

THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

MARCH/APRIL 1979 \$2.00

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

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Handgunner Profile

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ACTION**

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By Jim Triggs

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Exclusive Interview



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THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

MARCH/APRIL, 1979

Vol. 4 No. 2-15

GEORGE E. VON ROSEN
Publisher

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This month's cover depicts a .45 Colt Single Action Army revolver dressed up with carved ivory grips by Art Jewel and holster by Hunter. Photo by Dave Friend.

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NEWSLETTER

OUTSTANDING HANDGUNNER NOMINEES ANNOUNCED

The Outstanding American Handgunner Award Foundation has released the names of the 10 men nominated to receive the Award in 1979. The presentation will be made at the Foundation's Annual Banquet scheduled for Saturday May 19, 1979, in San Antonio.

Ray Chapman is a world renown competitive shooter with over 200 wins to his credit, including the Practical Pistol Championship (Switzerland 1975). Chapman presently directs the Ray Chapman Academy of Practical Shooting in Columbia, Missouri.

Elgin Gates is a two-time winner of the International at the Grand American (1975 & 1976), widely travelled big game hunter, and author. Gates is presently serving as Director of I.H.M.S.A.

Dean Grennell is Managing Editor of GUN WORLD, and that publication's resident handgun and reloading authority. Grennell's writing is admired and respected for its technical excellence, and good humor.

Steven J. Herrett is the founder of Herrett's Stocks, Inc. He has hunted extensively throughout North and Central America. His successful .30 Herrett and .357 Herrett reflect an intense interest in cartridge development.

Lee Jurras founded the O.A.H.A. Foundation in 1973. He has hunted throughout the U.S. and Africa, and co-authored, with the late George Nonte, HANDGUN HUNTING (Winchester Press 1975). Jurras presently serves on the Board of Directors of I.H.M.S.A.

Neal Knox founded GUN WEEK, and served as that publication's first editor. Prior to accepting the Directorship of the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action, he edited HANDLOADER and RIFLE magazines.

Bob Milek presently serves as Reloading Editor of SHOOTING TIMES. Milek collaborated with Steve Herrett on the development of the .357 Herrett cartridge. He has hunted big game extensively, and ran his own hunting camp for more than a dozen years.

Harry Reeves has compiled an incredible shooting record. His accomplishments include 6 National Championships, 8 mid-Winter Championships, and a berth on 6 Olympic or World Championship

teams. Reeves has devoted his entire adult life to shooting and instructing.

Hal Swiggett has written for all of the leading firearms publications, in a career spanning over 30 years. He was one of the earliest proponents of scopes for handguns. In addition to his journalism and consultation assignments, Swiggett is on the Advisory Committee of I.H.M.S.A.

Dan Wesson has been active in the building of handguns since 1938. He founded his own firm in 1968, and introduced his innovative revolver with interchangeable barrels in 1969. Wesson has long been active in promoting the recreational use of handguns.

O.A.H.A. ANNUAL BANQUET

It's not too late to get your tickets for the Annual Banquet. The Date; Friday, May 18. Place; El Tropicano Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. Cocktails at 6 pm, Dinner at 7:30 pm. There will be more merchandise prizes than ever before, and who can stay away knowing that Jim Carmichel will be Master of Ceremonies? Tickets are \$25.00 each. See you there.

YES, I want to become a member of the Outstanding American Handgunner Foundation

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A black and white photograph of a man, Ron Newberg, standing outdoors. He is wearing a light-colored short-sleeved shirt, a dark vest, light-colored trousers, and a baseball cap. He is holding a rifle in his right hand and a hat in his left hand. He is standing next to a wooden structure, possibly a fence or a table.

Ron Newberg,
Rangemaster

"A lot of people bring expensive rifles out here, with inexpensive scopes on top. It's a shame, because they'll never realize the full potential of these rifles.

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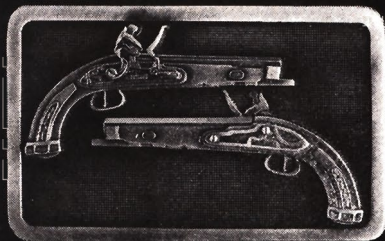
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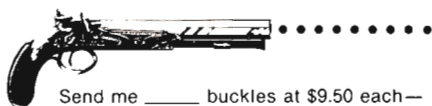


ANDREW JACKSON'S POCKET PISTOL

President Andrew Jackson owned many firearms during his career as soldier, statesman and President, however, his personal pocket pistol was his constant companion until percussion replaced flintlock. This rare flintlock pistol, circa 1812, was discovered on a roof rafter in 1968 during repairs to the Hermitage, Jackson's estate in Nashville, Tennessee.

Much conjecture exists as to how the pistol found its way to the rafters. One theory suggests that the pistol was stolen and concealed during the rebuilding of the fire-gutted Hermitage in 1834. When President Jackson found it missing one can imagine his wrath! Small wonder the thief never dared recover it.

This blackpowder buckle was struck to commemorate the preservation of this important historic pistol. The buckle is finished in brass and shows intricate details of both sides of the pistol in relief. The buckle is 2"x3 1/4" and fits belts up to 1 3/4".



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WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SMITH, COLT, IVER JOHNSON, DAN WESSON, BIANCHI AND OTHER CHOICE AND SUNDRY HEARSAY

Smith's prototype .45 autos, according to the latest poop we've received, weren't built in nearly the quantity that had been talked about in previous rumor-mongering. Why not? Because, says the latest source, they didn't work as well as expected, and no one at Smith could see spending mega-dollars on a new product anyway, when they couldn't keep up with demand for the stuff in the existing line-up.

We mentioned in previous columns the S&W Model 47, the prototype of a new generation of 9mm handguns from this firm. The number #1 prototype, built on a steel Model 59 frame and dubbed "Supergun," proved the validity of the concept at the U.S. National Championships of the International Practical Shooting Confederation in Los Angeles. In the capable hands of S&W employee Tom Campbell, Supergun captured third place overall and the gold medal in the demanding Cooper Assault stage. Though it has double action capability, the gun was set for single-action-only in

the match, and Campbell didn't even bother to use the ambidextrous safety option which is part of the concept.

How soon before you see a 47? Campbell isn't telling, not *me* at least. Our pipelines into Smith (which, incidentally, never included Campbell) tell us

Supergun S & W Model 47 captures 3rd and even a gold medal at IPSC

that funding has been approved to go ahead with the new generation 9mm's, at least as far as an improved safety that will totally prevent discharges if the gun is dropped on its muzzle.

Of course, much the same danger is present with the familiar 1911-pattern .45 automatic. Cold Ace .22 pistols on this design are coming with warnings to that effect, as a matter of fact. Colt is working on a firing pin safety, not unlike that seen

(Continued on page 10)

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18 good reasons why you should be an NRA Member!

I'm an NRA Member because a hunting buddy explained why I should belong. He was right, and I'm getting a lot out of it. But maybe no one ever invited *you* to join. Well, I'm asking you now, and here are 18 reasons why you should mail in the Membership Application—today!

1 A monthly subscription to your choice of either *The American Hunter* or the *American Rifleman*.

2 \$300 FREE firearms insurance and the chance to buy additional coverage at low group rates.

3 The NRA Institute for Legislative Action is battling for *your* rights as a firearms owner.

4 You're supporting the U.S. Shooting Teams in the Olympics, World Championships and other prestigious competitions.

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6 Our Firearms Information and Hunter's Information services stand ready to answer your questions on firearms, equipment, ballistics, reloading, game, seasons and regulations.

7 Through NRA shooting and hunting clubs, meet other gun owners and get involved in events going on in your state.

8 Win attractive awards for your outstanding game trophies.

9 Shoot courses of fire that will develop a hunters shooting skills!

10 Become an NRA certified Hunter Safety, Rifle, Pistol or Shotgun Instructor.

11 Get free information and special bulletins.

12 Buy authoritative, low-cost NRA publications that focus on range plans, firearms, hunting and competitive shooting.

13 As a Member, qualify for our in-hospital income plan.

14 Get help from our Affiliates Department and our Field Staff in organizing your own club and in setting-up or renovating shooting ranges.

15 Support NRA junior programs—programs for youngsters of every level of ability, from future World Champions to tomorrow's hunters and shooters.

16 Our Hunter Safety Courses, and Hunter Seminars programs have been pioneered and developed by the NRA especially for hunters.

17 Each year, attend the NRA Annual Meetings and Firearm Exhibit.

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

(Continued from page 8)

on a few of their pre-war guns, to deal with the issue.

Speaking of Colt autos, did we tell you that their long-awaited stainless double action .45 and 9mm., at last kissing dis-

Colt's Stainless Steel Auto axed again by executive decision

tance from an OK to tool up for production, were axed again at the last minute by executive decision?

Latest work on D-frame Colts: the two-inch Detective Special, the four-inch Diamondback .38, and the six-inch Diamondback .22 that was just introduced, will stay in the line. All other small-frame Colt revolvers are out to pasture for good . . . or at least, for now.

Bianchi's snatch-resistant police holster for automatics is finally coming out of the factory, unit by unit. We've tested

Finally, Bianchi's snatch-resistant holster is coming out . . . unit by unit

it, and Bianchi's R&D head Dick Nichols is right: it is the most secure duty rig for an auto on the market. With a little practice, it's as fast as almost any, and faster than most. Look for a writeup on it in these pages soon. Would you believe a holster that took seven years and ate up \$100,000 in design work?

The real sales winner now coming out of Bianchi is gonna be the new Pistol Pocket, a holster with all the good points of a Sparks Summer Special plus wet-fitting to the gun, and the thumbsnap safety strap many of us wanted. I had the good fortune to be one of the testers of the prototype Pistol Pockets, and wasn't the only one who recommended the strap. With it, and at a price just under \$20, I look for it to become one of Bianchi's most popular models, being an excellent combination of speed, concealability, and comfort.

Meanwhile, back at the digs of arch-competitor Safariland, we learned some startling news: that firm is going to be going into plastic holsters, probably within a year. Revolutionary designs are promised.

We recently played with the new Mossberg Military/Combat .45 automatic. The shape and location of the thumb safety wasn't at all impressive, nor was the trigger; on the other hand, it was a toolroom model, and the production version hasn't been finalized as yet.

Possibly more promising is their January '79-scheduled revamp of the Security Industries snub revolvers in .38 and .357. These guns exhibited fine design, and suffered only from sloppy quality control, something Mossberg should be able to improve on considerably. These wee wheelguns should be winners.

Well, Dan Wesson fans, it looks like two years before you see that company's big frame wheelguns in .44 Mag and .45 Long Colt. Yes, I know that's what we said a year ago. Thing of it is, gang, Dan Wesson Arms dug its way out of a deep financial hole a few years back, and went on to become one of the most financially healthy small firms in the gun business. They did that on the strength of a primo



Production version not finalized.

.357 that more people want to buy, than can find them. Dan Wesson is going to give that market all his attention before he goes into the newbies.

"Sure wish you'd hurry up with your new reloading manual"

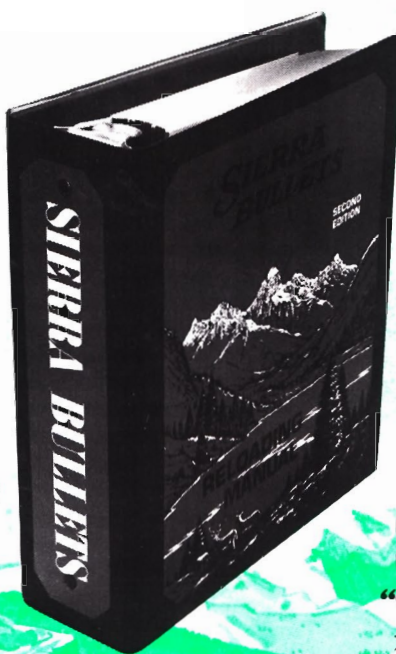
—Carl Tyler, Plattsburg, Minn.

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If you were a Maverick owner, would you feel a little nervous if you saw Henry Ford II driving by in a Volkswagen? It's surprising how often you see a top honcho for a gun company using a make other than his own for personal requirements. For instance, the importer of an expensive and ultra-fine series of foreign handguns keeps a humble Hi-Standard Sentinel .22 revolver in his desk drawer. Another exec, employed by a top US handgun maker, is seldom out of reach of his highly customized Belgian Browning pistol. One honcho in the domestic handgun industry likes to affect Gene Autry-style garb, having his roots east of El Paso (like a couple thousand miles east), and is reported to occasionally



We may see an up-dated Model 15 in the future.

complete the image by slipping an old Remington .41 rimfire double derringer into the top of his cowboy boot.

It's going to be interesting to see what Iver Johnson does for the Plainfield M-1

It's going to be interesting to see what Iver Johnson does with the Plainfield line of M-1 style .30 carbines the firm recently acquired. Lou Imperato, who runs I-J and also the classic and successful Jovino's Gun Shop in New York City, is a canny businessman; look for him to do more with the line than most would expect.

There isn't all that much news. The scarcity of J-frame Smith revolvers is explained by the company that each model is scheduled according to its need, and promises that the little five-shot .38s will stay in the catalog. Of course, there are lots of things in the Smith catalog that are nearly impossible to get. Oh, well . . . maybe it's another good time, like the Vietnam years, to think about buying stock in Charter Arms. (Speaking of

Mag-na-port's popular Charter Arms .44 Spec. Backpacker will be offered again . . . how about sights?

which, Mag-Na-Port is going to do another run of their amazingly popular Backpacker, a nicely slicked up Charter Bulldog .44 Spl. with 2" barrel. Aw, Larry, please at least *think* about putting on a front sight this time, huh?)

One other revamp we might be due to see would be an update on Smith's Combat Masterpiece Model 15, which hasn't changed since its 1949 introduction, save for the stainless variation (Model 67). A sleek sixgun to be sure, the Combat Masterpiece's attractively tapered barrel doesn't lend itself to recoil control as much as, say, the heavy barrel Military & Police in the same caliber. When Smith introduced the stovepipe-tubed M&P many years ago, it quickly became the most popular service .38 ever, and the old "skinny-barrel" style soon became the mark of the rookie. A similar modification of the Combat Masterpiece just might be coming. I recently testfired a Model 66 (stainless Combat Mangum), serial number 10,000, that had been furnished in .38 Special to Los Angeles PD for testing. LAPD is very much up on the Combat Masterpiece, since that's the issue gun for their 7,000-some officers, and the straight-tube barrel and ejector shroud of the Combat Mag configuration go nicely with the rapid fire control you need to make a .38 work for you. LAPD is phasing in 67s to replace their model 15s anyway, and has equipped maybe 20% of the officers with stainless guns; however, some of the armorers don't feel the new ones are holding up as well as the blue steel version.

"I have tried every target bullet. I always end up with Sierra..."

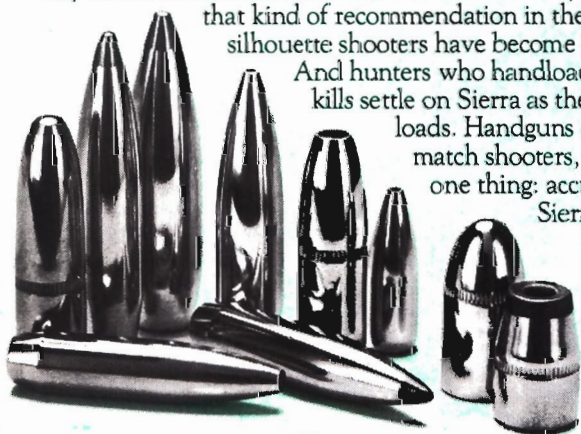
—Paul Johnson, Great Falls, Mont.

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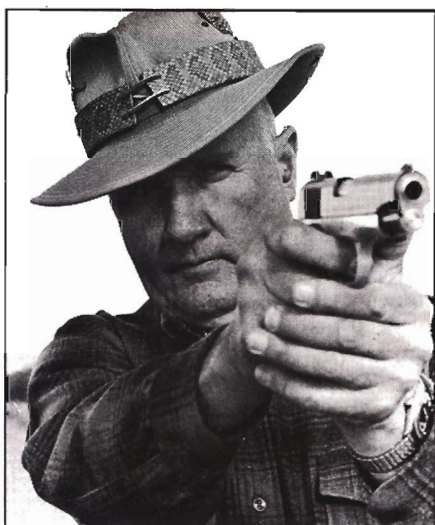
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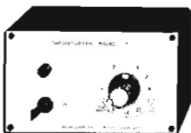
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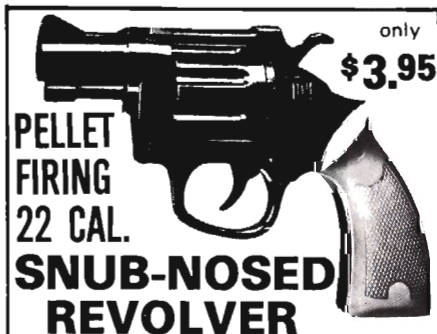
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PHILLIP C. BRIGGS

AN UPDATE ON RULES AND REGULATIONS

"The success of the IHMSA is due to the production class" Elgin Gates stated, punctuating his statement with the stub of a fat cigar. "We can't allow the class to become a money game, one that takes a \$1,000 to buy in." Members of the organization's technical committee crowded around him in a small room, a refuge from the relentless Kansas sun, nodded in agreement.

The occasion, the 1978 Championships of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association. The cause, the

**Gun internal tune ups did not
violate the letter of the law —
but most of it bent the
hell out of the spirit**

growing need to control the small, yet rapidly growing trend to tunes and super-tunes on production guns.

The production rules in effect at the time prohibited external modifications, but were silent regarding internal changes. When the rule was adopted in 1976 the organizers recognized the possibility that accuracy tunes, as well as trick innards, were allowable but were reluctant to get into the position of requiring teardowns to check for violations. And, I'm sure, they also hoped few would be tempted.

The production class, as defined in those rules, was supremely successful. From a few members in the fall of 1976, the IHMSA grew to over 5,000 members by the close of 1978, with more than 15,000 shooters competing in sanctioned matches in the first nine months of 1978. Fully 80 to 90% of these shooters were competing in the production class.

The class is intended for stock as a stove pistols, so that a pistolero can wander in off the desert with a magnum, forty rounds of ammo, and be competitive. They did, and they were, and the sport grew by leaps and bounds.

The casual approach to pistols permeates the whole game, with fellowship and fun being the goal of most; serious shooters, with winning on their mind, are in the minority. And why get deadly serious, when the equipment costs are low,

as the pistol you had hanging in the closet will do fine.

Tunes and supertunes up the ante, and they do provide results.

The Contender was a prime candidate for improvement. The spring driven locking bolt provides a semi-precise lock up, and the manufacturing tolerances required to insure any barrel would fit any frame contributed a random looseness that occasionally created a poorly accurate pistol. Vern Juenke, of Reno, Nevada developed a tune package consisting of a reshaped locking bolt, press fit hinge pin, and speeded up lock work. Priced reasonably, the tune was sufficient to produce several 39's with the ten inch barrel. And if that improvement wasn't enough, there were even more significant alterations — at even more dollars.

The revolvers weren't ignored either, with tunes going for beyond timing and a trigger job. Tunes began with removal of the double action lockwork to smooth the single action pull at one end of the scale, and escalate to complex conversions of single actions to single shooters of bottlenecked cartridges from cylinders that are removed for reloading. Costs range from reasonable to ridiculous.

None of this violated the letter of the rules — but most of it bent the hell out of the spirit.

"We've got a small band of legal cheats, who want to get an edge anyway they can" asserted Elgin, "and we can't

**We can't allow the class to
become a money game, one
that takes \$1,000 to buy in**









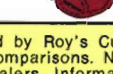
let that happen. And I don't believe," he concluded, with a sweep of the ever-present stogy "that the members will stand for it either."

The technical committee voted in support of Elgin's position, and a pole of the state directors in attendance indicated their support.

Still, the opinion of the organization's hierarchy was not unanimous. At the annual meeting of all directors, committee

(Continued on page 14)

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SILUETAS

(Continued from page 12)

members, and club delegates, the mood seemed to be to leave the rule alone for another year, and see what happens. Or create an AAAA production class for the hotdogs and let them duke it out, or separate revolvers and single shots. Those with supertunes argued against rule changes, those they had shot against argued for them, but most of those in attendance hadn't yet had the problem crop up in their area. In the end they were unable to reach a decision.

By the time you read this, it will have been made though, by a referendum vote of all of the IHMSA members. The proposed rule would read something like this. "Only parts supplied by the pistol's manufacturer will be allowed for repair or replacement, with no significant mod-

"The sport is new, growing and needs new shooters."

ifications thereto. Further, the mechanism's must remain substantially as produced by the manufacturer."

"It'll pass, it has to" Elgin commented, "if it doesn't, IHMSA will disappear as we know it."

The delegates to the annual meeting discussed a number of proposed rule changes, and did approve several that will take effect in 1979.

A full set of classes for standing competition was approved, to be used at the option of the match sponsor. The classes are:

AAA	: 22 - 40
AA	: 16 - 21
A	: 8 - 15
B	: 0 - 7

Standing has been shot in open competition this past year, but in some areas has become so popular, that fairness requires some segregation of shooters. This action will allow the match director that option.

A new classification rule was approved, to cut down on sand bagging and trophy collecting by outstanding shooters as they slowly progress up through the class structure. Next year, the first score fired in a sanctioned match by a new shooter will establish their initial class. Thereafter, any two scores, including the first score and any re-entry scores, that exceed the break point of any class will move the shooter directly to that class.

There are few sanctioning bodies that allow non-members to compete in sanctioned matches. The IHMSA does. In response to a proposal to require membership to compete, the delegates voted to leave the status quo. The sport is new, growing, and needs new shoot-

ers. The delegates felt that requiring membership would turn away some of these new shooters, and that for now at least, nothing should stand in the way of that growth.

Some of the freestyle positions, the various supine variants, are potentially dangerous to the shooter — there's a lot of shooter down range of the muzzle. There's more than one pair of levis in the country with a hole in the right cuff from a muzzle that was a tad too far back. No flesh wounds yet, but it's possible. Oddly, there's even more danger during the loading cycle, as it's very easy to point the pistol at a knee or toe while refilling. Close the bolt on an XP, finger the trigger, sneeze and you're a handicapped shooter. It hasn't happened yet, but the opportunity is there, especially for the novice. Rather than rule against a very popular position, though, the delegates decided to rely on the match director's responsibility for range safety to handle the problem on an individual basis. If a shooter is found to be violating common sense safety rules, the match director can take the necessary action — whether a word to the wise, or a disqualification — whatever is needed. The game has an unblemished safety record — let's hope it stays that way.

In an unprecedented action, the National Reloading Manufacturers Association presented a special certificate of award to the members of the IHMSA at



IHMSA was pleasantly surprised by an award from the National Reloading Manufacturers Association.

the 1978 annual meeting. Conceived by industry rep Edd Page, the plaque read "Presented to Members of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association in recognition of strides taken in ballistic experimentation." Awards to organizations are rather common, but for the subject at hand, the achievement has truly been made by the individual members — and hence the wording of this one of a kind award.

Edd presented the award himself to a stunned Elgin Gates, accompanied by a roar of applause from the assembled members. The plaque is now in residence at IHMSA headquarters in Idaho Falls.





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MODEL: "Abilene" Single Action

CALIBER: .357 Magnum, .45 Long Colt, .44 Magnum

BARREL

LENGTH: .357 Magnum 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ ", 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".45 Long Colt 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ ",
 .44 Magnum 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

WEIGHT: Approximately 48 oz.

SIGHTS: Front Sight - Serrated Ramp

Rear Sight - Adjustable for Windage and Elevation
 Click Graduated Screw Adjustment

HAMMER: Wide Spur

TRIGGER: Target

SAFETY: Safety Bar

LOADING: Gate with Manual Ejector

GRIPS: Smooth Walnut

STYLE: Traditional Frontier Model

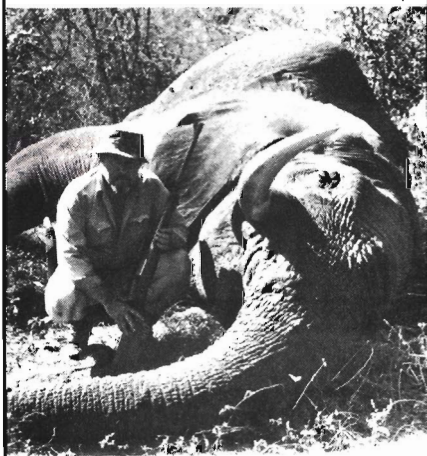
MATERIAL: High Tensile Steel

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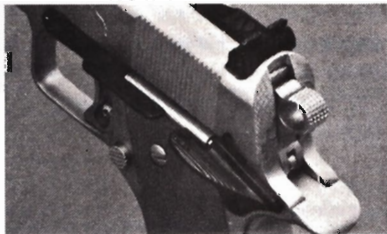
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Cooper's Column

ALL ABOUT THE S&W STAINLESS STEEL KIT GUN AND AN IPSC UPDATE

This one is a cutie. The famous Smith & Wesson "Kit Gun" has been around since Columbus, but now we have it rust-proofed. What a good idea!

For those who came in late, the "22/32" Kit Gun is a small frame, six-shot, four-inch, 24-ounce, double-action 22 revolver, with nicely designed adjustable sights. It was conceived as a general-purpose compact 22 for campers, fisher-

**Originally conceived as a
general purpose compact
for campers, fishermen, etc.**

men, backpackers, canoers, or anyone else who needs an auxiliary sporting sidearm. That was a good concept, and improving it with stainless steel is a distinct forward step. In pack, glove-compartment, tackle-box, on the belt, or (now) even in the bilges it stands ready to handle any of the normal 22 chores — from rat control to pot shooting. This is one I would rather buy than send back.

Its virtues are obvious. Its flaws are minor and correctable. First among these

**The Kit Gun's virtues are
obvious, its flaws
are minor and correctable**

latter is its butt, which was never designed for the human hand. Not to worry. Frank Pachmayr makes a nifty set of rubber stocks expressly for this little gem, and they provide solid, comfortable non-skid support without increasing bulk enough to matter. By drilling a hole transversely through the heel of this arrangement, as shown, we have an excellent lanyard mounting. The kit-gun seems to call for a lanyard, as it is often handiest when hung on a peg in camp, cabin, or cockpit.

Smith & Wesson stainless alloys have pretty well passed the test by now, and I feel disinclined to dunk this neat item in the surf, as I did with another test gun some years back. (The fact is, I have use for a #63, but none for the other piece, which was a #66. No matter. The #66

stood up to intense corrosion without any damage. The alloys are the same, I presume.)

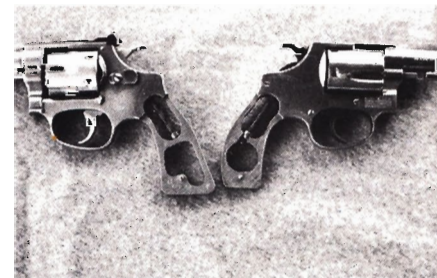
There is really little to test about so straightforward a pistol as the Stainless



Compact and easy to handle, this 24 ounce S & W Kit Gun comes in Stainless Steel.

Kit Gun. It works fine! One might not select it for formal target shooting but that is not its function. Its accuracy (4 1/2" five-shot groups at 50 yards) is all one could wish in a utility 22, and far beyond the marksmanship of all but a very few shooters. More to the point, on the "snake test" (1 1/2" pebbles tossed forward over the head of the shooter as he walks down the trail) it was flawless, even in some fairly unpracticed hands.

The fitting and finish of the test piece are not up to the old-time Smith & Wesson standard (What is?) but still better



Kit gun (L) has square butt configuration. Contrast that to the M-60 with round butt.

than we expect today. Out of the box, the trigger did not suffice, but just a little

(Continued on page 18)

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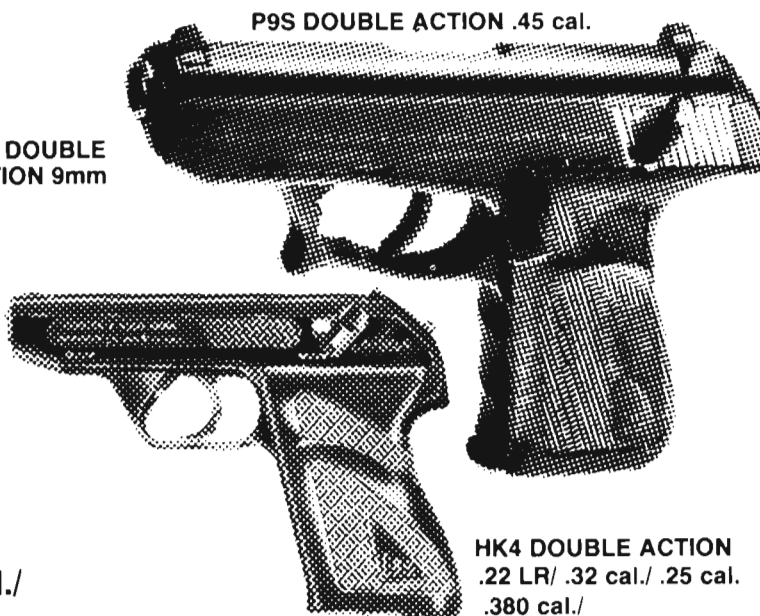


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MEDICOLEGAL INVESTIGATION OF THE PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY MURDER by Charles G. Wilber, *Colorado State Univ., Fort Collins*. Approaching his subject from the perspective of a coroner investigating the shooting death of a prominent citizen, the author analyzes all evidence in a strictly scientific manner. His conclusion, after a careful examination of the data, is that more than one person fired at and hit the victim. '78, 336 pp., 9 il., 2 tables, \$16.00

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, load and handgun selections. The shooter's basic mental and body processes that result in effective combat marksmanship are explained. '76, 272 pp. (6 3/4 x 9 3/4), 594 il. (26 in color), 8 tables, \$24.75

COMBAT SHOOTING FOR POLICE (2nd Ed.) by Paul B. Weston, *California State Univ., Sacramento*. The Second Edition of this proven manual presents entirely new chapters on combat automatic pistols, tactics, and handgun selection. The text continues to comprehensively cover such basics as grip, sights, aim and trigger pressure. Service revolvers, off-duty guns, holsters and reloading are also explored. '78, 184 pp., 71 il., 6 tables, \$10.75

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT BOOK OF WEAPONS, AMMUNITION AND TRAINING PROCEDURES: Handguns, Rifles and Shotguns by Mason Williams, *Firearms and Ballistic Consultant, Libby, Montana*. This text presents data on firearms, firearms training and ballistics. Types of guns discussed include revolvers, automatic pistols, special handguns, semiautomatic rifles, and shotguns. '77, 544 pp. (6 3/4 x 9 3/4), 506 il., 1 table, \$32.50

A HANDBOOK ON THE PRIMARY IDENTIFICATION OF REVOLVERS AND SEMIAUTOMATIC PISTOLS by John T. Millard. This text presents a simple yet concise method of carrying out a primary identification and recording of revolvers and semiautomatic pistols. By using the seven-point system of primary identification outlined in this book, the reader can determine an accurate description of any firearm. '74, 168 pp., 87 il., cloth-\$12.25, paper-\$9.25

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COOPER'S COLUMN

(Continued from page 16)

honing was needed to re-set it to a crisp three-pounds — single action. (The trigger-cocking action is irrelevant on a piece of this type.)

Revolvers, as a breed, may be conceptually obsolete today, but some of them are still great fun to have around. This new #63 places near the top of my own list.

IPSC NEWS

Plans for the World Practical Pistol Championships for 1979 have been initiated. The host for the event will be the

1979 World Championships to be held near Johannesburg

South African Practical Shooting Association, and the match site is Roodepoort, near Johannesburg. The dates are 10-19 of September, 1979.

The U.S. Championships for 1979 will be held Fourth of July week in Park City, Utah. Contact there is Dennis Tueller, 8207 South 1330 East, Sandy, Utah 84070.

The Practical Pistol Championships of Europe are tentatively scheduled for May of 1979, probably in Glattfelden.

The Australian Championships for 1979 are scheduled for Easter week in Perth, Western Australia.

Quoting from the IPSC bulletin:

"An important procedural point has come up at the U.S. Nationals recently held in California. In accordance with long-established policy a man may not be told how to shoot in any practical shooting contest. Specifically, he may not be told that he must shoot with his weak hand. He can, on the other hand, be told that his strong hand is a simulated casualty. If this latter course is specified, he may obviously not use his strong hand for any purpose after the stipulated point in the stage of fire. Thus on the "Cooper Assault Course," after a shooter passes the weak line, he may use his strong arm neither to operate his weapon nor to crawl or climb, since the object of the exercise is the elimination of the strong hand. Therefore, in order to conform with this doctrine it will be well to move the weak line in the Cooper Assault to the far end of the tunnel. Other courses, new or old, involving weak-hand shooting should be adjusted to conform with this policy."





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Tool and Punches	\$4.98
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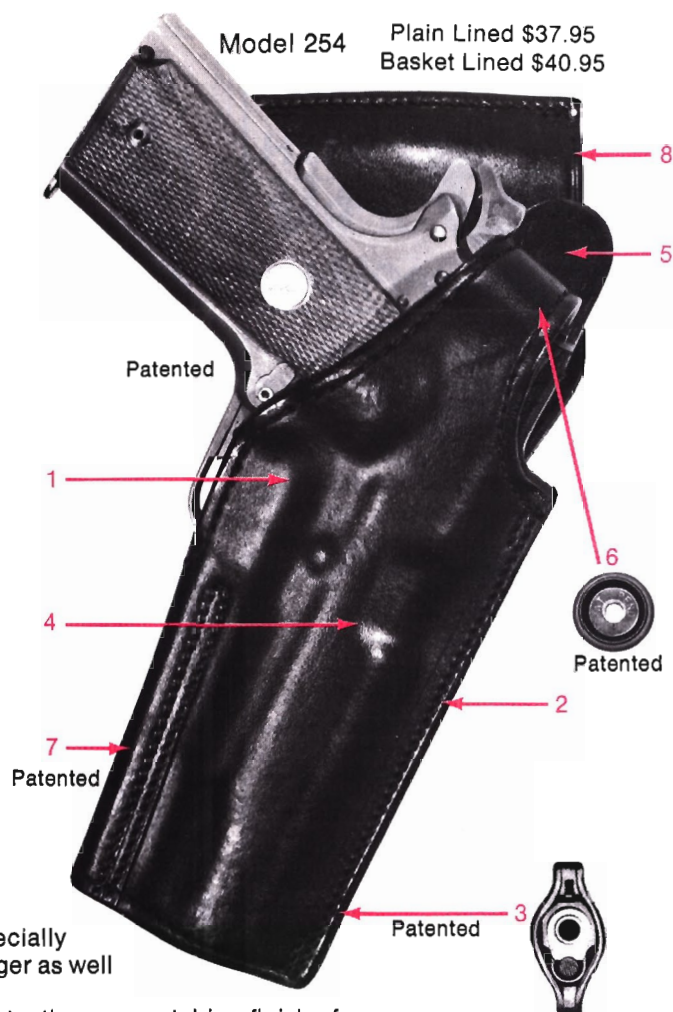
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7. REAR WRAP-AROUND: 254 Holster for large auto-loading pistols. Features Safariland's exclusive Sight Track and Rear Wrap-Around & welted design for maximum strength.


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Like all our equipment, this set is produced by expert craftsmen who give each item that personal touch.

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Give waist size

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The AIG military-combat auto in stainless steel with all the features. Extended slide stop release, safety levers on both sides of the receiver and it's compact — 7 1/2 inches muzzle to pistol grip tang and weighs-in empty at 36 ounces. On or off the target course it moves smooth and fast from holster to firing position. A combat style trigger guard and extended tang are designed to give positive control for a two-handed hold. Left or right handed the safety can be released by a thumb push forward. Fully adjustable sights mounted on the satin stainless slide help to point out targets quickly. Its serrated, non-slip trigger is fully adjustable for pull and travel.

Squeeze off seven hardball or wadcutters . . . the performance is consistent. The 4" barrel has a target style barrel bushing for accuracy; a positive lock-up system and integral feed ramp. A beveled magazine well makes speed loading quick and easy.

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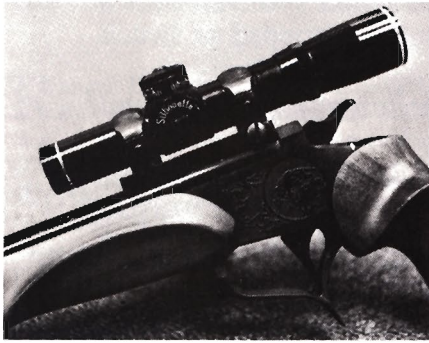
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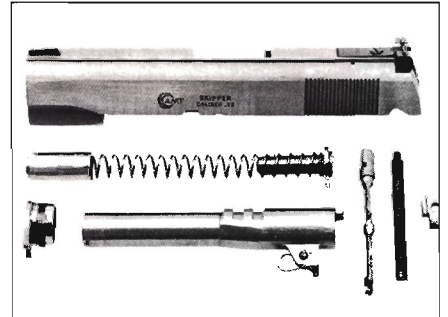


Here's a new pistol scope by John B. Williams that features ground, polished and coated lenses that were made on the same machine as the famous Nikon camera. They have an objective lens adjust-

able for parrallax and more elevation and windage adjustment than any other maker. Every lens is fully coated and different reticles are available. Additionally, they are fog-proof, Nitrogen filled and sealed. Every scope has a serial number. The field of view is 28 feet at 100 yards. We obtained our sample from Weisser's, 1018 National Avenue, National City, CA, 92050 (distributor). The developer, Fontaine Industries, Inc., 704 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton, CA, 92631 says that the scopes will be priced at \$90 for the 1.5X and \$95 for the 3X. Silhouette adjustment Turret Caps are optional.

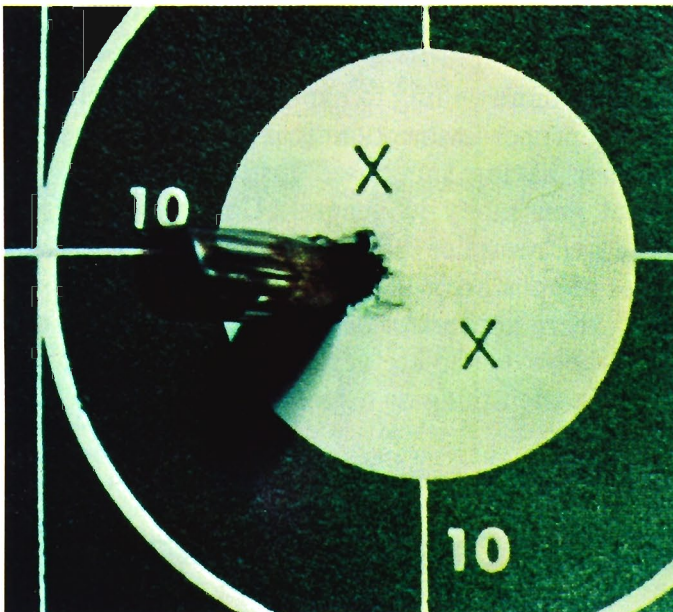
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HANDLE WITH CARE:

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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Handgun Leather

J. D. JONES

RANGER LEATHER

Ranger Leather Products, Inc. (P.O. Box 3198, East Camden, AK 71701) is a "new kid on the block" of manufacturers of holsters, belts, carrying straps, etc. This "new kid on the block" has some impressive innovative design fea-



This beautiful basket weave model is a great hunting rig and the inter-changeable belt loops mean that you don't have to buy a new belt if you change calibers.

tures that should appeal to a wide variety of shooters. Ranger isn't into the police or fast draw market. They are into equipment designed for field use effectively catering to the handgun hunter, plinker, hiker and those who just plain like good quality leather products.

Most impressive is Rangers' Camouflage Color option. The colors are dark, rich, and individual. No two are exactly alike and the effect is very pleasing. Other finishes, particularly the antique ebony, are also well done. Designed for rough field conditions the Ranger incorporates a quick release strap that doubles as a sight and hammer protector. It very effectively shields the upper portion of the gun while leaving the trigger guard and grip exposed. It does not hinder anyone's ability to get the gun into action. It isn't 100% on keeping sand, dirt, snow, etc. out of the holster when under sever conditions of sliding on your rear in sand or snow but it will do a good job even under those conditions. In normal usage, it should prevent accumulation of debris in the rig.

Rangers holsters fit their belts right — they won't slip or wobble around. They are double-welted and double row lock stitched at all stress points. Suede lining is an option, I heartily recommend. It is well worth the extra cost in any holster. Belts are two-ply leather, 10 ounce top-grain cowhide with a 4-5 ounce elk suede liner. They are 2¼ inches wide and made for heavy duty. Several styles of buckle are available. Leather covered to match the belt leather with cartridge loops or conventional buckles. Revolver belts usually carry 18 loop sewn on cartridge carriers. The loops are raised and not flat against the belt. A superior system without a doubt. For Autos, a two magazine carrier is an option.

Ranger offers plain, basketweave and camo finishes in a variety of shades from black to natural. Ditto on the carrying straps which attach to 1 inch sling swivels and are padded.

In general, I like the quality of Ranger's rigs. They are comfortable and

durable. They don't slide, chafe or otherwise inconvenience me. The angle of the holster to belt is a straight drop. It isn't as comfortable to draw from as a holster with a backward muzzle rake type, but it'll do for six inch and under guns. Over 6" barrel lengths are somewhat awkward to get out. The 2½ inch wide belt distributes weight well and is comfortable. 18 rounds plus five or six in the gun should satisfy the needs of a hunter. No belt can satisfy the needs of a real plinker.

The holsters ride high and out of the



way and are blocked to fit individual model guns. They stay in place well in strenuous activity. They protect the gun. In short, they do what they are supposed to do. Prices start at \$21.95 for holsters, \$25.95 for gun belts and \$13.95 for rifle carrying slings. Ranger's guarantee is as good as you can find. "We unconditionally guarantee every item sold. If you are not completely satisfied with any Ranger product you buy — whatever the reason — return it within 10 days and the full purchase price will be refunded to you."

If you are interested in seeing what they look like in color — drop Danny Hart a line for their color catalog.



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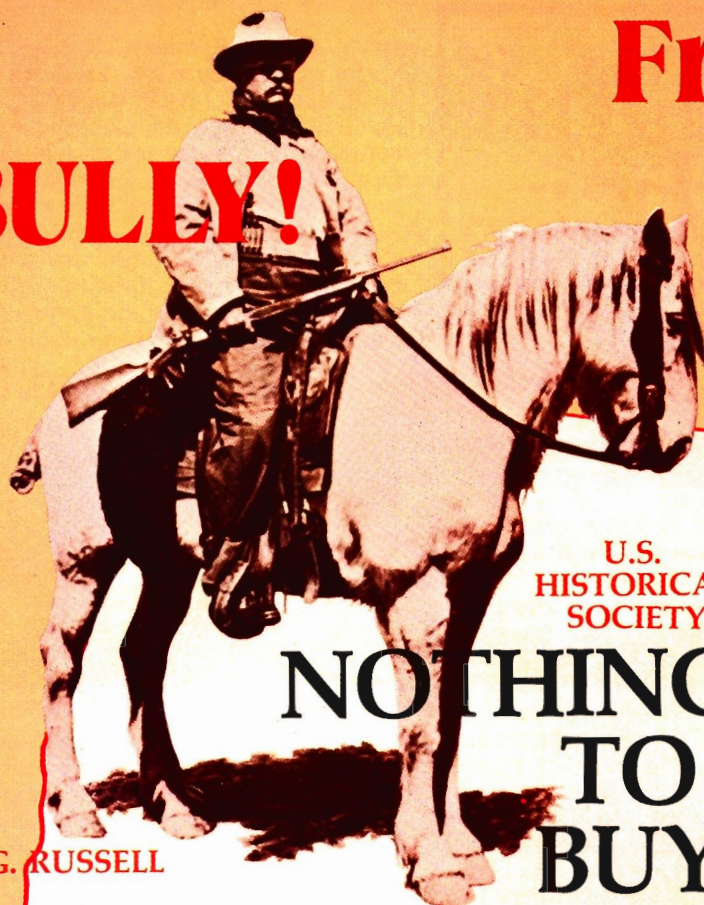
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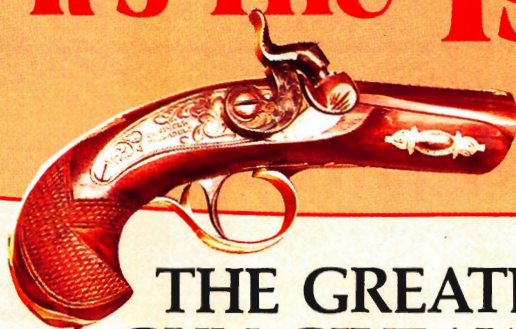
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You may already have won one of these fine firearms. The prize list represents many of the best guns made today. There are more prizes than we could even picture here. Send in your postcard at once to receive your prize packet containing your official numbered entry certificate and a giant prize poster showing all of the prizes plus many surprises. The sweepstakes is free to enter and no purchase is necessary to win. Just follow the simple instructions below and find out if you have won!



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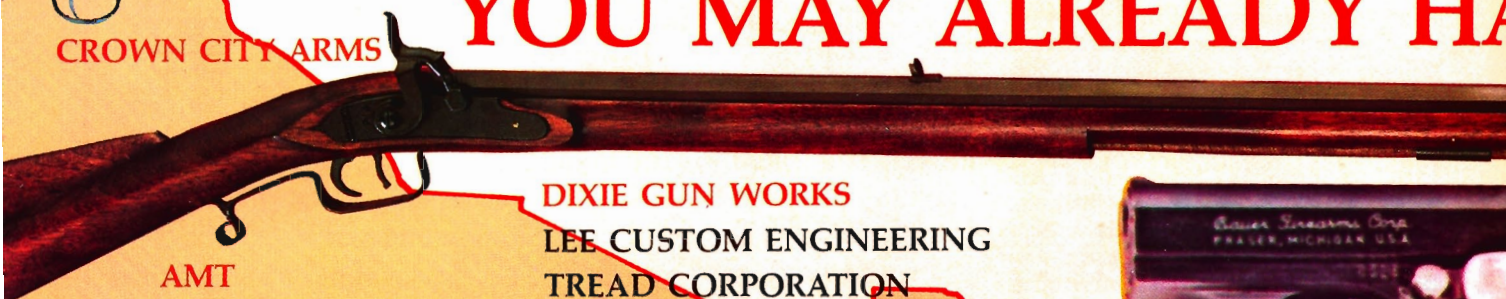
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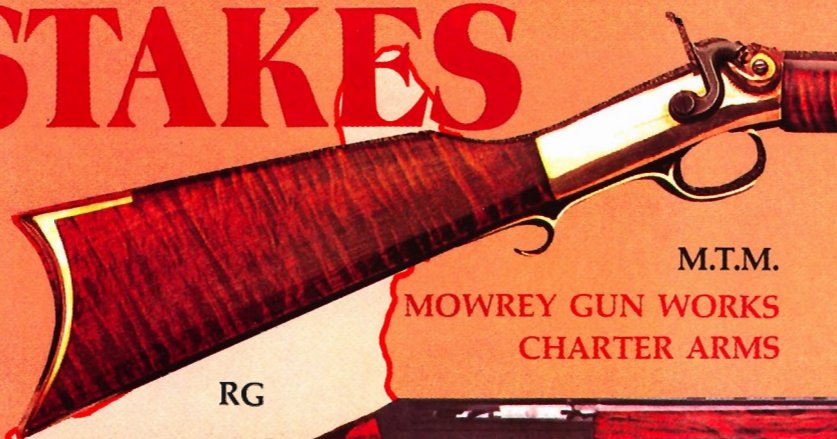


AMERICAN HANDGUNNER 9 GREAT HERITAGE SWEEPSTAKES

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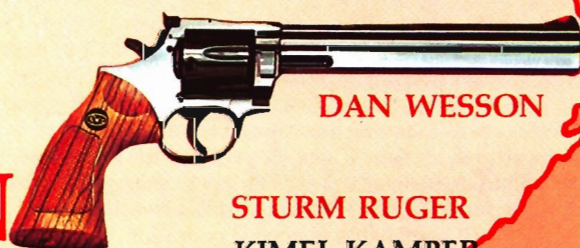
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To receive your official entry certificate simply mail a plain postcard with your name and address printed clearly on the back to: **SWEEPSTAKES COMMITTEE, Box X-16025, San Diego, Ca. 92116.** (No letters, please!) The request for your entry certificate must reach us by March 15, 1979. You will receive your special sweepstakes package in the mail on or before June 1, 1979. The 1979 sweepstakes is open to residents of the United States except employees of GUNS and AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazines and their families. Sweepstakes is subject to all Federal, state and local laws and is void where prohibited, taxed or otherwise restricted. No purchase is necessary to enter and all prizes are guaranteed to be given away. Only one entry allowed per household.

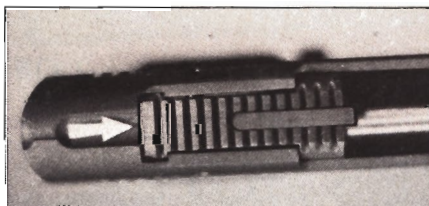
Troubleshooting Your Handgun



The OMC .380 "Back-Up" pistol, the smallest gun currently made in this caliber.



The OMC "Back-Up," field-stripped.



In this top view, the arrow points to the separate breech block.



A spring in the left side of the breech block locks into a groove (arrow) in the retaining cross-pin to hold it in place. When replacing pin, the groove must go to the left side.

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.

J. B. WOOD

This Month:

The O.M.C. .380 BACK-UP

Produced by the Ordnance Manufacturing Corporation, a subsidiary of TDE marketing Corporation, this is the smallest pistol currently made for the .380 automatic cartridge. They named it the "Back-up," a reference to its suitability as a "second gun" for the Law Officer. Needless to say, its caliber and size also make it ideal as a "first gun" for the private citizen, when local law allows carrying for self-protection. In addition to its size and cartridge, the little OMC has another significant advantage — it is made entirely of stainless steel.

This is an excellent and well-executed design, and has several good points. The idea of a separate breech block enclosed by the slide is not entirely new, but this application of it is handled efficiently. The breech block, which is strongly braced by several shoulders within the slide, is vertically retained by a single cross-pin which is under no strain. The cross-pin has a groove near its left end, and there is a circular spring clip in the breech block which grabs it to retain the pin. When reassembling, it should be remembered that the catch-spring for the groove is on the left side, and the pin inserted accordingly. Also, take care that the small cross-pin isn't lost. A new replacement for this bolt retaining pin, to use the factory term, costs less than a dollar, but the gun would be useless until you replaced the pin.

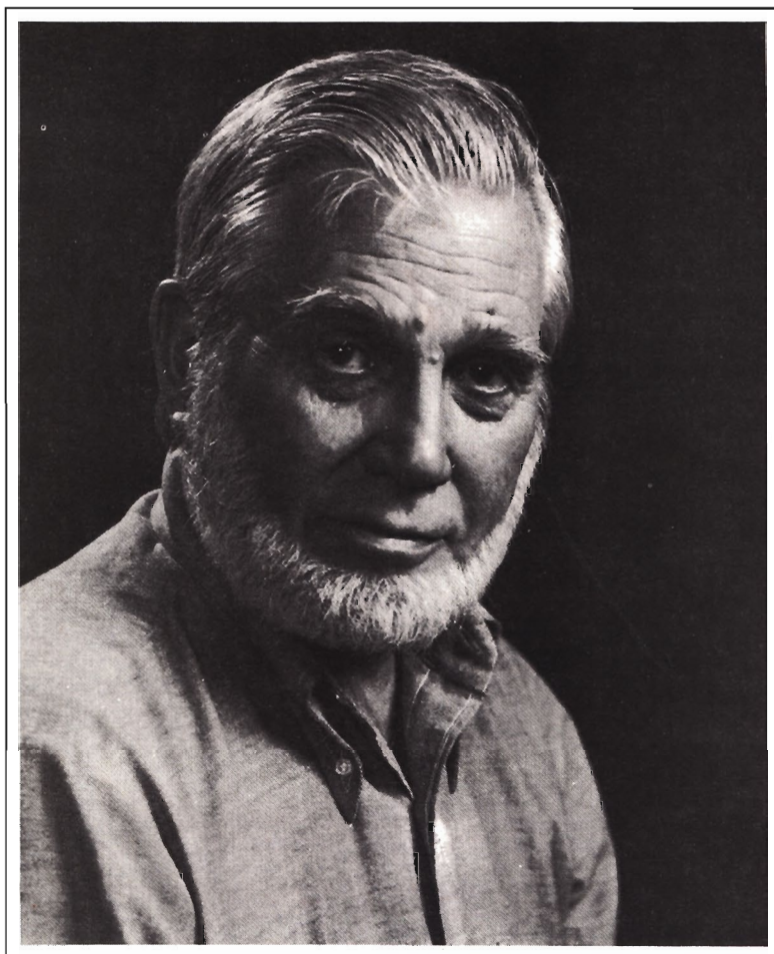
The manual safety lever, which directly blocks the sear, is perfectly located for operation with the thumb, and is neatly recessed into the frame. The lever is tempered to be its own positioning spring, and is the only flat spring in the design, but it is barely flexed and breakage is extremely unlikely. There is also a grip-type safety, blocking the sear. I usually consider these to be a nuisance, but in this case, on such a small, heavy-caliber pocket gun, it may have some value. The OMC is not a true hammerless pistol, having a pivoting hammer concealed by the slide.

On the right side of the frame, covered by the grip panel, the trigger bar/disconnector is set into a shallow recess. The lower edge of this part is grooved, and a small round-wire torsion spring fits into this groove to supply vertical tension to the disconnector. It's not likely in normal operation, but careless handling when the grips are removed may jump this little spring out of engagement with the trigger bar. Before replacing the grips, this spring should be checked.

There is no magazine safety, and the other two will function only when the hammer is cocked, so they act as indicators. If the grip safety is not protruding, and the manual safety lever can't be moved up into the on-safe position, you know the gun is not cocked. Takedown of the OMC is not difficult, but does require some tools — a small-diameter drift punch, a four-inch length of 1/4-inch wooden dowel, and a small mallet or hammer. With the magazine removed, drift out the breech block retaining pin. With the wooden dowel inserted through the magazine well and against the underside of the breech block, tap the dowel gently with the mallet, and the breech block will climb out the top of the slide. Next, move the slide forward a short distance, then lift it up off the frame at the rear and run it off forward, releasing the recoil spring and its guide. With some of these pistols, it's also a good idea to drop the hammer before starting the disassembly, as some hammers ride high enough when cocked to interfere with the forward takedown movement of the slide. Do the whole thing in reverse, and you'll have it reassembled. Don't forget, the grooved end of the bolt retaining pin goes to the left side.

The grip panels are of some dark, dense hardwood, and are held on with a single Allen-head screw on each side. They appear to be very resistant to breakage. I hope so, as replacements are relatively expensive, and available only from the manufacturer. I wish it had an external hammer, and/or a double action trigger system. Even so, I like the little beast. It's one of the good ones.

In Memoriam



Daniel Baird Wesson
April 22, 1916–November 24, 1978

We at Dan Wesson Arms mourn the loss of our founder and good friend Dan Wesson. His integrity, optimism and good humor will be sorely missed.

As we enter our second decade we pledge to maintain the rigorous standards he set. His spirit will live on in the company that bears his name.

PROFILE OF A PISTOL CHAMPION

ROSS SEYFRIED

By MASSAD F. AYOOB

Last year, when a strange face walked into the winner's circle at the National IPSC (International Practical Pistol Confederation) Championships in Denver, the hardcore devotees of the sport were hard put to explain what had happened. A few people, one at the podium of the awards banquet, attributed newcomer Kirk Kirkham's victory to luck. That inference not only poisoned the flavor of triumph for the winner, but left an unspoken promise that future titles would be won on skill alone, with no element of good or bad fortune.

The 1978 shoot, in Saugus, California, proved that implication part right and part wrong.

The winner didn't take it by luck at all; he was a fresh face as Kirkham had been the year before, and he shot steadily and well. His name was Ross Seyfried, and he took his place on the top and watched everyone else come close and then fall back. Bad luck for them? Maybe. But it was calm, expert, deliberate practical shooting that put Ross Seyfried in the championship gunbelt this year, just as the same combination of well applied skills had done for Kirkham the previous year.

Ross Seyfried is twenty-seven years old . . . tall, good-looking, athletic, and doomed forever to be called "an all-American type guy." He started shooting long guns casually at six, and pistols when he was ten; in his adult years, he concentrated on .357 and .44 Magnum revolvers, and only in July of '77 acquired a .45 automatic and went seriously into the free-style combat pistolry of IPSC.

His mentor was Bob Nelson, an early charter member of the Colorado Pistol League that hosted the first Nationals. Seyfried was soon caught up in the spirit of what Jeff Cooper calls "competitive combat pistolcraft," and quickly decided that he would devote himself to practicing for the '78 U.S. title event. Starting in October of '77, he held himself to a seven day a



week regimen of a hundred shots daily.

His gun was a Pachmayr Combat Special based on a Colt Mk.IV Government Model .45 auto, the same type of weapon used by such world-famous combat shooters as Ray Chapman and Raul Walters. For practice, he loaded his own cast 230-gr. round nose bullets over a hardball-equivalent charge of 231 powder. And when he came to California, he was ready.

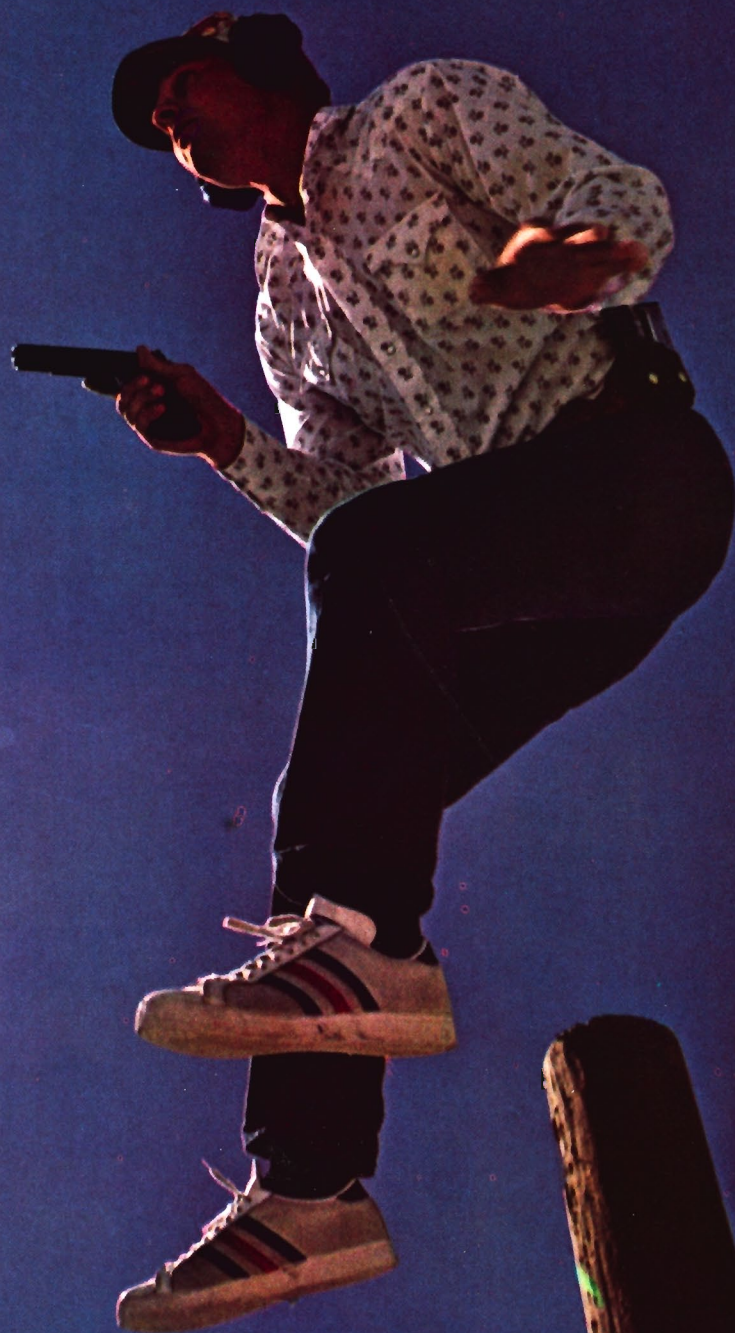
Seyfried's lead first became apparent on the Unique Mover stage (see course of fire), when he was the first to place all fourteen hits on the fast-racing, camouflaged bobber-style target known as the IPSC Item. He was at or near the top of the other three events as well, and by the end of three days of shooting, no one had to wait for the complex computations of who had beaten how many to know that Ross Seyfried had

wrested for himself the mantle of U.S. Champion.

IPSC is a very politicized outfit as shooting groups go, with its share of rivalries and animosities not only between clubs and geographic sections, but between two ideological factions that have emerged within the game. These are known within the sport as "the gamesmen" and "the martial artists." True to their self-explanatory titles, one contingent uses careful pre-planning and selection of specialized equipment to turn in the very best possible score over a known course of fire, while the other school of thought is that all practice should be with guns and leather suitable for daily wear, duplicating what a reasonable (and knowledgeable) person would wear for self-defense purposes.

Seyfried cannot be identified with one school or the other, and it will be interesting to see which claims his victory as ideological proof of their own approach. Certainly, Seyfried had practiced solidly for a known sequence of events, and handled them perfectly when he faced them in the heat of the championship arena.

(Continued on page 60)



Here's the "Colorado Cyclone" moments after clearing a barricade at a recent Denver shoot. Fast, accurate shooting is important, but it doesn't hurt to be an athlete either. Action photo by Ray Ordorica.

SUPERSTARS HALTED AT IPSC NATIONALS

By MASSAD F. AYOOB

Half an hour out of L.A., West Thompson's Juniper Tree Shooting Range lies in a region they call Sand Canyon. They don't call it that for nothing. Out of reach of the valley's smog, the clear air is whipped by winds that roar down from the mountains to sometimes spin the sand into eye-biting clouds.

Juniper Tree is divided into several ranges, owned by various local clubs, most of which are into IPSC shooting. When Southwest Pistol League won the bidding for the site of the '78 national championships, many of their own Californians pleaded to host the match at more lavish facilities, such as those of the Oceanside club, but the group settled on the Thompson range in Saugus.

The weather was kind to the match, considering what it could have done; locals remember matches where the winds tore the targets away from blown-down frames, yet save for the constant dust that made many competitors walk about with plastic bags around their guns or handkerchiefs stuffed up their magazine wells, there were few real complaints about the climate.

The complaints came from other things. And they came in volumes.

First was the course of fire, condensed at the end of this article or see Page 26. In particular, shooters were unhappy with the Unique Mover, a fast-stepping lateral-target that few of them were able to duplicate at home for practice. The Cooper Assault course was also hard to recreate in a learning format for many of the shooters. Between them, many outsiders said, California had used a course that gave an insurmountable home-ground advantage.

It wasn't necessarily so. At the last minute before shooting for record began,

Jeff Cooper ordered a change from plain buff-colored targets to camouflage-sprayed ones, and on the Cooper Assault course, the outdoor carpeting in the tunnel was removed and replaced with deep sand. The Californians had been practicing on a surface that allowed them to fling themselves into the six-foot-deep tunnel and slide most of the way through; now, *everyone* would have to half-swim through the unexpected loose dirt, and home-court advantage was negated.

IPSC '78 is going to be remembered as



Here are the winners at the Awards Banquet. (L to R): Mickey Fowler 4th, Tom Campbell 3rd, Ross Seyfried 1st, Steve Blankenbiller 5th, and John Shaw 6th. (Absent: Raul Walters 2nd.)



Raul Walters firing the pivot stage of the modified Advanced Military.

one of the most challenging events in the sport's history. Some said it was unrealistic, but nobody said it was easy, and perhaps a majority agreed with winner Ross Seyfried when he said, "It was an extremely diverse tournament. It tried almost all the practical pistol skills, from quick yet accurate fifty-yard shooting, through fast-moving targets, through physical exertion. It tested athletic ability and control of high-speed shooting without sacrificing practical marksmanship skills."

IPSC isn't for kids, but it's a baby sport in terms of its own age and maturity, and it was inevitable that the California nationals would not go off with the

smoothly worn-together synchronization that characterizes an NRA-style national match.

Are we going to say what was wrong with IPSC '78? You bet we are. We're also going to tell you what was right with it, but let's get the bad stuff out of the way to clear a path for the happy side.

Many of the non resident shooters complained bitterly to us that they showed up several days before the match for practice sessions, only to find ranges closed to them. "We're sorry," they were told, "but these are each privately owned ranges, for dues-paying members only." Those who were able to get onto ranges were charged fees they frequently considered unreasonable in light of having already paid \$60 or more in entry fees. One Southern policeman stated that

he had asked for a receipt after laying down \$4 to practice the Unique Mover, "The guy shoved my money back at me and said, 'Here, take your money.' I said 'Does that mean I can shoot for free?' He said, 'No, that means I don't give receipts.' I didn't have a whole lot of choice."

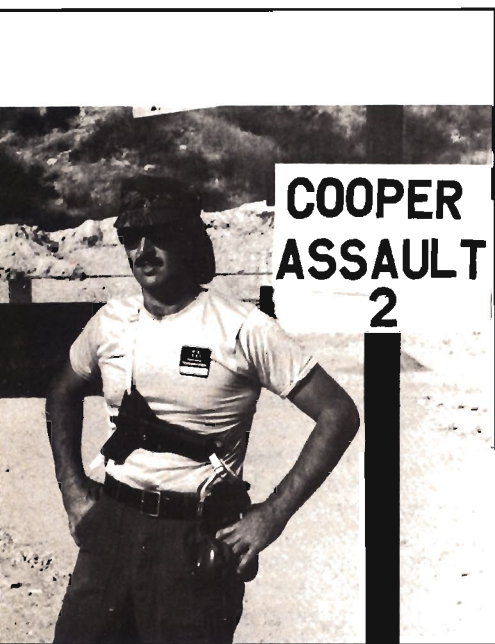
One private range that *was* open to all comers was the Eagles' Nest facility, operated by holstermaker Gordon Davis. Unfortunately, Eagles' Nest is located on the highest plateau above the range, and few shooters coming in below were referred there.

When the tournament opened on Thursday, October 11, complaints grew into a crescendo. Nothing quite started on time, and several of the stages were unable to get all their groups through.

Lone female contestant, Susan Yorty, shown firing long range stage of modified Advance Military. She shot offhand, though most went to prone for 2 shots in 7 second stage.

(Shooters were put into six groups, each of which shot a morning course one day, an afternoon match another day, and one day with double events.) The Unique Mover in particular was a bottleneck; the moving target range had been having its problems even before, and went to pot badly in the first few hours.

Top-ranked shooter Raul Walters, high US gunner at the last Internationals and third in the world, came to grief on the mover that first morning, as the lateral target repeatedly malfunctioned: now stopping before it should, then not starting again, and flopping loose the next time. Walters, like all shooters, was scheduled for two Mover runs; he had to shoot eight times. Rumors flew that he was playing the prima donna, making challenges until he finally got all his hits on. This was untrue; I was the shooter on deck behind Walters, and watched him through all eight runs. There were one or two calls that could have been debatable, but no one could say that Walters was



3rd overall, here's Tom Campbell with the modified Cooper Assault course in background. He uses a prototype Model 47 S & W 9mm with holster of his own design.

doing it just for practice to get his lead down right: his lead was *already* down, having practiced extensively on an identical Mover at Ray Chapman's adjacent, fenced in range, and the repeated runs took their toll on Walters, a finely-honed and high-strung shooter who is to IPSC as a quarterhorse is to a racetrack. In the last analysis, the eight runs hurt Walters more than they helped him.

There were to be other complaints. In three of the events. (Quick & Dirty, the Cooper Assault, and the Mover), Comstock Count was in effect, and was determined by clock-stopping bullet hits on metal targets. In Comstock, time is more vital than precision accuracy, and a bullet that hits the timing gong but doesn't register on the digital readout, destroys you. This was a problem not only for 9mm. pistols, but for .45s; Dick Thomas of Missouri, the prime mover in the historic 1975 Columbia Conference that got the whole IPSC concept going, hit the Mover's timing silhouette repeatedly with .45 slugs and the clock kept run-

ning, necessitating nerve-fraying refires.

The Quick & Dirty proved even more treacherous. To protect the electric wire, a steel column stood beneath the metal gong, and when a bullet hit that protective column, the shooter would bring his gun down from recoil to see the gong quivering. He had already heard the metallic ring, and perhaps saw bullet marks on the whitewashed steel (re-sprayed after every contestant), and wouldn't realize that the mark was caused by a bullet spattering on the steel below. The shooter would lower his gun, thinking the string over, not realizing that the clock was running on him . . . some complained, and got refires from Bill French, the fair-minded and long-suffering match director. Some didn't complain until later. When they waited more than a day, it wasn't French who screwed them. It was themselves.

When it was over, some would say that picky rules had got them, and some would say that they had just fouled up themselves under the enormous heat of



American Handgunner writer and match participant Massad Ayoob (R) getting some advice from last year's 6th Place winner in world competition, Ray Chapman.

side of the barricade was visible from fifty yards away throughout the rest of the match. Some called it poor sportsmanship . . . but it was no way for a champion to lose a title, and Kirkham had a right to his anger.

Leonard Knight. In Southern California, Knight is considered the classic freestyle combat shooter. When Ray Chapman announced that he wouldn't shoot in this tournament, the big names



Shooter running from station to station, reloading as he goes, during Unique Mover.

match pressure in this, the most uncertain of national handgun championships. Sometimes each would be right and wrong. Consider the way so many top-flight gunners went down in defeat:

Kirk Kirkham. Last year's champion, he had been branded "lucky" by big-namers who couldn't believe someone from outside had beaten them. Kirkham was determined to prove them wrong.

He ran the course hard, and that was his undoing, because during the Cooper Assault he threw himself so violently into the final tunnel, and pumped his legs so hard to drive through for an extra second, that he dislodged his .45 auto from his Davis crossdraw holster. Kirk reached the final window/barricade, went for his gun . . . and discovered it wasn't there. The fistprint he left on the

favoring Knight slightly to win. But in the Cooper Assault, two stovepipe jams destroyed his time so badly that he was out of contention for the open victory. A Quick & Dirty hit on a hostage — totally uncharacteristic of Knight, who is famous for fast, straight shooting at close range — sealed his defeat. Knight had been having troubles with his gun in practice, but hoping against hope that

new ammo would cure the problem, had stayed with his familiar #1 piece. It didn't work.

Ray Chapman and Ken Hackathorn. Though he has been beaten, Chapman retains the aura of The Man To Beat; he is the first world champion, and the acknowledged master tactician of IPSC shooting. Hackathorn is the undisputed ("Martial arts") top gunner in the mid-west if you don't count ("Gamesman") Walters. Rumors flew that Hackathorn

wouldn't come because of political differences within the organization, and that Chapman wouldn't because he hated Comstock events, which didn't allow him to use his analytical mind to shave every known-time course to the most efficient combination of movement and shots. In fact, both rumors were unfounded; Chapman didn't fire because he had severely injured his left hand (the wounds were available for viewing, though no one came to look), and Hacka-

thorn bowed out because he had been told that the results wouldn't count for the US Team in the next World shoot.

Jerry Usher. A world team member from last year, and always a threat in any major IPSC tournament, Usher shot extremely well with his long-slide Hoag .45 but fell under what one fellow shooter called "two shovels of chicken----." On the Mover, he was penalized because his foot was just over the line at the second firing station, and on the Quick & Dirty,

1978 IPSC EVENTS DIGEST

Modified Advanced Military

Here's your chance to pick up a possible 250 points. 50 rounds at ranges from 10 to 50 yards. First, 2 rounds at silhouette at 50 yards. 7 second limit — repeat 5 times. Next shoot 1 round, 8 times, at 25 yards. You're allowed but 2½ seconds each round. It's possible to pick up 40 points here. Third, 2 rounds at each of 3 silhouettes from 10 yards. Repeat, total 12 rounds. 9 seconds for each string. The Fourth Stage finds the shooter getting two round opportunity at each of 3 silhouettes at 10 yards. No peeking at these targets until they say to commence. Then a repeat for a 12 round total. You get 4 seconds for each string. Last, you fire 2 rounds at 10 yards. Repeat 4 times for a total of 8 rounds. 2 seconds each pair. This is a 40 pointer.

Modified Cooper Assault

Here you get the 4 foot barricade with 2 yards beyond being the "weak hand" line. To get a clear idea of the layout see illustrations. At "commence fire" you open up on the targets near the barricade from behind starting line. Then it's over the top, then the silhouettes at the "tunnel" before crossing the weak line. Next it's your weak hand, through the tunnel on all fours and then the blasts at the other two through a porthole. The only pleasant thing is that you can shoot as many rounds as you need. Hits and times are scored.

The Unique Mover

Here's a 10 to 20 yard, 24 cartridge event. The action commences when his shooting hand leaves the start button. Target X appears behind the left hand barricade and reacts to the timer. 4 shots at X, then 1 at Y and 1 at Z. Some move, some stand still and then it's "Katy Bar The Door." Contestant reloads, moves to different location, then there's a round at Z and a round at Y. But while you're popping one off at Z, that son-of-a-gun of an X starts rolling. You get 3 shots at that fast moving X as it goes right to left and a last shot at a silhouette (Target F) stops the clock. Remember, if this sounds a little confusing, try reading a non-condensed version of this event. Hit a barricade or have a foot fault and Goodbye Charley.

Quick and Dirty

This is 7, 10 and 12 yards. At least you get to sit down on this one. They use the Comstock Count and rounds are a minimum of 23. You grab your piece and fire one round at each of 5 targets. Time is stopped when you hit impact plate. Leaving even greasemarks on a hostage is a no-no. It will cost you ten points. Shoot it again only standing with your hands in an up position, at least shoulder height. The second part finds your hands behind your back. You shoot 2 rounds at any three of the five, reload, then fire 2 rounds at 2 targets . . . weak hand. Now doesn't that sound simple?



a ringing hit on the steel column fooled him long enough that he lowered his gun with the seconds ticking, and fell out of first place.

Mickey Fowler. An ex-race driver with extraordinary reflexes and fine motor coordination, Fowler is a top IPSC shooter in southern Cal and a definite contender in any championship event. His 247 out of 250 on the Advanced Military was unparalleled, but a single fault in the Assault (touching the last bar-

ricade with his right hand) resulted in a penalty that put him into third place. Usher was to finish 9th, Knight 19th, Kirkham, an amazing 42nd despite his disqualification from one-fourth of the tournament for losing his gun on the Assault.

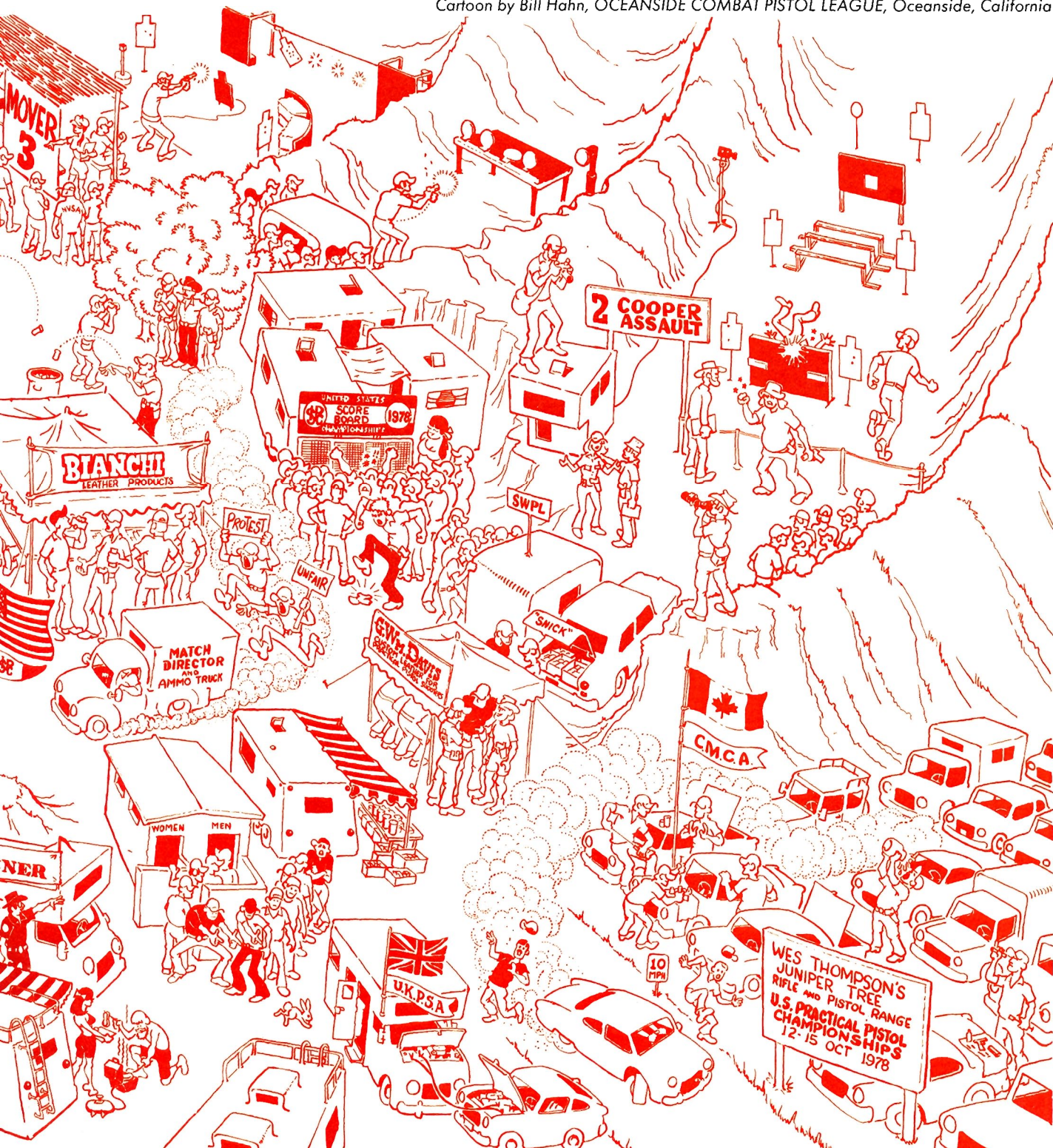
Raul Walters. Favored by many to take the event, and certainly ready for it by dint of practice and course analysis, Walters had a hard time with the Unique Mover and went immediately to the

Quick & Dirty, where he fired good scores at a pace that was, for a man of his skill, almost excruciatingly slow. An injured leg didn't hurt him on his excellent run through the Assault, but by the time it had wrapped up, the pressure had been just enough to bring him down to second place.

You could see upsets in the individual events, too. On the Cooper Assault, "the smart money" was on Mickey Fowler,

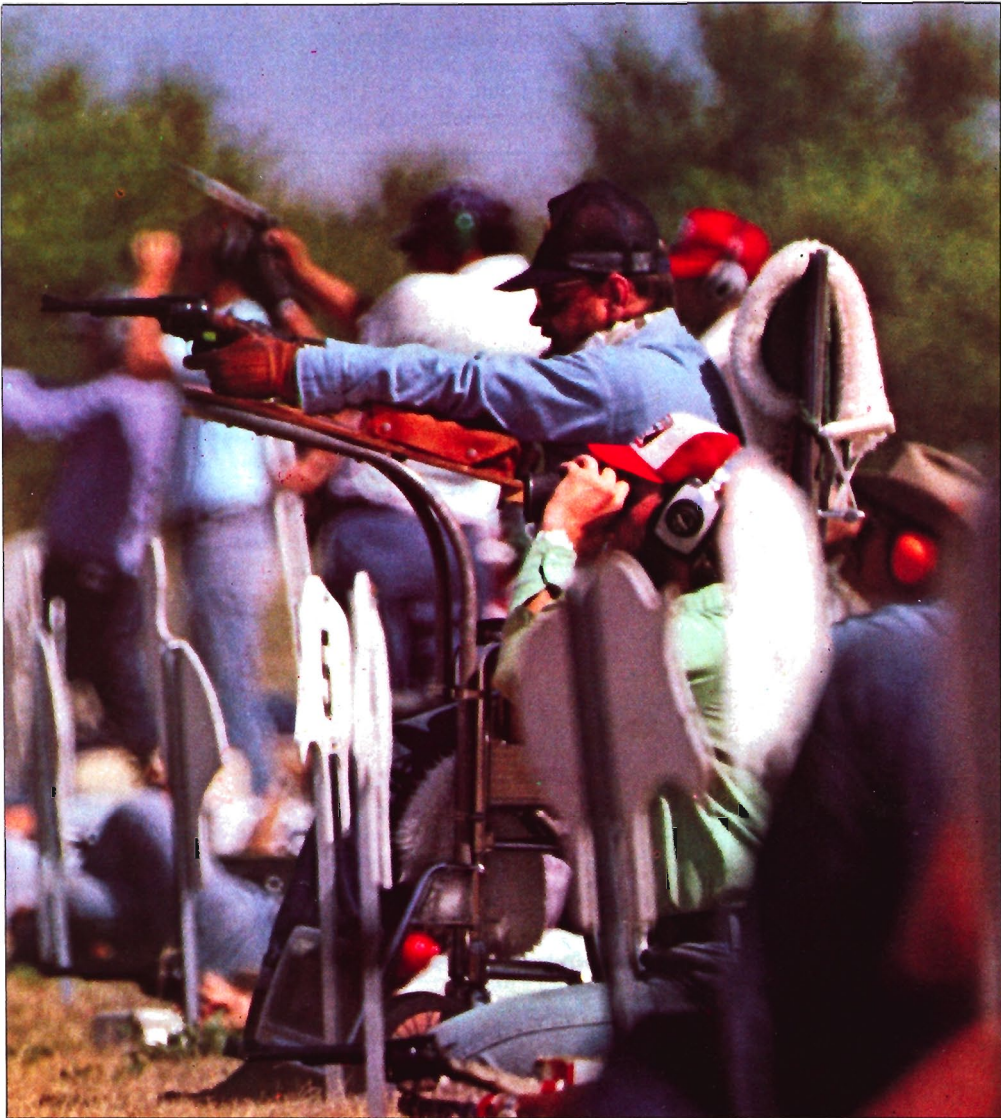
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Cartoon by Bill Hahn, OCEANSIDE COMBAT PISTOL LEAGUE, Oceanside, California



SILUETAS '78

By PHILLIP C. BRIGGS



**Our Silhouette Editor
covers the 1978 IHMSA
International
Championships, with
emphasis on the guns,
ammo, accessories and
shooting techniques**

Handgun silhouette shooting burst on the scene in 1975, and has grown tremendously every year since then, both in the number of shooters, and in their proficiency. This past year was no exception.

A little over a year ago, Skip Talbot became the first man to shoot a 40 straight in competition. Now, you've got to shoot one to get into the shoot offs. Scores are higher in every class.

Production shooters are pushing hard at the 40 barrier, with scores in the high thirties not uncommon in double and triple A.

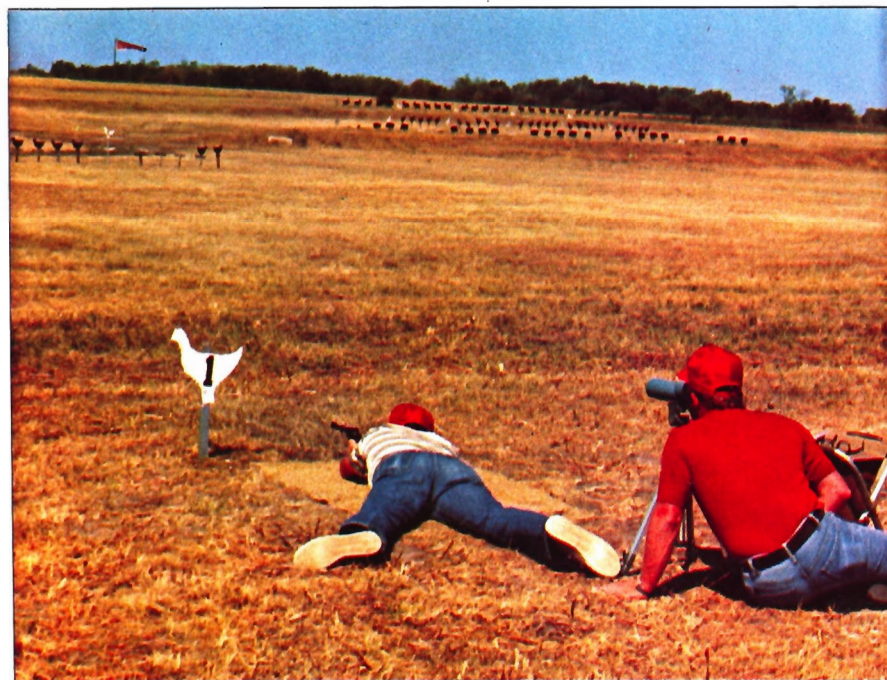
Standing shooters have broken the 30 barrier, and you'd better be capable of high 20's to even consider coming home with any hardware.

Why? Progress, my friend. In four areas: handguns, ammo, shooting techniques and plain old shooter skill. Let's look at each of these areas in detail to see where we are.

Production guns are shot by 80 to 90% of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association competitors. Most of those shooters use wheel guns,



An XP-100 Unlimited, being shot prone.



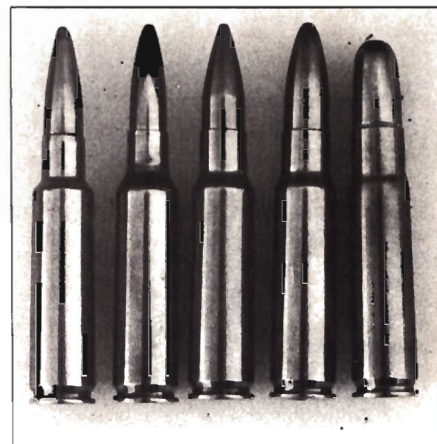
Yet another Single Action "Chicken Chopper" by Ruger. Silhouette shooting is the newest and one of the most challenging handgun sports to come on the scene yet.

Color Photos by Chester Peterson, Jr.

but the single shots are becoming very popular. There's been no new guns this year; progress has been evolutionary, rather than revolutionary.

The greatest changes were made by Thompson/Center, in their popular single shot. About this time last year they released the newly developed Super 14, which immediately began to raise havoc in the production classes. Tailored after custom built T/C's this unlimited gun in production clothes soon had everybody screaming — either because

they wanted one and couldn't get it, or because they had to shoot against it. Capable of 40's, the pistol was too good for it's own good. The long sight radius offered by the 14 inch barrel reduced aiming error enough that more conventional production pistols were out-classed. By April, both the IHMSA and the NRA had changed their production gun rules to put the Super 14 where it belonged — in unlimited. Although designed and built for silhouette shooters, the pistol is tremendously popular with



Presenting the "International" family ... 6, 6.5, and 7mm, 30 and 35 caliber.

pistoleros in general; T/C's production of the Super is sold out through next summer.

By mid-summer T/C was back with another development. The ten inch Contenders were, and are, legal in the production class, but the accuracy promised by the break-open single shot often wasn't there. I'd always assumed people used their T/C's to shoot small targets at long ranges, and were sufficiently satisfied with the pistol's accuracy. Apparently it wasn't until shooters began to keep score that the poor accuracy became a significant problem. The solution was an accuracy job by T/C custom pistolsmiths, in particular those by Vern Juenke of Reno, Nevada, who developed a magic shape for the locking surface of the pistols' under barrel locking bolt. Pushed by this development T/C brought

CLASS WINNERS 1978 IHMSA INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

TWO 40 TARGET MATCHES

CLASS SHOOTER PISTOL CARTRIDGE SCORE

HIGH OVERALL

— Stan Hannigan XP-100 308 80

UNLIMITED

AAA	Willard Choate	XP-100	7x45	79
AA	Van Flynn	XP-100	308	76
A	William Bledsoe	XP-100	300	69
B	Joe D. Hobson	XP-100	7x250	70
Novice	Rod Lansdowne	—	—	59
Ladies	Debbie Mitchell	T-C14	30-30	65

PRODUCTION

AAA	Jimmy Mitchell	T-C	30-30	66
AA	Jim Larson	T-3	30H	66
A	Alan Hawksley	T-C	30-30	57
B	James Ross	T-C	30-30	46
Novice	Donald Hubbard	Rug	44	44
Ladies	Edna Huff	S&W	44	54
Standing	David Whitman	T-C	357	42
Junior	Jeff Ellis	Rug	44	42



Here's the Wichita Unlimited pistol. It's a lefty, to make it easier for right-handed shooters to function the bolt while holding the pistol.



The Missouri "Sidewinder" position. That's a custom built Unlimited XP-100 in the factory stock.

out their own revised bolt. Although I have yet to shoot a T/C so equipped (and I have a couple of perfect candidates — they need a lot of improvement), I'm told T/C's so outfitted will shoot with the Juenkized ones. The new bolt has been included in current production, and is available for retrofit in older models.

The Merrill Company has built their "Sportsman" pistol for some time. This year they added a 12 inch barreled "Micro" sighted version for the silhouette shooter. The rule change outlawed that barrel, but they are still interested in

the silhouette shooter, as shown by the recent addition of "Micro Sights" to their nine inch barreled pistol. This pistol, by the way, has the potential to be the class of the production class. I'd get one in 30 Herrett, if I had the beans.

The wheel gun shooters have little to show for the passage of a year's time, save for the introduction of a 9½ inch long barreled version of U.S. Arms stainless single action. The long barrel does provide the advantage of reduced sighting error, and a marginal increase in velocity, but it's not enough to keep up with

the progress in the single shots. At the Internationals this year IHMSA International Director Elgin Gates was displaying a prototype of a specially tuned IHMSA commemorative from U.S. Arms — we'll have to wait and see how it shoots. Maybe next year.

The unlimited gun remained a custom built, one off project throughout most of the year. The bolt action, in the form of the XP-100, emerged as the dominant pistol. Custom built T/C based guns have nearly disappeared from competition.

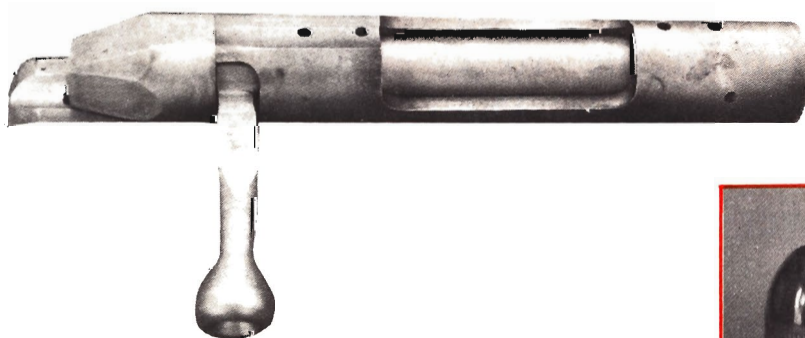
I doubt that's the

fault of the pistol, but rather due to the

complexity of fabricating and installing the under barrel lug on the replacement barrel. Not an easy task. The concept of switching barrels to change from production to unlimited still appeals though. J and G Sales, whose main business is mail-order firearms sales to or through dealers, has begun to carry the Ingram built unlimited T/C barrels. One size fits all. Get your dealer to order, and you're ready for laser warfare with a push of a pin.

Several manufacturers have entered

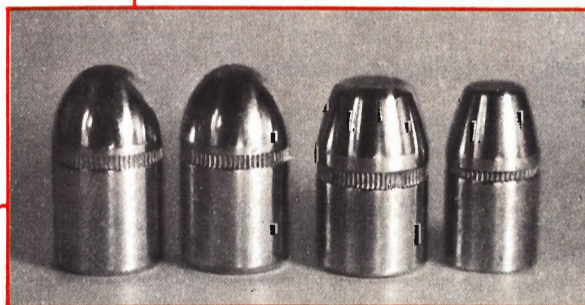
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Here you see the Tejas action . . . in the rough.

Newcomers will find that "spotters" are a must when you weren't sure if you were low, high, left or right.

Sierra 250 grain .44 S.P. — Sierra 250 grain .44 F.M.J. — Hornaday 240 grain .44 F.M.J. — Hornaday 160 grain .357 F.M.J.

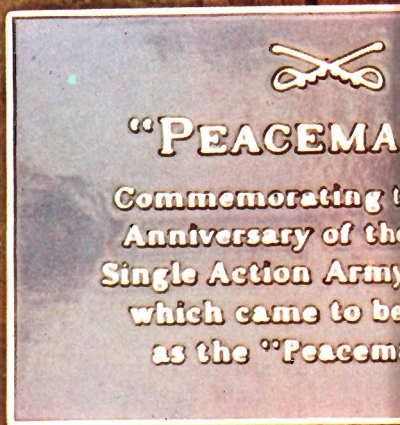


By JAMES TRIGGS



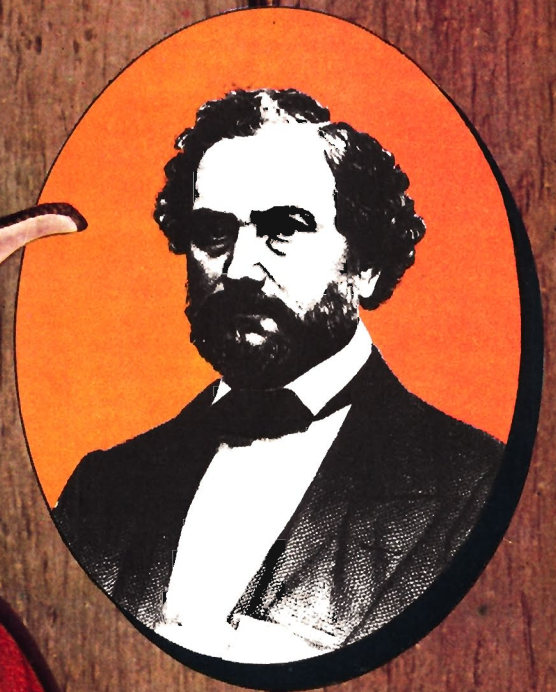
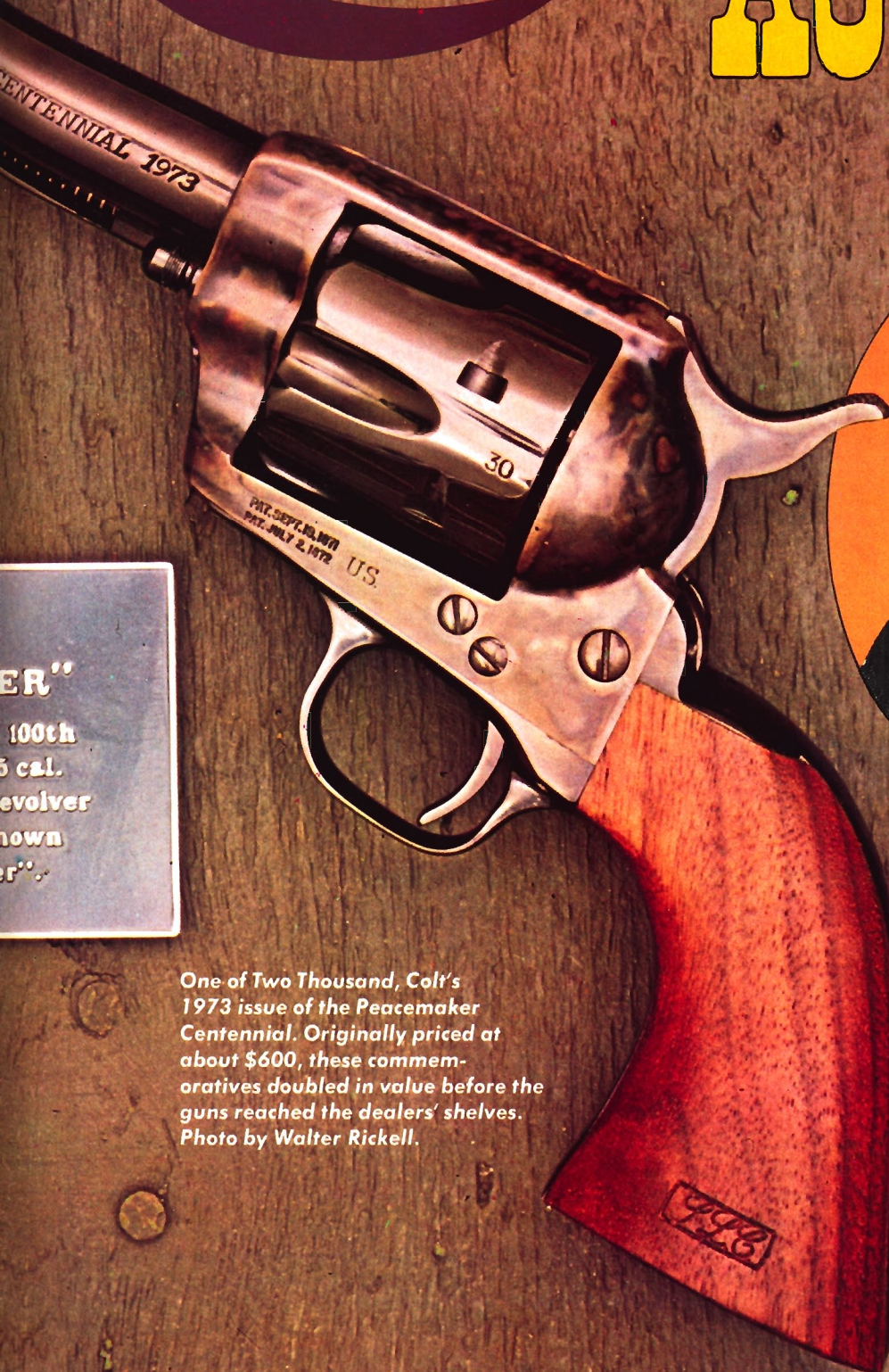
UNCE FOR OUNCE there probably has been more unadulterated baloney written, published, and otherwise disseminated about the Single Action Colt revolver than any other handgun ever manufactured. The reason for all this ballyhoo is simple: the old “thumb-buster” was — and still is — one of the finest handguns ever made. Its few disadvantages are often far outweighed by its pure romantic appeal alone.

The Single Action Colt, as we know it, is a development of the first Colt patent of 1836, and the lock mechanism of today’s Single Action Colt is virtually identical to that of the Walker model Colt, first manufactured in 1847! The design of the Walker and Dragoon models was further refined in the 1851 Navy and 1860 Army models. The Single Action design, the first large-caliber revolver made by Colt



COLT

SINGLE ACTIONS



ER"
100th
5 cal.
revolver
known
er".

One of Two Thousand, Colt's 1973 issue of the Peacemaker Centennial. Originally priced at about \$600, these commemoratives doubled in value before the guns reached the dealers' shelves. Photo by Walter Rickell.

Excerpted from the 21st Edition of the GUN DIGEST, 1967 with permission of the publishers, DBI Books, Inc.

for metallic cartridges, was the logical development from these earlier models.

The Rollin White patent of 1855, which covered bored-through cylinders to take metallic cartridges and which was held by Smith & Wesson, delayed the development of cartridge revolvers by other manufacturers until its expiration in 1869. During this period many systems for employing metallic cartridges and evasions of the White patent were marketed by other arms manufacturers. The Thuer and Richards conversions of the 1851 Navy and 1860 Army models were the Colt company's notable attempts to adapt their revolvers for metallic cartridges yet not infringe the White patent.

It was not until 1872 that Colt could introduce their first large-caliber, conventional-cartridge revolver; this, the 44 rimfire revolver (popularly called the open-top Frontier), was a true transition model, not merely a conversion of an earlier percussion gun.

Single Action Introduction

The Single Action Army revolver, based on the Charles B. Richards patent of July 25, 1871, was introduced in 1873. Later William Mason patents in 1872 and 1875 covered minor improvements in the basic design. Originally designated as Model "P" at the Colt factory, following its adoption by the War Department, the first commercial designation of the new model was the "Peacemaker." It was marketed under this name in 45 Colt caliber by B. Kittridge & Company, the Colt agent in Cincinnati, Ohio and by other Colt dealers. It was not until some time later that the designation "Single Action Army" was applied.

In 1878 the Single Action Colt in 44-40 caliber was introduced as the "Frontier Six Shooter" and it was soon thereafter marketed in additional calibers. Between 1875 and 1880, about 1900 Single Action Colts in 44 rimfire Henry caliber were manufactured. These were serially num-

Fig. 1 — these cross-section drawings show the Single Action Colt, Smith & Wesson Schofield, Remington Model 1875, and the Ruger Blackhawk for comparison. All are drawn to the same scale. Note the similarity of the Remington and Colt designs and simplification by the use of coil springs in the modern Ruger. Note too, the comparative complexity and delicacy of the Smith & Wesson as compared to the Single Action Colt.

Parts key: A, Hammer; B, Hand (cylinder pawl); C, Mainspring; D, Trigger; E, Cylinder locking bolt; F, Locking bolt spring; G, Trigger spring; H, Bolt & trigger spring (combined).

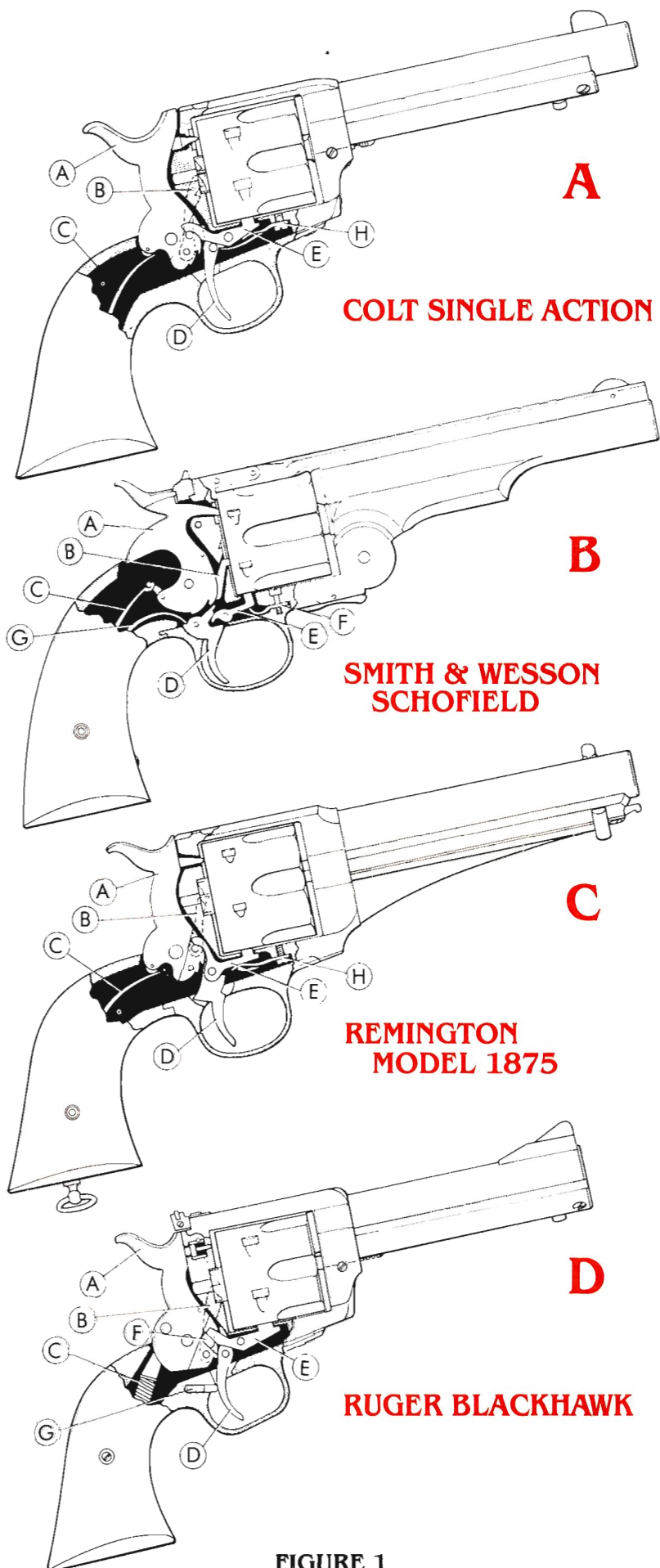


FIGURE 1

Fig. 2 — Major Colt Single Action Army Models

Types	Frame	Barrel	Sights	Stocks	Finish	Caliber†
Standard Army	A	ST	M	E	J	45 Colt
Standard Civilian	A	RST	M	EFGH	JL	45 Colt, 44-40, 38-40, 32-20, 41 Long Colt
Short Bbl. Models	D	Q	M	EFGH	JL	45 Colt
Standard Target	BD	RST	NO	GHI	KL	38 Colt, 45 Colt, 22, 41 Long Colt, 450 Eley
Long Bbl. Models	ACD	V	MNO	EG	J	45 Colt
Standard Bisley	AD	QRST	M	FGI	JL	32-20, 38-40, 45 Colt, 44-40, 41 Long Colt
Target Bisley	BD	RST	NO	FG	JKL	455 Eley, 32-20, 38-40, 45 Colt
Standard (1955)	A	RSTU	M	FG	JK	45 Colt, 38 Spl., 357, 44 Spl.
Short Bbl. (1960)	D	W	M	F	J	45 Colt
Target (1963)	B*	RSTU	P	F	J	45 Colt, 38 Spl., 357, 44 Spl.

Barrel Lengths
(ins.)

Q—2½ to 4
R—4¾
T—5½
S—7½
U—12 (standard)
V—8 to 16
W—3 (standard)

Frame Types

- A — Standard
- B — Target flat top (Fig. 5, No. 2)
- B* — Target flat top (Fig. 5, No. 4)
- C — Milled flat top (Fig. 5, No. 3)
- D — Without ejector

Sights

- M — Fixed square blade front, groove rear
- N — Removable square blade front; notch rear, adj. in dovetail
- O — Bead front, adj. leaf rear
- P — Quick draw ramp front, micro., adj. rear

Finish

- J — Casehardened frame, gate, & hammer, remainder blued
- K — Over-all blue
- L — Nickel or silver-plated

Stocks

- E — 1-piece wood
- F — 2-piece wood
- G — 2-piece rubber
- H — 2-piece rubber, oversize
- I — 2-piece ivory or pearl

† Calibers are listed in the order of their popularity. Only the most common are given here; see the text for the others, such as the 32 rimfire, 32-44, 32 S&W, 380 Eley and 45 ACP. See *The Peacemaker and Its Rivals*, John E. Parsons (New York, 1950), for a detailed survey on this point.

Note: Throughout the life of the Model P many minor variations were available, usually on special order. These included slight differences in barrel lengths from catalog listings, non-standard combinations of finishes, etc. Also, since some changes were easy to make by owners, they are often seen now, such as different front sight blades in the target models.

bered separately from other Single Action models, including the Bisley.

The Single Action Colt was continually manufactured from 1873 until 1941. The highest recorded serial number is 357,859 — a production record for any single action revolver ever made, including percussion models. Following is a list of calibers in which the Single Action Army was made.

Rimfires —	
22 Short, Long, Long	32
Rifle	44
22 WRF	
Centerfires —	
32 Colt	41 Long Colt
32 S&W	44 German
32-30	44 Russian
32-44	44 S&W
38 Short Colt	44 S&W Spl.
38 Long Colt	44-40
38 S&W	45 Colt
38-44	45 ACP
38 Spl.	450 Boxer
357 Mag.	450 Eley
380 Eley	455 Eley
38-40	476 Eley
41 Short Colt	

Single Action Variations

Many variations of the Single Action Colt have been made over the years, by both the factory and individual gunsmiths. Only the principal mechanical variations of importance to the

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

shooter and collector will be discussed here.

As originally manufactured, the Single Action Colt was designed for black powder loads. After about number 165,000 (1896) the space for the cartridge head

between the rear of the cylinder and the face of the recoil shield (headspace) of the frame was reduced to .060" to prevent primers from backing out because of pressure. Improvement in heat treatment processes and the use of better steel resulted in greater frame strength capable of handling the increased pressures of smokeless powder loads. The original frames were made of wrought iron; about 1883 soft steel was adopted for this part. Modern cartridges should not be used in SA revolvers bearing serial numbers below 165,000.

In the earliest Single Actions, the base pin was secured by a screw which entered the front of the frame at an upward angle. The Mason patent for a transverse, spring-loaded base pin latch, through the side of the frame, was included in the design at about serial number 150,000 (1893).

Several minor changes to the original Model P were made in the ensuing years. The original ejector rod head had been a disk-shaped button. This was changed to a curved knob which conformed more closely with the under-contour of the barrel and ejector tube. Also, the front sight blade was slightly enlarged, and a small change in rifling design was made at about serial number 273,000.

All the basic Single Action models are detailed in Fig. 2.

The initial acceptance of the Single Action Colt and its continued popularity, particularly on the frontier, were prob-

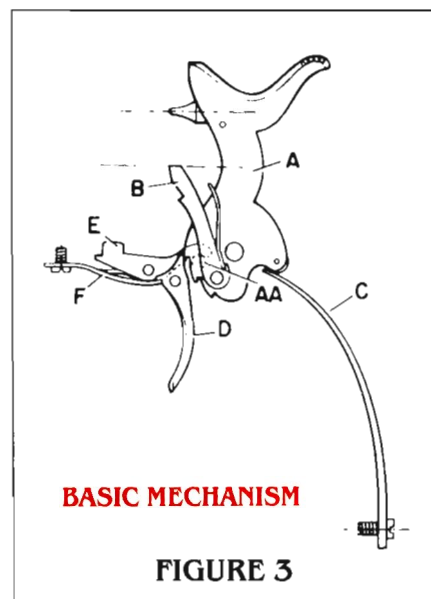
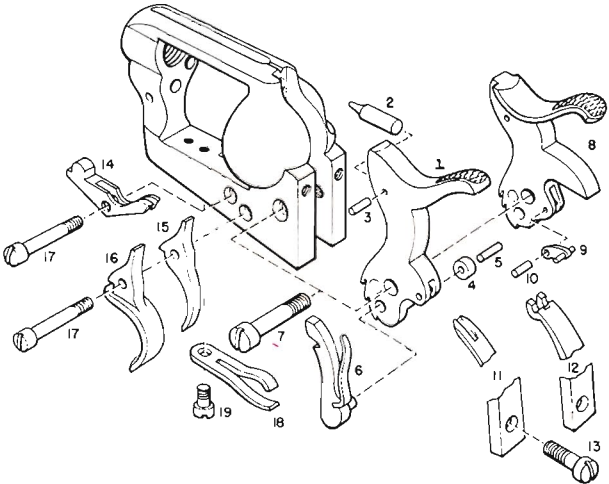


FIGURE 3

Fig. 3 — The basic lock mechanism of the Single Action Army revolver is shown here in profile. Parts key: A, Hammer; B, Hand (with hand spring); C, Mainspring; D, Trigger; E, Bolt; F, Cylinder and bolt spring; AA, Hammer/Bolt cam.

ably results of its ruggedness, mechanical simplicity and dependability. A number of other single action, large-caliber cartridge revolvers were contemporary with the Colt, but none compared with it where these factors were considered. Smith & Wesson's American and Schofield models were break-top types and, while they offered faster reloading, their delicate lock and joint parts would not stand up to the kind of handling demanded. The Forehand & Wadsworth and Merwin & Hulbert revolvers also employed delicate or complicated mechanisms which were subject to malfunction or breakage in hard usage. The sturdy Remington 1875 single action revolver, which closely followed the Colt design, was never made in sufficient quantities to displace the Colt. Shown herewith, for comparison, are cross-section drawings of the Colt, Smith & Wesson, and Remington revolvers (Figs. 1A, B, C, D), as well as the modern Ruger Blackhawk. Other illustrations show all of the basic Single Action Colt revolvers in a graphic form.

**FIGURE 4
LOCK MECHANISM**

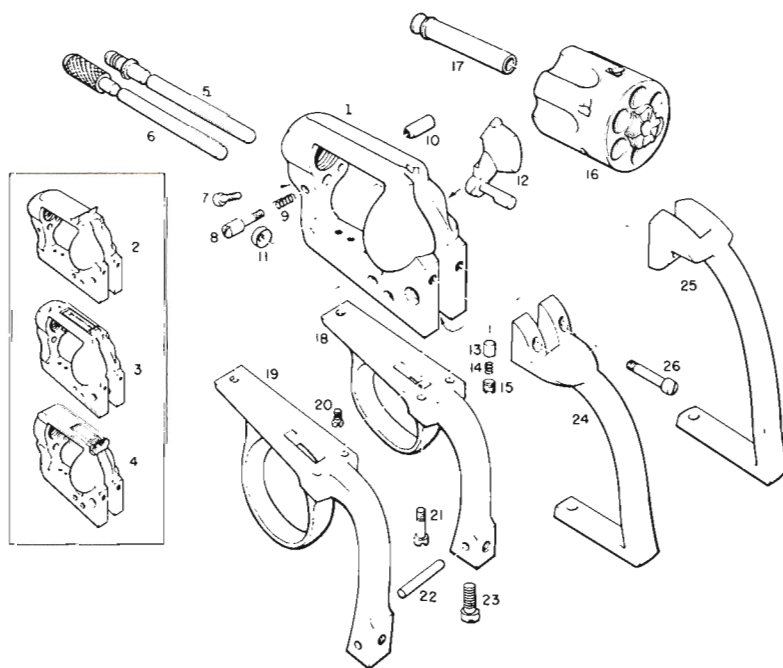


- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Parts List | 8. Hammer, Bisley model |
| 1. Hammer, standard | 9. Stirrup, Bisley model |
| 2. Firing pin | 10. Stirrup pin, Bisley model |
| 3. Firing pin rivet | 11. Mainspring, standard |
| 4. Hammer roll | 12. Mainspring, Bisley model |
| 5. Hammer roll pin | 13. Mainspring screw |
| 6. Hand (with spring) | 14. Bolt |
| 7. Hammer screw (Note:
Elongated screw used on
models designed for use with
detachable shoulder stocks) | 15. Trigger, standard |
| | 16. Trigger, Bisley model |
| | 17. Trigger & bolt screws (2) |
| | 18. Trigger & bolt spring |
| | 19. Trigger & bolt spring screw |





**FIGURE 5
MAINFRAME COMPONENTS**



Parts List

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Mainframe, standard | 8. Base pin catch screw | 20. Front trigger guard screw |
| 2. Mainframe, standard target with rear sight; flat top, Fig. 1B. | 9. Base pin catch spring | 21. Rear trigger guard screws (2) |
| 3. Mainframe, long barrel models; milled flat top, Fig. 1C. | 10. Base pin catch nut | 22. Stock pin (used on models with two-piece grips only) |
| 4. Mainframe, 1963 target model, w. and e. cidj | 11. Recoil plate | 23. Butt screw |
| 5. Base pin, standard | 12. Gate | 24. Backstrap, standard |
| 6. Base pin, knurled | 13. Gate catch | 25. Backstrap, Bisley model |
| 7. Base pin screw (older models, enters front of frame) | 14. Gate catch spring | 26. Backstrap screws (2) |
| | 15. Gate catch screw | Note: (Stocks are not shown. All two-piece stocks provided with inlet escutcheons and transverse grip screw.) |
| | 16. Cylinder, standard | |
| | 17. Base pin bushing | |
| | 18. Trigger guard, standard | |
| | 19. Trigger guard, Bisley model | |
| | | |

Production of the Single Action Colt was discontinued in 1941. After World War II, Colt closed for about nine months for reorganization and, after reopening, announced that this model would no longer be manufactured. Many of the tools, jigs, and fixtures used to produce it, some purportedly dating back to Civil War time, had been placed in storage at some time during the war and could not be found afterwards.

In the late 1940s and early 1950s came a terrific resurgence of interest in the old single action handguns, due in large part to the popularity of Western television shows and the birth of quick-draw competitions. Colt declined to put the Single Action Army back into production, but other manufacturers were busy.

New-Old Colts

In late 1947 Colt decided to use the Single Action parts remaining in stock to assemble as many finished SA revolvers as possible. About 300 of these pre-war/post-war guns were produced. They were assigned numbers in serial number gaps in the *original* series.

Colt neither advertised these guns nor offered them for sale. It is a matter of speculation just what did happen to them, but apparently a number found their way into the hands of various persons, either as "gifts" or presentations from the company. It would be impossible to tell if any given high-numbered Single Action were one of these 1947 models, since the workmanship and finish are identical to that of earlier revolvers. Accompanying documents which indicated a shipping date after 1947 might mean the gun had been one of these.

Because of increasing demand, Colt resumed manufacture of the Model P in 1955. Calibers were 45 Colt and 38 Special, with the 357 Magnum added in 1960 and the 44 Special in 1962, which was also the introduction date for the new flat-top Frontier. Barrel lengths were 4¾", 5½" and 7½". A 12" model in 45 caliber only was offered as the "Buntline Special," a concession to the television popularity of Wyatt Earp at that time! Regular stocks were checkered hard rubber, as on older models, but two-piece hardwood stocks were also available. In 1960, a version with a 3" barrel was introduced as the Sheriff's Model, to be sold exclusively by one American firearms dealer.

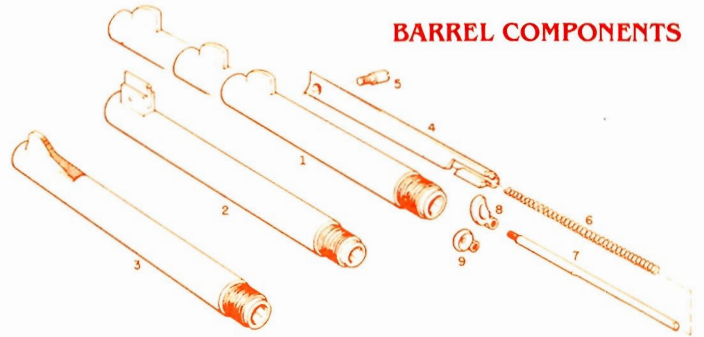
In 1962, a modernized version of the flat-top target models was introduced. Almost identical to the old target guns, the new Single Action has a quick-draw ramp front sight and micro adjustable rear sight.

A 125th Anniversary model was also

FIGURE 6

Parts List

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Standard barrel, 4¾", 5½", 7½", fixed blade sight | 6. Ejector spring |
| 2. Target barrel, bead sight | 7. Ejector rod |
| 3. 1963 Model target barrel, quick draw ramp front sight | 8. Ejector rod head (new style) |
| 4. Ejector tube | 9. Ejector rod head (old style) |
| 5. Ejector tube screw | Note: (Ejector tube stud is factory-installed in barrel, hence is not listed as a separate component.) |



BARREL COMPONENTS



COLT'S NEW **"Frontier Six Shooter,"**

Using same Cartridge as
Winchester Central Fire Carbine.

FOR SALE BY DEALERS GENERALLY, AND BY

Colt's New York Agents

JOHN P. MOORE'S SONS,

Wholesale Dealers in Arms, Ammunition, &c.,

302 BROADWAY,
NEW YORK.

Wholesale lists on receipt of business card.

introduced. It came in 45 caliber only with 7½" barrel, over-all blue finish with the revolver highly polished. Two-piece hardwood grips with the Colt medallion were fitted. Trigger guard and backstrap were gold plated. This revolver was available with a fitted presentation case.

In 1960 Colt had introduced a smaller version of the Single Action design in 22 and 22 Magnum rimfire calibers. Called the Frontier Scout, this gun had a 4¾" barrel. The trigger guard and backstrap were combined in one casting, similar to the Ruger single actions. Blued over-all or nickel-plated, the Frontier Scout has been offered in many fancy presentation



models commemorating various events. While this little single action closely resembles the old Model P, it cannot be properly included as a Single Action Army model for the purpose of this discussion.

COLT SINGLE ACTION Story Continues on Page 70

HANDLING THE SINGLE ACTION REVOLVER SAFELY

Since this article on Colt Single-Action Army Revolvers first appeared in the 21st Edition of Gun Digest in 1967, the single-action revolver as a class of handguns has continued to enjoy great popularity and remains to this day an all-time favorite of American shooters. The Colt Single-Action Army Revolver which was re-introduced in 1955 is still manufactured at this writing, and after Bill Ruger's introduction of the Single-Six revolver in 1953, other manufacturers have followed suit until today there are a number of different single-action revolvers on the market, manufactured both in the United States and abroad — every one of them patterned after the basic Colt Model "P" of 1873.

It would seem that the single-action revolver which has evolved from the old "Peacemaker" is destined to remain a popular and useful handgun despite the great advances in double-action revolver and automatic pistol design. And while this may seem to be something of an anachronism, the continuing appeal of the single-action revolver can probably best be attributed to its fundamental simplicity, classic design, general ruggedness, excellent handling characteristics and rich historical associations.

In recent years, government interference in the lives of its citizens has given rise to a new generation of people, some of whom thus coddled by various consumer protection agencies, seem unable or unwilling to accept responsibility for

their own actions; a fact that has become painfully apparent in their handling of firearms. From the basic mechanical principles described in Samuel Colt's patents in 1836, and the lock mechanism which therefrom evolved in Colt's Whitneyville-Walker model in 1847, the mechanism as applied to single-action revolvers has remained fundamentally unchanged for over one hundred years. To suggest that this basic design could be "defective" is patently absurd, yet in recent years suits have been brought against manufacturers, based on this premise, by people who have been injured as a result of their own carelessness or ignorance. The traditional safety practices connected with the handling of all types of single-action revolvers have always been well known, and there is a host of literature and historical lore to support this. Apparently some members of this new generation of shooters haven't gotten the word!

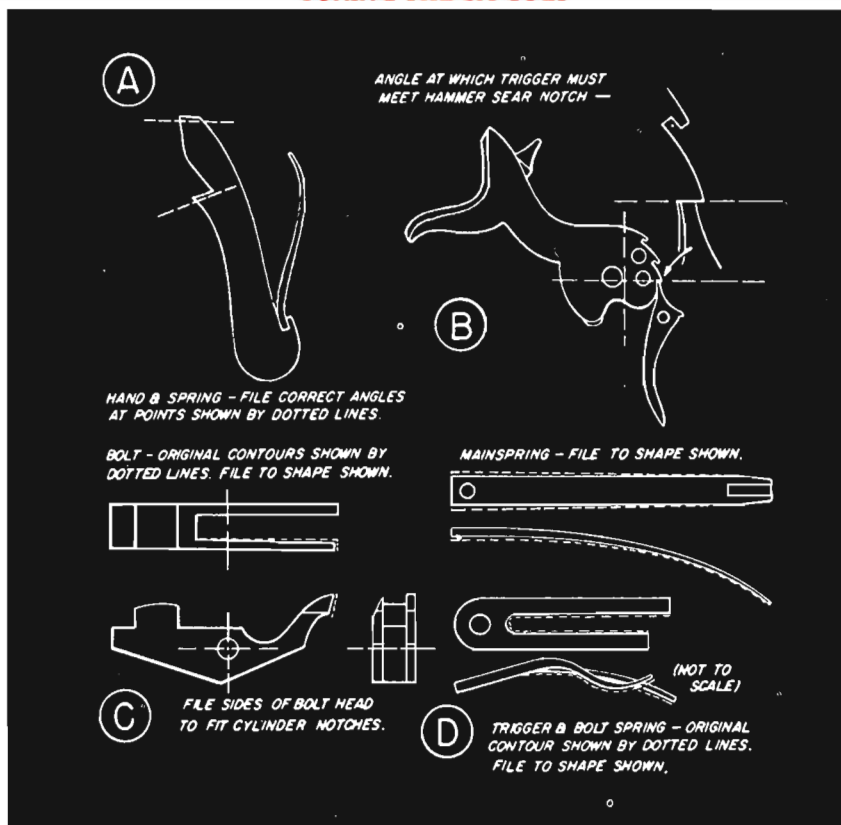
Although, since the earliest days of metallic cartridge single-action revolvers, civilians have carried them in a variety of holsters, with various straps, thongs, or flaps to keep the revolver from falling out, *it has never been considered safe to drop a loaded revolver!* In addition, it has long been an established practice to carry the single-action revolver with only five of its six chambers loaded, and to lower the hammer onto the empty chamber or a fired cartridge case — without relying on the so-called safety notch which could fail if the revolver were to be dropped on its hammer spur, with the attendant possibility of an accidental discharge. Yet today some shooters are ignorant of these time-honored rules.

A number of single-action revolvers have been manufactured since 1973 which incorporate various safety devices to protect against the possibility of accidental discharge and to minimize the limitations of earlier models. The Ruger New Model single-action revolvers can be safely carried with all six chambers loaded because the "transfer-bar" mechanism in this model is automatic, however, many other single-action revolvers from various manufacturers rely upon safety devices which must be manually operated. This is an important distinction because, no matter how good a safety device may be, it cannot be effective if the shooter forgets to use it.

It is important that today's shooters understand that the proper handling of firearms, *based on a thorough understanding of the mechanical characteristics of the gun they are using*, can prevent accidents. Americans have the right, guaranteed by the Constitution, to own and enjoy firearms, but with that right comes the *responsibility* to handle firearms safely and to protect oneself and others from injury.

James E. Triggs — Sept. '78

FIGURE 7
TUNING THE SA COLT





Bill Ruger tells it like it was at the birth of the Single Six to interviewer Barlow (L).

...and then came



RUGER

**An exclusive interview
with Bill Ruger on the
beginnings of his single action.**

At the request of the American Handgunner, Roger Barlow recently interviewed Mr. Bill Ruger at the Sturm, Ruger plant in New Hampshire. Here is how it went.

BARLOW: Bill, inasmuch as your first effort in designing and manufacturing handguns was the .22 caliber pistol, why did you consider a revolver as the second project rather than another automatic in a different caliber?

RUGER: Well . . . we had our automatic pistol in full production with the plant running very smoothly, so I suppose it's only natural in that position to begin thinking about another world to conquer. One of the thoughts we had at that time was to make a nice little single shot pistol. As I recall, I got into that quite thoroughly and built a prototype.

BARLOW: A break action type?

RUGER: Yes, it was a tip-up. In fact it was supposed to be somewhat on the order of the old Stevens. I always had a great affinity for the single shot type. I had thought that I was going to use the single action grip on this single shot pistol. Kind of a unique configuration. I don't believe there's ever been a single shot made with that grip, even since then.

BARLOW: What happened . . . I know

you never marketed such a product?

RUGER: Well, in the course of designing that single shot pistol the thought had obviously occurred to me that there we did have many of the components of a single action revolver . . . there was the grip and the grip frame components, the panels, there was the hammer and there was the main spring and so on. All the associated stuff for that, and a trigger. Plus a barrel. As I looked it all over and reflected, I did say to myself, "Well, it isn't really a great deal more to make it into a revolver." Then, one day, I recall I was showing this prototype single shot to the buyer from a firm that was one of our main customers. He seemed to be sort of unenthusiastic and finally said, "You know if it was a real single action revolver then you'd be talking about something that really intrigues us." The situation at that time was that everybody, including myself, was lamenting the apparent demise of the Colt Peacemaker. After World War II, when Colt announced that they were no longer going to produce that model, everyone began rushing to find a good specimen . . . or even a rough one! The prices began to climb and no one could quite see the logic of Colt's decision . . . but there it was and everyone was absolutely keen to have a single action.

BARLOW: I take it that was the only single action in production, at that time or just prior to World War II.

RUGER: Yes, during the period just before the war it was absolutely the only single action. I don't think anyone ever had a thought for a generation of reproducing it. That all came after the war when a great market for them ultimately developed.

BARLOW: But there were any number of double action revolvers on the market at that time. Why would there be such an interest . . . a solid commercial interest . . . in a single action?

RUGER: Well, it is interesting because you know a double action will do everything a single action can do for all practical purposes. I think the appeal of the single action lies in its extreme simplicity, its appearance, its nice feel in the hand, and the fact that, generally speaking, it's a great strong revolver capable of handling the heaviest cartridges. Double actions, as you know, are much more complex things. The average owner wouldn't dare take one apart. And they did seem to associate themselves — double actions, I mean — with a more utilitarian world.

BARLOW: You mean police use?

RUGER: Yes . . . and it seems to me that, in contrast, the single action has



These 3 screw or second model are shown in .357 and .41 Magnum. Ribbed sight guard replaced the unprotected sight that was the identification mark of the flat top or 1st model.



always related itself to the old West, to an outdoor tradition, and so on. Although the truth is, of course, that after the double actions came in, fifty or sixty years ago, a great many of them were used on hunting trips and by people living in the open. So, in reality, even that explanation of the single action's appeal isn't completely understandable . . . it's really a mystique.

BARLOW: In a way comparable to the interest in classic automobiles and single shot rifles that burgeoned shortly after World War II.

RUGER: That's perfectly true. Although unlike the great motor cars of the late 1920s and early 30s, which are now easily outperformed by modern cars of the same class, these older types of firearms don't necessarily concede anything in sheer performance when you compare them to the more modern types. An automatic pistol isn't necessarily going to give you any better performance in terms of accuracy or power than an old single action.

BARLOW: Had the single action Colts been selling in substantial numbers before the war . . . or was your wholesaler just making a damn good guess as to the market potential?

RUGER: Well . . . the sales of the Colts before the war were small but that could partially be accounted for by the depression. After the war, by 1950, things were quite different and there was evidence that a significant number of shooters wanted single actions guns. Enough to interest us because, with our very small company and small resources, we weren't going to attempt to produce them in any vast quantities.

BARLOW: Did you feel that it was going to be easier with your facilities to manufacture a single action than a double action?

RUGER: That would certainly have been a point. But considering the size of our company, even the manufacture of a single action seemed like a rather formidable undertaking!

BARLOW: All right, but you had designed a single *shot*, not a single *action* handgun!

RUGER: True . . . but as I said before, I

"After the war, by 1950, things were quite different and there was evidence that a significant number of shooters wanted Single Action guns . . ."

had realized that in the single shot we had already committed ourselves to building many of the components of a single action revolver . . . and approaching the whole concept of building a revolver on this basis I had developed a certain conviction that we could, even with our small company, actually get the tooling together and manage the production so as to produce these guns very reasonably. So I would say that that was our first insight and perhaps the most significant early step in actually coming out with the revolver and winding up, as we subsequently did, as a very large manufacturer of them.

BARLOW: How much design help did you have at that time? Was it pretty much a personal effort?

RUGER:

Well, I think you could say yes to that. We were a very small organization . . . say, probably 25 people. And these mainly engaged in the manufacturing and assembly of the Mark I automatic. I had a drawing board right there in my office and also one at my house and I spent a lot of time over them. As you know, I am by instinct a mechanical engineer and I'd been designing mechanisms and guns for many years by that time. I was 34 years old and had been seriously working on

Clockwise from bottom: The New Model Super Blackhawk with non-fluted cylinders in .44 Magnum Caliber. Also features all steel backstrap; Ruger makes the .357 in Stainless Steel with the transfer bar safety feature; here's Ruger's latest offering in a detailed cutaway. This new model Super Six has the transfer bar safety. All six chambers may be left loaded safely; pictured is the New Model Blackhawk in 7½" barrel. Note fluted cylinder. In .30 Carbine and .45 Colt calibers.



the design of firearms, or trying to design firearms, which is almost the same thing, for maybe fifteen years. And I had had an immense amount of experience during the war . . . developing machine guns.

BARLOW: During that period had you ever thought about designing a revolver?

RUGER: No, I didn't really ever think of it.

BARLOW: I know you have a deep interest in single shot rifles and in older firearms of the 19th century . . . did that influence your consideration of the revolver you proposed to make?

RUGER: I had always loved the old single action Colt. I can remember yearning for one when I was just 14 years old and living in New York City where there was no chance of my owning one. But I had the Colt catalog and I used to open it up and look at that gun and say to myself, "Someday that's what I'm going to have."

BARLOW: You might have added, "Even if I have to build one!" But were your wholesaler, and your instincts right . . . what was the initial gun-buying public's reaction to a "new" old fashioned revolver?

RUGER: The first announcement of that

gun was in a tiny little box Pete Kuhloff, the Editor, ran in *Argosy* magazine. A few days later we got a phone call from the Post Office in Southport wanting to know what was happening. They were absolutely inundated with our mail. We went down there and they had it in cardboard cartons and bushel baskets! I suspect our single action revolver made a First Class Post Office out of that station! As I look back on it, I don't think there has been a case where so much interest was engendered so instantaneously. The same sort of

"There was so much logic to the Colt Single Action design that to alter it much would be like trying to improve Mother Nature . . ."

thing had happened with the announcement of our first .22 pistol but not to quite the same degree. I suppose that because shooters were so well satisfied with that first effort of Sturm, Ruger & Co. they now had even greater confidence in this young company.

BARLOW: Was your single action priced much lower than competitive products?

RUGER: Let me think . . . it seems to me that it was priced at about the level of the lowest priced Colt or Smith & Wesson revolvers. That is, double action guns. It wasn't a notably inexpensive gun, nor was it high priced. It was sort of an expected price.

BARLOW: So the interest it generated was because it was a single action?

RUGER: Right. Price had nothing to do with it. We could have sold some had it

been priced ten times as high . . . and I doubt that lowering the price would have made much difference. It was just what shooters wanted at that time. It started out at about \$60 and today, despite automobiles and most consumer products of a mechanical nature having increased their price by three times or more in the same period, our Single Six has only doubled in price . . . within a Dollar or two.

BARLOW: When you decided to go ahead with the single action revolver, instead of the single shot pistol, did you give any thought to designing a completely "new," "Improved" "20th Century" single action instead of a traditional "Frontier" model?

RUGER: I certainly looked at it both ways. But the basic gun was unquestionably a good product to make . . . you couldn't go wrong with that.

BARLOW: The old Colt "Peacemaker"?

RUGER: Right. Although you know I never had any idea that we would make an exact replica of the Colt. In the first place . . . for what reason I can't now be absolutely sure, we wanted it to be a .22 . . . and that meant that, right off the bat, we were going to have to scale down the cylinder and frame size without touching the grip. The drawings we made showed this made a very pleasing design. It had all the old single action characteristics and atmosphere . . . but with a cylinder that made sense considering the size of that tiny little .22 Long Rifle cartridge. But we made what we thought were beneficial technological improvements in the mechanism. It was widely known that

(Continued on page 62)

SINGLE ACTIONS

...The Rest Of The Story

Col. Sam Colt never lived to see the self-contained, metallic cased cartridge (invented by his long time competitor . . . Smith and Wesson), but with his shrewd, Yankee businessman mind, he always was for progress. Now today, 107 A.C. (after Colt), a lot of manufacturers seem to feel that Colt had something worth copying . . . the sincerest form of flattery. Great Western single actions have disappeared, gone to that great revolving cylinder in the sky. However, other gun makers have stepped in with exact look-alikes and some with interesting variations. The Peacemaker had a long, continuous run from 1872 to 1941 and then again it started up in 1955. It looks like the Western-style single actions in some variation or other may run another century or two. Here then . . . some of those copies and variations.

E.M.F.

This Italian Importer carries the well known Dakota line of cartridge single actions. The Dakota is available with adjustable and non-adjustable sights. Calibers for the Target (or sighted) model are .45 Long Colt, .357 Magnum and .22 Long Rifle. The fixed sighted model includes: .22 Long Rifle, .22 Magnum, 44/40, .357 Magnum and .45 Long Colt. Barrels in the fixed sighted line are 4¾", 5½" and 7½". All models feature one piece Walnut grips. They also make a .44 Magnum in 7½" barrel only. 1875 Remington replicas can be ordered too. This extensive line includes a 12" barrel and a 16½". Price range is from \$44.50 for the .22 Scout size Single Actions to engraved models of larger calibers running up to \$395.00.





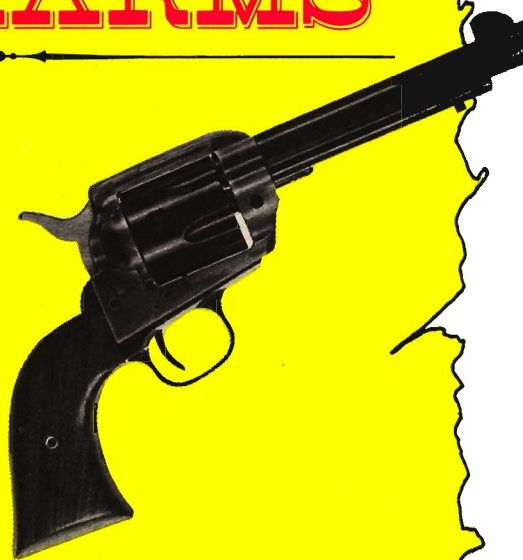
F.I.E.

F.I.E. makes the Buffalo Scout .22/.22 Mag. Single Action in 4¾" barrel with adjustable sights. There are no imported parts, it is 100% American made. Finishes are blue, chrome or gold. Blued and chrome models range from \$39.95 to \$53.95. They also make the "Legend" in .22 LR, .22 Mag., .37 Mag., and .44 Mag. .357 and .44 Mags come in 5½" and 7½" barrel lengths. Smooth Walnut or Black Checkered Plastic grips. (Walnut \$10.95 extra). These sights are of the fixed variety. Price range is from \$61.95 to \$129.95.

Hawes of Van Nuys, California has the most extensive line of imported Single Actions from Germany. Exact reproductions of the original with no external safetys. Manufactured by J. P. Sauer & Sohn, they have passed U.S. Safety tests. Their line includes the Texas Marshal, Chief Marshal, Montana Marshal, Silver City Marshal and Federal Marshal. All guns come in .357 Mag., .44 Mag., .45 LC, .357/9mm, .44 Mag./44/40, .45 LC/.45 ACP. The Texas Marshal is nicked with Pearlite grips, the Montana Marshal features solid brass backstrap and Rosewood grips, the Silver City Marshal has nicked frame with brass backstrap and Pearlite grips, the Federal Marshal is the special deluxe version with color casehardening and the Chief Marshal is the super target model. Price range is from \$144.95 to \$220.65.

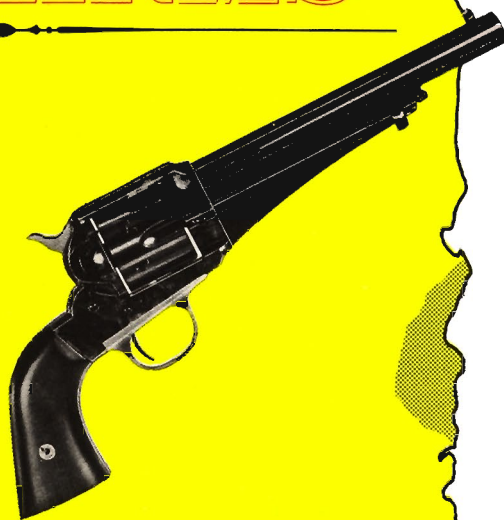
INTERARMS

Interarms like Colt and Ruger are made in the U.S. Made in their new Midland, Virginia plant, their new baby is called the Virginian Dragoon. In addition to the traditional design, they feature the patented Swissafe and are color case treated. They have both an adjustable sighted model and a fixed sighted one, much like Colt. Like the Ruger, they have a coil spring rather than a leaf. In the future they intend to get into stainless steel and even a Sheriff's model sans ejector housing. Right now they are available in .44 Magnum and .357 Magnum, but a .45 Colt is in the works. Barrel lengths include 6", 7½" and 8¾" with a new 12" Buntline thrown in for good measure. Price at this writing is \$209.



NAVY ARMS

Navy Arms leads off their line with a copy of the 1875 Remington cartridge Single Action in Nickel or Blue at \$165.00 in both .357 Magnum and .45 Colt. Their regular Peacemaker and New Frontier styles come in those loadings as well. Barrel lengths are 4½", 5½" and 7½". They too include a Buntline model with a 16½" barrel. These are well made and finished Italian imports. The fixed sighted models run around \$159.50 but add \$5.00 more for the adjustable sighted ones. Chromoloy steel barrel and cylinder. Also featuring case-hardened frames. Special orders will be filled on 38/40, 44/40 30 M1 Carbine and 9mm Luger. One piece walnut grips on all models.



HAWES



RG INDUSTRIES

This German import features two models in Single Action, the Model 66M and 86. Caliber is .22 LR with interchangeable cylinder for .22 Magnum. Barrel lengths are 4¾", 6" and 9". Both models have adjustable rear sight. Finished in Blue only, they range in weight from 32 oz. to 35 oz. Model 86 is the same as the 66M but has steel frame and Walnut rather than Plastic grips.



U.S. ARMS

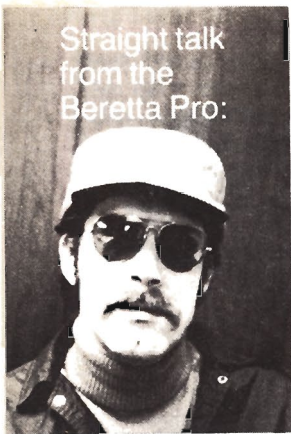
At first glance, most would swear this is a Ruger Super Blackhawk. It's called, quite appropriately, the "Abilene." Made by U.S. Arms in Riverhead, N.Y., this relatively new offering includes a trigger-controlled safety bar and comes in blued or stainless steel. Calibers are: .357 Magnum, .357 Magnum/9mm Convertible, .41 Magnum .45 Colt and .44 Magnum. Barrel lengths are: 4½", 5½", and 6½" for all calibers except the .44 Magnum. The .44 Magnum comes in 7½" and 8½". Even though they have a safety bar, the gun maintains the traditional half-cock for loading and unloading. Beavertail hammer is included with fully adjustable rear and ramp-front sights. Material is of a high tensile steel. Smooth Walnut grips.



Description	Model No.	Barrel	Finish	Price
.357 Mag.	104 AB	4½"	Blue	\$192.45
.357 Mag.	105 AB	5½"	Blue	192.45
.357 Mag.	106 AB	6½"	Blue	192.45
.44 Mag.	507 AB	7½"	Blue	219.95
.44 Mag.	508 AB	8½"	Blue	219.95
.357 Mag.	104 AS	4½"	Stainless	234.40
.357 Mag.	105 AS	5½"	Stainless	243.40
.357 Mag.	106 AS	6½"	Stainless	243.40
.44 Mag.	507 AS	7½"	Stainless	277.75
.44 Mag.	508 AS	8½"	Stainless	277.75
.45 Colt	405 AB	5½"	Blue	219.95*

*after January, 1979

Straight talk
from the
Beretta Pro:



A Beretta Automatic isn't just for collectors. You can count on it when you need it.

There's one thing you get with a Beretta that you don't get with any other auto.

Beretta dependability.

After all, Beretta invented the automatic.

Our heavy duty M92 9mm Parabellum (Luger) is the choice of law enforcement agencies around the world.

Sixteen shots quick, it holds 15 staggered cartridges in the same length as traditional magazines — and another shell in the chamber ready to fire. To reload, just slip in another clip.

Smoother, lighter double action firing. Stationary barrel for greater accuracy. Chamber loaded indicator. Safe simple field stripping.

Our M76 22LR Target Pistol surpasses International Shooting Union standards.

This high accuracy, smooth firing beauty has a built-in counterweight for proper balance and controlled recoil. Its raised matted rib has solidly mounted front and rear sights. The rear sight adjusts for wind and elevation. Three interchangeable front sights. Grips are shaped for a firm hold.

Your Beretta dealer has exactly the auto you're looking for. And a complete line of Automatic Shotguns, Overunders, Side-by-Sides. He's a respected pro we choose as carefully as we build our guns. Send for catalog. The Beretta Arms Co., Inc., P.O. Box 2000, Ridgefield, CT. 06877. (203) 438-7345. Dealers include FFL.

Two pocket size big capacity autos for sport, defense, law enforcement.

Both our 13 round M84 in 380 cal.

and 12 round M81 in 32

auto have smooth, fast

double action firing — no

need to cock the ham-

mer. Their unique grip

angle is designed for

natural pointing with either hand. Positive

thumb safety. Safe easy field stripping.



The Beretta 7 shot M70S 380 auto caliber is one of the most popular autos ever made — the choice of off-duty police.

A solid 6 1/4 inches and 23 ounces of dependable Beretta firepower, it's all machined steel. It has a full grip for even large hands. Positive thumb safety, inertia firing pin, non-snagging hammer, and wrap-around two-piece grips. **New for 1978 — M70S in 22 Long Rifle** with lightweight frame.

We proof test every gun we make to make sure you can depend on your Beretta — when your life depends on it.

Collect a few. They perform as beautifully as they look.



M92



Beretta
It's a lot more gun.

One of the latest single actions to appear is the Abilene, by United States Arms Corporation in Riverhead, New York. Available in a choice of five calibers, and manufactured of high tensile steel, or stainless, the Abilene is one of the improved versions of the SAA. The test revolver was chambered for the 44 Magnum cartridge, and it had a barrel length of 8½ inches. (This revolver is also available with a 7½ inch barrel in this chambering.) Weighing in at 48 ounces empty, the Abilene measures

U.S. ARMS 44 ABILENE

By LARRY S. STERETT

13¾ inches in length, and stands 6½ inches high at the front sight, with a sight radius of 10⅞ inches.

Unlike the original SAA, the Abilene has a frame-mounted firing pin, and a trigger-controlled 'safety-bar' which prevents the hammer from contacting the firing pin unless the hammer is cocked and the trigger pulled. Yet, it still maintains the half-cock hammer position for loading and unloading through the loading gate on the right side of the frame.

The cylinder on the Abilene holds six cartridges, and is unfluted. It measures 1.740 inches in diameter, is almost exactly the same in length, and is recessed for the cartridge heads.

The hammer spur is .512-inch wide, flattened, heavily grooved, and positioned correctly for easy thumb cocking. (There are no sharp edges on the hammer.) Where the Colt SAA has a narrow smooth trigger, the Abilene has a trigger measuring .310-inch in width, finely grooved on the front for non-slippage, and with just a slight curve for good finger positioning.

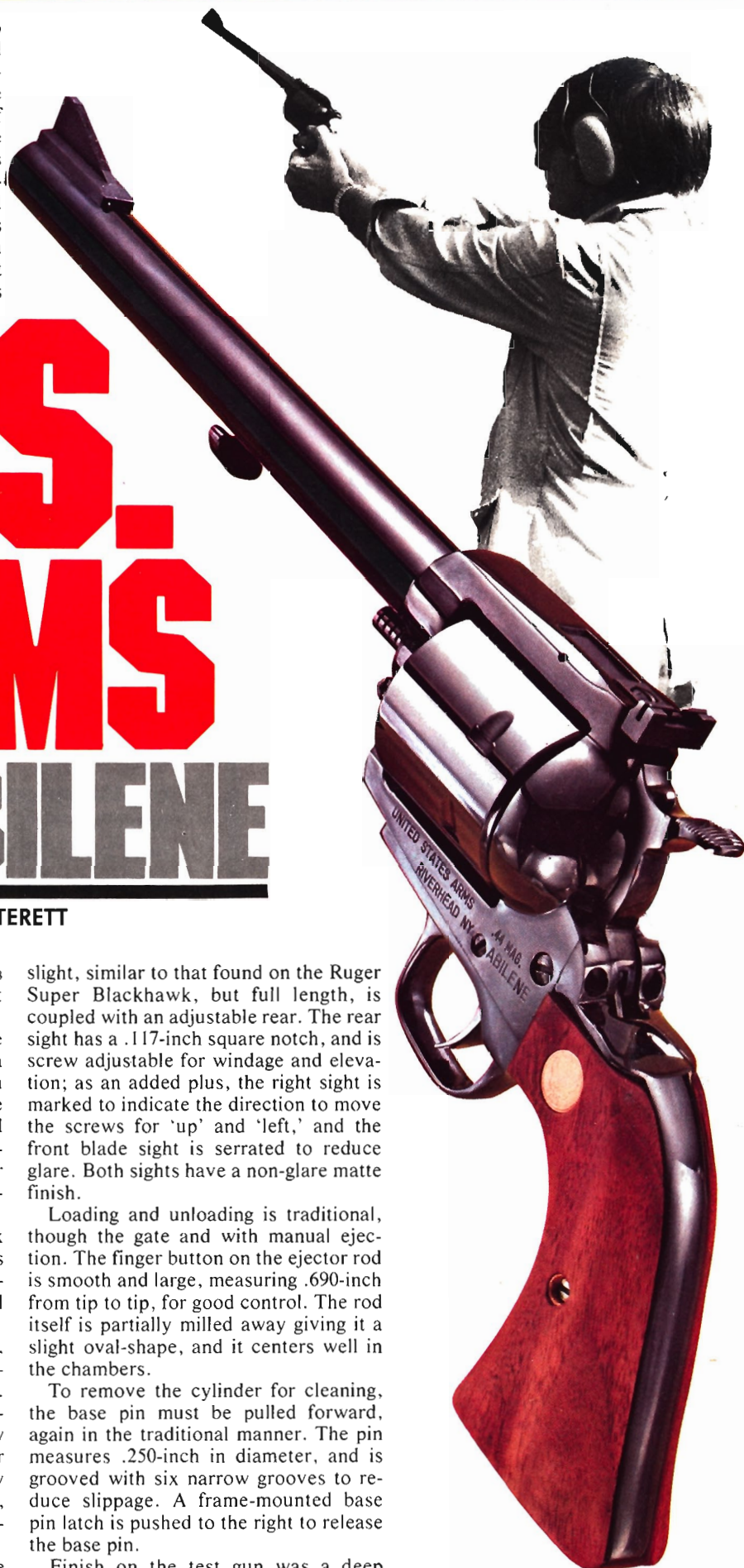
A ramp-mounted .122-inch front blade

sight, similar to that found on the Ruger Super Blackhawk, but full length, is coupled with an adjustable rear. The rear sight has a .117-inch square notch, and is screw adjustable for windage and elevation; as an added plus, the right sight is marked to indicate the direction to move the screws for 'up' and 'left,' and the front blade sight is serrated to reduce glare. Both sights have a non-glare matte finish.

Loading and unloading is traditional, though the gate and with manual ejection. The finger button on the ejector rod is smooth and large, measuring .690-inch from tip to tip, for good control. The rod itself is partially milled away giving it a slight oval-shape, and it centers well in the chambers.

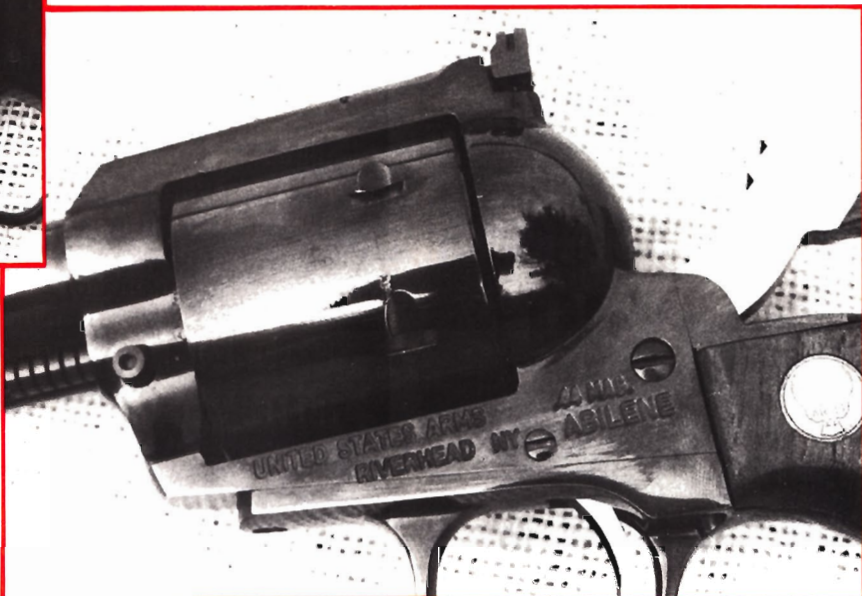
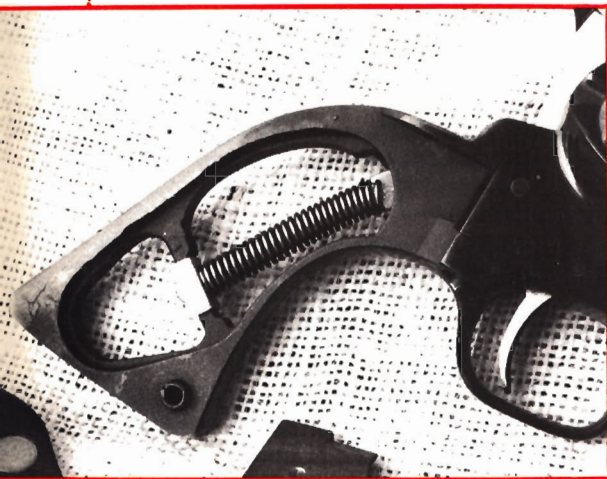
To remove the cylinder for cleaning, the base pin must be pulled forward, again in the traditional manner. The pin measures .250-inch in diameter, and is grooved with six narrow grooves to reduce slippage. A frame-mounted base pin latch is pushed to the right to release the base pin.

Finish on the test gun was a deep



bluish-black, with a high luster polish. The only non-blued parts were the sights, and the sides of the hammer and the trigger, which were polished bright. Smooth, oil-finished walnut stocks with an inletted brass medallion featuring the U.S. Arms logo complemented the blued metal, and the stock fit was good. Metal

Clockwise from top: The Abilene uses a one-piece investment cast steel grip, and a heavy coil hammer spring; The trigger-controlled "safety-bar" is visible here. In use it transfers the blow of the hammer to the frame-mounted firing pin, but prevents the hammer from touching the firing pin if the trigger is not pulled; The cylinder is recessed for the cartridge rims, as shown here. Note the base pin need not be completely removed in order to remove the cylinder; The rear sight on the Abilene is protected by side ribs on the topstrap, and the sight is marked to indicate the direction the screws should be turned; The cylinder of the Abilene is unfluted. Note a small amount of bolt drag is evident between the locking recesses.



to metal fit on the Abilene was excellent.

Following examination, the Abilene was taken to the range for a firing session, along with an assortment of 44 Magnum cartridges, including Dominion, Frontier, Sako, Speer, Remington, and Winchester-Western brands. Five-shot groups were fired from the bench at 25 yards, using a two-handed hold with sandbags for wrist rests. The majority of the groups obtained averaged around three inches in size, measured center-to-center. The smallest group measures $2\frac{1}{4}$ inches center-to-center, and was obtained using the Western Super-X 240 grain JHP load. The Frontier and Dominion brands did almost as well in the Abilene, with none of the groups going over three inches in diameter. (One group, fired with the Frontier 200 grain JHP load, measured only $2\frac{23}{32}$ inches in diameter.)

Since the Abilene is a hunting handgun, and is also suitable for IHMSA shooting, it was fired on the 100 yard range also, following the same procedure. Groups tripled in size at the in-

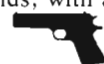


creased distance, but still stayed under ten inches in diameter, center-to-center, or good enough to bag a whitetail or knock a pig over at 100 meters. (In IHMSA shooting the rams are located at 200 meters, or 220 yards, and the Abilene in the 44 Magnum chambering should handle them with ease, although it was not shot at this distance.)

No problems were encountered with



the Abilene during the firing of some 250 rounds, except for the usual slight loosening of screws. A slight amount of bolt drag became evident on the cylinder, but this has also happened on more expensive revolvers. The gap between the cylinder and barrel measured .007-inch, which is a bit greater than on some revolvers, but no excessive flash or lead splattering was noted in this area. Contributing to the accuracy of the Abilene was a trigger let-off of 3 pounds, with a very minimal amount of movement.



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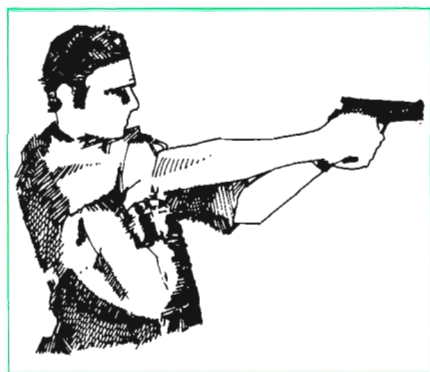
LUCY CHAMBLISS

PUBLICITY MUST BE AN NRA FUNCTION

Items from mid-year NRA Board of Directors meeting, Orlando, Fla.

Why weren't more of you shooters from the Southeast at this meeting, listening and talking to your *directors*, NRA officers and staff, it was advertised in "Rifleman"? Original idea was to have board and committee meetings around the country so members could participate. Attendance has been so small, board and committee meetings, other than Annual Members Meeting will probably be moved back to Washington as facilities are cheaper. Camp Perry entry was bigger this year than any year since 1967 when NRA took it back from military. Pistol entries up from 893 to 926, smallbore rifle up more, I think increase in rifle due to their updating courses of fire and attracting more juniors than we handgunners are. The total in all shooting nationals went up 14%; National Police Revolver Championships set a new high of 897, 1979 will be in Jackson again. Please, Mississippi, make good that 10 year promise of range expansion — national championships should not have 15 relays!

shame, this attractive young woman could win some friends for guns, if the NRA, and I say the NRA, would get her in the public eye. Publicity has got to be an NRA function. We keep "talking to one another," but we've got to reach that young potential shooter-athlete watching TV in Gary, Ind., who never heard of the NRA. Congratulations Kim, and all the US team members, you always do your best and we appreciate it. Funds voted by the board to the International Shooter Development Fund may help in future years.



42nd World Shooting Championships

Our team of 57 shooters received the same no publicity, no recognition treatment as teams in past years. We have got to do something in the NRA to get such an event and our team, more recognition, or we will continue to lose juniors and adults to other sports. Maybe you like to hide your accomplishments under a bushel, but the rank and file people we have to interest in shooting, don't. One team official described this World Championship as the worst for the US, medal-wise, since 1962. Could be this long practice of ignoring our shooters, takes its toll. The men won no medals in pistol. Kim Dyer won the World Women's Pistol Championship, with an outstanding score of 591X600 (that's same course of fire as men's center fire, precision and duelo matches, only ladies fire .22), and did you see Kim's picture on TV, or in Sports Illustrated? No. What a

Institute for Legislative Action

ILA is still the winner to me in all the NRA's efforts, and rightfully it should be. I only wish we either had Neal Knox and his magnificent staff working on publicity too, or another group just like them. Write for ILA's latest booklet, "The Great American Gun War," by B. Bruce-Briggs. Mr. Briggs does not own firearms, does not belong to NRA, or any other gun-owners organization, but in my opinion, his piece by piece, total destruction of the anti-gun line, is the best I have ever seen. Also, ask for pamphlet "Your State Firearms Laws," 6 states are in print now, with 22 other states in preparation, probably ready by time this is published. It is readable, easy to understand info on what layman can and cannot do with his firearms in a given state. I think a reasonable number of both these booklets are free, but if you have to pay postage, it's worth the price.

Lucy

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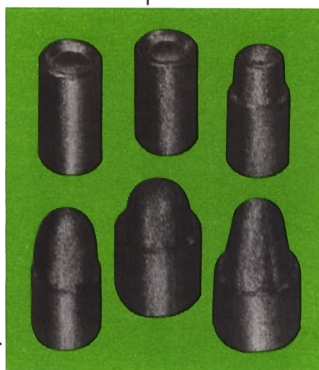
This advanced lubrication system permits use of a smooth bullet, one that does not require a

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TAURUS

SEYFRIED

(Continued from page 28)

Yet at the same time, he didn't use what is becoming known as "IPSC leather," custom rigs reminiscent of single-action fastdraw's heyday in the 1950's. Instead, he wore a high-riding Milt Sparks holster on his right hip, with the butt tilted forward in the traditional police style instead of canted into a backward "fast-draw rake"; wearing a gun that way amounts to heresy in the gamesman circles of IPSC, yet this sparsely designed and totally concealable holster outgunned every elaborately tied-down and steel-reinforced rig in sight.

Seyfried explained, "I carry the .45 that way for the simple reason that this position is where I am used to reaching for a gun. I wear a 4" Smith & Wesson model 29 .44 Magnum revolver every day, all day, in the course of my ranch duties in Rougen, Colorado. For me, it's natural." If there is a self-styled "martial artist" of combat shooting who would dispute that reasoning, his line of debate will be hard to sustain.

Like all of the experienced compet-

itors in the Championship class, Seyfried used the Weaver stance for his basic shooting platform. "Mine is actually a modified Weaver," he explains. "I bend both elbows slightly, place my left index finger on the front of the trigger guard, and tilt my head slightly to the right."



The most important factor in this respect, he believes, is "a hard, solid hold."

Last year, people who didn't know "the new kid" figured Kirk Kirkham's victory in Denver was a fluke. He proved them wrong when he went home to dominate the Arizona league, then went to the World Shoot in Rhodesia where he

tallied a respectable score, and returned to the California Nationals to turn in a bravura performance.

Ross Seyfried is in the same champion mold. One of the unique things about IPSC shooting is that, unlike bullseye, it doesn't take years of apprenticeship to rack up Master scores. If you have the right mind, good reflexes, and a sound basic knowledge of fast and accurate handgunning, you can win your first match. Every IPSC league in the country has a story like that, and a shooter like that.

Seyfried didn't walk in cold. He was already, in his short year of competition, possibly the dominant force in his region. However he does this year in other matches — and next year in South Africa, where his slot on the US Team in the World Championships is already assured — he will display the championship bearing he brought to California.

Kirkham was (and is) a champion, with every right to his title, and it was a pity that no one had the courage or the foresight to realize it and say so at the time. There will be less doubtful commentary on beginners' luck this year, when it was Ross Seyfried who proved that IPSC is a handgun sport that no one competitor can ever own.


Seyfried, too, is a true champion.



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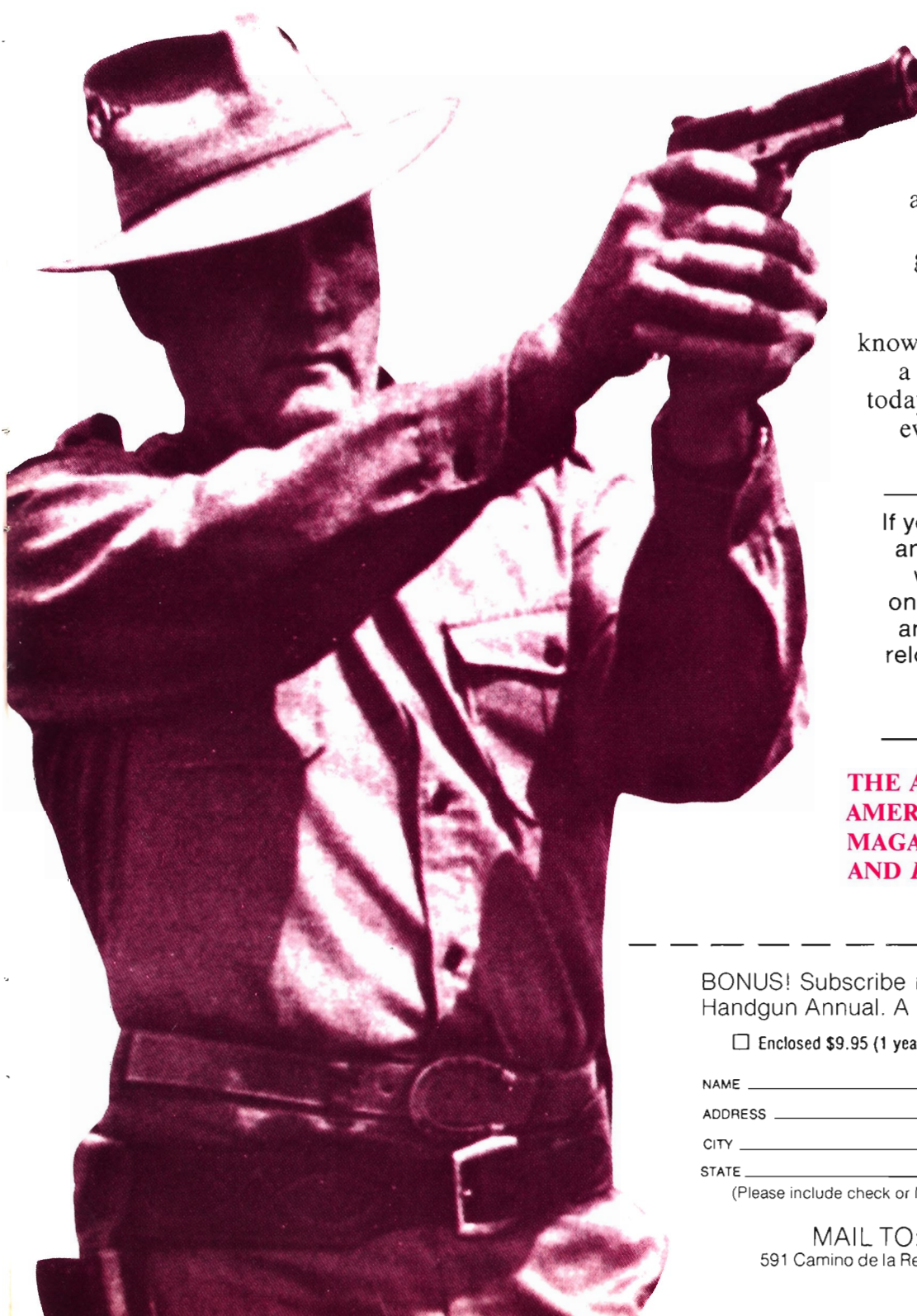
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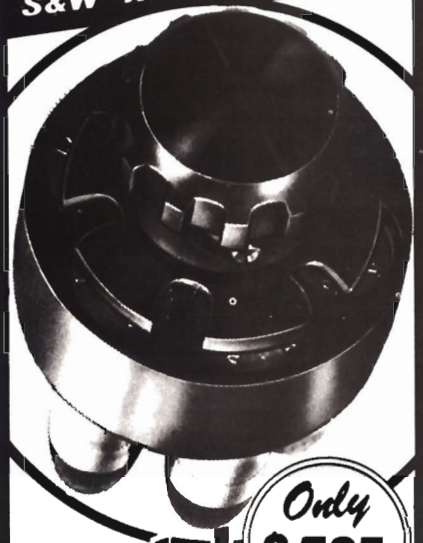
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RUGER INTERVIEW

(Continued from page 51)

the original Peacemaker had some problems . . . springs were certainly subject to breakage. In the practice of fanning it was easy to damage the trigger and hammer notches, you know, if the owner persisted in that kind of abusive handling. Then, too, with the old Colt you could pull the trigger and have the hammer fall when the cylinder itself, and not a chamber, was in alignment with the barrel. In the final analysis we did stick to the basic Colt type of mechanism but overcame the problem I've just spoken of by cutting a groove around the rear face of the cylinder to make clearance for the firing pin in the event anyone dropped the hammer when the chamber wasn't lined up. But the fact is when we said, "Well, shall we improve it?", we actually came to the conclusion that, except for the adoption of modern coil springs in place of the original leaf springs, it wouldn't be easy to do. There was so much logic in its design and it was so well understood and liked by so many people that to alter it much would be like trying to improve on Nature! Mainly we made the changes necessary to produce it as a .22 caliber; appropriately scaling down the size of the cylinder and frame.

BARLOW: Why did you decide upon the .22 Long Rifle as the cartridge for your first revolver?

RUGER: I can't recall the exact circumstances that led us to that decision but I guess that in those days the .22 cartridge was maybe more widely used than it is today. Certainly it would never have occurred to us at the outset to design that proposed single shot pistol as a .357! Also centerfire ammunition was quite expensive and handloading wasn't very widely practiced at that time. The nature of the single action being that of a gun ideal for informal target shooting and plinking, the .22 Long Rifle seemed the way to go.

BARLOW: At that stage of your company's existence had you done anything with the investment casting process?

RUGER: No . . . but the problem of producing the frame for the revolver brought us to the consideration of that process. Our prototype frames, incidentally, were actually machined out of solid blocks of steel by Rex King, who is still with the company and today is buying machine tools for next year's program! But even when made from forgings, the machining of those single action frames is very tricky and requires very special set ups as the ball breech area and configurations like the pawl slot are not normally machined by standard tools. So from early on the thought in the back of my mind was that perhaps that frame could be investment cast.

BARLOW: But weren't you worried about the average gun buyer's misconceptions as to the strength of such castings as compared to forgings?

RUGER: You mean that they would be brittle like pot metal or cast iron? Well, special test equipment clearly proved to us that investment cast frames were at least as strong as the forged ones we also had made. Besides scientific tests, we clamped some in a big vise and simply beat on them with a sledge hammer! Investment casting was an absolutely ideal way for our small company to proceed in the manufacture of this relatively complicated product.

BARLOW: How long before you went on to make a larger caliber single action?

RUGER: I think it was the summer of 1955 that I prepared the drawings for the Black Hawk. We were, then, going back to a revolver with the same frame size and cylinder diameter as the Colt. Many of the working parts never had been scaled down for our .22 caliber gun so now they were perfect for our Black Hawk when we went back up to a larger frame. Of course we did on that gun make adjustable sights a standard feature. Our only caliber at the start was the .357, which was the great barn burner in those days . . . and is still one of the best cartridges in the world for revolvers.

BARLOW: Has the market for single action guns continued to hold up?

RUGER: Indeed, it has. Even though we have increased our plant capacity many times since the introduction of those guns, we have nearly always been behind on filling the orders of our dealers and distributors.

BARLOW: Is the .22 Single Six still popular?

RUGER: It's still a major part of our normal production . . . and yet my general impression is that in recent years .22 shooting has seemed to have plateaued while centerfire shooting has increased. Maybe because the cost of .22 ammo has increased while reloading for centerfire guns has reduced the cost of shooting them. But this also is somewhat disturbing for we see an awful lot of bad handloads.

BARLOW: Reloads with excessive pressure?

RUGER: Yes, and careless reloading . . . when the powder charge is missed the primer alone can drive the bullet up into the barrel and if the shooter is on a noisy range he may just figure he had a misfire and fire off the next round without checking anything . . . so, KABOOM! Perhaps everyone takes it for granted that reloading is done with more care and skill than it really is. Maybe something for you writers and your Editors to get concerned about again.

BARLOW: There are two aspects of the design of all single action revolvers which have come in for criticism recently on safety grounds — "A," the possibility

of an accidental discharge because some damn fool might carry his gun with the hammer resting on a live round and "B," that an accidental discharge can occur if the gun is dropped and the hammer falls upon a rock with sufficient impact to overcome the safety or loading notches.

RUGER: Carrying the hammer resting on a live round is the same as carrying a percussion gun with the hammer resting on a capped nipple, and for the past 150 years the assumption has been that the owner has better sense than to carry a gun that way. Normal procedure with a single action revolver is, and has been from the beginning, to carry the gun with the hammer down on an empty chamber. Do that and there is no way a blow on the hammer, no matter how hard, can produce a discharge. In the 100 years or so that single action revolvers have been in use, thousands upon thousands of users have followed this generally accepted safety procedure; and remember, the single action was for a very long time the standard handgun of the U.S. Army.

BARLOW: There have been Sturm, Ruger advertisements dealing with safety related matters and responsibility shared by both manufacturer and consumer . . . how did this come about and what is the company's purpose?

RUGER: We're conscious of being in an area where the possibility exists of someone being injured by a product we make, usually by misuse or plain carelessness. Also, it occurred to me, that the operational characteristics of our old model single actions were quite different from the operational characteristics of the new model single actions, so perhaps there was a need to make sure that this is clear in the minds of all owners. That is, that they can distinguish one model from the other and understand the mechanical differences and the effect of those differences because, of course, there are things that you can do with the new model that are not good practice with the old model.

BARLOW: Such as . . . ?

RUGER: Well, the interior mechanism of the new model single action (which isn't really new as we brought it out in 1973) is fundamentally different. It has none of the usual loading or safety notches, instead there is this thing we called a transfer bar and the arrangement of that mechanism is such that the transfer bar is first struck by the hammer and then transfers the blow to the firing pin. But it's only able to do that when the trigger is actually pulled all the way back . . . then when the trigger is released the transfer bar moves back down so that it's not in a position where the hammer can touch it. Therefore the gun is incapable of going off unless the trigger is pulled all the way to the rear.

BARLOW: And if the gun is dropped so the hammer hits a rock or other hard surface?

RUGER: Without the trigger being held all the way back that blow to the hammer simply *cannot* be transferred to the firing pin to produce an accidental discharge.

BARLOW: If I were buying a replica of, say, an 1896 Benz I sure as hell wouldn't want it fitted out with 4 wheel power disc brakes even if they are more effective! It is an object from which I'd get most pleasure through use in its original form . . . and inasmuch as one of the main attractions of owning an old Colt, or your original single action revolvers, is that this was the handgun as it existed in frontier times . . . so are there still customers who prefer the old model Rugers?

RUGER: Indeed there are. We have reports of both new and second hand versions bringing higher prices than the list price of our New Model. Firearms appeal to a variety of people in a variety of

ways. In one sense people want the most modern performance they can get . . . there's immense appeal in progress and I think our New Model fills that type of demand. On the other hand there are shooters with a kind of antiquarian interest or historical sensitivity . . . and you see this typified by the great popularity of muzzleloading guns and shooting . . . which certainly relates to the continuing appeal of our older model . . . and the old Colts. You know, way back in the 1930s Elmer Keith wrote, "The single action is not obsolete and never will be."

BARLOW: Apparently a lot of shooters still feel that way . . . and feel indebted and grateful to you for what you have done to keep one of the great American firearm traditions alive for us.



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AH-39

IPSC NATIONALS

(Continued from page 35)

Leonard Knight, and a couple of others for proven consistency, while those of us who shoot around the country realized that it would come down to Tom Campbell of Massachusetts and John Davis of Illinois in a match that would have to be won by traversing a grueling course in twenty seconds or less to take the gold. Fowler went out on the penalty, and Knight on malfunctions; it became apparent that the contest would be between Davis and Campbell. It proved to be the most dramatic contest of the event.

Both are tall, athletic men, extremely fast. No one, not even Campbell, questioned Davis' dominance of that match in the pure athletic sense, and as one observer said, "Only Davis can beat Davis. He's faster than Campbell, but not as accurate. There's more chance that he'll foul up. His speed won't count if he doesn't have all hits." The Assault wasn't Comstocked; instead, all shooters with all hits went to the top, and then speed decided it, with score counting only as a tie-breaker.

Davis, a black belt in Tae Kwon Do (Korean karate) is a super-flexible athlete, and had cut 17 seconds in

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Cooper practice, with leaps that didn't even touch the 4-foot barricade. But pressure hit him on his first run out, and when he missed a shot on his first target and fired another to make up for it, he went out of rhythm and reloaded two shots too early. He veritably flew through the rest of the course, but when he hit the last window/barricade, he fired two into the silhouette and swung on the gong before he realized his slide was locked open on an empty magazine.

He said something under his breath with a rueful smile as he dropped the .45 between his knees (this was a weak-hand only phase of the Assault, and touching the gun with his right hand would cost him 5 seconds penalty), and reloaded with a spare clip from his hip pocket. By the time the gong clanged, only 21 seconds had elapsed, and he was then hit with a 5-point penalty for touching his gun earlier after leaving the barricade. (All shooters were videotaped as they ran the penalty-prone Cooper Assault, and it helped more than it hurt; this writer was charged with no fewer than five penalties by the judge, only one of which could be substantiated on the Sony machine. It was one of the more professional touches of the match.)

When Campbell hit the line, he was the last to fire not only in the Cooper, but in the tournament, and he knew it. Using



By the time you get this far, you feel like falling to your knees. This is Tom Campbell firing the weak hand part of the modified Cooper Assault.

his custom-built 9mm Smith & Wesson, a crossbreed model 59-model 52 that emerged as a super-accurate, 17-shot single action 9mm auto, he tallied 19 and 20 seconds on his two runs, drawing out of his unique chest holster, to easily take the Cooper. What no one had noticed up until then was how well he had been doing in the other stages, under the handicap of a minor caliber; in IPSC, all center hits are 5s no matter what you shoot, but out of center is 2 with a 9mm. instead

(Continued on page 66)

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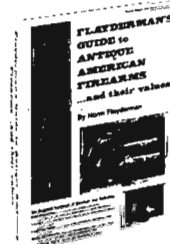
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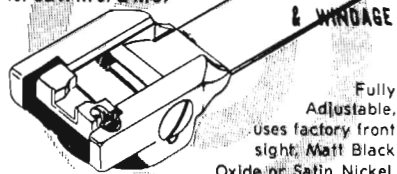
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IPSC NATIONALS

(Continued from page 65)

of 4 with a .45, and an outlying hit is 1 point instead of 2. Campbell was third overall in the tournament, and few doubted that if he had been shooting a .45, especially in the critical and point-heavy Advanced Military and Quick & Dirty stages, Campbell would have owned the title.

Everyone who analyzed the shoot beforehand knew that this would be a classic example of "slow and steady wins the game." Too many forgot it in the quest for bravura performances, and lost to themselves instead of to the rest. Ross Seyfried, who stayed cool enough and was skilled enough to hold with the slow and steady philosophy (and one who was confident enough to do it quickly), won the match at least as much as anyone else lost it. His coolness and knowledge of equipment supported him when others of championship class failed in this respect, and he proved himself a champion.

Though scheduling had been bad early on, Bill French and his capable team got things squared away with admirable efficiency and fairness. Whatever was wrong with the shoot, in terms of less than great organization (i.e., bathroom facilities for 156 competitors, and when a shooter challenged a target, the match officials had to borrow plugs and scoring overlays from competitors because they didn't have their own) the match directors made up for the shortcomings with almost superhuman efforts.

Overall, it was a good course, and a challenging one. Winner Seyfried was right: it did sweep a spectrum of practical shooting skills, and was tough enough that many fine shooters failed on their own without any help from the people they sometimes blamed it on.

So what does it count for? Originally, it was to make up the '78 US team, but that was meaningless, because there was no International match for the '78 team to compete in, since the world shoots are biannual and will next be held in South Africa subsequent to the '79 US championships. Some top shooters didn't attend solely because they weren't sure if their skills could win them a spot on a meaningful US team.

All this was worked out in an IPSC meeting during the shoot. First place would be guaranteed a slot on the International Team, this year and next; the other positions would be determined by a combined analysis of scores in the '78 and '79 shoots by each contender.

Whether this will hurt the US effort in the next Internationals remains to be seen. Aces like Ken Hackathorn and John Lazzaro, who didn't come to

California because they didn't know it would mean anything, will now be underdogs in '79 when they must shoot for the combined average dominance that will put them on the American squad where their fast-shooting skills will be needed. The Swedes may be chuckling up their sleeves. . .

IPSC '78? It was a damn good match, all in all, one that showed how some practical shooters can stand up to adversity and unexpected contingencies, and which showed how even champions can plunge disastrously with a single error. It makes newcomers feel good. When was the last world-class shooting game seen where, two years in a row, a competitor with a single year in could take a national crown?

The California match had some things wrong with it, but it had a lot right with it too. Next year, a lot of things will be different: it's going to Utah, just outside Salt Lake, and the collective IPSC mandate is that '79 will be a surprise shoot: the night before the event commences, a representative group from all sections



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will determine the course of fire. The date hasn't been set yet; they're waiting to check the phases of the moon. No kidding. One phase will be at night, and uniform total darkness has to be scheduled in.

All we know so far is that there will be a night phase, and a moving target phase. That last bothers me. After hearing all the griping that came out of California, I don't think anyone will believe that a Mover stage can be set up overnight without dry runs ahead of time, where the local team "could have had" prior practice. That kind of suspicion could poison the credibility of what promises to be the best national championship IPSC has had yet. If Big Brother doesn't intrude with specific demands, and Utah comes off as a true surprise, then IPSC will have been served well at the national level. In the meantime, while California was far from perfect, it tested a multitude of skills including one's competitive nature and willingness to fight for points.

When we left, we knew that while it was flawed, it was still a real National Championship. And we were proud to have taken part in it.



IHMSA

(Continued from page 38)

the silhouette market to ease the unlimited shooter into a suitable pistol. Can't say this has effected scores, but it's bound to get more people into the class. Completed pistols are now available from Wichita using a left-handed action of their manufacturer. Shilen and Freshour began offering barreled actions late in the year. Freshour offers their Tejas action, in two sizes; a tiny little gem for cases of the 222 family, and one of standard size.

Most of the progress on the ammo front has been instigated by the shooters. Suitable ammo wasn't available unless you loaded it yourself. You've still got to handload, but this past year the bullet manufacturers started to help out.

In the wheel guns, load development to date has been towards heavy bullets, of strong construction that are loaded to the gills. Rifle bullets in 35, 44 and 45 caliber were used, especially for ramloads. Still, these bullets have the minor drawbacks of longish length and high cost. Shaped for decent ballistics, these bullets are long, and overall cartridge length limits crowd them into the boiler room, just the opposite when you need lots of room for slow burning powders. And if you've never bought jacketed rifle bullets that are as big as your thumb, they do get a mite expensive.

Both Sierra and Hornady moved to cure this problem this year by offering

(Continued on page 68)

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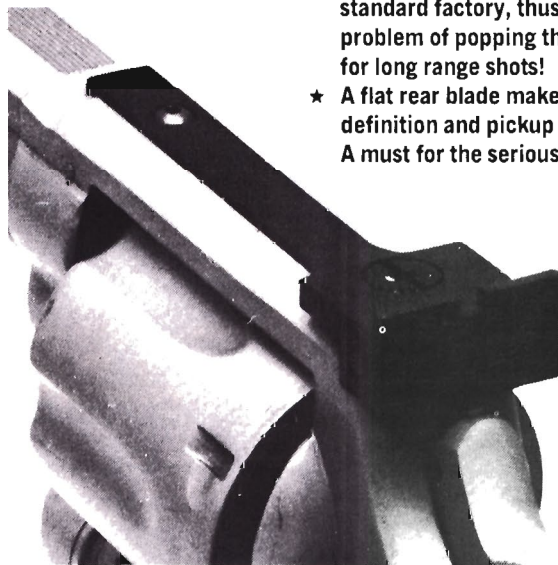
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IHMSA

(Continued from page 67)

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Sierra was the first out with a round nosed, 170 grain 357 caliber FMJ. By year-end they had followed this up with two 44 caliber bullets. Both round noses, both 250 grains in weight, one has a small soft point, the other is a FMJ with a very thick jacket.

Hornady introduced two flat pointed FMJ's, a 160 grain 357 caliber, and a 240 grain 44 caliber. They both look good, as did the special lot of Frontier 44 mag ammo that had been made up with the 240 that Steve Hornady was shooting at the Internationals. Unfortunately they've no plans to market this loading.

This year, target damage limits, common sense and cartridge efficiency are beginning to work to narrow the range of cartridges being used in unlimited. Let me explain.

Target damage due to penetration is principally a function of projectile velocity. High velocity is attained by use of small calibers for a given power charge — or more powder for a given caliber. The 250 Savage will burn holes in targets, as will the full length 308. There's lots of others with the same

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problem. The problem can be cured for the 250 with heavier bullets — the 308 can be loaded down. But the best solution will be a compromise selection of caliber and powder capacity.

Common sense would lead you to the conclusion that no one needs a full length 308, and few can shoot a 458. Recoil will make you punchy, and speed fatigue. Neither condition contributes to maintaining a high level of concentration, or accuracy. Solution — find a cartridge that's not too hot (to shoot), and not too cold (to be reliable). Just right probably ranges from the 30 Herrett and 30-223 to the 300 Savage in capacity, and 6 mm to 35 caliber.

A full length 308 that burns most of its

powder outside of the barrel is not efficient (over-bore personified), nor is one loaded down to low levels of loading density. In unlimited guns this leads us to the 300 Savage, or thereabouts. In 9 or 10 inch production barrels the 30 Herrett is about tops.

A final strong push in the direction of moderation will be Elgin Gates' family of "International" cartridges — 6, 6.5, and 7 mm and 30 and 35 calibers, on a case of about the capacity of the Savages. Federal will offer unprimed brass to clinch the deal.

A large part of the widespread raise in scores is attributable to the development and growing utilization of stable shooting positions. Pistols are traditionally shot

reared back on your hindlegs, but except for the masochists in standing, nobody does. Photos taken at the first two IHMSA Championships show some real strange sitting — kneeling — laying positions, but few use them now.

The favored freestyle positions are now prone, or some version of the supine like Creedmore or the Missouri side-winder. The Creedmore is the solidier of the two, but uncomfortable for some. The shooting elbow is on the mat in either position, but in Creedmore, the entire pistol is steadied by being pushed against the hip and thigh. In the sidewinder, only the forearm is supported, and even though the lefthand is used as a

(Continued on page 70)



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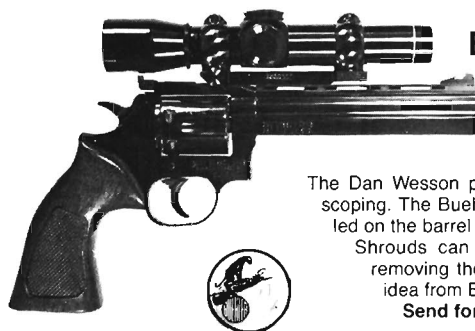
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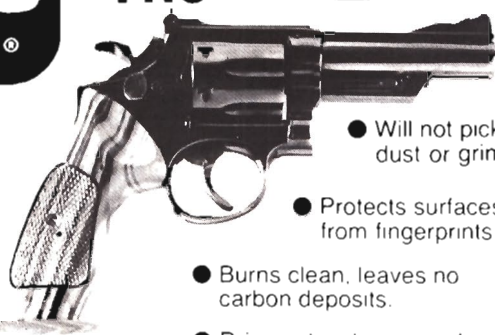
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IHMSA

(Continued from page 69)

brace, the pistol is still free to rock vertically.

The blast from the barrel/cylinder gap forces most wheel gun shooters into a prone position for self-protection. Although steadier than holding it out at arms length, this isn't the solidest of positions. Some enterprising shooters have been rigging blast shields for protection and using a laid back variant. The increase in scores in production indicates it's obviously worth the hassle.

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Skills, built from simple steps, combined with a desire to do better, a good pistol, carefully assembled loads and familiarity with points of impact are the simple rules of success. They are the keys to progress that we all can achieve.



COLT SAA

(Continued from page 47)

Single Action Mechanics

The design and interior mechanism of the Single Action Colt are simple and follow that of the earlier Colt percussion models. The one-piece frame encloses the cylinder, and the barrel is screwed into the frame. The cylinder and cylinder bushing revolve on a base pin, which runs through the frame lengthwise.

The basic lock mechanism of the Single Action design is shown in Fig. 3. As the hammer (A) is cocked, the hand (B), which is pivoted to the hammer at its lower end, rises through a slot in the frame and engages the ratchet teeth at the rear of the cylinder. The lower point of the hand engages one of the cylinder ratchet teeth just as the revolution of the cylinder has carried the preceding tooth from the upper part of the hand.

The bolt (E) engages the stop notches in the cylinder to lock it in position for firing. As the hammer is cocked, a small hammer cam (AA), permanently staked into the lower right-hand side of the hammer, rises, pressing up the rear end of the bolt and pulling the head of the bolt down and out of the cylinder stop notch. When the revolution of the cylinder is about complete, the beveled lower

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surface of the hammer cam (AA) comes to the split rear end of the bolt, which slips off the cam, allowing the head of the bolt to snap back against the cylinder wall and slide into the stop notch as the cylinder completes the last few degrees of revolution. The bolt and trigger spring (F) acts both to press the bolt into the stop notch and to keep the trigger (D) forward with its sear end against the hammer.

Single Action Takedown

Figures 4, 5 and 6 show detailed exploded views of the various parts of the revolver. (See illustration captions for identification of parts.) Disassembly of the Single Action Colt is simple. The cylinder is removed by opening the loading gate and pressing in on the left-hand end of the base pin catch, withdrawing the base pin toward the muzzle of the revolver. With the hammer in half-cock position, the cylinder can be dropped out of the frame. On older models, the base pin is removed by unscrewing the base pin screw from the front of the frame.

Remove the stock screw and stocks. On models with one-piece wood stocks, the backstrap must be removed first with the stock attached. Unscrew the backstrap screws and butt screw to remove backstrap. Remove the mainspring screw and mainspring from the rear leg of the trigger guard. Remove front and rear trigger guard screws and pull trigger guard off bottom of frame. Unscrew trigger and bolt spring screw and drop out the spring. Remove the trigger and bolt screws and drop out trigger and bolt. Remove hammer screw and remove hammer to rear of frame, drawing the attached hand and spring out of its slot in the frame. Hand can then be lifted out of hammer. Unscrew gate catch screw and drop gate catch and spring out bottom of frame. Draw gate out of frame toward front. Unscrew base pin latch screw from nut and draw out of frame with spring.

Remove ejector tube screw and lift front of ejector tube clear of stud in barrel. Pull entire ejector assembly out of frame to front. Ejector rod and spring can be drawn out of ejector tube to rear. Note that the ejector head is screwed tightly to the forward end of the ejector rod and care should be exercised in removing the head.

Reassembly of the revolver is accomplished in reverse order.

The basic stripping procedure has been outlined; however, there are several other steps for complete disassembly which necessitate some degree of skill and special tools. Removal of the barrel requires a suitable wooden clamp to hold the barrel in a vise and a metal block to fit around the front of the frame, for turning the frame off the barrel. Care should be taken to avoid damaging the


(Continued on page 72)

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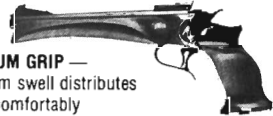





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NOTE: See pages 24 and 25 for our new exciting Sweepstakes!

COLT SAA

(Continued from page 71)

ejector tube stud at the forward end of the barrel. The threads in this stud are not standard and they are difficult to repair if the stud is damaged. Initial turning of the barrel from the frame is often quite difficult because of the extremely tight fit.

Accurate fitting of a new barrel requires a metal lathe to turn the rear barrel shoulder so that the barrel can be seated tightly with the front sight properly aligned and ejector tube stud the correct distance from the front face of the frame. This is not a job for an amateur and would be best left to the professional gunsmith or to the factory. Likewise, the installation of a new cylinder often requires precise machine work. Both operations are beyond the scope of this article. If in doubt about replacing these parts, return the gun to the Colt factory where the work can be best accomplished.

The recoil plate set around the firing pin hole in the rear of the frame is a semi-permanent part. To remove it, a proper size punch must be used to drive the plate out through the frame. The new or replacement recoil plate should then be seated in place and staked or punched into place. The factory uses a small, circular edge punch to do this job, but a small center punch can be used, securing the plate in the frame with a circular ring of punch marks. After punching, the front surface of the recoil plate and its surrounding frame area should be filed and polished smooth.

Tuning Up the Action

The Single Action is an excellent design, but its successful functioning depends in large part on the quality of the steel used in its manufacture and in the precision fitting of its working parts. Modern machine production methods have in large measure eliminated the careful hand fitting of years past and leave something to be desired so far as the shooter is concerned. Following are some things the home gunsmith can accomplish to slick up the action of this model on a do-it-yourself basis:

The Hand: The hand, or cylinder pawl, is pivoted to the lower end of the hammer. It is most often damaged or broken by hard cocking. Fanning the Single Action Colt — that is, driving the hammer back with the heel of one hand while the trigger is held back with the other, and allowing the hammer to fall at the end of its rearward travel — is the most frequent instance of hard cocking. The hammer should be stopped in its rearward motion by the slot in the backstrap,

(Continued on page 76)



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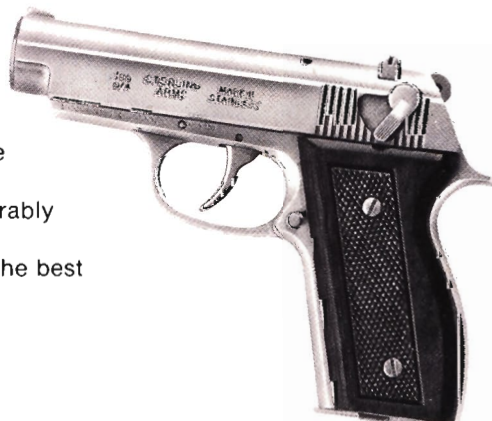
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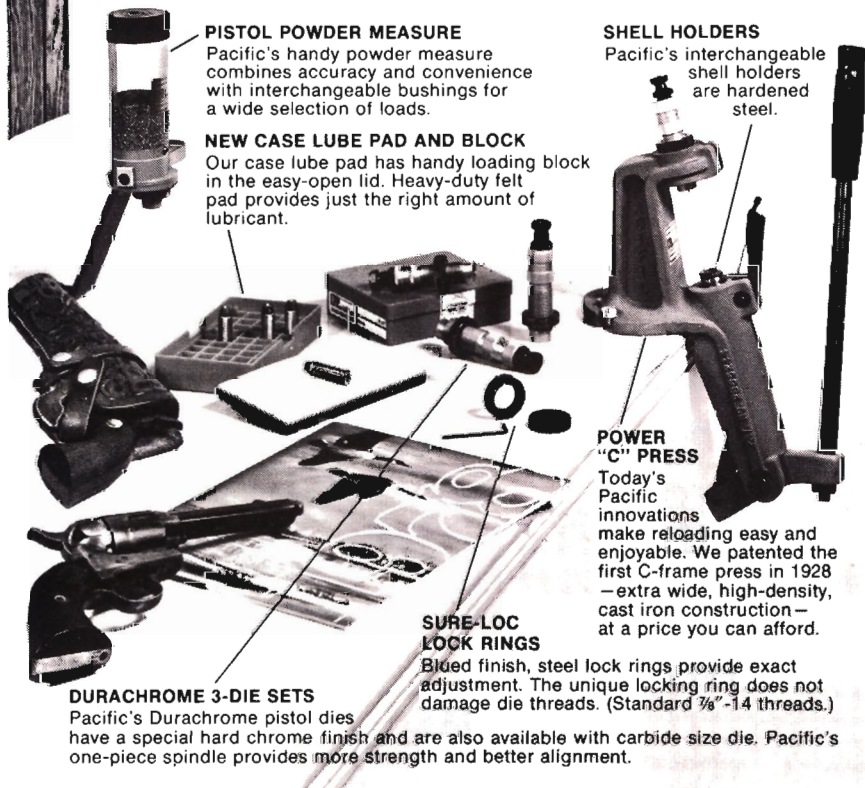
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COLT SAA

(Continued from page 72)

not by the gun's hand ramming again the cylinder ratchet after the cylinder has been locked in its firing position by the bolt. A small amount of metal, carefully filed from the two faces of the hand as shown in Fig. 7 (A) will allow the hammer to stop against the backstrap if the hand is too long. Care should be taken not to remove too much metal — it's easy to correct a hand that is too long but impossible to fix one that's too short, unless you resort to welding on more metal.

Hammer and Trigger: Careless or hard cocking, such as "fanning" the Single Action, will also damage the trigger sear and the hammer notches. The only way to repair a cracked or broken hammer notch or sear is to weld on additional metal.

The angle at which the trigger nose or sear meets the full-cock notch of the hammer is critical. Most modern-made guns have a full-cock notch a little too deep for a real crisp trigger-pull. On the other hand, older guns will often have a notch and trigger nose which are badly worn, possibly dangerously. A trigger nose or sear which does not fit the hammer notch correctly will result in either a very hard trigger pull or, what's more dangerous, in having the trigger meet the hammer notch at an open angle which might allow the hammer to slip off the full-cock position. The correct angle for the trigger and hammer notch is shown in Fig. 7 (B). The trigger nose and hammer notch can be filed carefully to this angle, finished with fine emery paper and polished. It might be necessary to use a stone on the hammer, as it is casehardened. After fitting these parts, have the worked-on areas lightly casehardened by a good gunsmith.

The Bolt: Bolts on many older guns fit quite loosely in the cylinder locking notches and may not engage the hammer cam properly because of wear. Usually it is best to replace the bolt. Since new bolts are made somewhat oversize, careful fitting will be in order.

File the sides of the bolt head to fit into the cylinder notches properly. Note that the contour of the top of the bolt head must also be changed to an angle which will correspond with the cylinder notches. The height of the bolt head is adjusted by filing the lower part of the rear end of the bolt where it rests on the hammer cam. File a bevel on the left-hand rear tip of the bolt as shown in Fig. 7 (C) to allow it to slip over the hammer cam easily. This spring-like rear end of the bolt can also be thinned slightly for smoothness of bolt operation. Do not caseharden the bolt after finishing.

The Springs: The action of the re-

volver can be smoothed and lightened appreciably by carefully reshaping both the mainspring and bolt and trigger spring as shown in Fig. 7 (D). Do not attempt to grind the springs as this will remove the temper of the metal; rather, use a small stone and fine emery cloth. Although not critical, the hand spring can also be thinned slightly and polished to cut down on friction as it slides in its channel in the frame.

Tuning other single action revolvers of modern manufacture is basically the same as that described above. With revolvers like the Ruger, the action can be smoothed a great deal by reducing the power of the coil springs employed. This is accomplished by clipping a turn or two off of the spring until it seems about right. Don't take off too much!

Hard Hammer Fall

One of the complaints about the Single Action Colt is the hard hammer fall, which invariably jars even the best shooter slightly off target. The solution to this problem is to have a gunsmith shorten the hammer fall, but since this short action conversion is a tricky and expensive job at best, a good alternative is to "skeletonize" the hammer by drilling holes in it. This operation, combined with lightening the mainspring, as shown in Fig. 7 (D), will considerably lessen the jar of the hammer's fall. This kind of alteration would be considered a sacrilege by the serious collector but it does improve the action of the revolver.

The Single Action hammer can be converted to a wide spur type by welding additional metal to the hammer spur and filing to the shape desired. Or a very practical and good looking conversion can be made from an old Bisley hammer, the spur of which is cut off and welded to a regular Single Action hammer which has been cut and filed to receive the new spur.

Floating firing pins for the Single Action Colt are available from a number of custom gunsmith firms at a nominal cost. This type of firing pin is easily installed by the amateur gunsmith and the alteration of the hammer for use with this type of firing pin consists of a simple grinding operation. A floating firing pin is definitely recommended for use with all rimfire cartridges as well as all high pressure loads.

The Single Action grips offer many possibilities for alteration to fit the hand of the individual shooter. One of the easiest and most practical changes, thought by many to be an improvement over the standard grips, is to install an 1860 Army model Colt trigger guard, backstrap, and grips. This results in a grip which is about 1/2" longer than standard and provides plenty of room for the little finger. These man-size grips are especially desirable when shooting high powered car-

tridges. The 1860 Army trigger guard is made of brass and the regular iron Single Action trigger guard can be substituted for it by welding a little metal to its underside and filing until it fits the 1860 backstrap. (Backstraps and trigger guards for the models 1851 Navy, 1860 Army, and Single Action Colt are all interchangeable on the Single Action frame.)

These parts for the older percussion Colts are usually available from the many dealers in antique arms and parts. Since most of the original old parts are from unused arsenal stock, they are usually in excellent shape. In addition to these, many dealers are offering modern-made replacement parts for these older revolvers. If other changes in the shape of grips are desired, the trigger guards and backstraps are easily altered

by forging, or by welding on additional metal which can be filed to shape by hand.

In any conversion or custom job, after the gun has been fitted and polished, the frame, gate and hammer should be re-casehardened, especially when the gun is to be used with one of the more powerful cartridges. While it is possible for the home gunsmith to do this work, it is much better (and much easier) to send the frame back to the factory or to a competent heat-treating plant. They are better equipped to do the job, and incidentally, to bring out the desirable coloring associated with good casehardening. The small cost of having this work done by a professional does not justify the sweat and aggravation the amateur will undergo when he attempts to do it himself.





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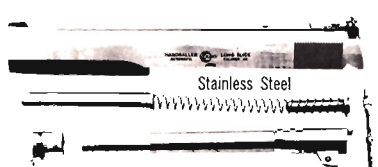
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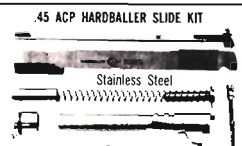
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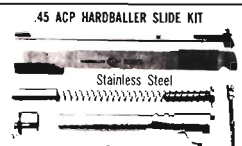
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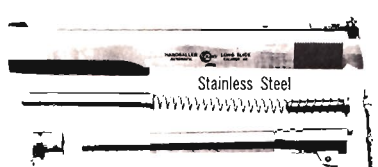
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1. Date of filing: September 25, 1978.
2. Title of Publication: American Handgunner.
3. Frequency of issue: Bi-monthly.
4. Location of known office of publication (Street, city, county, state, zip code): 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92108.

5. Location of the headquarters of general business offices of the publishers (Not printers): 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92108.

6. Names and addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor:

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Editor: Jerome Rakusan, 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92108

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