decided it was time to get someone else's impressions of my progeny. Accordingly, I'd asked Al, one of our better shooters, to meet me at the range that Saturday to test the pistol in simulated match conditions. I'd given him the pistol, 300 rounds of assorted factory and re-loaded ammo, and sent him off to Black Canyon's silhouette Range to try his luck. He's back now, and I can't wait to hear how he did.

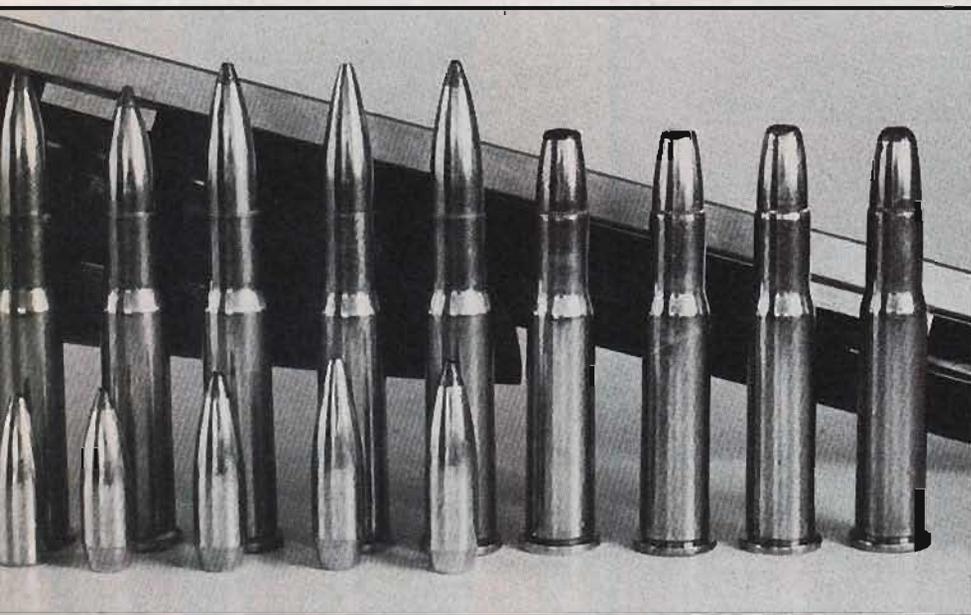
"Well, I sorted through the ammo, and started out with some of those 165 loads. Fired enough to get sighted in, and figure out what holds to use, and then shot through. Took all 40. Then I found a box of 180's, fired a few to check the holds, and shot another 40. Had a few rounds left so I took some chickens out to the ram line and went six for seven. It shoots good. I like it."

Good? Hell, that's at least alright! An 80 backed up with 6 X 7 on 200 meter chickens. The first time out!

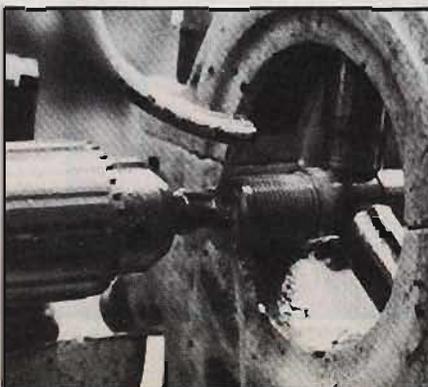
I'm all smiles, and so is he. We compare notes for awhile. He wants one, and so do I, but I've got other plans for this particular gun.

The pistol was born of a desire to find an unlimited gun that would shoot possibles, day in and day out, yet would have some of the other attributes most looked for in a pistol.

The bolt guns are relentlessly efficient in doing what they are designed for—taking



Above, (l-r): 150 gr. Speer spitzer, 150 gr. Speer boattail, 165 gr. Speer boattail, 168 gr. Hornady boattail hollowpoint, 180 gr. Speer boattail, 125 gr. Federal hollowpoint, 150 gr. Federal flatpoint, 170 gr. Federal flatpoint, 150 gr. Frontier roundnose, Right, making the last cuts in the chamber for a round and concentric chamber.





tiny targets at long range, but that is their prime virtue. You see, ever since Remington marketed the first XP in 1963 I've felt, well, to be frank, that they're *ugly*. They just don't look like a pistol. Not to mention being big and clumsy.

Now the Thompson/Center Contender looks like a pistol, and with the new Herrett-designed wood, or some of the custom stocks, they have their own kind of beauty. But I've had uneven success with them on the range. Some shoot, some don't. I've a Super 14 that shoots real well, but it changes point of impact as it heats up. Custom-barreled Contenders offer better consistency, but weren't quite what I wanted.

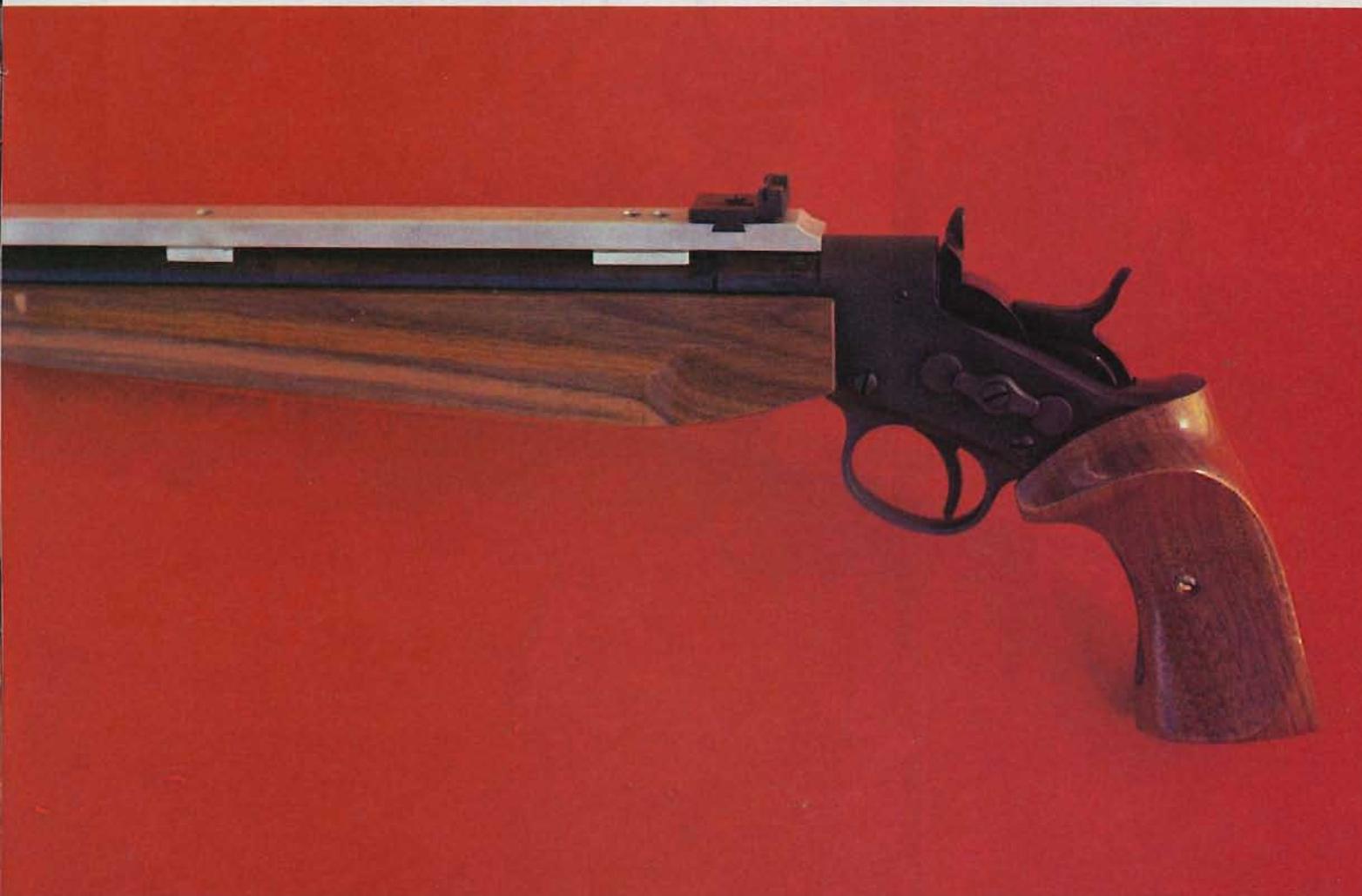
With BATF's restrictions on building handguns from rifle actions, there isn't much left to choose from. Actually, only one, and few, if any, have experimented with it as a basis for an unlimited gun.

The action? Navy Arms' replica of Remington's first single shot pistol, the rolling block. Designed in the black powder era, the replicas have been updated to the smokeless age with modern steels and heat treats, and are chambered for the .357 mag and the .22LR.

After sometime spent hanging out in gun shops studying the pistol, and pouring

(Continued on page 61)

Above, completed Rolling Block pistol with hammer cocked, and block closed. Below, pistol is open, ready to load.



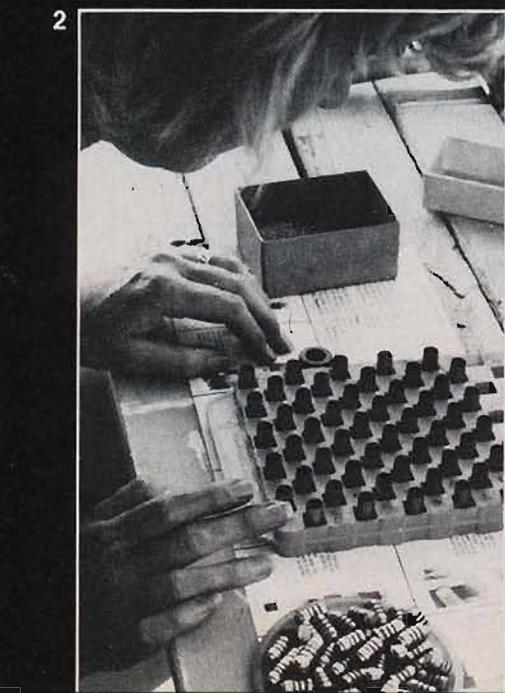
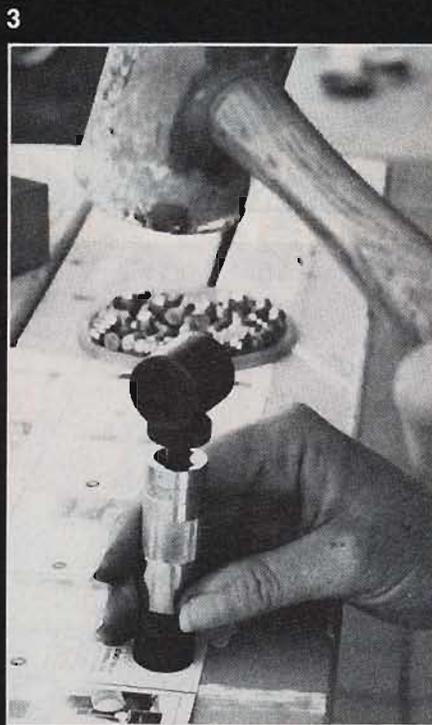
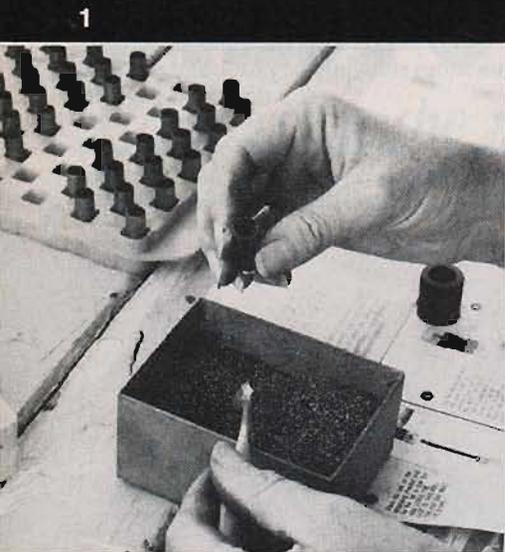


RELOADING

RELOADING ON A BUDGET

A little time, a little effort, and very little cost—can get you started on reloading your own

By Philip C. Briggs



1. After sizing, priming, and flaring, the case is charged. Powder dipper is used to scoop up powder from container.
2. Inspecting cases for over charges.
3. A few taps will seat the bullet in the case. Then die is turned over and tapped again to perform case crimping.
4. Handloaded round is final product.

It takes money to make money. No argument there. Worse yet it seems it even takes money to save money!

Handy stuff that long green, but not everybody's got enough cash to buy lots of supplies in advance or expensive equipment now to do it yourself to save some skins down the line. Whether it's grub or guns, flour grinders or reloading tools, coming up with that initial investment is often a hard thing to do; besides, what if you discover it's more trouble than you're ready to put up with after you've spent all that wampum?

Well, I can't help you if it's a sewing machine you're thinking about, but if it's reloading ammo that tickles your fancy you've picked up the right magazine.

Sara's busted a lot of caps in the years we've been together—pistol mostly—but she's never loaded a lick of it. I do that. With all my expensive equipment.

But you don't need expensive equipment to load serviceable ammo. Lee Precision Inc. (4275 Highway U, Hartford, WI 53027) builds an

(Continued on page 68)



RELOADING

PACIFIC'S O-7 PRESS

A new single-link O-press with the most revolutionary priming feature yet found on a press

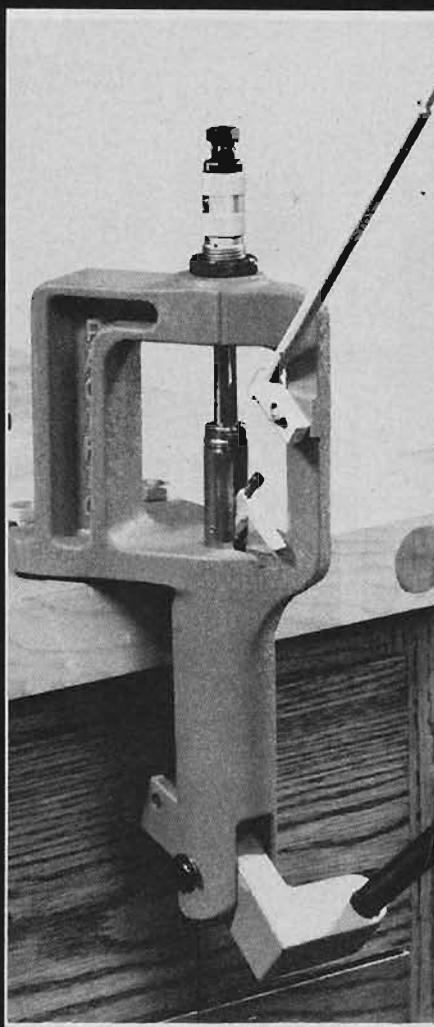
By Philip C. Briggs

Pacific has introduced a new single link O-press, incorporating the most revolutionary priming feature yet found on a bench press. It also includes an assortment of good ideas that make the press convenient and easy to use.

The press utilizes a priming arm that fits in the same category as the paper clip—it's real simple, and makes you wonder why you didn't think of it. The arm rides on a cross pin in the usual slot in the ram, and is so profiled that on the down stroke the arm is automatically cammed into alignment with the primer pocket, and then stops moving so that completion of the stroke raises it (relative to the ram) to seat the primer. At the top of the up stroke the arm automatically picks up another primer from the primer feed. And when you're done priming it just lifts out. Stroke, stroke—resize, deprime, prime. Simple. But different than what most are used to.

After the first 100 rounds I found a couple of live primers in the catch tray (I'd seated and then decapped them) and a couple of unprimed cases in the cigar box. It also takes some time to get used to the need to bring the handle to a full stop at both ends of its travel to pickup and then fully seat the primer. And I kept wanting to replace the case after sizing it before it was reprimed. Old habits.

The priming operation isn't foolproof then. You have to pay attention to see that a primer has been picked up, and that you've adjusted the feed tube to drop primers without getting them cocked or flipped over, when being picked up.



Pacific's O-7 single-link O-press has a uniquely-designed priming arm that automatically cams into alignment.

Incidentally the best way to adjust the position of the primer feed is to bring the ram up, and maneuver the holder around so that the tube is aligned with the pin in the priming arm, and just touching it at full stroke. It's easier done than said.

It's best, by the way, to pull the pin retaining the primers when the ram is up. Keeps the first one from rolling across the floor.

The priming tube holds 63 primers, which makes it too short to take a box, yet long enough that it seems to be in the way. I kept expecting to stab some part of my upper body on it but never did. Still, it would seem safer shorter.

There's a small primer catch tray which was half full with 150 LP or 250 SP primers. The tray sets behind the ram and is symmetric with the frame. But it shouldn't be. Although I didn't crawl around on the floor to get a good count, I estimate the tray missed 10 to 20 percent of the spent primers sent its way. It needs to extend further to the right, as the spent primers head for that corner of the tray. And that's my first and last bitch.

The arm seats the primers when the ram is near the bottom of the stroke, in contrast to the normal priming arm which operates in mid-stroke. As the single link reaches the minimum mechanical advantage at the bottom of the stroke the new design has the added advantage of providing more feel in primer seating than normal with a bench press.

The O-frame of the press has been rotated, if you will, about the ram 30

(Continued on page 70)

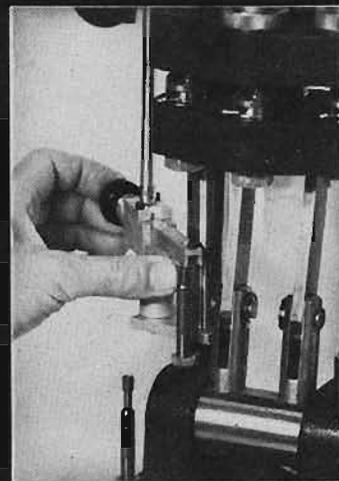
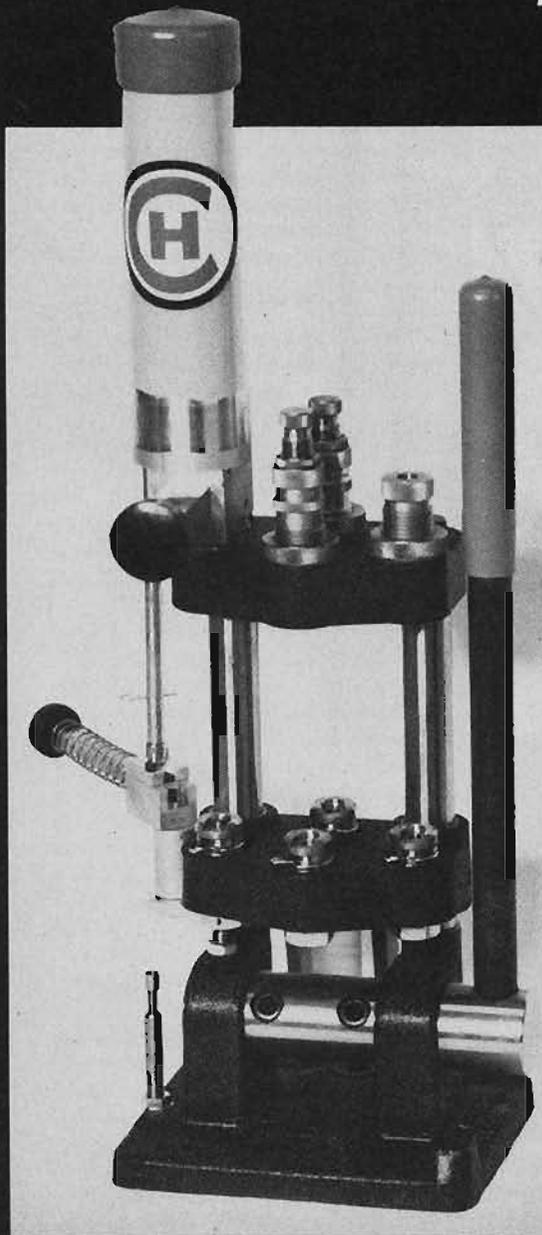


RELOADING

C-H NO. 444-X PISTOL CHAMP

Speedier than single-station, more affordable than full-auto; the Pistol Champ merits a close look.

By Don Zutz



Four reloading stations and automatic priming means the 444-X Pistol Champ reloads 150 to 200 rounds per hour. Retail price is around \$270.

One of America's leading pistol reloading press concepts just got better. This is the very popular C-H No. 333-X "Pistol Champ," for which there is now an automatic priming feature and taper crimp dies for cartridges like the 9mm Parabellum, .38 Special, and .45 ACP.

But the story doesn't end there. The people at C-H have gone that extra mile and developed an entirely new press which can best be described as a deluxe and sophisticated version of the No. 333-X. To be known as the No. 444-X "Pistol Champ," this advanced concept is built on the H-frame styling for multi-station, semi-progressive reloading. But whereas the original 333-X was a 3-position rig, the 444-X now has four stations to work in the newly available taper crimping die. Likewise, the 444-X utilizes the Auto Prime device. Here's how it works:

The 444-X has three reloading stations across the front of the slide plate with one additional station in the rear. These stations line up with dies threaded into the head. Lowering the handle elevates the slide, bringing the cartridge case upward to the dies. Constructed of a massive cast base with twin upright columns and excellent leverage for handgun rounds, the 444-X operates easily and with what appears to be precise alignment. The literature I have states that all dies are adjusted at the plant for optimum results.

The first step is resizing and depriming, which is done in the rear station. A simple lowering of the press handle performs both chores. And to

(Continued on page 71)



RELOADING

A LOAD FOR THE 4" .44MAG

Finding a load that provides controllable stopping power in the short barrel .44Mag

By Al Pickles



While serving as police chief on a department of modest size, I recall well over a dozen officers approaching me for permission to carry the 4" Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum Model 29. Our firearms policy was really quite liberal. Although the issue sidearm was the S&W Model 15, a .38 Special recognized as having marginal stopping power, officers were routinely granted permission to carry any other handgun of their choice if they could deliver an expert score (92% or better) on a strictly

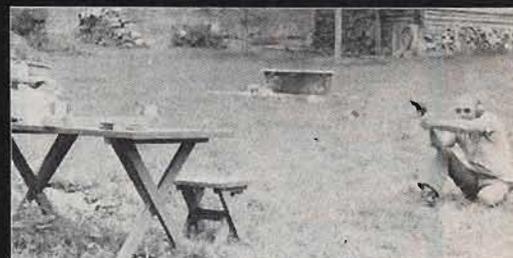
Necessary modifications to absorb and reduce recoil in the 4-inch S&W M29 included Mustang/Rangefield grips and Mag-Na-Porting (inset).

timed Practical Pistol Course. The only other requirements were that the gun be of .38 Special or greater caliber, and either a double action or autoloader of quality manufacture. The department sponsored monthly practice and qualifications but the policy itself encouraged a tremendous amount of self motivated individual practice.

In spite of our liberal policy, no officer ever managed to fire expert with the .44 Magnum revolver. It was not a lack of shooting ability because almost all those who tried were already qualified distinguished expert (97% and over) with their present duty gun. Almost to a man they were defeated by the course's time factor. The heavy recoil slowed



Much experimentation at the reloading bench looking for the right combination resulted in the mating of Taurus 230 grain hollowpoint with Hercules Red Dot.



Author shot hundreds of bullet/powder combos over chronograph.

down recovery, particularly at the seven yard position which required 12 shots in 25 seconds. If the shots were delivered accurately, time suffered. If they made the time, accuracy suffered badly. I guess I actually lamented the situation because in a very active police jurisdiction, having the best handgun possible—one that delivered maximum
(Continued on page 74)

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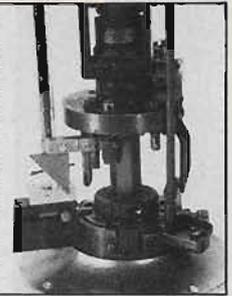
HANDGUN HUNTING

(Continued from page 22)

want to be sure of your equipment and proficiency with it. I hear of, and from, a lot of people who are thrilled by getting their first deer with a handgun. Most of the first timers are rightfully excited and proud of their achievement and praise their equipment highly. Some of the equipment is stuff I wouldn't walk into the woods with. But, it worked for them because they knew it well and used it properly. Good, bad, or indifferent equipment will work (assuming it functions) if used within its limitations. Excellent equipment is a handicap if you don't know it well enough.

Through Handgun Hunters International, Box .357 Mag, Bloomingdale, OH 43910, I'm learning a lot about equipment, loads and performance of calibers I simply couldn't personally test on game. The .357 Magnum, for example, has a quite strong following among woods whitetail hunters. The only ones I hear from are the ones satisfied with its performance. A seemingly larger group is anti-.357 for deer. I would guess the S&W M-29 .44 Magnum is the most popular deer gun followed closely by the Super Blackhawk. Wide open country hunters favor the longer ranged T/C. In any event, we're learning a lot more about guns, ammo and hunting.

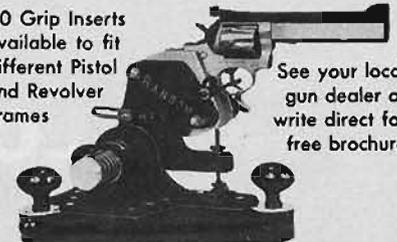
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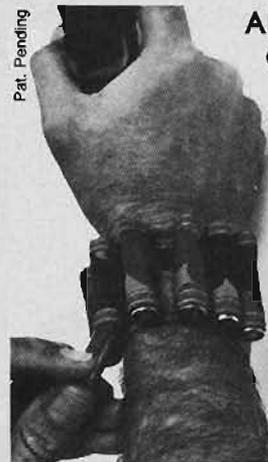
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Cal V. Drake, G.G. Dept. AH
 P.O. Box 9217, Marina del Rey, CA 90291

SCOPED PISTOLS

(Continued from page 33)

pistol shooting basics, there are great profits to be had in the form of more tens and X's. Just settle down to your minimum wobble area and squeeze straight back smoothly on the trigger until the shot is fired. A short period of concentrated effort will produce holding ability on par with iron sighted pistols. You will be pleasantly surprised because your group will be smaller than you anticipated. In a short time you will be calling your shots with amazing accuracy. If you are squeezing the trigger properly you will get a mental impression of the location of the reticle at the instant the pistol fired. If you are jerking or heeling (anticipation) it will immediately be perceivable as the crosshair twitches across the target.

Mounting a scope on any of the currently popular .22 target pistols is quite easy to accomplish with only drilling and tapping. Bushnell pistol scopes with accommodating mounts are readily available. The Maynard P. Buehler Company, 17 Orinda Highway, Orinda, CA 94563, can supply a very fine mount for any of the popular target pistols. Weaver's Quick De-



THE
COLT .45
AUTO PISTOL

This book covers nearly every facet of the Colt .45 Auto Pistol. From mechanical training to manual of arms for the pistol to marksmanship training to complete detailed inspection, disassembly, repair and replacement of parts. Plus drawings on the construction of repair tools and fixtures. With over 100 pages and over 80 clear photos and illustrations, this book has it all on the Colt .45 Auto. A must book for any gunsmith or pistol owner.
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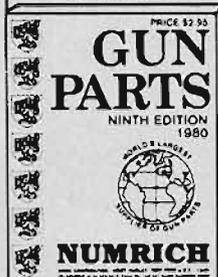
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tachable rings for 1" scope tubes work well. Using a pair of Weaver's #32 bases, a fine installation can be had on the S&W Model 41, Ruger Mark 1 or High Standard Military. Also Weaver's #16 base has a radius cut that will fit the contour of the High Standard Bull Barrel. So there are many ways to install a scope on the .22 target pistol.

Once a shooter is enjoying the advantages of the scoped .22, he will certainly be considering scoping the CF and .45 tournament pistols. With the CF, installation is quite simple as the scope must be mounted on a side grip mount. The left grip plate is removed and a combination grip plate and scope mount is installed using the grip plate screws to secure. Grip mounts are commercially available or they can be custom built and are easy to install. This mount can be used on the Government Model .45 ACP also. Another method of mounting a scope on the big bore target pistol is the slide mount. This method does not work too well with the CF pistol because there is just not enough working pressure in the .38 special cartridge to provide reliable functioning.

Obviously, there must be enough working force on the slide to overcome the additional weight of scope and mount. So

"... concentrated effort will produce holding ability on par with iron sighted pistols."

the grip mount is the best choice for the CF pistols. Considering the slide mount on the Colt Gold Cup and the Government Model in .45 ACP, a very good reliable installation can be had using the Leupold Gold Cup slide mount (Leupold, Box 688, Beaverton, OR 97075) with some alternations which we will discuss later in this article. Considering the additional weight of the scope and mount as situated on the slide, there enters into the picture again the matter of sufficient working pressure to reliably function the slide. (At this point let it be established that this writer considers anything more than one malfunction per 300 rounds as unacceptable.) Tests have proven conclusively that the conventional 3.5 grs. Bullseye/200 gr. bullet reload or factory match .45 ACP ammo will not function reliably using the slide-mounted scope. While hardball will work perfectly, it is getting expensive and hard to find. It appears that in most cases properly reloaded ammunition is the answer for the slide-mounted scoped pistol. Much experimentation and many thousands of rounds of testing have proven that the slide mounted scoped .45 will function reliably with a load of 4.5 grs. bullseye/200 gr. bullet. This writer has had great success both accuracy wise and functionally with



WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU LOAD & FIRE THESE CARTRIDGES IN A SCOPE MOUNTED

CONTENDER

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this load. Some shooters are aghast at the idea of shooting 4.5 gr. bullseye in the wad matches. The fact is, it's not all that bad with the slide-mounted scoped pistol. The weight of the scope and mounts soak up the recoil to the point where it is about the same as the standard 3.5 gr. bullseye or factory match ammo in the iron-sighted .45.

Some shooters have expressed a reluctance to install an expensive scope on a .45 slide lest the recoil reduce it to broken parts in short order. In some cases this may be true, but this writer has found the tough durable Leupold Model 8 2x extended eye relief scope equal to the task. Many Leupold Model 8 2x scopes have been installed on Government Model and Colt Gold Cup .45 ACP slides firing many thousands of rounds of ammo with practically no problems. One Leupold slide mounted scope has fired 10,000 rounds of .45 ACP ammo without even one sight change.

The many thousands of rounds of experimentation with the .45 slide mounting system have provided some guide lines for functioning success. It was discovered that to achieve the 1-300 ratio of malfunctions, the scope barrel or adjustment housing had to be at least .700 and ideally .720

"... a shooter does not have to use his time and concentration on sight alignment."

above the top of the slide. The Leupold Gold Cup slide mount mentioned earlier in this article does not set the scope up high enough. The result is, far too frequently an ejected fired case will hit the scope and bounce back into the ejection port to be caught by the slide on its way forward. The result is of course, a malfunction. It was found that by welding an extension or shim 5/32" thick on to each of the Leupold Gold Cup slide mount bases, it would raise the scope high enough to let the fired case out. The underside of the extension should be cut to fit the contour of the slide. A No. 8 socket head screw down thru each of the bases and threaded into the slide would complete the installation.

There is some concern over the use of the scope in the timed and rapid fire stages, "because it appears difficult to find the target in the glass." The answer is that a little practice will solve this problem much the same as the deer hunter must practice throwing up his newly scoped rifle to get his eye into the glass for a fast running shot. The correct pistol shooting stance and position in relation to the target will also help the new scope shooter to find his target. The fact is that there are many points to be gained with the scope in the timed and rapid fire because a shooter

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does not have to use up his valuable time and concentration on sight alignment. He has only to look thru his scope, allow the reticle to settle somewhere near the ten ring (depending on his holding ability) and squeeze straight back smoothly on the trigger until the shot breaks.

Of the many advantages of the scoped pistol for tournament shooting, there are some disadvantages. One of the greatest is the wind. The installation of a scope on a pistol increases the square area by about 25 percent, giving the wind an additional effect on the second pistol. To make matters worse, the additional movement caused by the wind is then magnified by the power of the scope. In this case a shooter can only go back to the basics concentrating on squeezing the trigger within his minimum wobble area. Shooters who have mastered the art of shooting in the wind will be similarly rewarded with the scope. Shooters who are bothered by the wind with iron sights will suffer disaster with the scope.

Duelists of old were especially aware of the balance of their dueling pistols. It was known that a dueling pistol, to be at its best, must be slightly muzzle heavy. So it is with a target pistol. Adding weight to the pistol in the form of a scope and mount must be done with great care in positioning that weight so as to accomplish the best possible balance to the pistol. Some experimentation may be necessary to determine the exact position of the scope in order to get the best balance of the pistol. Mounting systems should be designed with some flexibility in positioning the scope.

FRAGILE REPUTATION

Someplace along the line the scoped firearm acquired the reputation for being undependable or at least fragile. This is in evidence by the fact that there are a multitude of see-thru, swing-off and tip-up mounting systems being marketed today for hunting rifles. The aspiring scope shooter just cannot believe that he can depend on that scope and so must have access to the old iron sights. Knowledgeable shooters know that a properly scoped firearm is no more fragile than its iron sighted cousin. Scope sighted pistols, like rifles, given reasonably careful handling will perform flawlessly for many years.

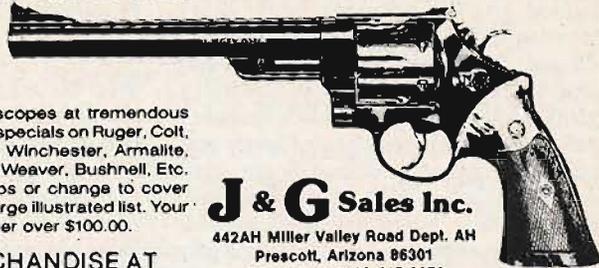
When cleaning the lens of a scope, care should be exercised to prevent scratching the coating on the lens. Cleaning can be accomplished with a cotton ball and alcohol or lens tissue designed for use on plastic eye glass lens. It is a good idea to equip your scope with a set of lens covers for use when the pistol is not being fired. Several different makes are available.

Traditionally, the weight of a target pistol has been from 40 to 46 oz. If you add another 10 to 13 oz. in the form of a scope and mount you have a package weighing up to 59 oz. Some shooters have expressed concern that the scope sighted pistol may

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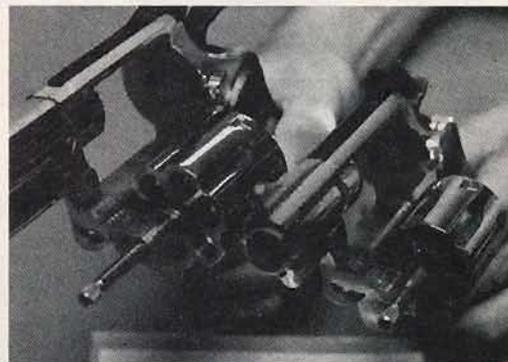
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be too heavy for tournament shooting. It is true that the first time you pick up a scope sighted pistol, it will seem quite heavy. However, most shooters of average physical stature will acclimate in a very short time. Usually in about a month the weight actually then becomes an asset because it dampens recoil, especially if properly positioned for optimum balance. Some shooters have actually added weights to dampen muzzle tremor. The scoped pistol for tournament shooting is a relatively new idea. Much has been done in the area of the development of extended eye relief scopes. Much more needs to be done in the area of mounting systems.

The pistol scope, while a little slow in catching on, is here to stay simply because a shooter can shoot more accurately with a scope sight. It certainly is a boon to the middle-aged shooter who is having trouble seeing the iron sights clear enough to stay in the nine and ten ring. Because of the role the handgun plays in our society, a scoped handgun is somewhat difficult to conceive. But for those interested in hitting a small mark with a target pistol, they owe it to themselves to try the scoped pistol. They will be pleasantly surprised. On those days when your holding ability is at its best, a scope shooter's reticle hangs steadily on the nine and ten ring as a tight group of bullet holes eat out the center of the bullseye. And happiness is—ten tens.



AMMO SCENE

(Continued from page 20)

fired the 50 shot group. The group was then placed over the X-ring of the B-27 police silhouette, and centered. It goes without saying that the tighter the group, the better off you are, since the better the group from the mechanical rest, the less that shooter error would affect your score. For instance, if the group were scattered all over the 10 ring with several 9's and even an 8 or two, just think where that 8 might have been if you add shooter error under pressure while firing in a match.

In the attached chart, each load is listed, along with hits in each scoring ring. Also listed is the size of the X & 10 ring. I didn't bother to list the size of each ring, since any ammo that couldn't keep all its shots at least in the 10 ring is totally unacceptable to me for match use.

It wasn't really any surprise to me that Federal match wadcutters came in the winner. However, as you can see, the Winchester wasn't that far behind, and to be totally fair about it, I had to fire the WW on a different day from the Federal, and there was a hell of a crosswind blowing at the time. Keeping this in mind, it's entirely feasible that with both fired on the same date, the WW could have equaled or

ACCURACY CHART

FACTORY LOADS	X's	10's	9's	8's
Federal Factory HBWC	47	3	0	0
Precision Reloads	45	5	0	0
WW Match	42	8	0	0
Zero Reloads	33	15	2	0
Frontier Match	29	20	1	0
S&W Match	39	10	1	0
HANDLOADS				
Cast BBWC	30	19	1	0
Hornady 148 HBWC	28	15	6	1
3-D HBWC	33	11	6	0

X-Ring Size: Height: 3" Width: 2 1/2"
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possibly surpassed the Federal in group size.

I had also expected good results with the Precision ammunition, and, as you can see, I was not disappointed. I have had the chance to fire a lot of commercial reloads in the past several years, but I've never fired anything quite like these. Any leading of the gun with this ammunition is practically non-existent. I fired two 50-shot groups with Precision without cleaning the barrel or cylinder, and there was just the barest trace of lead to be seen, something I couldn't say for my handloads and some of the other ammo I fired. Precision makes what they call the "50 Yard Wadcutter," and it certainly is aptly named. They make the bullet, while the actual reloading is done by Hudson Valley Ordinance.

I spoke with the President of Precision, Mr. Gene Smith, who is a design engineer by trade. He told me that he has drawn up his own set of rigid specifications for .38 reloads, and follows them to the letter in his operation. The only thing he would say about his bullet design, is that in the making process, each slug is whacked with 10,000 pounds twice, to give it its final shape and consistency. On top of that, my gun stays cleaner, without leading, than with any other ammo I've ever fired. I

"I don't think you can match mass-produced consistency with home handloads."

certainly have to rate Precision as a "best buy" for any match shooter. Cost of this fine ammo is \$44 per thousand on the shooter supplied brass, and \$5 for shipping per thousand via U.P.S. Precision can ship to any dealer or direct to your department if you wish. You can write to them at Precision Ammo Co., P.O. Drawer 86, Valley Cottage, NY 10989.

Are my findings conclusive? I think so, at least for my gun. Given a barrel with a different twist, perhaps a change in powder charge or brand, or even a change in primers, the results with my handloads may have been different. The point is that I don't think you can match mass-produced consistency with home handloads. I have a friend who reloads on a Star press and he recently showed me some targets that he fired from a Ransom Rest at 50 yards using his handloads and Remington match. His results were the same as mine, with the Remington showing a much better group over his own loads.

I also gave my handloads a try at 25 yds., along with the Precision and Federal. The home brew did give X-ring accuracy at that distance over 18 shots, but some holes were barely cutting the scoring line. The Federal and Precision both gave 18 shot groups that could be covered with a quar-



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ter. I now use Precision at the 25 and 50 yard line. My handloads were giving me perfect 180's at 25 yards, but now my X-count is much higher. As I sit here typing this, on the table next to me is a plaque from a PPC match fired just yesterday, where I used the Precision for the entire match. The plaque reads "Master Champion." The score was 596-40X. I could never have done that with my "cheap" ammo.

If you are fortunate enough to work for a department who will supply you with factory match ammo, you are most fortunate. However, when you're on a budget, you can equal that performance at a fraction of the cost. See you in the winner's circle.



HIGH STANDARD

(Continued from page 37)

point where Snyder recounts that an Air Force general was bumped from a military flight so that a badly needed supply of Eley match ammo could be sent to High Standard. High Standard also went to the expense of having Remington manufacture a special lot of .22 Short match ammo.

Among the problems faced in building a gun for rapid fire is finding a way to virtually eliminate recoil. The Air Force, and others, had experimented with various methods of venting the majority of powder gas through a series of ports in the barrel, and High Standard adopted their approach. Snyder determined that the maximum muzzle rise that could be tolerated was one sixteenth of an inch. Many various types of ports were studied for their effect on recoil, and an attempt was also made to help the shooter in swinging the gun by placing some ports on the lower right side of the barrel.

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used this form of porting. As an additional feature, each hole was tapped so the shooter had the option of plugging holes in varying combinations until he found an arrangement that suited him. Both Green and Teague felt this was especially important for it allowed adjustments to be made for best functioning with different brands and lots of ammo.

There was considerable concern over the effect on accuracy from drilling all the holes in the barrel. It was assumed that accuracy would suffer, but the concern was to what degree. Most of the experimental guns grouped a little over an inch at 25 meters, and everyone agreed this was marginal. High Standard set their accuracy goal at 3/4 inch groups. Unfortunately not all the barrel configurations were capable of this. One of the reasons for the loss of accuracy was that when the drill bit broke through to the rifling, it could not cut a clean hole. The resulting sharp edges deformed the bullet. High Standard was aware of this, and the guns that were shot in competition appear to have been polished to remove as many rough spots as possible. In a later Air Force development, a number of barrels were ported between the drilling and rifling operations in manufacture. According to Green these barrels

“Snyder was determined that High Standard would produce the most reliable gun possible.”

shot considerably better. High Standard's testing also included various types and twists of rifling, and ended up using a very last one in ten twist. Every available brand of ammunition was also tested, and Snyder reports that the High Standard guns preferred Eley and Lapua match ammunition, but had a tendency to be erratic with other brands. The specially ordered Remington ammo had a tendency to keyhole. Since any shot which appears elongated on the target is considered a skidder, and therefore a miss, in international scoring, the ammunition could not be used. Unfortunately the project ended without the U.S. ammunition manufacturers having a chance to work on the problem.

Rapid fire guns of the time shared a common problem of unreliable functioning, and many good scores had gone down the drain due to an untimely jam. Snyder was determined that High Standard would produce the most reliable gun possible, and felt that the magazine was a major source of malfunctions. For this reason, one of the four modelmakers was assigned to do nothing but make and fit magazines. Each one was tested in various guns until one was found in which it worked reliably, and it was then matched to that gun. The external dimensions of the special maga-

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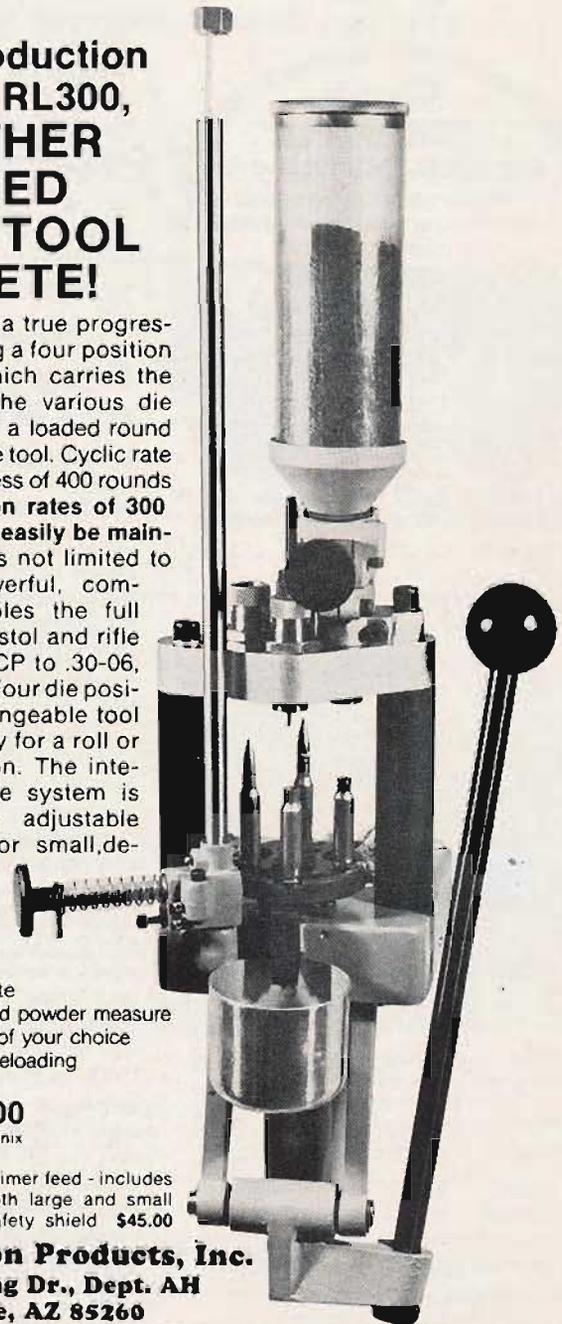
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zine are the same as the standard Long Rifle design, but internally they are quite different. In an effort to accelerate the action time and promote better functioning the new magazine was designed to place the round as far forward as possible by adding a spacer at the rear. This was contrary to the customary High Standard design which had the spacer at the front. The change reduced by 1/4 inch the necessary slide travel. So close is this tolerance that the slide may not retract far enough to pick up a round if one tries to use a standard magazine.

In order to better observe the functioning cycle of the guns, Snyder purchased a high speed motion picture camera capable of up to 20,000 frames per second. One of the first lessons learned from the \$15,000 camera was that the magazine lips were subject to stress when the gun was fired. These lips were known to be critical to reliable performance, so they were not hardened in the manufacturing process, and a special snap gauge was made so the lips could be adjusted to the close tolerances required.

During extensive firing tests, at a range built for the project at High Standard's Hamden, CT plant one gun was fired 2500 rounds without a malfunction. This is a

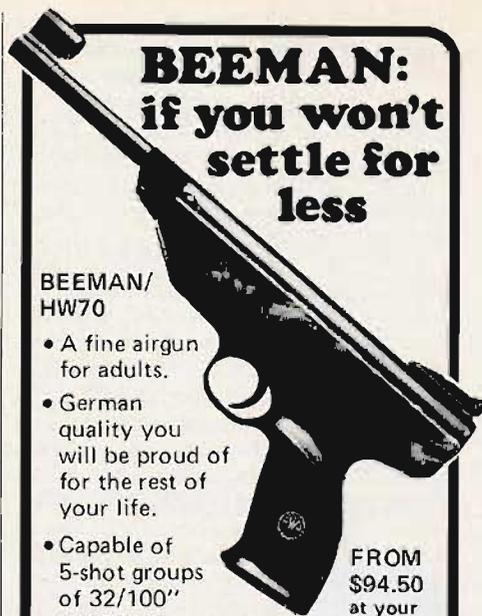
"During extensive firing tests . . . one gun was fired 2500 rounds without a malfunction."

remarkable achievement when the complexity of the gun is considered. Each gun was packed with a special notice advising the shooter of the handling required and advising the shooter to use plenty of oil. Snyder comments that they worked best when practically drenched.

In addition to designing a gun that shot and functioned well, High Standard wanted to provide a gun that felt good to the shooter. Most shooters preferred a muzzle-heavy feel, so two large barrel weights were provided for most of the guns. These weights were adjustable, and could be positioned anywhere along the barrel. The extra weight on the barrel made a very heavy gun when built on a steel frame, so High Standard made special aluminum frames for most of the guns. The frames were machined from solid blocks of aluminum, and only two guns are known to have been made with steel frames. Both of these were modified Citation frames from the company's regular production.

High Standard used two distinctly different slide designs. For convenience these have been classified as "long" and "short" slide types. The long slide design is quite conventional in appearance, and extends the full length of the frame. The short slide

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is a scant 1 1/4 inches long, and operates within a housing attached to the frame. The housing serves no purpose other than to cover and protect the internal working parts. The short slide is designed with ears to provide a gripping area for manual operation, while the long slide is grooved in a conventional manner. The area of the slide which touches the barrel is rounded so only a small area is actually in contact with the barrel. In studying malfunctions of other rapid fire guns it was found that the most common ones were where the fired case was trapped between the barrel and slide. The slides of the High Standard guns were then designed to be free of sharp edges the fired case might catch upon, and would instead be pushed clear by the closing slide.

NONE HAVE EXTRACTOR

None of the slides has an extractor. This departure from conventional designs was made for two reasons: first, the remaining powder gas was adequate to blow the fired case out in normal operation, and second, the action was so fast that a conventional extractor would be likely to interfere with the action and actually slow things down.

The choice of aluminum for both frame and slide led to an unexpected problem. The weaker aluminum frames sometimes developed cracks in the area of the sear and hammer pins after extensive firing. To correct the problem the frame was reinforced by placing a case-hardened steel insert in the weak area of the frame. This feature is not found on all the guns.

In a further attempt to reduce recoil and wear, an unusual buffer system was designed to dampen the rearward momentum of the slide. The buffer is a two-part system which is attached to the rear of the frame. First is a spring-loaded plate which can move rearward through two holes in the frame. Spring tension is adjustable by means of a set screw. Immediately behind the plate is a rubber bushing mounted on a small pin. In operation the slide is driven back against the plate which is, in turn, forced against the rubber bushing. To have room for the buffer system the special frames are about 1/2 inch longer at the rear than are the standard frames. The system is undoubtedly effective, for the guns which have been fired most extensively show little battering of the slide that one would expect.

COMMON & UNUSUAL SIGHTS

The sights used on the rapid-fire guns are both common and unusual. The rear sight is the standard adjustable sight used on High Standard guns of the time, but the method of mounting it was new, and two different rear sight placements were used. High Standard has begun the practice of placing the rear sight on the barrel with its 103 series. This was intended to eliminate a possible harmful effect from sight motion. This practice was continued with the rapid-fire gun. It was also noted that some

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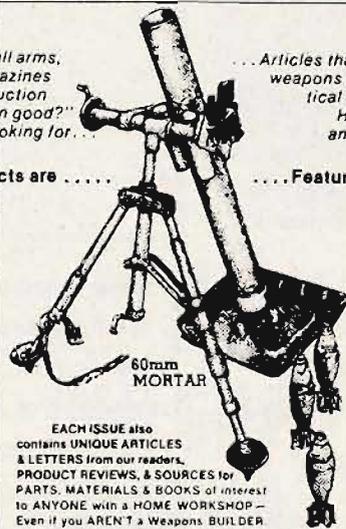
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shooters might prefer a longer sight radius than would be possible with a barrel mounted sight, so High Standard designed a bridge mount to place the sight at the rear of the frame; an adaptation of this bridge mount is used today on many High Standard guns. In order to make the rapid-fire guns as versatile as possible, many of them were made with provisions for mounting the sight in either location by simply exchanging a few parts. Equal attention was given to the front sights, and an adjustable extended front sight was used on many of the guns. The front sights are carefully matched, and most have an assembly number which matches the gun.

High Standard also experimented with many barrel lengths, but the purpose was to examine handling characteristics. Many of the guns were made with a 4½ inch barrel which was threaded to accept a muzzle extension which would allow the barrel weights to be placed further forward. The effective barrel length with the extension installed was 6¾ inches. Other barrel lengths ranged from 5 to 7 inches. The 4½ inch barrel with muzzle extension offers considerable versatility for the shooter to tailor the feel of the gun to his particular preference. It would appear that this configuration was more or less stand-

"The guns were not sold, but were loaned with the understanding they were to be returned."

ard for there are at least seven guns so made, and McMillan's guns were this type.

Although there are many other barrel arrangements, each is different in some respect. One of the guns examined has a jump barrel in which two inches of the barrel immediately in front of the chamber is cut away. The effective rifled barrel length is only a little over two inches. Green and others state that the accuracy from jump barrels in general is not as good as other types.

As the project was nearing completion, each gun was extensively test fired. If problems were found it was sent back for more work, but if it performed acceptably it was serial numbered along with current plant production. The guns were then issued to selected shooters for field testing. The guns were not sold, but were loaned with the understanding that they were to be returned to High Standard. The majority of shooters receiving the guns were on military teams, for High Standard wanted to place the guns with shooters most likely to make the 1968 Olympic team. In a gesture of confidence, two guns were sent to McMillan, then a Marine Major, for they were sure he would be one of the two chosen shooters. He was.

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had happy endings, it would close with another gold medal for the U.S. Unfortunately it was not to be, and a series of misfortunes befell the guns and teams. During training immediately before the Games, McMillan's number one gun began to experience malfunctions. Lou Willing, the team gunsmith, and Frank Green found problems in the magazine lips which required adjustment. Lacking the special factory snap gauge, they did it by trial and error until the gun functioned reliably again.

Shortly after the U.S. team arrived in Mexico City, McMillan's two guns were stolen. The panic that followed the theft resulted in two shipments of replacement guns being sent to McMillan. The first shipment arrived quickly, but was held up in customs, and nothing could persuade the customs officials to let the guns out before all the proper paperwork was completed. A second shipment was sent, only to be held up also. The Mexican police averted an international incident by recovering the stolen guns in two days. They were returned to McMillan at the same time that customs decided to let the other guns go, so at least McMillan had enough guns.

When the rapid fire matches were com-

“... but one can only wonder what might have happened if everything had gone well.”

pleted, McMillan finished in seventeenth place. As a gentleman and sportsman, McMillan never made excuses or blamed something or someone else for his score, but one can only wonder what might have happened if everything had gone well.

As stated before, High Standard spared no expense in the development of the rapid fire guns, and the cost was high. When pressed, Snyder stated that the total cost of the project might have exceeded \$10,000 per gun.

The recent sale of its museum and experimental collection by High Standard contained eighteen of these guns. Exactly how many more were made is not known, for some were scrapped in various stages of manufacture, and others were destroyed in testing, so it is possible that there are a few more around. If the total is twenty or thirty, the surviving guns must be regarded as extremely rare. In Olympic competition, according to the often quoted Baron de Coubertin, “Winning is less important than the fact that one has competed.” High Standard did compete, and its guns contain the distilled thoughts of many dedicated men, a considerable display of Yankee ingenuity, and perhaps most important of all, the evidence that someone gave a damn!



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HANDGUN FIREPOWER

(Continued from page 39)

ability to handle multiple targets. It is low in single-shot stopping power. The .41 and .45 share great stopping power but pay for it in reduced ammunition availability. The .357 seems to strike a balance between them.

Another consideration enters, and that is the mechanical difference between pistols and revolvers.

I wondered at this point just how much difference these things make to different shooters, and decided to try an experiment. On different days at the range I asked two friends to shoot a planned "course" for me against the stopwatch. The four guns were used, one after the other, each against a single silhouette target at 25 yards.

THE PRACTICAL TESTING

Each gun started clean, cold and in the readiness condition in which I, at least, would carry it. One complete reload was positioned by the gun; a full magazine for the pistols and a full reloader for revolvers.

My first shooter was a young lady who is an inexperienced shooter. While she had fired all the guns used, she was not familiar with any of them.

The second shooter was an experienced former gunsmith and excellent shot. He, too, had fired all of the guns involved but was not really familiar with any of them individually.

Both shooters were notably more accurate with revolvers. I find it most interesting that both were most effective with the .357 Magnum despite the lesser recoil and quicker recovery with the 9mm P Model 59. The first shooter, in particular, had several mechanical problems with the Model 59. First, it misfired and the dud had to be discarded. Then, the last shot of the first magazine failed to latch the slide back and, after reloading, she took time to discover why the gun would not fire. The slide was pulled back only after she was prompted to do so.

PROBLEMS OVER .357MAG

For even the experienced shooter, the time increased markedly, as did a decrease in results when .357 caliber was passed. Obviously, the heavier calibers caused both shooters problems.

Data reflect the ammunition used: 123 grain FMJ in 9mm P, 158 grain JHP in .357, 210 grain lead in .41 M, and 230 grain FMJ in .45 ACP. "Targets that could effectively be engaged" I include as a theoretical consideration; I intend it to illustrate a key difference in the large magazine 9mm P pistol. If targets presented themselves one at a time, and if the average number of hits achieved by the two shooters were made, then 21 targets could have been attacked. My point, of course, is that of all

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the probable users discussed only military personnel would seem to need this capability. All other users discussed earlier would seem to have more than the needed capability with either of the revolvers.

I think that it is clear that it takes more than average self discipline and training if one is to achieve maximum effectiveness with handguns more powerful than .357 Magnum. By the same token, the ordinary handgun user is likely to find revolvers simpler and easier to use effectively than pistols.



1st Shooter Gun	Shots—Hits	Total Time/Per Shot
9mm	27—18	58 sec/2.14 sec
.357 Mag	12—12	50 sec/4.1 sec
.41 Mag	12— 9	58 sec/4.8 sec
.45 Auto	15—10	68 sec/4.5 sec

2nd Shooter Gun	Shots—Hits	Total Time/Per Shot
9mm	28—24	56 sec/2.0 sec
.357 Mag	12—12	46 sec/3.8 sec
.41 Mag	12—11	53 sec/4.4 sec
.45 Auto	14—11	55 sec/3.9 sec

ROLLING BLOCK

(Continued from page 43)

through loading manuals and cartridge references, I decided the conversion would work, and that 30/30 would be the place to start.

Feeling that I had a good idea I contacted Val Forgett, President of Navy Arms, (689 Bergen Blvd. Ridgefield, New Jersey 07657) and explained to him my rationale and my plan. He agreed that the rolling block could be converted and forwarded a couple of rolling block actions for my use.

A project of this nature, basically prototype work, requires more skill and equipment than your average you-bust-it-we'll-fix-it gunsmithing establishment possesses. Fortunately for me, a new shop with the talent and machinery had just opened in my end of town. Gunsport it's called, and their slogan is "Run by, and for, shooters." A true statement, as I discovered after some discussion with Nancy Byers, owner, and Jim Carter, senior gunsmith.

And I shortly had another partner in my project. Jim's years with an AMA, and specific experience with custom rolling block rifles made the task at hand look like a piece of cake.

With the key arrangements completed I turned to acquiring the remainder of the necessary parts and supplies.

A good, but not necessarily match quality barrel was a prime requirement. I'd heard some good things from a local

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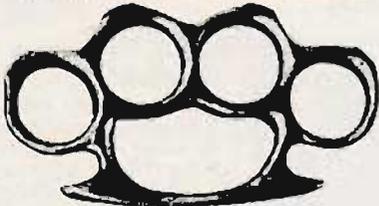
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smith about the pistol barrels supplied by E. R. Shaw (Thoms Run Road, Bridgeville, PA 15017, 412-221-3636) and decided to give one a try. I planned to use bullets of 150 to 180 grains in weight in long slippery shapes for match loads, so I ordered a blank with a slower, 1 in 12 twist.

I prefer open sights on my unlimited guns, and as I had experienced difficulty with mirage off plain barrels I was interested in trying a rib. SSK Industries (RT 1, Della Drive, Bloomingdale, OH 43910, 614-264-0176) offers a full length aluminum rib, designed for the Super 14. It's dovetailed front and rear for globe front and for a Micro rear sights, and by happy coincidence, could be adopted to the barrel contour we'd picked. It provided a simple solution to the sight problem.

Shaping and inletting a forearm onto a straight taper barrel is a simple chore, and I had some scrap walnut laying around for that end. But grips are an ox of a different color. Thinking it easiest to modify an existing grip I looked around and ended up with one of Steve Herrett's old style Controller grips for the Contender.

Front sights on unlimited guns are often globes, but quite often the shooter ends up using a blade insert. Rather than spend the extra cash for the unused sophis-

**"Construction of the
pistol was fairly
straightforward and
could be duplicated."**

tication I decided to just use a blade. Choices are limited here as only Burris makes patridge style, rifle-type (dovetailed) blades. I sent for a selection of heights in a width to match that of the rib.

I've always had good luck with Federal brass and primers, so I secured a supply of both. I wanted to try an assortment of factory ammo in the pistol to establish baseline performance, and to see how well a non-reloader might fare, so I ordered some Federal factory ammo while I was at it.

Bullets came from Speer and Hornady, mostly in the slippery boat tail shapes, and as I had only silhouette loads in mind, I concentrated on weights of 150 to 180 grains. I added in some Frontier factory ammo while I was gathering components to add some variety to the tests, and to see how well Hornady's loads would compare with a more established line.

Construction of the pistol was fairly straightforward and could be duplicated by others. Just accurately fit and chamber the barrel, and tune the action to eliminate movement in the block and hammer to reduce and control headspace. Easier said than done though.

The barrel blank was first trued up in the lathe, turned to about .970 inches in diam-

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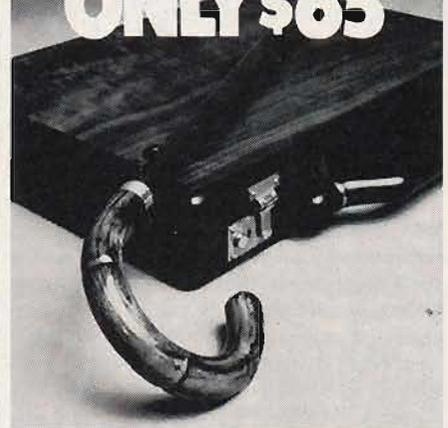
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eter, and trimmed to 15 inches in length. A shank a couple of tenths shorter than the pistol's frame is wide (1.220 inches on the one we had) was turned to a diameter sufficient to provide a tight fit when threaded (we used .8475 inches) and then threaded (square threads!). Dimensions here will have to be selected to fit your action, but the idea is to make a snug, but not interference fit. Once that was satisfactorily accomplished, the barrel was contoured to a straight taper from .755 inches at the muzzle, to .835 inches at the point about 1.1 inches from the shoulder on the shank. Should you do one, I'd suggest you shoot for .855 inches at this point so that the scope base will fit better.

Work on the action started with precision grinding the face off to square it up with the bore.

PIVOT PINS REPLACED

The pivot pins for the hammer and block were replaced with larger diameter pins to take out the factory slack to better control headspace. These were made .394 inches as in diameter as opposed to the stock .391 inches. For best fit, the frame, block, and hammer should have been individually precision reamed as a unit. Remember though, the hammer and block must rotate. Real tight fits may require a grove or two to allow lubrication to penetrate.

Once the pins were fitted the hammer and block were lapped together with grinding compound. Care taken here to reduce slop will pay off in tight groups.

The barrel was rough and finish chambered in the lathe, and Jim's measurements and calculations worked out well enough that headspace was just right on a Federal case the first time the barrel and action were assembled. The brass we had must be a tad thin in the rim, as the action wouldn't close completely on the go gauge, but as I didn't plan to shoot the gauge we left the headspace that way.

NEW DESIGN EXTRACTOR

The factory extractor was so shaped that matching the cut-out in the factory barrel would have seriously weakened the new barrel. Jim spent a couple, three days measuring and shaping trial extractors before he came up with the final design. It functions swell, and the smaller cut-out necessary for its operation left sufficient meat along the .30/30 chamber.

Once completely assembled, Jim sent a few rounds into the shop's bullet trap, and as nothing stretched or scattered, the next step was some serious shooting.

To get to that point quickly we decided just to mount a scope, and save fitting the metallic sights for later.

The barrel was drilled for a Leupold T/C scope base, mounted backwards, as with the base reversed the scope can be correctly positioned on the pistol without drilling holes over the chamber. The Leupold base has a relief cut on its bottom

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surface for the dovetail that fits neatly over the step in the barrel.

After completion of the load development and accuracy testing I brought the pistol back to finish installation of the sighting system.

The sights reflect my belief that an unlimited gun should be equipped with open sights equipped with normal notch and patridge blades and that the rear sight should be simple to adjust, repeatable in its adjustments, and durable enough to withstand adjustment every match. The Micro meets these criteria, is inexpensive, and better yet allows one to change blades to vary notch width to personal preference. We used a #1 which is intended for a Colt .45 ACP. I've since fitted a homemade .065 notch in the Micro to match the .075 blade width of the Burris W406 patridge.

The rib from SSK Industries is intended for a Super 14. Shortened a little and fitted with stands to support it once past the step in the barrel, the rear-end screwed right into the scope base screw holes. The barrel was tapped to match the rest of the holes in the rib, with an extra in the middle to control things there. By the way, one could do with only one stand at the muzzle, but the rib has two holes. The rib proved to be functional in the usual sense, in that it

"The rib is also neat in that it only takes a screwdriver to remove the iron sights . . ."

dissipates heat waves arising from the barrel, and reduces the resulting mirage. I say reducing, as the rib gets hot too, but not as quick as the barrel and not as hot. It works.

The rib is also neat in that it only takes a screw driver to remove the iron sights and their alignment isn't disturbed when you switch back to a scope for hunting or load testing.

The forend shape can be varied to meet personal concepts of beauty, but it must be functional. A rounded triangular cross section like a Fajen single shot stock would be nice, for example. Still, the thickness near the forend screw is necessary to give the forend sufficient depth for the prone shooter, so that when rested atop a gloved fist the muzzle doesn't point into the ground. The bottom of the forend cross section is flattened for stability when laid across a fist (prone), or a leg (supine) or a sandbag. The sharp edges help hold the pistol on the side of your leg when shooting Creedmoor.

A smaller, narrower, forend might be an option for a hunting version, but the silhouette version should meet the above criteria.

The grip is short so the prone shooter can rest his other fist on the mat without the pistol touching. A fatter grip than the

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stocker is needed to fill the hand, and distribute recoil uniformly over the palm. This one is a worked-over Herrett, and it turned out to be a tad too small to cover the frame. I cut the palm swell off, as it was too high on the grip, and bent the wrist too much when shooting Creedmoor. The filler behind the guard was left on as it helps control the pistol.

You're obviously free to try other shapes for the wood, but the above requirements should be met.

Both forend and grip were glass bedded, the forend the full length of the barrel, and to the action as well. Complete, with fat forend, big grip, and rib, the pistol is still quite light for an unlimited, weighing four pounds, four ounces, or four ounces under maximum allowable weight.

HEAVY CONTOUR BARREL

The barrel profile was selected as we wanted the heaviest contour possible, but most of all the straight taper and step look business-like. To carry on that thought, the trigger guard was blackened and the receiver was bead blasted and blued. The final product is attractive, and well, looks like a pistol. But does it shoot?

Well, Al thinks so. And so do Cord, Dave, Dan, Terry and Glen, all local silhouetters who gave it a try, and did well with it. And Terry who guided me to a small town of northern Arizona prairie dogs. We blew away a half dozen or so in an hour one evening with the Federal 125 grain HP round (once we'd got the Leupold 4X sighted in). From 50 to 125 paces. That load by the way, shoots good enough, flat enough, and produces enough damage on the dogs to be all a varmint hunter needs for his .30/30 pistol.

But just to convince you that the rolling block works, I shot a few hundred rounds from the bench to develop the data shown in the accompanying table.

SANDBAG TEST PROCEDURE

Test procedure was to shoot one five-shot 100 yard group with the scoped pistol from a sandbagged rest over the skyscreens of the M33 Oehler with each load. Groups with acceptable velocities, and pressures, that showed good accuracy and low velocity variation were shot farther to develop data on average group sizes for three five-shot 100 yard groups.

My first surprise was how well the factory ammo shot. My second was how hard it was to develop loads that shot as well, that delivered equivalent velocities and pressures. All loads, by the way, were kept at or below .30/30 rifle loads. Without having access to proof loads nor the desire to scatter the product of all this hard work in the interests of science, I figured it prudent to use 30/30 working pressures as maximum in the conversion. That's no handicap as it turns out 150's can be driven 2000-2200 fps within this limit, and that's enough recoil for most shooters. (Even the .308 users load down to this level). Any

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more is just too hard on the shooter's wrist, elbow and nerves.

After the bench sessions were complete, the best loads for the 150, 165, 180 bullets were selected, and quantities loaded for testing the pistol in actual and simulated matches. Factory loads were also used in this phase of the testing. The downrange performance of the flat nose bullets in the factory ammo was considerably less than that of the more streamlined bullets used in the handloads. The rams fall noticeable slower, and sight corrections as the range increases are considerably more.

With the scope still on, I found I could hold on the leg of the 50 meter chicken with the 150 grain Speer Spitzer/29.0 grains H322 load, and the center of the same target at 200 meters, and take both regularly. By contrast, the 170 grain Federal load required a leg hold on the 50 meter chicken, and an atop the horn hold on the rams.

The pistol performed better than I'd hoped. It'll take a well put together bolt gun to beat its accuracy and it's as tolerant of load variation as any bolt pistol.

On the range I shot simulated matches at a pace far faster than match conditions. In the 95 degree weather the handgun got too hot to touch, but it remained stable,

"In the 95° weather the handgun got too hot to touch, but it remained stable."

taking targets with the same hold hot as it had cold. I could also give another shooter the pistol, some ammo and my sight settings/holds, and he could hit targets without sight adjustment.

From the bench, changes in points of impact at 100 yards with changes in velocity with a given bullet or with changes in bullets were small enough to allow me to keep all my shots on my four spot, page-sized record targets.

After 1200 rounds it was shooting as well as at the start, and the headspace hadn't changed. Best of all it handles and feels like a traditional pistol.

A shooter, and a looker. What more could you want? Well, you could want one for yourself. I thought you might, so I did one more thing. I sent the pistol back to Val. He's evaluating it right now, and first impressions are good. If the economics work out you'll be able to buy one over the counter; no hassles with gunsmiths over custom building, or forming exotic cases for that other factory unlimited.

If that appeals to you, cross your fingers, and write Val. Hopefully we'll have a new factory unlimited. If you can't wait, write Jim.

Either way, you won't be disappointed.



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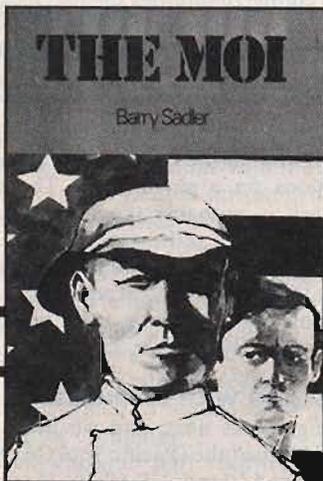
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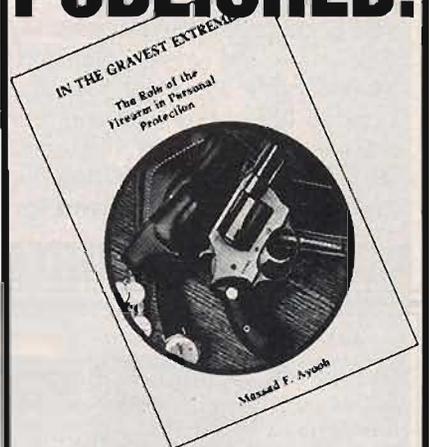
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Powder	Charge	Average Velocity	Average Group
125 gr. FEDERAL HP			
Factory		2283	2.31
150 gr. FEDERAL FP			
Factory		2098	2.15
150 gr. FEDERAL RN			
Factory		2045	2.20
150 gr. SPEER SP			
H322	26.0	1741	
H322	28.0	1877	
H322	29.0	1941	2.06
H322	30.0	2034	2.69
3031	29.0	1879	
3031	31.0	2043	
3031 Top load	33.0	2182	
150 gr. SPEER BT			
BL-C2	30.0	1737	
BL-C2	32.0	1838	
BL-C2	34.0	1995	
H4895	30.0	1864	
H4895	32.0	2060	1.60
H4895 Top load	33.0	2132	1.84
165 gr. SPEER BT			
748 Mild	28.0	1671	
748	30.0	1719	
748 Top load	32.0	1870	
BL-C2	31.0	1843	
BL-C2	32.0	1902	
BL-C2 Close to top	33.0	1950	1.41
H4895	26.0	1643	
H4895	28.0	1779	
H4895 Top load	30.0	1890	
168 gr. HORNADY BTHP			
BL-C2 Inaccurate	29.0	1749	
BL-C2 Accurate	31.0	1841	
BL-C2 Close to top	33.0	1960	
170 gr. FRONTIER FP			
Factory		1911	2.55
180 gr. SPEER BT			
H4895 Too light	23.0	1466	
H4895	25.0	1633	
H4895 Top load	27.0	1715	
4064	28.0	1569	
4064	30.0	1728	
4064 Top load	32.0	1912	1.52

Velocities are for one five-shot group, measured ten feet from the muzzle using an Oehler Model 33 chronotach with skyscreens. Group sizes are the average of the extreme spreads of three five-shot groups fired at 100 yards from a sandbag rest, using a Leupold four power pistol scope (their M8-4X). Federal 210 large rifle primers, and Federal cases were used throughout. Overall lengths were: 150 gr. Speer, 2.86 inches; 150 gr. Speer BT, 2.77 inches; 165 gr. Speer BT, 2.91 inches; 168 gr. Hornady BTHP, 2.90 inches; 180 gr. Speer BT, 2.91 inches. Top loads were estimated to equal 30-30 rifle loads, judged in 75°-80° F temperatures. HP—Hollow Point; FP—Flat Point; RN—Round Nose; SP—Spitzer; BT—Boat Tail; BTHP—Boat Tail Hollow Point.

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BUDGET RELOADING

(Continued from page 44)

"Improved Reloading Kit" that lists for \$13.98. Comes complete for most any popular rifle or pistol cartridge in a pocket-sized red plastic carrying box. Complete means everything (save a mallet for motive power) to load a cartridge is in the box.

Seemed like a logical pairing to me. A captive beginner, and an inexpensive set of loading tools. We made a date one Saturday.

To make this a valid test she was on her own, save for my collecting cases, primers, bullets and a suitable powder. I expect most any beginner could get that far with the help of a friendly clerk or a quick review of the loading chart that accompanies each tool.

THE LOADING CHART

The loading chart is but part of the directions that come with the tool. Sara spread them out in front of her, and read them through carefully (if all else fails, etc.) A key point here is to identify each tool, and pay particular attention to the step by step photos to determine how the tools are oriented for each operation. This is critical because most do more than one operation, and are turned about to suit the job at hand.

In a couple of minutes she had located the decapping base and punch and was busy driving the spent primers out of the 38 Special cases we'd set out to load. Here she decided to depart from the directions to do a single operation (decapping) on all the cases, rather than all operations on a single case. The first approach is probably the faster of the two but either is satisfactory.

In this operation, and all that followed, it only took her 10 to 15 repetitions to get the hang of the process, and begin to work efficiently. Simple.

SIZING WITH LUBRICATION

Sizing comes next, and we used Pacific's Unique lube (Pacific Tool Co., Box 2048, Grand Island, NE 68801) (Lanolin would do fine too) on the cases to ease the sizing effort. A couple of raps with the mallet drove them home. The directions call for driving the case out of the sizing die body on to a primer placed in the priming chamber. Sara was puzzled here by the direction's use of a new term (locating ring) and I had to show her where and how to place the primer (drop the primer, legs up, in the shiny spring-loaded ring with the small hole.)

She elected to size and prime all 50 in this fashion, and was happily hammering away when there was a loud bang. In the interest of speed she'd been driving the cases out of the die and on to the primer with one wack. There was no harm done,

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but she did slow down, and use a couple, three light taps for the rest of the cases.

We cleaned the cases by rolling them in an old towel, and then she was ready for the next step.

The case mouth must be flared to facilitate starting lead bullets, and there's a small punch that is tapped into the case while it is held in the decapping base. Sara pointed out it wouldn't be a good idea to flare the cases on the bench top, as a high/hard spot could set off a primer (suddenly she was safety conscious).

CHARGING WITH POWDER

Once through, and the flared cases were ready to charge with powder. She decided to do all 50 at once, so I fetched her a loading block to hold all the cases to keep things organized, and eliminate knocking a bunch of loose cases over domino-fashion.

The powder dipper was a tiny little thing, and easy to use—just push it through a small container filled with powder, shake it off, and drop it in a case. The dipper had a static charge though, and powder grains stuck to it. A dusting with graphite cured that.

Once all of the cases had been charged I had her look in each one to check for an

“A few taps seats the bullet, turn the die over and a few more taps crimps the case.”

inadvertent double charge. Safety first.

Bullet seating is done with the case in the decapper base and surrounded by the sizing die. The decapping chamber has a threaded rod and lock ring on the side which serves as a bullet seating punch. Threading the rod in or out of the chamber adjusts bullet seating depth, and the desired setting is fixed with the lock ring. (Normally the bullet is seated to the top groove, which is intended to provide room for crimping).

Sara chose to start each bullet in the case mouth by hand (to make sure it got started straight) before placing the case in the die.

FEW TAPS SEAT BULLET

A few taps seat the bullet, and the case is then crimped by turning the die over on the round and applying a few more taps.

That's all there is to it. My test subject loaded her first box of ammo easily, with no help from me save for answering a couple of questions. She'd probably figured those out for herself if I'd left her alone.

Took her about an hour and a half to do that first fifty, and as she said, “I never hit a thumb.”



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PACIFIC 0-7 PRESS

(Continued from page 45)

degrees to the right. This opens up the front of the ram, but at the same time it closes up the rear. If you're used to a big C-press like I am and work from the side, like I do, the new Pacific seems claustrophobic. Moving around to the front as was intended relieves this feeling.

Unlike many bench presses, the main link has an offset extension for the handle, which allows one to sit to the front of the press without hitting yourself with the handle (if you're right-handed that is). The handle is topped with a large ball-shaped knob; unlike the usual straight handle the ball allows you to operate the press without shifting your grip as the handle swings through its arc, all the while maintaining a comfy wrist angle.

I mounted the press tipped back 10 degrees or so, as that's what I'm used to. It has two mounting holes, which some will say is a weakness, but the fastening points work well to hold the press to the bench on the down stroke, which is when heavy loads are normally exerted. A third bolt near the front would eliminate some

“Did I like it? Well, the O-7's still bolted to my bench. It's a deal you can't refuse.”

movement on the up stroke, but if you're working that hard to extract a case the next one will stick in the die.

The linkage goes over center the end of the down stroke, and oddly, the directions instruct you to screw the dies in far enough to stop the ram before it does. Why I don't know, but often you can't do that, as there are times when setting the die that deep oversizes the case. Strange.

All this discussion is interesting but does it work? I mean, who's in a bigger hurry to get the ammo together than a handgunner with a week's practice fodder to load?

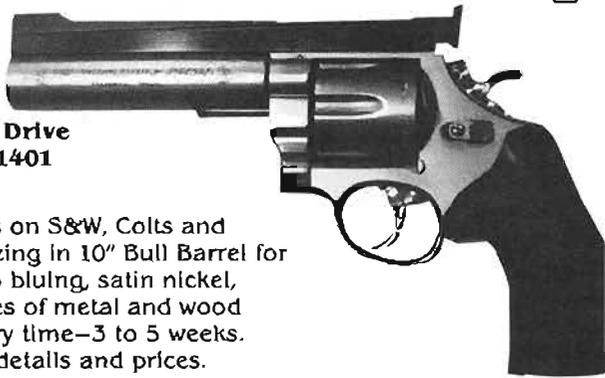
THE O-7 VS THE LEE AUTO

Well, after loading a few hundred rounds to familiarize myself with the O-7's operation, I had a race. Me and the O-7 versus me, the O-7 and my Lee (Auto Prime). Now the Lee is the fastest priming tool bar none. I've primed thousands of rounds with mine. Could the O-7 keep up?

I set out 200 7x47 cases, primers, and adjusted the tools.

Go. Necksizing only, I sized and primed a 100 cases in 12 minutes 10 seconds with the O-7, including time spent filling the primer feeder.

Next. With the primer feed and priming arm removed I sized the other 100 on the



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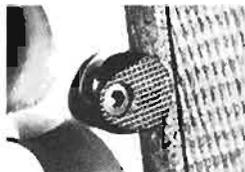
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O-7, dropped a 100 primers in the Auto Prime and seated them. Elapsed time—13 minutes 40 seconds. Sorry Lee.

Now before some of you curl up your nose in disgust at all those uncleaned primer pockets, and poo-poo the O-7's advantage because of your peculiar passion, let me note that I've never cleaned a primer pocket in 20 years of reloading and although I've never tried benchrest I shoot 40's and sub-minute groups with my ammo. So much for theory.

Did I like it? Well, the O-7's still bolted to my bench. It's a deal you can't refuse. Not only has Pacific created the most innovative press seen in years but they sell it for seven dollars less than their cheapest similarly equipped C-press. Now that's progress. Pacific Tool Co., Box 2048, Grand Island, NE 68801.



C-H 444-X PRESS

(Continued from page 46)

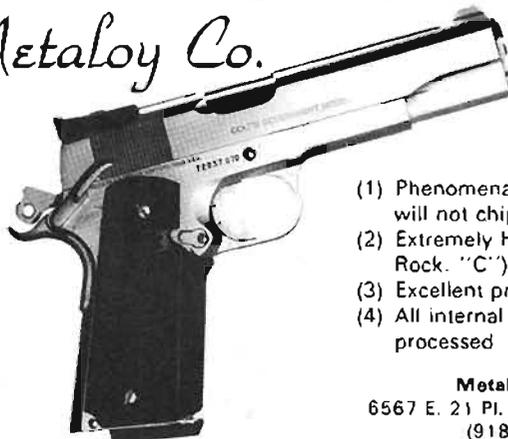
further simplify this job, C-H makes carbide resizing dies available to eliminate the need for messy resizing lubes and the need to wipe off lube, which slows reloading markedly. Carbide dies are obtainable in .38-.357, 9mm Parabellum, .30 M1 Carbine, .44 Magnum, and .45 ACP. Steel dies are also provided at slightly less cost, but if one is going to utilize the speed and ease of semi-progressive presses he must always think seriously of the carbide resizer.

Once a case is resized and deprimed, it is taken to the left front station for repriming, bellling, and powder charging. This is a unique operation, one which actually begins when the case is being resized. At that time, the reloader, thinking ahead, works the Auto Prime device by pushing its spring-loaded knob. This carries a fresh primer to the priming arm which runs through the second station. With the primer in place, the hand-loader lowers the slide only enough to reach the resized case, extract it from that shell loader, and bring it to the second holder. Then, final lowering of the slide performs the repriming operation. Thus, just one up-and-down move is all that's needed to accomplish resizing, depriming, and repriming.

BELLING & POWDER CHARGING

Belling and powder charging are also handled quickly at station No. 2. Leaving the freshly primed case in the second holder, the handle is lowered once again to elevate the slide and bring the case mouth into contact with the top-mounted expander die. This, happily, opens the case mouth just enough to allow easy bullet seating without nicking or shaving the bullet; in fact, the eye can hardly detect the mouth expansion. The glory of this gentle bellling, of course, is that the brass isn't

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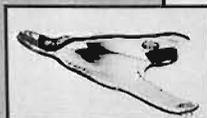
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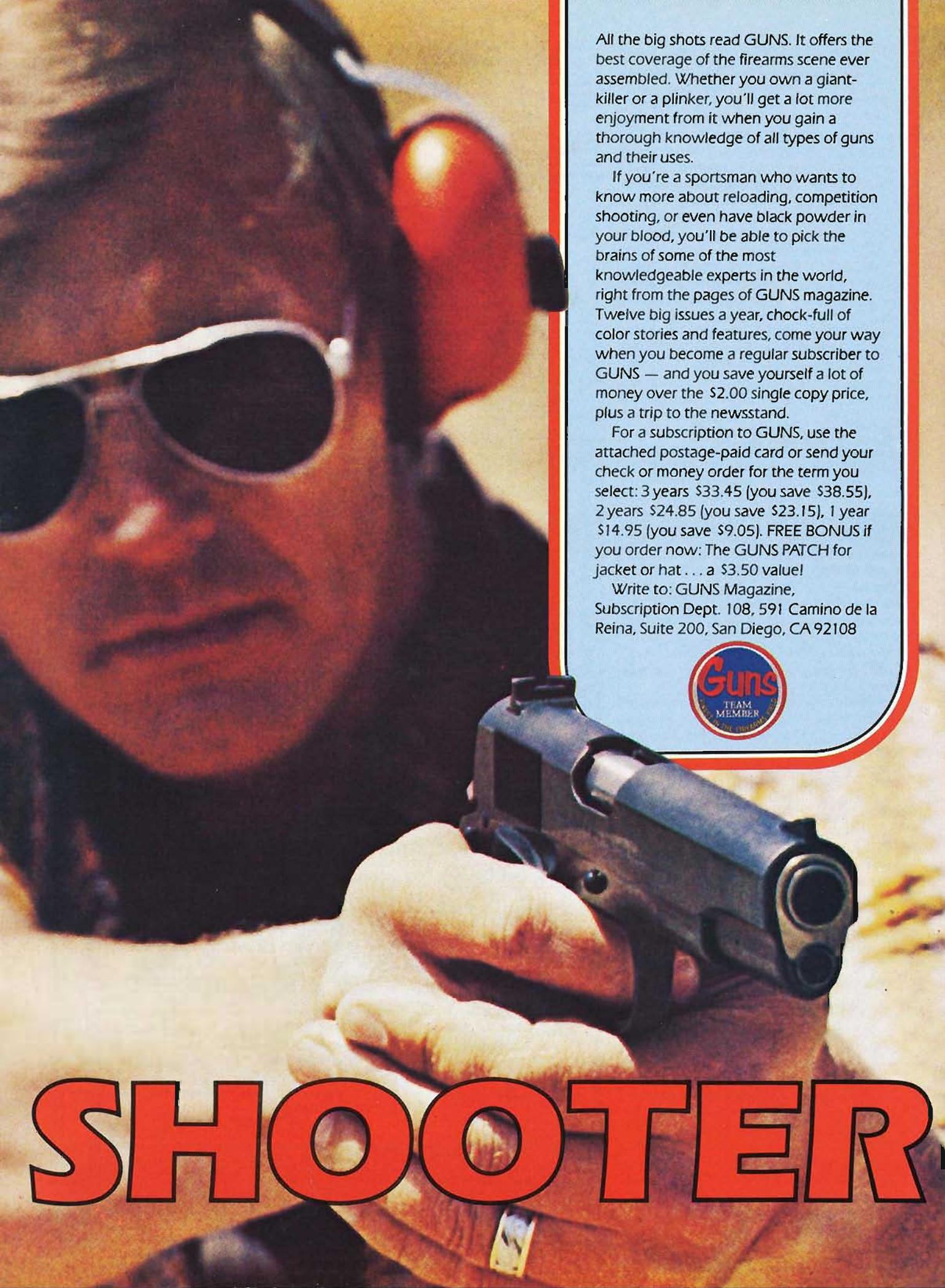
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SHOOTER

worked strenuously; hence, it doesn't split after just a few reloads. Indeed, most pistol reloaders bell the mouth far too much, thus sacrificing case life.

As the accompanying photos show, the powder measure sits squarely atop station No. 2. This works on a push-knob basis, the powder being measured by a bushing *a la* the shotshell press. The C-H No. 333-X has the same setup; various bushings are available and listed in the C-H literature. The powder drops directly through the bellings stem; hence, bellings and charging are accomplished at virtually the same time. The operator merely pushes the powder measure's knob while the case is at the top of its bellings stroke.

BULLETS TO THE LEFT

If the handloader has his box of bullets sitting directly to the left of the press's base, he can pick up a bullet and have it propped in the case mouth immediately after releasing the powder charger's knob and lowering the slide plate a mite.

The next step is removing the powder-and-bullet-charged case to the middle front station, which is the bullet seater. Various shaped punches are available for the different nose configurations, and lowering the handle merely forces the bullet to a desired depth.

The round is then taken to the final station at the extreme right of the slide plate, at which point the taper crimp is applied. In general, the taper crimp is highly desirable for cartridges which headspace on their case mouths in semi-automatic pistols, meaning the 9mm Parabellum and the .45 ACP. Ditto for the .30 M1 Carbine in either a rifle or the Ruger single-action revolver. Putting a roll crimp on rounds like the 9mmP or .45 ACP merely invites problems due to improper headspacing because of reduced case length and the absence of a case mouth to squarely abut the chamber's shoulder.

150-200 ROUNDS PER HOUR

Although reading the above sounds involved, one can actually load 150-200 rounds per hour with the No. 444-X. Once a reloader gets the feel of the press, he'll note that a full-length stroke of the handle isn't needed for each operation, and that all case movement and bullet seating can be done with his left hand while the right hand remains glued to the handle. A session of two will teach each handloader how to conserve motion and position his bullets and boxes for utmost efficiency.

I've been using a No. 444-X in .38-.357, and it's been a smooth, slick rig. I find that if the powder hopper is kept at least half full, the charges are quite uniform with practically all powders; and when one uses Bullseye or ball powder, uniformity continues easily to the one-third level. However, the fluffier flake powders like Red Dot, Green Dot, or "Hi-Skor" 700-X need more weight on top to drop continuously uniform charges, and



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Anyone who considers himself a serious handgun shooter and reloader, or anyone who feels he's about to burn up goodly quantities of handgun fodder, should take a long, hard look at the C-H No. 333-X and No. 444-X. Both are considerably faster than the single-station presses which require die changing for each operation, yet both are much less expensive than the fully automated progressive machines. My information tells me the new No. 444-X, complete with dies for one caliber (including a carbide sizer), Auto Prime unit, shell holders and powder measure plus one bushing, retails for \$269.50. Without the dies, but with four shell holders, powder measure, and priming arm, the No. 444-X goes just \$158.00.

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Additional information can be had by writing Mr. Tony Sailer, C-H Tool & Die Corp., Box "L", Owen WI 54460.



CONTROLLABLE .44

(Continued from page 47)

indeed save lives. On the other hand I was determined not to relax my standards.

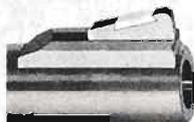
During the past year, although I am now retired from law enforcement, I have been experimenting with the 4" S&W .44 Magnum as a police handgun capable of delivering accuracy within the strict time limits of the PPC. It has always been apparent that the problem must be approached by modifying both the gun and the ammunition. Particularly the ammunition, in that no current factory loading is designed for optimum results in a short 4" barrel, not even the Remington medium velocity load. Most commercial loadings produce top performance in hunting style barrels from 7½ to 8¾ inches long. Some commercial ammo even performs best in 20" barrels. Hunting is undoubtedly the most common use to which we put a .44 Magnum, other than possibly prestige in ownership.

First, however, let's look at the gun and see what can be done to tame our short version of the S&W Model 29. Starting from scratch, I purchased a brand new 4" and ran into two initial disappointments. I had to pay a premium price for this high consumer demand item. I couldn't touch it for a penny less than \$50 over suggested retail. The second problem was that it needed an action job from a qualified pistolsmith before any serious use could be contemplated. One can only shake his head at the lack of quality control in much

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of the modern gun industry. With these unexpected expenses out of the way, I invested in some planned improvements. The large target-style wood stocks were removed and replaced with a pair of soft neoprene Mustang/Rangefield grips. Pachmayrs would have done well also, but I wanted the finger grooves offered by Mustang. The soft neoprene does much to absorb the "push" of the Model 29 while also eliminating the "sting" in checkering of hard wood grips. My second operation was to send the gun to Larry Kelly for a Mag-Na-Port job, a process which definitely reduces muzzle flip. There would, in my mind, be no way I could accomplish my goals without the help of Mag-Na-Port.

The next task was a tedious few hundred hours at the loading bench in an attempt to develop a load that would deliver approximately 100 fps velocity and at least 500 foot pounds of energy. An additional ideal would be a bullet that would expend all that energy within the adversary target. I was looking for stopping power, maximum utilization of powder charge within the 4" barrel, accuracy, and lowered recoil. Although I have almost every reloading manual published, I could find nothing listed that satisfied all my needs. I was

"The next task was a few hundred hours at the loading bench to develop the load."

aware that others had published experiments along this line in several gun magazines, but I did not have those particular issues available.

The bullet I found most suitable for my purposes, after much experimentation, was the Taurus 230 grain lead hollow point. This .44 caliber dry lubricated bullet actually weighs a uniform 228.5 grains. The soft lead bullet mushrooms consistently to .75 inch in flesh like medium at appropriate velocities. Its only limitation was a tendency to lead barrels if driven too fast. As it worked out I would be pushing it to limit. Anything over 1000 fps would produce unacceptable leading.

I worked with more than a half dozen powders; including DuPont PB and 700-X, Hodgdon HS-5, Hercules Red Dot, Bullseye, Herco, and Unique. Many proved just a tad too slow burning for the 4" barrel, as evidenced by too much recoil and huge fireballs during night firing sessions. For police use, a severe muzzle flash is a by-product best done without. Bullseye showed initial promise but was finally eliminated. Being the fastest burning powder available it was also the powder presenting the smallest granules. For every plus there seems to be a minus because this

(Continued on page 78)

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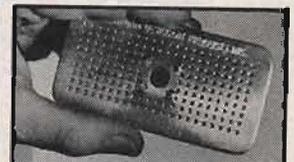
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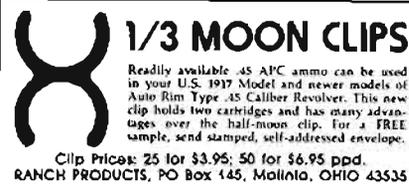
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CONTROLLABLE .44

(Continued from page 75)

fine powder did not take up enough volume within the large .44 Magnum case. An appropriate load of Bullseye (8 grains) to produce the desired 1000 fps, left too much unfilled space. Unfilled space, I believe, affects uniformity in burning characteristics with resulting accuracy problems. Fillers, such as Dacron, were out of the question for police use where the gun would be carried day in and day out.

In the final analysis, Hercules Red Dot proved the best powder available. Eight grains of Red Dot filled the case well, produced 995 fps measured by a Custom Chronograph at nine feet from the muzzle, burned clean and completely as evidenced

by the low level muzzle flash, was acceptably accurate for combat shooting, and produced recoil which was less punishing than most police .357 Magnum revolvers. With the Taurus bullet I was getting 503 foot pounds of energy, expansion to .75 inch, and penetration of only three to four inches in hard backed but soft target medium. It was indeed a "manstopper!" The combination of work on the 4" Model 29, and the load, made the gun comfortable to shoot for an experienced combat shooter.

The final test was, of course, finishing the PPC within the time limits. The first phase was the aforementioned 12 shots in 25 seconds at the seven yard line. My very first try produced a tight little two-inch group in less than 20 seconds and, I guess, it was at that point that I realized I had accomplished my goal. Final score on the PPC for my first run was 97.2%.

Unfortunately, there are probably few policemen whose department firearms regulations would allow them to carry either a .44 Magnum or reloads. If you have this freedom, as do the members of my old department, you might consider this load. On the other hand there are many honest citizens who have or carry a handgun for personal protection. If you have shied away from the big magnum as "uncontrollable," you need do so no longer—as long as you are practiced enough to contribute your part.

Mustang/RangeField Grips, 1334 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, CA 92805.

Mag-Na-Port Arms Inc., 30016 South River Rd., Mt. Clemens, MI 48045.

Taurus Bullets, Alberts Corp., P.O. Box 157, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417.

Hercules Powder, 910 Market St., Wilmington DE 19899.



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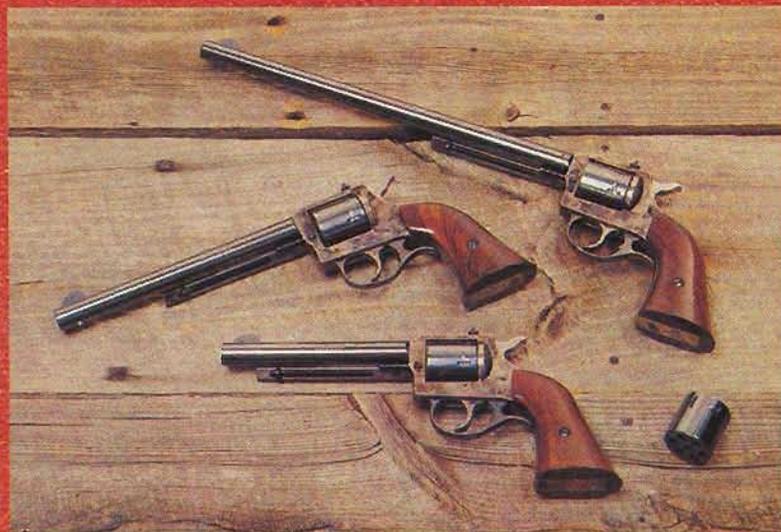
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