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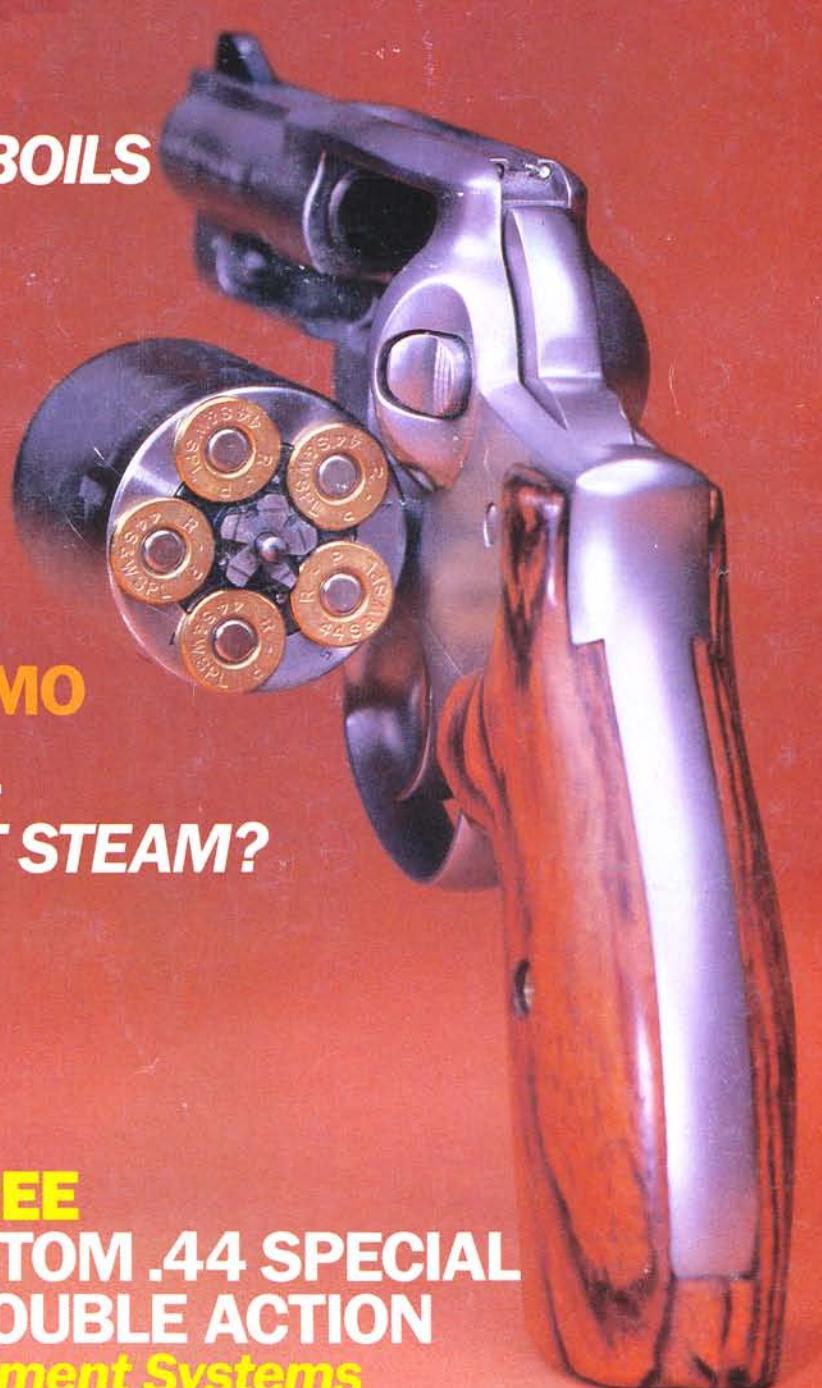
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THE SERVICE PISTOL
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**INSIDE STORY—
PPC REVOLVERS**

TEST REPORTS

- COONAN .357 AUTO PISTOL
- FRENCH POLICE AMMO

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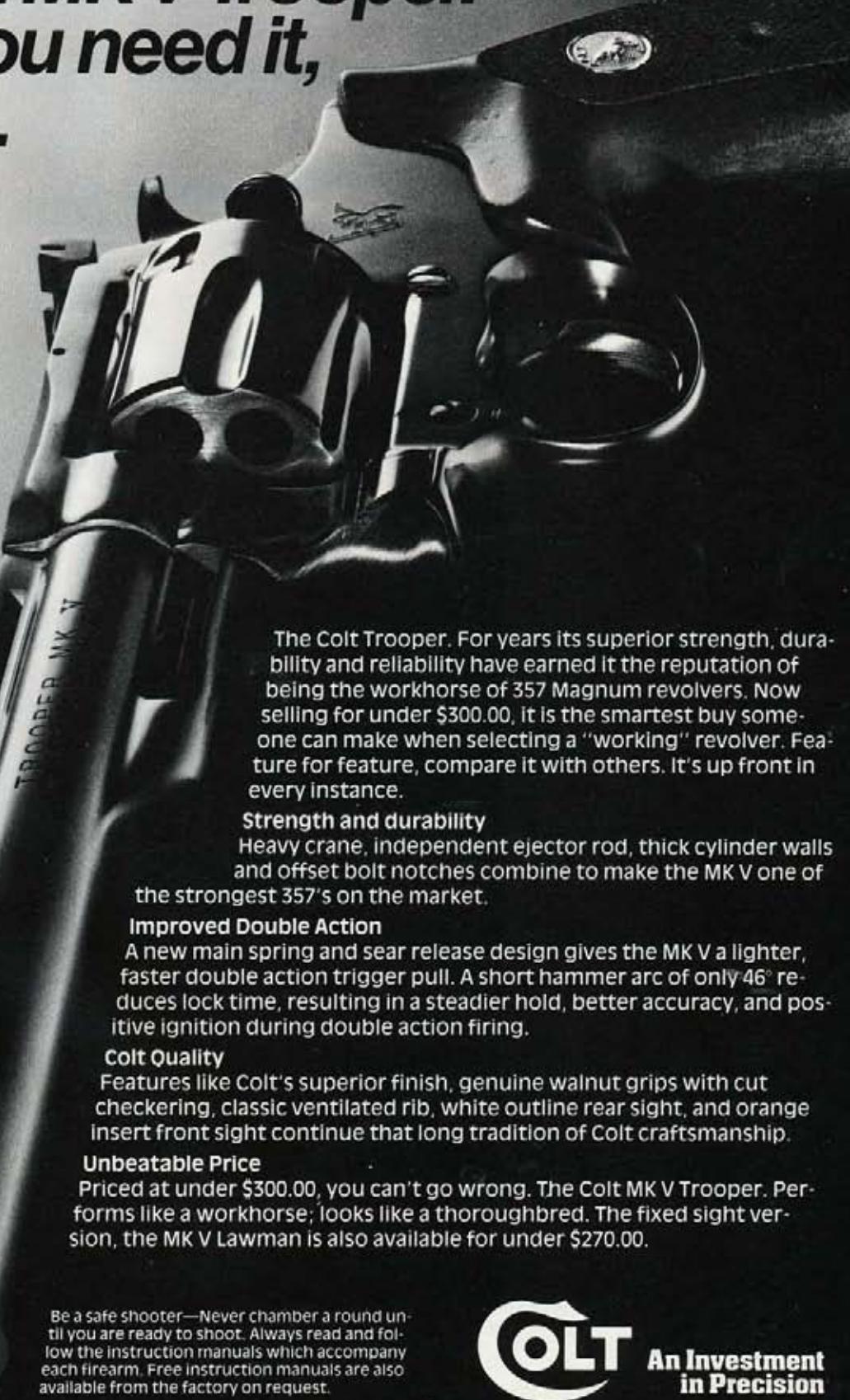


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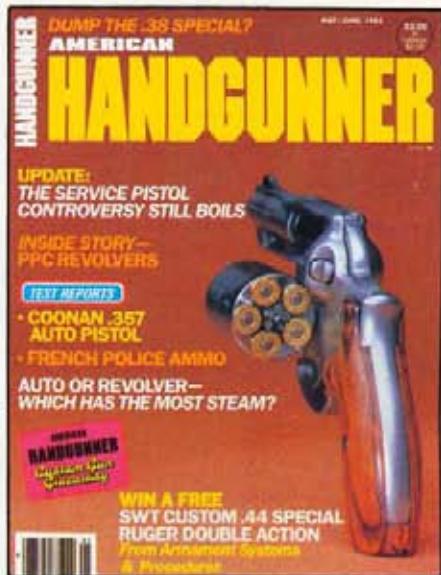
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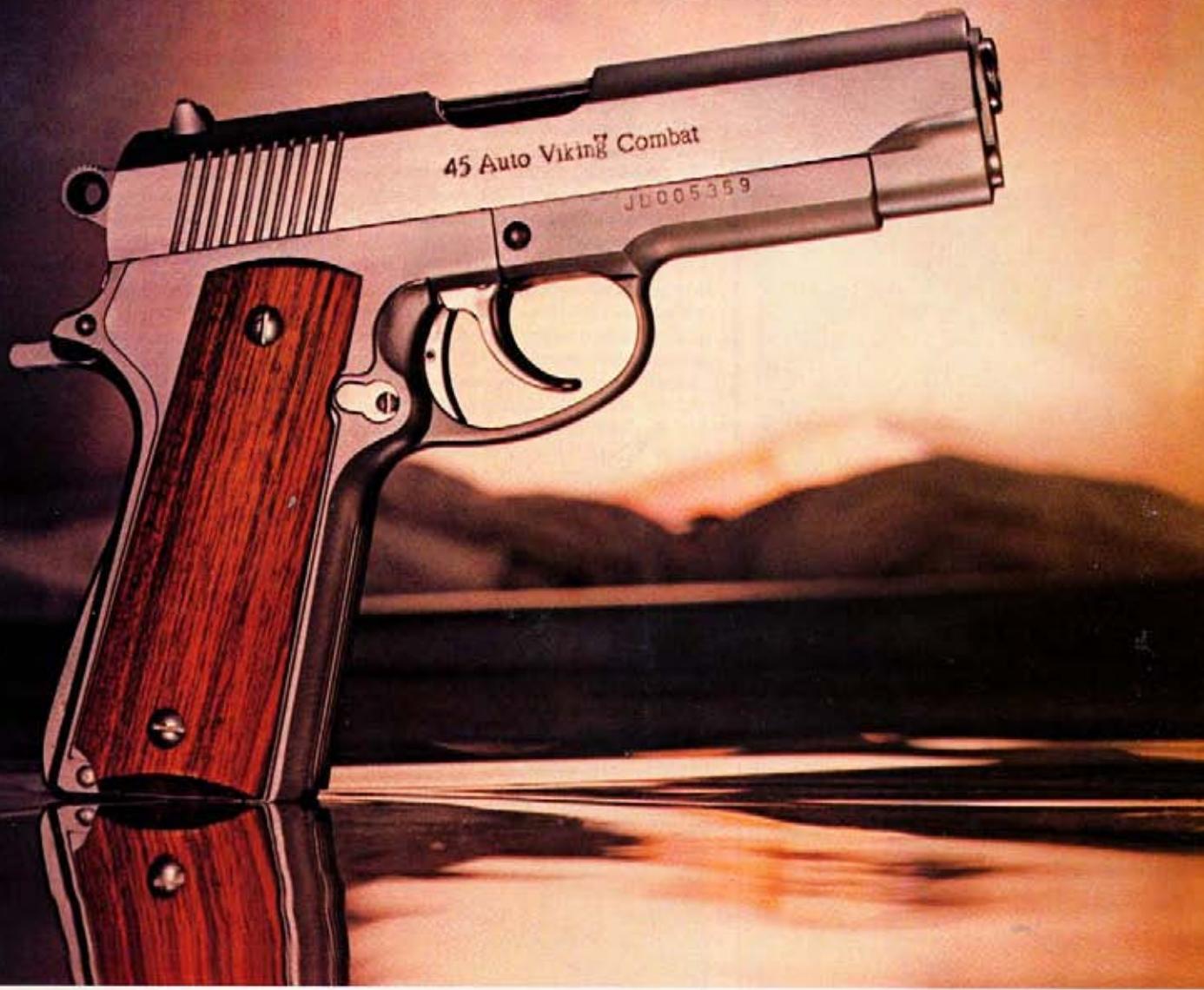
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COMBAT SHOOTING

MICKEY FOWLER

BIANCHI CUP WINNER DISCUSSES HOLSTERS AND COMSTOCK COUNT

Question: I am going to start shooting combat matches, with a .45 auto. What type of holster should I purchase? In what location on the body should I wear my

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holster? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the cross-draw versus the strong-side position?

Answer: Early practical pistol matches had few regulations on holster design. Most of these events required little or no vigorous physical movements. The position of the drawing hand was literally hovering over the gun. Open front rigs on low-slung gunbelts, some with leg tie downs, were a common sight. These outfits were extremely fast, but gave almost no gun retention; impractical for anything but fast-draw events.

As practical pistol match design advanced, holster development kept pace. The old hand-hoovering start position was replaced by such positions as hands clasped on center line of body at chest level, hands held shoulder high with wrists showing from behind in the surrender position, the parade rest position (which locates the hands touching in the small of the back) and others.



Vigorous physical movement courses were added, which required positive retention of the contestant's pistol. Anyone whose gun falls from its holster is disqualified. Once again, course design dictated equipment design.

The year 1981 saw IPSC (International Practical Pistol Confederation) write a definitive "holster rule." I won't go into all the details of this rule, but it does disallow any of the low-slung gunfighter rigs with leg ties. The contestant's holster and magazines must be worn on his pants belt.

Current IPSC rules do not specify what position on your belt the holster is to be worn. There are three common positions used in practical pistol shooting. Using a right-handed shooter as an example let's

first look at the cross-draw. The location of the gun is slightly to the left of the belt buckle. These holsters are built on an angle, to facilitate a quick draw, and position the muzzle so it doesn't point at any part of the body when the weapon is holstered. *This last point applies, no matter which position is chosen.*

CROSS-DRAW HOLSTERS

Some advantages of the cross-draw are quick access from the hands clasped and hands at shoulder-high positions. It is also an excellent choice for events such as the *Flying M* stages, which require knocking a can off a rest with the strong hand before drawing. As your hand sweeps the can off its rest, it naturally comes to your holster. It's also a good choice for use when riding in a vehicle. Some disadvantages are a slower draw from the hand hanging at your side and parade rest positions. It is also harder to conceal than a kidney position rig.

Another popular position is just ahead of the right hip bone point. This is very fast for hands placed shoulder high, hands hanging and the parade rest start positions. The best of these holsters are generally angled on a slight forward rake. This helps keep your wrist and forearm properly positioned for the draw. Few adjustments are required; once the hand contacts the pistol grip. Some disadvantages of this position are difficult concealment and poor access in a vehicle. Carrying the pistol behind the right hip bone in the kidney position is widely used in IPSC competition. The gun is easily concealed in this position. Holsters worn this way generally have a slight butt forward rake, and are built to pull the grip into the body. If start positions are parade rest, palms touching in the small of the back, or hands hanging at the side, this is a good choice.

When purchasing your practical pistol match holster make sure your belt is made of good quality leather and that when your pistol is holstered the trigger guard is covered. Any holster for an automatic pistol which leaves the trigger guard and trigger exposed should never be used for safety reasons. I would recommend purchasing a belt-and-holster combination.

Continued on page 24

Editor's note: Beginning with this issue of the *American Handgunner*, Jerry Rakusan's *Industry Insider* column will appear regularly on the page facing the inside back cover.

Now you'll have to read the magazine from cover to cover before having an opportunity to go behind the firearms industry scene with Jerry to learn first-hand what's going on in the world of guns, ammo, their accessories and shooting sports generally.

Because of the longtime popularity of his column, we bet there will be many readers who will turn to the back of the book first, like the Chinese do. L.D.

HANDGUN LEATHER

BOB ARGANBRIGHT

NEW HOLSTERS BY BILL ROGERS MAY BE ULTIMATE FOR .45 AUTOS

I recently requested a .45 auto holster from Bill Rogers for evaluation and received one of his new World Shoot models.

This is a strong-side holster cut deep in the front, making it very fast. I had two reservations about this model. I was afraid it might not provide the security I wanted. And I want my holsters to be made of leather; this holster is constructed of a synthetic material and *lined* with leather.

Another Rogers holster I examined recently—the *Hackathorn* model—is similar to the World Shoot model except that the front extends up to the forward edge of the ejection port on the .45, and a tension screw is placed just below the trigger guard. I was pleased to see that the *Hackathorn* model (named for Ken Hackathorn, a champion combat shooter) was leather both inside and out, with the synthetic material sandwiched in-between: a far better holster than the traditional two-thicknesses-of-leather with steel liner. The synthetic, plastic-like liner may be molded, producing a fit that will not change with wear. Rogers assured me that this holster will withstand extended prone shooting, without damage.

Only 1,000 *Hackathorn* signature holsters have been produced. They have been greatly improved by adding a hip plate on the back side of the belt loop and Velcro on the plate.

Rogers has introduced a belt of two-thicknesses-of-leather with a synthetic stiffener and Velcro on the back side for positioning the holster properly.

The *Hackathorn* model has a slight butt forward angle. The Velcro, however, allows some minor adjustments of the holster angle, before pressing the two surfaces together to lock the holster firmly in place.

My Bill Wilson .45 auto fit tightly in the new "Hack." Rogers instructed me to spray the inside of the holster with a silicone treatment (such as that used in the Bianchi leather care kit) and then leave the .45 in it for 24 hours so the holster adjusts to the specific gun to be carried. After doing this, the gun draws effortlessly.

FUMBLE-FREE DRAW

I like this holster. The final version closely resembles a high-ride Anderson *Thunderbolt* model without muzzle rake. The front welt construction allows use of even the highest, sharpest target front sight

without damage to the holster, and places a minimum amount of leather at the grip trigger guard junction. This is critical for a maximum speed, fumble-free draw.

I understand IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) ace Mike Plaxco is using a similar Rogers rig, with a muzzle forward angle. Plaxco won the 1982 Steel Challenge match, attesting to the speed inherent in one of these holsters.

The original Anderson *Thunderbolt* was the fastest secure holster ever manufactured for the big Colt pistol. Its sole drawback, however, was that it was heavy and made to be worn on a 2½ inch gunbelt around the hips, which limited its practicality.

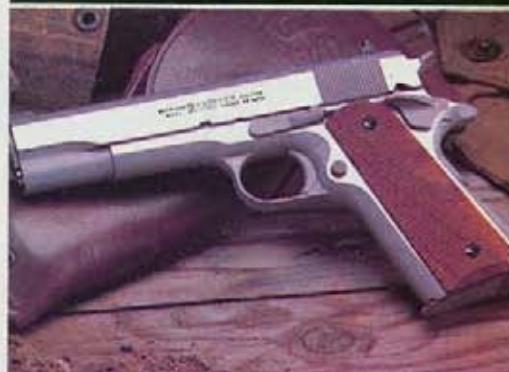


The new breed of Rogers holsters of similar design, while lighter in weight and made to be worn on a 1¼ inch waist belt, may be the ultimate hip holster for the Colt .45 auto. All for around \$45.

Another worthwhile leather product is Bill Wilson's magazine pouch, modified. He uses a Rogers *Idaho Reloader* pouch which he attaches to the leading edge of his regular double pouch made, I believe, by Gordon Davis. The Rogers pouch was butt-joined to the leather double pouch and attached permanently with rivets. Because the belt loop of the Rogers pouch was not attached to the belt, it projected slightly outward from Wilson's body. This provides additional clearance and reduces the chance of magazine fumbling during fast reloading. Wilson glued a magazine base pad to the bottom of the pouch, making the magazine ride slightly on the high side, above the other two.

As an ex-custom holster maker, I intend to design a similar triple magazine pouch for my own use.

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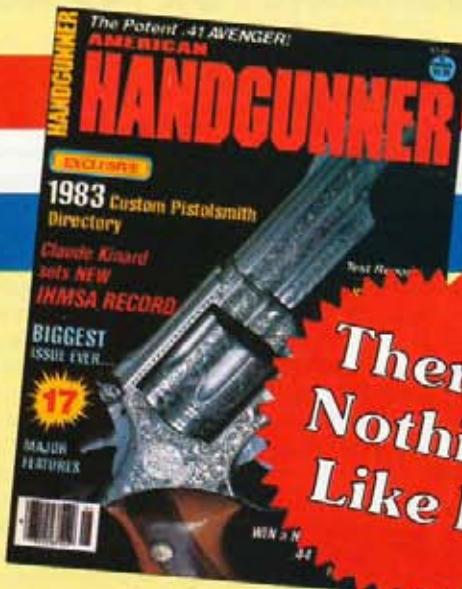
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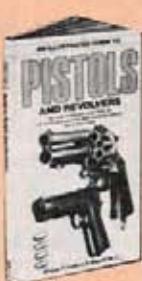
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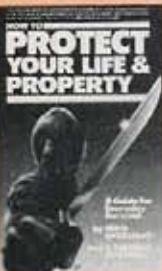
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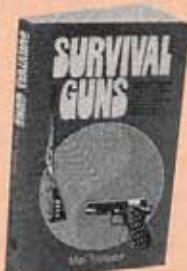
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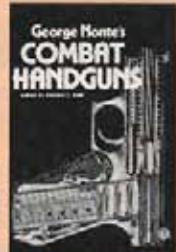
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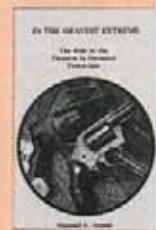
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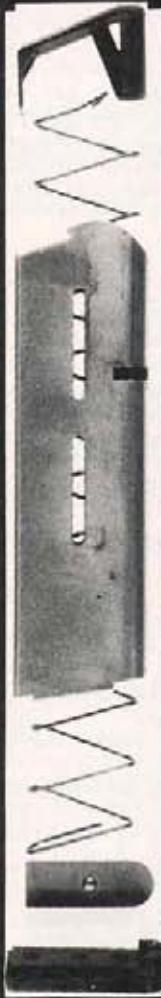
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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

READERS WRITE ABOUT RELOADING FOR .30 CARBINE, .45LC, WEBLEY

Call this a compressed charge, if you will, because reloading information from readers of this column is coming in at such a high rate it has become necessary to stick to essentials. Letters will, therefore, be quoted briefly, or simply paraphrased, in order to cram in as much valuable reloading talk as possible.

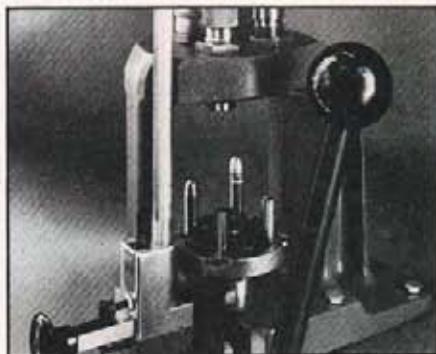
David Simanskey, whose mailing address is 3712 Waldo Road, Midland, MI 48640, suggests a rimmed version of the .30 Carbine case for use in a K-frame S&W, or perhaps the Ruger Security Six. He reloads for a Ruger Blackhawk in .30 Carbine caliber, which functions well with the rimless version.

"My load for the .30 Carbine Blackhawk," he writes, "is relatively mild. I use an RCBS .30 caliber, 115-grain soft point cast bullet of Linotype metal without a gas check, sized to .309 inch with CCI 400 primers and 11 grains of H-110 powder. The average velocity is about 1,250 fps with little shot-to-shot variation."

"Case length must be such that all cases in any chamber will allow free cylinder rotation. Loading manuals state a maximum case length or trim-length dimension. Ignore those except as a starting area (of length). Chamber six resized cases, and, if there is any binding on rotation, trim all six

slightly and try again. Chambers should be clean to allow cases to slide in easily. Do not expand the case mouths until after the case length has been determined."

"Hodgdon's H-110 powder was a surprise in its consistency and cleanliness of burning with a lead bullet and lighter load. Maybe the small case allows use of the standard primer, or maybe the hard-cast



bullet provides enough resistance for good burning."

HOT HUNTING LOAD

In concluding, Simanskey notes his intent to try gas checks and re-check velocities. He also notes that, thus far, he has

Continued on page 72

LIFE WITHOUT FEAR

Written by Mickey Fowler, three-time Bianchi Cup champion, Combat Master and 1979 IPSC National Champion, and Mike Dalton, four-time Southwest Pistol League Champion (who also holds the prestigious Combat Master rating and two-time IPSC World Gold Medalist. Both have operated the internationally renowned International Shootists Inc. training school, and now share their valuable knowledge with you.

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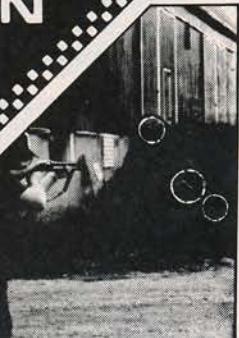
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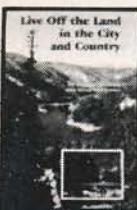


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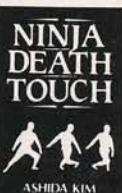
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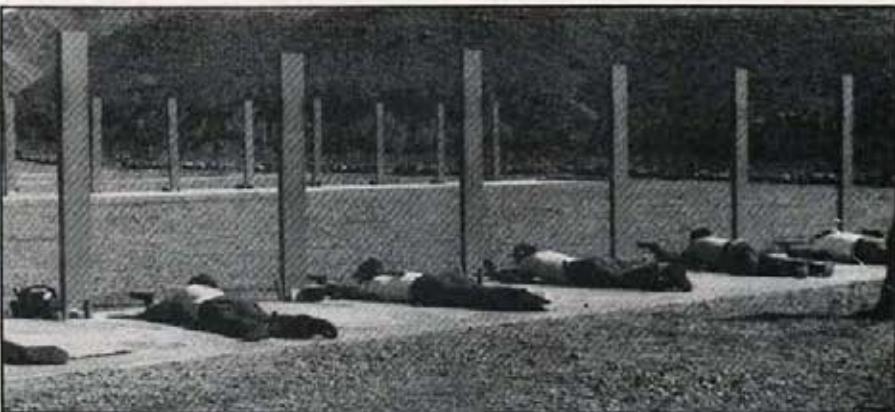
COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

SHOOTING SCHOOL COURSE COSTS WELL WORTH THE MONEY CHARGED

Editor's note: Here is the last of a three-part series by Massad Ayoob on shooting schools. They're places where pistol and revolver shooters—both police and civilians—go either to learn the basics or brush up on their marksmanship skills. The series covers everything you need to know, with respect to the selection of available schools with courses designed to meet your objectives.

In the last two columns, we've touched on some little-known facts about selecting a handgun academy, where you can refine your skills with sidearms. This time, let's look at various courses of study offered by some of the nation's top instructors.



In my opinion, the best way to adequately study the handgun is to take every course available. A lot of my own training has been in places out of bounds to civilians: half a dozen Smith & Wesson Academy courses, and almost that many NYPD Firearms and Tactics Training programs, among many others. I've even taken courses that not one in a hundred cops could get into if they wanted to, such as the superb Officer Safety and Survival Program taught at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Georgia.

In one sense, training is expensive; but when you look at it in the long term, it's incredibly cost-effective. A \$400 course at API, ISI, LFI, MSI (see end of column for definitions of these abbreviations) or the Chapman Academy sounds expensive until you realize that it's only the price of a Colt .45 auto, or a Smith & Wesson .357 with a good set of leather. By and large, the training will do a lot more for you than the gun.

No one course, however, will do it for you. Studying the handgun is like studying theology: there is no one true religion, and the better you understand each discipline out there, the better you will be prepared to meet your maker (or, as some of us teach, postpone that meeting as long as possible).

In the January-February issue of the *American Handgunner*, we gave you a study guide covering elementary courses through intermediate, and starting on advanced. In intermediate and advanced, there are certain special aspects you'll want to learn.

CHAPMAN ACADEMY
ISI, MISS, or Chapman Intermediate

will make you a fine pistol shot. Chapman's Advanced should not be missed. It is the only course available to civilians that teaches you to do things with a handgun that you would have thought impossible. All my graduates are urged to continue their training with a Chapman Academy course.

Every shooter should take one of John Farnam's two-day courses on the Duelatron targets. Farnam is a fine instructor, and his \$30.00 worth of computerized shoot/don't shoot targets give you a unique training experience.

For self-defense shooting, knowing when to shoot is often more important than knowing how to shoot. My Lethal Force Institute courses address that area. API alumni taking my course feel they have had a graduate study experience; yet, I tell my graduates that API—like the Chapman Academy—should be on their list of courses to take. The two concepts do not compete, they complement, no matter which direction the students come from.

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There are a multitude of shooting styles to fit a multitude of body shapes and muscle systems of students. Many programs—such as the Lethal Force Institute, Chapman Academy and Defense Training Inc.—show the student each technique and let him (or her) decide with what they do best. If a school tells you there is only one way to shoot, it's a little like studying theology under Sun Myung Moon: if the guru puts down another belief, it's probably because he fears that it may be superior to his. You may get a lot out of a course that teaches "the one true way," but take it with an open mind.

OTHER COURSES

If self defense is on your mind, start with a course in the judicious use of deadly force, and hone your pistolcraft skills later. If you're a sportshooter, save your \$400 tuition at Lethal Force Institute; instead, take an elementary safety and handgun handling course with a local, NRA-certified handgun instructor, and then go on to the nearest Basic Pistolcraft course. Study the literature from the various academies, and select a shooting school taught by champions who have a reputation for imparting their winning techniques. Personally, I would finish with a Chapman Advanced Course.

The study of using the handgun under pressure—in a match, in the game fields, or in a gunfight—is a study in stress control. Local community colleges hold classes in sports physiology and biofeedback (great for competition shooters), and body language and crisis intervention (incredibly useful in street defense situations). Study of the martial arts should be mandatory for people who carry guns with the intention of using them in a kill-or-be-killed fight.

If you want to be good with the handgun, in any of its serious applications, remember it's a lifetime study—and a lifetime study begins with the best formal training you can get. I had that training with the best police and civilian academies and, on more than one occasion, it has kept me and other people alive. I eventually reached the point of teaching it myself, and have had the opportunity to "make the pilgrimage to sit at the feet of the masters," people such as Charles Askins, Bill Jordan and Jeff Cooper. My own study brought me in contact with world and national champions, and what I learned from them was invaluable.

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Cooper was right about too many com-

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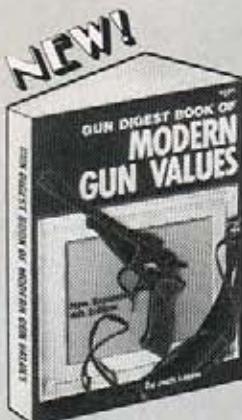
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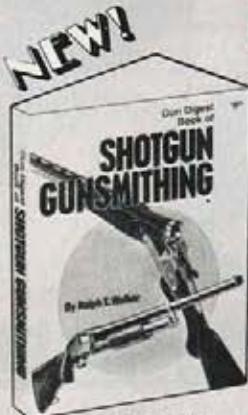
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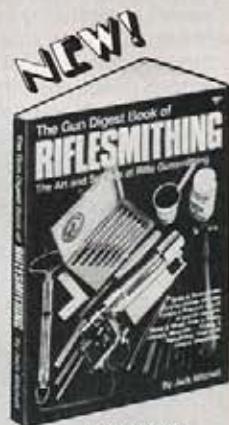
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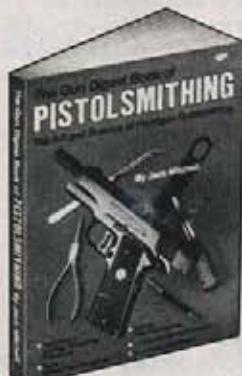
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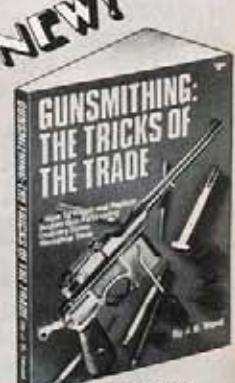
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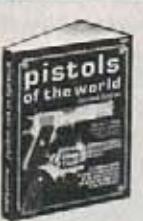


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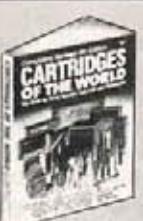
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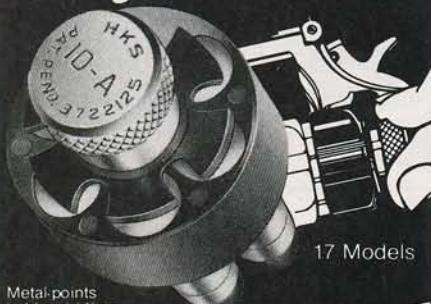


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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN G. LAWSON

FACTORY SIGHTS MAY NEED SOME ALTERATION TO SHARPEN PICTURE

There are two techniques of handgun sight alignment that polarize shooters into the major schools of thought.

One group advocates focusing vision sharply on the sights to insure a precise sight picture, while allowing the target to fall into a soft blur; the other focuses sharply on the target, bringing the sights into a field of blurred, peripheral vision.

It is necessary to choose between these two techniques, because the human eye is not capable of adjusting for great depth of field.

Although these alternative techniques have never been discussed in books, or in the popular press, it is necessary to understand them and choose which one you will use in order to make an intelligent choice of handgun sights.

As your eyes age, internal optical pressures distort the eye's lens, making vision focus farther and farther away, in most cases. Finally, when your arms are no longer adequate to hold a newspaper in focus, it becomes necessary to be fitted for glasses. Some prescriptions require rather thick and curved lenses. This often introduces a small amount of refraction, which differs from one individual to another. So, always sight in your own gun.

You may have to use a bifocal lens, a mechanical aperture such as the Merit, or a supplemental lens if you use the traditional method of focusing directly on the sights to obtain a perfect sight picture, while allowing the target to fall into a soft blur. This method provides the tightest groups for bullseye shooters, because if the sights are properly aligned, waver over the center scoring ring will be minimal (less than a minute of angle in the case of an experienced shooter). Many bullseye and silhouette shooters find this method of sight alignment best for their firing conditions.

VISION PROBLEMS

Deterioration of sight does not happen overnight. We occasionally find a shooter with vision problems widening the rear notch to make "light bars" up to almost two-thirds the width of the front blade, as compensation for lack of sharp focus and an increasing hyperfocal distance. This can be a temporary cure, since the brain tends to seek centering of the blade in the

notch. But, in some kinds of shooting—paper silhouettes on an indoor range, for example—the light bars fill with black from the target, and the shooter has an "off day."

Factory target sights are well engineered optically, if not mechanically, and are perfectly adequate for bullseye target shooting indoors and out, if the shooter has normal or corrected vision. A small amount of additional width of rear notch may be beneficial for quick sight alignment during timed and rapid fire. Usually, the amount is limited to "straightening out" non-perpendicular sides of the rear notch to make a cleaner sight picture.

I have found that a white outline rear notch and a white line front ramp sight are an almost ideal combination for *all* types of shooting. A red ramp insert disappears



Millet boresighter gauge helps reduce ammo costs and eliminates guesswork.

on an indoor range, where bright incandescent lights are mostly ahead of the shooter, or when the sun breaks over the target berms. The white outline and white line define blade top and centering even against a black silhouette in the penumbra of downrange backlighting. Photo gray glasses, or polarizing lenses, help.

On gray, cloudy, overcast days, some shooters use a K-2 medium yellow filter over their scope objective, or wear yellow shooting glasses to increase contrast.

RETICLE WAVER

Telescopic sights have the advantage of "gathering light" and providing a larger view of the target, with both the target and reticle in sharp focus. The disadvantage is reticle waver, and even a pronounced

"bounce" from heartbeats. You may find that a 1X-2X is enough magnification without objectionable waver. Other shooters may not be bothered by wavering.

The Aimpoint is another type of optical device that may help your kind of shooting. Again, sight alignment consists of centering the eye on the exit pupil. The reticle dot is a virtual image, projected to infinity; so it is in sharp focus, floating on the target, which is also in sharp focus. Properly sighted-in, the reticle will be the exact point of impact. Bulky, and requiring the services of a custom holster maker, the Aimpoint-mounted pistol is often a good choice for older shooters with deteriorating vision, and for younger ones with good eyesight who do not want to align iron sights.

Remember the little brochure that used to come with the Colt Official Police revolver? It depicted a portly police marksman showing how to grip the gun like a ripe fruit, and advising readers to focus on and align the sights under the bull, then gently squeeze off a shot against a blurred bullseye target. Presumably, combat shooting then was a matter of first focusing on the target, to make certain it was a fleeing felon and not a little gray haired lady pushing a shopping cart; then re-focusing on the sights and aligning them, while hoping that the felon had not dropped behind some sort of a barricade difficult to determine, since the target area was out of focus.

SIGHT ALIGNMENT

The apparent alternative was to crouch, focus on the target, bring up your gun to waist height and spray the area with lead, since the sights would be useless when out of focus at eye level.

This latter technique has traditionally been a little tough on innocent bystanders.

As in most human endeavors, your brain comes to the rescue. Remember the way it tried to center the front blade between the light bars of the opened out rear notch? This "comfortable" feeling with apparent symmetry, and the "uneasiness" with non-symmetrical images, are instinctive with all of us.

In a combat situation, you lock your vision on your opponent's eyes and close out the rest of the world. You *never* remove your focus from his eyes. You watch for a sign of his move: a squint of his eyes, a change of expression, or a physical movement—such as a drop of his shoulder or a bend of his knees.

Then, you make your move, to counter his. No time to "pick up the sights" because he's drawing, too.

Combat sights (for use on the range, or on the street) must be easily defined and instantly aligned. Perhaps the three dot alignment system, the white outline rear and white vertical line ramp will take on new significance. Even the "light bars" of a widened rear notch may now make sense to you.



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for purposes of clarity or space. Editor.

Tip o' the hat to Shootist Supply

I am writing to you about one of your fine advertisers, John Cook (Shootist Supply, 622 Fifth, Belle Fourche, South Dakota).

I became acquainted with Mr. Cook through your magazine.

Recently, he completed some IPSC modifications on my Colt Gold Cup. His work is excellent, and his estimated delivery time was practically to the day.

I am glad to see him listed in your 1983 Custom Pistolsmith Directory. I find the American Handgunner most helpful.

Timothy J. Conley
Kingston, Ohio

Lawson raps AH reader who blasts his column

Jim Moore's letter (Speak Out, November-December / American Handgunner) contains some bum information.

Moore recommends the Air Force gunsmith's method of disassembly by merely pulling the slide stop pin. Admittedly, this system works; in fact, I recommend it to shooters who use my barrel compensators.

My use of sandbags (in the July-August issue of the *American Handgunner*, to which he referred) was correct; it is the only way an artificial rest can be used to give an identical point of impact with hand-held shooting. I use the rest to support my wrist, *not* the pistol. Moore's theory about different points of impact ignores the fact that combat shooters use a two-hand hold, such as the one demonstrated by Mike Fichman on page 46 of the same issue. His pistol, supported in this manner, impacts identically with his hand-held shots. Both points of impact would be identical with a sandbag rest point of impact, with wrist support. We do sight in the way we hold to shoot.

The "accuracy defects" listed in

my article were a composite of every problem that a select group of top IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) shooters experienced with pistols accurized by virtually every top name in pistolsmithing today. Obviously, these defects did not all show up in the same pistol, and I did not intimate so in my article. If you felt the article was very poor, my apologies; it was researched by some household names in the Master Class of IPSC.

A smokestack jam is not a direct result of "breaking the wrist," as Moore claims. (Refer to page 9 of the NRA reprint, *The .45 Automatic*, for the reason this kind of jam happens, and solution of the problem.) If your gunsmith shapes the extractor properly, and lowers the ejection port for additional insurance, you will *not* get smokestacks, no matter what contortions you put your wrist through. I just came in from the range, where I tried for 125 shots to get a smokestack by breaking my wrist. Result: no jams, no matter how limp-wristed I held the piece.

If Moore lived in the three western states, he would not be so quick to recommend dipping your pistol in oil. In my area, for example, fine volcanic ash blows around every dry day there's a breeze. The ash is pumice.

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which makes an effective lapping compound. I have seen several pistols ground to uselessness on local ranges. I would personally opt for firing dry, or with a very sparing application of RIG or vaseline, on the friction points. Believe me, parts wear longer when dry than they do with an application of pumice and oil.

RIG is a lubricant, as well as a preservative, despite Moore's slur of this old and respected grease product. Its initials stand for rust inhibiting grease—grease, as in lubricant. For almost 40 years, I have used Rig on guns, locks, hinges, fishing tackle and machine tools. I can attest that its lubricating qualities are excellent.

Next time you stand out in that Florida sun, Jim, put on your pith helmet.

John G. Lawson
Tacoma, Washington

Kudos to Mickey Fowler for his first AH column

I'm glad to see that Mickey Fowler is writing an ongoing column for your fine magazine. It is another good reason for buying the Handgunner.

I'd like to say thank you, Mr. Fowler, for your answer to the first question in your first column (January/February issue of the *American Handgunner*) about the importance of ammunition. You gave an answer that went beyond the superficial and gave information that, at least for me, is most useful.

I hope you will direct all your answers by assuming that most people reading your column are reasonably experienced in IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) shooting. I know myself and many others are tired of the writing about practical shooting that concerns itself with questions—such as an entire column—devoted to extolling the virtues of the latest mainspring housing pin removal tool, or how to clear a "stovepipe." All this has its place; being the experienced shooter you are, however, I hope you will continue to give in-depth answers to solid questions.

Keep up the good work!
Santokh Khalsa
Portland, Oregon

INFO 'QUICKIE'

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Wants more coverage, NRA matches and Canada shoot

I have been buying your fine magazine from the newsstands for some time now and I must admit that you have one of the finest, if not the finest, magazine on the stands which cover a shooter's lifestyle.

I have only one complaint. There has been no mention of any of the NRA or CPCA Nationals matches. To many of us, this is the "ultimate" of shooting. I have been shooting for several years and only recently have become serious about shooting PPC. I had the opportunity to compete in the 1982 CPCA Nationals in Edmonton, Alberta, and placed third in the expert class.

I am sure there are many police officers who would like to see some articles on the two greatly honored matches. I would like to see your magazine write about these matches. I had a great time there and I am sure that one of your staff members would enjoy covering this type of event.

Keep up the great work!
Michael G. Knoop
Minot, ND 58701

Death, incapacitation 'are wholly unrelated'

I am writing in reference to your first article (*American Handgunner*, September-October) on handgun stopping power, a subject I have researched in depth for the last six years or so.

Robert M. Price points out certain holes in the RII (Relative

Incapacitation Index) which need clarification. As to the velocity variations, I have yet to see test barrel numbers match those of handguns.

Price mentions only in passing the biggest single flaw in the RII conclusions: the medical staff considered death as instant incapacitation. The two are wholly unrelated. A bullet through the heart or lung region results in instant clinical death. As long as the blood is still oxygenated, and the brain functional, the target is potentially dangerous.

Loads such as the "safety slug," with its 100 percent lethality rating, tend to be misleading. Also high velocity sporting loads intended for a quick humane kill shade the issue.

Price did point out two handgun stops which correlate with my findings—that the chest walls (both entry and exit) provide 70-80 percent of actual stops. What goes on inside the chest cavity during a bullet passage has very little immediate effect.

Many of the factors which determine instant incapacitation can not be controlled in a fight situation. Therefore, it is not possible to ensure one-shot stops on a 100 percent basis. Such factors are adrenalin content in blood, volume of air in the lungs, possible drug influence, etc. The only objective in a fight is to be the one who walks away, no more, no less. The chest walls are very resilient and the object is to have as great a total effect on them as possible. Ever seen anyone hit with a

stun gun?

Now a brief discussion on three handgun loads, and the effect they produce:

The .38 Special 158-grain lead round nose (my issue load), fired at approximately 900-950 fps, overcomes the inertia of the chest wall with very little noticeable effect. It does not deform, although it does lose some velocity. At exit, the bullet will have slightly more effect, due to decreased velocity, which increases the duration of passage through the chest wall. If the heart is shot, the subject will probably fall in about five seconds.

The .357 magnum 125-grain JHP, fired at around 1,400 fps will, on impact, overcome the inertia of the chest wall. In this instance, bullet shape and velocity will create about a two-inch radius around point of impact. At point of exit, the bullet has deformed to a more or less blunt configuration and has lost substantial velocity. Thus it achieves a dramatic increase in duration time against the chest wall during exit. This provides a substantial increase in performance over the .38 Special.

Next is a handload (bullet #429421 cast soft at 255 grains) and fired at approximately 750-800 fps from my S&W M 29 "backup" gun. The bullet design and low velocity have a significant effect; this type load has a comparatively long duration time against the chest wall, which it penetrates by sheer mass. At point of exit, the effect is slightly greater, due to the reduced velocity. It is very probable that the bullet will spend itself in exit.

With a non-deforming projectile, increasing velocity (within handgun limits) actually reduces the probability of a one-shot stop. With high velocity deforming bullets, you must sacrifice entry effect, for an increase in lethality.

Can a four-inch .357 equal the .45 ACP in stopping power? Yes. The ballistically superior .357 can match the .45, but not with sporting ammunition. No, it cannot do a better job on a shot-for-shot basis, it can only match it.

What about the *Bren Ten*? With its projected load (200-grain JTC at 1,100 to 1,200 fps), I'm sorry to say it will over-penetrate and not be a match for the .45 ACP 230-grain military handball load. It appears to have adequate mass, but at that velocity a deforming bullet is essential.

Robert S. Jones
Wheatland, Pennsylvania

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Laka people and their .45 mags are praised

I enjoyed Lee Echols' article on match shooting in your January/February issue. I am one of those 2700 bullseye shooters dating back to WW II and I knew and shot with most of the shooters he names. I was never good enough to make a splash in even a small pond, but my memories of pistol shooting in those days are among the happiest of my life. Things are just not the same any more.

The 2700 shooter is about to join the dinosaurs, and this is a real shame. Even Mickey Fowler, in that same issue, recommends a limited amount of bullseye shooting as an aid to increasing practical proficiency.

I do not believe the decline in bullseye shooting is due to cost of equipment, as some suggest. Have you checked the prices on some .45 combat conversions lately? I feel it is more likely that beginning shooters are frightened off by the long and arduous training and practice required to turn in even a mediocre score on the small-size scoring rings of the bullseye target. Remember, the bullseye 10-ring at 50 yards is smaller than the PPC X-ring at 25 yards.

Now, don't get me wrong; I know that in their own way, PPC and IPSC shooting are just as demanding as bullseye shooting. But for a beginning shooter, the fun and glamour of these "combat" style matches may serve to mask a lot of basic mistakes he might avoid if he had a sound bullseye background before he started practical shooting.

I have fired PPC and IPSC and enjoyed them both. I can look back over a lifetime of shooting experience as varied as anyone could wish.

Pistol basics must become such a part of your built-in reactions and reflexes that they literally become a part of your sub-conscious system. I repeat, go back to bullseye for basics.

Another item I ran across in that same issue started another train of thought. Can you really believe all you read in any technical publication?

Dan Cotterman printed a letter in his handloading column from a shooter named Terry Murbach in which the statement was made that, in his opinion, any magazine other than Colt manufacture was junk. Murbach then went on to single out Laka magazines for special attention in this matter.

My experience has been just the opposite of his with the Laka magazines. I have been shooting two

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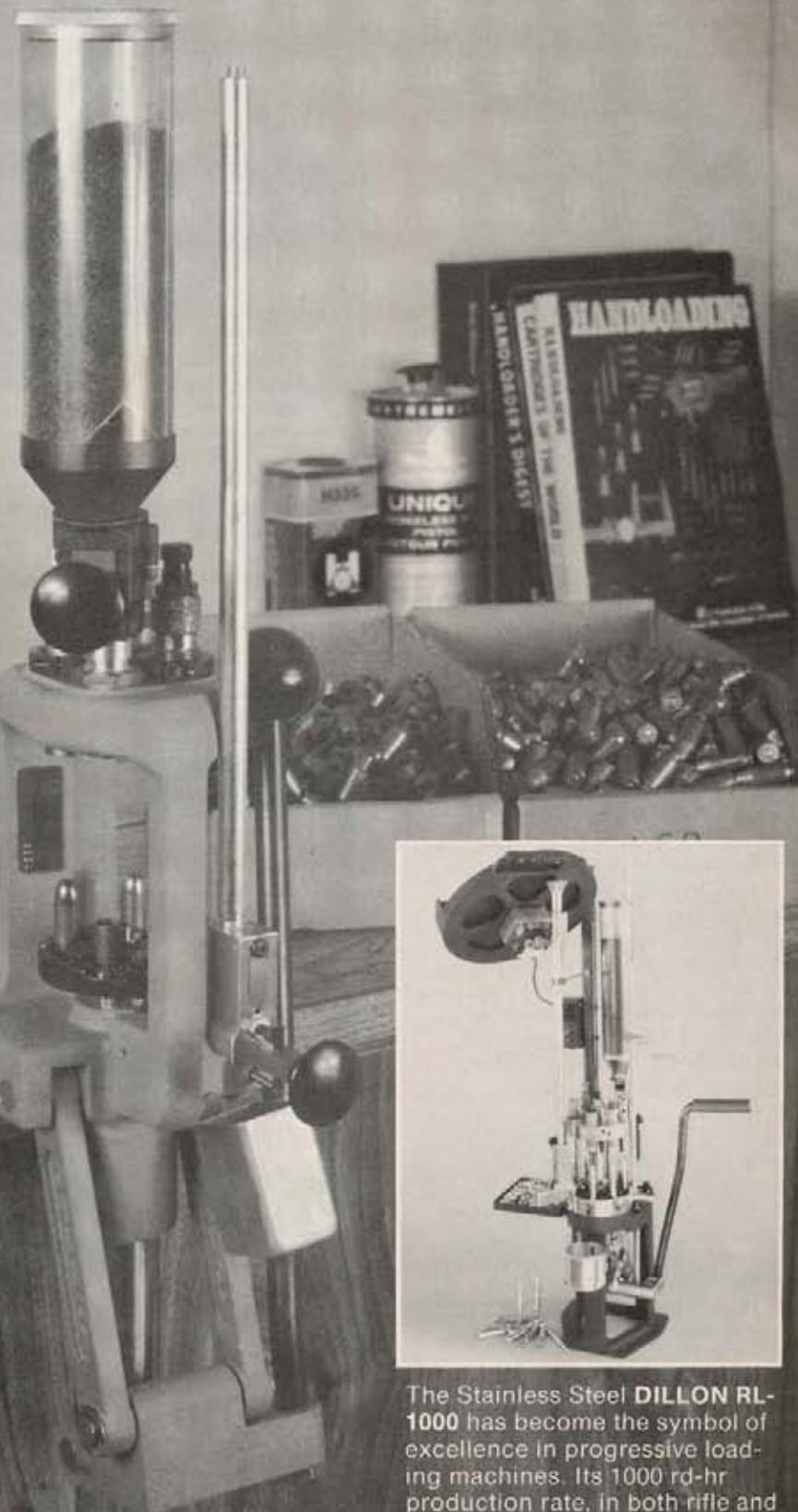
Continued on page 26

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QUICK QUIZ

By Len Davis

Here are 10 true or false statements developed from recent issues of the *American Handgunner*. If you get seven or more right, you win the *Careful Reader Award* and a tip o' the hat from Editorial Director Jerry Rakusan. Answers are on page 90.

- (1) Blazer .38 Special ammo is easy to reload. (T) (F)
- (2) The Astra A-80 .45 Auto is made in Portugal. (T) (F)
- (3) Multi-jacket handgun bullets help control expansion, penetration and velocity with one bullet. (T) (F)
- (4) The .38 S & W cartridge is less than 50 years old. (T) (F)
- (5) Rubber handgun grips are extremely unpopular. (T) (F)
- (6) Jim Clark invented the "pin gun," named for its original use—shooting down bowling pins. (T) (F)
- (7) The .41 Avenger (a necked-down .45 ACP) is the brainchild of J. D. Jones, an experienced handgun writer. (T) (F)
- (8) The most visible new equipment at the Bianchi Cup match last year was the new Partridge sight. (T) (F)
- (9) The late General Julian Hatcher's theories on bullet stopping power no longer are applicable. (T) (F)
- (10) The .22 High Standard *Victor* auto is a good choice for shooting either paper or metallic silhouette targets. (T) (F)

INFO 'QUICKIE'

The Jet is a .357 Magnum cartridge necked to .22 caliber, firing a 40-grain, spitzer-type, soft point bullet with a hard jacket at a muzzle velocity of approximately 2,460 fps in an 8½ inch barrel revolver.

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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER • MAY/JUNE 1983

23



MODERN PRACTICAL and DEFENSIVE SHOOTING

is being taught at the CHAPMAN ACADEMY OF PRACTICAL SHOOTING. Courses are now available for pistol, rifle and shotgun. The courses have been attended and praised by world class competitive shooters as well as law enforcement and military personnel. For information write:

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COMBAT SHOOTING

Continued from page 6

which can be worn either cross-draw or strong-side; then you can master both positions.

CHOICE OF RIGS

Some examples of rigs available that can be used this way are the *Bianchi #50 Chapman Hi-Ride*, the *Ted Blocker I.S.I. Fowler Speedmaster*, the *Gordon Davis Usher International*, the *Rodgers World Shoot Series* and the *Milt Sparks rigs*.

The well-rounded pistolers should also acquire and learn how to use a kidney position holster.

My recommendations are directed at the serious competitor who wants to be competitive in all events.

For the shooter who enters combat competition solely to be better prepared for self-defense, I would recommend using the same gun and holster used in daily wear. If you have a permit to carry a concealed weapon, use a good quality, inside-the-pants holster or other easily concealed holster. If you spend most of your time in a vehicle in rural areas and concealment isn't a factor, then the cross-draw might be your best choice. If you are a policeman, wear your duty rig. Serious competitors who also carry guns daily should use some of their regular practice session time working out with their street rigs.

Question: Please explain the Comstock count scoring system.

Answer: Comstock count got its name from Walt Comstock, a practical shooter who lives in northern California. This scoring system is widely used by IPSC and in other forms of combat competition. What Comstock count tries to accomplish is to balance speed with accuracy.

Your numerical target score is divided by the time it took to complete the required number of shots. In true Comstock count, scoring any shot off the target is penalized twice the value of a center hit; plus, you lose the value of the shot that missed. This promotes more controlled fast shooting.

EL PRESIDENTE

Let's look at a typical match which lends itself to Comstock count scoring. The famous *El Presidente* exercise involves the placement of three IPSC silhouette targets positioned three meters apart, edge to edge, 10 meters down range from the contestant. The shooter stands with his back to the targets; at the start signal he turns and engages each target with two shots, reloads and fires two more shots at each target. A center hit is worth five points. Shots out of

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- G: King's Recoil Spring Guides
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- I: King's Target Bushing
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- M: King's Ramp Kit
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- O: King's Recoil Compensator
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the center are worth anywhere from two to four points each when using the .45 auto.

The total of 12 shots have a possible value of 60 points. This exercise can be performed with consistency in about six seconds with a score of 55 points or more by experienced combat shooters.

Using the Comstock scoring method, we take the target score of 55 points and divide it by the time it took to complete the exercise—six seconds.

This equals a factor of 9.17, which is your Comstock score. Suppose the shooter got sloppy and missed a shot. The paper total is 55, but only 11 shots hit the targets. We deduct twice the value of a center hit for the miss, and end up with 45 points divided by six seconds. This factors out to a 7.50—a much lower score.

If the straight score, divided by time with no penalties for a miss were used, both scores would have been the same. We know that in a real armed confrontation, missed shots can have a deadly consequence. In practical shooting competition, dropped hits should be discouraged and heavily penalized. Comstock count scoring helps make "practical hand-gunning" even more practical.

Bianchi to award shooters \$40,000

Bianchi Gunleather will award top-ranking pistoleros competing in major practical shooting events this year more than \$40,000 in cash.

The one stipulation is that the shooters use Bianchi leather products.

The top 200 competitors each will earn \$120, paid at \$20 an event. Competitors finishing in the upper 20 places each will receive an additional \$100. First, second and third place winners in the major matches each will receive \$1,000, \$750 and \$500, respectively.

A consistent champion could win nearly \$7,000, according to Richard D.E. Nichols, Director of Competition Programs for Bianchi.

The major practical shooting events that qualify for prize money are:

- (1) The Bianchi Cup International Pistol Tournament.
- (2) The Steel Challenge Pistol Tournament.
- (3) The IPSC U.S. National Championship.
- (4) The IPSC World Championship.
- (5) The Soldier of Fortune Match.
- (6) The Second Chance Police Combat Shoot.

For more information on Bianchi's new program, contact Nichols at the company, 100 Calle Cortez (Dept. AH), Temecula, CA 92390.

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SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 21

of them in 2700 matches since 1978, and my son bought two for his Gold Cup when he saw how they functioned in my Clark Long Slide conversion.

In all the time we have been using the Laka magazines, there has never been a "failure to feed" type of malfunction usually associated with bad magazines. As to Laka attitude towards their customers, I was doing a little experimental work a few years back and wrote to them, asking to purchase two of the heavy magazine springs they were using in their magazines. I explained what I wanted the springs for and asked about ordering procedures and price. They did not bother to answer my letter, they just sent me two of their heavy springs, without charge. Hardly seems we can be talking about the same company, does it?

I do not deny that Murbach may have had exactly the experience that he describes, and yet, that sort of isolated case, written up in a magazine looked up to as a standard reference source by thousands of shooters, can do a lot of unwarranted damage to a company's name and reputation.

Larry E. Davidson
New Orleans

Editor's note: Handloading columnist Cotterman quoted from a letter he received from a reader, the essence of which is *not* tantamount to support by the *American Handgunner*. Such is the prerogative of any columnist in any publication.

Continued on page 79



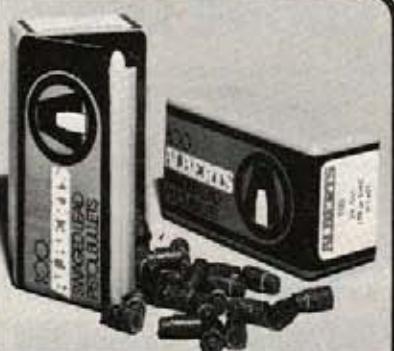
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It was the only kind of shooting around in the early days of America, and more and more Americans are rediscovering muzzle-loading now. To get started, read the booklet, "Black Powder, White Smoke," from the Association of Importers/Manufacturers for Muzzleloading (AIMM). Send \$1.50 for the booklet to AIMM, Suite 101, 4905 S.W. Griffith Drive, Beaverton, OR 97005.

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I enclose \$1.50 for "Black Powder, White Smoke."

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AIMM

COP TALK

Continued from page 13

bat pistol shooting schools being run by people who haven't yet learned combat pistol shooting themselves. You must shop carefully for your training, using the system of instructor resumes and references outlined in first two parts of this series. But once you've got your program of study firmed up, you'll be well on your way to having the training background that makes you a handgun professional.

Now, the names and addresses of recommended handgun shooting schools:

American Pistol Institute (Jeff Cooper, Director), POB 401, Paulden, AZ 86334.

Chapman Academy (Ray Chapman, Director), POB 7035, Columbia, MO 65205.

Lethal Force Institute (Massad Ayoob, Director), POB 122, Concord, NH 03301.

International Shootists, Inc. (Mickey Fowler and Mike Dalton, co-directors), POB 5254, Mission Hills, CA 91345.

Mid-South Institute of Self-Defense Shooting (John Shaw, Director), 503 Stonewall, Memphis, TN 38112.

Defense Training, Inc. (John Farnam, Director), Route 2 (Box 207-A), Elroy, WI 53929.

Perhaps you will want to write for course information from these schools, to help achieve your training objectives.

There are several other excellent schools around the country. Check with your local law enforcement agency or gun club for their recommendations.



INFO 'QUICKIE'

The modern-day sport of metallic silhouette shooting evolved from the earlier days of using live animals and birds during Mexican fiestas. It was a sport that got its start about the time Pancho Villa was operating in northern Mexico, during World War One.

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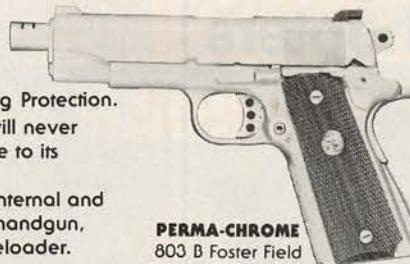
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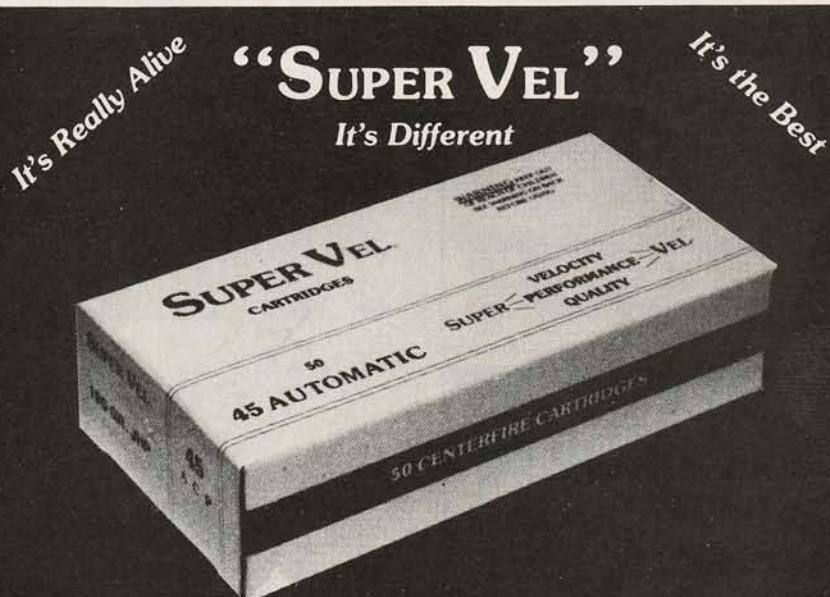
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NEW BOOKS

More women in the United States today are taking to handguns than ever before, be it for shooting on the range or self-defense in the home.

So, quite naturally, someone has come out with a book entitled *The Women's Guide to Handguns—a Primer for Safe Self-Defense*.

Written by Jim Carmichel, shooting editor for *Outdoor Life*, the 190-page book provides intelligent answers to questions that range from legality to proficiency (with emphasis on safety in self-defense).

The nuts and bolts of handguns and ammunition is woven together with a single thread: if a woman is going to own a gun, she'd better know how to use it.

Simple explanations, diagrams and illustrations help reveal the workings of pistols and revolvers, along with their cartridges and accessories.

It's a well-written, basic book—one that tells women (and men, too) how to select, legally buy, use, store, carry and care for a handgun.

Publisher is Bobbs-Merrill. Price: \$11.95 (L.D.)

George E. Virgines has written an excellent 80-page paperback devoted exclusively to the fascinating hobby of collecting police memorabilia.

Police Relics (Collector Books, Paducah, Kentucky) covers such collectibles as badges, buckles, batons, books, handcuffs, patches, whistles, uniforms, photographs, postcards, toys and many other categories of law enforcement memorabilia.

The price guide and textbook contains more than 70 photographs.

Virgines is a deputy sheriff of Lincoln County, New Mexico, and an active member of the *Westerners* and *Western Writers of America*. He is the author of *Saga of the Colt Sixshooter—Famous Guns and Gunners*, and many articles on police relics and Western Americana.

To obtain a copy of *Police Relics*, send \$5.59, plus \$1 for postage and handling, to Virgines at Box 2394 (AH), Northlake, IL 60164. All copies will be autographed by the author. (L.D.)

AUTHOR'S CORRECTION

Robert Shimek, who wrote "Is the Parabellum Practical?" in the July-August issue of the *American Handgunner*, tells us that the safety lever modification on the Mauser Parabellum "has not, over time, proved durable, and a remote possibility of shooter injury does exist as a result."

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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER • MAY/JUNE 1983

ORDNANCE EXPO IS HUGE SUCCESS

By Len Davis

A record number of law enforcement officers and suppliers of police equipment attended Ordnance Expo '83 at the Los Angeles Police Department Academy January 25-27.

LAPD Sgt. Dick Newell, Expo coordinator, said 26 states and 13 foreign countries were represented at Expo '82, compared with 41 states and 18 foreign countries this year.

Newell estimated overall attendance at "close to 5,000," considerably more than the number who registered last year. Exhibitors totaled 54 in 1982, 109 this year, according to Newell.

Ordnance-related products on display included handguns, ammunition, leather goods, body armor, computerized target systems, laser devices, low-light level optical equipment and a variety of targets for police marksmanship training.



Many of the guns were demonstrated on the academy's ranges, part of the 21-acre Elysian Park complex situated close to downtown Los Angeles.

The LAPD Academy is one of the most advanced police training institutions in the world and is nestled in a picturesque setting of fountains, waterfalls, pine trees and flowers. Its commanding officer is Captain Thomas G. Hays.

On hand to demonstrate a variety of handguns and sights, including the increasingly popular Aimpoint, were such shooting champions as Mickey Fowler of the Southwest Pistol League in Canyon Country, California; John Shaw of the Mid-South Institute of Self-Defense Shooting in Memphis, Tennessee, and Officer John Pride of the Los Angeles Police Department, a firearms instructor at the academy.

Host of Ordnance Expo '83 was the Los Angeles Police Revolver and Athletic Club. It was formed in 1925, when a private organization of sworn members of the

department opened a pistol range in Elysian Park, on the site of the present Police Academy.

A VIP dinner was held in the Academy's main dining room the day before Expo '83 opened. It was hosted by LAPD Chief

Daryl F. Gates, LAPD Commander William T. Burke and Sergeant Newell. Attending were many officials of the LAPD and other law enforcement agencies, exhibitors and the editor of the *American Handgunner*.



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Federal Cartridge Corporation has announced several new ammunition products for 1983.

They include two .32 S&W Long cartridges (a 98-grain hollow base wadcutter and the conventional 98-grain lead round nose), a 180-grain jacketed hollow-point .357 Magnum, and a hyper-velocity .22 Long Rifle cartridge, the *Splitfire*.

Why the .32 S&W Long?

In the world of international pistol competition, the light recoil .32 caliber has completely dominated the .38 Special as the preferred target cartridge. Federal is the first U.S. manufacturer to offer a wadcutter loading for the growing number of .32 S&W Long target handguns.



The .32 S&W Long round nose bullet is loaded to the standard industry velocity of 705 fps at the muzzle; the wadcutter, however, is loaded to the customary European velocity of 780 fps (giving it a 13 percent greater muzzle energy).

Federal's new .357 Magnum cartridge has a straight ogive bullet; with its long bearing surface, it provides exceptional accuracy at 100 yards and beyond.

From a 10-inch barrel T/C Contender, for example, muzzle velocity is 1,540 fps; energy is 840 foot-pounds.

The large hollow-point cavity provides maximum caliber expansion, while the additional mass means that a substantial core element remains locked in the .357-inch diameter base for driving penetration.

Federal's new .22 Long Rifle cartridge combines the performance features of a plated hollow-point bullet with increased velocity, while being offered at a price competitive with regular Long Rifle hollow points.

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The Spitfire ammo delivers a muzzle velocity of 1,500 fps—20 percent faster than that of conventional high-speed .22 Long Rifle cartridges. It is loaded with a new 33-grain copper-plated, truncated cone bullet.

The shape and depth of the Spitfire hollow point is specifically calculated to maximize the terminal ballistic performance of the bullet. It provides dramatic impact at short plinking ranges, and improved mushroom expansion over that of conventional 40-grain hollow points at longer hunting ranges.

Also in 1983, Federal will offer four Nyklad revolver loads, all in .38 Special caliber. They are a 148-grain wadcutter, a 158-grain round nose, a 158-grain semi-wadcutter hollow point +P, and a 125-grain semi-wadcutter hollow point non +P—the Chief's Special (it provides mushrooming capabilities from a two-inch barrel revolver without +P pressures).

Nyklad nylon-jacketed handgun ammunition provides the velocity and accuracy of lead bullets, while eliminating most of the problems associated with lead bullets. Gun fouling, bore leading and lubricant smoking are virtually eliminated, and the amount of lead particles in the air on firing ranges is significantly reduced. The nylon coating serves as a solid state, low friction lubricant, and thus enhances internal ballistics.

For more information on Federal's new cartridges, write to Hugh Reed at the company—2700 Foshay Tower (Dept. AH), Minneapolis, MN 55402.



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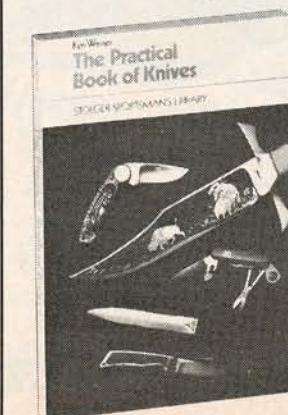
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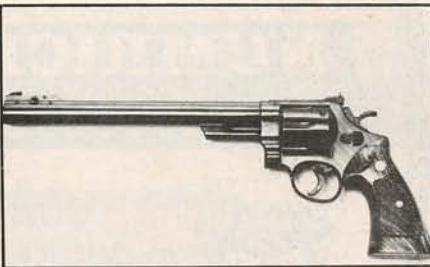


HERCULES

S&W announces M29 silhouette revolver

A new Smith & Wesson M29 Silhouette revolver in .44 Magnum caliber features a 10½ inch barrel and a unique four-position front sight.

A knurled knob on the front sight ramp adjusts the front sight blade to match the four distances at which metallic handgun silhouette targets are placed.



Up to now, the M29's longest barrel was 8¾ inches, beneath the maximum length allowed by silhouette match rules.

The new M29 with longer barrel weighs 58 ounces empty, and has an overall length of 16½ inches.

Suggested retail price is \$469.50 with presentation case, or \$423.50 without (same prices as the 8¾ inch barrel M29).

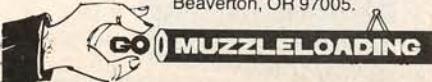
For further information, contact S&W at 2100 Roosevelt Avenue (Dept. AH), Springfield, MA 01101.

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

Continued from page 94

producing. Talk was the M-S would have a sample of its new squeeze-cocker auto, but I missed seeing it. (I'm told it was scheduled to arrive the last day of the show.)

At the Sturm, Ruger booth, the Redhawk still drew considerable attention, as did the company's stainless steel Blackhawk and the new .357 Maximum revolver. What caught my eye was a blued stainless Security Six.

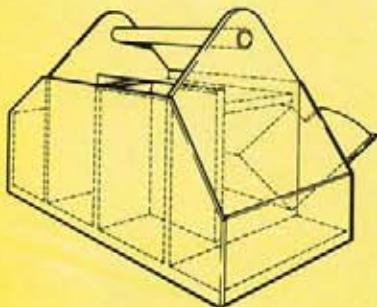
Lin Trapper of Trapper Gun, Inc. had a nice display of his custom guns, plus the complete line of Bullseye Spring Kits.

I met with Sig Himmelman of United Sporting Arms of Arizona and took a look at his Seville single-action chambered for the .357 Maximum cartridge; nice gun, and all stainless.

Dan Wesson was there, in spirit if not in person, and I believe he would have been proud of the line of guns that bear his name. On display were the new stainless models, including the .41 Magnum.

I thought for sure there would be more than a half-dozen Colt .45 look-alikes, and I may have missed one or two.

I did spot a trend that is developing, and that is the increased use of the auto pistol among law enforcement agencies. H&K people were strutting around their booth telling all who would listen that the New Jersey State Police had selected the P-7; S&W is holding seminars on the subject, and just about every custom pistolsmith is kept busy doing "duty tunes" on .45 autos. Interesting.



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INFO 'QUICKIE'

In December of 1955, the first Smith & Wesson M29 was completed and sent to R. H. Coleman of Remington; the second M29 was given to Major General Julian S. Hatcher, and the third M29 was given to the man who had the idea for such a gun—Elmer Keith.

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CONVERSATION WITH A CHAMPION

By Jon Winokur

Editor's note: Written by a combat shooter, *Conversation With a Champion* is a regular feature of the *American Handgunner*. Here is Winokur's interview with Craig Gifford of the Southwest Pistol League, sponsor of the highly successful Steel Challenge match, or *World Speed Shooting Championship*, an annual event held on the Juniper Tree range in Canyon Country, California.

JW: You've been successful on the combat shooting circuit, having won, among other titles, the *Soldier of Fortune Three-Gun Match*, the *IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) Rifle Championship*, and a Gold Medal at the 1979 *IPSC World Championship*. And you've recently joined the select group of *Combat Masters*. What's the secret to your success?



CG: There's no secret. You just have to execute the fundamentals of proper sight alignment, trigger control and follow-through. That is, you have to learn how to center the front sight vertically and horizontally within the rear notch, release the trigger without disturbing that sight picture, and hold it long enough after the shot goes off so that you know where the bullet strikes without looking at the target. And you have to do it when it counts.

JW: Sounds simple.

CG: It's simple, but not easy. It takes a great deal of concentration and practice. Intelligent practice.

JW: What do you mean by "intelligent" practice?

CG: It's not the quantity of practice but the quality that counts. Leonard Knight, the great Southwest Pistol League Combat Master, expressed it another way: "It's not how much you practice, but how often. One hundred rounds a day is better than 2,000 rounds a weekend." Practice can't be quantified solely in terms of the number of rounds fired. Some days you may be able to make as many as 200 good shots, other days maybe only 50 or so. You have to determine the limit of your concentration and not exceed it, because if you continue

blasting away absent-mindedly after you've lost your concentration, you're wasting time and ammunition. And you're actually practicing bad habits. So, when you start to miss the target and can't re-establish the fundamentals of proper sight picture, trigger control and follow-through, it's time to quit.

JW: Does concentration span improve with experience?

CG: I believe it does. When I first started shooting, I got tired very easily, both physically and mentally. Now, I can go a lot longer.

JW: Then what do you advise the shooter who can only practice once a week?

CG: If you only have one day a week to practice, it would probably be best to fire two distinct sessions, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, with at least two hours in-between. And it's very important to rest between sessions. But at the championship level, there's no substitute for frequent practice. I've talked to many top IPSC shooters and most of them have easy access to a practice facility. Some can literally walk out their back door and begin shooting.

JW: And you don't have that luxury?

CG: Unfortunately not. It would be great if I could set up three or four metal plates and a few silhouettes in my back yard. And it would be ideal if I had the room to set up entire courses of fire. But even firing just 20 or 30 rounds a day at one metal plate would be of great benefit.

JW: Since you and most of our readers don't have that advantage, how would you recommend dividing practice time between the fundamentals and a specific match?

CG: If you compete in an organized league with regularly scheduled matches, I'd suggest dividing practice sessions about equally between the basics and the upcoming match. I usually start with basic marksmanship while I'm still fresh and my concentration is up. If I'm able to make good, accurate shots, I then move on to practice the specific match. Of course, if the match in question is some kind of standard exercise—such as the Bianchi Practical—in effect then you're practicing the basics by practicing for the match. But if it's an assault course, a "quick-and-dirty" or Comstock Count match, or a speed shooting event like the Steel Challenge, it's easy to lose the basics while practicing, because fast shooting tends to erode the fundamentals.

JW: Do you have a different approach to practice for speed events?

CG: I still practice for accuracy first and speed second. As you master the basics, speed comes as a byproduct. If you try to do it the other way around—that is, if you go for speed first—you'll probably miss, fast.

JW: How important is dry firing and other practice at home?

CG: Dry firing is important as a supplement to live fire practice but should not be used as a substitute. By all means practice gun handling techniques, such as drawing and reloading. The faster you can get the pistol into action from the holster, or after a reload, the more time you have to make accurate shots.

JW: To sum up, your advice is to practice as frequently as possible, practice for accuracy first and speed second, and never lose sight of the fundamentals of proper sight alignment, trigger control and follow-through.

CG: It's that simple.

JW: But not easy.

CG: You're learning.



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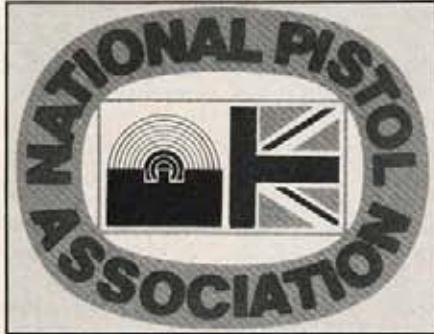
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Big handgun shoot scheduled at Bisley

The world's largest pistol and revolver match is scheduled to be held the end of May this year at Whitsun on the century-old complex of ranges in Bisley, England.

Sponsored by Great Britain's National Pistol Association, the match—Pistol '82—was attended last year by more than 1,000 shooters from 10 countries.



For information on Pistol '83, write to the association at Spirella Building, Bridge Road, Letchworth, Herts (SGG-4ET), England. Or call Richard Munday at 010-44-279-84-2154, in Herts.

The *American Handgunner* will carry a full report on last year's match, with pictures, in the July-August issue.

Eyeglass attachment hones sight picture

A clear sight picture is one of the most important aspects of accurate iron sight shooting.

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Information from *Clearsight* indicates the .75 lens is best for shooters with 20/20 vision, and also for most lighting conditions. The .50 lens is recommended for indoor shooting, and the one diopter lens for bright light.

Only trial will tell which lens is best suited to the individual shooter's eye and firing conditions.

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Armadillo now offers line of ammo boxes

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Combat shooters offer unique dry firing kit

A home practice, dry firing kit is offered by Mickey Fowler and Mike Dalton of International Shootists, Inc. of Mission Hills, California.

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"It is a very effective and inexpensive way for you to practice at home for self-defense or recreation," they added.

The kit comes with complete instructions for its proper use and sells for \$3.95.

Kits may be ordered directly from International Shootists, Inc., POB 5254 (Dept. AH), Mission Hills, CA 91345.

INFO 'QUICKIE'

Made for a relatively short time (1941 to 1951), the High Standard Model HD and the wartime-introduced Model HDM—which differs mainly in the addition of a manual safety—may still be found today in gun shops and at gun shows. The exposed hammer .22 autos came in barrel lengths of $6\frac{3}{4}$ inches and $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

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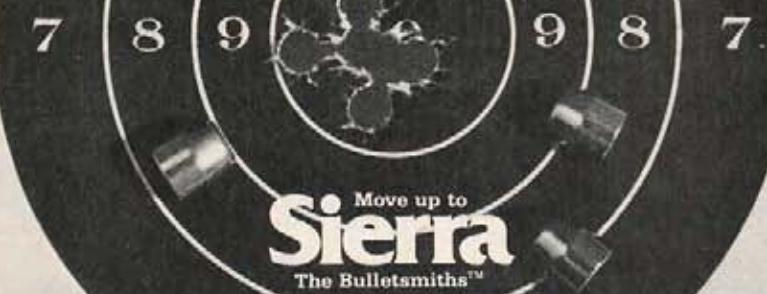
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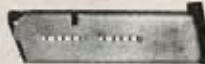
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1982 IPSC Champion,
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Wilson-Rogers present stainless steel .45 mag

Combat pistol shooters may wish to take a close look at a new .45 match magazine manufactured from aircraft grade certified stainless steel.

The seven-round magazine—named the Wilson-Rogers (for Bill Rogers and Bill Wilson)—has a moulded, synthetic follower, rounded and designed for positive slide stop operation.



Other features include a Wolff extra-power magazine spring, a removable base for easy cleaning, and manufacturing tolerances that have been kept to a minimum to assure positive fit and function.

The base, with pad, is made of moulded, synthetic plastic.

All moulded parts are manufactured from a new, unbreakable material.

The magazine body is designed and manufactured to eliminate cracking, a common problem in .45 auto mags. It is heat-treated to R/C 38.

Suggested retail price is \$20.

For more information, write Bill Wilson, Wilson's Gun, Route 3, Box 211-D (Dept. AH), Berryville, AR 72616.

INFO 'QUICKIE'

In 1954, Smith & Wesson came out with its double-action M39 auto in 9mm caliber. A few pistols—10 of them, to be exact—were made without the double-action system. This experimental version was called the M44 and you are not likely to see one—they're that rare.

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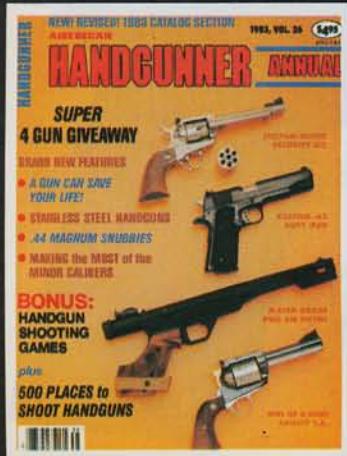
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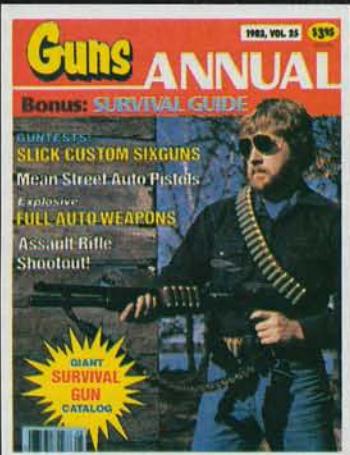
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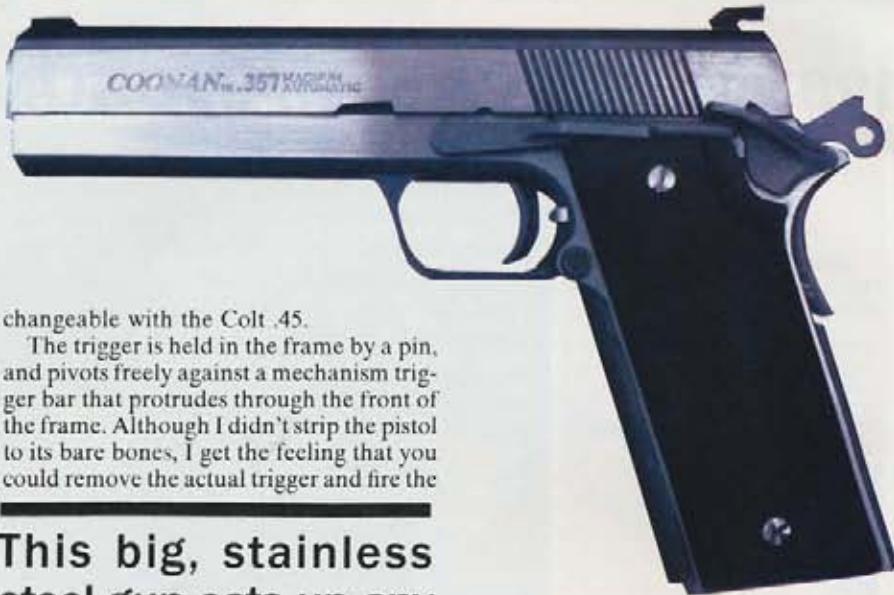
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THE COONAN



By Jim Weller

It was about three years ago that I first spoke with Bill Coonan about his proposed .357 Magnum Autoloader.

At that time, there were certain financial problems to be worked out; but he promised to keep in touch, and to get me one of the first ones off the production line. I heard nothing for all this time, and was quite surprised to get a phone call one day telling me that one was being shipped.

The gun in this test was #005, and is what Dan Coonan calls a "pre-production" piece. After doing the initial firing, I spoke again with both Bill and Dan Coonan and gave them my impressions and suggestions. They agreed that I had valid points and said they are presently working on solutions to everything I had suggested. What were my suggestions? How does it work? Let's take a look.

The pistol, at first glance, looks somewhat like the original Colt M1905. It's made of stainless steel, with the same grade being used in both slide and frame. I was concerned about "galling" between frame and slide, but Dan assured me that with their heat-treating process, the galling problem is eliminated. It's a large pistol, although not as large as it actually looks. The comparison to a Colt .45 auto is as follows: Slide is 3/8 inch longer, the butt is 1/2 inch longer from top to bottom and the length of pull is longer by almost 1/4 inch. The latter measurement is a necessity, by virtue of the longer cartridge. Unlike the .45, the frame rails run the whole length of the slide, and the extractor is on the outside of the slide, like the Browning Hi-Power.

It weighs 48 ounces loaded with eight rounds (one in the chamber).

Field stripping of the pistol is accomplished exactly the same as with the Colt .45 auto. The same bushing and recoil set-up is used, and the link and pin, barrel bushing, recoil spring plug, sear, disconnector, hammer and sear spring are inter-

changeable with the Colt .45.

The trigger is held in the frame by a pin, and pivots freely against a mechanism trigger bar that protrudes through the front of the frame. Although I didn't strip the pistol to its bare bones, I get the feeling that you could remove the actual trigger and fire the

This big, stainless steel gun eats up any load without jamming. Felt recoil is moderate, magazine loading different.

piece simply by pushing against the rail sticking through the frame. I'm not sure that I like this set up, because of the possibility of debris causing the mechanism to jam. But it works reliably, as far as I can determine.

SOME LOOSENESS

In disassembly, I noticed that there was a small amount of play in the barrel-to-bushing fit, and the rear lock-up could have been tighter. The test pistol had several thousand rounds through it before I got it, and I feel that this may have caused the looseness. After all, the .357 Magnum is a much higher intensity cartridge than the .45, and I feel that it probably causes the pistol to loosen up somewhat faster than does the .45 auto. Dan Coonan agreed.

Shooting the Coonan takes a bit of getting used to. I had hoped to fire it in my club's IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) match, but was only supplied with but one magazine. I did, however, give several club members an opportunity to fire the gun and all were

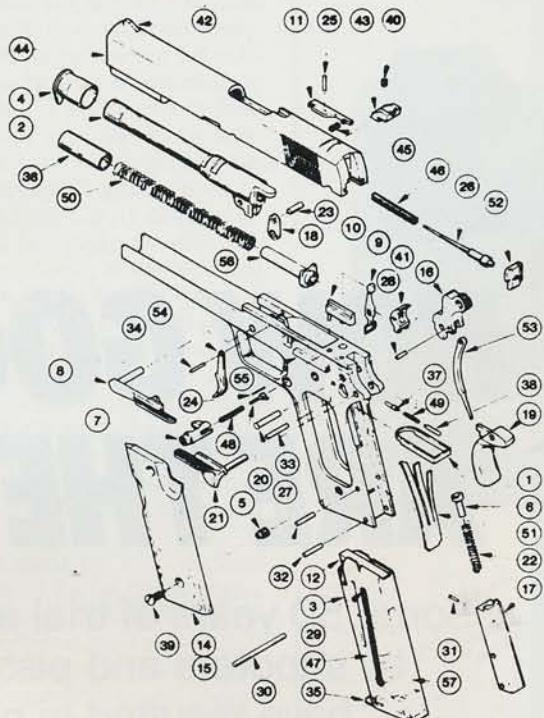
surprised—as was I—about the lack of "Magnum Jab."

Felt recoil ran from practically non-existent with the lighter bullets to a healthy "push" with the heavy loads. Rapid fire control was a cinch with all but the heaviest loads, and even those are quite manageable with some practice.

With any auto-pistol, reliability is the key word, and in the Coonan, reliable is an apt description. This thing just ate up any and all .357 Magnum ammo that I put through it, and that included the old S&W 90-grain loads and lead semi-wadcutter factory rounds. Bullet configuration made no difference. I dumped all available ammo in a box and mixed them up, then proceeded to load the magazine with whatever came out of the box. Result? No jamming. I did experience a problem with one cartridge, the Scorpion by Hydra-Shok. This is a .357 Magnum round with a super-expanding JHP bullet loaded to a low velocity (about 950 fps from a revolver). If I maintained a solid hold on the gun, it would function reliably with these cartridges, although the cases would barely clear the slide; but, if I relaxed my wrist—even a little—I was rewarded with a "stovepipe" jam. If one were to use these rounds, a change to a slightly lighter recoil spring should correct that problem.

Accuracy proved to be not the best. The

.357 MAGNUM AUTOLOADER



Exploded View Diagram Labels:

1 BAR, TRIGGER	20 LOCK, MAGAZINE CATCH	39 SCREW, GRIP
2 BARREL	21 LOCK, THUMB	40 SCREW, REAR SIGHT
3 BODY, MAGAZINE	22 MAINSPRING	41 SEAR
4 BUSHING, BARREL	23 PIN, BARREL LINK	42 SIGHT, FRONT
5 BUSHING, GRIP SCREW	24 PIN, EJECTOR	43 SIGHT, REAR
6 CAP, MAINSPRING	25 PIN, EXTRACTOR	44 SLIDE
7 CATCH, MAGAZINE	26 PIN, FIRING	45 SPRING, EXTRACTOR
8 CATCH, SLIDE	27 PIN, HAMMER	46 SPRING, FIRING PIN
9 DISCONNECTOR	28 PIN, HAMMER STRUT	47 SPRING, MAGAZINE
10 EJECTOR	29 PIN, MAGAZINE FOLLOWER	48 SPRING, MAGAZINE CATCH
11 EXTRACTOR	30 PIN, MAGAZINE LOADING	49 SPRING, PLUNGER TUBE
12 FOLLOWER, MAGAZINE	31 PIN, MAINSPRING CAP	50 SPRING, RECOIL
13 FRAME	32 PIN, MAINSPRING HOUSING	51 SPRING, SEAR
14 GRIP, LEFT HAND	33 PIN, SEAR	52 STOP, FIRING PIN
15 GRIP, RIGHT HAND	34 PIN, TRIGGER	53 STRUT, HAMMER
16 HAMMER	35 PLATE, MAGAZINE FLOOR	54 TRIGGER
17 HOUSING, MAINSPRING	36 PLUG, RECOIL	55 TUBE, PLUNGER
18 LINK, BARREL	37 PLUNGER, SLIDE STOP	56 TUBE, RECOIL SPRING PLUNGER
19 LOCK, GRIP	38 PLUNGER, THUMB LOCK	57 WEDGE, MAGAZINE

sights which came on the gun were a set of MMC fixed sights, and the front sight was already taken down so low that there wasn't much left. With myself and another shooter firing from 25 yards in the "rollover prone" position, bullets of 158-160 grains shot anywhere from 8-12 inches low, while lighter slugs of 90, 110, and 125 grains at least printed on the target. The best group we could manage all day was one two-incher using the Scorpion rounds. The average was somewhere around 5-6 inches at 25 yards—certainly not tack-driving accuracy. To be fair though, this gun was somewhat loose, and I feel that with a good set of adjustable sights and a

tight action, accuracy would improve substantially.

I put up several IPSC targets and proceeded to empty the magazine from 20 yards about as fast as I could fire, with the result being all "A" hits and group sizes not much worse than the ones we fired from the prone position. You figure it out; I can't.

There are several drawbacks to the Coonan as it now stands, and I've listed them as follows, along with the comments given to me by Dan Coonan:

Sights: The MMC fixed sights don't do justice to this gun. I made no bones about it to Dan Coonan. At the suggested retail

price (in the \$500-plus range), the buyer deserves a whole lot better. Dan told me the first 500 guns will be fitted with these sights, while those following will have good adjustable sights. You can install your own set of adjustable Bo-Mars, or whatever, if you're so inclined.

Magazines: You simply can't load them without the use of a short rod, supplied with each gun. At the base of the follower is a bushing through which you insert the rod and pull down. The rounds are then inserted at the front of the magazine below the feed lips. Once loaded, the slide should be locked back to facilitate the insertion of the magazine. It just doesn't want to go in when the slide is home. If you leave one in the chamber and try to insert a fully loaded magazine, you'll be disappointed. If you leave one round out, you can insert the magazine with a round up the spout, but you have to push hard. According to Coonan, the design of the magazine makes this necessary. The company is working on at least a partial solution to the problem.

TAPERED CHAMBER

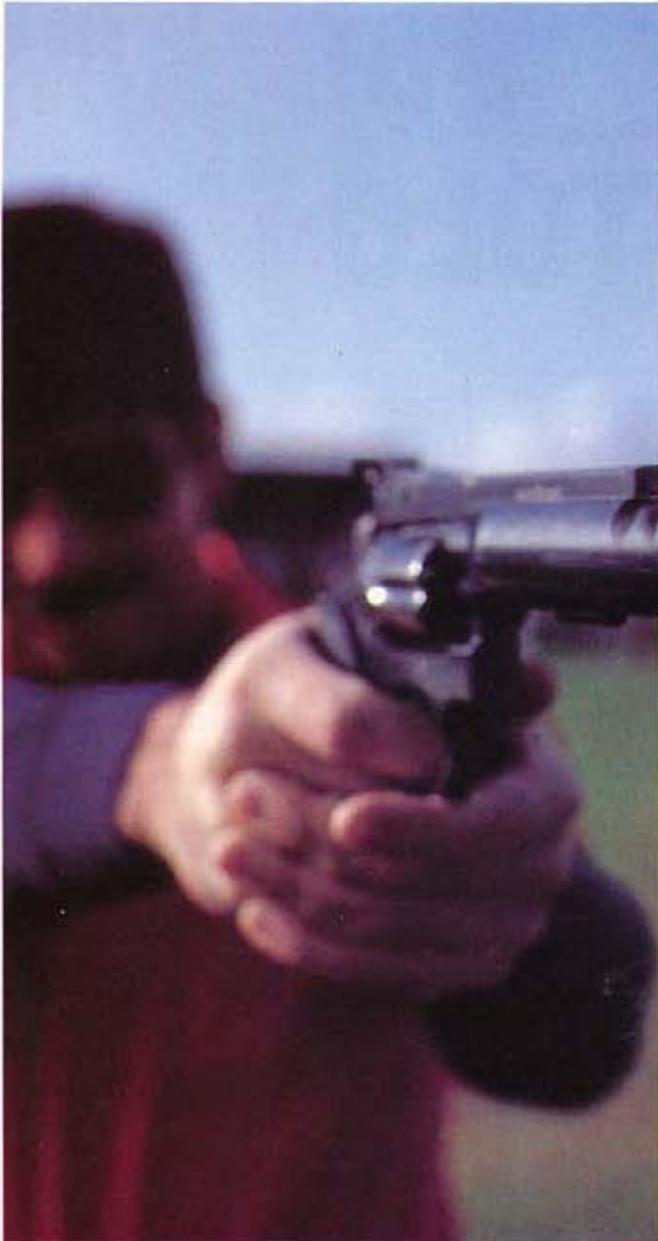
Fired cases: All cases fired show a bulge about three-quarters of the way around near the rim. Making the cases show it to be about 12/1,000 inch; it tapers to the case mouth. Coonan explained that the chamber is tapered slightly to facilitate loading and extraction, and that there have been no problems with any ammo. The cases can be resized easily, Coonan said that he has reloaded the cases (after being bulged) with no trouble, although he admits he likes his loads in the middle-range power category.

Grip safety: Simply put, it bites. The hammer is a Colt Commander type, and although it nipped me several times without being too serious, someone with a large hand is bound to get it sooner or later—but good. Later models will have an improved (longer) grip safety installed.

Coonan Arms is now shipping what it calls "pre-ordered guns." These are going to those who placed orders back when the company first got started. After that, the full production weapons will be available—hopefully with some of the improvements that Coonan and I discussed. It has the potential to be a fine gun if the changes are made.

For full information, contact Coonan Arms Inc. (Dept. AH), 1163 Old Fort Rd., St. Paul, MN 55102.





PPC REVOLVERS:



HOW GOOD ARE THEY?

Some 50 years of trial and error by shooters and pistolsmiths have resulted in near total perfection.

By Fred Romero

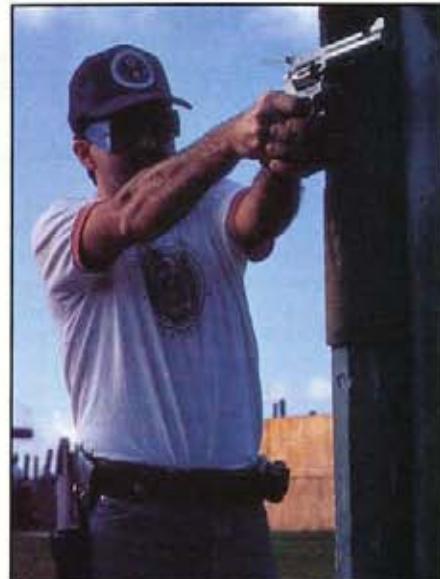
Editor's note: The author is a senior training officer with the Los Angeles Police Department, with which he has been associated for more than 16 years. A veteran shooter, Romero won the grueling Practical Event at the 1982 Bianchi Cup match, a stage sponsored by the *American Handgunner*. Romero credits Bill Davis of the Davis Company, a police supply house in Sacramento, California, for providing him with much of the information for the story that follows. Davis is a retired firearms instructor for the California Highway Patrol.

Big, heavy, and formidable looking, the modern-day PPC revolver represents an impressive mixture of state-of-the-art features not ordinarily found in a combat handgun.

Replete with an awesome array of design innovations, these guns are capable of firing 1½ inch groups, or better, at 50 yards. PPC guns are some of the most accurate

and reliable handguns to be found in competition today. Admittedly, the average PPC revolver may look like an overly complicated and impractical piece, but because of their reputation for flawless performance, these guns are showing up in increasing numbers at many of the professional "money" matches. For the record, 10 of the "Top Twenty" shooters at the 1982 *Bianchi Cup* match used a PPC-type revolver.

Why are these guns so good, and why are they appealing to more and more serious shooters? The answer lies in a simple rule of industry: Necessity is the mother of invention. The present PPC revolver is the result of about 50 years of trial and error by PPC shooters and gunsmiths. Because PPC is such a competitive sport, innovations came hot and heavy in an attempt to maximize the absolute potential of the handgun. Some things worked, some didn't. Accuracy and dependability are the bottom line with PPC shooters, and the



LAPD Officer John Pride, a veteran marksman, fires behind a barricade.

highly customized shooting machines that are campaigned at PPC matches around the country today are the end result of years of motivated effort.

As fascinating as the PPC revolver is, no detailed article on these guns would be complete without a brief history of PPC shooting itself. By understanding how the sport was developed, you will obtain a better insight on these unique weapons.

PPC HISTORY

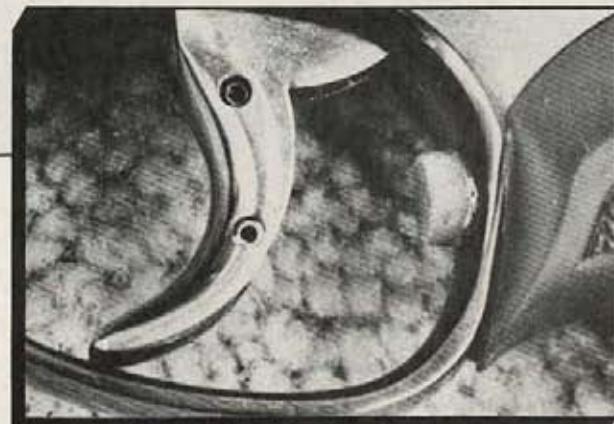
PPC came about, indirectly, because many police shooters in the early 1930s felt that "bullseye" was not wholly adequate for the kind of training considered necessary to prepare street policemen for real-life situations. In the heat of combat, no one really expected a policeman to hold his gun straight out with his strong hand and put his weak hand in his pocket, but there were no accepted alternatives to teach the police community otherwise. That's when PPC laid down its roots, approximately 50 years ago, at the National Pistol Matches, in Camp Perry, Ohio.

During the National (bullseye) Matches, field-oriented shooters developed a simple combat course to be fired in conjunction with special small arms seminars. Each year, the seminars grew in popularity, and the "Hogan's Alley"-type course that was used set the pace for combat shooting enthusiasts for several years.

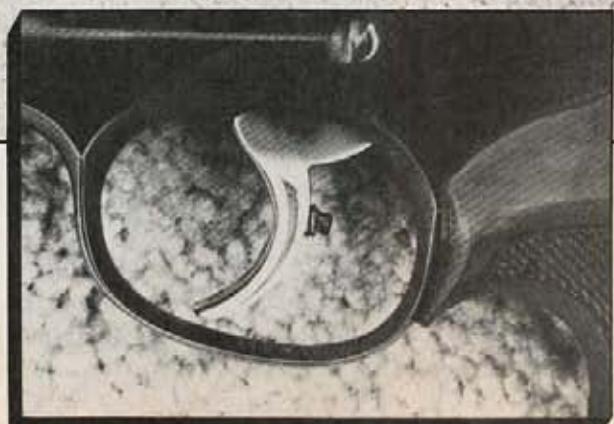
Realizing the need for a formalized "practical" course of fire for the handgun, the Federal Bureau of Investigation came up with a unique format prior to WWII. It was called PPC, and it stood for Practical Pistol Course. The new FBI course utilized silhouette targets with scoring rings related to "kill-zones," and the shooter was required to fire from various distances (7 yards to 60 yards) and different combat positions, using both the strong and weak hand. To add a little more realism, the course was also fired under timed conditions, making it necessary for the shooter to reload under pressure throughout the event. Compared to the rigid format of conventional bullseye shooting, the FBI course was heralded as the best approach yet to the problem of simulating combat conditions on the range.

PPC CONTINUES TO GROW

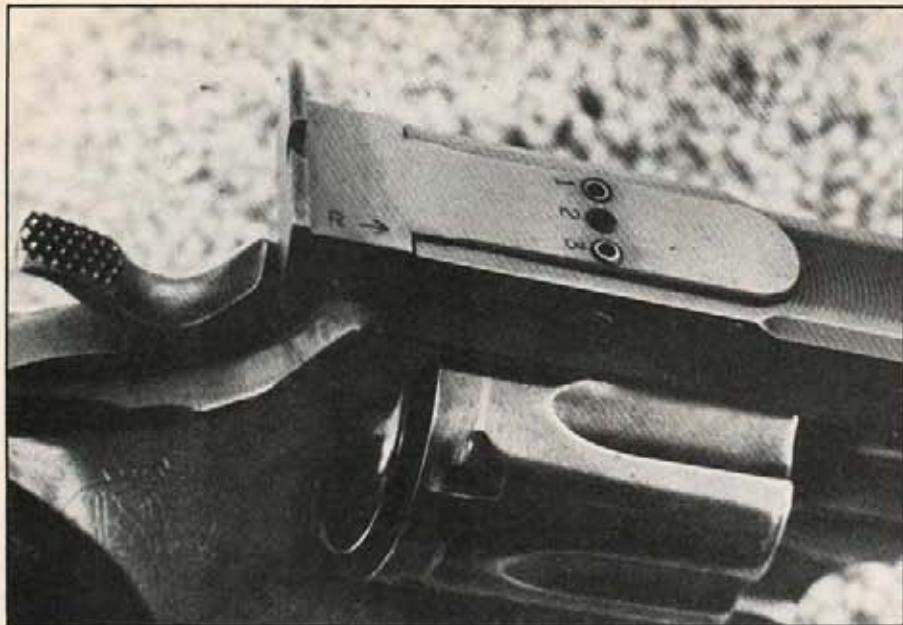
The new course was adopted by many police agencies as their intermediate or advanced course of fire. Fueled by an increasing and faithful grass-roots following, PPC continued to grow and, in 1959, the first National Police Match was held in Bloomington, Illinois. From that time on, PPC has turned into the most prominent of all police courses. Encompassing what some experts believe to be the best elements of both accuracy shooting and combat shooting, PPC has produced a breed of marksmen noted for their ability to perform well in other shooting events as well. Much of the credit must go to the basic



Author's gun: a fine example of old-style PPC revolver with Bo-Mar sight, Hurst grips, reworked cylinder latch. Note eraser, cut to exact fit and glued to the trigger guard.



PPC gun made by Davis Co., Sacramento. Note adjustable cam, front sight. Adjustable trigger stop has a rubber insert set into the back of Allen head screw. Another good gun for PPC.



Adjustable rear sight of the Arist-O-Crat sight-rib. Note the 3-position Allen head screws, which are pre-set for 7 and 25 yards, 50 yards and neck-hold at 25 yards. The cam is set by rotating the screw head on the right side of the sight.

equipment used by these police shooters.

In order to fully appreciate the technology of the PPC revolver, let's discuss some of the components and design changes that make these handguns so special.

Caliber and gun: NRA rules governing PPC competition limit the choice of caliber to .32 or larger. Through the years, it has been determined that the .38 caliber bullet is the best for PPC. Aside from availability, ballistics, duty gun compatibility and other factors, accuracy was also a prime consideration in opting for the .38 caliber bullet. The rules also allow for the use of target loads, and the mid-range wadcutter is the most popular at matches. The standard PPC target load consists of a .38 caliber 148-grain wadcutter bullet (hollow-base or solid-base), on top of 2.7 grains of Bullseye powder, or a similar equivalent. Although most shooters prefer factory ammo for match use, when they can get it, many are also using high-grade reloads that are capable of achieving factory machine-rest groups.

MAGIC COMBINATION

Since the majority of police agencies in the U.S. use the revolver as their primary duty gun, the revolver has become the accepted handgun for PPC. When used with match grade ammo, the PPC revolver is extremely accurate. For these, and other reasons, the magic combination of .38 caliber target loads and a revolver has remained popular over all other gun and ammo variations.

Frame: The foundation of every PPC revolver is the frame. Usually, the Smith & Wesson K-frame series is chosen over other makes. Most PPC shooting is done double-action (including 50 yards), and the consistently smooth action of the S&W in this mode has been found to be more conducive to precise double-action shoot-

ing. Also, it has been determined that any advantage gained in weight by using a heavier frame (such as the M19 and M27) is offset by the increased chamber space of the wadcutter bullet from the forcing cone. It is generally agreed that the closer tolerances of the .38 frame with a .38 wadcutter will result in better accuracy. Periodically, some will even go so far—to accommodate the wadcutter—that they will shorten the cylinder by milling it down, and extend the forcing cone back to close the cylinder gap. This kind of hair-splitting on internal ballistics is what makes the difference between "flyers" and Xs at 50 yards.

Barrel: The most obvious change between a stock gun and a built-up PPC gun is the barrel. PPC barrels are noted for

being overly large and heavy looking. But, in spite of their awkward appearance, bull barrels serve a practical need (competitively speaking), in that they generally are more accurate; the extra mass reduces recoil, and the placement of more weight out front gives the gun better handling and feel.

MICRO-GROOVED BARRELS

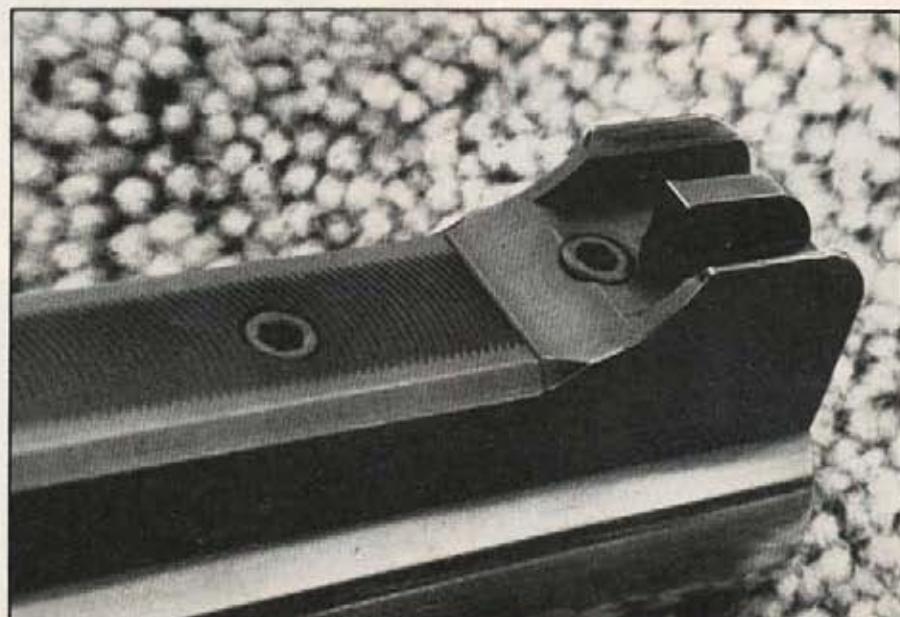
Bull barrels are accurate because they utilize "micro-grooves." Instead of the customary five or six lands and grooves that the standard factory barrel comes with, a micro-grooved barrel is machined with 10 lands and grooves, with a twist of 1-in-10 to 1-in-16 inches, depending on personal preference. The extra weight comes from barrel diameters of one inch or larger.

In an effort to add more overall weight, many gunsmiths are finding creative ways to increase the size and placement of a lower barrel "rib." A machined metal slab is usually affixed under the barrel with a cut-out for the ejector rod. This allows the lower rib to pass as a cylinder lock-up device, while at the same time increasing the overall weight of the gun.

Sights: Like every other component on a modern PPC gun, the sights have also gone through an evolutionary process. Obviously, factory sights on a stock gun were used in the early days out of necessity; but, as the sport grew, so did the science of handgun sights.

Drawing from the experience of successful bullseye marksmen, PPC shooters opted for high profile sights for a more defined sight picture. Many variations of factory sights were tried and, in about 1971, PPC shooters in California sent a request to Bo-Mar to come up with a "sight-rib" to be used specifically on PPC revolvers. What came back was the *West Coast Rib*, a

Continued on page 71



Front sight on the Arist-O-Crat sight-rib, made by L. Tiritilli. This sight, in combination with the one above, will result in an excellent sight picture for PPC shooting, along with bullseye, combat and other popular U.S. handgun shooting sports.

AVAILABLE IN SEVERAL CALIBERS...

NEW FRENCH POLICE AMMO

It is said to be the 'ideal police load' in terms of disabling effect, accuracy, metal-piercing capability.



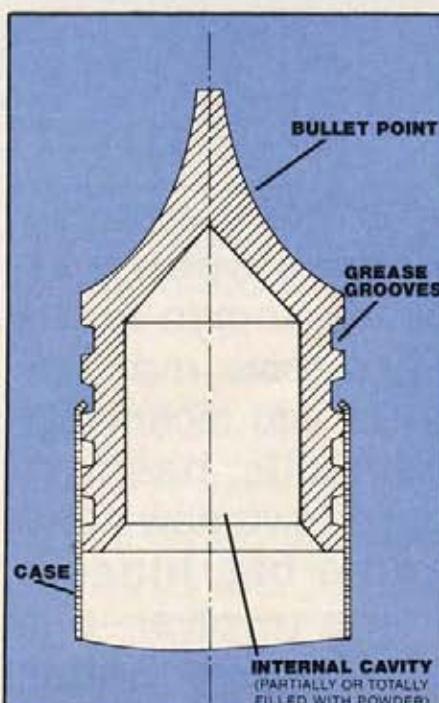
Note depth/width of cavity produced by new French ammo in .38 Special caliber.

By Michel Collin, DVM

Editor's note: Collin, a French veterinarian and part-time ballistician, wrote the following story in longhand. It was difficult to read, and required extensive editing because of language differences. We hope we have captured correctly the essence of his excellent report on French police ammo disabling qualities.

Some months ago, Massad Ayoob wrote an article dedicated to the New York City Police Department and the .38 Special. In it, he said the problem is to find a cartridge that the "average" cop can control effectively, yet which also takes an opponent out of a fire fight with one or two reasonably solid hits. "Twenty-three thousand New York cops... are hoping for a solution," Ayoob wrote.

Now, that cartridge *does* exist, and soon should be in mass production at the S.F.M. plant near Paris. Its revolutionary ammo is the answer to police requirements in the areas of disabling effect, accuracy, metal-piercing capability and no over-penetration.



A major feature of the French load is the powder charge IN the projectile.

It is dubbed T.H.V.—*Tres Haute Vitesse*, or very high velocity—by its designers.

While abiding by Den Haag international convention guidelines, T.H.V. delivers the same disabling effect as *Hollowe* (hollow) points do; but, unlike H.P.s, which crash against hard targets, T.H.V. (made of copper alloy) has three times more penetrating power than conventional jacketed bullets, due to its hardness, geometrical design and high velocity.

Projectile "braking" after impact—or energy transfer to the target—has been obtained by a special design of the bullet point; a section of that point is defined by two symmetric, concave lines. One can see on the accompanying drawing that all substance threads. Projected at extremely high speeds, the substance becomes excessively dense; molecules press on one another, creating a significantly large increase of the bullet's original caliber.

POWDER VOLUME HIGH

Efficiency at this point is important, when the bullet attains its highest possible velocity. This is achieved by increasing the powder volume, which reaches—and *Continued on page 71*

THE FULL STORY ON

3 NEW GUNS BY DETONICS



Detonics designer Nehemiah Sirkis, left, and author discuss the multiple functions of the small gun's components.

By Al Pickles

Editor's note: A preliminary story by Al Pickles, in the March/April issue of the *American Handgunner*, represents an industry exclusive on the three new Detonics guns described in detail below.

A visit to the Detonics plant is, to say the least, an exercise in excitement. It is like no other gun company I have ever visited, and the people at Detonics are like few other people I have known in the gun industry. The executives are alive with enthusiasm, unpretentious, and deeply involved in actual production—right up to their elbows. They are also skilled shootists and highly knowledgeable gun buffs.

Although Detonics Manufacturing Corporation is only seven years old (produc-

This comparatively new company, already known for its aggressive management and technological skills, has produced two new autos and a big, hinged-frame revolver—a la the famous British Webley.

tion of the small Detonics .45 began in 1976) and sells every handgun it can make, new ideas still take top priority and are worked upon immediately.

The research and development staff is, from what I have seen, second to none in the world; members come from all over the globe. The manner in which some of these men were recruited and brought to Detonics would, indeed, make an exciting adventure story. Israel, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Nigeria, the Phillipines, and the local sheriff's office are just a few places of origin. These men—along with their American counterparts in design and engineering—come forth with an abundant flow of new ideas, some of which are already tabbed for production shortly.

There has always been a great need for small, full-power handguns. To a large degree, the original Detonics .45 has satisfied that need with police officers and



Detonics soon will be producing this super-small, seven-shot pistol chambered for the heavy 9mm NATO round (9x19).



This full-size, double-action .45 auto from Detonics will also be chambered for the .451 Detonics Magnum cartridge.

others whose pursuits put them in harm's way. Be that as it may, there is still a large demand for powerful pistols of even smaller dimensions. Although small pistols do exist in .22, .25ACP, .32ACP, and .380 calibers, these cartridges do not deliver adequate stopping power. There has been a dangerous tendency among gun writers to label the .380 as "marginal." I have even used that word myself to describe the .380 in a very small autoloader made for back-up purposes. In truth, the .380 just happened to be the best available in super small guns, and in that sense alone it rated the term "marginal."

BACK-UP PISTOL

If you agree that a void exists for a super-small, but reasonably powerful, back-up pistol, you will certainly be turned on by a new—and as yet unnamed—pistol, to be produced by the people at Detonics. The pistol will be chambered for the 9mm Luger cartridge in its heavy NATO standard loading.

The gun, designed by Detonics' Nehemiah Sirkis, will be the smallest, full-powered 9mm in existence, with an overall length of 5.8 inches, a height of four inches and a barrel length of three inches. Weight is about 23 ounces. The magazine holds seven rounds.

There will be fewer than 30 parts making up this small 9mm, many of them performing multiple functions. As an example, one ingenious and unique flat spring performs no less than seven functions. The trigger, ejector and slide stop are all built into one part. A connecting rod does double-duty as a disconnector, and on it goes in this amazing pistol.

The gun will be made almost entirely of a new and better stainless steel alloy. The "bread board" working sample looked beautiful; and when I expressed a desire to take the first actual photo of the gun, Sirkis dispatched his apprentice son to make a set of stocks. To my surprise, the young man had them ready for photography in just a



The new Detonics hinge-frame revolver in .45 Long Colt caliber caught the author's fancy on first viewing. Webley-like, it is an extremely accurate gun.

few hours. That's how things happen at Detonics.

Another new Detonics undertaking, displayed proudly by Project Manager Ray Herriot, is a full-sized autoloader which will be chambered for both the .45 ACP and the new .451 Detonics Magnum. The pistol sports the smoothest double-action trigger I have ever manipulated, bar none.

Although hoped-for-production is about a year away, modifications and improvements are still taking place. It is not yet known whether they will use a polygon barrel or a ratchet barrel; but either way it will certainly be innovative.

The barrel-slide lock up in this extraordinary pistol consists of a pin that rolls out

of engagement in such a manner as to delay slide blow-back until pressure has been sufficiently reduced. I can testify that it works well, because I fired it repeatedly and experienced remarkably light recoil.

The gun, made of stainless steel, has an ambidextrous safety which is pushed down with the thumb of the gun hand to disengage and is really the only way to go for a natural maneuver. When engaged, the safety positively blocks hammer contact with the firing pin.

After having examined and fired this new gun, I couldn't help but think how well advised our own military would be to stick with the .45 while upgrading to all

Continued on page 75

SWT CUSTOM



FRC
ARM
SYS
& PR

Armament Systems and Procedures, Inc. of Appleton, Wisconsin has provided this issue's *Gun of the Month*, a converted Ruger Police Service-Six double-action revolver in .44 Special caliber.

The stainless steel, five-shot revolver has a 2.75 inch barrel in front of an unfluted cylinder, machined from special bar stock. No barrel insert was used; instead, rifling was cut in factory barrel.

Each individually-numbered chamber is chamfered to facilitate loading.

Other features include a spurless hammer and smooth combat-type trigger.

Handcrafted rosewood grips have a slight palm swell and balanced design to help minimize recoil. They are relieved for the use of speedloaders.

A tri-dot, radioluminous sight is designed for rapid fire shooting under low light condition.

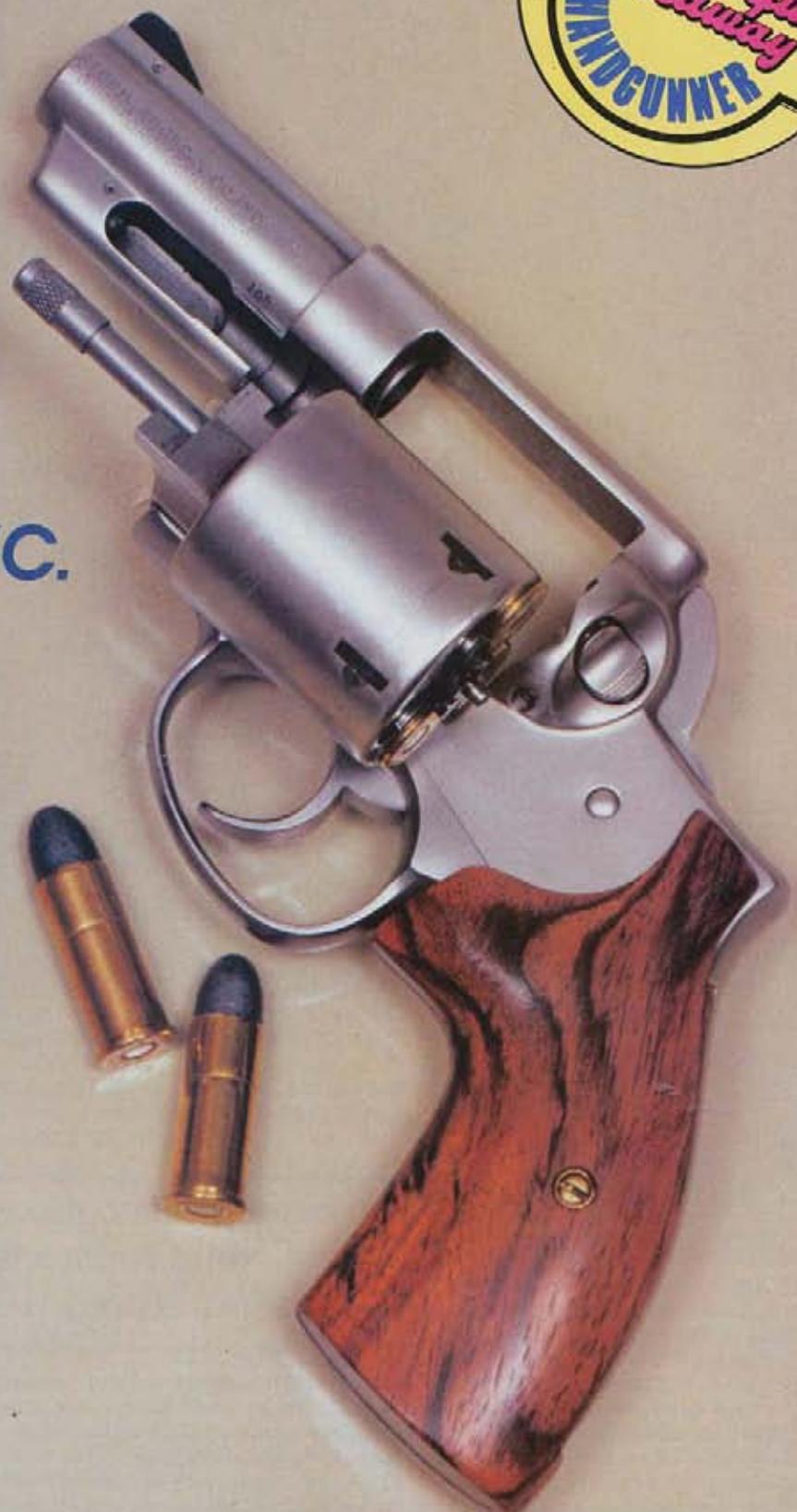
This rugged service revolver comes in an attractive leather case.

Designated the SWT, conversions also are available in .38 Special, 357 Magnum and 9mm calibers, with 2.75-inch or four-inch barrels in blue or stainless steel finish (Ruger Service-Six or Ruger Speed-Six models).

For more information on this Ruger conversion (and others), write the company at POB 356 (Dept. AH), Appleton, WI 54912.

.44 RUGER

H
M
ATERIAL
S
YSTEMS
PROCEDURES, INC.



TO ENTER CONTEST: Use a postcard, follow sample; include name, address, HOM-M/J, local dealer name and address. Mail before June 1, 1983. Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Box 16025, San Diego, CA 92116.

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Address _____
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HOM-MAY/JUNE

Phone _____

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.

SAMPLE

HANDLING THE .45 AUTO - SAFELY



Too much hammer bobbing on Colt .45 auto can mean a loss of gripping surface, a slip—and accidental discharge.

By Richard Savino

The Colt Government Model M1911 .45 auto is the closest thing this country is likely to see in a universally acceptable personal defense weapon.

It has the reliability, stopping power, accuracy and availability to fill that role, and is the gun of choice for those who train in practical shooting.

Even so, the official sidearm of the U.S. armed forces is surrounded with much folklore and quite often is unnecessarily subjected to modifications by those who think mechanical adjuncts can take the place of thorough familiarity.

Perhaps the area least well covered in overall familiarization with the M1911 pistol and its variants is that of simple loading, holstering, carry and unloading: the actual "nuts and bolts" of how the .45

is set up and used in an everyday setting of personal defense or utility service.

While I have used the .45 almost

a year-old infant. Following the usual drill, I dropped out the fully-loaded magazine and set it aside on an end table.

Some modifications may be dangerous. And some methods of handling may be outright stupid. Use common sense!

exclusively for such purposes for a number of years, and have instructed others in its use, I've never stopped learning about the gun. And all the learning has been put to use, although sometimes not without embarrassment.

Once I came home with the gun in "condition one," and proceeded to unload it while standing between my father-in-law and my wife, who was at that point rocking

ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE

Then, as I had learned and practiced intensively for several years, I prepared to unload the piece. Pointing the muzzle at the floor in a safe direction, I snapped off the thumb safety. The gun fired. The baby woke up, my father-in-law raised his eyebrows, and a long discussion ensued in which I was finally able to convince all concerned, including myself, that the acci-

dent was one of those things that shouldn't have happened.

The trigger finger was out of the trigger guard. The gun had been held correctly and firmly. On disassembly, into all its components parts, nothing was found to be out of order. I literally could not imagine why the gun had gone off. I didn't worry too much more that night; but it stuck with me, and eventually I was forced by sheer curiosity to call Jeff Cooper of Paulden, Arizona, acknowledged expert with anything having to do with the M1911 auto.

What Cooper told me should be written in large, block letters on a sign in every gun person's home: *Tolerance stack-up*. There comes a time when everything is working against you: the trigger happens to be at its rearmost position in the gun frame, and the hammer happens to be on the edge of its notch, relative to the sear; and the safety is in one of several possible positions, relative to everything else inside the gun.

The gun goes off. In my case, all I suffered was embarrassment and a hole in the living room floor.

FOOLPROOF UNLOADING

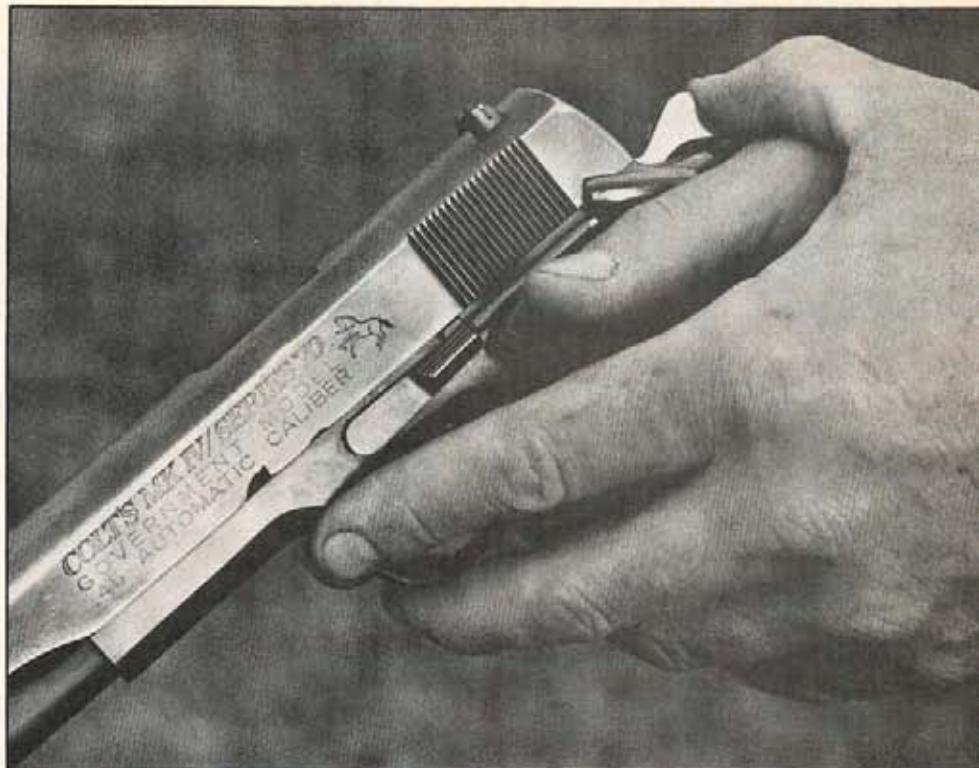
But I learned a lesson, and evolved a method for unloading the .45 that is foolproof: drop out the magazine first, and put it away. Then, holding the hammer firmly with the left hand (assuming the gun is held in the right hand), release the safety while pointing the muzzle in a safe direction. Lower the hammer slowly onto the firing-pin block. Then, when there is no possibility of the hammer slipping, turn the gun upside down—still maintaining muzzle control—and rack the slide back to drop the chambered cartridge into the left hand.

The above drill is what I have followed and taught to my pistol students for nearly three years, since my aforementioned incident. It never failed me until recently. And the new failure brought up another point about .45s and their modification.

I had practiced very little this past summer. Normally, I've been firing 3,000 to 5,000 rounds a year, even though I'm not a tournament IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) shooter.

Imagine my surprise when, going through a round of combat shooting on a friend's private range, I found the .45 auto—for the first time—biting the web of my shooting hand. It took only the pain of a box of cartridges to tell me I was doing something gravely wrong in my draw, and as I established my grip preparatory to firing.

But the temptation to take the short cut was there. Remembering one pistolsmith's work on rounding the edges on the .45 auto, I took my gun to a bench grinder and dressed down both hammer and grip-safety tang. It went well. When I was finished, no part of the end of the gun could possibly "bite" my hand. I tested it,



When unloading, drop magazine, bring hammer down under thumb control as safety is taken off. Guns have fired when manual safeties were released.

shooting full-power loads, and found it fired reliably—with comfort.

ACCIDENTAL DISCHARGE #2

I prepared to take down the gun to clean it. My usual drill was followed, as it has been for three years. But this time, the hammer—bobbed off to a bare $\frac{1}{8}$ inch of spur—slipped from my thumb and fired the gun. It virtually disintegrated a table lamp, and the jacketed hollowpoint slug came to rest on the floor, 15 feet away.

Note that the hammer had enough spur left to allow me to cock it under normal, unhurried, methodical circumstances. Because it did not work the way it was expected to, I have placed an order for a new hammer and grip safety.

Absolutely *nothing* should be assumed about a loaded handgun. I have adopted the habit of using the thumb to control the big auto's hammer, even while holstering it. Any number of things can happen in this part of the carry procedure; and I have seen, in police circles, the results of modifications to revolvers, such as trigger shoes, that catch on seemingly innocuous articles of clothing, as well as belts and holsters.

The highly modified .45 autos that are sold widely, and which are fitted with accessories like S-shaped grip safeties and ultra-long-slide stops and thumb safeties, are great for matches. But, in the real world of everyday carry, they should be avoided like the plague. They try to make up in special metal shapes, what the handgunner may lack in familiarity and dedication to practice. If the gun's not part of your skin, you can't say you know it and can rely on it under all circumstances.



Thumb control all the way into the holster is worthwhile "extra precaution."

My advice to handgunners is, quite simply, use your gun and equipment regularly, and don't take anything for granted, including the relatively simple, mundane chore of loading and holstering, unloading and de-holstering your gun.

Follow *one* system of drills. Live with it and let it become second nature to you. Above all, don't rely on mechanical safeties or on weapon modifications that take the place of personal skill. It's court-martialing embarrassment at the very least, possible disaster at the very worst.



AFTER 80 YEARS

'DEEP SIX'

By Claud Hamilton

Let's dump the .38 Special. No, I'm not kidding. I mean just what I say.

It's high time we stopped wasting our efforts and money on "has beens" and "also rans" which have outlived their usefulness. Sure, in its day, the .38 Special was a fine cartridge. It was developed about 80 years ago and gained fame first as a target cartridge; within a few years, it and the fine Smith & Wesson and Colt revolvers chambered for it became the accepted sidearms for U.S. police officers.

Since World War II, however, more and more officers have expressed dissatisfaction with the .38 Special, and many now carry more effective calibers. We have a splendid cartridge in the .357 Magnum. It will do anything the .38 Special can do—and do it far better. In my opinion, there is no sense in continuing to make the .38 Special as a commercial load.

This is just the tip of the iceberg. The proliferation of center-fire handgun cartridges now offered by the makers defies belief. Would you believe that there are no fewer than 30 now in regular production, in calibers from .22 to .45? Considering all the different bullet types and loadings, there are 108 variations. Add to this the natural growth which takes place—right now, we have the new .45 Winchester Magnum and .357 Maximum—and it becomes clear that a system is needed to eliminate cartridges as soon as they become obsolete. Currently, the ammo companies—if they use any system at all—seem to rely upon commercial demand. As long as there is any demand, they continue to make the item even though it is probably no longer truly profitable.

What do we want from handguns? Pleasure plinking, target shooting, defense/law enforcement and hunting capabilities seem to pretty well cover the field. We also want reasonable size, weight, concealability and manageable recoil. Let's take a close look at what the makers now offer.

CALIBER CATEGORIES

Calibers .22 to .25:

- .22 Jet .221 Fireball
- .25 Auto Colt Pistol .256 Win. Mag.
- The .22 Jet is a loser. Made in 1961 for a



The .357 Magnum should be kept.
The .38 Special should be dumped.

Several ballistically better cartridges are moving in, ready to take over in a variety of 'fields of need.'

special Smith & Wesson revolver, which had a second cylinder chambered for .22 Long Rifle, the slightest lube on the case would cause the gun to lock up due to cartridge setback. In .25 caliber, the .25 ACP is not even on a par with the .22 Long Rifle as a defense weapon, and has no other potential than its suitability to tiny pocket pistols. Like the .22 Jet, the .256 Winchester Magnum has turned out to be too hot for satisfactory use in handguns, other than single shots, and in rifles.

Of the lot in this caliber category, I recommend retention of the .221 Fireball only. This cartridge has proven to be a finely accurate one in the Remington XP-100.

Calibers .30 to .32:

.30 Luger	.32 S&W
.32 S&W Long	.32 Colt Short
.32 Colt Long	.32 Auto Colt Pistol
.32-20 Winchester	

With but two exceptions, this entire category consists of small, underpowered cartridges unsuitable for defense/law enforcement use and not sufficiently accurate for target shooting, or even plinking. They are old revolver cartridges, ex-



The Colt .380 Auto pistol cartridge is recommended for retention since it has value in small pocket pistols, such as the Browning Model 1910, shown above.

THE .38 SPECIAL?

cept for the .32 ACP.

The .30 Luger is a powerful cartridge, but its usefulness is limited by the smallness of its full metal jacketed bullet, and by the few arms chambered for it in the United States. The .32-20 Winchester dates back to black powder days. It is a good plinker; and that's about all.

Calibers 9mm (.355) to .357:

9mm Parabellum	.38 S&W
(Luger)	
.38 Short Colt	.38 Long Colt
.38 Special	.357 Magnum
.380 Auto Colt Pistol	.38 Auto Colt Pistol
.38 Super Auto	.38-40 Winchester

This category includes by far the most widely used—if not the most useful—cartridges produced commercially in America today. The 9mm Parabellum is the world's preeminent submachine gun cartridge, and probably the most widely used military handgun cartridge of all time. Its place in history is secure.

The .38 S&W, and the long and short Colts, have nothing going for them, except that there still are guns around chambered for them.

The .38 Special probably is the most used cartridge in this country; which does not alter the fact that it is made obsolete by the .357 Magnum.

Among the pistol cartridges, the .38 ACP and .38 Super compete directly, and unsuccessfully, with the 9mm Parabellum. The .380 ACP, however, does seem to fill a legitimate need for a small, concealable handgun. The .38-40 is the black powder old-timer, and far past its prime.

I vote for the 9mm Parabellum, the .357 Magnum and the .380 ACP to be retained. (Add to this the .357 Maximum, not yet shown in cartridge lists.)

Calibers .41 to .45:

.41 Rem. Mag.	.44 S&W Special
.44 Magnum	.44 Auto Mag
.45 Colt	.45 Auto Colt
.45 ACP-Rimmed	Pistol
.44-40 Winchester	.45 Win. Mag.

Among the non-magnums, the .44 Special and the .44-40 are no longer viable, and should be dropped. The .45 ACP is probably our second most used handgun cartridge, and still our service standard. On the other hand, the rimmed version was never a big success and is not needed. The .45 Colt is a special case; until recently, I would have recommended its elimination; but the new loadings for the Contender and Black Hawk put it right up in the magnum class.

The magnum loads are all powerful and suitable for hunting and self-defense. The .44 Auto Mag does not seem to have caught on, and can be dropped. The .45 Winchester Magnum is a special case. Made for a new gas-operated pistol, called the Wildey, it is not yet on the market. I'd say give it a chance.

In this category, I recommend for retention the .41 Magnum, .44 Magnum, .45 ACP, .45 Colt and the .45 Winchester Magnum.

Continued on page 81



Today, the 9mm cartridge is made in the United States in a wide variety of bullet types and weights, designed to improve its anti-personnel performance.



The ubiquitous .45 Auto pistol cartridge remains standard for U.S. Armed Forces. It is loaded with a wide range of bullets to improve its performance.



Here are the larger caliber cartridges the author recommends for retention: left to right—.41 Magnum, .44 Magnum, .45 ACP, .45 Win. Mag. and .45 Colt.

STICK WITH .45 AUTO IN...



THE MODEL 1911-A2 VERSION?

By Dick Thomas

The U.S. military's search for a new sidearm—a costly one—has resulted in much confusion and created a maddening situation for most of the shooting public.

The General Accounting Office concluded that the cost of each new 9mm pistol would be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$550, plus the cost of holsters and armorer retraining.

The cost was driven up, in part, by the specifications set by the military. The requirements included double-action firing capability and a safety mechanism that would lower the hammer without engaging the trigger.

It is one thing to criticize a program; it is more constructive to offer a solution: The M1911-A2.

The military should continue with the M1911 in .45 ACP with the following modifications:

Durable, higher and more visible fixed sights, with the front sight ramped; a longer trigger, with square front surface; an ambidextrous thumb safety; an improved finish; a heavier recoil spring; a beveled magazine well; a lighter bullet; a lowered ejection port, and a grooved front strap.

When existing parts inventories have been depleted, guns should be built with cast receivers—a good deal less expensive than forged receivers. When receivers are cast, the following modifications can be incorporated in the process:

A checkered front strap, a beveled magazine well, and a checkered, somewhat squared, trigger guard.

It would entail several modifications—such as new sights, longer trigger, ambidextrous safety, beveled magazine well, heavier recoil spring, checkered mainspring housing and Commander-type hammer.



A good view of the M1911-A2, top of page. The three guns covered in this story are, top to bottom: the M1911, the M1911 A-1 and the M1911 A-2; all .45 ACP.

Continued on page 83

RUSSIANS DOMINATE CARACAS MATCHES

By Sam Baiocco

The Russians dominated the handgun shooting scene at Caracas, Venezuela.

Caracas was the site Nov. 1-10 last year for the 43rd annual meeting of the world's best marksmen. Sixty-two countries were represented, with the largest delegations coming from the United States, Russia and Australia.

Hundreds of shooters fired thousands of rounds of ammunition—first in practice and finally in competition—for the coveted gold, silver and bronze medals proclaiming them the best in the world.

The 1982 World Shooting Championships were held at the Ft. Tiuna Army base, situated 15 minutes from downtown Caracas. The Venezuelan Shooting Federation, under the direction of its president, Oscar Arellano, built an entire shooting complex there—called the *Polígono de Tiro* (polygon, for shooters)—to handle all the events held over the 10-day period.

This four-sided complex featured five different ranges: a 50-meter range for rifle and pistol, a 25-meter range for pistol, a 10-meter range for air rifle and pistol, and separate ranges for running boar, Olympic trap and skeet. From my viewpoint, the entire complex was well laid out; although there were some minor problems, the ranges were well-built and the modern equipment was run efficiently by members of various Venezuelan shooting clubs.

As a shooting member of the U.S. centerfire pistol team, I observed most of the pistol competitions.

There were five pistol events for men and two for women. In addition to the individual championships, there were non-fired team championships using the combined individual scores (four-member teams for men and three-member teams for women).

SWEDEN WINS

The first event was the free pistol match, which provided one of the first "surprises." The individual gold was won by Ragnar Skanaker of Sweden, using a modified version of the Hammerli 150 free pistol. His score: 568x600. Olympic champion and world record holder A. Melentiev of Russia was second with a 567; third place went to A. Egrichin, also of Russia, with a score of 563. Based on their strong individual

scores, the Russians easily won the team gold with a score of 2248x2400. The U.S. team won the silver medal with a 2211 (the first time a U.S. team had placed in the free pistol team event in 24 years). The Peoples

scores; the spectator interest, however, was clearly centered on Kuzmin to see if he could duplicate his first day's score. He started out with a possible 100 in the eight-second phase, and then shot a 99 in the six-second phase. He was looking at a tie for the world's record. Then catastrophe struck, as he fired a 95 in the four-second phase, dropping him from first to sixth place, where he finished.

The final results saw Puzyrev of Russia come in first with a score of 596. Second, was Gunnarsson of Sweden with a 595; Radke of France, with another 595, finished third. Based on strong individual scores, Russian shooters placed first, fourth, sixth and eighth. Russia won the team gold with a score of 2376. Second was Romania with a 2362; third place went to Hungary with a 2355. The U.S. team came in eighth.

Men's air pistol was next. Although not as noisy as the other events, the air was soon buzzing with excitement as reports of the scores came in. There were no surprises as the Russians again dominated, this time capturing the first three places. The winner was V. Turla with a score of 590—a new world's record. Second was his teammate, Melentiev, with a 580; third place went to Egrichin of Russia with a 579.

The team gold was again won by the USSR with a score of 2327. Second place

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Republic of China team placed third with a score of 2207.

The second event was rapid fire. Unlike free pistol, this event took two days to complete. Each shooter fired a "half course" of 30 shots the first day and then finished up the second day with his last 30 shots, for a possible score of 600.

The first day of competition saw some great scores. Six competitors fired 297 or better. A. Kuzmin of Russia shot a perfect 300.

The second day saw nearly identical



The Ladies Pistol Match was fired on 60 targets at a range of 25 meters. Targets are operated electronically.

THE SERVICE PISTOL CONTROVERSY

This in-depth report traces the political donnybrook that pits U.S. government groups against one another and damages the reputations of some gun makers.

By Patrick F. Rogers

A controversy is quietly seething in Washington. When it erupts in the next year or two, it will rival the M16 rifle as the small arms controversy of the century. It pits the Army against the Air Force, the House against the Senate and has caused our NATO allies to raise serious questions regarding U.S. arms policy.

It all started innocently enough in 1977, when the Air Force requested congressional funding to develop a new, more lethal .38 Special cartridge for its service revolver. This sounds startling; .38 Special service revolvers? Doesn't the Air Force use the standard U.S. Government service pistol, the .45 automatic? No, the Air Force abandoned the .45 automatic more than 20 years ago.

Although in theory the Air Force should



All test pistols must function in cold room's minus 60 degrees F. temperature. This hurdle alone eliminates many contenders for a U.S. Government contract.

have used small arms selected by the Army in the interest of standardization, it was allowed to adopt the .38 Special Smith & Wesson Combat Masterpiece with little publicity or argument. This happened for two reasons.

First, the Air Force was expanding and required additional handguns. No new .45 automatics had been purchased for issue to troops since 1945. The Army had no spare .45s to transfer to the Air Force. The Department of Defense was not willing to allow the Army to order additional .45 automatics.

It is important to note what the controversy is *not* about. The caliber question—.45 ACP versus 9mm—is not an important issue. Our NATO agreements require any new pistol we adopt to be a 9mm. The .45 ACP could be retained only by procuring new .45 Colt automatics and rejecting a new design. While individual officers may have a preference for one cartridge over another, the military simply want new pistols. In fact, the Air Force decision freed the .45 automatics to support Army and Marine Corps combat requirements.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS

Second, the Air Force invoked the rule allowing a service to procure non-standard equipment to meet special requirements. The Air Force argued that a double-action .38 Special revolver was superior to the .45 automatic for air crew survival and air base security, the two principal requirements for handguns in the Air Force.

The Air Force adopted the S&W Combat Masterpiece as the M15 revolver in 1963. Several hundred thousand M15s were procured in the 1960s. Few have been purchased since then. The M15 S&W was the Air Force service pistol during the Vietnam War. While it was generally satisfactory, a number of problems were encountered. By 1977, they had become serious.

The Air Force inventory was wearing out. Repairing or rebuilding a double-action revolver requires a skilled gunsmith. It is beyond the capacity of the average Air Force armorer. Also a large percentage of the M15s are so badly worn they are not worth rebuilding.

The Air Force encountered a number of problems with its .38 Special ammunition, a metal-jacketed bullet fired at standard velocities. There were instances of bullets sticking in the bore during firing, and cases of unexplained "detonations," which completely destroyed several guns.

The Air Force .38 Special cartridge lacked stopping power and was considered deficient in lethality. The Air Force thus asked the House Defense Appropriations Sub-Committee for funds to develop a new .38 Special round.

HANDGUN INVENTORY

The committee, headed by Congressman Joseph P. Addabbo, had been investigating possible waste and unnecessary

duplication of guns and ammunition in the Armed Forces. Committee staffers had determined that the Armed Forces had more than 25 different makes and models of handguns in inventory. As Congressman Addabbo stated, "The current proliferation of handguns and handgun ammunition in Armed Forces inventory is intolerable."

The committee would not fund development of a new .38 Special cartridge. Instead, it encouraged and offered to fund a Department of Defense effort to select a standard handgun and ammunition and prepare a plan to phase-out all other types.

The job was assigned to the newly-formed Joint Service Small Arms Program (JSSAP) Committee. JSSAP concluded that a new pistol firing the NATO standard 9mm cartridge could be developed to meet the requirements of all the Armed Services. Since the Air Force was clearly interested and had an immediate problem with its revolver inventory, JSSAP selected them to evaluate the single handgun concept. The Air Force assigned the task to its Armament Laboratory (AFAL).

AFAL issued a detailed requirements list for the new pistol. The key features were that the new pistol must:

- (1) Be chambered for the 9mm luger NATO cartridge;
- (2) Have detachable magazines with a minimum capacity of 13 rounds;
- (3) Have a magazine catch easily operated by the right hand. The released magazine must fall away without assistance from the left hand;
- (4) Be able to be fired either double-or single-action;
- (5) Have a slide stop to lock the slide open after the last shot is fired, and
- (6) Not jam under adverse operating conditions and, during a 5,000-round test, have no more than eight significant malfunctions.

SAFETY SYSTEM

The safety requirements for the new pistol were extremely detailed. The main features were that there must be a thumb safety system. It must be easily operated by right- or left-handed shooters, allow uncocking and lowering the hammer without the trigger being touched, and lock the firing pin when placed in the safe position.

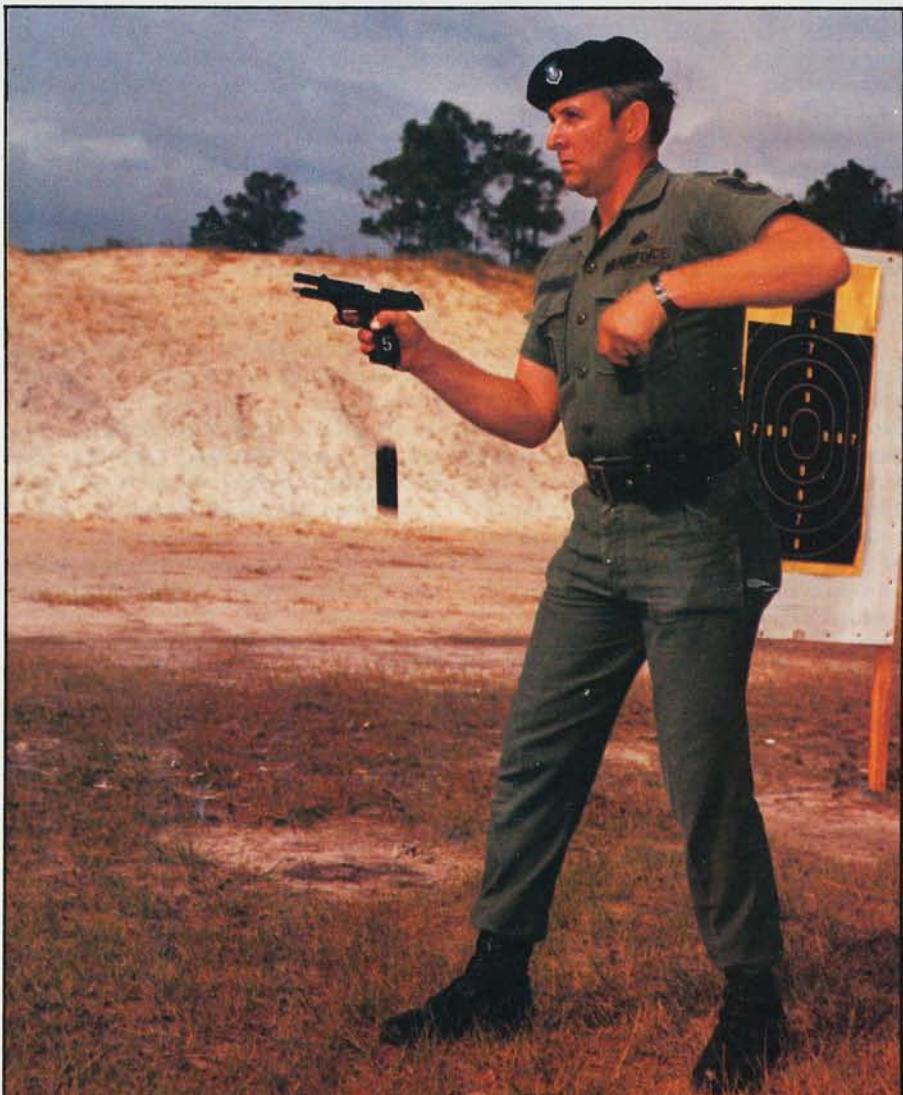
The specification was not an easy one. No pistol then in production anywhere in the world completely met the requirements.

AFAL invited all handgun manufacturers in the U.S. and NATO to submit pistols for trial. Ten Colt .45 Model 1911-A1 automatics and .38 Special S&W M15s were to be tested as control guns. Testing began in 1977.

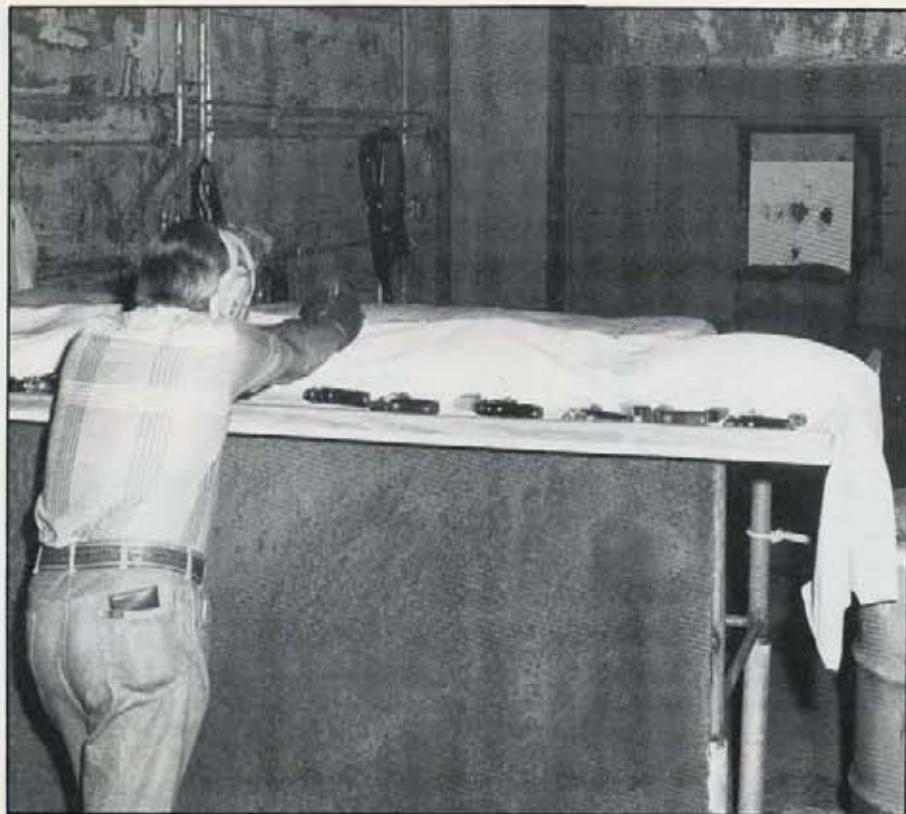
Six guns survived the initial AFAL testing: the Beretta M92SB; the Colt SSP; Smith & Wesson's M459; two variants of the Browning Highpower, the Double Action and the Fast Action; and the Star M28. The Air Force purchased 10 pistols of



All test pistols undergo mud baths in a cement mixer. Afterwards, they must shoot. Only minor manual assistance in operating the action is permitted.



Tech. Sgt. Ernest F. Decker, USA, reloads his Beretta 92S-1 during test firing. Note dropping of spent magazine. On-range shooting is crucial in evaluation.



Department of Army civilian Bob Snodgrass test-fires pistols in a hot room. The temperature is 125 degrees F. Note gloves to prevent burns from hot metal.

each type. These, together with the control guns, were subjected to environmental tests, including dust, mud, extreme heat and cold. Reliability and functional tests were also conducted, along with "human factors" tests in which the candidate and control pistols were fired by Air Force personnel with widely-varying skill.

In that area, the tests quickly demonstrated that the Air Force had been right. The Air Force shooters were able to score far higher percentages of hits with the 9mm automatics than with the current service S&W M15 .38s. Performance was also better than that achieved with the .45 automatic; but the improvement was not so great. Especially important to the Air Force was the distribution of the improvement. The least-experienced shooters showed the most improvement.

THREE WINNERS

Testing continued through the middle of 1980. Three pistols were selected for final tests, including extended endurance trials. No official announcement was ever made; but it is clear that the three winners were Beretta, Smith & Wesson, and Browning's DA model. Final testing was concluded in late 1980. The winner was to have been announced in March 1981. An initial order for 100,000 pistols for 1982 delivery to the Air Force was expected. Everyone held their breath; but nothing happened. What had gone wrong?

The Air Force had, in effect, selected a new service pistol. But before the selection could be validated, JSSAP needed the agreement of the other services. At this

point, the Air Force ran head on into the Army. The Army uses far more pistols than the other services. It is also the Department of Defense smallarms procurement agent. The Army's concurrence was critical. And the Army would not agree.

Why? At this point, the situation becomes confused. Air Force supporters suspect a plot. They feel the Army deliberately decided to discredit the AFAL tests, simply because Army Ordnance would never agree to adopt a gun developed by the Air Force. The Army says its experts investigated the Air Force's tests and found them flawed, inadequate to support the selection of a new service pistol. Who is right? Let's look at what the Army investigation discovered and make up our own minds.

The Air Force tests appeared to prove that two of the new 9mm pistols were significantly more reliable than the .45 automatic. High praise, if true. But when Army experts examined the detailed Air Force test report, alarm bells began to ring. The .45 autos tested by the Air Force had averaged one malfunction per 748 rounds fired. The corresponding figures were 2,000 for the Beretta and 1,952 for the Smith & Wesson.

DETAILED MALFUNCTIONS

The Colt test figures were immediately suspect. The first Colt M1911 tested by the Army in 1911 fired 6,000 consecutive rounds without malfunction. Something must be wrong, but what? Analysis of the tests records indicated that the .45s used by the Air Force were old, with unknown fir-

ing histories. Even more interesting were the detailed malfunctions. Collectively, the four .45 1911-A1s tested fired 34,400 rounds. A total of 46 malfunctions was listed. Of these, 15 were listed as "failures to feed" and 17 as "failures to chamber." The remaining 14 malfunctions consisted of one failure to fire, eight failures to extract or completely eject, and five listed only as "other."

Any experienced .45 automatic shooter who looks at those figures will have the answer in a second. When a .45 automatic fails to feed or completely chamber rounds, one of two things is almost always wrong. Either the ammunition is defective, or something is wrong with the magazines. U.S. military .45 ACP ball ammunition was used in the testing. Colt .45 autos feed and chamber .45 ACP ball with monotonous regularity.

The magazines appear to have been the problem. One observer was quoted as saying, "Magazine failures played an important role in the failure of the .45s." Colt .45 automatic magazines are normally reliable. When they fail, the remedy is simple. Replace them. This was not done in the Air Force tests. Army ordnance experts concluded that this fact alone invalidated the Air Force conclusions.

The Air Force appears to have tested heavily-used .45 automatics with defective magazines against new 9mm pistols. This is not a trivial point. If we eliminate the .45 failures probably caused by defective magazines, the Colt .45 figures would be one failure in 2,457 rounds. This would make the reliability of worn .45s significantly better than that of the best new 9mm pistols.

TESTS INVALID

The Army considered the Air Force functional tests to be invalid. Also, it did not like the Air Force sand, mud, and high- and low-temperature testing. Army tests of this kind are extremely rigorous and tightly controlled. These did not meet Army standards.

In order to save the program, JSSAP suggested a compromise. The Army would conduct a new series of tests. The pistol selected by the Army would become the new standard. All the services agreed.

New requirements were drawn up. The new pistol was designated the XM9, and the Army issued a request for proposals in September 1981. Each company wishing to compete had to supply 30 pistols for testing and submit a firm bid on a contract for 220,000 pistols. Army requirements were essentially the same as those used by the Air Force. There was one exception. Acceptable minimum magazine capacity was reduced from 13 rounds to 10.

The requirement to deliver 30 pistols on short notice, and quote a firm price for the production of 220,000 pistols, caused several contenders to drop out. Only two of the Air Force test pistols were re-entered,

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THE SHOCK WATCH

Dense metal liquid dampens brunt of recoil shock waves; prevents damage to elbows and shoulders.

By George H. Gamble

There's a new accessory for handgun shooters, the *shock watch*, which is worn on the wrist to prevent the jar of firing a pistol or revolver from hurting your elbow and shoulder.

For many people, every round of ammunition fired from a large-caliber handgun causes a compression of the cartilage at points of skeletal movement.

Another stress on the human frame and tissue is a wave or impulse that travels up the arm the way a rope snakes when a child waves one end. A plucked banjo string is another example of an oscillation that travels along a line.

If a slow motion picture were taken of a man firing a powerful revolver, the viewer would be able to see the flesh ripple along the arm with the frequency of the force wave resulting from the discharge of the firearm. The damage done by repeated pounding of heavy-caliber handguns can result in very real cases of tendonitis, bursitis, arthritis, and changes in positions of bone to cartilage.

I first learned of the *shock watch* during a conversation with Dr. Donald L. Davidson. He is the director of the New Jersey Institute of Sports Medicine, and head physician for the United States International Muzzle Loading Team.

Davidson suggested I use the watch to help improve my pistol scores. He and the N.J. Institute of Sports Medicine have been making a study of the watch since May of 1981, with the help of shooting

members of the U.S. International Muzzle Loading Team. While the study is not yet completed, most shooters have reported they experienced less fatigue and strain when shooting with the *shock watch*. Many of Davidson's patients use the watch either as a therapeutic aid or as a prophylactic.

REDUCES FATIGUE

As a shooter, I figured any device that could reduce fatigue would enable me to fire better aggregate scores. After all, a "2700" match means we must fire 270 rounds of ammo; and I can get plenty tired toward the end of the center-fire stage. The less stress and shock I absorb, the better my control and scores will be in the later events.

The same principle holds true when large-caliber guns are used in metallic silhouette matches. Knocking over that 40th iron target will be much more likely if the competitor has not been battered by all those previous rounds of .44 magnums. His trembles and flinches increase in direct relation to the number of rounds fired, and the force absorbed per round.

Dave Lewis created the *shock watch* and heads up Future Sports, Inc., which manufactures and sells it.

I met with Lewis and asked him about the watch.

"The idea for the *shock watch* came from many years of interest in both professional and amateur sports," said Lewis. "My goal was to provide a way to check

those forces that caused strain on the tissues and joints of the arm when engaged in one sport or another."

He explained that shock waves move from the point of impact and travel up into the arm. "I suffered from these impact forces and lost some of my confidence and control," he said. "Those vibrations caused shoulder and elbow problems, so I decided to try and dampen the shocks to save my joints and have better control."

Lewis said various weights and masses were added to his sports equipment. But these were, in some cases, *too* effective; so control was compromised, for the sake of shock dampening. So he placed a stabilizer on his arm. After much experimentation, he devised a combination of mass, material and location that permitted freedom of motion and controlled the shock waves that injure and tire many shooters.

SPECIAL LIQUID METAL

The watch has a red Lexan dome, which contains a special liquid metal, a curved base, and an easy-to-adjust strap.

It is important that the watch be worn snugly, to get the full effect. As you squeeze off a shot, the impact of recoil takes the dense liquid metal and causes the surface tension to break. Each molecule then absorbs the brunt of the shock wave, and sets in its own motion. The collision of these heavy fluid molecules is in direct proportion to the degree of shock with which they

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TEST-FIRE REPORT



S&W M39 shown with its 25-yard target; a fine 3-inch group, minus the shooter's six-ring flyer.

A MEXICAN STAND-OFF

It is commonly believed, and widely stated, that auto pistols—because they have no power-robbing cylinder gap—produce higher velocities than revolvers.

Seems reasonable enough, and I believed it, too. But since not many revolvers and autos use the same cartridges, no one ever bothered to check. So, when Smith & Wesson introduced its M547, I just had to ask. I was amazed at the answer: you will be, too.

I didn't just ask; I wanted proof. So a test was arranged. The ammo would be Frontier brand, using Hornady's new 124-grain truncated cone flat-nose bullet. The guns would be a S&W M547, 9mm revolver with a 4½ inch barrel; a Ruger Old Model .357 Blackhawk with a 4½ inch barrel equipped with an auxiliary 9mm cylinder; a S&W M39, very early production, with a four-inch barrel; and a HK P7, with a 4½ inch barrel, loaned by a friend who thought there should be two autos in the

By Dave Reynolds

Two revolvers and two autos—both in 9mm caliber—produce muzzle velocities too close to rate objectively.

test, since there were two revolvers. The test site would be the Dallas Pistol & Revolver Club range, the judge would be Ken Oehler's M33 Chronotach.

The first order of business was to fire a 10-shot group from each gun, recording individual velocities and summary data as provided by the Chronotach. One round

from the MP7 produced a recorded value of only 774 fps. I forgot to press the "forget" button, so this unrealistic number was included. I decided to fire another string.

REVOLVERS BEAT AUTOS

Looking at the data, I realized that both revolvers had beaten both autos. Ruger was the fastest at 1,245 fps, then the 547 at 1,162 fps, followed by the 39 at 1,119 fps and the P7 showing 1,077 fps on the second group. Excluding the 774 fps, the P7's first group averaged 1,102 fps. Frontier factory literature claims an average muzzle velocity of 1,120 fps, fired in the S&W M39.

Perplexed at the initial findings, I devised an impromptu test to validate the Chronotach. I loaded five rounds into each of the guns, and fired each gun once, then continued in the same order until all were emptied. In this manner, I hoped to eliminate the effect of any external factor that might cause a change of readings. A quick

calculation of averages for the five shots from each gun showed that all maintained their respective places, even though muzzle velocities were slightly different: Ruger, 1,225; M547, 1,138; M39, 1,110; and MP7, 1,078 (all fps).

Throughout the shooting I kept brass segregated so I would know which gun each case was fired in. I had begun shooting the M547 with the mainspring strain screw backed out from the bottom one full turn. Curious about the possible effect of this variable, I fired four 10-shot strings with the strain screw $\frac{1}{2}$ turn out, all the way in, $\frac{1}{2}$ turns out, and 2 turns out. There seemed to be no significance to this variable, because averages were: $\frac{1}{2}$ turn, 1,135; full in, 1,136; $\frac{1}{2}$ turn, 1,141; and 2 turns, 1,136. At one turn out, the five-shot group was 1,138 and the 10 shot was 1,162. (Note: all four-digit numbers above represent muzzle velocities in fps.)

INNOVATIVE DESIGN

It is possible that some of the four guns used in the test are unusual and don't produce representative velocities; but selec-

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Data Tables for Shooting 9mm

Table I-test #1

GUN	S&W 547	S&W 39	Ruger	HK P7	*
No. of shots	10	10	10	9	10
Av. (fps)	1162	1119	1245	1102	1077
E.S.	93	55	66	61	81

E.S. = Extreme Spread. *Two strings were fired in the HK because one round in the first string recorded only 774 fps. Excluding that value gave results shown in first string.

Table II—validating test

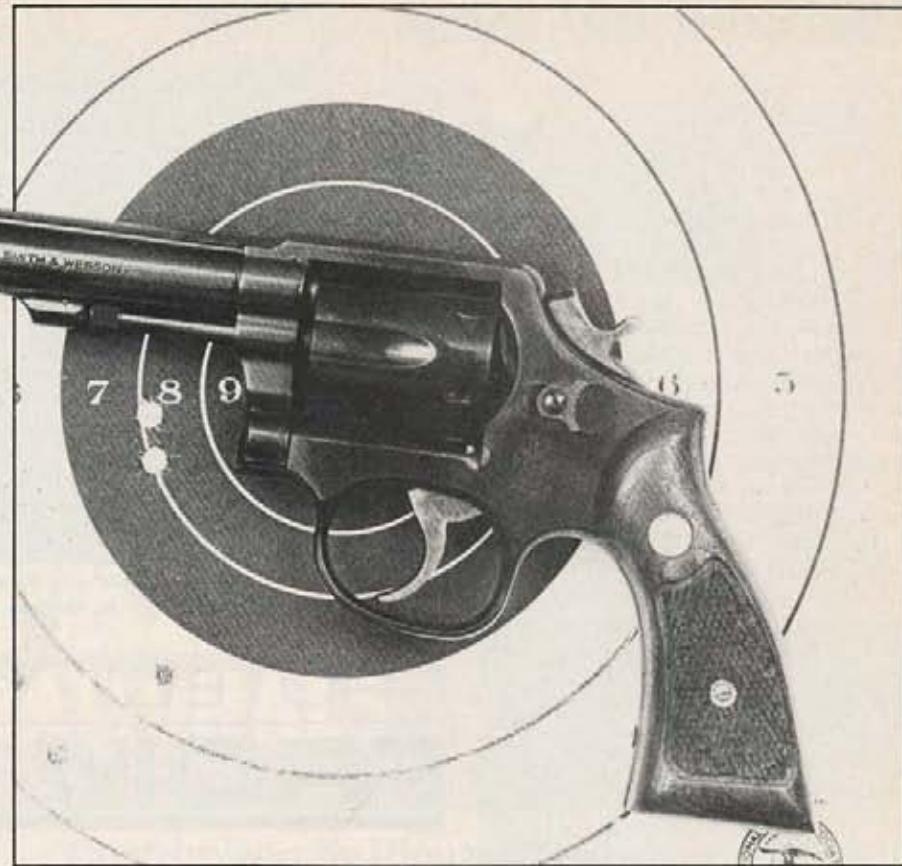
GUN	S&W 547	S&W 39	Ruger	HK P7
No. of shots	5	5	5	5
Av. (fps)	1138	1110	1225	1078
E.S.	69	48	63	62

NOTE: Both revolvers had higher velocities than both autos. One shot was fired from each gun; then the sequence was repeated until all shots were fired. All guns maintained their respective places.

Table III—547 strain screw test

No. of turns out	1 (from prev. test)					
	Full in	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	2	3
No. of shots	10	10	10	5	10	10
Av. (fps)	1136	1135	1162	1138	1141	1136
E.S.	85	72	93	69	58	67

NOTE: Based on these results, full ignition occurs (on ammo tested) at any setting of strain screw up to 2 turns out. This would not be true, however, for some foreign ammo with hard primers.



A 3 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch group was fired by this S&W M547 at 25 yards. Author believes that the 9mm revolver is capable of doing better, despite its 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch barrel.



This old model Ruger Blackhawk, with 9mm cylinder (top), produced highest velocities. The HK P7, with 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch barrel, is a remarkably compact 9mm auto.

TIMES ARE NOT GOOD

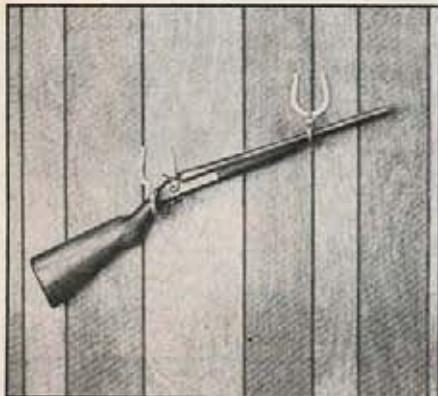
By Seth R. Nadel

Caught between a rising crime rate and rising unemployment, guns are becoming more valuable and more frequently the targets of criminals.

Most of us realize that to replace our collection, be it large or small, is virtually out of the question at today's prices. So it is time for all of us to look at our security system—a plan of cover and concealment designed to protect our guns from theft.

Cover is preventing unwanted persons from knowing that you own a gun or guns. It takes many forms; the most obvious is *don't advertise* the fact.

I am proud of my membership in the



Viewed through a window, a gun hanging on your wall is a definite no-no.

NRA, IHMSA, IPSC, and a dozen other groups. But all those decals go on my gun box, *not* on my car. To a thief, they say, "This car has guns, or they are inside the house in front of which it's parked." Many a gun has been stolen from a decal-covered car at a motel near a major match. When I park my car, anything dealing with guns—including copies of this magazine—is put under cover, out of sight. And no loose rounds in the open ashtray, or pistol magazines on the seat; they all get thrown under an old jacket, where they can't be seen.

Around the house, concealment is the watchword. The casual visitor should not be able to tell that you have an interest in guns. Again, all gun books and gun magazines should be out of sight. There is no need for the neighbors, the plumber, or anyone else to know, without an invitation, that you are a shooting sportsman.

Perhaps the best plan is to keep everything in one room, or even one closet. Those of us who have the space may have a gun room, while others may use the back of a closet. Even my treasured trophies are kept in my "gun room," not in the living room. You should *never* hang a gun where it can be seen from outside your home. A wallhanger over the fireplace looks fine, but screen it from prying eyes.



Gun-oriented labels are fine for your shooting box—but they're "inviting" to thieves when displayed on your car.

PROTECT YOUR GUNS FROM THEFT

Here are some tips to follow, as guns become more valuable and more frequently the targets of criminals.

THINK LIKE A CROOK

With everything in one spot, we must make it harder to steal. We must "harden the target." So step outside and try to figure out how *you* could break in. Try to *think* like a crook; look for the open window, the cheap lock, the bushes you will hide behind. Then call the local police or sheriff and ask to have a crime prevention officer stop by for a visit. He can give you good advice as to locks, doors and other potential problems. Good locks, properly installed and constantly used, are a fine first-line of defense. Where I live, only four percent of all residential burglaries involve broken glass; the criminals find unlocked doors and windows to enter.

If you are in a high crime area, or out in the country, window grills may be cost effective. The average house can be protected for much less than the cost of a good hunting rifle and scope, and they let you leave windows open in the summer for ventilation.

Alarms are big items at gun shows; but investigate them before you buy one. Who will hear the alarm? Will they call the police? How many false alarms will it cause? Who will install it? Are they bonded?

Alarms are of two basic types: central

station and local. Central station alarms ring at the police station, or alarm company headquarters. They are the best for places where the neighbors cannot hear a bell or siren. I prefer the local type alarms, because my interest lies more in keeping my guns, rather than in catching a thief. When that big bell goes off, he runs as fast as he can!

Give some thought to enlisting the aid of a neighbor, with either a timer to reset the alarm, or a key to shut it off. A bell ringing all weekend while you are away winning that big match will not exactly endear yourself to your neighbors. Alarms are relatively easy to install, and basic parts are available from most radio stores.

Much has been written about safes for your guns. They are a fine investment in piece of mind, and also can hold your cameras and jewelry. Buy a safe as large as you can afford; but only buy the protection you need. Some makes are too thick, with fancy, complicated locks. Remember to buy *theft* protection, rather than *fire* protection.

If you lock all your doors and windows, cover spare gun parts and gun magazines, and conceal your guns so they will become family heirlooms rather than tools of criminals.





FIRST PRIZE: 1982 IPSC NATIONALS

By Len Davis

When J. Michael Plaxco of Roland, Arkansas won the 1982 IPSC nationals in Milan, Illinois last September he took home as first prize an engraved, customized Colt .45 Mark IV Series 90 auto, pictured here.

The photos, taken by W. Thomas Stewart of St. Louis, Missouri, show the beautiful engraving by Kim Ahrends of Clarion, Iowa.

The custom pistolsmithing was done by Richard Heinie of Havana, Illinois.

He designed the combat competition fixed sight, positioned just ahead of the Commander-type hammer (altered with opened-up hole) above an M.S. Safari beavertail grip safety.

The gun has a Colt ambidextrous safety, checkered mainspring housing and front strap, beveled magazine well, long match trigger and opened ejection port. The flat mainspring housing matches the contour of the backstrap.

Accurizing by Heinie included the installation of a Kart barrel (which he threated and polished), adjustment of the trigger pull to 3 3/4 pounds, deburring and polishing of all parts, tightening slide to frame and replacing the factory recoil spring with a heavy-duty type, complete with a Shok-Buff washer.

The auto's frame was hard-chromed by Perma-Chrome of Victoria, Texas.

Ten-to-one Plaxco will fire this gun, many times, rather than display it proudly in a glass case along with his many other trophies for shooting prowess.

Customized by Richard Heinie, engraved by Kim Ahrends, it's a beauty—one that we bet will be shot, rather than displayed.



Here are two views of Mike Plaxco's prize for his score of 92.60 percent in the 1982 IPSC nationals. Plaxco used a strong side/front holster made by Rogers.



POSITION YOURSELF To Win!

By Drexel Boswell

There probably have been more free-style shooting positions tried since the introduction of metallic silhouette matches than at any other time since the handgun was invented.

Go to any metallic silhouette range on any match day and you'll see what I mean. While there are a few positions used by most shooters, you'll see many slight variations on the firing line. One with his feet wider apart, or closer together. Another with arms bent; still another with elbows locked. All are trying to do one thing: knock down silhouettes.

Why so many different styles and variations, with but one goal in mind? Is one position better than another? Which one should I use?

I'll try to answer these questions.

Each of us has different tastes in food, music, guns, and just about everything else. Each of us differs physically. Some of us are short, tall, slim, and not so slim, or a combination of one build or another. So, it is unlikely that each of us would use exactly the same shooting position. Not because we don't like the looks of it, but because we are physically unable to get into some positions, with any appreciable degree of comfort.

Metallic silhouette shooting features many different free-style positions. For maximum accuracy, stick with those which offer the most comfort.

In freestyle shooting, however, your position has a major influence on accuracy. And that's what we want: maximum, repeatable accuracy. If you can lay down and tie yourself in a knot and hit a dime at 200 meters, that's real good shooting. But if you are so uncomfortable that you cannot shoot but one or two rounds, that position will not do you a bit of good in a 40-round, metallic silhouette match. On the other hand, if you lay down and get comfortable enough to shoot all day, but your gun weaves back and forth, and bobs up and down, you will be doing good to hit the backstop, much less the silhouette.

Any gun suitable for metallic silhouette competition is capable of more accuracy

than the shooter, simply because of human error. So, we must cut down on human error. While we cannot eliminate it entirely, we can reduce it enough to shoot accurately.

FREESTYLE POSITIONS

Let's look at four popular freestyle positions, and discuss their good and bad points where maximum, repeatable accuracy is concerned.

In the sitting position, the shooter sits facing the target with his knees drawn up in front of him, arms extended holding the gun, with elbows resting on his knees. One variation is to draw the feet in closer to the body, by crossing the legs at the ankle, still resting the elbows on the knees. Sitting is definitely a more stable position than standing, and it has some good points. We are less susceptible to the external force of wind, and the internal forces of breathing and heartbeat, for example. Resting the elbows on the knees helps reduce arm movement, and increases the time it will take our arms to tire from the weight of the pistol. Also, the arms and body are free to move and absorb recoil.

The sitting position, however, has one major fault. There is no direct support, or contact point, for the pistol. The forearms and pistol are extended and free to weave and bob, despite our best efforts to hold

them perfectly still. This may be a good position for a quick shot in the field where no rest is available, but sitting is *not* the best position for maximum, repeatable accuracy.

In the prone position, the shooter lays down on his stomach facing the target, with his arms extended on the ground holding the pistol. The head must be raised in order to sight the pistol.

Prone is a more stable position than sitting. With our body and arms flat on the ground, wind will have little, if any, effect on us. Also, the arms are in contact with the ground between the pistol and our body. This reduces the effect that breathing and heartbeat have on the pistol.

CRICK IN YOUR NECK

While the body and arms are very steady all the way out to the hands, the muzzle of the pistol is still free to move around. The fact that our body and arms are flat on the ground, and not free to move, can work against us. There is no way for our body to comfortably absorb magnum recoil in the prone position, because it will not give. Also, the head must be raised, unsupported, in order to sight the pistol. This puts a strain on the neck, making it harder to hold your head still enough to get a good sight picture. Then, too, you will probably get a crick in your neck before the match is over.

In the crossed leg position, you sit down—facing the target—and cross your legs American Indian style. This puts your right foot under your left knee, and vice versa. Now, simply lay back. In this position the barrel, or forearm, of the pistol rests on top of your leg, or knee. The pistol can be pushed forward until the trigger guard and your hand come in contact with your leg, while your elbow is resting on the ground (be sure to use an elbow pad). Your other hand is used to support the back of your head.

For a variation on this position, you could raise your left knee (if you are right-handed) to a vertical position. Doing this puts your left knee up, and the sole of your left foot on the ground, under your right knee. Thus, your left foot can be used to adjust for high or low targets. This leg-down position is just as steady as the crossed leg position, but it may be more comfortable for you than keeping both knees down.

Both the crossed leg and the leg-down positions have several good points. Wind will have little or no effect on these positions. Also, with a rear grip pistol, most of the pistol's weight is resting on your leg, and need not be supported by your hand. With your elbow on the ground and shooting hand against your leg, the rear of the pistol is less likely to have up and down or sideways movement. This also leaves your arm free to move and absorb recoil. Supporting your head with the other hand prevents head movement (making it easier to get a good sight picture) and keeps you



The prone position is more accurate than standing or sitting, even though the muzzle of the pistol is free to move. Recoil from pistols like this T/C .44 Magnum is tremendous, especially with short barrel. Gloves help—somewhat.

from getting a crick in your neck.

NEGATIVE ASPECTS

About the only negative aspect of these positions may come with the use of a center grip pistol, such as the Remington XP-100. Because most of the pistol's weight is balanced in your hand, and not resting on your leg, it makes it easier for the rear of the pistol to move around.

The Creedmore position is the most popular for metallic silhouette competition. Here, the shooter sits facing the target, then lays down on his back. The knees are drawn up together, with feet apart on the ground. This forms a sort of tripod with the legs. The pistol is held with the barrel against the side of the calf of the leg, and the grip, or fingers of the shooting hand, against the thigh, elbow on the ground. The other hand is used to support the head.

This is a very steady shooting position with three good contact points: elbow on the ground, side of the barrel against the calf of the leg, and grip against the thigh. There is less chance for the rear of the pistol to weave in the Creedmore position than in the leg-down position, because of side contact with the thigh. The tripod formed with the legs is extremely steady, and reduces movement caused by the wind,

and body movement from one's breathing and heartbeat. The arm is free to move and absorb recoil, and gun contact with the side of the leg seems to reduce felt recoil. The head is supported by the other hand.

The only negative aspect of the Creedmore position may be in the use of rear grip, unlimited guns, since the weight of the pistol must be supported by the hand. Spreading your feet wider apart will help support the muzzle of production guns; but unlimited guns may be too barrel-heavy to hold steady in the Creedmore position.

When shooting from a reclining position, you must be sure that *all* parts of your body and clothing are behind the muzzle of the pistol. Otherwise, you could get a hole in your pants; or worse yet, a hole in your leg!

These four positions are not all I have seen tried at metallic silhouette matches. But most shooters use one of the four, or some variation, to suit their own particular style.

A person's own shooting style is important. He may have to take a basic position and change it a bit to suit his physical makeup, be comfortable and hold his gun steady. Then he is on the way to achieving his goal of maximum, repeatable accuracy.



The Creedmoor position (upper-left and above) has three steady contact points: elbow on ground, barrel against calf, grip against thigh. Note variation of barrel rest with XP-100, and how left hand supports the shooter's neck/head.

By B.R. Hughes

A former Colorado state highway patrolman, now a pistolsmith, operates on the theory that if your gun doesn't work when you need it, you probably will never need it again.

He is Bill Bidwell, and his practical approach to combat handguns is refreshing. "My guns have been used by professionals throughout the world," said Bidwell. "One of my regular customers has carried his in Rhodesia, South Africa, Honduras, Guatemala, and all over the United States. He has been in several firefights. In his last two, my gun accounted for three kills."

This might seem shocking to some, but as the pistolsmith says, "As a former police officer, I know what it is to have to bet your life on a handgun. And I realize what can happen if your weapon fails. I have gone to great lengths to develop my work so that your weapon will always function under the most difficult conditions."

Bidwell attended Trinidad State Junior College for one year and took many of the gunsmithing courses offered there. Later, he received his bachelor's degree from Northern Colorado State University and did some work towards his masters degree. Following this, he served more than nine years as a law enforcement officer, before becoming a full-time armorer.

"I prefer to think of myself as an artist in steel, rather than a pistolsmith," he told me. "Any hack can take a handgun apart, butcher it, and call himself a pistolsmith. I like to believe that the detail work I perform, and the feel of my guns, set them apart. I go to great lengths to make them feel good in the customer's hand."

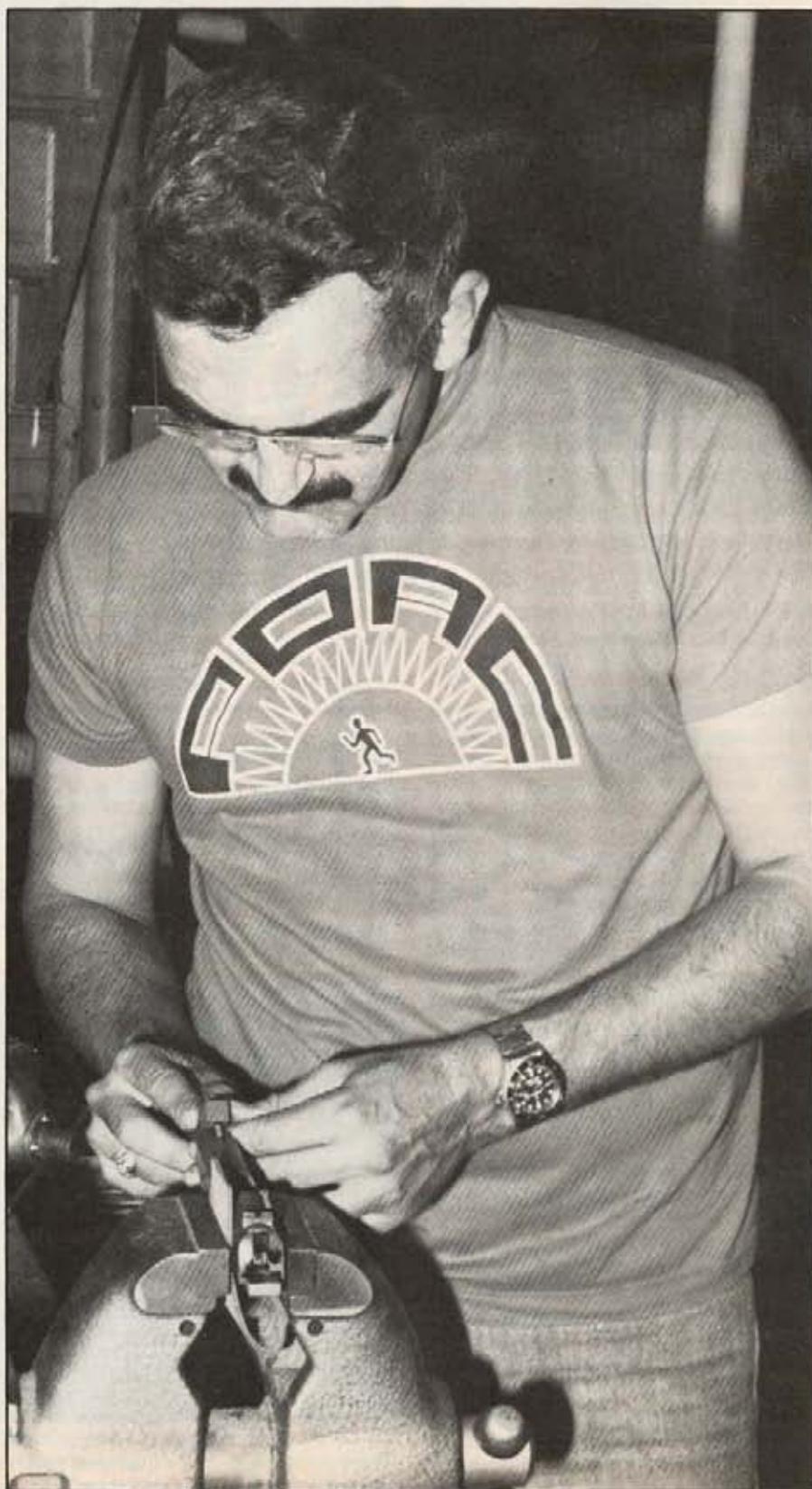
When I inspected my first handgun from *Jawbones Limited*—the name Bidwell has given his business—I was immediately struck by the way the gun "settled" in my hand. Anything that might bother the gun hand has been removed. Most combat shooters are familiar with the excellent Swenson safety. Bidwell has subtly altered the edges, the length, and the grooves. The lower edge of the right-hand side does not overlap the frame. In the area of the main-spring housing, there is no overhang of the frame. These are minor touches, to be sure, but they are indicative of the care lavished on a Jawbone pistol.

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR SKILL

Bidwell has made up several competition guns for IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) shooters; but his outlook on such pistols is different from that of many 'smiths. "It is important to note that in no way, shape or form is a custom handgun intended to perform as a substitute for skill," he said. "Skill is a function of education and practice, and a certain amount of natural talent. If you are seeking a substitute for skill, you will not find it in a pistol made by me, or by anyone else."

BILL BIDWELL

PISTOLSMITH PERSONIFIED



Bidwell stressed that unless a shooter has above-average skills with an out-of-the-box Colt .45 auto, he probably won't do much better with a fine custom handgun.

"What do you need in a pistol?" Bidwell asked. In the next breath he answered his own question: "In truth, absolutely nothing. John Browning designed the gun to be an excellent firearm right out of the box, and for years many people have used the GI .45 to shoot other people successfully, without recourse to custom work of any kind. Most gun writers recommend new sights be installed and a trigger job done; then you're all set. I suppose there is some truth to that, although for many years I shot a lightweight Commander with issue sights, and I shot very well when I got some practice. Issue sights aren't very fast to pick up, but if the truth be known, most people who have been to the wall

The rules are a little screwed up. IPSC should allow anyone's pistol in a reasonable caliber and whatever leather the shooter wants. It's getting so restrictive that it is becoming less practical and more of a game."

By this time, I had become fascinated with this outspoken builder of quality guns, so I began to ask Bidwell a few questions concerning specific subjects.

BRH: *What gun do you prefer?*

BB: I like Colts. Most of the others I have seen, or worked on, were pretty awful. The gun as it comes out of the box in GI trim is fine. However, the sights could be better and the trigger is generally too heavy with lots of creep. I would not hesitate to use a plain issue gun with my reliability job performed on it, in almost any situation. It simply isn't necessary to spend

a basket of money to gain an advantage, unless you are good enough to benefit from the modifications.

BRH: *How about sights?*

BB: I prefer the Bomar, or a simple plain fixed rear sight. I do believe in and recommend some type of night vision aid for those who might benefit from this feature. S&W sights are good for some applications. I like the sights to be as close to the bore line as possible.

BRH: *What is your recommendation for a combat trigger?*

BB: I learned to shoot the one I was handed, and I can do all right with almost anything. My preference is for a trigger with about a four-pound pull, with no creep. It's safe and efficient, and in combat you don't squeeze the trigger anyway.

Continued on page 80

He discusses his 'Jawbone' .45s, his unusual approach to shooting and provides a 13-point checklist on .45 auto functioning.

with a handgun will tell you they didn't go for precise sight alignment in the fight. I do, however, recommend some modifications, and fixed sights rank right up at the top."

Any Jawbone handgun is guaranteed. But, as Bidwell points out, "This doesn't do you any good if you're 100 miles from nowhere in a shootout. For this reason, no gun leaves my shop unless I would bet my own life on its overall performance. The bulk of my work has been for professionals who use their weapons seriously. I have yet to receive a complaint from any of them.

CHRONIC COMPLAINTERS

"I have received a few complaints from match shooters, and any 'smith who says he hasn't is either a liar or doesn't do much work. There are always people who are unreasonable about their guns, and complain about this or that, just to have something wrong in order to fix it."

Bidwell is *not* a rabid supporter of IPSC. "Here in Denver," he said, "it recently outlawed the crossdraw and made everyone go to strong-hand holsters, with the belt worn through the pants loops. Let's face it, cross-draw and shoulder holsters are extremely practical for normal use, and they are fast. What is impractical is a six-inch barrel on a Colt .45, or long slide. I have yet to hear of anyone carrying one of these in a real combat situation, or for any police agency; yet, they are permitted to do so.



This Colt .45 Combat Commander shows the raised checkered panel on the front strap, a special customizing feature by Bidwell.

MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

How to Clear a "Stovepipe"

One of the most common types of jams is the "stovepipe", and it's one of the easiest to clear. Here's my technique:



LEONARD KNIGHT, Combat Master,
three-time Southwest Pistol League Champion.

In order to be able to recognize and clear jams quickly, practice regularly by simulating jams with dummy ammunition, and always clear jams in live fire practice as if you were shooting in a match. Remember, when your gun jams, don't quit. Look at the gun, clear it immediately and continue shooting.



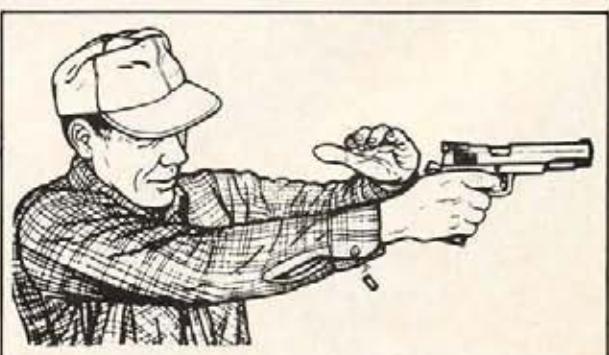
1. As soon as you've identified the jam...



2. ...quickly bring your weak hand up to the gun, placing the hand palm down and forward of the un-ejected case.



3. Strike the case sharply rearward with the weak hand.



4. While some experts recommend cycling the slide with the weak hand, I find that hitting the case sharply will move the slide far enough to the rear to chamber a fresh round.

SEVEN STEPS TO SURVIVAL

By Seth R. Nadel

Last year, more than 100 U.S. peace officers were killed in the line of duty. A few were killed from ambush, the others because they had failed to apply—or had never been taught—those elements of a confrontation that determine the winner.

After many years of studying actual incidents, I have come to believe there are seven basic elements to a shooting confrontation, and that they can be listed in their order of importance. Most shooters will be surprised that I have played down shooting ability; but the training officers of large law enforcement agencies will, I think, agree with me. I have not allowed my regular participation in shooting sports to sway my judgment.

To survive a shooting, the officer must examine closely the parameters of a confrontation, so he or she can train and plan to survive in the real world. Most “qualification” shooting is not based on the shootings that have occurred, but on outdated basic training courses that are both traditional and easy to administer. Those who run the courses have forgotten that *survival is the only victory*. Arresting the criminals is nice, but living is nicer. By attending to the seven basic elements I list, the odds for survival can be swayed in favor of the police officer.

(1) *Tactics*. The use of proper tactics will decide who lives and who dies. You can be daydreaming about the new department dispatcher, working alone in a high crime area, and armed only with a .22 short derringer; but if you use good tactics you will survive all but a planned ambush. The recognition of proper cover and its use, the methods of approach, handcuffing, search

and processing can all be learned and applied. There are books, films, and experienced officers who can teach you much in this area. Don’t hesitate to go to other departments to pick up their methods; and remember to vary your own techniques from time to time.

It takes more than basic shooting ability to emerge victorious from a confrontation.

DON'T EMULATE TV

Proper tactics also apply to the everyday handling of your sidearm. I have been present at eight accidental discharges, but in no case was anyone injured, because the sidearms involved were pointed in a safe direction. Several office walls were ‘killed,’ but all the officers survived. By the way, if you use the tactics shown on TV you will most likely get killed. They are planned first for camera angle and second for dramatic impact—not to keep the actors alive.

(2) *Awareness*. If you are aware of your surroundings you can employ proper tactics and techniques early in a confrontation, perhaps preventing the need to shoot at all. Don’t let people come up close behind you. Be alert to where your gun is, in relation to people; if they are evil-doers they may try to take it away from you. Learn the limitations of your equipment, and yourself, and utilize your strengths to make up for your weaknesses. Observe potential weakness in your opponent, and try

to take advantage of them. Know when you need to call for a backup unit.

In a larger sense, be aware of what is happening in the community. Is there a feeling of unrest, a potential for violence in the people you police? It may be wiser to forego a certain arrest now, to avoid a confrontation or a riot later. Identify the person and come back with a warrant when tempers are cooler. Learn who on your beat may be pro or anti police, so you can tailor your response. Some departments give this the fancy title “Threat Awareness,” but it can all count toward your survival.

DRAW ‘REFLEXIVELY’

(3) *Reflexive drawing ability*. When the situation has reached the point where a life may be in danger you must be able to draw your sidearm without thought—*reflexively*. And you must be able to do so without being distracted from the situation; your decision to draw must be separate from your decision to fire. If you always train that a draw ends with a shot, you may shoot someone who will try to surrender as you go for your gun.

It is not uncommon to hear of a “mirror shootout.” Here, an officer—usually poorly trained—is searching a building. Turning a corner, he sees a figure, draws, sees a gun, and fires, only to find he shot a mirror on an open locker door. He should have been concentrating on the situation, rather than on drawing and shooting. The gun should come from the holster and be aligned on the target—automatically.

(4) *Reflexive shooting ability*. Shooting a handgun is not an instinctive act, so I have

Continued on page 70



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by MICKEY FOWLER

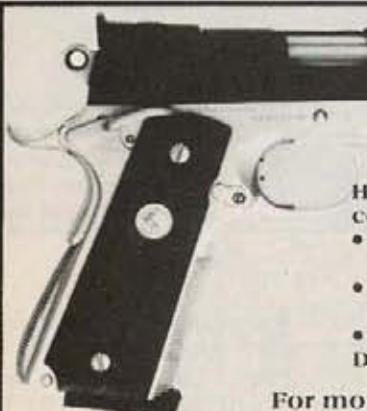
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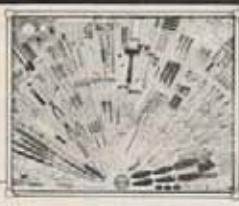
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SEVEN STEPS

Continued from page 69

used the word *reflexively*: Much as your ability to draw must be "semi-automatic," so must the shot go where, and when, intended. In most cases, the distances are close—less than 10 feet. The light is usually dim, so dim that you cannot see the sights, if you had the time to use them. Thus the prime factors are the type of grips used on your gun, so as to allow shots to go where you look, and practice. Your ability to hit where you look is more important than the type and caliber gun you carry.

HOLSTER SELECTION

(5) *Holsters*. The type, location and training you have with your duty gear has a great impact on (3) and (4). Holsters must be selected for safety (retention), speed, and comfort (days can get long). Spend as much money as needed to get the best; then practice, practice, practice. And do so the way you use the gear on the street, safety strap fastened and hand off the gun, looking at the target. If you don't, you will be training yourself to die.

(6) *Handguns*. If we were all perfect shots, capable of 100 percent accuracy at all distances from any position—making hits that would stop all attackers all the time—then the .22 short derringer could be the issue gun. Failing that, we have to substitute a certain amount of power for accuracy. Power without control is useless, so there is a point of diminishing returns. If your department dictates the use of a relatively low-powered issue gun, then lots of practice with quick, two-shot bursts, can help. Remember, in all cases, a hit from a less effective pistol is better than a miss from a powerhouse magnum.

(7) *Ammunition*. Most departments and agencies have learned that the most humane round is that which stops the attacker the fastest. Research shows that high velocity, hollowpoint bullets are the most effective. They combine high stopping power with low over-penetration and ricochet hazard. Their use has resulted in fewer deaths, as less tissue destruction is needed to bring on shock and stop the attack. Again, if your department decrees less effective ammo, get more practice.

BASED ON REAL WORLD

There are many who will not agree with the order of my priorities. But I would remind them that it is based on the real world, not on a range officer's fantasy. These are the things that save lives. I had to separate them for clarity, but they are all

Continued on page 84

FRENCH POLICE

Continued from page 45

usually goes beyond—the total volume of the case, due to the deep cavity cut in the bullet.

Test results have been impressive. For example, a T.H.V. .38 Special bullet, fired in a Smith & Wesson M60 with a two-barrel, was totally stopped after only a six-inch trajectory in plastiline block (a French testing medium that duplicates living tissues). Expansion cavity diameter averaged three inches.

Comparative perforation tests were performed with the same gun against steel auto bodies, at a range of 10 feet. All rounds fired passed through cleanly. Under the same conditions, T.H.V. .38 Special ammo totally defeated "Kevlar" body armor, which resists conventional .44 Magnum loads.

Accuracy tests, performed at the S.F.M. range with a four-inch S&W 19 revolver at 25 yards, were excellent. (Note: T.H.V. ammo is also available in other calibers—.357 Magnum and 9mm Parabellum, and are being readied for .45 ACP, .380 Auto and .44 Magnum.)

In all tests, ejection of empty cases was easy, and there were no signs of over-pressure on primer faces.

An ideal police load has been born, according to French police officials. But will it get the international recognition it deserves?



PPC REVOLVERS

Continued from page 44

precision rib with a high profile front and rear sight. The Bo-Mar sight rib allowed for $\frac{1}{4}$ inch adjustments at 50 yards, and with the increased weight of the rib, PPC scores soon rose. Several years later, a California machinist-shooter—Leonard Tirilli—designed a sight-rib that uses a three-position cam in the rear sight to facilitate sight changes on the range. Once it is pre-set for the various distances, all that is necessary is to turn the cam to the desired setting. This allows for more accurate and faster sight changes, with no counting of "clicks."

MANY SIGHT SYSTEMS

Today, PPC shooters have a wide variety

Continued on page 78



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HANDLOADING

Continued from page 10

used Winchester military brass, dated 1944, exclusively.

How about a hot hunting load for the .45 Long Colt? Jim Taylor, POB 252, Oracle, AZ 85623, tells of some Elmer Keith recipes he's used successfully for more than 10 years. The loads involve the Lyman 457191, which nominally casts to about 292-grains, and was designed primarily for use in the .45-70. Such bullets should be sized to .451-.452 inch; the loads Taylor is using apply only to Ruger or Contender

guns. They should not be fired in the Colt Single Action, Bisley, New Service, or other older, weaker revolvers, Taylor says he uses an old model Ruger in .45 Long Colt.

"I cast the bullets out of wheelweights, size them, then heat-treat them. I use the kitchen oven and have experimented to find the correct setting. The temperature is about 470 degrees Fahrenheit, and the bullets are left in for 45 minutes. I immediately quench them in cool water, then lube them after they are dry. Cases are full-length, resized and trimmed, if necessary."

Taylor's lighter of the two loads calls for 18.5 grains of 2400, ignited by a Federal bench rest rifle primer. He says the primer pockets have been deepened to accept the rifle primers, and that this load averages 1,108 fps.

"I shot a javelina at 150 yards last spring with this load," he states, "and the load performed wonderfully." It will shoot 1 1/4 inch groups at 25 yards consistently, if I do my part. I hung a 16-inch truck rim on a tripod at a range of more than 350 yards behind my place; on a good day, I can ring it three times out of five. The load dents the rim heavily at that distance.

In chronographing it, during testing, I found that the same charge with pistol primers produced an average muzzle velocity of around 1,070 fps, and left unburned powder in the bore. With the rifle primers, the charge burns well, and the variation from shot to shot is relatively small.

RAM BUSTER

"The other load I use with the 457191 is 20 grains of 2400 fired by a Federal large pistol primer. This load gives a little more than 1,200 fps out of my pistol. I have used it successfully in knocking down iron rams."

Taylor says accuracy and penetration are good with the latter load. He notes that if he attempts to use rifle primers with the 20-grain charge, pressures appear to increase, but velocities goes down.

No mention is made of incomplete combustion using pistol primers with the heavier charge. It's logical that such a problem would be compounded by adding more powder. If you want to experiment with Taylor's loads, remember what I said about using them *only* in Rugers or Contenders, and approach with caution. (Taylor admits he had problems with the terrific recoil generated by these combinations.)

Richard Savino of Irasburg, Vermont provides some tips on how to make .455 Webley ammo. The first I read of this method was in an article written by Frank Marshall Jr., some years ago. Savino, who owns a Webley revolver, appears to have come upon a similar method independently.

Many guns chambered for the old .455 have enough clearance between the cylinder and the backing plate to allow use of shortened .45 Colt brass. (The .45 Colt rim is about .020 inch thicker.)

"I took a tubing cutter," explains Savino, "and 'doctored' a few cases (.45 LC/R-P) down to ACP length (note: Marshall says this length should be no more than .785 inches and no less than .750 inch). Then I ran them into the .45 Long Colt sizer, using the normal shell holder for the caliber. The next step—belling—was just as easy. I adjusted the ACP die to meet the case mouth, seated a primer, and was ready to load the powder and bullet."

MORE ON WEBLEYS

After chamfering the mouths of his altered .45 LC cases, Savino discovered that, in order to achieve sufficient cylinder-to-backing plate clearance, he had to dress about .001 inch of brass off the thickness of the rims. Remember, Marshall said that a

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lot of the old Webleys had plenty of clearance; but not all of them.

Savino substituted the .452 inch Speer lead SWC, a 250-grainer, for the Webley's traditional 265-grain round-nose lead slug. He seated the Speer bullet over five grains of Unique, assuming this combo would not overstress the old gun.

"Surprise!" he exclaims, "Flame out of the muzzle, some noise, lousy accuracy. I forgot the crimp! The bullets were tight, owing to the smaller inside diameter of the shortened .45 Colt case. Chamfering a little more, I adjusted for a slight taper crimp, again in the ACP die. Shooting was better, but still yielded mountains of unburned powder in the barrel and action."

After some experimenting, Savino finally settled on 4.5 grains of Red Dot powder behind a Hornady 200-grain semi-wadcutter bullet. He says it'll shoot on point-of-aim at 20 meters, adding that little unburned powder is left, and that recoil is mild.

He concludes by saying that his Webley is bored straight through in the chambers. "That," he cautions, "has an effect on the type and degree of crimp you want to use. Generally, the more open the cylinder, the more crimp you should consider, since a nonexistent chamber step, or a worn or so-so one, will drop chamber pressures. Conversely, a tight step will raise pressures, so act accordingly."

Marshall discovered that three grains of Bullseye with the 200-grain Hornady, or 3.5 grains of Bullseye with a 250-grainer, gave satisfactory results. He says, however, that heavier loads are not quite as accurate, and that lead bullets—such as Lyman's 457195 or 457196—will fill the bore and provide better results. He notes that his best accuracy resulted from using a Lyman 45127, cast of 1-20 alloy and sized to .457 inch. This cast bullet, weighing 205 grains, is lightly roll-crimped over 3.5 grains of Bullseye.

If you'd like to take part in this exchange of reloading data, write to me at POB 222, Pinon Hills, CA 92372.



INFO 'QUICKIE'

The .41 Magnum revolver cartridge was introduced in 1964, along with the Smith & Wesson M57 revolver.

It is similar to an old (1924), but little known, wildcat cartridge—the .400 Eimer.

Bullet diameter of the .41 Magnum is a true .410 inch, rather than the .386-.387 inch of the .41 Long Colt.

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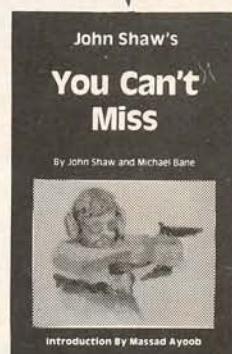
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1404	Fed. Ord.	Handguard Ventilated Stain- less Finish	8.50
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1406	Drasen	Handguard (Copy of Factory)	6.50
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1409	Fed. Ord.	Flashider Permanent Stainless	17.50
★1410	Feather	Assault Sight (HK / Valmet style - fits on any Feather flashider with front sight)	6.95
1411	GI	Flashider and Front Sight (M-1 Style)	24.95
★1412	Choate	SS Flashider & Front Sight	27.95
★1413	Feather	Flashider (M-14) with Front Sight	19.50
★1414	Feather	SS Flashider (M-14) with Front Sight	25.25
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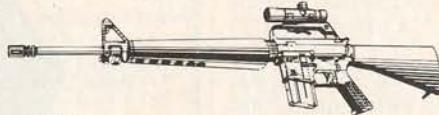


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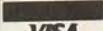
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DETTONICS

Continued from page 47

the new features. This gun could easily become the ultimate military/police sidearm.

Although I was understandably impressed with both innovations previously mentioned, the real thrill came when I examined and fired a new Detonics designed revolver. I really don't know why, but I have always been impressed with big, hinged-frame revolvers like the famous British Webley. It is an excellent design, for a revolver, that never really caught on with the American shooter, soldier or policeman. Early Smith & Wessons—such as the S&W Russian—were also hinged-frame, or break-open, but were not strong enough to compete with the Colts of the same time period. While the Webley lived a long and useful life in many of Britain's large and small wars, the hinged-frame fizzled in the U.S., even though speed of reloading was considerably faster than its contemporaries. Of course, autoloaders were obsoleting all revolvers for combat military use; but to me, the hinged-frame still had a certain fascination.

The whole idea, with innovative twists and modern stainless steels, is being resurrected by Detonics as a special-purpose revolver for hunting, metallic silhouette and maybe even defensive use. I fell in love with the prototype at first glance. The revolver, like the Webley, is slab-sided—except for the cylinder and grips. With its tasteful fluting, it looks beautiful in the eyes of this beholder.

SEVEN-ROUND CYLINDER

Much to my surprise, I found they had chambered the cylinder for seven rounds, even in the big .45 Long Colt cartridge. This caliber, another of my all time favorites, is only one of the many planned offerings. Detonics hopes to offer the gun in almost any current revolver cartridge, and maybe even a few new ones of their own. Barrels also will be offered in a variety of optional lengths, to appeal to both the hunter and competitive shooter.

Detonics designers have improved considerably on the barrel latch, which locks up the hinged frame; and they have even included an ambidextrous opening feature. This was always a weak point on the old Smith & Wesson and Webley.

The hinge bolt itself is unique and, while placed and secured to function positively and smoothly, can be easily removed with the top of a bullet. Why remove it, you ask? Because Detonics plans to offer many

Continued on page 77

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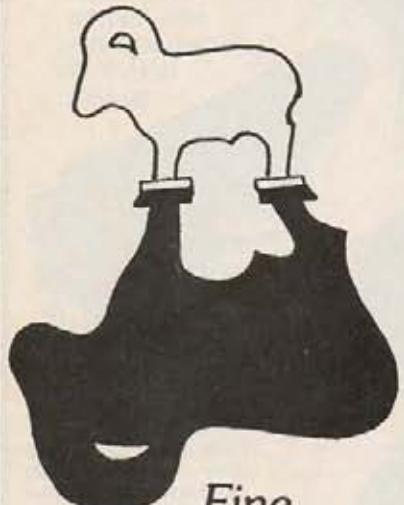
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NEW .41 MAGNUM AUTO WILL FEATURE SIMPLICITY OF DESIGN AND LOW COST

By Jack Breskovich

There's a new .41 Magnum auto being readied for production, one that highlights simplicity of design and features fewer parts than most conventional models in .45 caliber.

Stan Buffham, a veteran tool and die maker from Canyon Country, California, told me his new auto is made of investment castings (all-steel or aluminum) to extremely close tolerances with only a few machine cuts in critical areas, "to keep production costs down to the lowest possible level."

Buffham said the rear of the trigger guard is undercut—a la revolver style—to help keep the shooter's fingers closer together, and the gun low in the hand.

The rear beaver tail flares upward nearly $\frac{1}{8}$ inch higher than the Colt .45 auto, and the hammer arc has been shortened to help reduce lock time and eliminate hammer bite.

Buffham's super-strong rotary locking action mounts the barrel $\frac{1}{4}$ inch lower than the Colt .45 auto.

"This keeps the bore line lower in the hand, helps reduce recoil and muzzle flip, and assures a positive, straight-line feed," he said.

External slide rails support the slide through its entire travel and provide incredible accuracy without custom fitting, according to Buffham.

"Every desirable feature of an IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) gun will be incorporated in the auto's design," said Buffham, who explained that barrel and slide lengths can be changed at will, to meet a variety of shooting requirements.

His new gun will have 12-round, staggered magazine and is expected to sell in the \$350-\$400 price range.

Cartridges for the new auto are made from .41 Magnum cases cut to a length



of .950 inch and neck-reamed. The rims are machined off and grooves cut for the autoloader extractor.

Buffham said the cases are easy to make and incredibly strong because they were designed for chamber pressures far higher than those produced in the .41 auto loads.

Editor's note: For a progress report on Buffham's .41 auto, write Breskovich at POB 828, Whittier, CA 90608.



INFO 'QUICKIE'

There's a new, private membership, indoor shooting range in Milpitas, California, opened by Target Masters, Inc.

Designed with a country club atmosphere and highlighted by a sound-proof spectator area, it features 14 firing points, five at 75 feet and nine at 50 feet (each with electronic target retrieval).

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DETTONICS

Continued from page 75

caliber and barrel length options that can simply and quickly be bolted on your one frame. The idea is not unlike interchangeable barrels on the Thompson/Center Contender.

Another unique feature is a small slot in the upper-left corner of the recoil plate, which allows you to visually note whether the next cartridge up has been fired. An indented primer would indicate an empty cartridge; not a bad idea.

The designer is still toying with the idea of incorporating an auto feature not unlike the old .455 Webley-Fosbery Model of 1902. Other possibilities are a series of barrel weights positioned in the forward end of the ejector spring shroud, just beneath the barrel.

If this writer was in love with the overall appearance of the prototype, he was *ecstatic* over its performance. I did not expect, nor did I perceive, much recoil because it is a big gun. Using Federal 200 grain SWCHP, accuracy was more than I could have possibly dreamed. Using a previously fired bullet hole as a point of aim at about 45 feet, I cranked off three more rounds of big .45LC cartridges. Noticing no more holes on the plain cardboard target, I wondered how I could have missed. Actually, I couldn't have since the cardboard was larger than the back opening of the big pipe in which I was firing. Upon closer examination I found my shots had all struck the first hole, enlarging it only slightly. Staring at a four-shot hole measuring about one-half inch, I quickly passed the gun to the next shooter.

I am impressed with Detonics, its people, and its products. If I were a young gun designer, or an old one for that matter, Detonics is where I would want to punch the time clock; but then, there are no time clocks at Detonics, because few of the staff really want to go home.



INFO 'QUICKIE'

The Smith & Wesson .35 Auto was made from 1913 to 1921. A total of 8,350 were produced. The ".35" designation was for advertising purposes only, to set it apart from the well-known .32 Auto round. Actual bullet diameter was .312 to .318; the standard .32 Auto measured .303 to .312.

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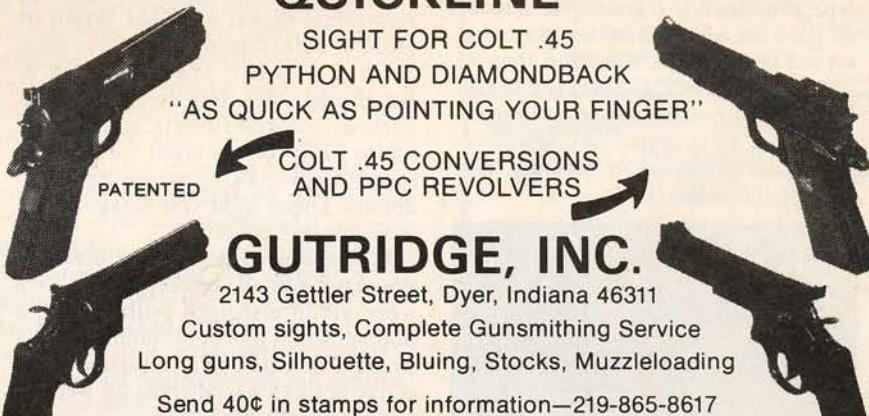


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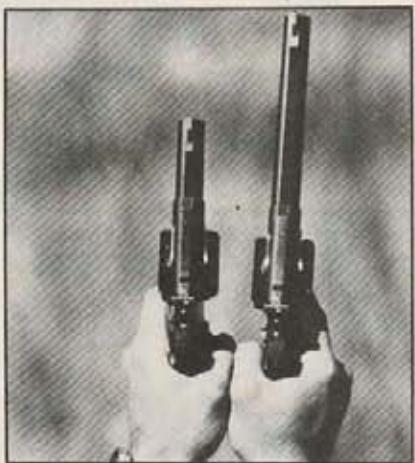
S&W M29 conversion is offered with 4" tube

By Bart Norris

Many people in law enforcement work have need for a large caliber, concealable handgun, one capable of providing maximum stopping power and ample penetration of such barriers as walls and automobiles.

A handgun that fulfills all these needs is now available from H&H Gun Works (10-3 Coal Branch Road, Greenup, KY 41144). It's the S&W M29 .44 Magnum, altered to provide the best defensive arm.

Unlike previous conversions of this type, the barrel of the revolver is faced off from the rear, moving the front ejector rod lock closer to the crane, thus increasing its strength. After the barrel has been shortened to approximately 2½ inches, an 11-degree forcing cone is cut to provide maximum accuracy with all types of bullets.



The best revolver for this conversion is the four-inch model, due mainly to the fact that the muzzle is at the proper distance in relation to the ejector rod shroud, thus eliminating recutting and recrowning a longer length barrel. Also, the four-inch barrel comes fitted with

S&W's integral front sight base and blade, making an extremely neat arrangement.

The grip frame of the revolver was reworked for greater concealment and control. Reduction of the N frame grip to dimensions equaling the K frame round butt did not noticeably affect recoil. Control of the revolver was greatly enhanced by the addition of the Pachmayr neoprene grip.

Control in rapid double-action fire was increased by employment of the Mag-Na-Port process. Felt recoil was decreased approximately 40 percent with magnum loads.

Two finishes are currently available: electroless nickel in either bright or satin, or a durable, non-reflective blue. Sights are the standard S&W Baughman quick-draw ramp type, with various colored inserts, mated to a white outline rear sight for greater speed of sight pick-up in poor light conditions. Other sight combinations are available on request.

In addition to external modifications, the actions of all converted revolvers were given a superb polish, with a double-action pull of 8½ pounds, and a single-action pull of 2½ pounds. None of the springs was altered; all were of factory-weight.

Weight of the revolver unloaded is 39½ ounces, compared with 43 ounces for a standard four-inch M29. The balance is excellent, the gun having a muzzle-heavy feel of a longer barreled revolver.

Firing the M29 proved fascinating. The recoil was not noticeably greater than a similarly equipped four-inch model. The recovery time between shots was excellent, with no break in cadence apparent. Muzzle blast was, however, rather severe.

Further information and a complete list on other combat modifications and conversions by H&H Gun Works is available on request.

fit, size and smoothness. Of special importance are proper cylinder lock-up and timing, smooth and even trigger pull, and a satisfactory cylinder gap on each chamber. Many new shooters equate a light trigger pull to better scores; this is not always true. A light trigger pull can be the result of less mainspring tension, and this can lead to misfires. It is more important for the gun's double-action to be smooth and consistent, while still maintaining the mainspring's tension. The only way to do this is to expertly hone internal parts until the fit is perfect—something best left to experienced gunsmiths.

DESIGN VARIATIONS

In the pursuit of the ultimate action job, several interesting design variations come to mind. Probably the most exotic action design was developed by Travis Strahan (Strahan & Son, Inc.) of Ringgold, Georgia. The two-stage Strahan action utilizes a Colt-like coil mainspring, and the sear has been reworked, so that the hammer can be literally "cocked" double-action before the shot is fired. This action is especially appealing to those shooters who still prefer a single-action type release, but want to take advantage of the double-action mode.

Another design, used by Lou Ciamillo (Maryland Gun Works, Ltd.) of Clarksburg, Maryland, consists of roller bearing type sleeves on interior parts to produce a slick-as-oil effect. The result is an action that makes the trigger literally glide from shot to shot.

Special modifications: In addition to the obvious major modifications, there are many small "tricks" that are employed to make the PPC revolver a real winner. Take for example the trigger. Almost all PPC shooters use a narrow- or medium-width smooth trigger. PPC gunsmiths accommodate their customers by grinding down and polishing the ridges off the factory trigger. Another extra is to grind off the bottom of the cylinder latch, to allow for less hang-ups when using speed loaders. Still other items of interest are chamfered (beveled) chambers, bobbed hammer spurs, lead-weighted grips, cut frames to accept tapered grips, custom trigger stops and off-set triggers, to name just a few. Small things, maybe, but all directed toward ensuring flawless operation.

Have PPC guns gone as far as they can? Many believe that there really isn't too much more that can be done with them to achieve better accuracy or dependability. But there are also those who feel that as long as the search for absolute perfection continues, there will always be a new design idea to be tried and tested.

This quest for excellence is what makes the PPC revolver so unique and interesting to the followers of other shooting disciplines.



PPC REVOLVERS

Continued from page 71

of sight systems to choose from, all well made and unique. As an example of the kind of precision involved in PPC shooting, consider this: many PPC shooters aim at the head or neck of the silhouette target for a better sight picture at 50 yards. The sights are then adjusted to allow for the 12-

inch-plus drop of the bullet into the 10-ring. Realizing this, some sight manufacturers have machined the front sight blade to coincide perfectly with the width of the target's neck at 50 yards, making for an even more precise aiming point.

Action and tuning: As with all precision shooting sports, PPC has placed its own special demands on its gunsmiths. Since PPC is basically revolver-oriented, every effort is made to take advantage of the revolver's strong points, and minimize its flaws.

In order to improve an already good action, the side plate is popped off and every moving part is removed and inspected for

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9MM AUTOS/ REVOLVERS

Continued from page 61

tion was not made on such basis. The M547 came from Smith & Wesson unfired, an ordinary new gun. The Ruger and the M39 came from my personal collection, and are the only two guns I own that will fire the 9mm cartridge. The Ruger's 9mm cylinder had never been used prior to this test, and I had not previously chronographed either gun with any load. The MP7 was selected from a group of several available 9mm autos because I had never fired a MP7, and I admired this innovative design.

More testing with more guns will be needed for proof positive; but from this experiment, it appears that revolvers aren't as bad as some people think.

The original plan had been to test all guns for both velocity and accuracy, which is why the new Frontier/Hornady load was selected. This bullet was designed specifically for accuracy. I was much impressed by the development work involved, and was expecting great things.

Because of the two extra tests, validating the Chronotach, and examining the effect of mainspring tension (plus studying the brass), I was running out of time. Then there was the real problem. I'm not getting old, but my eyes might be. After this much shooting, the bullets start playing "ring around the bullseye," and accuracy testing becomes hypothetical. I settled for a pair of five-shot groups on clean targets, pitting the M547 against the M39. Extreme spread for the M547 group was 3/4 inch and for the M39, three inches.

With no more evidence than this, I'll have to call the accuracy test a draw, for now.

SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 26

Jeff Cooper reports on IPSCs 5th world meeting

The 5th world assembly of The International Practical Shooting Confederation was convened August 9, 1982 in the village of Frome, Somerset, England.

Represented were Austria, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Israel, The Netherlands, Norway, South

Africa, Southwest Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Zimbabwe.

The principle business of the session was to present a series of new constitutional provisions, prior to adoption or rejection at the next world meeting. An interesting consideration was the federalization of the Confederation, to recognize that some nations are more heavily involved in practical shooting than others. It seems odd that Italy, with only a handful of shooters, no ranges, and no active program, should vote equally with the United States, South Africa or the United Kingdom.

Of interest to individual competitors was the stipulation that, in the future, any international match must consist of at least 50 percent standard courses, that extension magazines be forbidden, that the penalty for accidental discharge be made more severe, and that the protest fee be raised to \$100 U.S., or equivalent.

The executive council was directed to explore the practicality of impractically-modified pistols for competition. "Gadget guns," as they are sometimes called, are clearly damaging to both the practical and sporting purposes of IPSC, and must be brought under some sort of control.

Elaborately modified weapons, while of questionable advantage in competition, do advance the belief that one may not compete successfully without spending a great deal of money. It is clear that an "IPSC pistol" and a "street pistol" must be one and the same. Just how this is to be accomplished was not decided at the meeting, but will be proposed at the next one.

The preparation of a world guide to the conduct of practical competition was assigned to Gerry Gore, the author of a good book on practical shooting. His guide is intended to become the Bible of practical pistol competition. It will be a year or so in preparation, and will be passed upon in detail by the world body assembled. Thereafter, when someone wants to put on a practical match, there will be no reason why he cannot do it correctly.

Future events agreed upon were the 1983 World Championship at Hampton, Virginia, the 1984 Eurochampionship in Paris, the 1985 Eurochampionship in Vienna, and the 1986 IPSC anniversary in the United States.

Of interest to U.S. shooters is the understanding by all assembly participants of the need to bring the tentative practical shooting rules of the NRA into coincidence with those of IPSC. When this is accomplished, all

Continued on page 81



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BILL BIDWELL

Continued from page 67

BRH: What do you think about recoil buffers?

BB: Junk! I won't use them. Every frame I have seen that was cracked had a buffer in it.

BRH: What are your views on squared or hooked trigger guards?

BB: Squared guards are a waste of money, although I will do one if the customer requests it. I won't do hooks, under any circumstance.

BRH: What about grips for the .45 ACP?

BB: The standard Colt grips have always worked fine for me; but either GI checkered plastic or smooth wood would get my vote. Special welded finger memory grooves on the front of the frame are no good. What a waste of money!

BRH: How about checkering on the metal parts?

BB: I like it. I recommend this to anyone who wants something other than a smooth front strap. I like 20-line best. My own tests have shown that 20-line checkering is less

likely to get caught on clothing than 30-line. This sounds unreal, perhaps, but the fact is that the finer checkering seems to get into the weave of the cloth easier. Try running a T-shirt over a housing with 20-line checkering, then one with 30-line checkering. This should convince you.

BRH: What's your opinion of safeties on the Colt?

BB: I think the Colt thumb and grip safeties are just fine. I also like the feel of the Hoag grip safety, but I don't like the look or feel of the Safari. For a match gun, an ambidextrous safety is worthwhile.

BRH: How about an extended slide release?

BB: There is no reason why anyone but an amputee should need an extended slide release. If a customer demands one, I will fit it; but I absolutely will not fit an ambidextrous extended slide release. No way!

BRH: What would be your recommendation to the owner of a stock Colt .45 who wants some custom work performed?

BB: The further one gets from the issue pistol, the less likely that person will be able to handle an issue pistol should the occasion demand. People should move slowly in getting work done, and only have the work done that will truly benefit them. A seasoned competitor knows what he wants in a match pistol, and he should have it if he has the skill to benefit from it. There is a real difference.

Since Bidwell obviously—and understandably—puts great emphasis on

reliability, I asked him to explain what he does to make sure a .45 ACP will function properly. Here are the steps he recommended:

(1) Polish the ramp and throat.
(2) Check the fit of the slide to the frame, to make sure that there is no binding or an overly tight fit.

(3) Cut a half moon out of the top of the firing pin hole in the breech, to make sure that the case rim doesn't jam in the feeding operation.

(4) Polish the disconnector surfaces and matching slide depression surfaces.

(5) Polish the mainspring cap and bevel the top edge.

(6) Polish the firing pin bearing surfaces.

(7) Hone the inside of the firing pin recess and mainspring housing.

(8) Polish the lower edge of the firing pin stop, so that it will move smoothly over the hammer, and bevel the inside edge even with the base of the slide.

(9) Polish the face of the breech to remove tool marks.

(10) Recut the lower bevel on the extractor, and polish the inside bearing surfaces.

(11) Replace the firing pin spring with a heavy duty version.

(12) Check and hone the grip escutcheons, which may rub on the magazines.

(13) Check the functioning by firing the gun with the ammo that actually will be used in the gun by the customer.

"For (7), I had to get Tom Wilson to obtain some special stones and, while he now catalogs them, I doubt if many people use them," he said. "In my price for a basic reliability job, I include trigger work and a light opening of the ejection port."

EXCELLENT WORKMANSHIP

Bidwell does his "basic reliability job" for \$75. Here are some examples of his work/prices: low mounted Bomar sight, \$135; complete combat accuracy job, \$150; combat safety, \$28; and a complete two-tone refinish job, \$80.

"When I first got into this business," said Bidwell, "a veteran cop, who was my first shooting coach, told me to always give the customer more for his money than he expected. I have always tried to maintain that policy."

When I took a Jawbone pistol to my home range, I was a bit skeptical. During the past several years I have shot .45s with work performed by such experts as Mike Plaxco, Bill Wilson, Shootist Supply and Jim Clark.

The Jawbone workmanship turned out to be excellent. But would it be as reliable as Bidwell had promised?

To provide a tough test, I took along a variety of handloads with round-nosed lead bullets, lead semi-wadcutter, jacketed semi-wadcutter, hollow-points, and a few ancient GI loads. To assist with the



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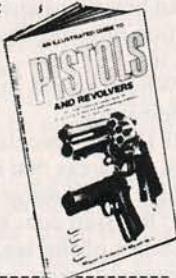
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DUMP .38 SPECIAL

Continued from page 53

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9mm Parabellum	X		X	
.357 Magnum	X	X	X	X
.380 ACP			X	
.41 Magnum	X	X	X	X
.44 Magnum			X	X
.45 ACP	X	X	X	
.45 Colt (new)	X		X	X
.45 Win. Mag.			X	X

What about all those guns out there chambered for the .38 Special and discontinued cartridges? There's really little need for concern. If they were cut off tomorrow, it would take several years for existing supplies to be sold out. After that, there would be ample supplies of components to keep the old guns in business for many years to come.

If this cutback is made, resources should then become available to the ammo makers to permit better bullets and loads to be developed for the loads which remain. Good target loads for the .357, .41 and .44 Magnums have long been needed, and presently are only available as handloads.

SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 79

serious shooters throughout the world will be competing under the same set of rules, and the massive support of the American association will be placed behind the discipline, as agreed upon by all founding and continuing participants.

Jeff Cooper
Honorary Lifetime Chairman, IPSC
Paulden, Arizona

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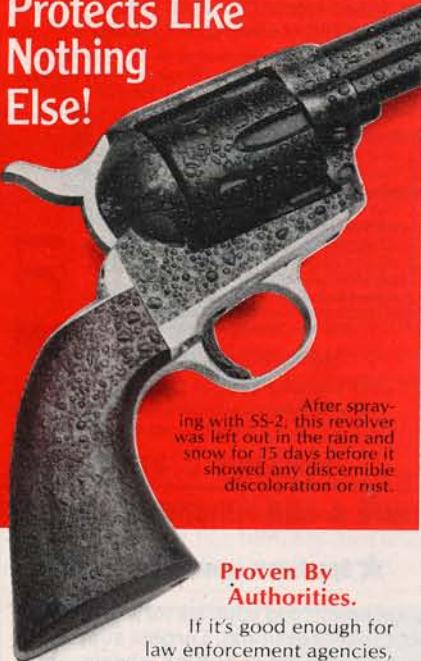


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CARACAS SHOOT

Continued from page 55

went to the USA with a score of 2284; third place went to Sweden, with a score of 2281.

Ladies air pistol places one, two and three were taken by Russian women shooters. Women fire only 40-shot matches, compared to 60 for the men; the winning score of 386x400 was fired by M. Dobrantcheva, followed by A. Treinite with a 380, and Inna Rose also with a 380. Team gold was won by the Russians with a score of 1146. Second place went to a strong team from the Peoples Republic of China with a 1122 and third place went to Sweden with a 1120. The U.S. team came in ninth.

The Centerfire match was fired in two days (30 shots each day). The Russians continued to show their strength as they took first and second places. Turla (of air pistol fame) won with a 592, followed by his countryman, Rysev, with a 591. Third place went to J. Cheres of France with a 590. The team gold was won by the Russians with a score of 2356. Second place went to Switzerland with a 2330, and third place went to Finland with a 2325. Close, but a disappointed fourth, was the U.S. with a score of 2317.

The last event for men was the Standard Pistol event. By now, the results were rather repetitious as the Russians won first and second places followed by Italy forthird. Vladas Turla of Russia took first place with a 583. He was followed by Melentiev with a 578, and Andreotti of Italy with a 576. Team scores saw the USSR first with a 2299, followed by Italy second with a 2281 and the U.S. with a score of 2270 for third place.

The last event of the Championships was Ladies Pistol and for the first time in the world championship there was another country on the winner's stand. P. Balogh of Hungary won with a score of 590. Second place went to Russia's Inna Rose with a 586 and third place went to J. Gao of China. The Russian team captured first place for a gold medal score of 1751. The silver medal went to Hungary with a score of 1746 and the bronze medal went to China with a score of 1739.

RUSSIANS DOMINATE

The 43rd World Shooting Championships saw the Russian shooters clearly dominate the entire competition. The Russian men won four out of the five individual gold medals and captured all five team gold medals. The Russian women won one out of two individual and both team matches. In comparison, the U.S. men shooters won no individual medals. U.S.

men's team captured two second places and one third. The American women won no individual or team medals.

It was difficult for me to believe that the Russians could do so well; but then the scores speak for themselves. For example, V. Turla won the air pistol, center fire, and standard pistol events—clearly an outstanding performance. On the other hand, I saw Kuzmin falter in his four-second string of rapid fire and lose the match. I distinctly remember his coach walk up to him after the match, his face tinged with purple, and slowly but deliberately tell him what he did wrong. Kuzmin, head bowed, listened carefully as the realization of losing the gold medal began to set in.

What factors made the Russians so dominating?

If I could speculate somewhat, I would pick two areas that I feel stand out prominently. One is *discipline*, the other is *coaching*. Russian coaches were like the fifth member of the team. They were always present during practice, looking for changes in technique or any new errors their shooters might be prone to follow. Strict discipline was always used during practice. For example, during rapid fire practice one shooter would shoot live ammo and the other three shooters would be in booths beside him "dry firing." Then they would rotate and another shooter would fire live, while the original shooter would dry-fire. Thus, each shooter would fire 30 live rounds and 120 dry fire.

In comparison, U.S. shooters practiced on their own, or practiced with another team member. The task of maintaining perfection became an individual one. The *Russian Shooting Federation* places such importance on coaching that they have a special school just to train coaches. In this way, only accepted techniques are taught, perfected and used. These techniques are then shown to young new shooters, who are continually being brought up through the system.

I had the pleasure of shooting in Moscow in the summer of 1982. In the air pistol match, the Russians shot one team for record and three other teams (12 shooters) just for practice.

I feel a great deal of the success the Russians had during the Caracas championships was due, in part, to the system they have perfected for the shooting sport. This system, after discovering potentially good young shooters, continually develops them through various levels of competition, all under the watchful eyes of experienced coaches. The ultimate goal in Russia is to become a world class competitor and to win.

Based on what I saw at the 43rd World Shooting Championships, the system works.



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COLT M1911/A-2

Continued from page 54

GRIP SAFETIES

When new grip safeties are required, they should be made wider, following the style of the Pachmayr custom grip safety.

A better front and rear sight must be included. The Richard Heinie sights are possibly a bit too wide and high for military use. The design, however, is excellent and the sights could easily be miniaturized by Heinie.

A longer trigger, with a square surface, will give the feeling of reducing the trigger pull. On mass-produced .45s, it is unlikely that all trigger pulls will be crisp at four pounds; so, pulls of five to seven pounds, with some creep, must be tolerated.

Ambidextrous thumb safeties, accompanied by left-handed holsters, are so logical that the concept cannot be disputed.

A Parkerized finish is acceptable.

A heavier recoil spring of 18.5 pounds, instead of the present 16-pound spring, would help reduce recoil—a common gripe with the 1911. There is a widespread tendency among shooters endeavoring to reduce recoil to use springs that are too heavy, even up to 26 pounds. A recoil spring that is too heavy will interfere with reliability. Any time an extra power recoil spring is used, an extra power firing pin spring should be installed. The extra thrust of the slide, when returning to battery can cause ignition. Wolff Gunspring Makers (POB 232, Ardmore, PA 19003) sell high quality springs.

Another way to reduce recoil is to modify the cartridge. A 200-grain round-nosed bullet, with a velocity of around 840 fps, is worth investigating.

MAGAZINE CHANGES

A beveled magazine well has the obvious advantage of facilitating magazine changes.

The ejection port should be lowered, but not enough to encourage the accumulation of debris.

A Commander-type hammer will eliminate pinching the hand, between the bottom of the hammer and the top of the grip safety. This problem occurs with only a fraction of shooters, but it should be resolved. An additional advantage of Commander-type hammers is that they are less likely to snag on clothes, or military gear.

The gun should have a checkered mainspring housing, and the housing should include a lanyard loop.

The fit of the receiver and the grip safety should result in proper mating, so that nei-

Continued on page 85

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SHOCK WATCH

Continued from page 59

fire scores were better by six points in the aggregate, and my perceptions told me I was getting less muzzle flip. How much less I cannot say, because I do not own the special test equipment needed to tally exact results. The sights required an adjustment to the right from my normal zero, or two inches at 25 yards.

SUPER LOADS

The third test was conducted the next morning after making up some loads for my .45 Colt Ruger Black Hawk. I checked the Speer reloading manual and used the Speer 250 grain lead semi-wadcutter over enough Olin 296 powder to reach 1,000 foot pounds of muzzle energy. I must warn you readers *not* to use such a load if your .45 Colt is chambered in any other make revolver. My Ruger Black Hawk can take these loads; your gun may not stand up, so use only loads recommended in the new Speer handbook.

This last test subjected the *shock watch* and shooter to greater recoil forces than those produced by a .44 Magnum. This is because the Black Hawk is a full half-pound lighter than most revolvers chambered for the big cartridge. Most shooters are simply not willing, nor able, to take recoil and shock forces from handguns in the .44 Magnum class. I admit that Elmer Keith and Skeeter Skelton are tops in control when shooting these powerful revolvers; but lesser mortals like myself must

fight the jerks and flinches with every shot. Yet, I enjoy a powerful revolver as much as they, so I let loose with 50 rounds of the extra performance loads in my .45 Colt to see if the *shock watch* helped.

The big loads in .45 Colt brought out the true value of the *shock watch*. Scores for 10 rounds fired were three to five points higher *per target* than those fired without the *shock watch*.

The last 10 rounds were fired at targets of opportunity, with attention focused on the muzzle jump. It was checked against a cardboard panel placed in front of the gun. Lines were drawn across at intervals of one-inch to provide reference points. I noted that the muzzle of my revolver would arc up to line eight when I shot without the help of the *shock watch*. With the device in place, the muzzle only climbed to line five. For my shooting ability, the reduction in recoil and muzzle climb had to be at least one-third.

My evaluation of the *shock watch*, admittedly, is a subjective one. But just as each person has his own tolerance for pain, so it is with a shooter's ability to control these recoil forces. I believe shooters who use this special watch can add two or three points to their aggregate pistol scores; and those who shoot their magnum revolvers at iron targets or game will experience far fewer flinches—and considerably more comfort.

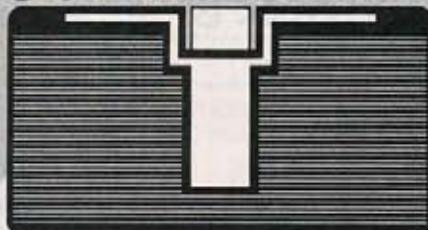
As a protective device, every person who fires heavy amounts of handgun ammunition should use one. Just as he wears shooting glasses and ear protectors.

The retail price of the watch is \$24.95, according to Lewis.

For more information on the *shock watch*, write to Dave Lewis, Future Sports Inc., (Dept. AH), 170 East Ridgewood Ave., Ridgewood, N.J. 07450.



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SEVEN STEPS

Continued from page 70

part of the integrated act of survival. Their constant use can save your life.

By reading this far you have demonstrated your interest in surviving, but don't let it stop here. Find out what kinds of confrontations (not just shootings) are happening in your area. Train under similar conditions, to see what you could do. Try attending your local IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) matches with your duty gear and ammo. You may not win, but you can get cheap life insurance, paid for one shot at a time.

With some effort, study and the proper training you can be the *victor*, not the *victim*.



COLT M1911/A-2

Continued from page 83

ther edge of the receiver protrudes beyond the grip safety when the grip safety is depressed.

Richard Heinie (821 East Adams, Havana, IL 62644) built the first M1911-A2, at the writer's request. His work is excellent.

The principle changes made in the M1911 to the M1911-A1 were a long spur on the grip safety, an arched mainspring housing, a shorter trigger and thicker front sight. Lesser changes to the M1911-A1 included dropping the diamond checkering on the grips, and including a relief cut behind the trigger on the receiver.

Mrs. Marcy Hudson, president of Crown City Arms, estimates that the cost to our government of each M1911-A2 (with an order of 50,000 or more guns) would be \$240. A representative of Colt told me her estimate was probably accurate.

We must have right-hand and left-hand holsters. A good place to start in the development of a new holster would be to build prototypes that include the following:

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Charlie Kelsey of Devel (3441 West Brainard, Cleveland, OH 44122) has perfected an eight-round magazine for the M1911, an improvement that must not be ignored.

The M1911-A2 project was undertaken with the idea that it would be of some value to both military and civilian shooters. The specifications for the M1911-A2 should serve well those shooters who wish to build a servicable, reliable and reasonably priced .45 auto.



INFO 'QUICKIE'

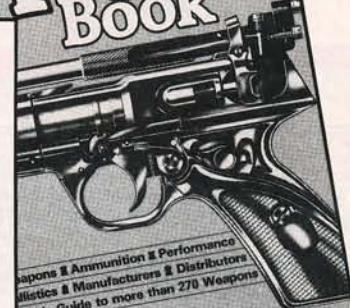
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SERVICE PISTOL

Continued from page 58

the Beretta M92SB and the S&W M459. Two new companies decided to compete. Heckler & Koch entered a modified version of its P7 with a 13-round magazine and an improved magazine release. SIG-Sauer entered the P226, a slightly-modified version of a design familiar to U.S. shooters as the BDA.

Significantly, several of the original contenders dropped out. Colt, Browning, and Star were either unable to modify their designs and deliver 30 pistols in time for the tests, or were unwilling to quote a firm price for the production of 220,000 pistols.

NEWS BLACKOUT

The four contenders delivered their test pistols, and the Army proceeded to run the tests. Although the program is not "classified" in the security sense, an effective news blackout was imposed.

Finally, in February 1982, the Army issued the following terse announcement: "The Army, in its role as Defense Department executive agent for 9mm handgun procurement, has cancelled the procurement. It was not possible to make an award because the submitted weapon samples substantially failed to meet the essential requirements contained in the procurement solicitation. The Department of Defense intends to reexamine its requirements for a new handgun."

At this point, all hell broke loose! Military and Congressional XM9 supporters went on the attack, describing the Army tests as "rigged" and a "fiasco." They were particularly enraged about that last sentence. "Reexamine requirements for a new handgun" is widely thought to mean dropping the XM9 and procuring new Colt Government models in 9mm or .45 ACP caliber. This view was reinforced when Colt Industries submitted an unsolicited proposal to convert the existing inventory of M1911-A1 .45s to 9mm and produce new versions at a price which reportedly undercuts those quoted by the XM9 contenders.

Colt's decision to propose a conversion program was determined by the lack of time to correct problems encountered with its 9mm SSP in the Air Force tests. The conversion proposal put Colt back in the competition with a chance to win and obtain large new production contracts for updated M1911s.

What caused the XM9 failures? Were the tests unfair? The Washington press corps demanded more information. The Army finally stated: "All candidates failed

to meet test criteria in three areas—reliable operations in low temperature conditions, reliable operations in sand, and reliable operation in muddy conditions." No data on the performance of individual weapons was released. The Army justified its position by contending that since a new competition may be held, individual weapon-failure data may be "competition sensitive." The Army position was probably also influenced by threats from the contenders to protest the tests.

REPUTATIONS DAMAGED

The competing firms are furious. Beretta, SIG-Sauer, and Smith & Wesson feel that their commercial reputations may have been damaged. Their test pistols were essentially "off the shelf" specimens of guns they produce for the world commercial market. To have the world told that their guns were unreliable under military service conditions, without specifying how or to what extent, could result in major losses in sales. One company is rumored to be considering a law suit. The results were so different from the Air Force tests that they appear to have been "rigged." Rumors that .45 Colts used as control guns passed with flying colors adds fuel to the fire.

Were the tests rigged to discredit the XM9 and support procurement of new Colt Government models? No one outside the test group knows, but I think not. After the M16 rifle and M73 machine gun disasters, the Army is not about to bless a pistol design it considers unreliable. Low temperature, mud, and sand are the worst conditions a military pistol must meet. Rumors around the Pentagon are that the Army test standard was 1,000 rounds without a failure under adverse conditions, while 800 rounds was considered the absolute minimum. Reportedly, none of the XM9 test pistols reached 600 rounds.

Where does the new pistol program now stand? Politics is heavily involved. Air Force supporters and Congressman Addabbo are understandably livid. Congressman Addabbo has officially demanded a full written account of the Army tests, and has ordered his staff to review the records. If he does not receive answers that satisfy him, Congressman Addabbo is said to be threatening a Congressional investigation.

On the other side, Senator Stevens of Alaska and Representative White of Texas are strong backers of retaining the Colt .45, or converting it to 9mm caliber. With high current unemployment in New England, "buy American and keep jobs here in the United States" is a powerful political argument. But can the existing Colts be efficiently converted to 9mm or rebuilt for additional service as .45s?

REBUILT PISTOLS

Rebuilding and conversion may be more difficult than it seems at first glance.

Continued on page 91

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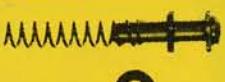
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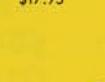
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QUICK QUIZ ANSWERS

Continued from page 23

- False. They're not meant to be reloaded.
- False. It's made in Spain.
- True.
- False. It was introduced in 1876.
- False. Their popularity remains high.
- True.
- True.
- False. It was the Aimpoint projected-light-dot sight.
- False. His theories are "on the money" today.
- True.

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SERVICE PISTOL

Continued from page 88

The military inventory consists of pistols manufactured from 1911 to 1945 and produced by many different companies. Condition of the .45s ranges from nearly new to pistols rebuilt four or five times, which may have fired 10,000 to 20,000 rounds.

An experienced Army ordnance officer described the 9mm conversions process like this. All pistols in inventory would be recalled in lots of several thousand. Each pistol would be disassembled. The frames would be subject to non-destructive testing to detect cracks. All frames which passed the test would then be refinished and fitted with a new 9mm barrel, a new slide, new barrel bushing, magazine, springs, ejector, extractor, and slide stop. If ambidextrous safeties are required, the safety would also have to be replaced. The rebuilt pistol would have an intended service life of 5,000 to 10,000 rounds.

Rebuilding the existing pistols in .45 ACP would be similar, except that some of the minor parts would be reusable. New barrels and slides would be required.

How many existing military .45 frames would pass the test and be rebuilt? There is no official estimate, but *ARMY Magazine* recently revealed that a small-scale inspection at the Anniston Army Ordnance Depot found 40 percent of the frames inspected to be cracked. If this sample reflects the condition of the military pistols on hand, only about 250,000 pistols could be rebuilt.

What would the rebuilt and new-production Colts be like? The .45s would simply be slightly improved M1911-A1s with ambidextrous safeties and, perhaps, improved sights.

The 9mm Colt would be similar to the 1970 Model MKIV 9mm that Colt has produced since 1970. The Army might not buy the collet barrel bushing, and would probably add an ambidextrous safety.

X9 REQUIREMENTS

Essentially, they are Government Model automatics chambered for the 9mm Luger cartridge with the magazine capacity increased to nine rounds. They would certainly be satisfactory military pistols, the caliber question aside; but how do they look when compared to the XM9 requirements?

Not too good. Specifically, they would not be double-action, would not have a firing pin safety, could not be cleared with the safety on, and would have a magazine capacity of nine, rather than 10, rounds. Still, they would be reliable and effective military pistols. After all, we have managed to do quite well in a number of wars with single-action, single-row magazines, and pistols that cannot be cleared with the safety on.



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What happens next? The battle lines are drawn with important military and political forces on each side. The XM9 program for 1983 was stopped in October, when a joint House-Senate Conference Committee added a clause to the 1983 defense budget which prohibits the use of any funds "for the purchase of 9mm handguns for the Armed Services, or to carry out any activity concerned with the feasibility or desirability of purchasing 9mm handguns." Note that nothing is said about rebuilding or conversions. A contract to Colt, to rebuild existing Model 1911-A1s may be issued. That decision would be controversial, and would make some im-

portant people mighty unhappy.

Still, something must be done. The military handgun inventory is deteriorating rapidly. The Air Force, the Marine Corps, and the Coast Guard have urgent requirements. A decision probably will be announced in 1984. The odds favor resuming the XM9 test program then. But don't count the Colt out. The General Accounting Office has endorsed the Colt conversion program, and the GAOs recommendation carries considerable weight with Congress.

John Browning's masterpiece may spend another 70 years in GI holsters.



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Continued from page 80

HANDGUN NAMES OF YORE ADD TOUCH OF NOSTALGIA, AND A SMILE OR TWO

By Len Davis

Brand names on handguns—like the appellations on automobiles—have dwindled in numbers substantially over the past 50 years or so.

The Ajax Army, Eclipse, True Blue, Climax, Young America, Ladies Pet, My Friend, Favorite, Thames, Pioneer, Enterprise and New Liberty, for example, have gone the way of the Marmon, Whippet, Reo, Hupmobile, Auburn, Pierce Arrow, Cord and Essex—just to name a few guns and automobiles that have disappeared from the American scene since the 1920s and 1930s.

Others were manufactured by the Crescent Firearms Company—a subsidiary of the H. & D. Folsom Arms Company—and the E.C. Meacham Arms Company.

Sporting goods dealers, even hardware jobbers, demanded—and got—their own names (or the names of their choice) on handguns of all kinds, most of them made in New England.

With the rise of the mail-order business, brand names proliferated at a fantastic rate. Some were chosen to sound

like well-respected makes, with the hopes they would be mistaken for the better-grade guns. (Sam Holt, for example, might be taken for Sam Colt.)

Guns made by the Carolina Arms Company and the Mississippi Valley Arms Company, firms in the south, implied local production and that parts would be easily obtained.

HARD TIMES

The great depression of the early 1930s forced many of the lesser known, but extensive, handgun makers out of business. Others retrenched and discontinued certain product lines.

Still around today—like the Buick and Oldsmobile—are such fine handgun manufacturers as Colt, Smith & Wesson and Harrington & Richardson.

But it's a far different ballgame today, for several reasons.

No longer do firearms manufacturers attempt to dupe potential buyers of their products by resorting to name trickery, or capitalize on their corporate titles.

Virtually all the guns mentioned were inexpensive revolvers, ranging in

testing, I asked Ronnie Tedder, a first-rate IPSC competitor who had finished third in the North Texas Section in 1980, to help me out. Between us, we put more than 200 rounds through the Jawbone. We were both impressed by its accuracy and workmanship. We did, however, experience a few malfunctions with one batch of handloads; but it developed that these loads had roll crimps. This, combined with a relatively tight chamber in the custom barrel fitted to the Jawbone, caused the problem. With factory loads and taper-crimped handloads, no malfunctions were experienced. If a person is going into a life or death situation, handloads probably would not be used; so, in view of the excellent performance of the Jawbone with factory hardball, this should in no way be taken as criticism of the gun, or Bidwell.

The Jawbone we tested would consistently shoot into two inches or less at 25

Continued on page 93

which all gunleather is judged!"

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caliber from .22 Short to .44 Webley. Many were made for mail-order sales by Sears, Roebuck & Company which, at one time, owned the Meriden Fire Arms Co.

And mail-order sales of handguns (except to dealers) are a thing of the past—called 1968.

Production quality has risen to heights believed virtually unattainable 50 years ago.

Makers jealously guard their names—both corporate and model—from any form of misuse.

Accuracy and dependability have achieved new levels of excellence, coupled with a variety of designs and calibers that would literally boggle the mind of a handgun buyer during the halcyon days when Franklin D. Roosevelt was governor of New York.

Gun prices, too, have achieved new levels—not necessarily of excellence—and undoubtedly will continue to climb, along with just about everything else.

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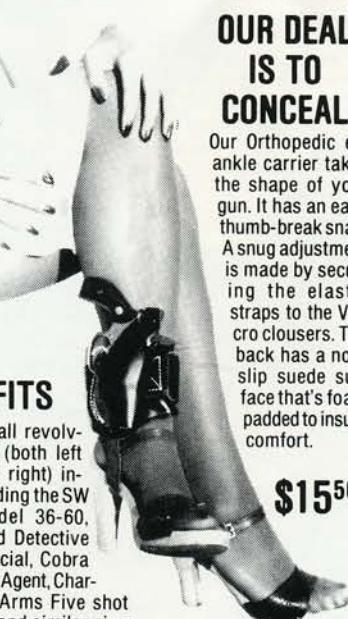
Continued from page 92

yards. This is excellent accuracy for a combat handgun.

One of the more noteworthy features of the test gun was the tremendous job Bidwell did on checkering the front strap. He actually removed the metal from around the area to be checkered, resulting in a raised, checkered panel which feels great and looks terrific.

If you are interested in having Bidwell work on your Colt, contact him at Jawbones, Ltd., 1555 Abilene Drive, Broomfield, Colorado 80020.

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

FIREARMS INDUSTRY TRADE SHOW FEATURED SEVERAL NEW HANDGUNS

Gun dealers were treated to the largest trade show of shooting supplies I have ever seen. More than 700 exhibitors were on hand at the SHOT show in Dallas (Jan. 6-8) to show their wares.

In this review of the show, we'll try to cover the highlights. If we missed something, we'll cover it in a future issue. Provisions have been made to obtain samples of many of the new guns and accessories so look for our test reports. Let's cover the new (or almost new) handguns.

Jim Mongello of Arminex Limited was there with his Trifire .45 auto (Colt look-alike #1), which features a firing pin lock safety, a comfortable grip design and caliber interchangeability. There's a pocket .45 also in the works.

Beretta—showing its complete line of handguns—also had a brand new full line of accessories, from holsters to custom stocks and handgun jewelry.

Colt was showing its Combat .45 and offering a 10-year free service agreement on the Python; sorry, it's not retroactive.

Bill and Dan Coonan took a couple of us out to the Target Master range in Dallas to shoot his .357 Magnum auto (Colt look-alike #2). Jim Weller's report on the gun in this issue is right-on.

We broke the Detonics story first, and had a chance to take a close look at its three new guns; a full-size .45 (Colt look-alike #3) stopped a lot of IPSC fans, and a big-bore, top-break revolver caught everyone's fancy, as did its double-action pocket 9mm.

Charley Kelsey of Devel has a good line of auto accessories including his eight-shot .45 magazine. He showed us the third generation Gammon; watch for an update in the *American Handgunner*.

Dornaus & Dixon had several versions of the Bren Ten that are ready for the market. The chopped version looks like a winner.

NO HERITAGE ARMS

Remember the .454 Casull single action? It's coming back—in a special edition first—from Freedom Arms.

Remember, too, the ads in the *American Handgunner* a few months ago for the Heritage Arms single-action? They may be collector's items; the company was a no-show, and as far as we know, there is no Heritage Arms—and no guns.

A new outfit, L.A.R. Manufacturing Co.

out of Utah was showing its M1911-type (Colt look-alike #4) conversion units in eight calibers. They also showed the Grizzly, which it claims is the first semi-auto to fire the .45 Winchester Magnum cartridge, with a conversion unit for the 9mm Win. Mag. All are based on the Arnett patented system.

A new company, Lone Star Armaments of Texas, is bringing back an old favorite, the Browning M1910 auto pistol in .380 ACP caliber. In the works is another oldie, a .22 RF Magnum that looks like the Broomhandle Mauser; this one is still a fair piece down the road.



Arminex Trifire .45 auto

Magnum Research had the Eagle .357 Magnum auto, but at this writing, none for the dealers, yet.

Michigan Armament—no longer in Michigan, but in California—had its custom .45s and the .380 and .25 stainless autos on hand.

O.D.I., with its double-action auto using the Seecamp system, has new management, and is reported to be shipping guns.

Personal Protection Systems (see the Custom Gun of the Month in our March/April issue) had the Scorpion and its Manstopper specialty ammo.

Randall of Sun Valley, California was showing not only its .45 auto (Colt look-alike #5) in stainless, but its stainless accessory magazines and canvas pistol and rifle rugs and cases.

Sile Distributors had its new second generation double-action Benelli auto pistol at the show, along with its extensive line of handgun stocks and holsters.

NEW SQUEEZE-COCKER

M-S Safari Arms was there with its widely accepted parts for home-built guns, plus the several special edition .45s it is

Continued on page 34

6 7 8 9 10 10 9

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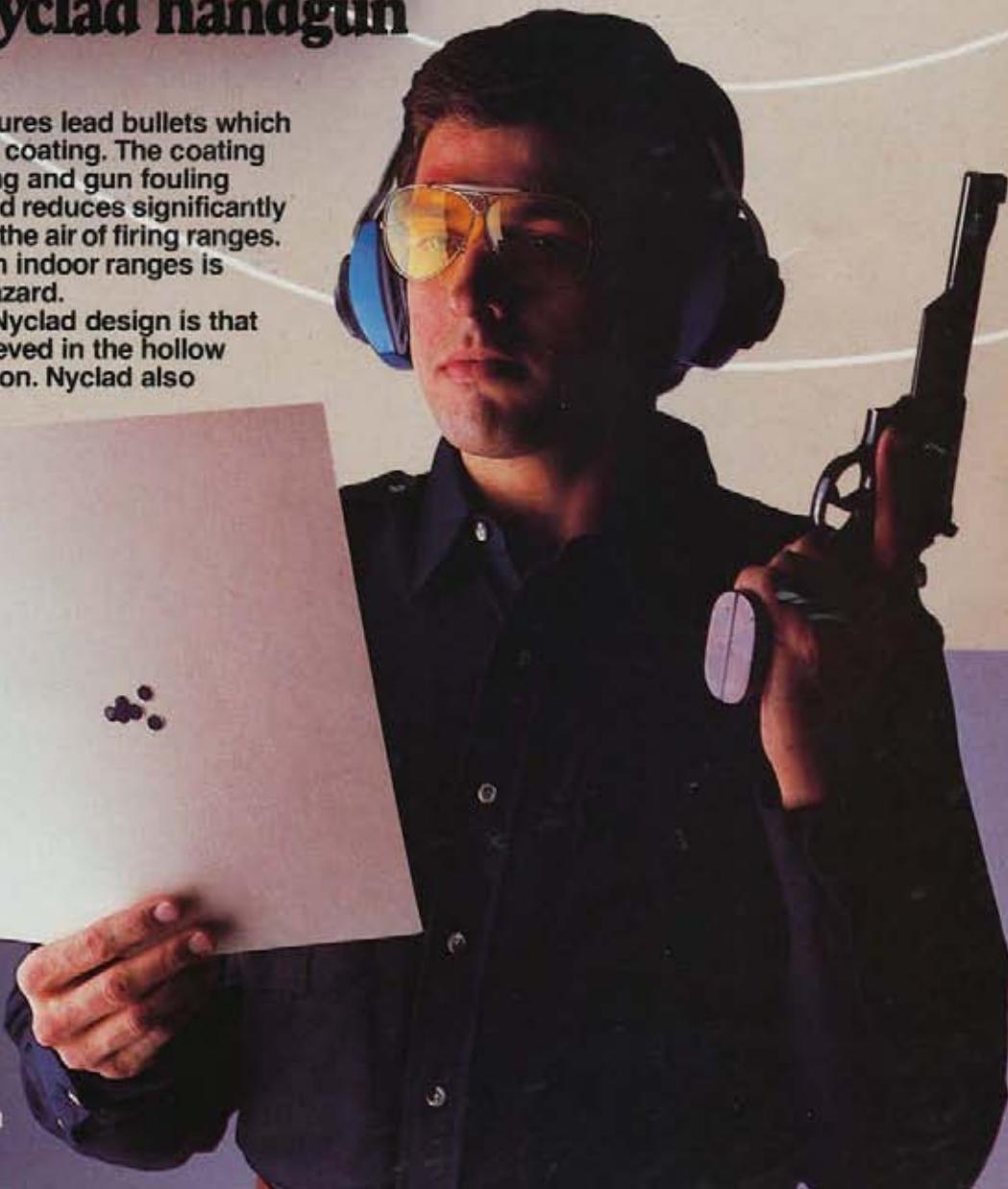


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