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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1979 \$2.00

HANDGUNNER

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

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THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

January/February, 1979

Vol. 4 No. 1-14

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This month's cover shot is gunsmith Ron Power's beautiful conversion of the XP-100. Photo by Dave Friend.

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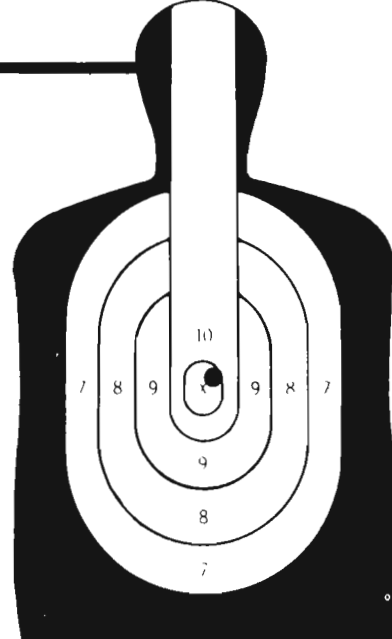
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COMBAT HANDGUN SHOOTING by James D. Mason, *Consultant, San Diego County Sheriff's Dept., San Diego, California.* Foreword by Bill McMillan. A broad scope of handgunning interests is covered in this book, including handloading ammunition, conditioning and maintaining handguns, and load and handgun selections. The shooter's basic mental and body processes that result in effective combat marksmanship are thoroughly explained. '76, 272 pp. (6 3/4 x 9 3/4), 594 il. (26 in color), 8 tables, \$24.75

FIREARMS IDENTIFICATION: The Laboratory Examination of Small Arms, Rifling Characteristics in Hand Guns, and Notes on Automatic Pistols. Volume I (2nd Ptg.) by J. Howard Mathews. Foreword by Julian S. Hatcher. '73, 416 pp. (8 5/8 x 11 1/4), 644 il., \$51.50

FIREARMS IDENTIFICATION: Original Photographs and Other Illustrations of Hand Guns. Volume II (2nd Ptg.) by J. Howard Mathews. '73, 500 pp. (8 5/8 x 11 1/4), 3138 il., \$51.50

FIREARMS IDENTIFICATION: Original Photographs and Other Illustrations of Hand Guns. Data on Rifling Characteristics of Hand Guns and Rifles. Volume III by J. Howard Mathews. '73, 744 pp. (8 5/8 x 11 1/4), 3701 il., 7 tables, \$80.00

THE DEFENSIVE USE OF THE HANDGUN: For the Novice by Mason Williams, *Firearms and Ballistic Consultant, Libby, Montana.* This text presents fundamental information on the safe and effective defensive use of handguns by private citizens. The author offers basic instructions for purchasing, loading and firing pistols and revolvers; handgun cleaning and care; evaluating the condition of the handgun; and practicing. '78, 240 pp., 106 il., cloth-\$11.50, paper-\$6.95

BALLISTIC SCIENCE FOR THE LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER by Charles G. Wilber, *Colorado State Univ., Fort Collins.* Topics include interior, exterior and terminal ballistics; dum-dum bullets; shotguns; and practical considerations. Appendices discuss bullet velocities, technical terms for describing bullets, propellant powder technology, and the standardization of police weapons. '77, 324 pp. (6 3/4 x 9 3/4), 86 il., 26 tables, \$27.25

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Industry Insider

By Massad F. Ayoub

ABOUT RUGERS, WILDEYS, AND 66'S

Some interesting turns are being taken in Ruger's quest for a stainless steel .44 Magnum revolver. We have had reliable reports that a single action Super Blackhawk in stainless was to be ready to roll by the end of 1978. Some close to the Southport, Connecticut firm's decision-makers have their doubts, though.

Word has reached us that super-secret Ruger tests have shown that, with cylinders of standard thickness, the stainless steel just isn't as strong as the chrome-molybdenum composition that has made Ruger's regular Super Blackhawk the standard of the industry in .44 Magnum durability and safety. Strong enough for most anyone else, but not Ruger. This has

feature may some day be the basis of a new generation of Ruger Security-Six double actions in the familiar .357 Magnum version.

We don't know yet what the new .44 DA will be called, and there remains a chance that the Super Blackhawk will appear in stainless. One recurrent rumor is that the stainless single action will be brought out on a larger frame than the present one. We'll take that one with a grain of salt, but something bigger and brighter and more rust resistant is definitely coming from Ruger before too terribly long, even though Southport execs are playing their informational cards close to the vest.

Measurable more in years than months is what may be an even more exciting Ruger project: a largebore, semi-automatic pistol. It may be .45 ACP . . . or it may be something more innovative. We don't believe rumors that the firm has bought options to buy a stainless steel .44 Magnum auto hand-built by a Michigan inventor; he denies it, and so do they, and besides, Bill Ruger prides himself on using in-house designs. Whatever comes out, though, is likely to be dynamite. It is one of the most closely-guarded secrets in the handgun industry, and even we haven't nibbled all the way through the wall of silence yet, but we've picked up a scent so tantalizing we'll keep trying.

• • •

Speaking of super, high-power auto-matics, it appears that the long-heralded Wildey .45 Magnum and 9MM Magnum won't be out for a while. Production problems seem to have stalled the project. Winchester is said to be a bit nervous

" .45 and 9 mm Magnums won't be out for a while . . . "

"Ruger will have a Double Action .44 Magnum revolver . . ."

supposedly been confirmed by independent experimenters who took big-frame Ruger Blackhawk .357 Magnum single actions in stainless form, and bored them out to .44 Mag.

The most startling news, which we have finally been able to confirm, is that prototypes *have* been built of a Ruger Double Action .44 Magnum. The gun resembles a stainless Security Six with six-inch barrel, scaled up more or less proportionally. The trigger/trigger guard assembly appears similar to that of the familiar Security Six, and may possibly be interchangeable. Action and general feel are said to be better than decent . . . quite nice, in fact.

The prototype Ruger double action .44 is somewhat beefier than the Smith & Wesson Model 29 that now rules that field of handgunning. It weighs at least fifty ounces in six inch barrel size, compared to around forty-six in the Smith. The cylinder is massive, with extremely thick walls between chambers.

More Ruger news: the .44 Magnum double action prototype purportedly has a cylinder pin locking mechanism that keeps this central axis motionless as the chambers rotate through all six cycles; this has distinct advantages in terms of reliability and durability. It is rumored that this

about the delay. Insiders had told us that a million rounds of ammo for these guns were either in process or already manufactured, something Olin's spokesmen now deny. They also pooh-pooh stories that Winchester-Western had been financially

(Continued on page 8)

Troubleshooting Your Handgun



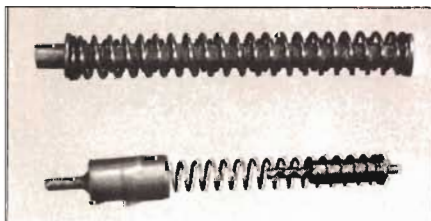
The Bauer Stainless Steel .25 automatic. The one shown is the author's own gun, and has been modified by removal of the sights and thinning of the grips.



The Bauer .25 pistol, field-stripped.



The manual safety level (arrow) is its own positioning spring, but it is not flexed enough in normal operation to make breakage likely.



The recoil spring assembly (top) has two captive springs, one inside the other. The striker assembly contains a spring guide (at right) which encloses an indicator pin and its spring.

J. B. Wood's book, TROUBLESHOOTING YOUR HANDGUN, published by DBI, is available from GUNS MAGAZINE Book Department, Suite 200, 591 Camino de la Reina, San Diego, CA 92108, for \$5.95, postpaid. The book gives similar details on 87 American and foreign handguns. These monthly columns are all new material, and are not included in the present edition of the book.

By J. B. Wood

This Month:

The BAUER .25 AUTO

In 1968, our Wise Leaders decided that owning a tiny imported pistol such as the Browning "Baby" would turn an otherwise stable citizen irretrievably to a Life of Crime, and the importation of these nice little pistols was banned. Around 1972, Jim Bauer had an excellent idea: Why not produce the little Browning in this country? Then he had an even better idea: Why not make it entirely of stainless steel? An arrangement was made with the Fabrique Nationale in Belgium, and the Bauer .25 automatic was born.

The Bauer pistol is, of course, simply a stainless steel version of the Browning "Baby." The parts will even interchange, a good thing to remember if the gunshop in your area has parts for one, but not for the other. The original design, by Val Browning and the FN engineers, contains several interesting innovations. One problem in a pistol of this size is the limited space available for the recoil spring and guide. In this pistol, the problem was neatly solved by using two springs of different sizes, one inside the other. This recoil spring system is further refined by being a self-contained unit, so the springs don't go flying away when the gun is taken down. It should be noted, though, that if the recoil spring unit is ever lost or damaged, repair can't be made by simply installing an ordinary single recoil spring. The action is balanced for the double spring, and an original type must be used for proper functioning. Fortunately, replacement parts are no problem. They're available from most of the larger gunshops, and from Bauer, of course.

This is a striker-fired pistol, a true hammerless, and the cocking indicator is of unusual design. It consists of a tubular striker spring guide which contains a central pin and a small internal spring. When the striker is forward, the small spring pulls the pin inside the rear of the slide. When the striker is cocked, it pushes the pin out, to indicate that the gun is ready to fire. This system doesn't, of course, indicate whether the chamber is loaded. The guide/indicator unit is factory-assembled, its end rolled over to retain the pin and spring, and no attempt should be made to take it apart. If it is lost or damaged, it should just be replaced with a new part.

The pistol has a magazine safety, to prevent firing when the magazine is out of the gun, and this one is interconnected to other parts in the mechanism in such a way that removal is not feasible. It could, however, be altered to cancel its operation, without affecting other parts. Keep in mind, though, that this alteration would not be reversible, without replacement of the part. Perhaps, on a pistol of this size, which might be used frequently by those not extensively acquainted with firearms, a magazine safety might have some value. For my own use, I prefer a pistol to be operational, even when the magazine is lost or damaged. That way, in a survival situation (or a serious social encounter) the loss of a magazine does not leave me with a useless collection of parts. A single shot pistol is better than none at all.

There are no flat springs in this gun, unless you count the positioning tension of the manual safety as one. Some of the round-wire springs have rather esoteric shapes, but this is no cause for worry, as the ready availability of parts makes handmade duplication unnecessary. The original grips will be either wood or synthetic mother-of-pearl. The left grip panel has a narrow ledge at the top, above the safety lever, and this has been known to chip off. Both grips are recessed on the back (inside) to accommodate the safety lever on the left, and the trigger bar/disconnector on the right. The grips are not likely to crack in normal use, but they are susceptible to impact breakage if the pistol is dropped. This is especially true of the acrylic plastic material in the synthetic pearl type.

My own Bauer .25 is somewhat altered from the original pattern. The wood grips have been thinned to half of their regular thickness, and the sights have been neatly removed. All sharp edges have been rounded, including the back of the magazine catch. These changes are not radical, but it's surprising how much smaller my gun seems than an unaltered original.

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

(Continued from page 6)

backing the Wildey manufacturing operation, which goes contrary to a lot of rumor-mongering that has been going around in Gun Valley. There is, however, no doubt that Winchester execs are less than happy with the foot dragging in what was, not long ago, a four-star project.

Smith & Wesson's Model 66 stainless Combat Magnum has recently entered its third stage of development. The first Model 66s developed some problems. Because stainless steel reacts differently to the heat and buffeting generated by .357 Magnum rounds going off at 30,000 pounds per square inch pressure than does chrome-molybdenum steel in the 4140 alloy most commonly used by gun-makers, the early stainless Combat Mags

"Smith and Wesson Model 66 entering third stage of development..."

displayed a tendency for certain of their parts to expand or loosen just enough that vital tolerances would be closed, and parts would bind.

The problem was traced to the gas ring, that innocuous little part that looks like a washer and is located where the cylinder meets the yoke it swings out of the frame on. S&W decided that by moving the gas ring to the yoke from the cylinder, they could eliminate the problem. This was done... and because the problem had been known to happen with the blue-steel Model 19, though with far less frequency, somebody at Smith & Wesson decided to put the gas ring on the yoke on *all* the K-frame guns.

This was done some time ago. But the gas ring on the yoke wasn't much of a gas ring at all, and it wasn't too great at performing its primary purpose, which was keeping gunpowder debris from blowing up through the channel in the center axis of the cylinder, where it could accumulate under the ejector star and cause enough layers of fouling that the cylinder eventually wouldn't close. Or worse, would close but would be so jammed with gunk that it wouldn't rotate and shoot when the trigger was pulled.

The problem, clearly, had been only changed. Accordingly, Smith & Wesson reverted several months ago to the proven gas-ring-on-the-cylinder concept. Had they gone back to the old problem as the lesser of two evils, or what?

No, they hadn't. We checked with S&W's spokesmen, and they would only tell us that the gas ring was indeed back on the K-frame cylinders, but that it had been somehow changed *but* not how it was changed.

Obtaining several recent production

guns and going to our experts, Industry Insider concluded that the difference is that the gas rings are now being solidly swaged into the cylinders, instead of just press-fitted as they were before. This makes for a much tighter fit that seems to reduce or eliminate the Model 66s previous tendency for the gas ring to either expand or move or both, causing cylinder freeze. We torture-tested a couple of the latest 66s in independent tests using some of the hottest .357 Magnum 158-grain ammo on the market (Federal) and couldn't make them jam.

We examined and test-fired ten recent production stainless Combat Magnums. All were brand-new revolvers, half marked "66" and half marked "66-1," the designation given to the Model 66 after the gas ring was moved to the yoke. Nevertheless, all had the gas rings on the cylinders, which indicated two things, these being brand-new revolvers on mid-1978 order: that Smith has gone back to the plain "66" designation for current production guns with cylinder-mounted gas rings, and that some of the frames marked 66-1 were fitted with the improved, third-generation cylinder assemblies.

Despite all that, there are indications that quality control at Smith & Wesson may be improving. People in the factory, in the field, and in between at the distributorships are saying good things about S&W workmanship since a certain non-firearms-oriented executive was imported

"Colt 'D' frames may not be dropped..."

to take over that firm's quality control functions. It may not be where it was in 1955, but it's inching up. To understand the difference, you have to talk to a stockholder in S&W's parent corporation, Bangor Punta, who has access to official data on how much Smith & Wesson handgun production has increased over past years. We're talking multiples, not percentages. Yet there hasn't been *that* much automation, *that* much movement of little operations like service and engraving out of the main plant, or *that* much increase in personnel. Three shifts *then* shouldn't have produced all that much less than three shifts *now* in close to the same production space, yet looking at the difference in unit output would make you gasp for breath.

Colt's recent announcement that all of the "D" frame revolvers would be dropped, may or may not be operative. Word is that the Diamondback and Detective Special *may* still be around for a while, if not in their present state, at least as special items. That may be good news or it may be not so good, depending on what kind of prices Colt puts on these "special" models.





1. MODEL 73 SWIVEL CARTRIDGE POUCH



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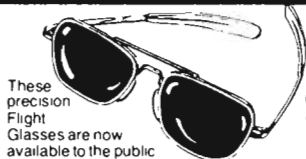
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Siluetas

By Phillip C. Briggs

CARTRIDGES: FROM THE MINIMUM .357 MAGNUM TO THE .44 SUPER BLACKHAWK AND XP-100 VARIETIES.

Dale's glued to the binoculars. "Another hit," he mutters around the stub of a big cigar.

With a little kick I sit up, reach over the XP with my left hand and open the action. "Where about's this time?" I inquire as I load another round. I'm not doing too well, six hits so far and not a single ram down. Doesn't look like this load is going to work.

"Maybe six inches down from the top of the back, centered east-west."

"OK, well, I'll come up some more." I'm trying to tip one over with a high hit, but my margin for error is getting small. Back into shooting position, the XP snuggled tight against my hips, sights carefully aligned, and a slow squeeze.

"Miss, just over the back."
"Well, it doesn't matter — either way it looks like I'm going to get goose eggs." The XP's neat, but it just doesn't hit hard enough at 200 meters.

"Cartridge selection for silhouettes involves power, trajectory and recoil . . ."

There are three things to consider when selecting a cartridge for silhouettes: power, trajectory, and recoil. They're interrelated, of course, but the best cartridges for the game will maximize the first, and minimize the last.

One of the appeals of the silhouette game is that it gives the magnum pistol shooter a worthy target on which to practice his craft. In fact, it requires big bore, high performance pistol cartridges to reliably score on sheep — which are the hardest to knock down being the heaviest target and the farthest away.

I've done some limited testing and research on what it takes to score on rams, and based on that I've leapt to the conclusion that the momentum the bullet possesses is the key factor, and further, that the threshold value for 100 percent knockdown is about .7 pound-seconds. Higher values will score with poor hits, but they'll push you around more. At values of .6 pound-seconds, you'll only ring

some targets. Lower values will leave more standing.

To digress a minute, let me explain the threshold value and the units. It looks awful small, right? Well, that's because gun scribes heretofore have used pounds-weight in their calculations, not pounds-mass as the physicists define this property



of a body in motion. Momentum is simply mass times velocity, and mass (in pounds, here) is weight (also in pounds) divided by the acceleration of gravity (32.2 feet per second squared). The units, which seem odd, drop out of the calculation. You can calculate momentum simply from your handy dandy ballistic tables by dividing the energy given for a particular bullet (at the range of interest) by one-half the velocity given for that range.

To give you some feel for what will do the job, I'll run down through the cartridges available in revolvers, autos, and single shots. With the above information you can also check out your favorite load.

For revolvers, the .357 Magnum is about the lower limit for effectiveness on the rams. None of the cartridges available in production guns really flatten them, they just slowly tip over, but poor hits with the .357 won't always do the job.

"Poor hits with the .357 Magnum just won't do the job . . ."

Looking through the results for shoots around the U.S., it seems the .44 Magnum is the most popular revolver cartridge — of those that are winning. The .41 Mag-

(Continued on page 12)

HANDLE WITH CARE:

Old Style Single-Action Revolvers

Limitations on Use:

1. Regardless of the position of its hammer, an old style single-action revolver with a loaded chamber under the firing pin may discharge if accidentally dropped or struck on the hammer.
2. The safety notch in the hammer provides only limited protection against accidental blows to the hammer or accidental pulling of the trigger.
3. Ever since the introduction of the famous "Peacemaker" single-action revolver over 100 years ago, it has been generally known that the safest way to carry such revolvers is to load no more than five cartridges and to keep an empty chamber under the firing pin.

Exceptions:

1. Although many are still in use, we discontinued our old model single-action revolvers in 1973 when we introduced our history-making, patented "New Model" revolvers. The internal mechanism of our New Model single-action revolvers is entirely new and is not subject to the limitations on use listed above for the old model. Both models look alike, but the New Model has the words "NEW MODEL" marked on the frame and has only two visible pins in the side of the frame instead of three screws as in the old model.
2. Some of the other brands of old style single-action revolvers, particularly those of foreign manufacture, have added various manual "safeties" which may or may not be reliable. Even if it functions properly, a manual safety device is no safer than the person using it. It is useless if it is not used, or if it is used improperly by mistake.

Why Are We Telling You This?

In the last few years, people are apparently becoming more willing to handle firearms, including Ruger single-action revolvers, without *first* receiving proper instruction from a knowledgeable shooter. *No one* should handle any gun without *first* having supervised instruction about the particular type of gun he is using, as well as about gun safety in general. Until very recently everyone, gun users and non-users alike, seemed to be well aware of this obvious rule, and accidents with single-action revolvers, as well as with other types of guns, were limited to those very occasional lapses of common sense against which, unfortunately, there appears to be no real protection. Now, with the growth of consumerism, people who should know better are acting as though guns, like electric toasters, are meant to be foolproof. There is no such thing as a foolproof gun.

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SILUETAS

(Continued from page 10)

num is no doubt a good middle ground, but not often used. The .45 Long Colt in the Ruger is rare, but with the right handloads, it will do the job.

In auto pistols, the seldom seen .357 and .44 Auto Mags are found the most often; both have sufficient punch to do the job. The .45 ACP, with hard ball loads will be less reliable than the .357, but is still a possibility. Just don't count on dumping every sheep you tag.

In the single shots, there's a wide range of cartridges to choose from. The .221 Fireball in the XP-100 has a lot going for it, but it's a 30-32 target proposition. With factory ammo, or normal reloads, it's less reliable on the rams than the .45 ACP, not to mention the .357. A shame. The .256 Magnum does better; with heavy bullet reloads it will do almost as well as the .357. It's used by a few people, often in Ruger's Hawkeye. The 30 MI Carbine is never seen, but on paper, at least, it should do well. The magnum revolver car-

"The .41 Magnum is no doubt a good middle ground . . ."

tridges gain new muscle in the long, solid barrel of the single shots and are worth considering. And there's always the arm-wrenching .357 Herrett. Best choice is probably the .30 Herrett, although the 30-30 with less than maximum effort loads would be a simpler equivalent.

The next consideration is trajectory. The faster the flatter — and the easier it is to tag the various targets at their respective ranges without constantly twisting sight adjustments. There's a couple of reasons for avoiding sight adjustments and staying with Kentucky windage. First, it's a pain in the butt — easy to make a mistake, and it takes a lot of practice to learn sight settings. Second, factory-installed sights on today's production guns are not intended to be constantly adjusted to cope with differing ranges — they're not marked for it, nor built to withstand the wear, nor to return to zero after twisting up and down the scale.

Flat trajectories unfortunately are the domain of small caliber, high performance cartridges and are available only in the single shots.

The .221 has a midrange trajectory with a 200 yard zero of about 3 inches; by comparison, those for the .357 and .44 Magnums, 17 and 15 inches respectively, are rainbows.

This means if you're shooting the XP you can sight in to be dead center on the rams with a 6 o'clock hold on the belly, and center the pigs and chickens with a hold on their feet. There's too much arc to the .44's trajectory to use Kentucky; you'll have to adjust the sights as you

change targets. The adjustment ranges from four to six minutes of angle between the chickens and the pigs to eight or more between the turkeys and the rams. Depending on the pistol's sights, that can be a bunch of clicks.

Lightning bolt power, and straight as a string trajectory won't do you any good if you can't shoot the pistol. If the recoil wrenches your arm and splits the web of your thumb, and you don't happen to like that, you'll never be able to slam a ram for flinching.

There's no way around it, the .44 Magnum bites on both ends. Accessory grips can help reduce felt recoil a lot though, such as a set of Ted Schiemeier's two handed stocks on the Ruger.

Still, the recoil energy of the .44 equals that of a 30-06 rifle (about 16 foot-pounds). If that's too much for you, don't even think about a 30-30 or .357 Herrett. The big Herrett gives out 50 percent more recoil than the .44; it takes a great deal of practice and conditioning to run 40 rounds of 250 grain ray gun loads up the spout without developing a flinch at loud noises.

The small caliber, high velocity cartridges offer a way out of this dilemma though, the proverbial cake and its consumption.

Physics again. The small caliber, light weight (for a pistol) bullets can be launched at high velocities and still produce less recoil energy than, say, a traditional magnum and yet deliver as much — or more — momentum on the rams. How? Simple — better ballistics. The small caliber bullets retain more of their initial velocity and, hence, can arrive on target with enough whack to do the job, without the launch penalty of sliding you backwards in the dirt and skinning up your elbows.

To recapitulate, let me review why I'd picked the Super Black Hawk and the XP for my ideal battery last issue.

The Super looks to be the most durable of the .44's that are available when fed a

"Author prefers XP-100 for accuracy but still hasn't found that magic load . . ."

steady diet of maximum effort loads. The rear sight seems to be fairly durable and reliable as well. The trigger pull won't ever match that of the big Smith, but durability and price overshadow that. With a set of Schiemeier's, the big Ruger is a hard gun to beat in the standing classes.

The XP shoots flat, and is the most accurate production gun going. Recoil is nil. From my freestyle leaner position, the sights never waver off the target. And those pesky rams? Well, I still have hope of finding that magic load.

Next issue we'll talk about how to shoot — tips and techniques to give you the edge.




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CustomShop

By J.K. OSGOOD

"JET" POWERED COMBAT PISTOLS

Custom built combat pistols have evolved into fairly common form. Take a Smith & Wesson Model 10 or a Colt Python, add a bull barrel, rib, trigger stop, smooth up the action, and there you are. The result has been highly successful. So why fool with success?

That is exactly what I asked Reed Knight after I saw his conversions of two Smith & Wesson Model 53 "Jets" to combat form. And while one was understandably a .38, the other was a .32!

"I'm a gadget-person," Reed told me. "And I'm always looking for a way to improve things I use."

An hour or so later I learned a great deal more about Reed and his interests, and how the Model 53 conversions came to be.

A native Floridian, C. Reed Knight is a man of varied interests as well as talents. He earns his living in the citrus industry, one facet being a highly mechanical tree pruning operation. Reed developed the machinery he uses, and set up a well-equipped machine shop to build and maintain the equipment. When he got interested in shooting and gunsmithing, the machine shop was there to serve a dual purpose.

Reed is also a private pilot, Reserve Police Officer, and President of the Florida Police Combat League. A top-flight shooter, he is currently rated first in the Governor's Twenty, placed Tenth Municipal Master at the recent Nationals, and the day we met, fired a 240-24x at Clearwater's October 22nd match. He used the .38 caliber version of the 53 Combat Conversion in these feats.

Reed started combat shooting in 1973, and used out-of-the-box Smiths and Colts, mainly because no one in Florida had custom pistols to offer. But, at an out-of-state match, he saw what was then being offered by custom makers. The birth of the Model 53 Conversion was soon to come.

Reed started building combat pistols patterned after those he had seen. He built about 75 conversions, not all of them on the Jet frame. But as he progressed he became more sure that the Model 53 suited him best.

As Reed put it to me, "Earlier shooting with factory guns convinced me that the

Colt had a better ignition system with the separate firing pin concept," Reed explained. "But the Smith & Wessons fit my hand better and the Smith action is easier to work with. The Model 53 was a natural, as it had both of these characteristics."

All of his early conversions had Douglass 1 in 14 twist barrels, and all were in .38 caliber. Why then the .32?

"As I said, I'm a gadget-person, and I

vice, which Reed felt needed more work to be completely satisfactory, so he took it off. The original hammer of the 53 is removed, and replaced with a K-22 hammer. Reed doesn't dehorn his hammers, but achieves a lighter mass by drilling several large holes in the body of the hammer piece.

Just how much better is this conversion over others? That may be a moot point,



Here's Reed Knight's (1306 29th, Vero Beach, FL 32960) conversion of the Model 53 Smith and Wesson Jet to .32 caliber.

love to tinker," Reed answered. "The .32 is a standard police cartridge, and legal in combat matches."

Reed used an Obermeyer 1 in 16 twist barrel on the .32 version. With Dynamit-Nobel factory ammunition, he has gotten under 1" groups at 50 yards from the bench, and under 1/2" at 25 yards. The only drawbacks seem to be a difficulty in finding regular supplies of the .32 fodder, and a tendency for the lighter round to be wind-sensitive.

The photographs are of the .32 conversion, and show some of Reed's ingenuity. With no .32 speedloaders commercially available, Reed built his own. They are fabricated from aluminum, and seat the rounds flush with no added hand movement required. On the pistol itself the front sight shrouds are larger and higher than commercial versions, and the front sight blade a bit narrower. It exactly covers the neck of the target image at 50 yards. The cut-out dovetail on the rib was for a quick-change elevation-setting de-

but Ray Steele, Armorer for the U.S. Secret Service, has built six in .38 caliber. Perhaps Reed's philosophy tells it best:

"If you think something will help, it usually does."

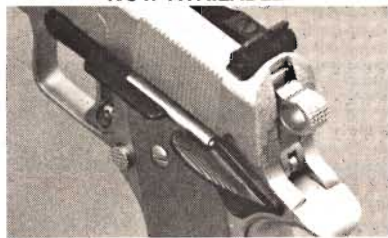
Since only 16,000 Model 53's were built, finding one for this conversion can be difficult. Although Reed is always on the lookout, he has to compete with collectors who want a Model 53, as is. But, resourceful as ever, Reed has recently gone another way to achieve the same results. By using a Smith Model 10, and a Python firing pin and spring, a substitute conversion-conversion can be made.

Reed finished by telling me he has a top-notch machinist in his shop now, and may accept custom work on a limited basis.

I watched him as he headed for the plane that he flew to the match. All the way home I wondered how he would have fared against the Red Baron. A crazy idea maybe; but my money would have been on Reed!



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AmmoScene

By Evan P. Marshall

THE .38 SUPER: A GREAT GUN WITH THE RIGHT BULLET

The .38 Super was introduced in the late 1920's and created a real sensation. With a velocity of 1280 feet per second and a muzzle energy of 475 ft lbs, it was the king of the handgun field. FBI agents routinely carried the .38 Super, because of its ability to penetrate the bullet-proof vest worn by the criminals of that day.

The advent of the .357 Magnum, however, soon diminished the Super's popularity. The Super headspaces on the case rim, and the end result is only mediocre accuracy. Furthermore, the 130 grain full metal jacket slug was great on penetration, but lacked stopping power. Another cause for its lukewarm reception on a long-term basis, was the lack of military surplus ammo in this caliber.

The Super struggled along in almost total obscurity, until Lee Jurras turned his

attention to this caliber. Lee developed two loads for this caliber; a 107 grain jhp and 112 grain jsp. Both loads were rated at velocities in excess of 1400 feet per second.

Unfortunately, shortly after Lee introduced these two loads, Super Vel ceased production. As a longtime disciple of the .38 Super, I spent a great deal of time going from gun shop to gun shop buying all the SV .38 Super ammo I could find.

With the end of the SV load, .38 Super owners were forced to turn to handloads for high performance .38 Super loads. This coupled with the .38 Super's casual accuracy, lessened further the already limited popularity of the Super.

Winchester-Western, however, came to the rescue of the .38 Super with a 125 grain jhp load. While this load has a rather large amount of exposed lead at its nose, it

COMING IN THE JANUARY ISSUE OF GUNS MAGAZINE

"In The Gravest Extreme" By Massad Ayoob

This timely and important book is must reading for everyone concerned with personal safety. It does not attempt to convince people that they either purchase or carry a firearm. It does tell those who have already decided that they need a gun for personal protection just what a grave responsibility it is, and how to handle situations where their lives are in danger.

The words of the author best exemplify the tone of this book:

"This book was written to correct the dangerous misconceptions on the part of many as to when they can exert the deadly force of the guns they have decided to use for self defense. It will be said that this book teaches the reader to kill. I prefer to think that it teaches him to stay alive; the emphasis is not so much on the taking of life as the relieving of a threat to life."

Each of the 10 exciting chapters to be published in the next 10 issues of GUNS Magazine are filled with the down to earth facts every gun owner needs to save his life, protect his freedom and prevent bodily harm. Subjects covered include: "The Laws of Lethal Force," "A Gun in Your Home," "A Gun in Your Car," "Common Senses About Carrying Concealed Weapons," and "The Dangerous Myth of Citizen's Arrest."

Excerpted from the forthcoming book, "In The Gravest Extreme" is destined to be the most popular self-defense book of 1979... and you can read it now, only in GUNS Magazine.

feeds reliably through both my Colt and Llama .38 Supers. It expands well, has good accuracy, and produces consistent performance with little velocity variation from round-to-round. The results are listed below:

Winchester-Western
125 grain jhp Velocity Expansion

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|
| 1. Llama 5" barrel | 1228fps | .723" |
| 2. Colt 4 1/4" barrel | 1162fps | .672" |

When Bob Hamilton re-introduced the Super Vel line, he produced both SV .38 Super loads. Unfortunately, however, sales were so poor that production has ceased. Bob has indicated to me, however, that he would resume production of these loads if demand warrants it. They are both extremely accurate loads; in my Bar-Sto equipped Colt, they both shoot under 2 1/2" from my Lee Pistol rest at fifty yards! The results are listed below:

Super Vel
107 grain jhp Velocity Expansion

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|
| 1. Llama 5" barrel | 1442fps | .816" |
| 2. Colt 4 1/4" barrel | 1342fps | .724" |

Super Vel
112 grain jsp Velocity Expansion

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---------|-------|
| 1. Llama 5" barrel | 1418fps | .718" |
| 2. Colt 4 1/4" barrel | 1327fps | .674" |

As I mentioned earlier, the .38 Super has long been scorned because of its lousy accuracy. There is, however, a solution to

**"New life with an Irv Stone
super-accurate barrel . . ."**

this dilemma. Irv Stone builds a super accurate barrel for the .38 Super. These barrels will make a dramatic increase in the Super accuracy just by ordering one and installing it yourself. To obtain the full potential of these barrels, however, it's best to ship the complete gun to Irv (Bar Sto, 633 S. Victory Blvd., Burbank, California 91502), and pay the nominal fee Irv charges to fit the barrel to that particular weapon. I have a xerox copy of a target shot with the SV 112 grain jsp load and Bar-Sto barreled Colt Govt. .38 Super that had been hand-fitted by Irv. This combination produced an incredible 1 5/16" fifty yard group from a machine rest!

There is always a great deal of pressure to conform to the norm, whether the subject is firearms or something else. But if you prefer the light bullet-high velocity approach to stopping power, the .38 Super makes the 9MM seem anemic by comparison. Furthermore, it offers an accuracy potential that the 9MM and the .45 ACP can only dream about!



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since the invention of the revolver!**

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- Original one-piece MONOGRIP® design hugs the frame—no side screws or loose, shifting panels.
- HOGUE's famed orthopedic hand shape for the ultimate in gun handling.
- COBBLESTONETM system—An efficient, non-slip, non-irritating, stippling pattern that replaces conventional checkering. This grip will not wear out clothing.
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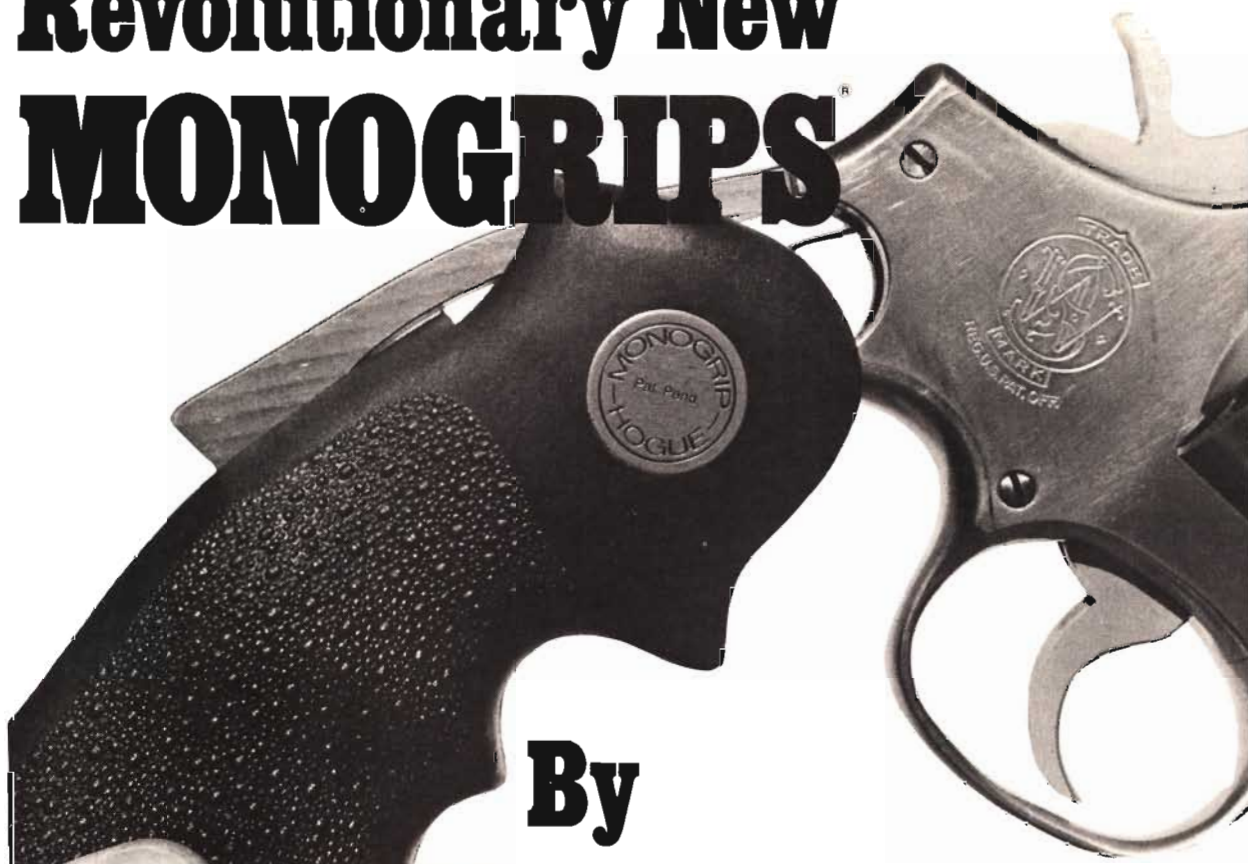
Only S&W square butt K frame grips currently available.

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Revolutionary New MONOGRIPS®



By

HOGUE

Here the grip is almost in place. Once in place, it is impossible for one side to shoot loose and unstabilize the hand of the shooter.

By James D. Mason

Really new changes in handgun grip designs are rare. Guy Hogue of Hogue Combat Grips (Box 460, Morro Bay, CA 93442) has come up with the biggest innovation to come down the pike in 140 years. Called Monogrip® (a registered trademark of Hogue), it is a one-piece grip design made to slip over the metal frame handle of the revolver. As such, it provides the most solid, stable handful of handgun this author has experienced.

Regular two-piece designs are applied to either side of a handgun handle much like slices of bread on a sandwich. A tension screw holds the grip halves together; the slabs are stabilized by inletting into the upper handle recesses and by a crosspin in the butt section. This arrangement has worked reasonably well for a long, long time, so why tamper with tradition?

The disadvantages of two-piece grips are legendary, especially for the avid handgunner and shooter of high-energy loads. Sooner or later, the wood sockets enlarge on the stockpin and the butt end of one grip-half slides freely under tension from the hand squeeze or recoil. This slight movement is enough to be distracting for combat situations; for the precision shooter, it can blow a perfectly good group at 25 or 50 yards. Solutions to this two-piece grip problem involved all kinds of fixes, including epoxy resin filling for the channel of the grips, thus making the

grip hug the frame but also making the halves difficult to mount or remove. But, all this concern is no longer necessary.

Monogrip® is a single-piece device that slips over the gun handle and is held by a machine screw that threads into a special metal stirrup that attaches to the bottom strap. It is secured by this single screw that enters through the butt of the grip. No unsightly screw holes are seen in the side panels to irritate the finger tips or palm. Screw tension raises the grip into the frame recesses and up against the flat portion of the butt near the backstrap. Since the grip is made in one piece, it is impossible for one side to shoot loose and unstabilize the hand hold of the shooter. The hottest revolver loads can be fired with no concern about shifts and changes due to loose grips.

The Monogrip® concept is simple and adaptable to many variations in styles. Hogue is now making wood grips in this configuration for the open or closed backstrap style. The superlative Hogue orthopedic hand fit is retained and improved on in Monogrip®; this grip shape and function has been described as the best available and has evolved over the years from Hogue's earlier combat styles. It is so good, it has been copied directly by another grip maker. Guy Hogue's grips are used by many champions in PPC and combat league competitions.

The heart of the Monogrip® system is the stainless steel


stirrup that joins the grip to the gun frame. This stirrup consists of a "U"-shaped piece that straddles the bottom strap of the frame. When it is pushed over the bottom strap, a 3/16-inch roller is placed between the stirrup walls. A crosspin then goes through the stirrup and roller completing the installation. My sample grip required using tweezers and a small hammer to start the pin in its hole; pins are made to fit the stirrup holes closely to avoid looseness.

Once the stirrup is on the frame, the grip is introduced from below the gun butt. The stirrup is put into the guide slots inside the grip cavity and the stock and handle are then mated. A 6-32 machine screw is put in the escutcheon hole in the bottom of the grip; the screw picks up the threaded nut on the bottom of the stirrup. Tightening the screw for a snug fit stabilizes the grip. When the grip is properly mounted, it fits as though it were part of the gun; removing the screw allows the grip to be dismounted as easily as it goes on.

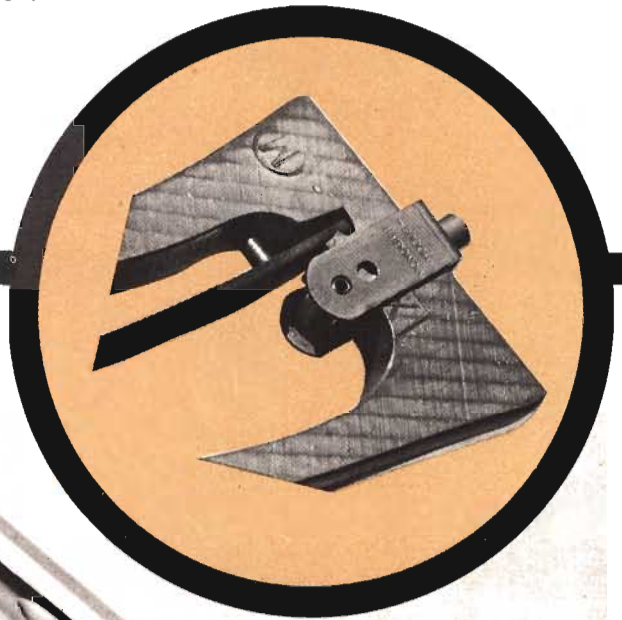
On older S&W gun frames, handle dimensions are slightly smaller than on recent production guns. Hogue provides a strip of tape to apply to the front strap of the gun handle in these cases. The tape acts as a shim to position the grip farther forward on the frame so as to eliminate the slight edge that stands above the backstrap on open back models. The grip is made to fit modern frames exactly, but the shim allows a perfect fit on older S&W frames as well. The sample Monogrip® fit my late model K-frame perfectly, but an older Military and Police revolver required the shim. It is best to try the grip first to see how it fits the frame. Be sure to check the strain screw on S&W guns to see that it is flush with the front strap before installing the grip.

Closed back Monogrip® designs are available from Hogue for round butt K and J frame S&W guns. The stock material completely encloses the metal frame handle so there is not metallic contact between the hand and the gun. These grips are surprising in that they are small scaled for concealment, yet they

provide that secure, natural feeling handhold so needed for consistent point shooting and recoil control. The J frame closed back grip is destined to become a classic, even surpassing the feel and performance of Hogue's older model grips for small guns.

The importance of handgun handle grips cannot be overemphasized. The handgun/human interface occurs at this point. The fewer problems that are encountered by the shooter at this union the better. Among other things, the grip should be easy and natural to grasp. Too many shooters are not adequately sensitive to what constitutes a good handhold or to know when a grip is ill fitting. Good DA shooting demands a consistent, stable handhold of adequate trigger reach to control the DA trigger pull and recovery. Design of palm swells must be in accordance with uniform pressure distribution in the palm; properly proportioned, the swells help position the gun uniformly during the grasping action. The girth proportions must fit the fingers well enough so that an adequate amount of "meat" is present for long middle fingers, while a suitable reduction in the butt dimension allows the little finger a full grasp, also. 

Here's the metal stirrup that attaches to the bottom strap that makes it all possible. Grip is slipped on from bottom and is secured only by a single screw that enters through the butt of the grip.



No screwholes, no seams and nothing to separate under recoil . . . that's the new Hogue Mono grip shown on a Model 64 S & W .38 special.





You can choose from molded Nylon or wooden grips. Also there is an open or a closed backstrap style. Style was adapted from earlier Hogue grip designs.

Hogue was one of the first grip makers to realize the significance of the revolver speedloader and altered his grips years ago for full relief. The Monogrip® carries forward this feature, allowing unobstructed speedloader access as well as ample clearance for ejected cases. Proper speedloader clearances must function flawlessly in both respects, and Hogue's Monogrip® is one of the few stocks on the market that accomplish both functions.

Guy Hogue's earlier career at LAPD encompassed armory work, exhibition shooting, and firearms instruction. He knows the requirements for handgun stocks as do few other grip makers. His line has become known for overall excellence and Monogrip® is another extension of that theme. From my experience, Hogue's grip designs come closer to perfection in all the basics listed above than any of the other makers. This is not to be disparaging of the many other fine handstocks that are available; they only serve to highlight the excellence of the Hogue product. These are not just my own observations, but constitute a consensus from other writers and shooters with whom I have discussed the issue. The general feeling is that Hogue earns the top marks for his balanced, orthopedic grip shape. His consistent craftsmanship is of the highest order. And, if all this good functional design yields an aesthetically pleasing handgun stock, so much the better for the beholder.

About 90% of grip buyers want finger grooves in their stocks. Among *aficionados* of combat shooting, the point is always controversial. My own tastes run to no-finger grooves; it can be rationalized that they provide no real advantage while giving a potential disadvantage where the grasping hand places fingers *over* the separations not between them. However, having used several makes of grooved grips, I have found Hogue's designs among the most uniform in grip hold; but then the same is true of his no-groove stocks (he offers wood grips with or

without finger grooves at no cost difference). The point here is that Hogue's proportionally radiused grooves have not tended to slow or inhibit the speed or uniformity of the initial grasping motion on the grip. The same cannot be said of all grooved grips and comparisons should be made by the discriminating shooter. Just because finger grooves *look* sexy does not mean they will function positively. Properly designed, the grooves should be neutral feeling in the hand with each segment proportioned to individual fingers.

Hogue's wooden grips are offered at \$35 for the basic unit. Fine line checkering (which most shooters want) runs \$5 more. In addition, strain screw adjustment holes and fancy woods come at extra cost. Wood options offered for Monogrips include Pau Ferro, Concato Alves, Cocobolo (\$2 extra), and Brazilian Rosewood (\$4 extra). Wood Monogrips currently are made in open back strap designs for the square butt models N, K, and J Smith & Wesson revolvers as well as for Colt Python I frames. Closed back, open back, and open back with special shoulder Monogrips are also available for round butt models K and J frame S&W guns. Ruger Security Six Monogrips will be forthcoming.

Monogrips® are also available in molded Nylon. Currently made for the square butt K frame, Nylon Monogrips® soon will be available for the N-frame and round butt K and J models, plus the Security Six. Unlike so-called "plastic" grips, the Hogue molded model is made from high-strength, reinforced Nylon. This one-piece grip fits the frame precisely with no warping. The surface finish is vapor honed to produce a pleasing, light matte texture. The normal checkering areas are stippled with a functional COBBLESTONE™ pattern that clings to the skin with no slippage or irritation. As opposed to regular checkering, the stipple pattern will not wear out clothing when the gun is carried concealed. This stippling feature will be especially useful during those critical phases of a combat shoot where hands sweat profusely. The exclusive COBBLESTONE™ pattern will not irritate sensitive skin. Heretofore, checkered grips have been shunned by the big Magnum shooters for this reason.

The Nylon Monogrip® is practically indestructible because of its high impact resistance; it is impervious to practically all chemicals and should keep its attractive finish for many years of

"The Nylon Monogrip is practically indestructible . . . it is impervious to practically all chemicals and should keep its attractive finish for many years of hard use."

hard use. Nylon material should not be confused with other cheap plastic materials that are usually used in molded grips. At \$14.95 a pair, the Nylon Monogrip® is a good bargain; the shooter gets the same first-class functional fit of a Hogue custom grip along with the serviceability of a precision molded one-piece design.

No compromises have been made in the design or manufacture of this Nylon grip; it is not a "cheap" version of Hogue's wooden line. Nylon makes sense for a good many applications where practical field and duty situations dictate. The Nylon is much less vulnerable to wear and abuse than wood. True to the integrity of this product, no attempt has been made to simulate wood grain; the Nylon grip appears to be exactly what it is. Currently it can be purchased in any color the buyer wants as long as it is deep blue-black. Other colors will come later as demand dictates.

This new Monogrip® concept is going to make a big splash. It has a lot of things that handgunners have wanted in their grips for quite some time. As it is made exclusively by Hogue, Monogrip® combines the best mechanical functional features with the best orthopedic hand shapes so vital to consistent scores, for competition, field shooting,



or duty combat use.

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"K" SIGHTING

THE WORKHORSE COLT

By Joseph H. Gerard

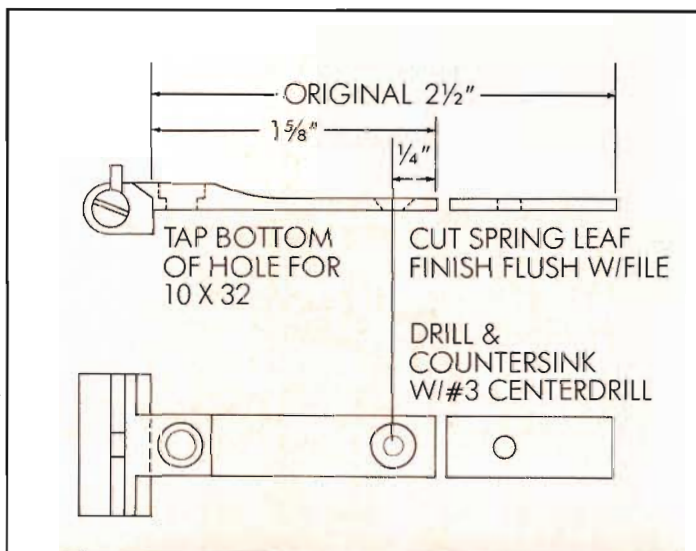
Sights have been bolted, brazed, and beat on the Colt Government Model 45 A.C.P. in many fashions, for many reasons, for many years. Smith & Wesson "K" sights are popular because they afford: a lower sight plane, a more aesthetic appearance (makes a Colt look like a "fox"), and to accommodate its use out of a holster.

Previous installation methods of the "K" sight required: removal of the old sight, filling the dovetail in the slide with weld, shaping the weld to the contour of the slide, milling the required intricate clearance cuts for sight installation, and refinishing the slide.

Now, another method for those who choose to skip some steps. Not as "Foxy," not as fragile, and not as much sight radius, but it does not require touching the slide with a torch, or refinishing when complete (if you're careful).



K-Sights on the "workhorse" Colt gives a lower sight plane, and, of course, puts finely adjustable sights where once stood only the "windage only" plain combat sight.



"K" SIGHT MODIFICATION

It does require milling the slide and modification to the "K" & "N" Smith & Wesson sights. ("J" sights may be used without modification and*¹ the original front sight need not be replaced.

The following procedure details "K" sight modification and installation, the "J" sight is installed by the same method; however different dimensions cuts are required.

SIGHT MODIFICATION

The "K" sight is sprung for elevation adjustment to be 'pulled' against spring tension. The modification allows elevation adjustment by 'pushing' against spring tension.

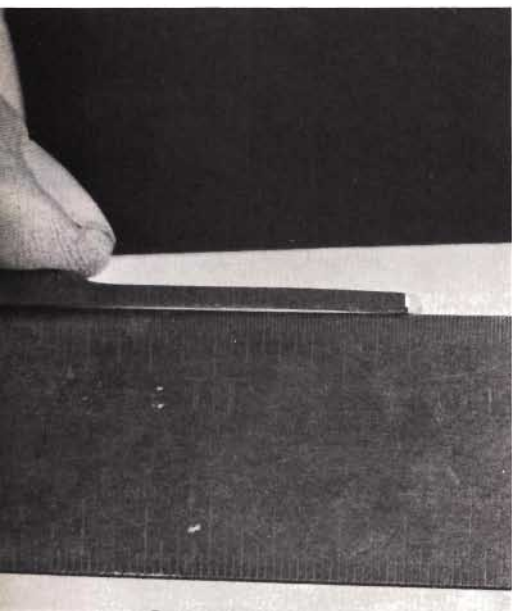
To modify the "K" sight: remove (1) rear sight elevation stud, (2)



"Springing" the K-Sight is accomplished by placing sight assembly upside down on anvil with sight leaf supported on a lead block and tap spring leaf from curved to flat (.015 recurved) contour with ballpeen hammer.



Steel ruler can be a big help in getting a true picture on just how straight you made the sight plane.



spring clip, (3) elevation nut with (4) sight plunger and (5) plunger spring. Place sight assembly upside down on anvil with sight leaf supported on a lead block and tap spring leaf from curved to flat (.015" recurved) contour with ballpeen hammer.

Thread bottom of elevation nut hole with 10 x 32 tap. Cut a shallow cross on the bottom of a 10 x 32 1/4"

front lower surface of dovetail. Increase depth of cut by 5/32" (.156"). Make horizontal cut across dovetail squaring and deepening front of old sight dovetail. Increase width of cut to the rear (.044") to allow 3/8" (.325") total clearance for sight assembly.

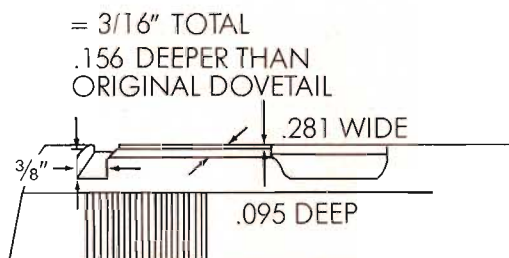
Place sight assembly in clearance cut with .020" clear between front of squared dovetail and front of windage adjustment housing. Mark springleaf at bolt face. Cut and finish springleaf for flush finish with bolt face at ejection port.

Locate center and drill hole 1/4" from bolt face in springleaf and slide with #3 centerdrill and countersink sight springleaf for "Weaver oval" 6x48 3/16" screw. Remove "K" sight from slide and re-drill hole in slide with #31 bit & tap for 6 x 48 thread.

Raise detent on slide with centerpunch to engage cross on bottom of elevation adjustment screw.

Finish machined surfaces of slide with cold blue and install modified "K" sight.

Replace front sight with 1/8" new front sight and cut to approximate height of 3/16". *1"J" sight may require slight reduction of original sight leaf height to use original front sight.



SLIDE MODIFICATION

screw and install in elevation nut hole of "K" sight.

SIGHT INSTALLATION

Chuck stripped slide in milling machine vise (level & square). Install a 9/32" (.281") end mill cutter in collet. Center cutter on top radius of slide and mill slot from bolt face to front of dovetail .095" deep.

Align cutter to match bottom and

Here's a closeup of the completed job. When you know the sights are right on, it's bound to build shooting confidence.



"El Presidente"

By Jeff Cooper

Some eight years ago, when the techniques for teaching practical pistolcraft were being developed, certain proficiency tests became semi-standard. Since expert weaponcraft can never be properly evaluated by any one exercise, no single course of fire can suffice as a "pass-fail" determinant, but among sev-

eral that stand out is one that has come to be called "El Presidente." I used it first in training the presidential guard in a Central-American republic, but I gave it no title at the time. It was the Australian practical pistolmen who standardized and gave it a name. Today it is used as a basic exercise and competition stage throughout the world. Any experienced pistolero, from San Francisco, Cape

Town, London, Oslo, Zürich, or Sydney can tell you his average score on El President, along with (more happily) his best ever.

It is a good test. It is certainly not all-inclusive, but if time presses and you want to know if a man can handle a pistol, have him shoot this one for you. A good performance on it pretty well establishes good pistolcraft.



As the ads keep on saying, "a good man with a revolver can load as fast as the one with the auto." If anyone can do that trick, it's Candolfi. Sequence shows: last shot, cylinder open, ejector in action.





Here we see the last of the shells out, speedloader inserting shells and the gun back in action and ready to fire. There are a lot of good wheelgunners around that can do this little ol' trick mighty fast.



In its pure form it is shot thus:

Three standard silhouettes (now I.P.S.C. "Option" targets) are placed at ten meters distance, three meters apart.

The shooter stands with his back to the targets, opposite the center. His pistol is holstered and safe and his hands may be held any way except "cocked." He wears clothing that conceals the fact that he is armed.

On signal he pivots 180° and engages each target with two shots each, reloads, and repeats. The Option target has a 25cm (10") center. A twelve-shot "possible" (60 points) in ten seconds is "par."

The best scoring system for the Presi-

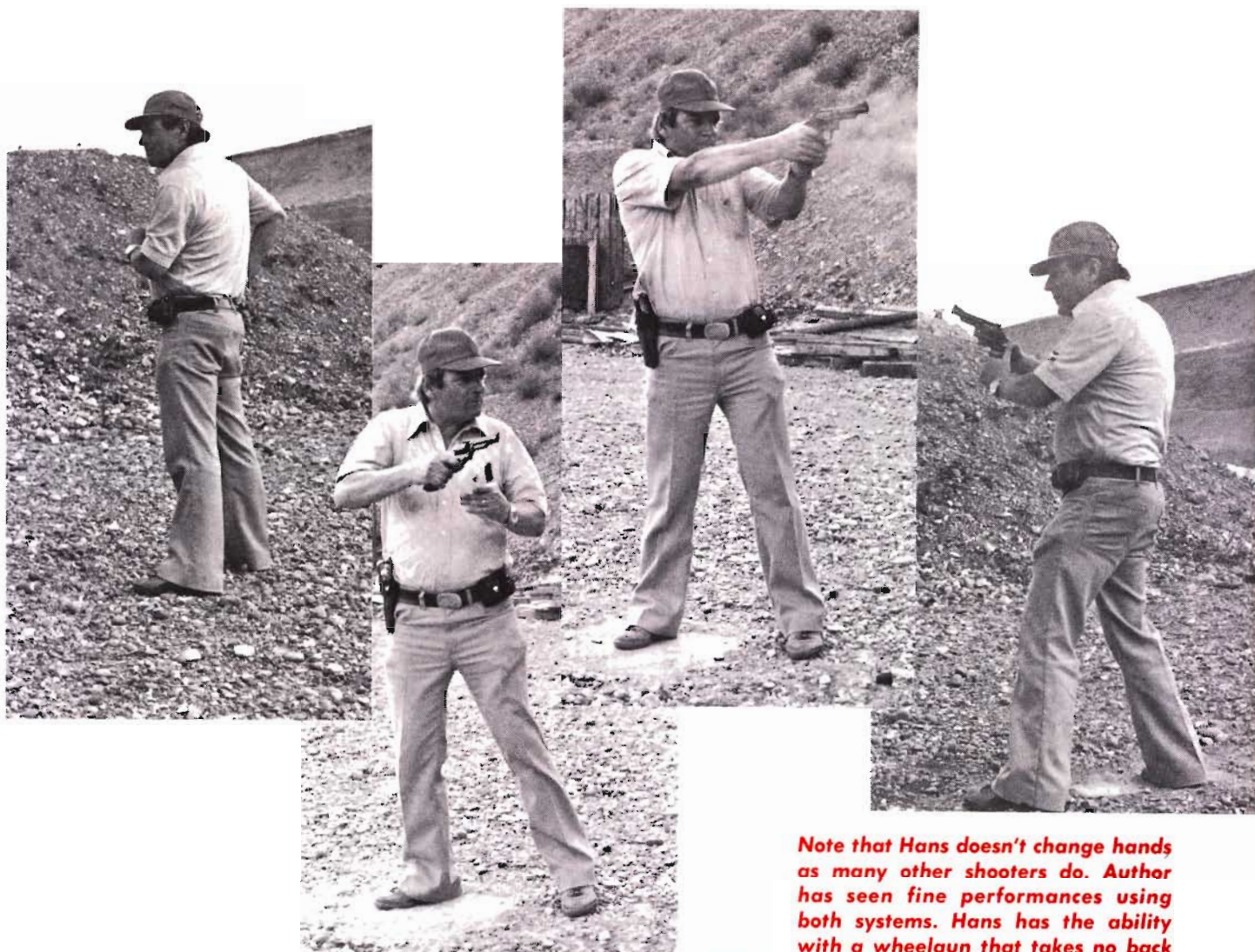
dente is the Comstock Count. A par performance provides an index of 6 (60 divided by 10). To correct to 100 points a conversion factor of $16\frac{2}{3}$ is used. Thus a very good string might show 55 points in 8.2 seconds for an index of 6.7, convertible to $111\frac{2}{3}$. All this calls for a hand calculator, but these are very common now.

This is "El Presidente de veras," the true and original. There are, of course, various altered versions.

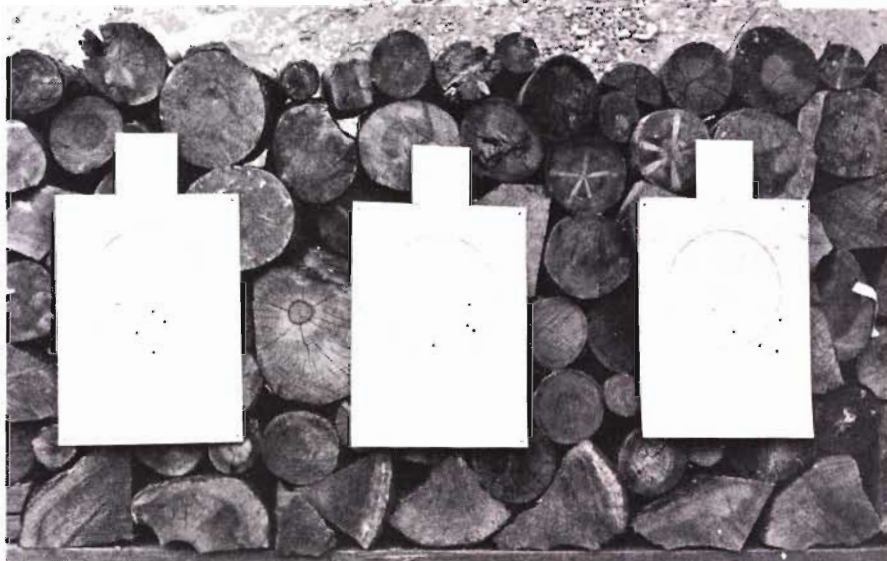
The first variation is the elimination of the concealment provision, which has been known to cause raised eyebrows with some legalists in some places. It

makes no difference. A good man can pivot and draw at the same speed from concealment as from without, since the pivot takes longer than the draw.

The second variation is the "Vice Presidente," (pronounced ((VEEsay)) shot without the pivot. Starting back-to-target, which is simple, quick, and safe when done right, absolutely horrifies some people who are unfamiliar with the modern technique. The fact that this has been going on for about a decade, all over the world, without a mishap, does not change their opinion. Neither does the fact that the Karate pivot, as examined photographically, never points the



Note that Hans doesn't change hands as many other shooters do. Author has seen fine performances using both systems. Hans has the ability with a wheelgun that takes no back seat to an auto.



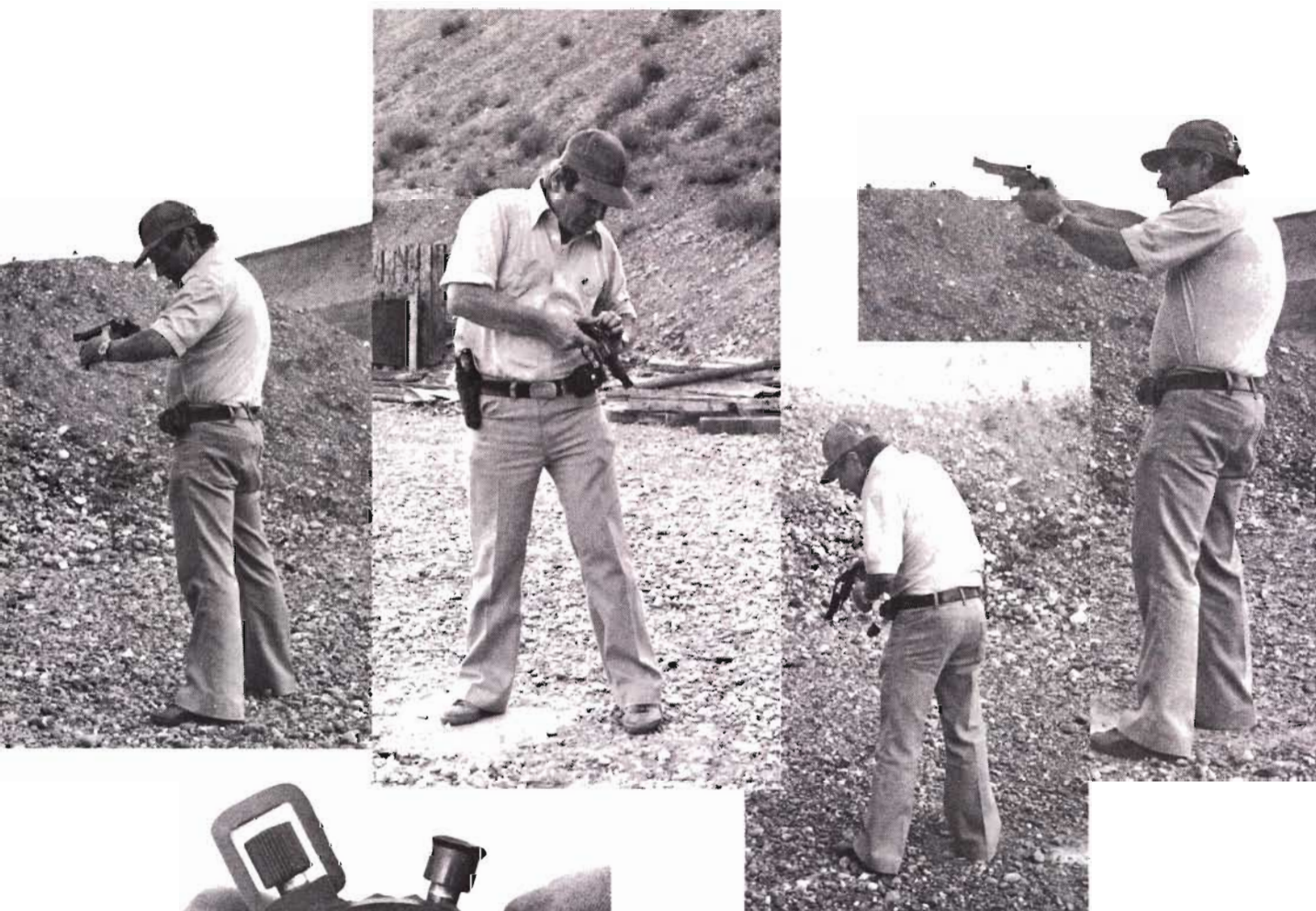
How about this? here we see nine 5's, two 3's and a 1. That makes 52 points in anyman's language. The time is 8.2 seconds. Corrected score (Comstock) is 105.7 or 5.7 over par. Great for a revolver.

pistol in an unsafe direction. You cannot argue with a man about *safety*, even (or perhaps especially) if you are right and he is wrong. Hence the "Vice Presidente." Par time is 9 seconds.

The third variation is the "Demi Presidente," in which, after the reload, the shooter fires only one shot on each target rather than two, but in the head ring (10cm, or 4"). The head ring counts 5, anything else zero. Par time remains 10 seconds, but since possible score is 45 rather than 60, par index is $4\frac{1}{2}$ and the conversion factor is $22\frac{1}{4}$.

All handgun types are scored the same on the Presidente, as with all practical exercises, and pistols with a capacity of more than twelve rounds are traditionally reloaded after six. This is not to rule against large magazines but rather to recognize that smooth and dexterous reloading — with any sort of piece — is an element of good gunhandling.

Those who favor a revolver are faced with the need for a bit of extra practice if they are to do well on El Presidente, but, as the ads insist, a good man with a speed loader ought to be able to reload a revolver as quickly as an auto. Whether or



Hans Candolfi shooting a classic Presidente (3 targets, 10 meters) with an M-19 unconcealed. Firing stance is Weaver, as taught in the API overseas program.



not this claim can be supported, there are some *very sharp* wheelgunners around, and the way they tear into a Presidente is a joy to behold.

The photo sequence shows Hans Candolfi, of Basel, Switzerland, shooting a 52 in 8.2, for a score of 105.2. Note that Hans does not change hands, as many do. I have seen fine performances using both systems, so I must conclude that either will do. It would seem to be a matter of just how capable the aspirant is with his left hand. These targets are not placed the specified three meters apart,

but that hardly matters. If they had been the time might have been 8.4, and who would notice? Hans is among the great wheelgunners. Men of his ability need not defer to auto shooters, but such men are rare.

El Presidente has become so standard that there are quite a few sportsmen who shoot nothing else. It calls for only ten meters of range, it is easy to set up and administer, and it takes no time at all. Using four firing bays, 100 shooters can be accommodated in an hour and a half, shooting two strings each. Its stand-

ardization has its bad side, but it is also a plus in that it lends itself to very wide interregional comparisons. In Germany, for example, if you can shoot par (100) on demand, three times in succession, you rate a fancy black decal for the rear window of your Mercedes.

I don't really know what the record is at this time. I have seen a couple of 6½'s, with pretty fair hits. (This works out to around 130.) The Norse Region, in particular, is fielding marksmen who consistently break seven seconds and stay well centered, but practice is never the same as a match, and a minor match is never the same as a major one. Thus a "presidential stage" should probably be included in the next World Championships, if only to settle this matter of an established world record.

As with most practical pistol exercises, El Presidente should not be attempted by unskilled shooters. Smooth, precise gun handling does not come without a certain amount of work, much of which can be done with an empty gun and dummy ammunition off the shooting range. The best course, for those who are really interested, is to enroll in a formal school of weaponcraft and acquire the right technique from the ground up. Bad habits are hard to break.



At one time in the dim past, Spanish-made pistols had a bad reputation among American shooters. And up until World War II there were a lot of cheaply made handguns exported from Spain. By and large these were inferior copies of American and German designs, made of poor-quality materials and sloppily manufactured. Not surprisingly, these guns were anything but dependable, and some were even dangerous to shoot.

However, there were some Spanish gunmakers who produced nothing but quality firearms. Included in this number was Unceta, the manufacturer of Astra handguns.

Astra handguns are now imported to this country by Interarms, 10 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22313, and the Interarms lineup of these Spanish-made arms include one of the slickest-looking, smoothest operating auto pistols I've seen in a long, long time. This is the Constable model, a double action pocket pistol bearing more than passing resemblance to the famed Walther model PPK.

The Astra Constable is available in .380 ACP and .22 long rifle versions, with

either chambering selling for \$198. For an extra ten bucks you can have the same guns in chrome finish.

While most customers for a DA pocket pistol are likely looking for a personal defense firearm and will probably select the centerfire version, I opted for the rimfire .22. My handguns are bought for three basic reasons — for hunting, target shooting or informal plinking. The .380 isn't much of a big game load, and the ammo is too costly to plink with unless you chase down those far-flung brass cases and recycle them at the loading bench. But the .22 long rifle makes a great cartridge for small game, is both accurate and pleasant to shoot, and keeping a .22 pistol fed won't put much of a dent in the budget.

I'm a big fan of rimfire pocket pistols. I spend as much time as possible outdoors, and I like to carry a small, lightweight

handgun whenever I'm hiking through the woods or desert. The rimfire Constable easily qualifies in that regard. My sample weighs just 24 ounces and measures 6½ inches in overall length. Height is 4⅝ inches. The slide and frame is ¾ inch thick, while the gun itself is barely an inch wide at its widest point (the grip).

This is an all-steel handgun, and both frame and slide are highly polished and deeply blued. I've already mentioned that the Astra resembles the well-known Walther PPK. Internally these guns are somewhat different, but externally they're very much alike. Both pistols operate on the straight blowback principle, and both feature similar safety levers located at the left rear of the slide. The magazine release button is also located on the left side, at the base of the trigger guard.

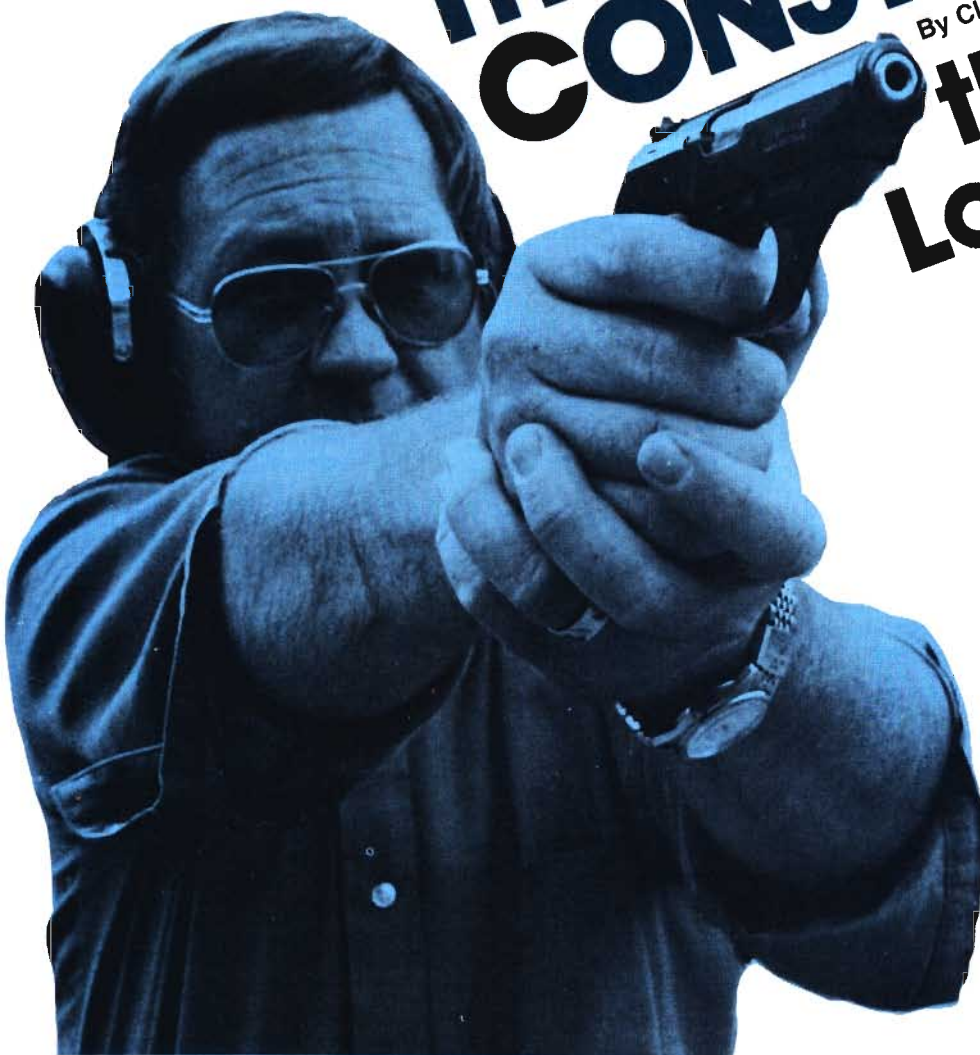
The Constable's takedown latch is lo-

The ASTRA CONSTABLE... By Clair Rees the PPK Look-alike

cated just forward of the trigger and projects slightly on both sides of the frame. Disassembly procedure is simple — just remove the magazine, pull the slide to the rear and hold it there with one hand while pulling downward on the takedown latch with thumb and forefinger of the other hand, and then ease the slide assembly forward off the frame. Reassemble in reverse order.

Care of workmanship is obvious on close inspection. Fit and finish are excellent and the gun functions very smoothly. I've run maybe 1,000 rounds of both standard and high-velocity .22 LR loads through my test sample to date, and have encountered maybe a half dozen failures to function. Those came early on in the testing, incidentally, and the last several hundred rounds have fired without a flaw. That's phenomenal reliability from any rimfire autoloader. CCI's hot Stinger ammo works very well in the gun, as does

Author firing the Constable in combat stance. The .22 rimfire makes this gun less than ideal for combat, but it's also available in a .380 Auto version.



Winchester's new Xpediter loads.

The double action trigger pull is smooth and easily controllable, while the single-action letoff is a crisp 4 pounds. The squared-off front sight blade is generously sized and is easy to find in square-notched leaf of the adjustable (for windage only) rear sight. The rear sight has rounded corners to prevent hangup on clothing.

Loading the 10-round clip is made easier by the knurled button projecting from the left side of the magazine. This lets the shooter compress the follower spring with the thumb while the magazine is being filled. The magazine itself appears to be very well designed, and the lips seem less fragile and damage-prone than some I've seen. Magazine ejection is positive, and

the hammer down. There's no trigger disconnect to render the gun inoperative when the magazine is removed, so the gun can be fired without the magazine in place.

The slide locks open after the last round has been fired, so you always know when the magazine runs dry. When a fresh clip has been inserted, depressing the slide release button that falls handily under the thumb of a right-handed shooter puts you back in business.

Accuracy is all you could expect of a lightweight pocket pistol. I had no trouble making 5-round groups print inside of 2 inches at 25 yards, while firing off the whole clip opened the spreads up to around 3 inches across. The checkered plastic grips felt good in the hand, and the

little gun proved to be a natural pointer.

Fully loaded and with the Constable tucked away inside a Jackass hip holster, the whole outfit still tips the scales about 4 ounces shy of two pounds. That makes it an easy-carrying sidearm that even a lazy outdoorsman couldn't object to toting around.

The rimfire Constable makes a top-notch knockaround handgun, and is accurate enough to put meat in the pot. And while the .22 long rifle round wouldn't be my first choice for serious social use, the gun could certainly be used for self defense.

I've also had the chance to try the .380 centerfire version, and it's all but identical to the .22 rimfire Astra. Unless you get a good look at the size of hole in the muzzle, the only way to tell the two guns apart is by glancing at the legend stamped on the breech end of the barrel and visible through the ejection port when the slide is in battery. The rimfire constable shows ".22LR" through this port, while the centerfire reads "9mm C (.380)." There's a .32 ACP version, as well, but because this caliber isn't overly popular among American pistoleros Interarms doesn't stock this number.

Interarms also imports the similarly styled Walther pocket pistol, but this admittedly excellent handgun now retails for nearly \$350 (the rimfire PP and PPK/S sell for \$370). That makes the Spanish-made Constable a real bargain at just under \$200. There are other handguns that outwardly resemble the Walther, but most look-alikes are of much poorer quality. While the Constable isn't a dead ringer for the higher priced Walther, it does share some design features. More importantly, this gun approaches the famed Walther quality of workmanship and appears to be equally reliable.

In short, the Astra Constable is a top-quality auto pistol that the most discriminating shooter would be happy to

(Continued on page 62)



Above: The Astra is small enough to fit in the palm of your hand, making it an easily concealable back-up piece. **Right:** Takedown is easy and takes only a few seconds. Takedown release is located just forward of the trigger, and projects on both sides of the frame.

the clip pops part way out of its well when the release button is pressed. If the gun is held anywhere near vertical the magazine falls clear every time.

The rotating safety lever locks the trigger and blocks the firing pin when engaged — and if the safety is moved to its "on safe" position while the gun is cocked, the hammer automatically slams forward. In fact you can't cock the hammer while the safety is engaged. The rebounding firing pin doesn't contact the primer when the hammer is riding forward, so it's safe to carry the gun chamber loaded and with

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER



By Fred Massey

The .256 Winchester Magnum round was introduced circa 1960, along with the Hawkeye pistol, a Ruger Blackhawk frame with cylinder replaced by a flat tip-out breech with a single chamber. The pistol failed to sell, going on to become one of the rarer Ruger collectibles, but the round lived on (in the Thompson Center single shot) and developed a small but ardent coterie of fans.

The .357 Magnum case necked to .256 caliber, this cartridge has proven itself as a fine choice for the handgun-packing varmint. At the same time, many beltgun aficionados simply refuse to truck with any gun that doesn't go off five or six times without reloading.

No production revolver has ever been chambered for the .256. When the round came out, Colt tried it experimentally in the Python, but found that casing backup due to the bottleneck design would jam the brass cartridge head against the recoil shield and freeze the cylinder solid. Smith & Wesson's model 53 in .22 Remington-Jet was finally discontinued because its tapered cartridge often caused similar problems.

But, fortunately, there are always inventive gunsmiths around. One is Jim Koons of Cleveland Bluing. In addition to the fine refinishing capability that gives the operation its name, Cleveland Bluing offers a full range of custom gunsmith services, and among other things is a Dan Wesson warranty repair station.

Last year, Koons decided that the .256 revolver was a concept that could be

ironed out. Starting with a blank barrel and cylinder, and a fine new Dan Wesson model 15 with factory engraving, he set to his task.

The fruit of his labors is sitting next to my typewriter at the moment. What catches your eye even more than the engraving is the boldly unfluted cylinder. And, as you turn the gun in your hand, the mousegun openings in the front of the cylinder make you do a double take.

Does it shoot? Does it ever. Dan Wesson guns have always exhibited extraordinary accuracy; if not the tightest shooting sixgun you can generally take out of a factory box, it is at worst tied with the Python for that honor. Koons used a Douglas Premium barrel, turned and threaded to work with a standard DW barrel shroud, and with a rifling twist of one turn in 14 inches.



The .256 Comes Back in a Revolver

*Custom .256 Winchester
Magnum Dan Wesson
Revolver by Cleveland Bluing
registered fine accuracy in
field tests.*

While I couldn't find a Ransom rest with a Dan Wesson grip insert in time for this article, my groups from two-handed rest indicate that the Cleveland conversion is capable of staying well within the two-inch maximum group size at fifty yards that Dan Wesson owners have come to accept as a matter of course. My own groups were stringing a little horizontally, doubtless because I wasn't accustomed to the lime-yellow plastic ramp from sight on the sample piece; the gun was having trouble with the shooter, as it were.

Handling characteristics? Muzzle blast and report were extremely unpleasant, much more so than full .357 Magnum

loads in the Dan Wesson control gun I brought along, which also had a flat-sided, unvented, six-inch heavy barrel shroud. The muzzle flash makes that of a .357 look like a pencil flashlight next to a five-cell Kel-Lite, just about, and high, hard sound of its detonation all but knife through your ear protectors to get at your eardrums. Felt recoil, however, seems to be somewhat less than with the 158-gr. .357, about the same as a 110-grain .357 that would push 1500 fps out of the six-inch tube.

What you're getting in return is a sixty grain bullet leaving the muzzle at maybe 2200 feet per second, which you can push to almost 2400 with the eight-inch option on the Dan Wesson. In a Contender of similar length, you're getting a bit over 2400, and even more if your T/C has the ten-inch tube.



The mushroom will go between .50 and .60 caliber, which is extraordinary for a small bore slug, and equals or surpasses what many 9mm., .38 Special Plus P, and some .357 Magnum softpoints can achieve.

Couple this dramatic expansion with the short penetration, and with the hydrostatic shock value that becomes a reality when you pass the 2,000 foot-second mark, and you have what handgun hunters knew was there all along: a dramatically effective varmint handgun.

I would be very leery of using this round on whitetail or boar. It is too likely to break up on heavy bone. Its ability to

knock over metallic silhouettes, even under the new rules about setting them that makes them go down easier, is unproven and doubtful at this time. If the round has anything to offer for anything bigger for varmints, it would be special-purpose anti-personnel confrontations. I would consider a Dan Wesson converted to .256 Magnum if assigned, for example, to security for a VIP who spent a lot of time amidst crowds. In that application, since a terrorist or assassin might be expected to wear concealed body armor, the .256 would likely still do the job.

But that is admittedly far-fetched. The .256 is for varmint hunters and handgun performance enthusiasts, and there it shines.

A .256 Winchester Magnum does a lot, and with a converted Dan Wesson, you can do it six times instead of once, as with a single shot. That is, if the gun keeps shooting.

Yes, folks, there is bad news. The test sample didn't perk as reliably as I had hoped. Koons tells me that during tests in Cleveland, the gun functioned perfectly except with some handloads that had been inadvertently assembled with too-high primers. I started with an assortment of .256 handloads, proven formula ranging from mild to wild on the ballistic scale.

In most of the handloads, I experienced

I called Jim, who had sent some of the handloads I was testing it with, and he advised me that a bad batch might have gotten into the package. Factory loads, he told me, had worked perfectly in testing. I acquired a box of Winchester 60-grain hollow points, and made another trip to the range. *Case backout was, indeed, non-existent with the factory stuff.* Unfortunately, the sticky cases persisted. At least a fast, smooth six shots could be gotten off.

I personally tend to think that additional polish of the chambers would be likely to solve the problem, since one or two chambers were sticky to get the rounds into in the first place. I'm a thousand miles from Jim's shop, though, and I think having a gunsmith touch up another gunsmith's brainchild is in bad taste, let alone working on it myself. A little careful but forcible application of ejector rod tip to shooting table handled the problem well enough for the tests to continue anyway.

Bear in mind that this was the very first of Jim's efforts, a true prototype. I have no doubt that the successive .256 Dan Wessons will have a more thorough polish.

Jim is now taking orders for the conversion, at \$180.00 per gun. Of course, your .357 barrel and cylinder will be returned to you. He will use your standard barrel



Specially-reamed cylinder is evident in this shot. Backouts did occur with some handloads but factory fodder worked well.

bad cylinder freezeup. A check showed that everything was as it should be; the cases were simply backing up out of the cylinder. Extraction was also extremely difficult, so much so that the spent casings had to be pounded out once the cylinder was forced open. Yet only a couple of the fired handload hulls showed signs of extra pressure.

shroud, so anyone you show your prize to will have to look beyond the barrel stamping to realize it's something other than a three-five-seven.

Jim is also planning to deliver .256/.357 interchangeability on commercially reworked Dan Wessons. He hopes to be able to fit the new cylinder so that the old one can still be dropped in again. This is

going to be an iffy proposition, I fear; getting a revolver in perfect time generally involves more than a little fitting and filing, in which the cylinder assembly plays an important part. Dan Wesson Arms is said to be working on interchangeable calibers with the big-frame .44/45 version due out in 1979, and though I can't comment on the approach they're taking to the timing problem of multiple cylinders, I have seen the plans and I *can* say that it differs from Jim's technique, which is going to involve a modification of the upper crane leg.

It can perhaps be done, however. Ruger and Harrington & Richardson have several successful, interchangeable-cylinder models out, as have some other makers, though all must be factory-fitted to be

eleven degree crown in my four-inch Model 15 Dan Wesson, and it shoots superbly with any ammo, and better than the factory barrel with .38 wadcutters. Price is similar, as is the six week delivery time.

The .256 Magnum Dan Wesson is a newbie on the custom market; at this writing, the sample on my desk is the only completed gun. You pay your money and you take your chances. Jim knows this well, and he promises me that anyone dissatisfied with the results can get a full refund, provided that they return barrel and cylinder. Naturally, if they have been tampered with, the refund goes out the window.

Being first in line for a radical new cus-

gun. It's accurate and unique, and has features many hardcore handgunners would like to avail themselves of. True, the big gun companies couldn't get the bugs out of similar designs, but that doesn't necessarily mean that a custom conversion can't circumvent the problems that made production versions of a .256 revolver impractical.

If you've got a Dan Wesson you'd like to try it with, write to Jim and see what you can set up. I'm personally not too excited about the interchangeable caliber feature, if only because of the possibility that somebody might sock in the .357 cylinder and leave the .256 barrel intact,



The small muzzle opening would lead you to do a double take when you consider the massive .357 frame it comes out of.

thus setting the stage for a blowup that could leave them doing the rest of their shooting with prosthetic hooks instead of hands. Remember, the production interchangeable caliber revolvers are .22 LR/.22 Magnum, or 9 mm./357, or .45 Long Colt/.45 ACP, and use the same barrel with both cylinders. Still, if Jim is going to do it for nothing (it's going to be included in the \$180, he tells me), then the .256/.357 versatility might make the difference for you. Just be *damn* careful when you swap calibers.

This article would not be complete if I didn't state that the Dan Wesson Arms people consider Jim and his guys to be among the best 'smiths in the country to work on their guns; DWA vice president Dick Rosenfeld considers the Cleveland Bluing action job on the Dan Wesson to be the best available anywhere. They wouldn't have given Jim the blank cylinders and whatnot that he needed for the experimental .256 if they weren't sure he could put it together better than anyone else.

You take a risk when you send your gun in for any custom work that's still in the experimental stages, but I'd trust Jim with one of my Dan Wessons. In fact, I've got an unfired model 15 that I won in a combat match a few months ago, and I've got several DWs in .357 now anyway, and I've been wondering what to do with that latest addition.

As soon as I can get a hundred eighty spare dollars in the same pile, I'm gonna wrap it up and weigh it, address it to Jim Koons, Cleveland Bluing, 1024 East 185th Street, Cleveland, Ohio 44119, and call the UPS people to make a pickup.



certain of proper parts line-up. I imagine it can be done on the Dan Wesson double action, to, but it will have to be done *very* carefully.

Jim has other irons on the fire. Among them are a cylinder for a shortened .22 Hornet with complementary barrel, and a .22 rimfire version of the gun. He already offers replacement Douglas barrels that slip inside the factory barrel shroud of a Dan Wesson in .38/.357; you have the option of one-in-ten or one-in-fourteen inch twist, and the muzzles are crowned to an eleven degree dish as on many custom PPC guns. Prices are \$25 for a four-inch, \$30 for a six, and \$35 for an eight-inch tube. Jim has sent me one but a shipping problem prevented my testing it in time for this article. Nolan Santy (Sanco Guns, River Road, Bow, N.H. 03301) put a one-in-fourteen twist Douglas with an

tom gun is kind of like having open heart surgery done with a new technique at a teaching hospital. It may be more satisfying than you had dared to hope, or it may be disappointing, but either way, your response is going to be intense. If a .256 revolver is what you want (and it is desirable in many ways), and if it turns out that super-careful mirror polishing is all that's required to make the gun function perfect, you're gonna love it to pieces. If you get case backouts and chamber-stick after coughing up a hundred eighty smackers, you're going to be righteously ripping mad. If that happens, you simply get a refund and put your .357 barrel and cylinder back in, perhaps making minor timing readjustments. That *is* a better deal than they give you in the cardiac surgery unit.

I'm not badmouthing the Cleveland

What's New

G. Wm. Davis New EPITAPH S.A. Rig

● For the shooter who prefers the low slung, forward rake holster, Davis now offers their model 4505. Made from 7-8 oz. top grain cowhide, the EPITAPH is



metal-lined for speed, good looks and durability. Leather is strongly stitched and rig is furnished with tie-down although a tie down really isn't necessary as the holster doesn't change position in the fast draw. With 6 or 12 cartridge loops in 38/357, 44 & 45 with 2½" contoured belt and boot stitch. Available in all barrel lengths from 4¾" to 7½" single action only. (Not made for .22 caliber revolvers). Write: G. Wm. Davis, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 446, Arcadia, CA 91006.

Metallic Silhouette Pistol Introduced by Wichita

● Wichita Engineering & Supply, Inc. of Wichita, Kansas, previously known for their line of outstanding Varmint and Sporter rifles, single shot actions, and quality accessories, has introduced a new pistol for serious handgunners. The Wichita Silhouette Pistol was designed primarily for the Metallic Silhouette enthusiast, or hunter, who insists upon extreme accuracy and master craftsmanship.

The Wichita Silhouette is a single shot, bolt action pistol. The round receiver and barrel are made of the highest quality chrome-moly steel. The fluted and polished chrome-moly bolt is carefully ground to assure a precision fit. The bolt face is recessed, and the three (3) locking lugs are hand lapped to assure perfect alignment with the chamber. If a cartridge



case is ruptured, or a primer is pierced, escaping gases are vented through three (3) ports in the bolt. The Wichita Silhouette receiver incorporates a bolt-stop release, and is drilled and tapped so the Lyman rear sight can be mounted at either the rear or front of the receiver. The trigger is adjustable.

The Wichita Silhouette is inventoried in 7mm PPC, .308 x 1½, and .308 Winchester (full length). Other chamberings are available upon request.

The stock is offered in either fiberglass or American walnut. Write: Mr. Nolan Jackson, Wichita Engineering & Supply, Inc., Dept. AH, 333 Lulu, Wichita, KS 67211.

Hutson Handgunner II . . . World's Smallest Pistolscope



● The tiny new *Handgunner II*, a second-generation pistolscope designed by Neil Hutson, has been announced by JPM Sales, national marketing firm for the scopes.

Only 5½ inches long and weighing just 5 ounces, the compact pistol scope features new internal click adjustments for windage and elevation (not provided on the original *Hutson Handgunner* introduced more than 10 years ago). List price for the new scope is \$89. It fits standard Thompson/Contender rail

mounts (available at local gun stores) for Smith & Wesson, Ruger and Contender pistols.

With 1.7X magnification, *Handgunner II* has an 8-foot field of view at 100 yards. Parallax is adjusted for zero at 75 feet and beyond. Hutson's patented design provides an exclusive *unlimited eye relief*. It enables even the longest-arm shooters to obtain a total, clear target image while holding their pistol at arm's length. A standard cross-hair reticle is employed.

The new *Handgunner II* has precision-ground, high-efficiency optics, coated with magnesium fluoride, nitrogen filled and sealed to prevent leakage and fogging. "By employing high-speed digital computer analysis, an extremely compact optics system with optimum clarity and brightness was achieved," said designer Neil Hutson. "With new elevation and windage click adjustments of ⅛-inch per click at 100 yards the competition shooter, ammo tester, handgun hunter — any pistol enthusiast — will find the *Handgunner II* to be a useful addition to his sport," he added.

For a free brochure on Hutson's *Handgunner II* pistolscope, write JPM Sales, Dept. AH, Box 593, Mansfield, TX 76063.

Custom-Grade Conetrol Base for Thompson/Center Contender

● Good news for silhouette shooters. New Conetrol has a new three-ring base for the Contender pistol. Style shown is the Custom-grade low-ring style. Cost is the same as the regular mounts except you add the cost of a third ring. Specially adapted for the "hot" calibers. They will stay put even during the heaviest recoil. Write: Conetrol, Dept. AH, Highway 123 South, Seguin, TX 78155.



DENVER ASSAULT COURSE

By Ray Ordorica



The Mile High City of Denver, Colorado, is one of the most active areas in the country for pistol competition of all kinds, including IPSC, metallic silhouette, magnum handgun, and classical NRA competition. Some of the fiercest competition takes place among the IPSC shooters. Ask any IPSC shooter in the Denver area what is one of the toughest courses of fire and he will probably mention the Denver Assault Course, designed by Dan Predovich, coordinator of the Colorado Pistol League (CPL).

The Denver Assault Course is a true test of practical shooting ability combined with speed and agility and with extreme demands made on shooter accuracy. Shooters have to shoot two stages of 18 shots per stage. During each stage the shooter must run approximately 50 to 75 meters at top speed stopping at 3 shooting points along the way. He must draw and fire 6 shots from each position, two per target, three targets, and reholster before moving on. The entire course is Comstock count, score divided by time.

Shooters start from behind a start-finish line which is located about 35 meters back from the target line and on the right side of the range. The targets are spaced about 5 meters apart and the center target for the first stage of the course is 5 meters closer than the targets on each side, or some 30 meters from the start line. On command "fire," the shooter must run diagonally to the left to position one—behind a barrel approximately 25 meters from the target line, from which he must fire from a concealed position. This is defined as having at least one knee touching the ground within the marked area behind the barrel. You are in for a surprise when you touch off your 1st round with the gun over an open barrel!

After shooting 2 shots per target from position one, he then must run diagonally to the right to position two—a log or railroad tie on the ground. The shooter must again fire from a concealed position two more shots per target. "Concealed" here is defined as having any portion of the

Hitting isn't the only way to win. As Ross Seyfried found out. Speed and a measure of agility are just as important. The start / finish line is 35 meters back from the target line and to the right.





One of the toughest and demanding, the Denver Assault with its true test of practical shooting ability makes for a busy day in any man's language. You can tell by the facial expression that Ross is having a workout.

upper torso touching the ground behind the log. The farthest target from the log is about 20 meters. Safety prevails and to make sure the gun is not drawn pointing rearward at the spectators, contestants are advised to draw while kneeling or, in some cases, while diving through the air. With head toward the targets in a prone position it is almost impossible with most rigs to draw without covering the spectators, so it is spelled out to all shooters very specifically that the gun must be handled in a safe manner at all times or match disqualification will be the result.

There is quite a variety of shooting positions seen here, (position 2) with some even shooting from Elmer Keith's back-rest position, with knee drawn up and head away from the targets. While that is a very good and quick position to assume, most shoot with head toward the target and two hands on the gun to help control recoil.

After these second six shots are fired, shooters must reholster and move to position three—the closest point to the targets at approximately 15 meters from the farthest target. These last 6 shots are fired from a conventional exposed 2-hand standing position. The gun is then holstered and the shooter must turn and run away from the targets back across the start-finish line to stop the clock. Two people with electronic timers compare results to avoid conflict and range alibis.

Emphasis is placed on accuracy by subtracting 10 points for each miss which is effectively removing 15 points from your possible score; 10 for the penalty plus 5 you could have got. In this game, misses are fatal. In addition to the 10 point penalty for misses, extra shots will count 10 points off. Touching the gun while moving between positions will cost you 5 points. Deduct 5 points for moving between positions with an empty gun except for the final dash to the finish line. Shooters must keep their wits about them. One clever fellow felt his gun coming out of its holster during the mad dash to the finish

line. Knowing that if the gun hit the ground he would be disqualified for the stage, but would only lose 5 points if he touched it, he grabbed his gun just in time to avoid the disaster of losing one whole stage and gladly lost only 5 points.

For the second stage of the course the targets are all partially concealed behind a wooden barricade and the firing procedure is the same. The left target is $\frac{1}{2}$ exposed, the middle target is just poking head and shoulders over the top of the barricade, and the right target has $\frac{1}{2}$ the torso exposed plus both shoulders and head showing. The barricade is presumed to be impenetrable so shots in the barricade count as misses. However, should a shot strike the edge between barricade and target and split the difference, going $\frac{1}{2}$ into target and $\frac{1}{2}$ into wood this counts as a hit since on a concrete or steel wall the bullet would most probably strike the real-life target concealed behind.

The targets and barricade to which they are attached are about 25, 20, and 15 meters from the shooting positions and 35 from the start-finish line. Due to the criss-crossing of the range while running from position to position, shooters end up running from 50 to 75 meters per stage. This also depends on the terrain on which the course is set up and may be somewhat longer if uphill and down from position to position, etc. No hard and fast distances should be set, but there should be a reasonable balance between running and shooting.

Common sense applied to available terrain and backstops should always prevail in all practical shooting tests. It is far better to be well versed in the fundamentals of shooting and be able to apply those basics to any given situation than to be able to practice any standard exercise to perfection and boredom. The Denver Assault Course, while being a fine test of shooter skill also places some emphasis on physical condition, which is a most practical consideration for the truly well-kept *pistolero*.



THE REMINGTON . . .

XP-100

It's been called "The Pursuit Of The Iron Chicken" or "Stalking The Steel Turkey," but whatever you choose to name it, the sport of metallic silhouette shooting is a fun-gun thing that is catching on everywhere. It came up from South of the Border and was immediately jumped on by American rifle toters . . . then, not to be outdone, the pistoleros found out that they knew a good thing when they shot it.

Now 50 states have their chapters of IHMSA (International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association) with sanctioned matches. There was something infectious about toppling over life-sized, steel rams at distances clear out to 200 meters . . . with a pistol, yet?

Aye that is the rub. What pistol? A lot of fine handguns could hit those distant beasties but those targets didn't fall down and play dead, necessarily. At this point in time, some anonymous deep thinker must have said, "What about the Remington XP-100?"

That did it. The pistol with a whole lot of rifle in its blood . . . was born again. The .221 Fireball was a good, flat-shooting cartridge. But, neither the factory nor the handloaded round had enough stuff for the punch that was needed to always knock 'em flat. The answer? Larger cartridges.

So now, what do we have? Well, would

you believe these possibilities? Here's a partial list: .222, .222 Mag., .223, 6 × 47, 6mm, .250 Savage, .257 Roberts, 6.5 × .250, 7 × 57, 7 × .250, .30 Rem., .308, .35 Rem., .350 Rem. Mag., .338, .358 and more . . . much more.

It had to come to this, when you figure that the targets were 1/2" thick steel for chickens and pigs and 3/8" for turkeys and rams. Now we have the gun and with modifications, the cartridge. But how did the Remington XP-100 come about? To begin at the beginning, let's go back to about March, 1963.

With more and more shooters becoming interested in long range varmint and small game hunting with a handgun, high velocities and flat trajectories became the name of that tune. With telescopic sights already a reality, few shooters could hold well enough to take maximum advantage of the improved scopes and ammunition at long ranges. Understanding this problem, Remington designed a new, highly accurate handgun that later went on to become the basis of their 600 rifle.


A single shot, bolt action, they dubbed it the XP-100. The one piece molded Du Pont "Zytell" structural nylon grip and stock was great for not warping or changing shape like wood can sometimes do. It was made for either a right- or left-handed shooter. The cartridge head was completely encased in a ring of solid steel.

Actually, a bolt action rifle with pistol dimensions.

Remington put on a ventilated rib to improve the sighting plane and a blade front sight and a rifle-type rear sight. Drilled and tapped for scope it was made with a 10 1/2" barrel. A rotating thumb safety was placed near the bolt handle.

Now the beauty of the XP-100 was that the unique design gave only minimum whip, jump and recoil. After all, when you're shooting a cutdown rifle, so to speak, you'd like to be able to hang on to it.

As we mentioned earlier, the .221 Fireball was good for game with 2650 velocities. But on the armored rams, sustained energy way out was lacking. Remington said its Fireball would sustain 780 foot pounds of energy at 300 yards. But the metal menagerie wasn't impressed by that 50 grain pill no matter what Remington said.

So now . . . enter the modifications. And that's what this issue is all about. The Remington XP-100 was a great idea. And great ideas deserve to remain alive. With heavier barrels and cartridges the XP-100 has come of age. The Remington XP-100 belongs . . . it belonged yesterday for varmints and small game and it's alive and well in this new era . . . THE DAY OF THE METAL MONSTERS. 

IN THE BEGINNING



Photo by Walter Rickell

**METALLIC SILHOUETTE
SHOOTING BOOM CREATES
NEW DEMAND FOR THE
REMINGTON PISTOL THAT
THINKS IT'S A RIFLE**

By Mike Thill



A SELECTION OF

In an interview with Helmut Sakschek, he tells how he developed the Thunder Jet.

Development of my first unlimited pistol started in March of 1978. At this time, I had competed in three Silhouette matches. My involvement grew and by April, I was appointed the Wisconsin State Director of the I.H.M.S.A. At our next match a friend showed up with an Unlimited. At this point, I decided I had

they are the best stainless barrels on the market today. I have never owned an Obermeyer barrel that would not shoot a consistent group (well under MOA). Not only does the use of stainless give better strength, but it also promotes better throat life; a definite plus, since slightly hotter turning powders are used in a 15" barrel.

In consideration of our weight problems, another problem was the stock. The

a customized Redfield International Small Bore Competition sight. This sight has 10 different inserts to fit almost every condition of lighting.

When we put it all together and put it on the scale . . . it was 1½ ounces overweight. So much for the calculations. With a pass of the milling machine on the underside of the action, and a couple of lightening holes in the bolt handle, it tipped the scale at an even 4 pounds - 7



TYPICAL LOADING DATA

Helms 747 Thunder Jet, Custom XP-100 Conversion, 15" Obermeyer Barrel

The following loads were developed in a pistol with standard throat length. Bullets were seated to touch the rifling slightly.

BULLET	POWDER	CHARGE	VELOCITY	NOTES
139 Hornaday H335		28.0	2,201	good accuracy
139 Hornaday H335		30.0	2,309	large muzzle flash
139 Hornaday H335		31.0 Max.	2,351	large muzzle flash
154 Hornaday H335		26.5	2,075	accurate
154 Hornaday H335		27.5 Max.	2,124	adequate for rams

to build one for myself. I set out to build the Ultimate Unlimited Pistol.

The caliber I chose to work with was 7mm. It has been my experience that bullet for bullet, the 7mm is more accurate and retains better energy than any other caliber. Case selection was partly based on the action I intended to use, the Remington XP-100 action. In order to avoid modifications to the bolt face, our case selection was limited. Of possible cases to choose from, we had the .221, .223, .222, .222 Mag., and 6 x 47 (.222 Mag. opened to 6mm). We chose the latter because the neck had only to be opened one more mm and the neck would not thin out as much as it had with others. Hence, the birth of the Helm 747. (A 6 x 47 opened to 7mm, or a 7 x 47). We feel that this is the best combination for Silhouette shooting in that it offers mild recoil, good bullet selection and more adequate knockdown power for those heavy rams.

The biggest problem that I was to encounter was the weight restriction of four and one half pounds. I wanted a barrel that was strong enough to take a load that would leave the rams flat on their back. The barrel was an Obermeyer. I have used Obermeyer barrels before and I feel that

existing nylon stock looks unworthy of the type of pistol that I wanted to produce. Some of the Fiberglas stocks available were also plenty practical; but again, not in keeping with the beauty of the piece. The only thing to use was wood. I contacted Fajen and the cooperation that I received was amazing. In the next week, we had a fancy grade French Walnut that weighed only 13 ounces; only 2 ounces more than the original nylon. We modified the stock slightly to open the back side around the trigger area; (an area that was totally enclosed before) to allow us to use a Canjar set trigger.

We topped the action with a Lyman 57 rear sight especially made for us with target knobs and elevations marked in 50, 100, 150 and 200 yards. The front sight is

and ⅞ ounces . . . ⅛ ounce under the weight limit.

At this point we went to the range. A friend asked what I called it; I told him the Helms 747 Jet. After one shot with our beast we added the word Thunder.

We also had dies custom-made for us by Pacific. Case-forming is a simple operation in that it forms the case from either .222 Mag. or 6 x 47, in one stroke in the full length sizing operation. Each finished pistol comes with 100 preformed match nickel cases, a complete set of reloading dies and a velvet lined presentation case; price \$747.00 complete. Custom modifications to existing XP's start at \$195.00. Write: Helmut Sakschek, 216½ Main St., Dep't. A.H., Hortonville, Wisconsin, 54994.

XP-100 CUSTOM PISTOLS



Nels Largent, gunsmith and owner of Silver Shield Gun Shop of Boise, Idaho likes to work with .30 Remington when he customizes the XP-100. A good cartridge that is flat enough and still has the remaining energy to topple the turkeys, says Nels. The XP-100 pictured was made for Jim Looney of Salt Lake City. Nels started with a modified Fajen stock, added a special muzzle brake and used Ebony tips and caps. Later, the gun pictured had a high relief engraving job with a checkered stock. The bolt handle was changed with a new Remington 700 handle. Sights are the Lyman 66 and a Lyman 17-A in the front. Silver Shield will make any custom conversion requested by the customer. This includes custom engraving, custom metalwork, accurizing, custom stock work and the gunsmithing required for change of caliber. Although involved heavily now in guns for metallic silhouette shooting, Nels specializes in the fine tuning of revolvers too. Write: Silver Shield Gun Shop, Dep't AH, 4508 Emerald, Boise, Idaho, 83704.

**MORE XP-100
CUSTOMS ON THE
FOLLOWING
PAGES . . . INCLUDING
RON POWERS,
JOHN TOWLE
AND OTHERS**



RON POWER PUS



By Mason Williams

I believe it was back in 1963 that Remington startled handgunners with their production caliber 221 Fireball cartridge and their XP-100 bolt action single shot pistol. For a while no one could figure out whether Remington had a sense of humor or whether they were dead serious about the XP-100. They certainly had faith in it because every year since 1963, it has been offered for sale to the public. Shooters, both riflemen and handgunners, kinda skiddled around the XP-100 trying to figure out just what to do with it. I put a scope on mine and shot varmints.

When I first received it, I played around with it on a bench rest and finally ended up firing less than one inch groups at one hundred yards with it and the

Bushnell Phantom scope. It has never been altered or changed to this day and it continues to put the bullet right into the cross hairs.

Fortunately, there are many handgunners who are never satisfied, thus increasing the slow pace of progress. The barrel has been re-chambered. The barrel has been removed and replaced with just about any rifle or handgun cartridge that could be handled by the action. Having a short action limited the cartridges that could be fired in this pistol.

Others ripped off the plastic stock and fitted the metal to exotic woods, some of the stocks having designs worthy of Star Wars. And still other shooters installed various types of scopes. Put simply, the

H, PULL,

BLAM!



XP-100 has led an interesting life even though sales volume has never been impressive — up until now.

It is strange that such an extremely versatile piece should remain basically ignored until today when the Mexican Silhouette and handgun hunting has brought the XP-100 to the front as THE handgun to beat. With its strong rifle action, there is no chance of warping or springing anything within the piece itself. It will effortlessly handle the 308. I understand that some individual is planning to bring out a 45-70 XP-100. And yet, with the ability to install heavy barrels and custom stocks, recoil can be handled with reasonable comfort.

As far as I am concerned, the key man

in the development of the XP-100 for both match shooting and hunting is Ron Power of Independence, Missouri 64055, P.O. Box 1604. He is a gunsmith that ranks with the top half dozen in the country today. He has imagination combined with intelligence. He is a shooter, hunter, competitor and he knows what he is talking about. Added to this is his ability to work with wood, metal and tools and you have an extremely versatile and competent individual.

Because of the ability of the XP-100 to handle rifle cartridges, Power has laid in a stock of over 135 calibers for which he can chamber the XP-100 running basically from 17 caliber through 45 caliber. Unless the customer specifies some other

With the advent of Metallic Silhouette shooting, the XP-100 has really come of age. Author states that Ron Power was an early pioneer and one of the best in custom conversions. Powers has a stock of over 135 calibers that he can chamber from .17 to .45.





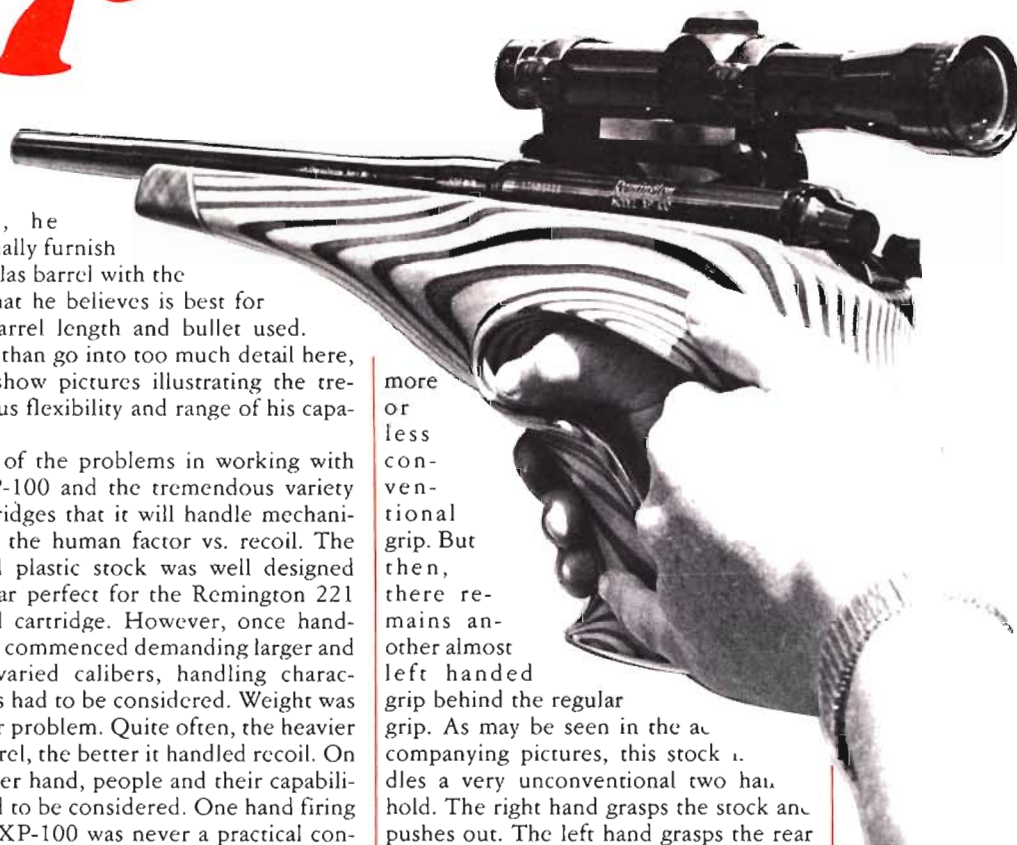
barrel maker, he will usually furnish a Douglas barrel with the twist that he believes is best for both barrel length and bullet used. Rather than go into too much detail here, I will show pictures illustrating the tremendous flexibility and range of his capabilities.

One of the problems in working with the XP-100 and the tremendous variety of cartridges that it will handle mechanically is the human factor vs. recoil. The original plastic stock was well designed and near perfect for the Remington 221 Fireball cartridge. However, once handloaders commenced demanding larger and more varied calibers, handling characteristics had to be considered. Weight was another problem. Quite often, the heavier the barrel, the better it handled recoil. On the other hand, people and their capabilities had to be considered. One hand firing of the XP-100 was never a practical consideration. As a result, two handed firing became the recognized method of shooting this handgun, but it took Ron Power to design the correct type of stock.

Those readers in their sixties will remember Doctor Doolittle and his menagerie of weird animals. One of these, the Push Me-Pull You as I recall had a head on each end and one end was always pulling or pushing the other. Ron Power has put this concept to work in his special design stocks. The stocks do not meet any normal requirements of a regular two handed stock. The right hand fits into the

more or less conventional grip. But then, there remains another almost left handed grip behind the regular grip. As may be seen in the accompanying pictures, this stock includes a very unconventional two handed hold. The right hand grasps the stock and pushes out. The left hand grasps the rear of the stock and pulls back. Surprisingly, this is a very steady hold permitting extremely accurate firing off hand. Once the shooter gets the hang of this, he can literally call his shots with iron sights or scope. Once Power figured out the hang of what he wanted to do with stocks for the XP-100, he went to Reinhart Fajen and the two of them worked on the basic design. At this time, Fajen makes the stocks and Power installs and fits them to the specific barrelled action that the customer has selected.

The primary advantage of this type of



stock design is that recoil is dampened and controlled without the shooter having to take a beating. Through the Push Me-Pull You concept, recoil is bucking both hands with the result that it cannot punish the shooter — within reason of course.

I have touched upon the mechanical aspects of these Power XP-100's. While important, this is not nearly enough. Mechanical details such as barrel weight, chambering, stock design, balance, heft, hand, and the fitting of special sights and



UPPER LEFT: Here's the famous push-pull grip being used on a beautifully laminated stock by Fajen. Fajen makes the stocks and Power installs and fits them to the specific barreled action that the customer has selected.

ABOVE: Another model by Power, this time in an exotic wood with contrasting tip. Notice too the aesthetically done checkering adds that extra touch that so beautifully complements the quality gunsmithing work.

patience that make the Power handguns what they are today. Without these assets, these handguns would amount to merely pieces of steel and wood. The polishing is superb. The taper of the barrel, the slight turn of an angle, the precise fitting of metal to wood — all these things add up to a Ron Power XP-100. They are beautiful. They are clean. They are classic in their simplicity and finish. They are, let's face it, as nearly perfect as any such object can be made. And this is why the demand outruns production. With money a secondary object today, Ron Power's hand-

work is worth far more than a fistful of cash. Add to this the pride of ownership and it is easy to understand why so many people are trading cheap dollars for pride, craftsmanship and some of the finest handwork in the country.

In fifteen years, the XP-100 has come from a question mark to the top of the field for both the Mexican Silhouette and for handgun hunting. I do not believe that the creation of fantastic trigger pulls are all fine, but without experience and craftsmanship, these mechanical aspects would amount to very little. It is the de-

tails and hand work and craftsmanship and anyone at Remington could ever have foreseen what would happen to the XP-100. Even I remain a bit dazed by all this. It is difficult to believe that this simple bolt action, single shot, long barrel pistol would ever reach such heights of achievement or popularity.

It is not necessary to own a Ron Power XP-100 to appreciate the potentials inherent in this handgun, however, in my opinion, A Ron Power XP-100 is probably one of the finest handguns anyone can ever own.



A GALLERY OF CUSTOMS



SINCLAIR OF INDIANA

They're the Fiberglass People

All Fred Sinclair needs is your XP-100 action. What you'll get is a Fiberglass stock to hold the weight down and the following: the action will be reworked and a Douglas barrel will be fitted and chambered. The package includes a blued barreled action, the installation of Redfield & Williams sights (sights included), a standard Fiberglass stock blank, and Fred will epoxy bed the barrel, action and finish stock. He recommends a match grade, stainless barrel that runs an additional \$15 over the standard \$281 charge. By the time this issue reaches you, Fred can offer an XP-100 thumbhole stock of Fiberglass. The cost of this rough, blank stock fitted to customer's barreled action will be approximately \$135.00 (including blank). Finished weight will be about 12 ounces. Made of one-piece Fiberglass construction, it will withstand the recoil of any of the standard large bore silhouette calibers. It is inletted for the standard XP-100 action and trigger assembly and comes with an oversized barrel channel capable of accepting a "bull" sized barrel. Write: Sinclair Inc., Dep't. AH, 1200 Asbury Drive, New Haven, Indiana, 46774.

CROWLEY CUSTOM CONVERSIONS OF THE XP

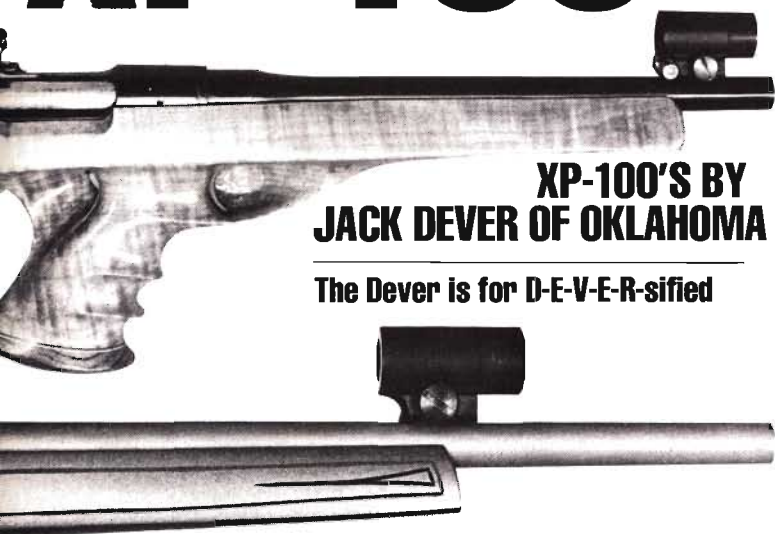
Phil Crowley likes to work with the 7 x 57, .35 Remington, .308, .250 Savage, 7mm/.308, .257 Roberts, and .338 CJ. The .338 CJ was the brainchild of American Handgunner writer, J. D. Jones. A frequent visitor to Phil Crowley's shop, J. D. came up with the idea to add to the XP-100 line. The cartridge is made by necking down a .35 Remington to .338, using the full length case. The dies are being made by RCBS and will soon be available. No forming or trim dies are necessary. They will be regular, full-length die sets marketed as .338 CJMK. Measured groups at 150 meters with this cartridge average 1½" with a 200 grain Speer bullet. Although they obtained higher velocities with other loads, hotter loads are not necessary. Here are a few that worked well:

41.0 grains #4895	200 Gr. Speer	2031 fps
37.5 grains #3031	200 Gr. Speer	1923 fps
39.0 grains #3031	200 Gr. Speer	1997 fps
39.0 grains #4198	200 Gr. Speer	2279 fps
39.0 grains #4895	225 Gr. Hornaday	1949 fps
40.0 grains #4895	225 Gr. Hornaday	1965 fps

The .338 CJMK improves down-range ballistics a bit over the .35 Remington. As far as damage to the targets is concerned, at 1800-1900 fps it does less damage than the 30/30 or .30 Herrett loads from a 10 inch Thompson Center Contender.

Crowley uses Douglas Premium-grade barrels on all conversions and a Lyman #17 Front Sight and a Lyman #57 rear sight.

XP-100



XP-100'S BY JACK DEVER OF OKLAHOMA

The Dever is for D-E-V-E-R-sified

Jack Dever's letterhead reads "riflemaker" but Jack Dever can put together one mighty fine customized XP-100. He's not crazy about putting on wood stocks because of the weight problem (see photo No. 3) but his wood stocked XP-100 looks great just the same. But let's start with his complete modification with a Fiberglas stock (see photo No. 1). The lugs are lapped for even bearing surfaces, the bolt face extension is trued and the bolt face is squared. The bolt is then opened for .308 sized cartridges. Further refinements include the lapping of the cocking cam, the bolt throw is increased and the ejector spring lightened, the ejector post is milled in receiver to eject loaded 7 x 250 (or similar) cases. Additionally, the trigger is honed and adjusted to 13 ounces.

The barrel is Shilen stainless steel, octagon bore, matchgrade 15" long with all fitting and chambering done by a man who has spent 25 years building bench-rest rifles. The outside is glass peened for a non-glare surface.

Dever uses a Lyman #57 rear sight with slide tightened to remove play. Adjustable rear aperture disc is complemented with a Redfield Int. match, big bore front.

The Fiberglas stocks were designed especially for silhouette shooting. They are made by Brown Precision who originated the glass bench rest stock. The design is especially good for the recoil conscious shooter.

The 7 x 250 with a special neck diameter that permits turning the O. D. of neck to achieve a perfect case to chamber fit is the kind of a setup that prevents splits and makes for longer case life. As a matter of fact, Dever believes that the cases will never wear out. The best load to date has been 33.5 grains of 748 with a 139 grain Hornaday bullet.

Notice that photo No. 2 features the economy version. Basically, this is a barrel and sight job using the factory stock A-14. Shilen barrel is shown.

In photo No. 3, you'll get all of the modifications mentioned for the first gun plus an action lightning job. A 12½" Douglas barrel is installed and the front sight is equipped with a bubble level to prevent canting of gun. Stock is semi-turned by Peterson of California and has been bedded and finished with Var-ethane plastic oil finish.

For a peek at what a set of benchrest-type hand dies look like see photo No. 4. These dies are made using the same reamer used to chamber the barrel and are the ultimate in accuracy.

You'll see in Photo No. 5 some of the chambers that have been tried. (Left to Right) 7 x 45 (.223 case), 30 x 45, 6.5 x 47 (.222 Mag. case), 7 x 47, 7 Maxi-Mag. (40 degree shoulder and short neck on mag. case), 30 x 47, 30 Maxi Mag, 6.5 x 250, 7 x 250, and shortened and radically reformed 308 on 243 case.

In photo No. 6 from left to right: 15" barrel showing Dever standard contour — 14" barrel that is fluted to save weight — 12½" barrel with larger OD than standard. all other barrels are the same weight.

Write: Jack B. Dever, Dep't. AH, 8520 N.W. 90th, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73132.

00 Ohio Gunsmith Specializes in Full Length Cases



All metalwork is done by Crowley. His shop is fully equipped and he is working at it on a full-time basis. To maintain weight limits, he removes metal from the bottom of the action and enlarges the loading port which also makes it easier to unload.

As far as the stock is concerned, he uses the factory stock with alterations to handle the heavy barrels, and it is re-inforced on the inside to handle recoil. Fiberglas stocks by Jack Dever (shown in photo), and various wood stocks from George Peterson of Western Gunstock company can be ordered. Other options include the Mag-na-port process and the SS Chromium finish by Metalife Industries.

Crowley uses a 15 inch barrel with a design that is uniquely Crowley. The center portion of the barrel has no taper to it, and the "snozzle," as he calls it, on the end serves to balance the gun and reduce the muzzle climb. He also recesses the muzzle about ¼" to prevent damage if dropped. For dependable extraction, he uses the AR-15 extractor. Cases are not damaged in extraction, and in case of breakage, they can easily be replaced on the firing line.

Phil says that his reason for choosing full-length factory ammo is not because he dislikes Wildcat cartridges, but for simplicity. This way a competitor doesn't have to worry if he hasn't had time to load for a match.

For more information write: Phil Crowley, Dep't AH, Crowley Customs, 910 Cadiz Road, Wintersville, Ohio, 43952.



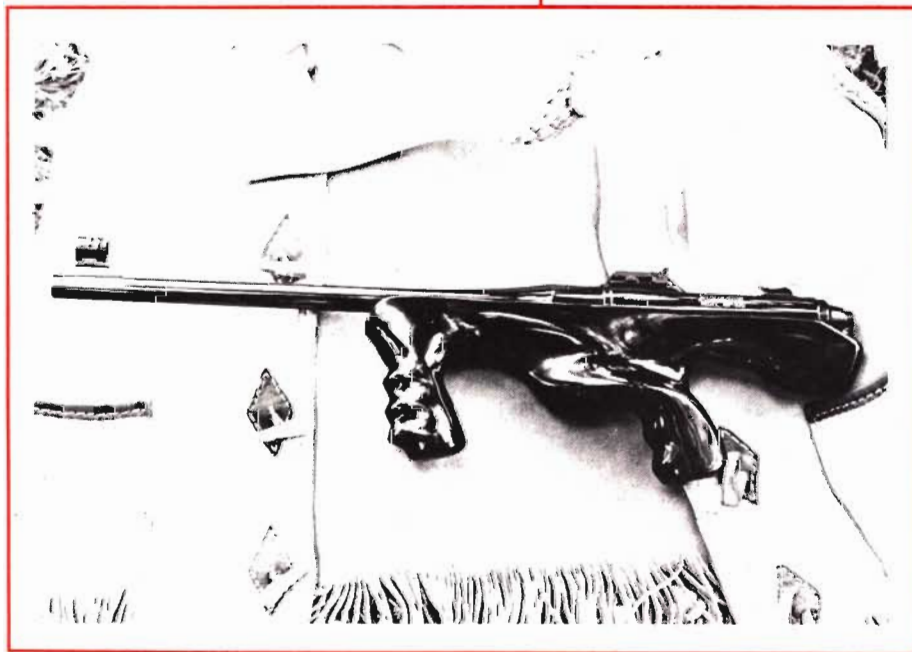
By Massad Ayoob

John Towle doesn't call his pistols "T-N-T" for nothing. The single shot, bolt action hunting and metallic silhouette handguns that he builds (on assorted actions but mostly Remington XP-100s) are the most powerful pistols being constructed today.

Would you believe, for instance, .308 Winchester and .358 Winchester, not in inch-and-a-half shorties but the full length rifle chamberings? Would you, indeed, be ready for a 4½ pound XP-100 shooting (gasp) the full .458 Winchester Magnum?

Towle didn't just leap aboard the metallic silhouette bandwagon with these pieces. He's been a full time gunsmith for several years, and along about 1970 he began making fancy custom XP-100s for hunters and discriminating gun buffs. Soon he was experimenting with chamberings more potent than the .221 Fireball, as well. "I was naive enough to believe, when I learned of silhouette shooting, that I was the only one who had

John Towle, left, comparing .358 XP-100 with Skip Talbot's 7mm.



Here's the Towle T-N-T shown with twin grips. Note the modified bolt handle.

stumbled on the converted XP-100 as the gun to do it with. I soon learned I was, one of many, though 7 or 8 years ago, I probably *was* one of only 2 or 3 in the country."

His entry into the dynamic world of steel animals came in 1977. Bob Zwirz, who had become fascinated with the custom single shots while researching a story on Towle's PPC revolvers for GUN WORLD, was the catalyst. As Towle remembers it, "Bob called two weeks before the first IHMSA-sanctioned match in the Northeast, one of Ron Ricci's in Massachusetts, and said, 'You're in, because I've already paid your entry fee, so you'd better get down here.' I panicked. I put together a .308, and finished it two days before the match." John's score was a 29 out of 40, which surpassed anything yet fired in Eastern competition and was only a point short of what was then the West Coast record.

That first match XP-100 had a Douglas Premium barrel with one turn in ten inch rifling, a tube he still uses. The barreled action was Acraglas bedded into a Western brand gunstock, and topped with a

JOHN TOWLE



T N T



Bo Mar rear sight with custom aperture.

Williams receiver sight and a Lyman bead up front on a Remington ramp. This, with the exception of a new stock, is the combination used in most of Towle's metallic silhouette match games today.

When John first hit the eastern ranges with that beast, we were appalled. When he told us he was going to switch to .358, we looked even more askance. Had he told us then of his plans for a .458 Magnum handgun, a petition doubtless would have circulated to get the man committed.

It was awesome to watch those guns being fired from the prone position. There would be a sheet of flame, and a cloud of dust on the ground in front of the shooter, and the gun would rise almost perpendicular to the ground. But even more spectacular, the big forty-pound rams, which often didn't go down to a low .44 Magnum hit and were known to laugh at .357s, would go over with their metal feet in the air after taking a rifle round

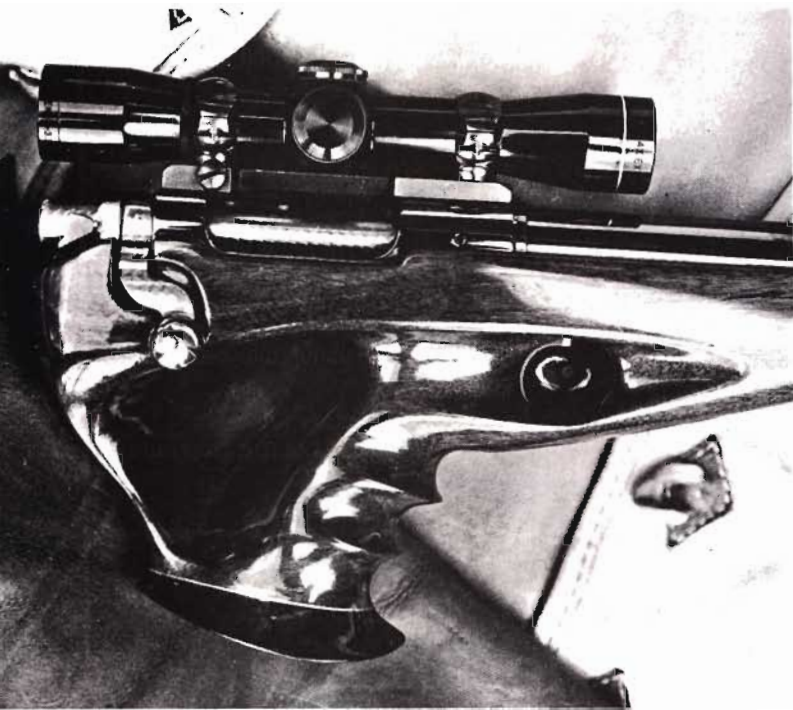
Here's a modified Redfield Globe front sight showing "HAMMERHEAD" insert.



from one of John's pistols, especially the .358.

By now, Towle had established himself as the top ranked Unlimited Class shooter in the Northeast. He had never fired in organized pistol competition before, and freely admitted that the gun, more than he, was doing the winning.

Orders began coming in from the ardent silhouetters who watched him win



This scoped model has a place for the thumb and solid and tasteful-looking finger grips. Wood is by Western.

again in Massachusetts, Maine, and Connecticut. Soon people like Larry Shovelton were becoming nationally prominent, again with T-N-T guns.

Meanwhile, John was still refining the concept. He found that fiberglass stocks gave him a two-fold advantage: a dramatic reduction in heft that allowed him to lengthen barrels for more practical accuracy without going beyond the 4.5 lb. IHMSA weight limit, and a distinct increase in strength. "Some of the wooden stocks were cracking from the recoil of the .358," he explained to us. "George Peterson at Western Gunstocks in Aptos, California helped us design the stocks we use on the XP-100. He's a genius, and he puts out beautiful work, especially his fine Bastogne walnut and his fantastic screwbean mesquite. It wasn't his fault that they cracked with .458 and constant .358 recoil; no one ever expected rounds that bearish to be going through the XP-100."

Western's beautiful wood still adorns T-N-T hunting singleshoots, but the competition pieces are now coming out with a fiberglass stock developed by Towle, who did the designing, and Jim Gilman of Ranger Canoe Co., who also has extensive



Although Western's gorgeous woods adorn this XP-100, the competition pieces are now coming out with a Fiberglass stock by Towle with Ranger Canoe Company furnishing the construction expertise.



both hands resting solidly on the ground. It creates a bipod effect that you have to try, to believe. This is also the style Towle is using in matches. He sells the exclusive designs separately, in primary finish, for \$120 in two-grip and an even C-note for the one-hand version. Weight is only ten ounces and eight ounces, respectively. "I could make one only five ounces," he says, "but it would cost \$300."

Bedding adds about an ounce of weight, and with other trimmings on the XP-100, that is significant because he can now go from his usual #1 contour Douglas Premium to a heavier, steadier #2 contour and still not tip the scales beyond the weight limit. A finished Towle gun must weigh 4.46 lb. on a calibrated and certified Hobart digital scale before he'll send it out, to protect the customer from judge's error at match weigh-ins.

tom-worked trigger with reliable external adjustments. On either gun, he aims for a reliable 12-16 ounce pull. "I personally don't feel a gun of that power should have a lighter trigger than that," he says adamantly. "If you graze a 6-ounce trigger while adjusting your hold before the gun is locked in position, you can wind up eating your pistol."

When properly held, though, the big T-N-Ts are surprisingly mild, considering the ballistics they're putting out. I've shot several. In .308 Winchester, there is a distinctly nerve-shattering roar that makes you thank God for ear protectors, but I've shot a lot of .38 Specials that were more uncomfortable going off in my mitt. The .358 with two-grip stock, surprisingly, feels only as if a .357 has gone off simultaneously in each hand. With the elbows bent in the forward prone position, the



background in space-program fiberglass use, contributed the structural expertise. The result is a handsome item that comes with a single grip for Creedmoor-style shooting, or double handles designed for the forward prone position.

I'm especially fond of the latter. The twin grips are on a bias, ten degrees left on the forward and five degrees right on the rear. When you take a two hand position, belly down and arms bent, the sights are in perfect alignment with the heel of

Though most of his single shots are XP-100s, Towle favors the Wichita short benchrest rifle action. Now, the XP-100 action weighs a good 3½ ounces less than the Wichita, and that's important to a man like Towle who meticulously grinds down his globe front sights just to achieve a 130-grain weight saving. (He also bright-polishes the inside of the sight hood to constantly reflect even light on the front sight.) But he figures the Wichita is stronger and more adaptable to a cus-

A close up reveals the loving care put in by Power and the quality Leupold scope adds the finishing touch.

gun moves back and up enough to let you know you've unleashed some real firepower, but not enough to bother you.

The .458 is another story. It figures out to about 57 pounds of free recoil with 90% handloads, and Towle has shot some fodder that he computed at 77 recoil
(Continued on page 60)

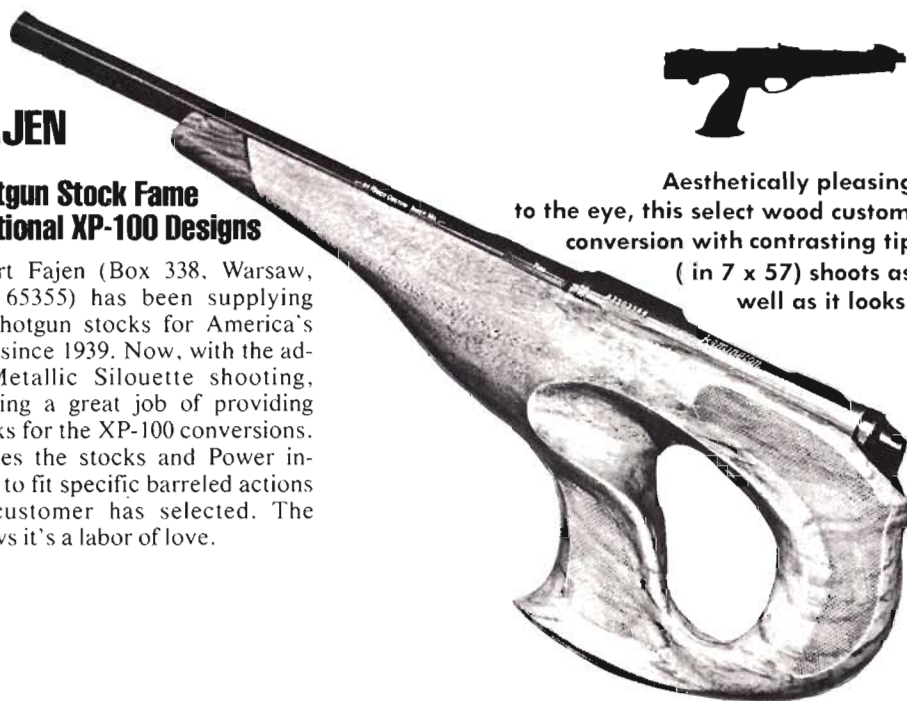
REINHART FAJEN

FAJEN of Rifle and Shotgun Stock Fame Turns Out Beautifully Functional XP-100 Designs

Reinhart Fajen (Box 338, Warsaw, MO 65355) has been supplying rifle and shotgun stocks for America's sportsmen since 1939. Now, with the advent of Metallic Silhouette shooting, they're doing a great job of providing wood stocks for the XP-100 conversions. Fajen makes the stocks and Power installs them to fit specific barreled actions that the customer has selected. The photo shows it's a labor of love.



Aesthetically pleasing to the eye, this select wood custom conversion with contrasting tip (in 7 x 57) shoots as well as it looks.



CUSTOM XP-100

BROWN PRECISION

BROWN PRECISION'S Fiberglass XP-100 Stock Blank Weighs In at 11 or 12 Ounces



Brown Precision's glass stock forms the basis for the heavy actions and can take it with the heaviest cartridges.

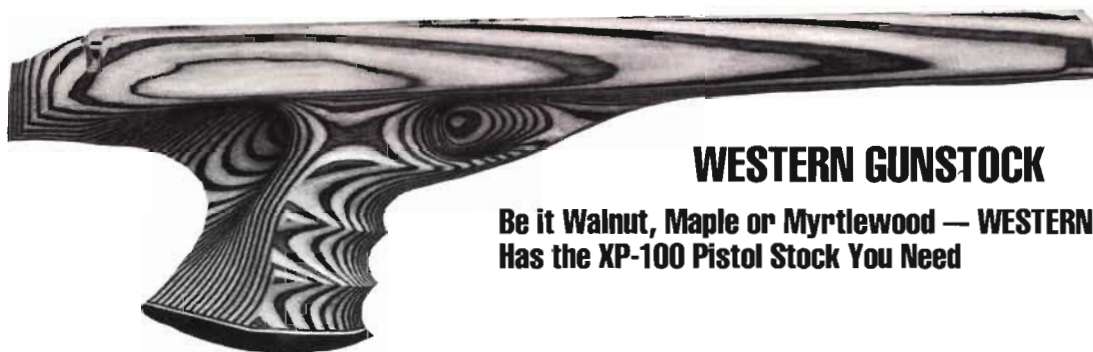
Here's the stock blank that is the starting place for the building of a fine Fiberglass XP-100. Inletted for a Remington 700 ADL trigger guard. The action is inletted for an XP-100 standard trigger linkage mechanism. Stock is one piece and won't shoot apart with the heaviest recoil. In the works is an XP glass stock with the pistol grip to the rear. This will eliminate the trigger linkage and allow for the use of a Remington 700 rifle trigger. Perhaps even a 2 oz. conversion. Write: Brown Precision Inc., Dep't. AH, 5869 Indian Avenue, San Jose, CA, 95123

Western Gunstock Mfg. Co. (550 Valencia School Road, Aptos, California, 95003) offers stocks in light, heavy and extra heavy configurations. In addition to Walnut, Western Maple and Myrtlewood — some other lightweight woods are included in their inventory, as well as laminated wood.

Prices range from \$48 to the \$85 laminated model. All of Western stocks come with grip cap, some with tip. Owner

George Peterson emphasizes that he is not a production line shop, and that all of his stocks are made to the individual client's needs. Matched sets and premium grades are available and priced accordingly. Peterson also advises the customer to give complete information when ordering to save time and correspondence. If you'd like to call George the number is (408) 688-5884 in Aptos, California.

This Western Gunstock XP-100 laminated model is available in either right or left-handed designs.



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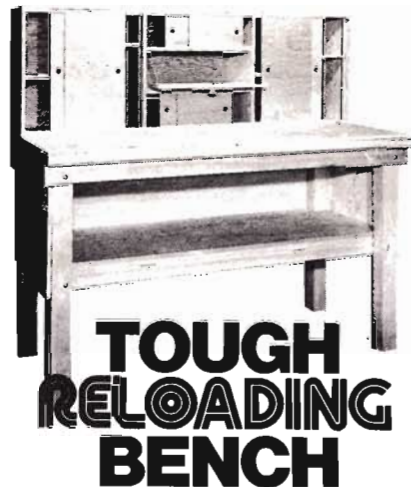
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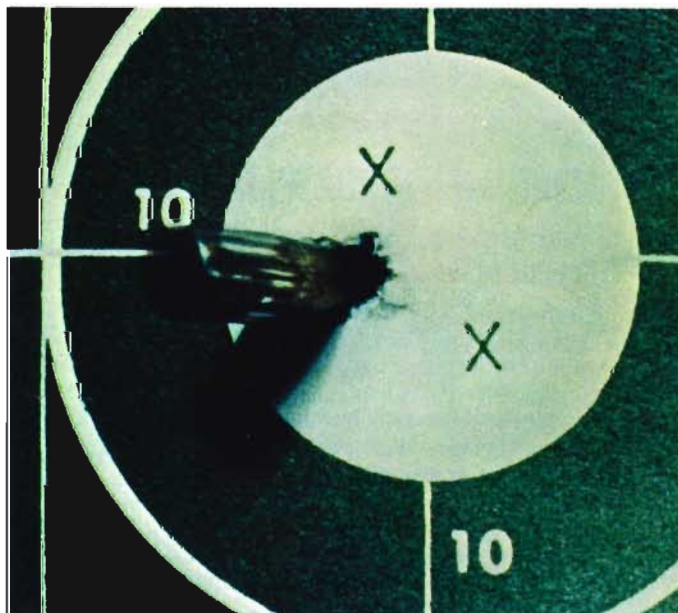
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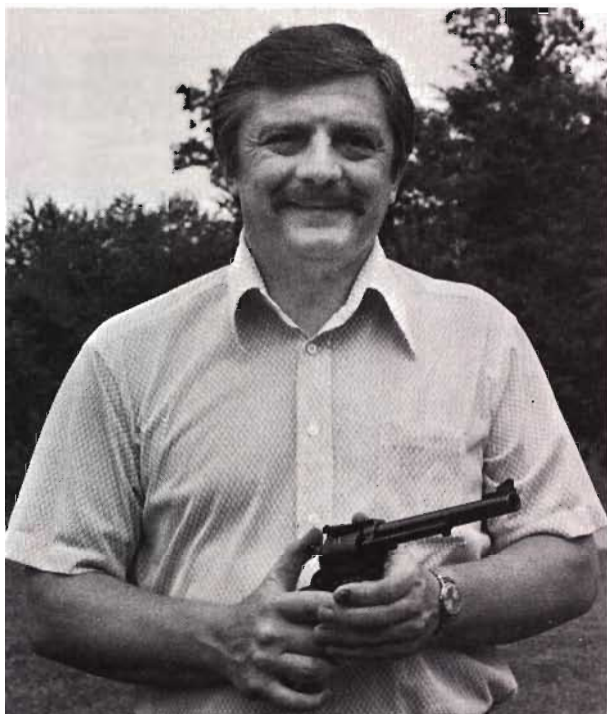
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NEWSLETTER



J.D. Jones, Vice President
Outstanding American Handgunner Awards Foundation

GETTING TO KNOW YOUR O.A.H.A. OFFICERS

J.D. is well known to handgunners for his extensive writing on all phases of the sport. Articles under his by-line have appeared in all of the leading firearms publications, including AMERICAN HANDGUNNER.

Although primarily interested in big bore handguns — he worked with Lee Jurras in the development of Super Vel ammunition — J.D. is also a devoted long range rifleman, and ballistics experimenter. Favorite handgunning activities, today, are hunting and metallic silhouette competition.

Jones' acceptance of the Foundation's Vice Presidential office is typical of his willingness to serve the sport of handgunning. In addition to undertaking this responsibility, he never misses an opportunity to take the handgunner's "message" to student bodies, civic and special interest groups, and radio and TV audiences . . . to anyone who is interested in hearing the sportsman's side.

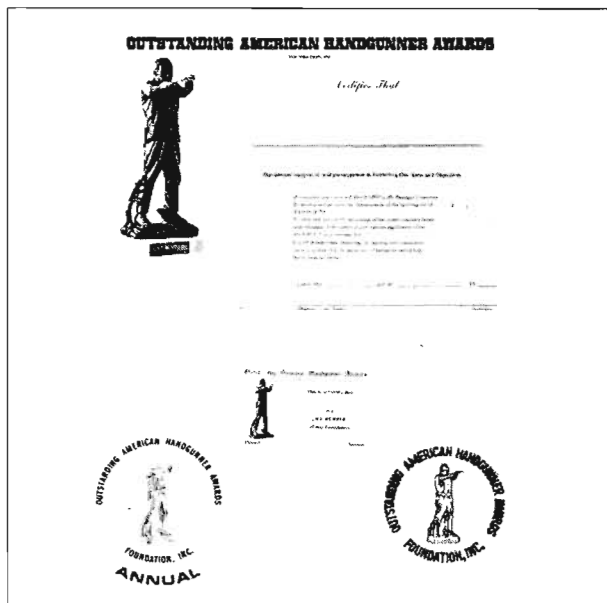
J.D. is currently devoting full time to his own company, S.S.K. Industries in Bloomingdale, Ohio.

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It's not news that the .45 Detonics Auto is on the market and doing well with their blued Mark I and Satin Nickel Mark II. What you may not know is they're going to unveil their Hard Chrome Mark III and their highly polished, blued Mark IV with adjustable sights at the January NSGA Show in Chicago. The IV is the "professional model." Of special interest too is their unveiling of a Special Set of 10 engraved guns that will be sold in pairs with matching serial numbers.

Handgun
Hunting

By George Bredsten

PRE-HUNT PREPARATION — PART I

Proper pre-hunt preparation is defined to mean that endeavor, undertaken before an actual hunt, which results in the handgun hunter having an adequate level of competence in pertinent abilities and skills. Why is it then that so many handgun hunters appear to take umbrage whenever they are asked about the type and extent of their pre-hunt preparation? For many, it is due to a reluctance to accept the fact that their attempted preparation is farcical — such preparation being incomplete and/or incorrect. For others, it is because no preparation has been made whatsoever! Think for a moment, if you will, and you are likely to remember one or more handgun hunters whose behavior afield ranged from the absurd to the pathetic; e.g., the person who intentionally hunted big game with a pocket pistol chambered for the 32 ACP or the person who used a shot cartridge in the T/C Contender to try a fifty yard shot at a "Hooter" (Blue Grouse)! Small wonder then that some Fish & Game Department personnel look askance at those espousing the cause of handgun hunting — especially big game handgun hunting.

To be a competent handgun hunter requires a serious and active commitment to a program which permits optimum development and utilization of the person's *physical condition, woodcraft, and marksmanship*. At the onset, it should be understood that no single program can be best suited for everyone. Nevertheless, the following guidelines — modified to suit individual idiosyncrasy — can be used by the responsible handgunner to improve both his behavior and performance afield.

PHYSICAL CONDITION. Because the more common methods of hunting do not usually require a great amount of physical exertion, it is believed by many that physical conditioning is unnecessary. It is difficult to support such a view when the facts indicate otherwise. Witness the number of hunters who needlessly suffer minor and/or major physical discomfort — from blisters and cramped/fatigued muscles to cardiac arrest and stroke. Such physical discomfort is often brought about because of an

optimistic but woefully incorrect self evaluation of general health and physical ability. Good physical condition often helps in preventing the occurrence of the minor discomforts and/or minimizing the deleterious effects of some major discomforts.

Because most hunters lead a relatively sedentary life, it usually means that many are overweight, short-winded, hyper-nervous and otherwise less than at their best. Consequently, one should not expect to physically correct in a week or two that which took years to incorrectly develop! It would be prudent to commence a physical conditioning program *months* before the anticipated hunt. Also, before beginning any physical conditioning program, each person should first get a complete physical examination and then heed the examining doctor's advice as to what and how much exercise is permitted.

While no single exercise can be considered the panacea for proper physical conditioning, it is believed that jogging is probably the single most helpful exercise for hunters. Jogging serves not only to strengthen the legs, it also helps to improve the efficiency of the circulatory system and it tends to help increase the general stamina of the individual.

If the hunter is in rather poor physical condition, one of the better ways to begin jogging (subject to a physician's approval) is to use the "walk-jog-walk" technique. For example, a person may begin by walking one hundred steps, jogging for fifty steps, walking one hundred steps, and so on until the exercise time of five to ten minutes has elapsed. As ability increases, the number of steps walked can be reduced, say by ten, and the number of steps jogged increased by ten. However, it is strongly recommended that each phase or level of exercise last at least one week and that the exercise be done at least twice each day.

When the "walk-jog-walk" ratio reaches approximately 50:300:50, one can then delete the "walk" part and begin jogging only. By this time, the person's condition will have been improved to the extent that a non-stop jog of about one mile can be attempted. It may take

the person ten to twelve minutes to jog the mile, but when completed the person should not have a feeling of utter exhaustion. Over a period of time — at least several months — the person can then endeavor to increase the distance jogged to from three to five miles. These longer jogs should be done at least three times each week.

Some individuals will claim that their place of abode and/or work schedule is such that there is not sufficient time available to do any meaningful amount of jogging. If this is true, these individuals ought to consider doing stationary double time (SDT). Begin by doing SDT for thirty to forty-five seconds, rest for a minute and then repeat the SDT. Do this two or three times each day and for at least one week before increasing the SDT. One should eventually be able to increase the SDT to five or more minutes which, although not as beneficial physically as jogging, will definitely improve one's condition.

When a person can, without undue strain or stress, comfortably and regularly exercise with weights of from 100 to perhaps 200 pounds, it is reasonable to believe the person's torso and arm strength is adequate. After one can exercise with such weight (100 pounds plus), it then becomes more important for the person to develop endurance or stamina rather than to increase the weight (pounds) that can be lifted. For example, it is of academic interest only if a hunter can lift a bull moose "clear" of the ground, yet cannot backpack 1/10th to 1/8th of the dressed animal more than twenty-five steps before needing a rest!

Cross country hiking with backpack and "bucking" hay would undoubtedly do wonders for a person's endurance — especially if while bucking hay the person continued to wear a forty pound pack!

While a person may have good to excellent health, strength and endurance, he should remember that there are those persons who, because of factors such as age, sex, and/or physical infirmity, have neither especially good health nor even moderate strength or endurance.

A deficiency in health, strength, endurance can be and often is largely compensated for by experience. Experience does not just mean the process of observing/doing; it instead means the ability to utilize the practical wisdom gained from the observation or act of doing. Thus, experience may also be considered as that knowledge (wisdom) an individual has that he can and does use to solve/resolve an otherwise "sticky" situation. Applied to the subject of hunting, experience should be considered as the necessary precursor to woodcraft. The subject of woodcraft will be discussed in the next issue of *The American Handgunner*.



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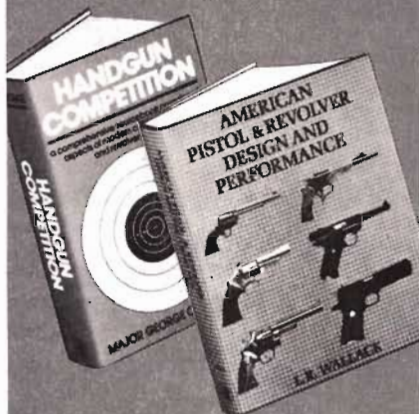
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Combat Course

By Evan P. Marshall

ON THE RELEVANCY OF THE PPC COURSE TO ACTUAL COMBAT AND HOW TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR NEXT PURCHASE

If you're a regular reader of *American Handgunner*, you know that I'm not overly enthusiastic about the PPC course. As a street cop, I know it holds little relevance to reality. I resent it being referred to as "Police Combat Shooting," because the ammunition used would be hard pressed to stop the charge of a crazed squirrel let alone those of a determined felon.

The cost and specialized nature of PPC guns turns off those individuals who need the practice most. A wise street cop equips himself with a big bore revolver or auto for on-duty, an adequate off-duty weapon, a Second Chance vest, and a second gun. After expenditures of this magnitude, you'd be hard pressed to convince him he should lay out upwards of \$400 for a PPC gun and related equipment.

I have to admit in spite of my aversion to PPC, that it's considerably better than no practice at all. Certainly the techniques of proper sight alignment and trigger control are ones that can be applied to any weapon used.

"PPC ammo would be hard pressed to stop the charge of a crazed squirrel..."

After kicking the idea around for a few months it seemed to me that it should be possible to build a weapon that could be used for both duty and PPC use. Certainly such a dual purpose weapon would not allow you to walk away with all the marbles at the Nationals, but it would be a weapon that would be competitive at the local level.

Because I consider the .38 Special as inadequate for police duty use, I contacted Bill Clede, who handles the public relations duties for Smith & Wesson. Bill provided a new S&W Model 19 with six inch barrel. The weapon was promptly bolted in my Lee Rest, and fifty rounds proved that the weapon possessed ten ring accuracy right out of the box. In fact, approximately 70% of the group was in the X ring.

The next thing was to install some

sights that possess the necessary amount of adjustment for PPC use. Bo Mar, who produces the custom full-length ribs for the bull barrel PPC guns, also make a similar rig to fit the K frame S&W with factory barrel.



With a total cost of \$100.10 for custom work, S & W Model 19 can double as both duty weapon and PPC revolver.

Gil Hebard Guns, 125-129 Public Square, Knoxville, Illinois, is well known for his catalogue that offers a superb variety of pistols and related equipment for shooters. What not everyone realizes, however, is that he offers substantial discounts on those items he stocks to police officers. The Bo Mar rib retails for \$49.00, but Gil offers it to cops for \$37.80 postpaid. A local gunsmith installed is for me for \$15.00.

A trigger job is a necessity on virtually any weapon that is to be used for competition. There are any number of "name" pistol smiths who offer excellent work. Unfortunately, however, they're backed up for months. With a little luck, you can find a local man, who does outstanding work. Shooters Service of Livonia, Michigan, does top quality trigger work at down to earth prices. They did the trigger on my Smith, and I couldn't be more satisfied.

Gil Hebard also offers the HKS Six Second speed loaders and cases at substantial discounts also. I prefer this brand, because they're sturdy enough for duty use and yet quick enough for competition. Last but certainly not least, Hebard offers the Pachmayr rubber grips at a discount also. They're excellent duty grips and now come from the factory relieved for speed loaders.

A holster with sufficient clearance for the Bo Mar rib can be a bit of a problem. I found the solution, however, in what I'd already considered the best duty holster; The Bianchi "Judge." Mine holds the Model 19 with full-length rib securely and it can be quickly drawn.

Ammunition in sufficient quantities to become proficient, can also be an expensive problem. If you're a reloader, of course, the problem pretty much disappears. If you're a cop who doesn't reload,

"Gil Hebard offers discounts to Police personnel..."

however, all is not lost. Zero Buller Company (P.O. Box 1012, Cullman, Alabama 35055) will supply 1,000 rounds of .38 wadcutters to police officers for only \$36.30 (brass exchange). The ammunition can be shipped directly to the officer at his station house. I've tested this ammo, and it's perfectly adequate for practice use or for competition up to the 25 yard line. At 50 yards, however, factory wadcutters offer a substantial increase in accuracy.



For those who prefer wood grips, Schwiebert Enterprises offer top quality work at affordable prices.

The cost breakdown is as follows:

1. Bo Mar rib	\$37.80
2. installation	\$15.00
3. trigger job	\$25.00
4. speed loaders and case	\$13.90
5. Pachmayr grips	\$08.40
total	\$100.10

The most obvious question, is how does it shoot? Well, a buddy of mine borrowed it for his department pistol team tryouts, and outshot many of the "name" shooters on his department who were using custom bull barrel revolvers. Also, I recently finished fifth with it in a local PPC shoot. It was the first time I'd ever used it in

"\$100.10 job takes 5th in PPC shoot..."

competition, and again it outshot several custom weapons costing three times as much.



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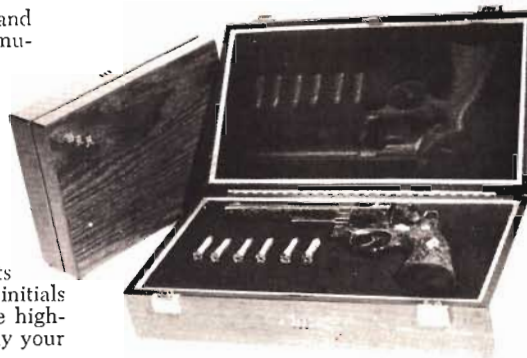


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Pistolsmithing

By J. B. Wood

THE ASTRA MODEL 400

Ten years ago our Wise Leaders decreed that the availability of foreign military surplus firearms was a bad thing, and banned the importation of any gun that had seen military service. You are aware, of course, how this beneficial legislation has completely stopped Crime In The Streets. Fortunately, before the axe fell in 1968, a number of excellent surplus arms had been sold in this country, and one of these was the long-nosed Astra Model 400 pistol, the sidearm of the Spanish forces from 1921 to 1945.

The pistol is chambered for the same cartridge as its ancestor, the Campo-Giro, a round that Spain calls the 9 m/m Largo (translation: "long"), and is known elsewhere as the 9 m/m Bergmann-Bayard. Because of the dimensions of this cartridge, the chamber of the Model 400 pistol will accommodate some other rounds of similar measurements, and this led to a popular fallacy that the gun would readily handle any other 9 m/m cartridge, including the Luger (9 m/m Parabellum). Wrong. If the extractor happened to grab the rim as the Luger round was fed, and if the extractor beak was sharp and its spring strong, the cartridge might be held firmly enough to take the firing pin strike and fire with no problem. More often, though, the impact would drive the shorter round forward into the long chamber before detonation. Or, the extractor, missing it at the start, would push it forward. In either case, firing would occur with about 1/8-inch excess headspace, and the results were sometimes spectacular. So, if you want to shoot an Astra in 9 m/m Luger, get the shorter Model 600, which is chambered exclusively for that round.

"Astra 400 won't reliably handle the 9 mm Parabellum..."

There are other cartridges, though, which can be fired safely and reliably in the Model 400 pistol. The 9 m/m Austrian Steyr-Hahn round is one, but, like the Bergmann-Bayard, surplus stocks are dwindling. There is, however, a standard U.S. cartridge that is dimensionally cor-

rect for the chamber of the Model 400 — the .38 auto, also called the .38 ACP. The more powerful .38 Super has the same dimensions, of course, but that one is a little hot for the unlocked action of this pistol. While the .38 auto is a perfect fit in the chamber, some early Astra pistols with very close tolerances may run into difficulty with the larger rim diameter of



Sidearm of the Spanish forces from 1921 to 1945 . . . the Astra 400 in 9mm Long or the 9mm Bergmann-Bayard.

this round. The original 9 m/m Bergmann-Bayard cartridge has a rim diameter of .392, while the .38 auto measures .405, and the breech face recess in some pistols will not accept the larger rim. When this is the case, the slide will not fully close on a chambered cartridge.

If you find this situation in a Model 400 that you own, it can be corrected fairly easily. This does require a special tool, but it's one that can be made by any gunsmith or advanced amateur without difficulty. The tool that I made for enlarging the breech face recess started as a 6 1/2-inch length of drill rod, 7/16 of an inch in diameter. The length mentioned is a minimum, as the tool must reach from the muzzle end of the slide to the breech face, with a little extra for handling. The working end of the tool is turned down to exactly .405, the rim diameter of a .38 auto cartridge, and the end notched to form four cutting points. The points must have cutting edges only to the side, and the end must be a neutral surface, to avoid deepening the cartridge head recess. The other end of the tool may be adapted for hand turning in any way convenient. It can be cross-drilled and a smaller rod inserted to make a simple T-handle, or it can be squared for use with a large tap-wrench.

After the working end is hardened by heating to a dull red and quenching in oil, the tool is ready.

With the slide removed from the gun and the barrel and extractor taken out, the tool is inserted from the muzzle end, the cutting head centered on the breech face recess, and the handle given a few turns. An empty .38 auto cartridge case is a



.38 Auto or ACP will fire in the 400. This will require a little work with this home-made tool described in article.

handy gauge, and when it will fit neatly into the recess to full depth, the job is done. It should be noted that some Model 400 pistols, with certain special features and markings, have collector value, so before altering your gun, check to be sure whether you might have one that shouldn't be altered.

"Accurate and reliable, it makes a good home defense gun..."

Although the grip angle is a little too straight, the Astra Model 400 is an extremely reliable and accurate shooter, and makes an excellent home defense pistol. Stored with the magazine loaded and chamber empty, it should be quite safe in a home with small children, as there is no way the little people can operate the slide against the tension of its very heavy recoil spring.



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Handgun Leather

By J. D. Jones

DIRTY HARRY AND LAWMAN LEATHER

"Dirty Harry" aka Clint Eastwood created an immense demand and black market prices for S & W's M-29 .44 Magnum.

Lawman Leather Goods (P.O. Box 447, Katy, TX 77450 (713) 371-7964) is the manufacturer of the "Dirty Harry" .44 shoulder holster.

Jerry Ardelano, a Chicago plainclothesman, saw the movie and became interested in the holster. Pursuit of that interest led to Lawman Leather and manufacture of the "Dirty Harry" shoulder holster — by the same guys that built the original for Dirty Harry.

Holsters are largely a matter of personal preference. Some are well designed and some are terrible. Some guys will use a 5 buck rig and be completely happy with it and others must have \$500 one of a kind rigs. Expensive holsters aren't necessarily good holsters. I have one custom \$130 shoulder holster that is the biggest turkey to have hit the market simply because one of the straps attaches to the holster about an inch from where it should — throwing the whole rig out of balance and causing it to be very uncomfortable.

Good serviceable holsters are available from many sources. Safariland and Bian-

"Safariland and Bianchi are probably the largest and produce the highest quality shoulder holsters . . ."

chi are probably the largest and produce high quality rigs for the price. That is the name of the game — high quality — well designed — and a reasonable affordable price.

The "Dirty Harry" rig fits this category quite nicely. It is well designed, hangs straight, attaches to the belt on both sides of the body to assure well balanced weight distribution and to keep it from flopping around. It is *there* when you reach for it. The holster and harness are made of top grain leather and the holster is fully suede lined. The harness is adjustable and can be simply adjusted to comfortably fit almost anyone. A metal spring inside the leather

and the cylinder cut-out assure the gun will stay put while not unduly hampering drawing the gun. In short — it's OK! And that reminds me of one that wasn't. Before I got too old to heal up quickly, I used to spend a good bit of time in the Smokies on a bike. One day, five of us, soaked half frozen and mud covered after six hours of playing in the mud, walked into a country store to warm up and chow down. The TV was on and a bunch of old



Breaking out the S & W Model 29 revolver from the Lawman rig requires some effort and a little noise.

guys were sitting around a pot belly stove. It was obvious they were apprehensive of us. We soon made friends and were invited to warm up by the stove. I unbuttoned my fatigue jacket, unzipped my insulated — and was rewarded by my .45, holster and all, dropping to the floor. Back to nervous time. The holster was a cheapie and the wet leather harness had separated during the ride. Gun and holster were merely held in place by the tight fitting insulated jacket. Besides being embarrassing, it was dangerous and could even give bikers a bad image!

Shoulder holsters provide protection and concealment. I prefer them for most hunting, particularly in the winter. Poorly

designed, they will cut you to pieces and fatigue you quickly. The Goerg shoulder holster was the first I had and liked. It's a good holster and sold for about \$28.00. I don't know if it is still available. It was not of the quality of the "Dirty Harry," but still a good holster.

The harness is at least as important as the holster. Again — personal preference and the useage is important in deciding what will work best. Shoulder rigs with a wide soft leather harness that place most of the weight of the gun and holster on the shoulder directly above the gun and utilize a harness around the other shoulder to merely keep the gun side from

"The Lawman is well designed and hangs straight..."

sliding off the shoulder work all right with light guns. A loaded Super Blackhawk or M-29 over a tee-shirt while running, climbing or engaging in strenuous activity, particularly in warm weather, wrinkles the shirt under the leather and the wrinkle abraids the skin. With all of the weight hanging on one side; I feel lop-sided. Doesn't affect a lot of people at all — but it sure bugs the hell out of me; particularly when climbing. "Dirty Harry" works well under those conditions.

I particularly like the way it rides and find I can wear it for a long time under severe hunting conditions before it begins to bother me. The harness does not interfere with any conventional shooting position when set up properly.

I've used the rig for both 6½ and 8¾ inch M-29s and am quite satisfied with it. It is easier to draw by raising the gun until the cylinder is clear of the holster than it is by simply breaking the gun out of the front of the holster.

On the negative side; the harness opposite the holster, won't clip over a 2" wide belt. 1½-1¾ inch belts are the max it will fit. The manufacturer cut out remedy this with little effort. The cylinder cut out looks good, but isn't a necessity. I would prefer the holster to release the gun a little easier when simply breaking it out of the front of the holster. And I don't know of any shoulder holster that you can break the gun out of silently. In many hunting and/or combat situations holster noise could be an important factor.

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While designed for the M-29, when scaled down it works equally well with smaller guns. It is now made for all popular handguns and at \$59.95 (up to 6-6½" models — \$69.95 over 6½") represents a fair value. I feel it is equally suited for police and sportsmen. Manufacturing quality including leather cutting, stitching and finishing is excellent.



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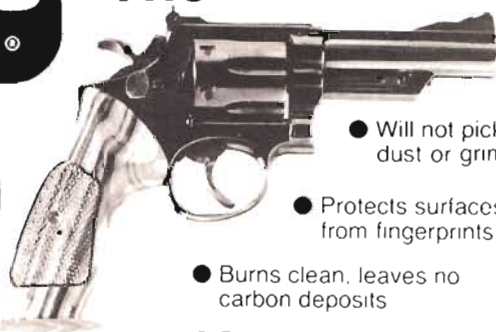
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Much conjecture exists as to how the pistol found its way to the rafters. One theory suggests that during rebuilding of the fire-gutted Hermitage in 1834, it was stolen and concealed in the rafters of the west wing, the only undamaged section. When President Jackson found it missing, one can imagine his wrath, swearing "By the Eternal" to have the hide of the thief. Small wonder the latter never dared recover it.

This buckle has been struck to commemorate the discovery and preservation of this important historical artifact. Finished in brass, just as the metal portions of the original pistol, the buckle shows detail of both sides of the pistol, in relief, on a plain background. The buckle is 2" x 3 3/4" and will fit belts up to 1 3/4".

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TOWLE T-N-T

(Continued from page 47)

pounds. By the same formula, a .44 Magnum Smith & Wesson with factory fodder has about one-fourth the kick of the 90% .458. It feels that way when shooting it, too. When I fired it from the Creedmoor position with the barrel across my calf, a la Skip Talbot, the recoil was throwing the gun up to within ten inches of my shooting glasses. This gun could hurt someone who didn't know exactly what he was doing, and Towle is well aware of that fact. "I built it mostly for the hell of it, just to show it could be done," he says. "I have a ridiculously high price on it, partly to discourage people from buying them. I'll do everything I can to steer a customer to the .358, which has very controllable recoil and more than enough power for the silhouettes."

To that last statement, I can heartily attest. I recently ran one of John's two-handed Wichita .358s over half a course, and was impressed by both the accuracy and the power. I dropped all the chickens and pigs, blowing most of them off so violently that we found them lying about a foot and a half behind their pedestals when we went downrange. The turkeys, which I have the most trouble with, went down decisively save for one I had a bad sight picture on. All the 200 yard rams dropped like shooting gallery ducks, and all but the last were hit within 2 1/2" of point of aim. The last ram I hit badly, in the rear leg. Had I been shooting my Production Class .44 Mag, I'd have written it off. Incredibly, what happened instead was that the rear leg swung away under the 250-grain Hornady's impact, the forty-pound sheep did a long pirouette on its front leg, and the metal critter fell end over end into the dirt. "Now," John told me, "you can believe me when I tell you that I've never hit a ram *anywhere with the 250-grain .358 and not taken it over.*"

Wait a minute, says the reader, if this concept is so great why aren't people like Skip Talbot, the national champion and the best shooter the sport has yet produced, using it? Well, sports fans, it's like this. Skip and the other Westerners went to shortened rifle rounds like the .308 x 1 1/2" and the 7mm. Talbot because they wanted near-rifle power and velocity without uncontrollable recoil, and they were sure that full rifle rounds of .30 and .36 caliber would be more than pistol or shooter could handle. They were and are super accurate and powerful, knocking over the early steel rams with consistency that clearly outstripped the .44 Magnum.

However, Towle relates with an unabashed gloating smile, those fast little bullets also cratered hell out of the

targets. Range hosts responded by going to heavily armored steel targets designed to take that kind of abuse. "Loads like the 7mm. Talbot won't knock over an armored ram reliably," John believes. "They sometimes blow up on the surface. A big, heavy, slower moving bullet has the deciding factor in ram knockover: dwell time. The longer the bullet stays together and continues piling up and pushing against the target surface, the more certain you can be of the ram going over. In essence, the guys who forced the match sponsors to go to armored targets that last indefinitely, are losing now because their small bullets won't dig into the harder surface. There's no dwell time. The animal does

".308 and 7 mm are flat and accurate . . ."

not *move* in some cases!" Thus, Towle maintains, the pioneers of light, fast metallic silhouette loads have been hoist by their own petard.

All this is debatable among the Westerners, of course, but there is a certain validity to the argument. There is no doubt, though, that John's loads sledge over the steel. John favors the CCI BR2 benchrest primer in all his .308 and .358 ammo, on the theory that the mild primer throws less of a firecone and permits the powder to ignite at its own rate for greater uniformity. He swears that switching to that brand of primer brought his shot-to-shot velocity variations down to 18-25 foot seconds, chronographed. In his pet .358, he uses a 200 gr. round nose Hornady with 36 grains of 4198 on chickens. He goes up two grains for pigs and turkeys, and for the rams, switches to a 250-gr Hornady and 34 gr. 4198.

In .308, he likes a 150-gr. Hornady round nose bullet ahead of 32 grains of 3031 for chickens. He adds two grains of powder for pigs, and two more for turkeys. Come ram time, he switches to the Hornady 220-gr. round nose and 35 gr. of 3031. This gives him 1800-1850 fps, compared to 2100 or so for his chicken load (actually, only John would call that a "chicken load"). He does favor the .358, though, for virtually total consistency with hits anywhere, and a sacrifice of only 2/10" in trajectory.

"Author encourages the use of the .358 above all others . . ."

John's XP-100s all come out looking terrific. He figures that for the money they pay, his customers should all have a gun that looks so nice they can show it to non-shooting friends and still elicit oohs and ahs. Bluing and fit are topnotch.

I've shot 'em, and I know lots of other metallic silhouette gunners who swear by them. Once you've actually touched one

off and experienced for yourself its easy controllability, its superb accuracy, and its unsurpassed knockdown power on the business end, you'll understand why no one who knows T-N-T guns is lifting eyebrows anymore, except in appreciation. Right now, most of the silhouetters who buy T-N-Ts are plunking down their bucks for XP-100s, starting at \$575, and I have yet to meet one who regrets the transaction.

Towle's address is T-N-T Arms, P.O. Box 387, Conway, NH 03818. Delivery time is running 120-150 days. If you're not a metallic silhouette buff, but instead a connoisseur of the superlative and unusual, you might want to check with John on his forthcoming "Ultimate Pistol Pack." He explains, "Dan Wesson set an excellent precedent with their Pistol Pac, a quality revolver with interchangeable barrels and stocks. I want to go a step or two beyond that, and offer a fine singleshoot, bolt-action handgun in optional calibers, as well." The basic pack will start at four figures and will include an XP-100 or Wichita action, four standard rifle or belted magnum-chambered barrels in assorted calibers, (i.e., 6mm., 7mm., Mauser, .308, and .358), a fine wood hunting stock, and a fiberglass silhouette stock, plus competition iron sights and a Leupold hunting scope. Delivery time will be a year minimum and price, as with New Hampshire seacoast lobster, is negotiable at the time you come in to place your order. He achieves the interchangeable barrels on the Wichita action by crush fitting to the receiver on four receiver steps, so that when two socket cap screws are removed, the barrel is only hand tight. Since all barrels have to be contoured to .001" on the outside to fit the bedding, the ultra premium price is understandable.

There are lots of people out there doing XP-100 conversions. I've played with Skip Talbot's match gun, and it impresses hell out of me, but I have to think Towle is right up there with the best in this area of custom handgun building. His concepts are perhaps the most dramatic and exciting . . . and effective, against the new second generation of super-hard steel silhouettes. Anyone thinking of an Unlimited Class XP-100 should check out a T-N-T gun before making the final, expensive decision. It's an excellent choice.

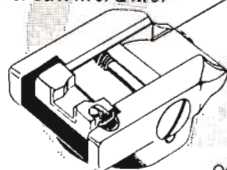


NOTICE OF CORRECTION

In our September/October issue in the article entitled *Super "4 Teens"* by J. D. Jones, the load listing for the 14" Thompson Contender at the bottom third of the chart should have been headed .35 Remington and not appear to be a continuation of the .357 Herrett loads. See page 45 in Sept./Oct. issue.

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ASTRA CONSTABLE

(Continued from page 27)

own and use. Its Spanish ancestry is anything but a detriment, and this gun should go a long way toward bolstering the reputation of *Espana*-made firearms. It's a real sweetheart.

There are regrettably few pocket-sized auto pistols of American manufacture on the market today, and those small .22's I'm aware of come equipped with rudimentary fixed sights and lack many of the other niceties featured by the Astra. The Constable isn't what you'd call a budget priced rimfire pocket pistol, but it is a whole lot of gun for the money.



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Handloading

By DAN COTTERMAN

CHARGING THE .45 AUTO

Not too long ago our reader survey brought to light an unsurprising fact: The .45 auto ranked Number One on the buy-next lists of the majority of handgunners who responded. This confirmation of popularity provided more than a sufficient excuse for me to return to these pages with additional information on handloading one of our most formidable combat and self-defense cartridges.

Our first look at feeding this heavy-handed and challenging artillery piece



Here's the Colt .45 Auto Gold Cup.

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

First, however, a brief review is in order for the benefit of those who do not have back issues at hand, as well as for anyone who was with me then but has not yet had an opportunity to put my suggestions to use. As a *prélude* to discussing handloading for the .45 auto, I am going to mention one significant point purely on the basis of its mnemonic value: I refer to the "transport factor," a function peculiar to all autoloaders which requires the movement of each

cartridge from the magazine clip to the chamber from which it will be fired. There is, under such a circumstance, a comparatively long and often damaging trip for carefully prepared ammunition.

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

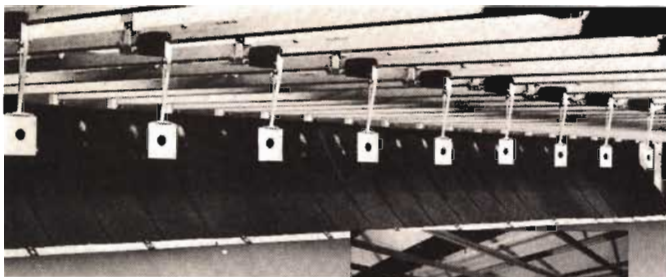
The need for the cartridge to withstand being slammed from clip to chamber while traveling up a more or less steeply inclined ramp — the most demanding part of the total cartridge movement referred to in the term, transport factor — calls for a bullet contour that involves a minimum of abrupt angles. Ignorance of this exigency will result in jamming.

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

Observation and personal experience have caused me to realize that one tends to shoot with the same care he exercises in the preparation of his handloads: sloppy handloads encourage a negligent, and often dangerous, attitude toward shooting while diligence at the loading bench tends to sustain itself, both in the field and at the target range.

If, in the optimum circumstance, every shot is to result in a full measure of accuracy and terminal effectiveness, it should be realized that the selection of powder

(Continued on page 64)



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HANDLOADING

(Continued from page 62)

type, charge weight, primer and bullet share at least equal importance with the requirements already reviewed.

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

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

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

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

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

The baffling part of this entire drama existed in the fact that, according to the

handloader's statement, he had merely picked the offending round up from his bench when it exploded in his hand. It had contained 2.7 grains of Bullseye, he said.

I later lost contact with the man; the bottle of remnants, although kept in a desk drawer for several years, eventually became lost. But, as I have said, the misgiving instilled in me because of the evidence I had seen and the testimony I had listened to, lingered on to pop up now and then as I handled 38 Special rounds I'd charged with the customary 2.7 grains of Bullseye.

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

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

I also should note that the extreme conditions of burning-rate increase described by Cooper's physicist-correspondent ("... a man who identified himself as a physicist" J.C.), would doubtless not exist in the .45 auto, that is, using the standard 3.5 grains with a 185-grain semi-wadcutter target bullet. The blow-ups reported to Cooper referred to 38 Special revolvers only, and that probably because of more frequent use. It is not unreasonable to infer that a similar disaster might occur with a 38 Special autoloader since the anomaly apparently exists within the case-volume versus charge-weight combination, not the gun.

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

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

The same can be said — and perhaps with greater emphasis — of the selection of bullet weight and type. The variety of missiles available in both cast and swaged types is, I'll wager, virtually unexplored by the average handloader, a

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fact that, unfortunately, seems to exist without respect to the cartridge being loaded.

It is, of course, economically impractical to experiment with every bullet-and-powder-charge combination in each of a number of cartridges the individual chooses to handload. A broadening of component types is possible, nonetheless, and is strongly recommended. Bear in mind that each component of the handload was manufactured with a specificity



of performance and purpose built in. Take full advantage of the specific nature of these products, but *always* within the limitations set by the manufacturers in their handloading manuals.

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

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

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



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Sight Settings

By Lucy Chambliss

HERE'S LUCY . . . A Women's National Champ And Her New Column

Editor's Note:

We herewith introduce a new column for and about target shooters. The author, Lucy Chambliss should need no introduction; she has 6 Women's National Championships to her credit and holds a lifetime Master in Bullseye and Combat. Recently elected to the NRA Board of Directors, Lucy is active in several NRA committees. If you like her column, disagree with her comments or have ideas on topics you would like discussed, she'll be happy to hear from you. Write to her c/o this magazine.

In my thirty years of competitive shooting, there is one outstanding trait among handgunners that I have noticed. Concentration is saved for the front and rear sight, and printed matter is almost totally ignored, whether it be match programs, rule books, future plans for betterment of shooting, or directions to the range.

The rank and file, and let's face it, we're not all the Jim Collins or Alice Bull type organizers, won't take time to find out what is really going on in their sport of target shooting. Hopefully, this column will highlight and capsule things you're interested in, that need your attention, thought and action. There are many good things planned for a shooter's future. Let's start with . . .

"More emphasis will be placed on women's awards and recognition in NRA competition . . ."

The Range Development idea; I think this is a great positive move on the NRA's part. A committee has been set up to provide financial support to local, state and regional ranges. The Northeast Regional Firearms Education and Marksmanship Center at Cape Cod will receive \$35,000 a year for 7 years beginning July '78, subject to approval of the technical aspects by NRA GO and the R.D.C. Let's get more ranges in more

areas, to be seen by more people. Don't hide them in wilderness areas, hundreds of miles from big population centers, as if we were training for guerrilla warfare. Don't tell me that sad story about your town being anti-gun and you can't have a range close to it; I read the other day New York City has so many ranges, no one can get an exact count. If target shooters can put in ranges there, you can

"NRA may support local, state and regional ranges"

do it anywhere. If you think you've got a good prospect for a range, write Range Development Committee, c/o NRA, they'll receive your correspondence (Will they ever — believe my becoming an NRA director helped bring on the postal strike.) Let's not be begging, or hollering till we're hurting for money, remember the NRA's just like federal government, got nothing except what we give them, so don't be wasteful.

PRO-GUN AMMO

Write ILA at NRA headquarters for these pamphlets, they're as necessary to a handgunner as a screwdriver, I think they say it all and refute all the anti-gun lies; "Ten Myths About Gun Control," "Federal Firearms Laws," "Gun Laws Don't Reduce Crime," "The Right to Keep and Bear Arms," "Gun Law Failures," "The Myth of the Saturday Night Special." . . .

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Doc Arenson, Chairman of NRA Pistol Committee has appointed a subcommittee (and Doc's committees work and act), for study of a U.S. Civilian Team, items are namely assistance to unsupported civilian (or police) shooter in training, recognition and financial aid from local, state, regional to national competition level support to be given for team competition with other appropriate countries. It's not time for us to give up

(Continued on page 68)

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SIGHT SETTINGS

(Continued from page 66)

our moonlighting jobs or other ways we support our shooting, this is just in the building state, but there is hope. Think, you might sometime soon be able to compete on a level with the military supported shooters!

Pistol Committee meeting at Perry brought out possibility of adding to the "2100" experimental pistol match, a rapid fire match of 8, 6, and 4 second stages but using a single target rather than a bank of 5. There we'd be getting something junior shooters could definitely relate to International competition and do on any range. Rifle shooting is turning out the junior shooters with their International style matches, we handgunners need to do the same, we old ones ain't gonna live forever.

More emphasis will be placed on women's awards and recognition in NRA competition, even now a woman's perpetual pistol trophy has been added at Perry (there didn't use to be one I can tell you) . . . I'm chairman of a subcommittee in Women's Policies Committee to work with NRA Law Enforcement Assistance Committee (all that just means Police Committee), to interest more policewomen in shooting and NRA membership. We're losing support and members out there now among the many women who must qualify with firearms in their departments.

When the U.S. International Shooting Championships were moved to Phoenix in 1969, rumor was then that these, the most prestigious of our matches and our Final Team Tryouts as well, would be held there for 10 years. Our lease or "sentence" could be up in 1979. I would assume this was some sort of arrangement of repaying Maricopa County for building the ranges that were then used the next year for World Championships. Our U.S. International Championships began in 1962 at Ft. Benning. The Running Boar and the shotgun shooters have moved their matches out of Phoenix and if enough handgunners feel like I do, I hope we can move. Phoenix is a nice place to visit, people and hospitality are wonderful, but everything else puts our shooters at a disadvantage. The temperature on the ranges this year reached 112-117 degrees, if you move matches to fall or winter, the wind will blow the targets out of the frames. You have the costly and hazardous 50 mile round trip to the ranges from Phoenix, no place to get out of the heat for relaxing between the long relays. Let your views on this important event be known to the International Committee. c/o NRA, your opinion does count. . . .

Lucy

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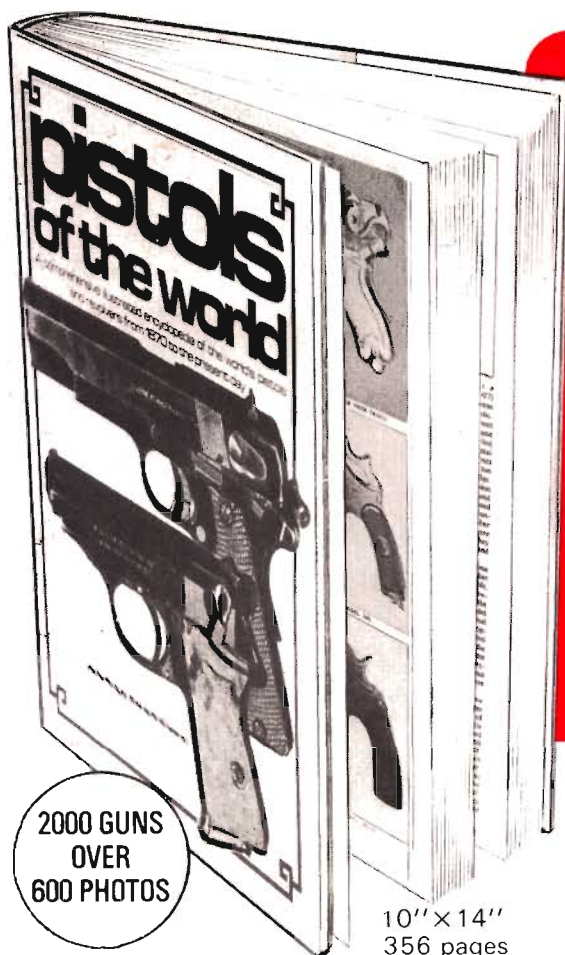
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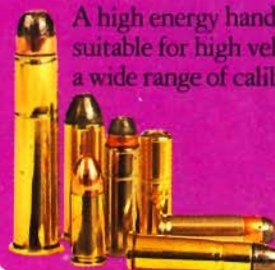
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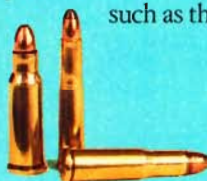
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