

THE AMERICAN

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1980 \$2.00

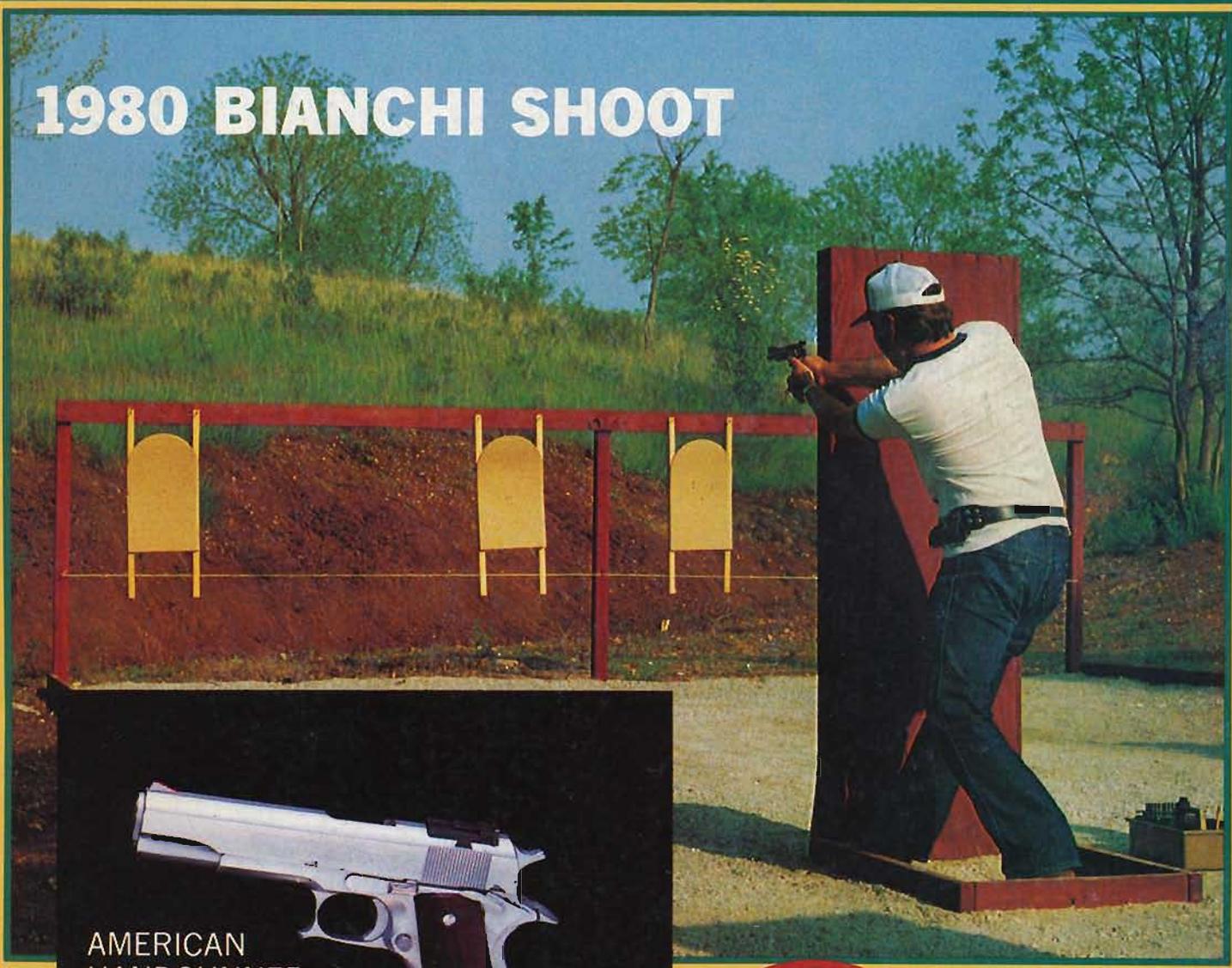
HANDGUNNER

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION

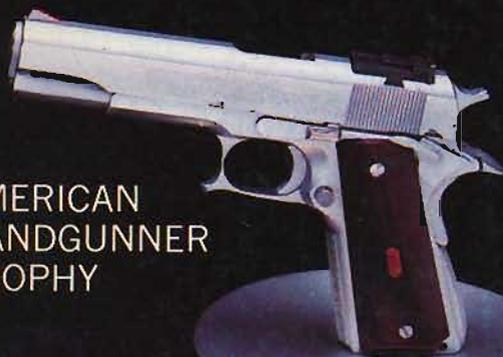
67522 T&E

New .45 Design Reduces Recoil First Indoor Combat Matches
Wilson Combat: Street & Match In One Gun
1,000,000th Ruger The Ruger Mk I: Design Excellence

1980 BIANCHI SHOOT

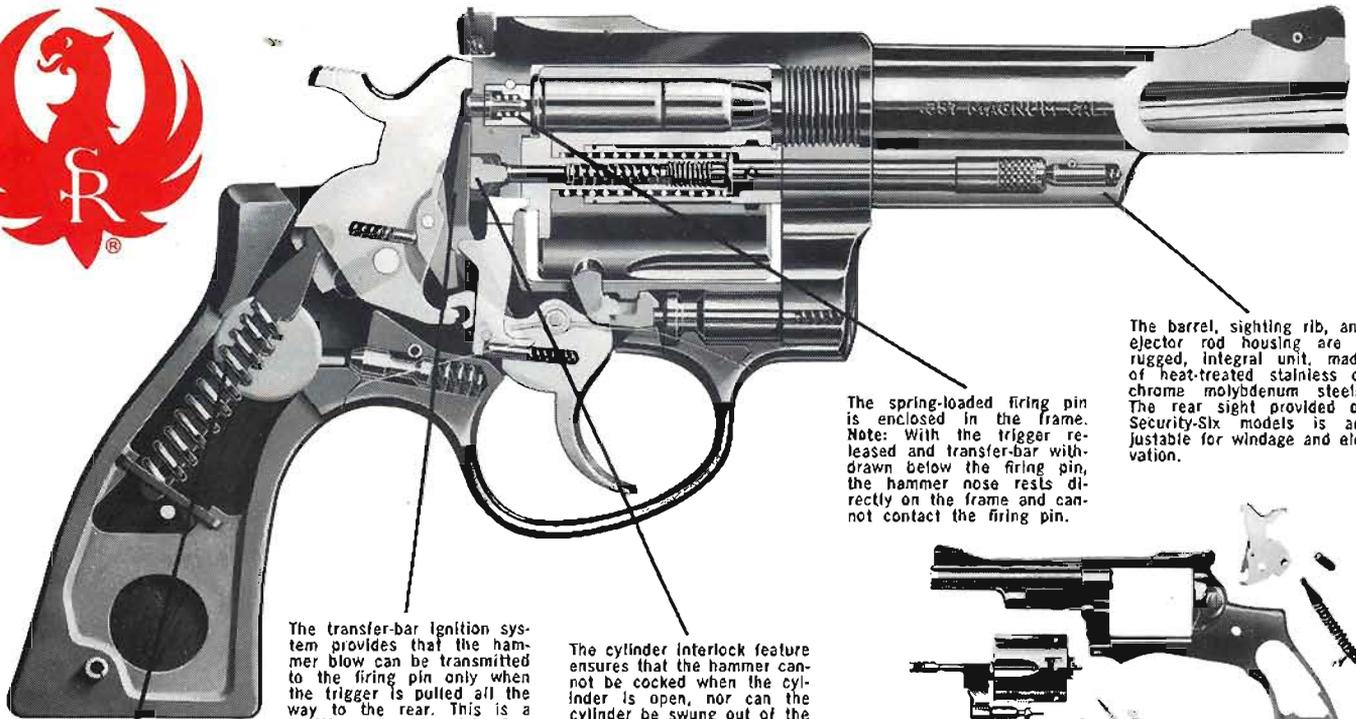


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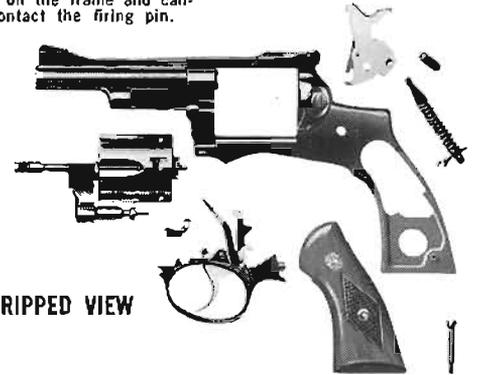
Music wire or stainless steel coil springs are used throughout the Ruger double action revolvers.

The transfer-bar ignition system provides that the hammer blow can be transmitted to the firing pin only when the trigger is pulled all the way to the rear. This is a positive internal safety feature designed to prevent firing if the revolver is dropped accidentally, or if the hammer spur receives a sharp blow.

The cylinder interlock feature ensures that the hammer cannot be cocked when the cylinder is open, nor can the cylinder be swung out of the frame when the hammer is cocked.

The spring-loaded firing pin is enclosed in the frame. Note: With the trigger released and transfer-bar withdrawn below the firing pin, the hammer nose rests directly on the frame and cannot contact the firing pin.

The barrel, sighting rib, and ejector rod housing are a rugged, integral unit, made of heat-treated stainless or chrome molybdenum steels. The rear sight provided on Security-Six models is adjustable for windage and elevation.



FIELD STRIPPED VIEW

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The finest materials are used in Ruger double action revolvers. Music wire or stainless steel coil springs are used throughout and frames, cranes, cylinders, and barrels are of heat-treated stainless or chrome molybdenum steels. Most of the small internal parts of *all* models of Ruger double action revolvers are made of stainless steel.

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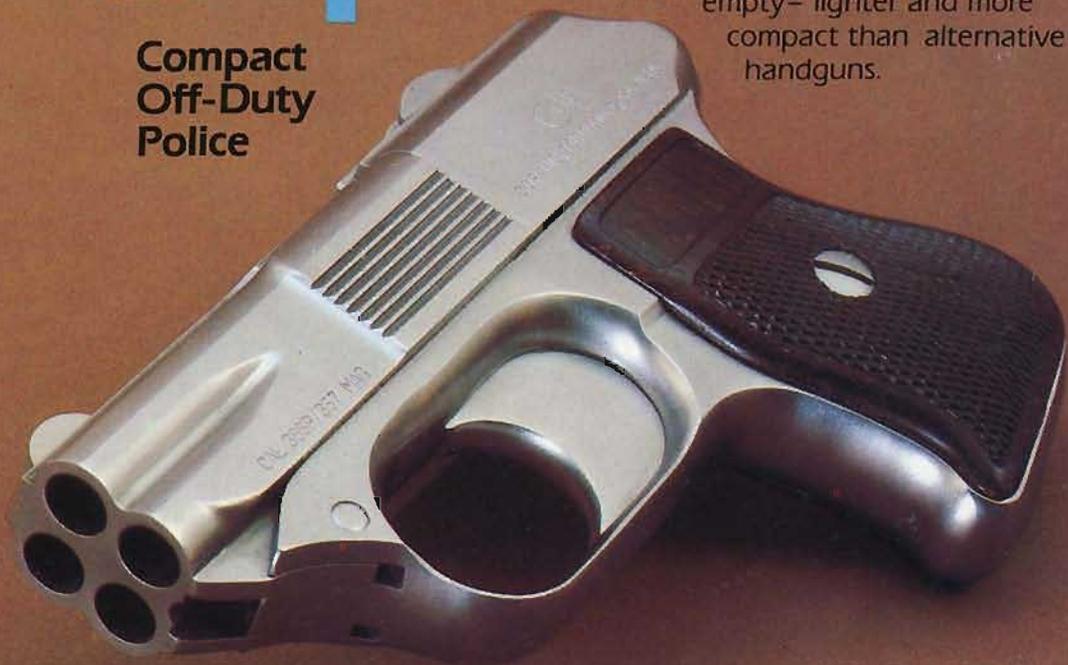
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THE AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1980 Vol. 5 No. 6-25

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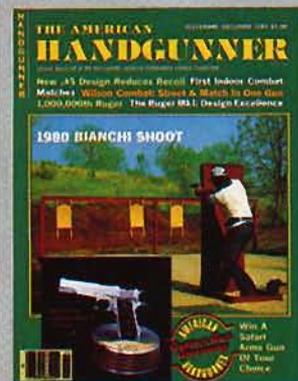
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COVER: Bianchi Shoot story starts on page 34. Photos by Jim Woods and Altaffer/Jones.



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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JEROME RAKUSAN

NEW STAINLESS MODEL .44s CREATE EAGER ANTICIPATION, BACK ORDERS NUMBER 85,000

There are many interesting things brewing in the handgun field, and it appears that most of them will break later this year. Some hints on what to watch for include a big breakthrough from the West Coast: we are told that this will be a "drop-in" D.A. conversion kit for any commercial or military 1911 auto. From the Southwest comes a new .45 auto recoil system that we will be testing in August. This one claims to reduce recoil substantially and increase accuracy greatly in G.I. guns and even up to 20 percent in accurized .45's.

At the present, Smith & Wesson has more than a little news. Factory exec's are crowing about the fact that theirs is the first stainless, double action .44 Magnum off the line. Two hundred master shooters, the cream of the handgunning sport in the free world, saw the first Model 629 off the production line awarded at the Bianchi Cup Invitational Match. It was selected by Mickey Fowler, whose intelligence must be right up there with his shooting ability. Mickey won the event, had his choice of first prize, and immediately glommed the shiny, 6" M-.44. It's a good bet that, with collector prices being what they are, the gun will ultimately be worth more than the several thousand dollars Mickey won from the cash purse at the shoot. (Mickey also received the beautiful trophy, and cash prize, donated by this magazine for the moving target phase of the Bianchi shoot.)

The first week in July, five weeks after the Bianchi shoot, the first production run of 629s went out to the distributors. It wasn't a big run, but the guns were carefully allocated so that everyone got some. Another was scheduled for shipment in August, with more to follow. There's a long order list to fill. Ruger faces the same situation with their stainless .44 Redhawk, which only barely lost the race into production. Who's ahead in the early popularity polls, judged by the number of orders already in? Tough to say. Both companies consider that "proprietary information." We have heard through covert sources in the industry, however, the number 85,000 in regard to back orders for one of these guns.

Meanwhile, after a labor longer than any elephant's, Smith & Wesson is at last giving birth to the new generation of 9mm automatics. Ayoob has tested the 439 and

we should have the results forthwith. He reached some unexpected and surprising conclusions in his testing and research of the new guns.

Big buyers of these guns, the people at S&W hope, will be military and police. Ups and downs there. The tri-service testing group that will select the new 9mm service pistol for the armed forces is believed at this writing to be strongly favoring the Model 559 S&W (steel frame, 15-shot) 9mm. However, Illinois State Police, the department that made the original Model 39 Smith Parabellum popular in law enforcement circles, has rejected the Model 439 after testing. The reason they cited was the new thumb safety design, which does not drop the hammer automatically on a bar to block the firing pin as do the Models 39 and 59. The latest safety blocks the firing pin totally, but the trigger must be pulled to lower the hammer. More details on this in Ayoob's article.

Before we leave the subject of S&W autos, let's look at six-shot Model 52s. This target auto, which fires only .38 Special wadcutter ammo, was built around a 5-shot magazine for bullseye shooting. As soon as PPC was opened to automatics, everyone figured this would be the logical gun to dominate it, and custom gunsmiths quickly promised 6-shot magazines. None were forthcoming, however; stacking that many rimmed cartridges in that particular magazine proved to be an almost insurmountable problem. *Almost*. Tom Campbell, the international IPSC ace, has developed functioning m/52 mags for his own use in NMSS matches and NRA-sponsored PPC events that allow autos. Will you be able to buy such a mag from S&W one day? Could be—since Campbell makes his living doing research for Smith & Wesson.

Not long ago, Roy Jinks of Smith & Wesson was promoted from overall responsibility for repairs and similar services. He's done quite a job. The S&W engraving shop is now turning orders around in six to nine months; it used to sometimes take years to get an engraved Smith. He has also more than doubled the number of factory-authorized warranty repair stations.

There used to be only four such facilities: S&W Service Centers in Baltimore, Md.; Tampa, Fla.; and Monrovia, Cal.;

plus, of course, the factory itself in Springfield, Mass. Latest service stations for sick Smiths include Walker Arms Company (with locations in Selma, Alabama and Joplin, Missouri); Bolsa Gunsmithing in Westminster, Cal.; Pacific International Service Company in Janesville, Cal.; and The Cop Shop in Anchorage, Alaska.

S&W is hoping to relieve the drought of small, J-frame .38 snubnoses, and our weather forecasters in the gun-dealing world cautiously predict that they'll do it. At this writing, Chief Specials and Bodyguards are dribbling into the marketplace again at an accelerating rate. A Smith spokesman told us, "We soon hope to have our production of these guns up to where it should be." Our sources vary as to what caused the virtual disappearance of the 5-shot .38 belly guns from S&W. The official factory line is that the market had softened around 1977, and long-range plans were made to cut back on production of them in favor of Combat Magnums, Model 29s, and other guns more in demand. Others say that the Conyers Bill, which would have lumped the Chief in with prohibited Saturday Night Specials, softened something besides the market and decision makers pessimistically assumed these models would soon be banned anyway.

That's water over the dam. The word is, J-frame Smiths are supposed to be more or less readily available by the time you read this. Is our prediction right? Go down to your dealer and ask him how his availability situation is. We do this column many weeks ahead of when you see it. That's why we don't hold our breath waiting for *anything* we're told to expect.

Want a gun that *isn't* in the S&W catalog? No problem. Just order it from the factory. Only thing is, you'll have to order a *lot* of 'em. S&W will indeed put special guns together on a custom order basis. A number of three-inch round butt Combat Magnums were supposedly sold overseas some years ago. Quantities of Military & Police .38 revolvers were made up with a special cylinder latch that also functioned as a safety catch, for French police. Connecticut State Troopers were at one time all armed with stainless Combat Magnums with blued finish, something supposedly impossible since bluing is a controlled rust process theoretically incompatible with "rustproof" metal. They looked just like Model 19s, though.

It is little known that the standard issue FBI revolver is such a special order gun. The Bureau still has a lot of 4" skinny barrel Model 10s in the field (they adopted it in 1951, changing from the Colt Official Police at that time), and a small number of agents have been issued little Bodyguard .38s. Some members of FBI SWAT units have, or had until recently, specially ordered round butt, 4" Model 19s. However, since the mid-1970s, the Bureau has been replacing all these with a gun made

(Continued on page 19)



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**MODEL #5BH & 5BL
"THUMB SNAP"**

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**MODEL #4
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Named after legendary pistolero Col. Charles Askins. This holster rides high and hugs the body. The fit has been hand-molded for your gun. Stabilizing slot through holster pulls gun butt against body. Molded sight channel protects front sights. Hand-rubbed leather and fine stitching create a long-lasting holster for large autos.



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**MODEL #12
"ANKLE HOLSTER"**

A very comfortable ankle holster. Soft, deep-pile genuine shearling sheeps wool on inside of leg strap, adjustable with Velcro tape. Holds gun and holster snugly against your ankle. Holster is form-fitted to your gun, with thumb-snap strap. Ideal for use when a coat or jacket is impractical, such as warm weather. For small autos, revolvers.



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"You look with the eyes, you see with the mind." Bud Decot, shooter's optician, starts the interview with the basic principle he's come to rely upon in over 30 years of experience.

He's learned a lot about the shooter's eye in those thirty years and has formed some definite opinions on how to give his customers the edge. Obviously, what you can't see, you can't hit, but few of us realize just how poorly we do see the target. Assisting the eye in forming a clear, sharp image is Bud's goal.

Unless you're a shotgun shooter you probably haven't heard the name before, as being a shotgunner himself, Bud's always concentrated his efforts on the trap and skeet shooter. From his small office here in Phoenix (P.O. Box 10355, Phoenix, AZ 85064, tel: 602-955-7625) Bud serves knowledgeable customers world-wide with the best shooting glasses you can buy. Always busy, he spends the summer traveling the shooting circuit in a motorhome stuffed with sample cases. But right now he's at rest for a moment, sharing his experiences, and thinking out loud about the special vision problems of the handgun shooter.

"The eye is an avenue for light transmission. It focuses the image on the retina, where it is transformed into impulses that are transmitted to the brain, to be interpreted by your mind." It's the mind that interprets the image of target and sights and controls the body to bring the sights into perfect alignment. The skill with which you do that depends on your physical strength and coordination, which of course is controlled by your mind. It's in the feedback loop of seeing what the body does where shooting glasses can assist in providing a clearly-formed, and perhaps even enhanced image.

"Your pupil controls light reaching the retina, exactly like the shutter on a camera." The pupil contracts in bright light, dilates in darkness. Just like a camera aperture at small settings, the pupil when contracted provides the greatest depth of field possible, that is, things at both near and far distances are in the best possible focus. For the same reason rifle shooters long ago discovered that they could see better through the small aperture of a peepsight.

"The healthy eye works best with a

small pupil. The retina (screen of the eye) has only a small area on which you see clearly; with dilated pupils the image is not concentrated in this important area for accurate focusing." Considering that dark sunglasses are a relatively recent affection, it is obvious that our eyes have evolved to function perfectly in bright sunlight, and conversely, function more poorly in darkness, whether real, or artificially created with an auxiliary lens.

"The sunglass industry has been weakening the human eye since they started promoting dark glasses. I highly recommend the lightest tint the shooter can wear on a bright day." What tint you can wear depends on your age, eye condition, and work habits. If you work at a desk, you're using your eyes close under artificial light.

"The people with the best vision are those that work outdoors at an active job, and don't wear dark glasses. I've seen farmers that are 70 years old before they needed reading glasses. You must exercise your eye muscles. The finest book on eye exercise is called *Sight Without Glasses* by Dr. Peppard."

I asked him about the vision problems of a pistol shooter.

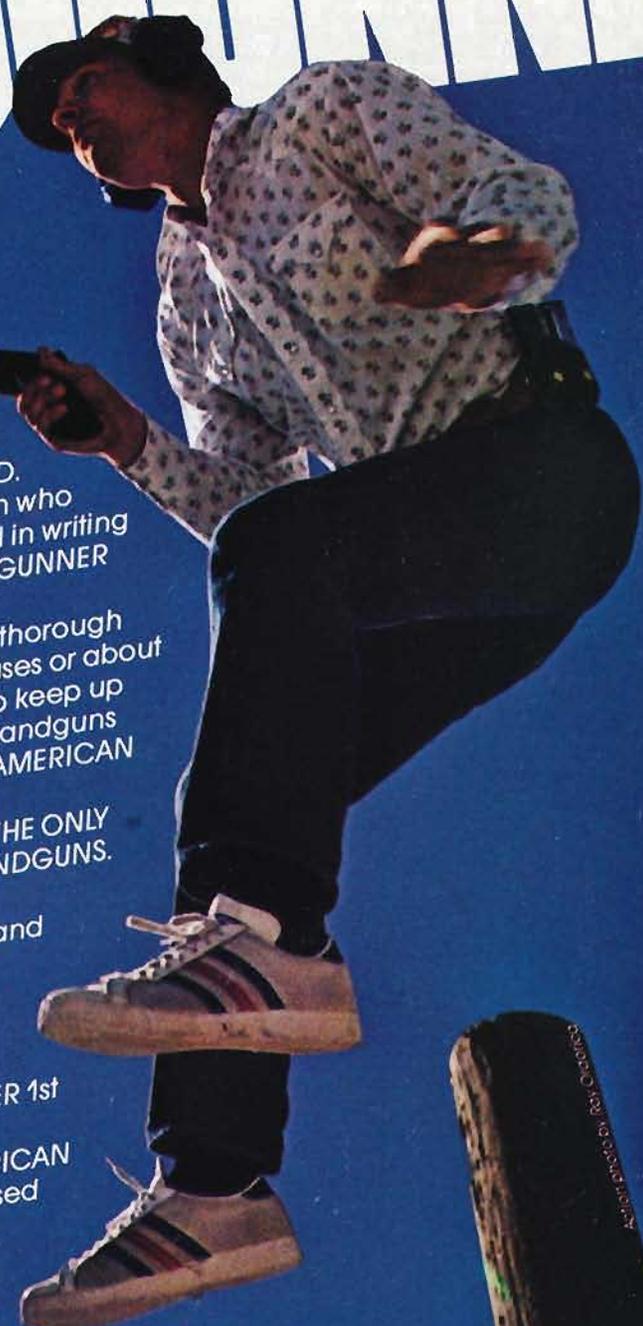
"To see clearly at both intermediate and long distances (sights and target), you must either be young, with perfect eyes, or exercise your eyes regularly if you're older, or work outdoors." There's another way which goes back to the camera analogy. Use clear or lightly tinted shooting glasses to close down the pupil to increase the depth of field, shoot peepsights, or in production classes, look with your master eye through an aperture made of a square of tape with a small (one-sixteenth of an inch) hole stuck on your clear shooting glasses.

"Lens tint and eye exercise are as important as the gun and ammo to the shooter."

I asked him about the color of the glasses.

"Colors work like filters on a camera, they enhance the contrast of the target against the surroundings. I've 30 different colors and tints to allow the shooter to pick out which one works best for him." Grey doesn't change colors—the other colors—green, gold, bronze, rose—affect how you perceive colors and often they will enhance the contrast between target and background. We're all different—eye

HANDGUNNER



The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine is written for the competitor, sportsman, collector, hunter, combat shooter and lawman. If you're one of these or just enjoy fine handguns, you can share in the knowledge and experiences of men

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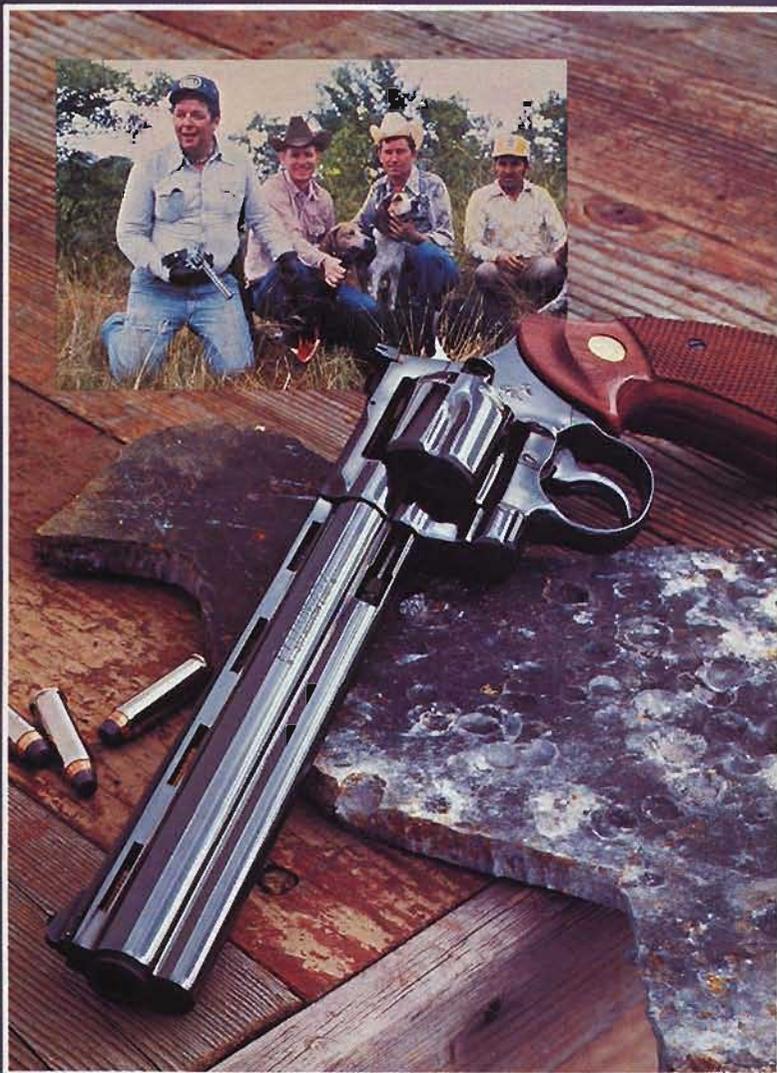
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"Adjustment of the glasses on the face is very critical to accuracy of vision. Ideally the lenses should be perpendicular to the line of sight."

when your eyes were tested for glasses? Prone? No. Do you suppose your prescription is any good when you are? The drugstore specials would merely displace the target—which means if you sighted-in sitting upright at a bench it's not surprising that you didn't do well when you shot prone. When shooting laid back in Creedmoor the angle is not too bad, and you can perch the glasses on your head so that you look through them fairly square. Just remember to sight-in from your field position.

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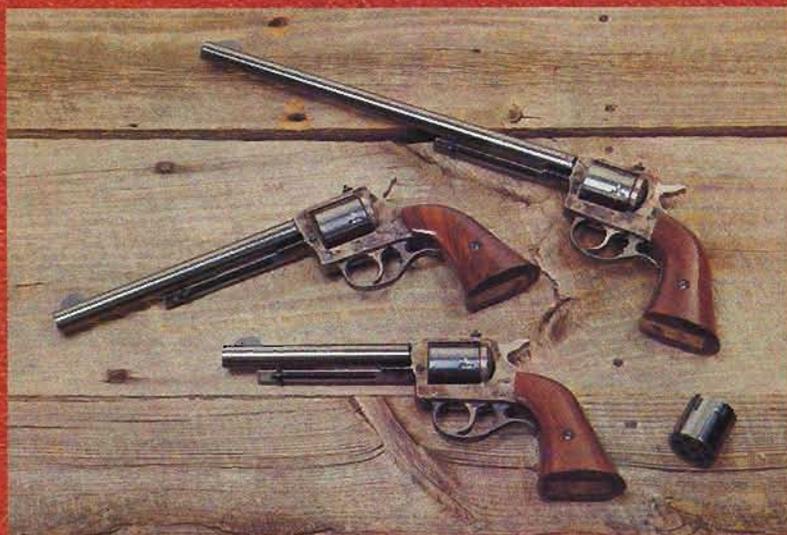
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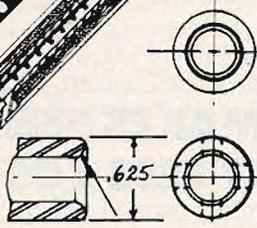
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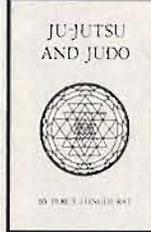
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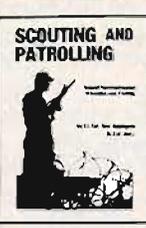


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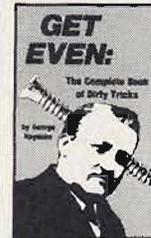
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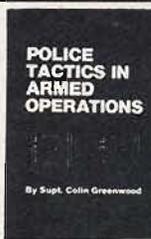


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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

PRESERVE HUNTING MAKES SENSE FOR A GOOD HUNT AT LESS COST

If you are a handgun hunter you know handgun hunting is usually a difficult way to obtain either meat or horns.

If you are an average working man you probably have limited time available to hunt. Likewise with the business executive who lives a job 20 hours a day with much of it at 35,000 feet and 500+ MPH. The same lack of time exists with one hell of a lot of people whose occupations are in between.

The degree of difficulty existent in hunting with a handgun and the time available to hunt simply turns a lot of people completely off handgun hunting. Some become tennis players or runners. Others simply won't leave a rifle at home and chance losing a kill because of insufficient confidence in their ability with a handgun.

Add the writings of the "snob" hunters who are so damn pure they would have you believe they don't sweat, much less ever have to change underwear; and a lot of "would be" handgun hunters are confused about even attempting the sport.

OK, enter preserve hunting into the picture. Privately operated preserves are in business from one end of the country to the other. Almost any kind of animal is available on preserves for a fee. Sure it costs bucks to hunt, but it's frequently less expensive than even driving half way across the country to hunt by yourself in unfamiliar country. Add costs of licenses, guides, specialized equipment and you can be getting into big bucks. A lot bigger bucks than you would spend going to a preserve for the same animal. For example, that \$200 license isn't usually required.

In addition, a preserve operator wants you to make a kill. He doesn't make as much money if you strike out. Frequently, in my opinion, a guide or outfitter does not want you to make a kill. He wants you to see animals but *not* to get a decent shot. His objective may be to have you leave semi-happy, convinced that bad luck is why you failed to score. Those elk that spooked while you were making that last ten yards of stalk by yourself may not have been spooked by you—but a guide standing in plain view of them waving his hat may well have been the reason you didn't get a shot. It's a plain fact of life that hunting areas frequently do not have enough game to handle all the clients an outfitter can book. Result—make some of

that game available at the end of the season as well as for seed.

Fifteen years ago when I was a lot more naive about those things than I am now, a good bull elk crossed a trail ahead of us while we were riding into camp. He went on downhill 50 feet past the trail then turned toward us on a path directly parallel to the trail. I could see his rack over the brush. There was an opening directly below. I swung off the horse, got the Super out, eared it back and followed the horns to the edge of the opening. At which point the guide placed his hand on the .44 and gently pushed it down while whispering, "Let him go—he's too easy." Well, I thought at the time I'd had it without a kiss and 19 days later after seeing only two mulies at about 500 yards, I was sure of it. After a few remarks about how that guide would look hanging on my wall, he disappeared from camp several days prior to the end of my hunt. Perhaps the outfitter feared a confrontation! In any event, it was a lousy hunt: bad food, part time guides, and no game. The only thing good about it was the scenery and companions.

Safari Club International recognizes "preserve" trophies even if the "snob" hunters don't.

Frankly, preserve hunting makes a lot of sense—particularly if you are pushed for time and/or money. You can hunt on most preserves for less bucks than you can hunt with an outfitter and also have a better chance of getting your game—although it is not a sure thing.

Lousy hunts at preserves ... Yep—it happens. Some are too small. Some owners just plain don't give a damn. Some stock too many animals. Check them out. Ask for client lists if you have any doubts. Spend a few bucks on phone calls checking them out with previous hunters.

Don't be disappointed if you kill out early. It happens. I've killed my deer on open hunts and had him gutted by 15-20 minutes after season's opening on three separate occasions. Those quick kills didn't spoil the hunt. They simply made up for the weeks of hunting in other years without a shot.

Boar are the most favored "preserve" animal. They are tough and will usually give a satisfactory hunt—particularly if dogs are used. Various exotic game from Corsican Rams, Axis Deer, Fallow Deer,

Ibex and Blackbuck are available. The YO Ranch in Texas as well as others have astounding arrays of animals; including some of the African Antelope that are huge.

There isn't a thing wrong with preserve hunting per se. You are much more likely to get a bumper of a hunt *off* of a preserve than *on* one in my opinion. The YO Ranch (Box 300, Mountain Home, TX 78058 AC512-640-3222) for example, is loaded with "Texas" artifacts from Ranger guns to complete buildings. I've heard the comment that "preserve hunting is like shooting fish in a barrel." I've never shot a fish in a barrel. Strikes me as a good way to get wet. The 125 square miles of the YO strikes me as some barrel! I've hunted several preserves—never one of the "little" ones in size. I don't think over 500 acres of rough, rocky, hilly, wooded land is needed to give a good hunt. I've spent an awful lot of good hours at Telico Junction Hunting Preserve (Hog Hollow Road, Englewood, TN 37329 AC615-887-7819) with Joe Meeks and always had a good hunt. Cou-

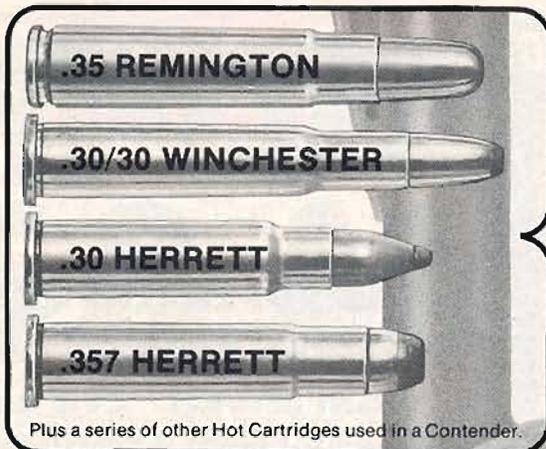
"There isn't a thing wrong with preserve hunting per se. You are much more likely to get a bumper of a hunt off a preserve than on one in my opinion."

ple of weeks ago Rob Dakis of Woodbridge, VA killed the biggest damn hog I've seen outside of a stockyard at TJHP with a .357.

Southern Ohio has some rough country. Paul Richter runs Shawnee Ridge Hunting Preserve (Box 13A West Fork Road, Stout, OH 45684 AC 513-549-2346) and generally furnishes satisfactory hunts.

Layne Simpson, Shooting Editor of "Deer Unlimited" has been highly pleased with Hall Brothers Wilderness Hunts (Route 4, Box 392, Savannah, GA 31405 AC 912-925-4459 after 5:00 P.M.).

I'm not familiar with any other preserves in the western half of the country. I'm sure many are well run. I can recommend the above that I have had the pleasure of hunting. Handgun Hunters International is attempting to obtain a list of preserves, guides and outfitters from hunters along with the hunter's comments about them to furnish members upon inquiry. Send comments to HHI, P.O. Box 357 Mag, Bloomingdale, OH 43910, (\$12.50 for 1-year membership).



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PISTOLSMITHING

DICK THOMAS

COLT SUPER .38 CUSTOMIZED FOR RELIABILITY, ACCURACY

Three years ago, at the suggestion of Ken Hackathorn of Marietta, Ohio, the quest was begun to build the "Super" Super .38 pistol.

While the value of highly customized guns can be debated endlessly against the time required and the money expended, the fact is that for most of us personalized guns are fun. Obviously, good sights, smooth trigger pull and the work which is done to improve reliability are vital. It is the value of a deluxe finish and precision checkering that can be seriously questioned.

The 1911 Al Colt Super .38 began life in 1929 as a high performance Colt .38 Auto amidst great fanfare as factory velocity was advertised at 1300 feet per second. The advent of the .357 Magnum and persistent reports that the Super .38 isn't accurate have substantially reduced the Super's popularity. South Texas, Mexico and Central America are the only locations where the use of this cartridge is still extensive.

There is some merit to the claim that Colt's 1911 Super .38 barrels don't shoot all that well. The cartridge in a Colt barrel headspaces on the extractor rather than the case mouth. Therefore, the place to start to maximize the potential of the cartridge is a new barrel. Irv Stone of Bar-Sto Barrels, 633 South Victory Blvd., Burbank, California 91502, fitted a barrel and solid bushing to this gun. The quality of Irv's barrels is exceptionally high but can be enhanced by having him personally fit them. Solid bushings are preferred by many because of their longevity. Most shooters have seen one form or another of the currently available collet bushings fail and thoroughly jam up the works.

Bill Ives at Pachmayr Gunworks, 1220 South Grand Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90015, supervised the installation of a deluxe Bo-Mar rear sight, high profile ramped front sight, checkering the front strap and main spring housing and the installation of a no-creep three pound trigger pull with a long trigger.

Bill North, 18 Brookwood Road, Asheville, North Carolina 28804, beveled the magazine well, installed a Swenson ambidextrous safety, rounded and smoothed the sharp edges of the gun, fitted the slide to the frame and silver inlaid the grips.

When the work was completed Bill Judd and Stan Newman, both high ranking

executives at Colt, Firearms Division, 150 Huyshope Avenue, Hartford, Connecticut 06102, reluctantly agreed to replace the original finish. This adds much to the appearance of the gun. Colt's finish is difficult, if not impossible to duplicate. Colt's custom shop is understandably reluctant to re-finish customized guns because of the difficulty of replacing specially fitted parts which can be lost or damaged. A written release before shipment to Colt satisfied their concerns.

The accuracy of this gun is very acceptable with 3 1/2 inch groups at 50 yards from a Ransom rest with Winchester Western factory 130 grain ammunition. Velocity with that load proved to be a consistent 1246 feet per second.

Winchester Western's 125 grain factory hollow points produced 4 1/2 inch groups at 50 yards with a consistent velocity of 1255 feet per second. Irv's barrel is purposely not overthroated. The idea was to support the back of the cases as much as practical because of the announced intention to use heavy handloads. To achieve reliability with Irv's barrel and Winchester Western's 125 grain hollow point loads, the overall length of the cartridge was reduced to 1.2 inches.

The barrel doesn't reliably accept Hornady's .355 115 grain hollow point, number 3554, regardless of the overall length of the loaded round.

The good news is—Speer's 125 grain jacketed soft point, number 4005 with 8.8 grains of SR 4756 with an overall cartridge length of 1.245 inches provided flawless reliability with somewhat less than 3 inch groups at 50 yards with consistent 1380 feet per second velocities including a negligible variance in velocity between shots. Eight grains of Unique produced an average 1415 feet per second with that Speer bullet but the cases showed evidence of excessive pressures. The variance between shots was acceptable but not outstanding at 35 feet per second.

A variety of loads with this bullet were tried with Unique, Bullseye and SR 4756 in new Winchester Western cases. A definite accuracy edge was noted with SR 4756. That powder is much overlooked, its unusual characteristic is an intense and elongated muzzle flash with heavy charges. Obviously some of the powder is burning outside the barrel, but so what.

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Hornady's 100 grain round-nosed jacketed bullet, number 3552, produced an average 1608 feet per second with 10.2 grains of SR 4756 with borderline accuracy of 5½ inches at 50 yards.

Lyman has announced that it will market a taper crimp die for the Super .38 this year. Lyman's number is 7153100 and the die will be available through Simmons Gun Specialties, Inc., 700 Rogers Road, Olathe, Kansas 66061. The taper crimping of the loads described here were done with a locally fashioned die.

While shooting this gun, Ray Chapman of the Chapman Academy, Columbia, Missouri 65201, as good an analyst of the ills of 1911s as you can find, noted an inordinate difference between the spring tension of several old Colt magazines as against several new ones. The old magazines were working effortlessly while the new ones momentarily retarded feeding the first and last rounds. Ray took one and one-half coils off the springs in each of the magazines to solve a potentially serious problem. He noted that rounded followers for Super .38 magazines might be even more beneficial than they are for .45 ACP magazines.

Shooting the Super .38 with hot handloads or commercials is a pleasure. The increased velocity, for one used to the .45 ACP, adds a substantial amount of range. There is very little recoil even with heavy



The "ultimate" Colt Super .38 features Bar-Sto Barrel, Bo-Mar rear sight, and Colt's superior finish.

handloads but noise and muzzle flash cannot be said to go unnoticed.

The hunting potential of this gun is high. Some of the states that permit handgun hunting for deer have a power floor or minimum requirement of the equivalent of a 125 grain 9mm or larger bullet which retains at least 350 foot-pounds of energy at 50 yards. Handloaded, the Super .38 with Speer's 125 grain bullet leaving the muzzle at 1380 feet per second retains 1150 feet per second velocity at 50 yards producing 366 foot-pounds of energy thereby satisfying the regulation.

The competition potential of this

weapon is untested. The challenge of the moving target should be lessened because the high velocity substantially reduces the required lead. Also, 60 meter stages should be easier for those .45 ACP users who want to "help" the bullet by holding higher than necessary on the target.

The question as to whether or not the Super .38 makes major caliber or is relegated to minor caliber for IPSC competition is unresolved. If the cartridge is tested on a ballistic pendulum it appears to be a cinch for major classification. Ken Hackathorn's Fort Harmar pendulum "folded" when addressed by a hot handloaded Super .38.

If the cartridge is chronographed and required to match the momentum factor (velocity times weight) of .45 hardball, the Super will be relegated to minor. The momentum of hardball is approximately 185,000 meaning that a 130 grain Super .38 would have to go about 1425 feet per second which is outside the practical range of the cartridge with that bullet weight. It would be unwise to plan to shoot a Super .38 as a major caliber in the 1981 IPSC world matches which will be held in Johannesburg. The South Africans have refused to use the ballistic pendulum despite considerable and repeated pressure from above. In the case of the Super .38 their conclusion might very well be wrong.



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It is the model 10-6, a Military & Police .38 with round butt and a 2½" bull barrel. The G-men wanted a relatively concealable revolver sturdy enough to handle their +P 158-grain lead hollowpoint ammo, and when a survey showed the 2½" Model 19 to be extremely popular among agents in the field, the format was solidified. Eventually all agents will have this 10-6, though they are still allowed to carry any Colt or Smith .38 or .357 model with steel frame while on the job, so long as they shoot 50 percent of their qualification scores with it.

Meanwhile, over at Colt, the police orders coming in are strictly for stock guns. The surprise is that they're coming in at all, since Colt frankly admits that they've priced themselves out of the bid-oriented police market. One analyst who is not connected to the firm told us, "Much of Colt's 'pricing itself out of the market' came at the same time Ed Warner took over as president of the firearms division and made a total commitment to Cadillac quality. In law enforcement today, you have a very turbulent climate in terms of civil suits and job actions, and it is vital that a police department issue the best quality equipment possible. This may be why some departments are starting to buy Colts again despite the high prices." That authority cites the Florida Highway Patrol, a traditionally Colt department that, after a bad experience with several hundred guns made by another company, recently placed an order for 4" Python .357s.

Bill Judd, who heads police sales efforts at Colt, reports that a surprisingly large number of agencies, usually 20- or 30-man departments, are ordering the deluxe and costly Pythons for uniform wear. A bigger factor, however, is the growing popularity of the Government Model .45 automatic as an issue police gun, especially in the Midwest. It appears that police weaponmasters are becoming more sophisticated and more conscious of developments in combat handgunning outside of their own rigidly disciplined field, and are recognizing, often for the first time, that the Colt .45 auto has many things to recommend it as a police service weapon. Indeed, the Government Model is now the biggest thrust in Colt handgun sales to police. Detective Special .38s, however, have also been garnering a lot more orders from budget conscious police departments lately, despite a price that is not bid-competitive.



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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

THE CONTROLLABLE .38 SUPER: WHERE POWER & ACCURACY MERGE

The first commercially-produced semi-auto handgun and cartridge combination the United States could lay claim to, didn't just happen to be a .38, so-called, it was the result of a direct effort on the part of John M. Browning and the Colt gun-makers. Browning's idea bubbled up in the mid-1890s; he presented the results to the Colt people a short time later; a sporting version, the .38 (actually a 9mm) Auto, was presented to consumers. The round, if not the gun, held promise. Browning's experience with handgun cartridges led him to the conclusion that an optimum balance between charge capacity and bullet weight and diameter had been achieved.

The great promise of superior power and all-around performance was not to be realized. A military version of the gun and its cartridge was presented in 1902 and failed adoption, and the Colt's .38 sporter itself disappeared from the market a few years later.

This nutshell revelation would, at first glance, seem to reflect the brief saga of a product that emerged, was found wanting, and suffered a just demise. First impressions, however, are often deceiving. The cartridge, then designated the .38 ACP round, was everything Browning had envisioned it to be.

Why, then, did the first of our autoloading combinations fail? The spark of life seems to have been snuffed as the blessing of military adoption was denied. And that, in turn, has been blamed on the dismal performance of the old .38 Long Colt revolver round during the then-recent Philippine misunderstanding. The military, and, for that matter, the civil populace, had a yukky feeling about anything with "38" in its name. Heavier calibers were, it seemed, the way to go, so we wound up with the .45 ACP.

Still, the .38 ACP was recognized and cherished by a few of the perceptive individuals of the time. A handgun crank and scribe named A.L.A. Himmelwright wrote: "The .38 Automatic Colt is the best proportioned and most powerful of all automatic pistol cartridges. It has a slightly flattened point and is extremely accurate. When fired from regulation arms this ammunition is capable of placing ten shots inside a 3-inch circle at 50 yards and inside a 7-inch circle at 100 yards."

Himmelwright handloaded the round

with a 130-grain bullet, which was propelled at 1175 fps by 4.6 grains of Hercules Bullseye. Some years later, with somewhat greater technical sophistication, Julian Hatcher was to record 1200 fps for the same load while adding that the chamber pressure amounted to 28,000 psi. Almost simultaneously, Hercules listed a charge of 5.0 grains at 35,000 psi with a 75 fps velocity gain for the 130-grain bullet.

We have, in mentioning heavier loadings, departed from our discussion of the .38 ACP as it was introduced originally. When, in the 1920s, Colt got around to developing a pistol of the 1911 A1 G.I. type that was chambered, not for the .45 ACP, but for the .38 ACP, things began to pop. The gun's greater strength made it possible to upgrade the ballistics of the .38 ACP, so much so, in fact, that a re-naming became appropriate: the .38 ACP was henceforth known as the .38 Super. It has, for over half a century, remained one of our most powerful autoloading handgun rounds.

The .38 Super, with accuracy potential equal to the .45 ACP or any other well-designed cartridge, substantially out-powered other handgun rounds of its day, including the .44s and .45s. Its factory-loaded 130-grain bullet at 1300 fps yielded 488 foot pounds of striking energy. Even the more recent Winchester loading that produces 1280 fps for the 130, remains superior (in terms of foot-pound rating) to the 230-grainer from the .45 ACP.

Additional benefit results from the .38 Super's controllability. It is noticeably easier to shoot than the heavier calibers it out-powers. This consideration is based, gun for gun, on guns that are box-stock, without the benefit of special target grips. In practice, I used a Government Model version that served in as-issued condition. It had not, therefore, had any custom accuracy treatment.

I wanted to test a few of the mid-power loads I had assembled. These consisted of Speer's 100-grain hollow-point bullets and charges of 7.0 grains of Hercules Unique. The velocity for these loads averaged out at 1300 fps. These shot well for me off-hand at 25 yards. The accuracy wasn't spectacular, but I am quick to admit that my off-hand shooting ability is not up to Olympian standards.

I decided, therefore, to use a machine rest for the balance of my testing. Using

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the load just mentioned, I was able to place a string of ten shots inside a three-inch circle at 50 yards, thus achieving the accuracy Himmelwright attributed to his 130s. I made no tests at 100 yards with this particular loading because I was anxious to move on to tests using heavier bullets.

If you do your own casting, there are a number of bullets available in .355-inch diameter. Unfortunately, a dearth of selection exists in the realm of swaged, jacketed or semi-jacketed types. As the test loading took place, Speer offered the heaviest in their 125-grain semi-jacketed soft-point. I loaded this bullet with 11.5 grains of Winchester-Western's 630, which produced a velocity average of 1250 fps and an energy of about 440 foot pounds. The next step up in velocity and power was achieved with 10.0 grains of Blue Dot, which boosted the respective figures to 1320/485, this last charge being ignited by Remington X22626 magnum-type primers.

Power and accuracy merged with the benefit of machine-rest control. Two ten-shot strings at 50 yards laid into the three-inch circle (measured center-to-center); a third group of ten measured a hair under two-and-a-half inches.

I moved the target frame to 100 yards. The happy suggestion might have favored a group of about five inches at 100 yards. But things don't work out according to that kind of reasoning. Using the Blue Dot load I was eventually able to place eight of ten shots within a circle measuring just over six-and-a-quarter inches. The two erring shots expanded my group to roughly six-and-a-half, not bad for a high-power load.

I don't for a moment intend to suggest that the groupings I recorded represent the best accuracy that is attainable with the .38 Super. Better—that is, more accurate—loadings will be possible. It is obvious, too, that a greater degree of accuracy might have been achieved with an accurized gun.

My objective with the limited experiments I have described has been to stimulate interest in expanded accuracy testing with the .38 Super. It is an excellent cartridge with power capabilities that exceed its shorter counterpart, the 9mm parbellum, as well as a host of other handgun rounds, both autoloading and revolver.

Guns and cartridges seem to come into widespread use following their adoption by military and police units. Police use, for example, is the only excuse we can give for the unwarranted proliferation and sustained life of the .38 Special and the 9mm parbellum. These represent examples of wide availability and low cost.

All this is more woeful lament than gripe on my part. Some amazement, too, arises from the fact that this most worthy cartridge, the .38 Super, apparently continues to suffer from a lack of popularity (hence, development) because of a misbegotten association between it and the likes of the sickly .380 Auto, or, for that matter, any of the "38" family.



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WEAK-HAND DRAW TECHNIQUES FOR MATCH—OR UNDER FIRE

From a practical viewpoint, learning to shoot effectively with your non-gun hand can be just as important as skillful gun handling with your normal strong hand, for policeman or civilian. When the handgun is essentially a defensive firearm, and you have to use it as such, chances are you will already be under fire, with a good possibility that your normal gun hand or arm may be put out of action by your assailant's opening fire. In a situation like that, could you draw weak handed and shoot effectively? Would it be possible to reload with one hand, if necessary? The answer to all of these questions is yes, if you know the right techniques, and if you practice them.

Weak-hand skill is also a must for the gamesman. Freestyle practical pistol competition, of the IPSC style, quite frequently calls for use of the weak hand.

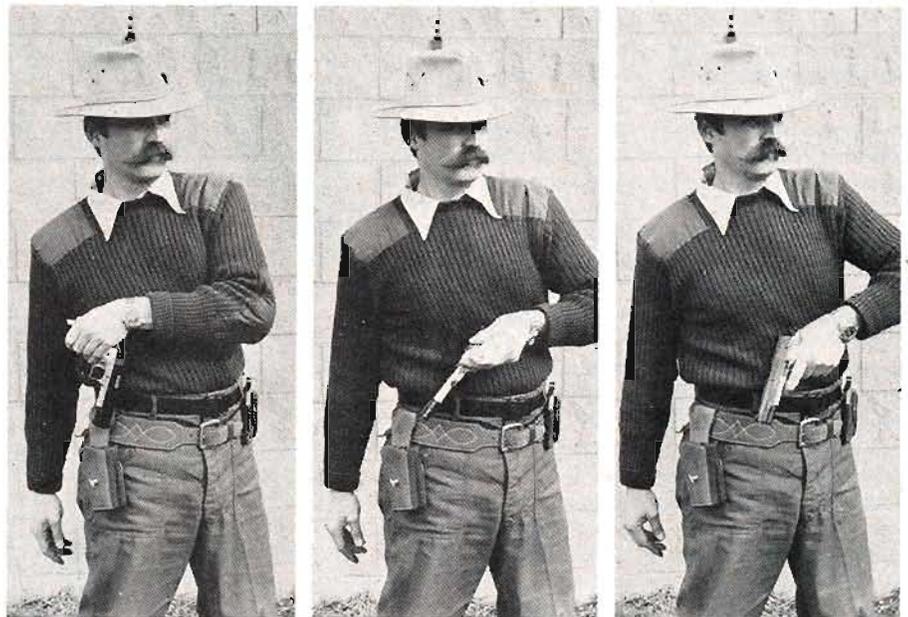
Methods of quick and efficient handling of a sidearm with the weak hand have improved vastly over the years, right along with all other aspects of defensive pistolcraft. Since they are not often discussed at length in print, let's take a closer look at them here.

SHOOTING

All handgunners who have kept up-to-date with developments now understand the soundness of placing two hands on the pistol, both in speed shooting and for deliberate fire. However, in weak side shooting the use of two hands is not possible. Your strong hand will either be out of action, or the rules will prohibit its use.

Assuming the shooter's weak hand is the left, as will be the case in most instances, you should face the target with left foot leading slightly. Raise the pistol onto the target with elbow straight, and as you do so "cant" (angle) the weapon markedly to the right. Although canting the pistol will change the impact point of the bullet somewhat, ranges are normally short (usually five to fifteen yards) and the silhouette is large, making the small change in the point of impact insignificant.

Maintain a firm grip as you cant the piece, and notice the muscles of the left arm are placed under added tension. This extra tension will help you to steady down on the target quicker for the first shot, and it will improve recoil control greatly for follow-up shots. It may at first seem quite



The Body Roll Draw: Pistol is drawn and held against the stomach, trapped by the thumb, and fingers rotated around to grasp the butt. Note muzzle pointed down and away, finger outside the trigger guard, and safety on. The whole sequence takes about a second and a half.

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unorthodox to shoot in this manner, but with sufficient practice the results will surprise you.

DRAWING

Drawing with the weak hand from a strong side holster will completely defeat most people at first, but like all other phases of shooting, there is a proper technique to cover the situation.

The "body roll" is a good method of getting into action quickly with the weak hand from a strong side holster. A good performer can do the body roll in approximately one and a half to two seconds. That's not fast, but it is a lot better than nothing when your strong hand is out of action.

To execute the body roll, reach across the body with your left hand and grasp the pistol butt *upside down*. Draw the gun and bring it around to your chest, twisting the left hand over so that the pistol is now upright, pointing to the shooter's right. Trap it against the chest with the left thumb. While the thumb holds the pistol securely in place, rotate the fingers of the hand around to where they can grasp the butt. As the fingers wrap around the stock and the gun is swung around towards the target, the thumb is now free to slip off the safety and then be located in its proper firing position.

This method works equally well with revolver or self-loader and should be practiced by every lawman who wears his handgun on the strong side with butt to rear. Another advantage is that the pistol may be gotten to, even when wearing a coat, whether it is buttoned or open. If the coat is closed, and doesn't extend too far down, simply hook up under the bottom with your left thumb until you can grasp the gun butt.

Another weak-hand draw technique sometimes seen in matches requires the shooter to reach behind his back to get at the pistol on his strong side. This is a good technique, but the shooter must be fairly slim and limber to make it work, and it cannot be used when wearing your pistol under a coat.

The mechanics of drawing behind the back is really quite simple. As you reach around behind, let your left shoulder hunch back a bit to facilitate the movement. Get your hand around as far as possible, so that you can come as close as possible to a good firing grip while the handgun is still in the leather. As you draw and swing the weapon behind you, be sure to keep the muzzle pointed downward, and your finger out of the trigger guard. Just before coming into final alignment slip the safety off and correct the firing grip.

Since so much weak hand shooting is seen in freestyle matches these days, the cross-draw position is becoming quite popular. When worn in the cross-draw position the pistol is very handy to the weak hand, and all that is required is a twist of

the wrist to bring the pistol into play.

Anyone can do the cross-draw, no matter what his build or dexterity, and it is probably the least complicated draw of them all. It does, however, involve crossing the shooter's body with the muzzle of a loaded pistol. But then, none of the techniques described in this article is for the beginner.

The last draw technique we shall discuss is not widely used. I've only seen a couple of people employ it in all the years I've

The well-rounded pistolero should also know how to reload his sidearm with one hand, whether it is revolver or self-loader.

been shooting, but it is interesting nonetheless. Its limitations again are imposed by the shooter's physique and dexterity. For lack of a better name, I'll call it the "front twist," not because you twist the pistol, but because the left wrist and forearm must be twisted around to make the draw from a right-hip holster.

In this draw you reach across your stomach with your left hand for the pistol positioned butt to rear on your right hip. If you are limber enough, you can almost achieve a normal firing grip while the pistol still rests in the holster. As you draw, a little fudging will correct your grip on the gun and allow a fairly quick first shot. A holster that carries the butt tilted slightly forward is a help with this technique.

RELOADING

The well-rounded pistolero should also know how to reload his sidearm with one hand, whether it is revolver or self-loader. If you shoot effectively a reload usually won't be necessary, however, it's always a good idea to be prepared for every possibility.

With an autopistol the reloading sequence starts by pressing the magazine release with the index finger of the left hand. After the magazine drops clear of the pistol flip the safety on (an ambidextrous thumb piece helps) and with the muzzle pointing towards the ground, clamp it between your knees with butt to the front. With the pistol firmly clamped between the knees your left hand is now free to withdraw a spare magazine from its carrier. As you insert it into the well and jam it home, rap it smartly once with the heel of the hand to make sure it seats and locks in positively. At this point you may

grasp the pistol butt, and as you swing it back on target the safety is slipped off and the piece is ready to fire.

If you are not under immediate fire it is a good idea to reload while you still have a live round in the chamber. That is why I advocate using the safety. It doesn't waste any extra time, and it makes the firearm safe while it is pointing at your feet and ankles. Some shooters say it is too slow, but I don't agree. While the pistol is being lowered no time is lost in applying the safety and the same holds true after reloading. Of course, if you are under immediate attack you will want to use that last round in the gun before reloading, after all, it just might suffice.

Weak-hand reloading with a revolver is similar to that of the autopistol, but somewhat more complicated. After the last shot is fired the left index finger is used to press the cylinder latch, and normally a slight flip of the wrist will open the action. Don't do this too hard or you will spring the crane. In a gunfight situation you will hardly worry about that, but in practice you don't want to foul up your pet wheel-gun. After the action is open the ejector rod can be pressed against the knee to eject the empty cases.

With the empties clear of the cylinder the piece is now clamped between the knees. A charged speed loader is withdrawn from its pouch on the belt and inserted in the cylinder. After all cartridges are seated and the speed loader stripped away the cylinder is closed and the gun brought back into action by the left hand.

CLEARING JAMS

Clearing malfunctions of the autoloader with the weak hand also is a subject that needs some attention. It rarely happens with a properly set up pistol, but the possibility is always there. The technique described below will cover the two most common types of jams: failure to feed and failure to eject properly.

If you experience one of these problems while shooting weak handed here is what to do. Remove your finger from the trigger guard and turn the pistol completely over on its right side, so that the ejection port is toward the ground and the muzzle is pointing straight down range. With the pistol in this attitude, bring it down and hook the rear sight firmly on your pants leg, then jab it forward sharply to fully retract and release the slide. If done properly this will allow an empty case to fall clear of the action so that a fresh round will chamber, or if a round has failed to feed properly it will give it a second chance. This technique has proven very effective and is 100 percent safe, because at no time during the sequence does the pistol muzzle come anywhere near the shooter's anatomy.

Another method of clearing weak hand malfunctions that is widely used calls for jamming the lower front portion of the slide against any solid object that might be

(Continued on page 30)

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SIGHT SETTINGS

LUCY CHAMBLISS

POLICE WANT SERVICE REVOLVER FOR LESS EXPENSIVE MATCHES

My column in the May-June issue, suggesting a Police Service Revolver Aggregate be started, brought me some interesting letters. So far, all have been very much in favor of the idea and against continuation of the expensive, non-service type matches by the NRA. Some thoughts of you readers were:

"Ban the custom and the non-service type ammo."

"There is a Governor's 20 combat league in our state but due to the cost of equipment, no one from this state agency has gotten involved."

"I have an Expert classification with the NRA but can't see the practicality of training with a custom gun that can't be used on duty."

A 25-year veteran officer said, "We should shoot with one hand, and change to service type ammo."

A custom pistolsmith wrote, "I agree with your basic premise, prices are far from practical. We've raised prices on 'basic competition' to where it rivals a used car in price. We should reduce the time limits, especially at 7 yards. I know shooters are going on the line with triggers that most smiths wouldn't dream of putting on street pieces."

One patrolman wrote, "I have an S&W Model 19, a pair of Pachmayr grips, a smooth combat trigger and an action job. Matches with no more customizing than this allowed would be a welcome sight."

Keep your ideas coming to me; the NRA will need to hear from many more of you to justify the change. You are sending me new angles and arguments I hadn't thought of and they will be used in my urging the return to service-type matches. At the NRA LEA Committee meeting in March, we adopted firing with only one hand at 7 yards and shortened time to 20 seconds. I argued intensely for this 2 years ago and finally, with some help from other shooters, the entire committee adopted the change. It can be done.

The International Competitions Committee also met in March and the committee's report contained the following: The USA has greater strength in the Union Internationale De Tiro, than ever before. We have 2 members on the Executive Committee, 3 on the Administrative Council and members on almost every Section Committee. Home training al-

lowances for the National Training Team were put at a total of \$35,000 divided between the 4 shooting disciplines. Pistol received the second largest allowance, based on the number of Olympic and World Championship events and the number of non-supported shooters on this year's National Training and Development Team. An interesting detail: no money can be used for purchase of guns. Guns are expensive, but I've never thought they were the big cost. While two good pistols, and you need that spare, for the Ladies Pistol event can cost between \$800-1800, that is a one-time investment. One trip to the Final Team Tryouts in Phoenix can cost \$800.

International pistol events are attracting many police shooters. It could be due to the variety of courses of fire, or to the constant work of the International Committee in the NRA to make shooting better recognized, easier financed, and our U.S. International Shooting Championships bigger. One of the U.S.'s best combat shooters told me last month he is trying the International Center Fire, thinks it is very compatible with police training and wants to someday "get one of those big Distinguished International Shooter medals."

Police may find they can capitalize on publicity generated by the media for International sports. Sometimes more financial support can be gotten for those matches with "International" attached, than for combat. ("It's never been on TV... are you sure there is a combat match?") Support money may be even more scarce if we continue police matches with custom guns and courses of fire mechanized to perfection. That International Center Fire is very practical and you might find you can start in matches with your service-type revolver.

The NRA's Annual Meeting in Kansas City this year provided these developments which you may not have heard about but I think are important to handgunners: The Women's Basic Firearms Course (replaces Women's Protection Program) should be ready in July. The Range Loan Committee reported the NRA has received only seven completed loan application forms. To repeat a few of the requirements for these loans: 75 percent of the club members must belong to the NRA, and it cannot be a commercial

shooting facility. Bullet impact control problems have to be solved. A loan to a single club may not exceed \$50,000 and must be repaid in 10 years. Keep the program in mind and contact NRA if you have a situation where one of these loans could be the only way to improve, or acquire, a range.

The Gun Collectors Committee reported an increasing problem with the FAA regulations affecting air travel of firearms. Presently there are no definite inspection rules fitting all airlines and this is particularly troublesome when transferring from one air line to another during a single trip. It could curtail all exhibits at all gun shows and those having to travel to competition or hunting. The NRA was asked to investigate the importance of these transportation problems with the FAA and airline management. Personally, I try to fly with either Delta or Eastern and take the precaution of writing their home office Customer Service Division and telling them there will be unloaded firearms in my checked baggage. I hope the NRA will work on this transportation problem. Po-

"We could lose the right to have firearms in checked baggage and those of us who have to travel to compete or hunt, or exhibit, will be out of business."

lice officers lost the right to carry their firearms on board with them or have the pilot take them on the flight deck. We could lose the right to have firearms in checked baggage and those of us who have to travel to compete or hunt, or exhibit, will be out of business.

The Pistol Committee recommended that a Pistol Firearms Firing School be reinstated at Camp Perry. Also, that junior pistol shooters be charged half of adult fees at the Nationals. The National Board for Promotion of Rifle Practice will be asked to sponsor a President's Service Pistol Match, 30 shots over the N.M.C. with service .45 ammo and awards similar to those in the high-power rifle matches.

The NRA Elections Committee report showed 270,113 ballots mailed to members eligible to vote for directors this year and 1,661 ballots were judged invalid for various reasons, including "returned after deadline," "voted for more than 27," etc. Always surprises me that people will pay the cost to be a voting member, go to the trouble to complete the ballot, but do it wrong. I try to make sure mine is counted.

Lucy

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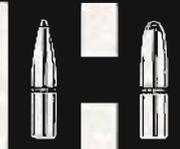
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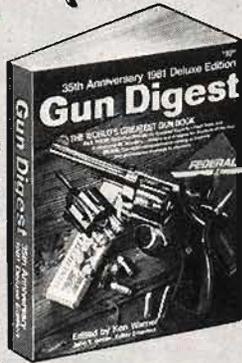
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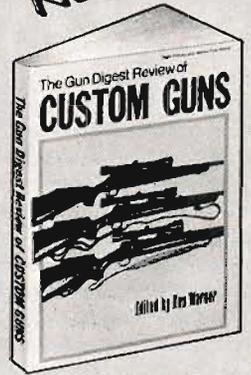
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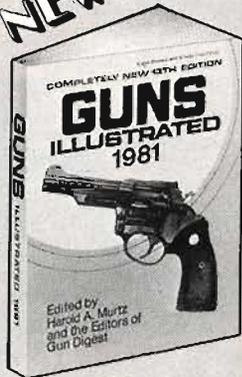
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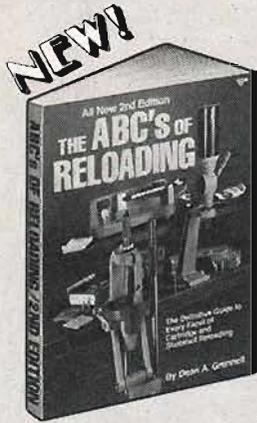
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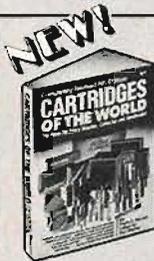
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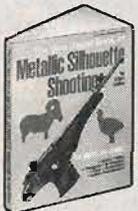
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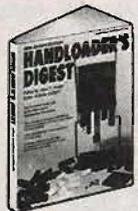
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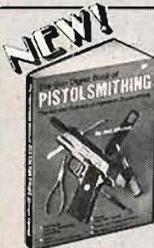


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COMBAT COURSE

(Continued from page 22)

handy. The lower front portion of the slide (below the muzzle) is placed against the object, and then the shooter pushes forward with his hand to jack the slide back, and hopefully clear the stoppage.



For a stovepipe jam, wipe it out on your pants leg. If an empty is stuck inside, hook pants leg with rear sight and push forward sharply to work slide. Note finger clear of trigger and gun pointed down to insure safety.

SWITCHING HANDS

Switching the pistol from one hand to the other also calls for a little thought and practice before you actually have to do it for real. At first glance this is a very simple procedure, but I've actually seen several people come close to dropping their gun while switching from right to left hand while under severe pressure in a match.

Here's how it should be done when time is precious. Assuming you are switching from right to left, as you bring the left hand up, remove the right thumb from its normal firing position and at the same time withdraw the forefinger from the trigger guard. As this is done, jam the pistol butt into the crotch of the left hand, pushing the pistol firmly home with the fingers of the right hand. While the left hand pushes the pistol forward the fingers of the right hand slip away and the fingers on the left take their place on the grip. This whole operation can be performed at or just below line of sight, and is smooth, positive, and quick. With very little practice you can perform the switch very quickly, and with almost no chance of a fumble.

In summation, the well-rounded pistolero will train with both hands, together, and individually, for all possible situations. That way, when something unexpected happens the right move will be made automatically.





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Inset photo taken at Woburn Sportsman's Association, Bedford, Mass.



Monkey watches in wide-eyed wonder as Smitty Brown demonstrates pistol technique. Smitty's plan was to enter the ape in the next match.

They weren't as good as shooters of today—but they had fun!

HANDGUNNERS

OF THE ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★ ★★

30's

By Lee E. Echols

They came up from everywhere and they got good in a hurry. At least, good for those days. Prior to 1930 good pistol shooters were like earthly visits of angels, few and far between. Then they began having team competition as well as individual matches and the guns, ammunition and shooters all began to improve.

Of course, they didn't improve like they did immediately after World War II, for in the decade following that unpleasantness, the upward trend in top scores was almost comparable to the cost-of-living rise in the 1970's.

There were several reasons for this phenomena. The first was the Advanced Marksmanship programs set up by the armed services. They'd find a likely looking young bucko among their recruits and they'd ship him off to a place like Fort Benning, Georgia—if he was in the army—and they'd systematically make a fantastic pistol shooter out of him.

They'd get him up at daylight, feed him well and hustle him out to the pistol range, where he'd shoot under close and stringent observation until they'd have to lift him out of his hulls with a Bucyrus crane.

Then, along with that, they'd pick out servicemen who were handy with machines and tools and they'd make armorers out of them. Within a very few years they had master gunsmiths who could make a .45 pistol shoot like a .22 rifle. Then these armorers and top service shooters encouraged gun manufacturers to build .22 automatic target pistols with the front and rear sights on the same piece of metal and they did all sorts of other omnium gatherum which improved the guns and the shooters. And back in the Thirties, we, too, were trying everything that came along—which didn't interfere with our revelry too much—which might give us a few more points in a three-gun aggregate.

None of the things anyone ever did to guns to make them more accurate was understandable to me. I suppose I was the only Master shooter in the United States who couldn't unscrew a pair of grips on a pistol without all sorts of unbelievable springs and other small metal gewgaws flying all over the place, necessitating a trip to a gunsmith with the various parts of my gun in a paper sack. I am so well known for this mechanical failing that at one time on a ranch near Yuma, Arizona, I was leaning against a wheelbarrow, watching a cowboy try to ride a raunchy colt when a friend yelled at me, "Lee, in God's name, get away from that wheelbarrow! As little as you know about machinery, you're liable to get killed!"

In the Thirties, we all shot .38 Colt Officer's Model revolvers in the centerfire matches. Anyone in those days foolish enough to fire his .45 automatic in a centerfire match could just figure on losing from



Charlie Askins, 5'11", shows Jack Earle, 8'6 1/2", the correct grip

five to ten points. The reason for this was, they hadn't learned to make them shoot that well.

They have now, though, and the men who are shooting them seem to be able to hold them somewhat closer than we could.

But they don't any of them seem to have much fun at it. You'll see a big, tough Gunnery Sergeant accost one of his

charges at a match, "Lance Corporal Langersmith!" he'll roar at him, "your firing point is Number twenty-seven! You will report there immediately with your weapon and thirty rounds of ball ammunition!" And the Lance Corporal will give him a heel clicking salute, yell, "Yes, Sir! All the Way, Sir!" and go

(Continued on page 50)



here were no losers. Cash awards, trophies, plaques, manufacturer-donated merchandise, shooter's gift sets, cocktail parties, and assorted freebies and courtesies including a barbeque dinner made this the richest shooting match ever.

By Jim Woods
Field Editor, *Guns Magazine*



LAST YEAR, his momentary lapse in concentration cost him the match and caused him some considerable personal embarrassment as well. This year, at the second annual Bianchi Cup Invitational Pistol Tournament, he suffered no such letdown. Mickey Fowler shot his Jim Hoag-built long-slide .45 auto to win the prestigious event with a total overall score that is likely to stand as the target score for future participants as long as the Tournament employs the same set of four individual matches. His total four-event score was 1879-85X out of a possible 1920-144.

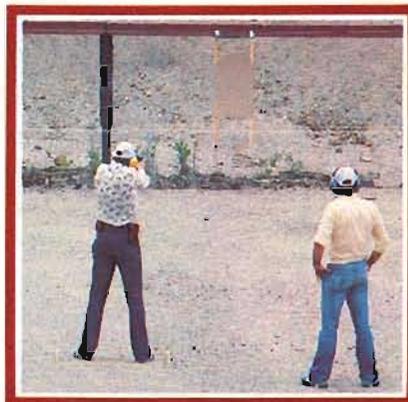
The 1979 SWPL (Southwest Pistol League) champ with 5 wins in 11 matches, Fowler is also the current IPSC National Champion. And he placed 10th in the 1979 World Championships in Africa.

Fowler has completed all the demanding list of qualifications within the SWPL to be rated as



196 Shooters Competing for \$18,000 in Prizes

The 1980 Bianchi Invitational Pistol Tournament



TOP 20

Mickey Fowler, CA	1879-85
David Bates, CT	1851-47
Paul Jones, CO	1835-58
Tom Campbell, MA	1827-61
Mark Duncan, NC	1826-54
John Shaw, TN	1825-63
Gavin Carson, So. Africa	1821-73
Craig Wood, VT	1821-62
Ron Lerch, CA	1821-62
Dennis Sundermeyer, MI	1817-68
Chris Dawn, CA	1812-53
Mike Dalton, CA	1804-62
Jim Baynes, NY	1794-64
Charles Grabbatin, NY	1792-52
William Norton, OH	1789-44
Bill Wilson, AR	1780-72
Dan Scott, NE	1774-37
Ross Seyfried, CO	1772-59
Wayne Bowker, NY	1772-51
Michael Murray, OH	1768-54

Master except he hasn't been shooting the required three years yet.

While much of the spectators' attention was directed to Fowler who won two individual events, the Practical and the Mover, and to Mike Murray who posted a perfect 480 on the Falling Plates and a near perfect 478 at the Barricades, David Bates was quietly establishing an impressive Second Place overall standing. With Fowler and Murray in command of all four individual matches, Bates still piled up a total score of 1851-47X with a Colt Python PPC revolver. Bates, of the Connecticut State Police, finished fourth in the 1979 Tournament.

There was a good bit of drama connected with THE AMERICAN

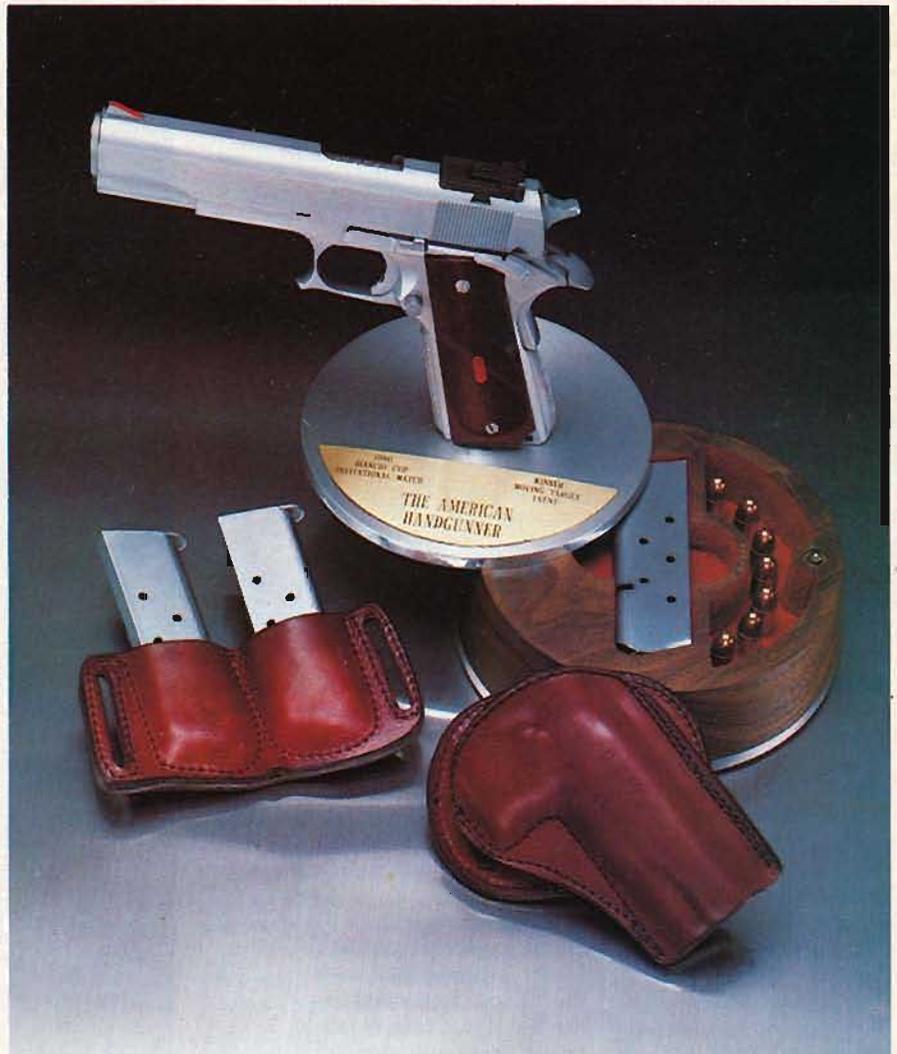
HANDGUNNER-sponsored Moving Target Event. First of all, it probably was the event where most penalties were recorded, and disputed. On all three other events, shooting was started and stopped by the whistle. Occasionally, a late shot, after the ending whistle, resulted in a ten-point penalty for that shooter. On the mover, though, the shooter signaled for the target to start by raising his hands above his shoulders. The official would hit the switch from his remote position and the shooter could draw as soon as the target came into view from behind a barricade. He could shoot until it disappeared behind the barricade at the opposite end of the target.

Several shooters

reacted to the whirr of the motor mechanism and started their draw prematurely, before the target was in view. If they actually touched the pistol, even if they realized that they were early and pulled their empty hand away, they still were penalized ten points for an early start. If the shooter dropped his hand but did not contact the pistol, then recovered, there was no penalty. Frankly, there were a few bad calls by the match officials, too, who penalized shooters for premature draw, when in fact, the target was in view for the shooter but not for the official who was farther back and off to one side. However, in no case of a bad call, was the outcome of the event affected insofar as the eventual winner was



Opposite Top: Overall winner Mickey Fowler receiving top trophy from John Bianchi. Above: Mickey (right) receives the AMERICAN HANDGUNNER Award plus \$500 check from Jim Woods for taking first place in the moving target event. Right: The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER Award Devel custom .45 auto mounted by John Martz and valued at \$1500.



concerned. That is, no one was wrongfully penalized out of winning that particular event, but had that been the case, that would be the breaks of the game. The official's judgement must stand, and that's a necessary part of administering such shooting tournaments.

A very real tension existed about the Moving Target for at least one competitor, Paul Jones, of Durango, Colorado, P.D. Jones fired the course early on the first day of the tournament with the aid of his Eversull PPC revolver, and established a score of 462-21X to pace the event, only 18 points shy of a perfect 480. Top gun after top gun came to the line over the balance of the four days, and all were turned away with lesser scores on the intimidating moving target. Finally, on the fourth and final day, almost at the final hour, the top gun of all top guns at the match, Mickey Fowler, shot holes through Jones' hopes for making his score hold up, with a fantastic 467-24X.

Tom Campbell, of Smith & Wesson, with his custom S&W 9mm auto, placed fourth with 1827-61X. Young hotshot Mark Duncan, with a K-frame PPC gun he built himself, gave a very good showing with a total score of 1826-54X good for 5th place.

Mike Murray's story at the 1980 tournament was almost as disappointing as was Mickey Fowler's last year. Mike, who is an officer with the Upper Arlington, Ohio, P.D., finished third in 1979 behind Ron Lerch and Mickey Fowler, and just ahead of David Bates and Tom Campbell.

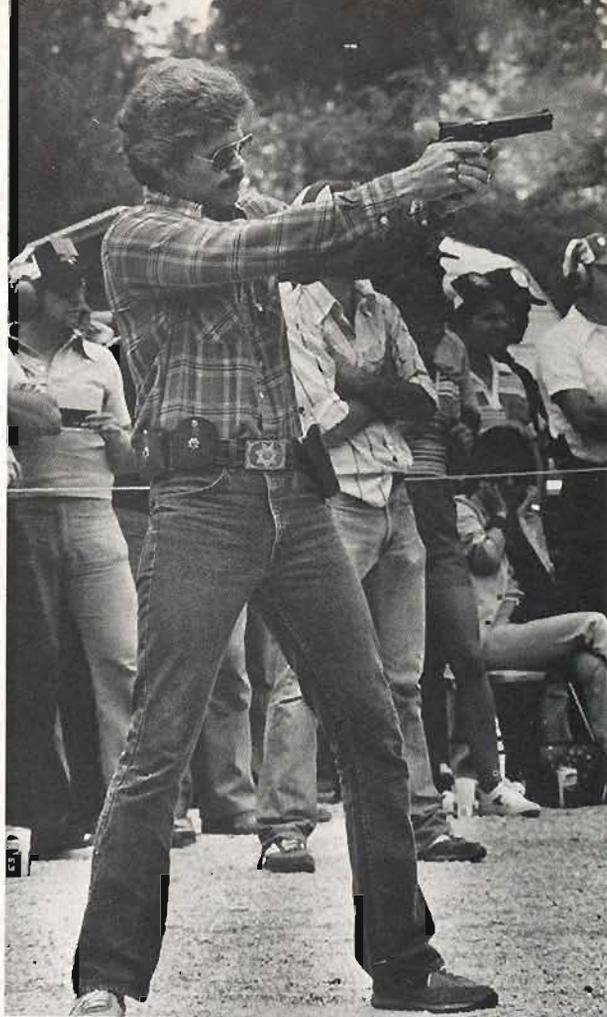
Obviously he was one of the top guns to watch this year. His first-day match was the Falling Plate Event. Dozens of spectators were held in awe as every plate dropped, one by one, to Mike's PPC S&W

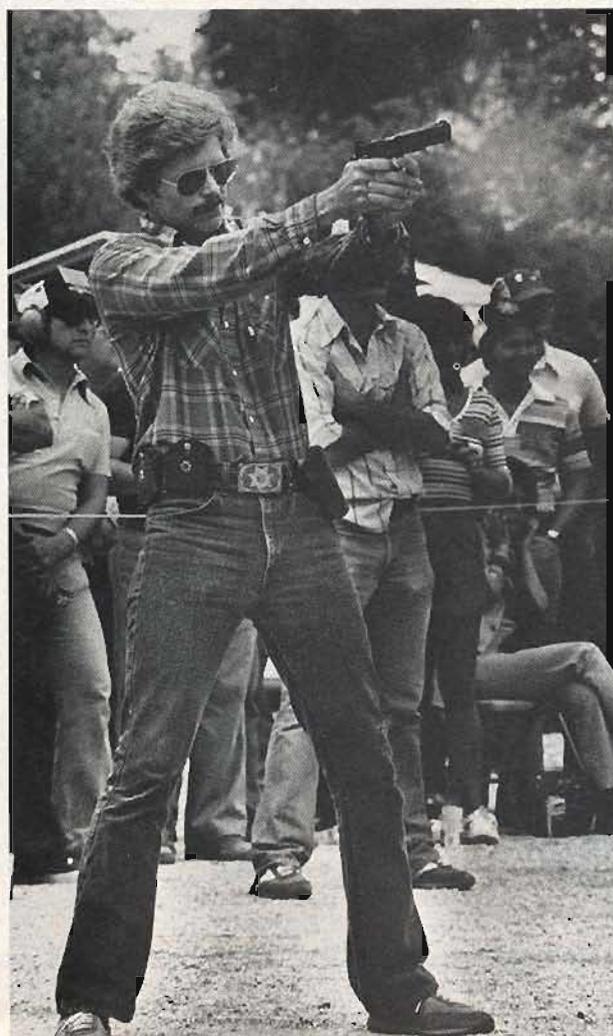
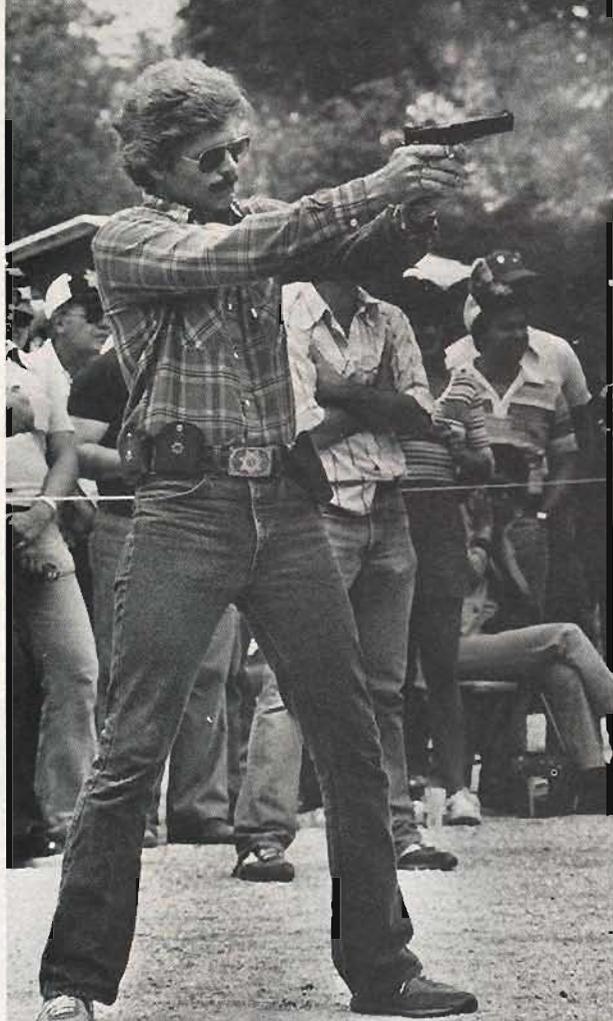
equipped with Davis Aristocrat rib and Hogue Monogrips. Tension built among the spectators, not to mention at the firing line, as the shooters moved into position for the final half dozen steel plates. Hardly a breath was drawn as each of the last five dropped in sequence, and the gasp of relief was almost in unison as the 48th one fell. Forty-eight out of forty-eight plates down—a perfect 480 score in the only event of the tournament that has no tie-breaking Xs and no 8-rings. Only hits and misses figure into the score, and Mike had nothing but hits.

No, his perfect 480 was not the disappointment; but it set the stage for it though. While Mike Murray was shooting the Moving Target Event on the second day, he failed to reload one time, just as Mickey Fowler did the year before at the Falling Plate Event. Murray went on to post his worst score of the four events and dropped out of contention for a high place finish.

However, the next two days saw him return to form and score very well, 448, on the Practical event, and then came on to better Mickey Fowler's outstanding 476-33X on the Barricade. Murray posted a 478 to take the event. While he may have still been suffering, on the third day's Practical event, from lingering effects of his "snakebite" at the Moving Target on the second day, he was fully recovered on the fourth and final day. Of the two events he won, the Falling Plates and the Barricade, he was only two points away from a perfect score.

Several shooters had the temporary honors of leading in the four separate events, but thanks to Fowler and Murray, their glory was short lived. At the end of the first day, Craig Wood of the Vermont State





Police, who wound up in 8th place overall, lead the Practical Event with a 464-21X. Mike Murray held on to his first place in the Falling Plate Event, because no one else could get all 48 plates down as he did on the first day.

At the end of the fourth day, the final individual match results had Mickey Fowler taking Number 1 & 3, the Practical and Moving Target; and Mike Murray taking 2 and 4, the Barricade and the Falling Plates.

Overall winner Mickey Fowler took the top prize money of \$3000 plus \$1000 more in cash for winning two of the four individual events. Additionally, he received the Bianchi Cup valued at \$1000 and the Bianchi custom buckle valued at \$1200. His trophy for winning Match One, in addition to the \$500 cash that went with it, was valued at \$500. For

winning The American Handgunner-sponsored Match Three, his Devel custom .45 auto mounted on a unique base by John Martz, was valued at \$1500, this also in addition to the \$500 in cash. Since Mickey had first choice of the merchandise awards, he selected a very low serial numbered Smith & Wesson Model 629, valued at \$1000. His grand total was \$9200 in cash, trophies, and merchandise, which is not a bad four days' work in any league.

Second Place finisher Dave Bates took home loot worth over \$3000 including \$1500 cash; and Paul Jones, in third place, garnered over \$2000 including \$1000 in cash. Shooters in 4th, 5th, and 6th places received cash in addition to merchandise awards, selected by the shooters in accordance with their overall position in the standings. Every one of



Mickey Fowler shooting the 25 yd. stage of the moving target event sponsored by AMERICAN HANDGUNNER. Mickey drew a crowd of spectators in anticipation of his winning the event and the match. In this series of photos he displays his winning form. His long-slide .45 auto was built by Jim Hoag. Last year, Mickey won second place.

the Top Ten also received plaques, except for Fowler, of course, whose trophy will be evidence enough in years to come, to prove his win.

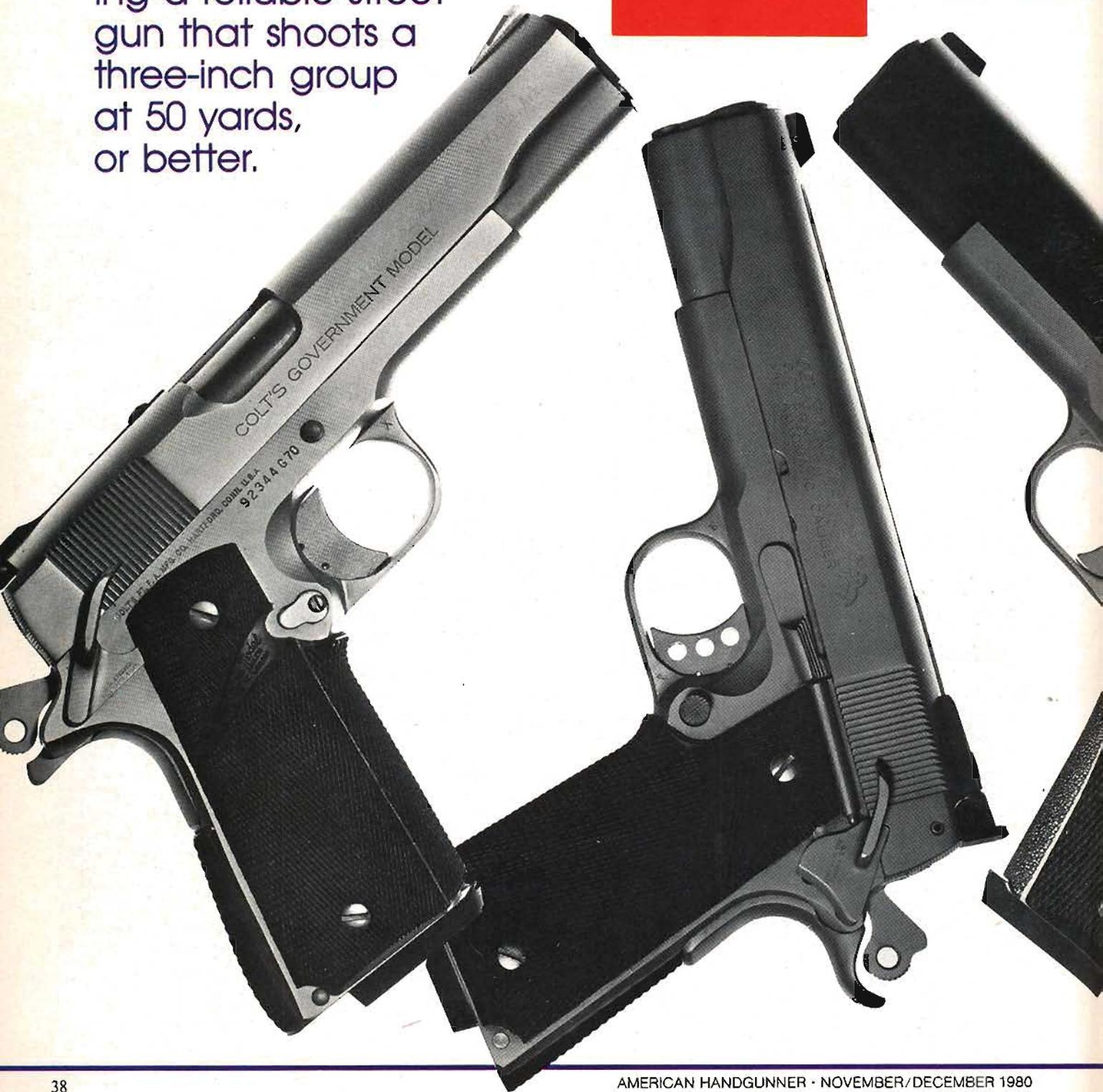
The top four of the International shooters got cash awards and trophies, including \$1000 cash to winner Gavin Carson. The top three ladies received cash and plaque awards, too, and like all
(Continued on page 54)

PHOTOS BY W. THOMAS STEWART

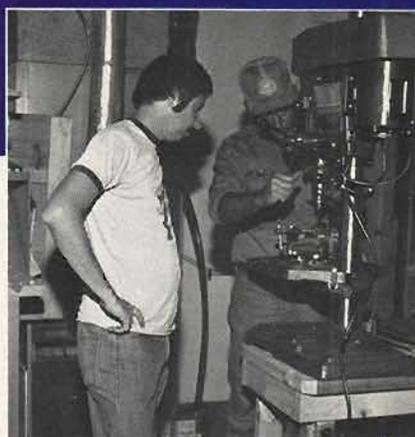
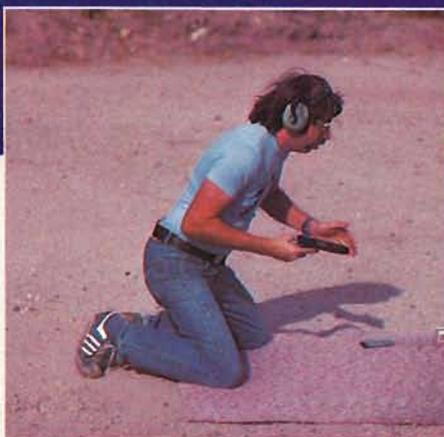
By Massad Ayoob

Pistolsmith Bill Wilson customizes .45s for both street and match, producing a reliable street gun that shoots a three-inch group at 50 yards, or better.

2 GUN A PR CO



S IN ONE ACTICAL MBAT .45



Left gun is a metaloyed full house Wilson. Wilson favors a Commander hammer (note cutaway grip safety). Each gun is test-fired 50 rounds before leaving the shop. Center gun is Master Grade Wilson combat with skeletalized trigger and "buried Bo-Mars." Padded magazines are included. Right gun is economical Competition Grade featuring King/Tappan fixed sights, factory barrel and bushing, trimmed GM hammer, and extended one-side thumb safety.



Readers of this magazine know that custom tuned combat .45 autos are about the hottest item in the pistolsmithing biz these days. It's not terribly hard to get a grand invested in a good piece. Many of them exhibit superb workmanship.

Few, however, are especially versatile. Take the Hoag, considered by many the ultimate IPSC competition piece. I know a lot of topflight contestants who swear by these superbly tight and accurate guns. Many of them also carry a Hoag for personal protection. *But it's not the same gun!* Rather, delighted with the workmanship on their match piece, they'll send Hoag a Commander or whatever for "light customizing" as a street pistol.

What if somebody offered you a "two guns in one" custom job, one accurate enough to win any IPSC match around, but also loose-fitting and reliable to the extent that you'd feel safe betting your life on it in a firefight after rolling to cover in a muddy ditch? To me, that combination sounds like a winner. It wouldn't just save you money, but all your match experience would be geared to the same instrument you'd be using for real.

Making a gun that tight *and* that reliable is a difficult task, one only a handful of pistolsmiths can come up to. Of all my custom .45s, only one is in that category. I've had it for a decade or more, and gunsmiths tell me today it could only be duplicated at four figures of expense.

There's another way, though, and Bill Wilson has it. Bill is the youngest "name" pistolsmith in the business, still well under 30, and he also tops the rest in personal combat laurels. In 1979, Bill won several local and regional events, took the number one slot at Second Chance, and came in 5th in the World shoot.

Now specializing 100 percent in the .45 auto for combat—he works on late-model commercial Colts only—he has established an enviable reputation for good guns that work, and work well. Many of the top aces speak of him and Hoag in the same breath.

What's his philosophy? Quite simply, Bill puts reliability ahead of accuracy, and he thinks that comes down to a matter of tightening. He feels it's easy to get a .45 too

tight to work when it's dirty or held loose. "A three-inch group at 50 yards is all you need for IPSC shooting," he told me, "and that's what I guarantee my competition guns for. Fit the slide to the frame any tighter than that, and you begin to lose your guarantee of 100 percent functioning."

Wilson soon learned, though, that within the arcane engineering of the 1911 pistol, accuracy and reliability don't necessarily constitute an either/or situation. There are ways to get both, and Bill Wilson uses them all.

On his Master Grade Combat Pistol, part of the secret is the Bar-Sto barrel, and its collet bushing. There are gunsmiths who swear the system is superior to the admittedly excellent Colt Mk. IV approach, and Wilson is one of them. Many professionals argue that the Bar-Sto tube and bushing are almost an accuracy job by themselves. And neither fit nor function are compromised.

A Dwyer "Group Gripper" kit is part of all Competition- or Master-Grade Wilson guns. It uses spring pressure to hold the barrel in the same relation to the slide, shot after shot. In other words, it attempts to do what tight fitting does, while leaving the fit loose enough to chew up gunk and dirt without choking.

These guns win in the hands of their maker, and equally capable hands like those of up-and-coming IPSC ace Mike Plaxco. We asked Bill to ship us a couple of test pieces.

One was a Master Grade Mk. IV with low-profile, edge-rounded Bo-Mar sights. These "buried Bo-Mars" give you the best of two worlds: great sight picture and meticulous adjustment, along with super durability and a low profile that aids both carrying and "half aim, half point" shooting at close range with maximum speed.

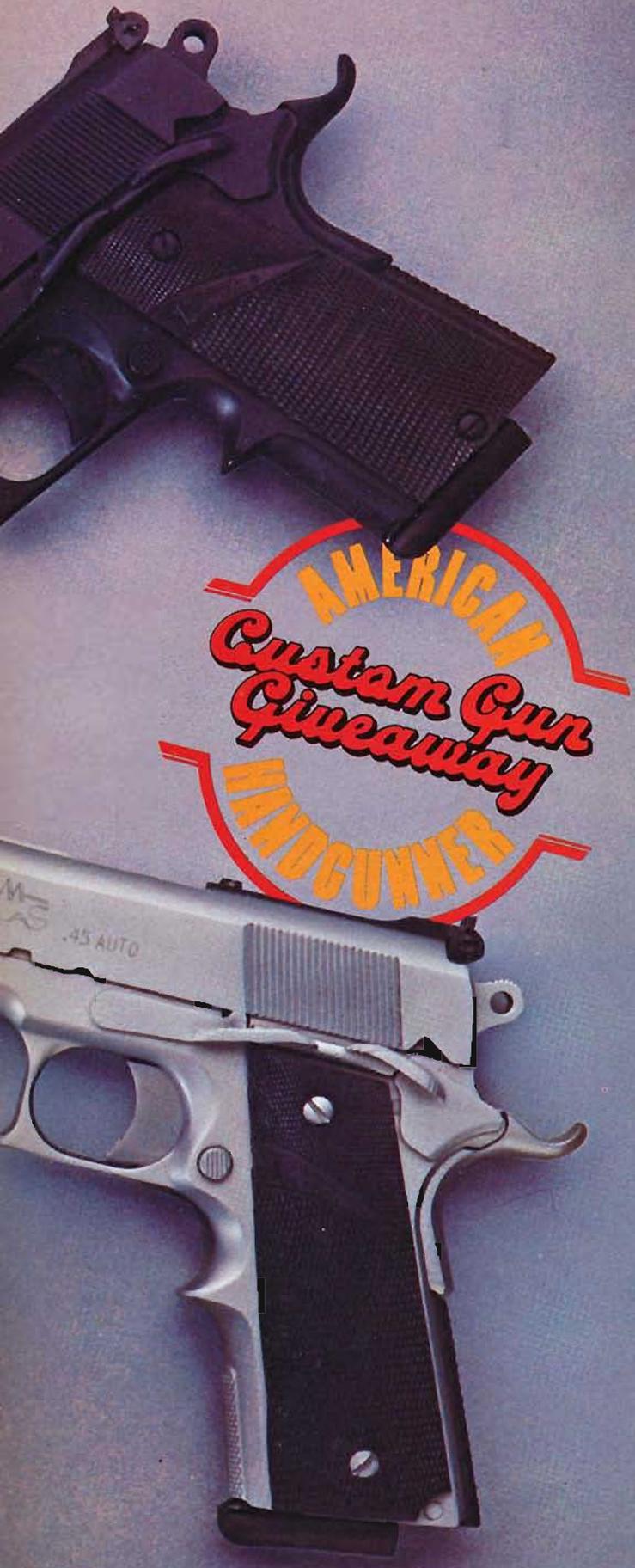
The second gun was a Combat Commander done for street carry. It included a Swenson ambidex, like most Wilson Customs, and fixed King Tappan sights with bright post and dot insets. Again like all Wilson Combats, both had had the ejection ports lowered, the barrels

(Continued on page 58)



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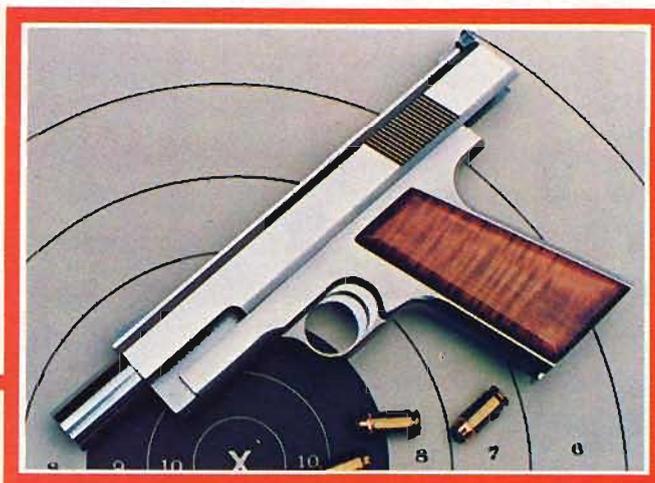
The New **SOKOLOVSKY**



A California Engineer has designed a clean-looking new target semi-auto that uses .45 ACP and has little recoil and smooth slide action.

.45 Prototype

By Bert Stringfellow



THE SEMI-AUTO PISTOL has been designed, redesigned, refined and re-refined. However, very few of the big bore semi-autos to appear are little more than a take-off on one or more of the designs that first appeared at the turn of the century.

Firearms designers have revised the semi-auto to take advantage of space age technology. Forgings have been replaced by investment casting and precision die castings are being used to replace intricately machined frames. Metal stampings, cold-formed metal parts and centered metal parts are seeing extensive use in hand guns. But, throughout all the revisions nothing really new or innovative has appeared until *now*.

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of examining and firing Paul J. Sokolovsky's prototype semi-auto pistol chambered for the .45 ACP. This pistol incorporates the best of the known designs, plus some very innovative thinking.

The inventor, Paul Sokolovsky, a resident of Sunnyvale, California, is a registered Mechanical Engineer and a pistol enthusiast. A combination which has produced a very unique handgun. Paul told me that his objectives, upon starting his design, were to develop a pistol without any external devices such as safety, slide stop, pins, screws, etc., to protrude from his gun and he wanted to develop a more accurate repeatable system of holding the barrel and slide in battery during firing. Paul's designs for the safety and magazine release are shown on his patent drawings. The safety is to the rear of the trigger on the right side of the piece and the magazine release is to the rear of the trigger on the left. The magazine release also acts as a slide stop and disconnecter for removing the barrel. The delay mechanism for the slide is not described, as the patent for that device is currently in the paper mill.

The pistol is large, weighing 96 ozs. and sporting a six-inch barrel. It features a delayed blow-back action, a striker-type firing pin mechanism, eight-shot magazine and a very clean appearance. To field strip the piece: (1) lock the slide back; (2) push the magazine release lever and quarter turn the barrel; (3) withdraw the barrel from the slide; (4) release the slide and the pistol falls apart. The assembly is simply a reverse of the procedure.

Northern California's worst storm of the season was in progress when we arrived at the Sunnyvale Rod and Gun Club range for a shooting session with Paul's new .45. Paul braved the elements to go out and set targets, while I stayed under the firing point cover and set up the camera in (Continued on page 61)



RUGER PRESENTS

1,000,000th AUTO



PISTOL



Presentation of the one millionth Ruger Automatic Pistol. Shown left to right are: Gary Anderson, NRA executive director; Harlon Carter, NRA executive VP; Admiral Lloyd Mustin, NRA executive council; J. Thompson Ruger and Stephen K. Vogel of Sturm, Ruger & Company.



When the one millionth Ruger Standard Automatic Pistol came out of the Sturm, Ruger & Co. factory in 1979 it was designated the first Ruger anniversary commemorative. Engraved and gold inlaid by master engraver Ray Viramontez of Dayton, OH, and ivory-handled by Ron Lang of Hays, KS, the pistol was donated to the International Shooter Development Fund, a non-profit organization affiliated with the NRA. The ISDF offered it to the highest bidder, to raise funds for the U.S. Shooting Team. It brought a high bid of \$27,200, from Austin M. Wortley, Chairman of Penguin Industries of Coatesville, PA, who is now the proud owner of the one-millionth Ruger Standard Auto.

In continuous production since the company was founded in 1949, the .22 caliber Ruger pistol represents a design that was so successful from the very beginning that it became the cornerstone upon which one of the most comprehensive lines of sporting firearms ever made in the U.S. was established.

Old style Ruger "Red Eagle" medallions were inset in the grip panels, marking the pistol as the first Ruger firearm to be produced bearing red medallions since 1951 when the color was changed to black by William B. Ruger to commemorate the passing of this friend and partner, Alexander M. Sturm.

The pistol is contained in a special glass-topped display case and was shown at the SHOT show in San Francisco and at the NRA meeting in Kansas City.

The signature of William B. Ruger has been gold inlaid into the barrel of the pistol, and the serial number 1000000 and other standard roll markings have been gold inlaid on the receiver. In addition, the Ruger trademark and 30th Anniversary logo have been inlaid in gold on the top of the receiver. 

Three Decades of Rimfire Excellence

RUGER'S MARK I.

By Jim Williamson



Top photo: Bull barrel Mark I with the new sight. The latest Rugers have Ruger medallion on the right grip plate, and weight is just over 42 ounces. Photo above shows right side of the Standard Ruger with the grooved bolt knob and extractor, mounted on the bolt. The rear grip strap shows mainspring housing, which pulls down and back to strip the gun. The photo on right shows the Ruger stripped for cleaning. The mainspring pulls out the rear of the grip, and the bolt slides out.

Handgun design is a little like vintages along Germany's cold Saar River: most of the time, the results are average, sometimes even less. But when a fine vintage comes along, the wine is worth talking about for years. So it is with a few landmarks of handgun design. The Colt models of 1873 and 1911, the Smith Magnums, and the SIG-210 all became classics in their own time, and remain so today. Such classics are rare among rimfires, and rarer still are those with an appealing price tag. The only one that comes readily to mind is the Ruger Mark I.

Like some of our greatest presidents, the Mark I was born in a wooden cabin, in Southport, Conn. A young gun designer named William Batterman Ruger joined forces with a fellow named Alexander Sturm, who had an interest in guns and some money to invest. Ruger had been employed by Springfield Armory and the Auto Ordnance Corp. during World War Two, and had learned something of manufacturing techniques. Better yet, he had learned how new technology could be applied to produce ingenious designs representing a marriage of high quality and



Left: The Mark I is billed as a target piece but can be used as an outdoors gun. Taken on fishing trips, the gun can add frog's legs to the camp fare and zaps snakes. The knife is by Rick Darby, 4026 Shelbourne, Youngstown, OH 44511. Below left: Ruger Standard Auto .22 with 4 3/4 or 6-inch barrel. This cutaway view shows pistol ready to fire. Note the round in the chamber.



low price.

The first gun to result from this design concept was the Standard Model .22 autoloading pistol. This arm was well-named, for it has indeed become the standard by which today's less-expensive .22 handguns should be judged. (There are those who would eliminate price as a consideration in the foregoing sentence.) Featuring a bolt cycling within a hollow steel receiver that mounts a rigid barrel, the basic gun is capable of excellent accuracy. This was perhaps the first .22 auto with a rear sight that didn't travel with the slide in recoil, and the sight picture, therefore, tended to remain more consistent than with competing Colt and High Standard guns. The overall appearance of the new gun suggested a union between a Luger and an Italian Glisenti or Jap Nambu. The result was a clean, handsome gun that took the shooting public by storm at the sensational price of \$37.50.

In the Nov. 1949 issue of *American Rifleman*, a brief coverage of the Standard Model noted that Jack Boudreau of Ruger had won two medals with the Ruger .22, and "placed high" in several other matches. Here was a "plinker" with target potential!

With the Colt Match Target in short supply and costing considerable money, a natural demand arose for a good target pistol at reasonable cost. The new Ruger

accordingly appeared in 1950 with target sights, a 6 7/8-inch barrel with an undercut front sight, and a better trigger. It listed at \$57.50, twenty well-spent dollars above the regular gun. An early ad appeared in the Dec. 1951 *American Rifleman*, which was then the only shooting magazine of note.

These earliest Mark I guns look very much like the current model, but there are a few differences. The most obvious is that the butaprene grip plates bore a stylized red bird. This is popularly called a "Red Eagle" model, but the bird is actually a phoenix, which rose from its own ashes in mythology. With the death of Alexander Sturm in 1951, Ruger changed the color of the phoenix to black, a move inspired by a similar change in the color of the double

"R's" on Rolls-Royce motorcars on the death of a partner in that firm. Ruger was and is a car buff, and I recall seeing him posing with an old car in one of Warren Page's articles for *Field and Stream*. The ruger phoenix has remained black since.

Between serial numbers 2,500 and 2,800, the bolt and firing pin were improved to ease production, and early guns have a more square look around the chamber. Until 1969, the Mark I used a Micro rear sight. After that year, a new Ruger sight with a sturdier appearance was substituted.

During the decade beginning in 1953, a shorter Mark I was available with a tapered 5 1/4-inch barrel. These are quite rare, and a real find for collectors. The writer was allowed to handle one at the Ruger Collectors' Assn. booth at the 1979 NRA Convention, and found it to be a well-balanced arm that is probably the best Ruger .22 ever made for the outdoorsman. Unfortunately, target shooters wanted more weight, and the gun was redesigned into the present Bull Barrel version with a heavy 5 1/2-inch barrel. This, too, is a good gun for the hunter and plinker, and the shorter barrel lessens the likelihood of the holster toe dragging when one sits down. This is a heavier gun than many trappers and fishermen like, but the weight is minimized by wearing a good holster, my choice being the Bianchi M89L.

Astonishingly, some Bull Barrel Mark I's were issued to security personnel in South

Africa during the mid-1960s, according to H. Smith of the Rand Water Board. Speaking of this South African connection, I knew that some Mark I's had reached that country prior to the U.S. arms embargo in 1961, and that some of them belonging to shooting clubs had been shot more than usual because of the difficulty in obtaining replacements. To see how much shooting a Mark I would take without falling apart, I wrote to the South African Pistol Shooters' Assn. in Pretoria, and to Barry Berkovitch, the noted collector and author of *the Cape Gunsmith*. Barry Miller, a Durban dealer, and several ordinary shooters also helped. I am especially grate-

(Continued on page 48)

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ful to Mrs. A. Marais, who published my
letter requesting assistance in the journal of
the South African Pistol Association, the
SA Sharpshooter. It was evident from
the resulting mail that the Ruger has a
large and loyal following abroad.

John Shinn of Port Elizabeth, Natal, has
a 5/4-inch Mark I that he uses on tin cans
and snakes, including the deadly PuffAd-
der (*Bitis arietans*). John says that the .22
won't deliver the goods on dassies, which
are sort of the local equivalent of wood-
chucks, if you stretch the point a bit. The
dassie, or rock hyrax, is related to the
elephant, and is a tough little customer.
Even the Colt Police Positive chambered
for the old .22WRF round is too little gun
for them. Shinn didn't know that his short
Mark I was rare until we exchanged letters.
James Cowan of Johannesburg owns a
Ruger with about 150,000 rounds through
it. Bought used, his gun has had a crack in
the magazine welded, and works fine.
Gavin Carson, the internationally-known
combat competitor who placed fourth in
the last IPSC championship, belongs to a
club that has two Mark I's, a Bull Barrel

**"... a senior Ruger
executive asked that I
stress that Ruger goes
to great lengths to
ensure that its guns
don't go to South
Africa or other lands
under U.S. embargo."**

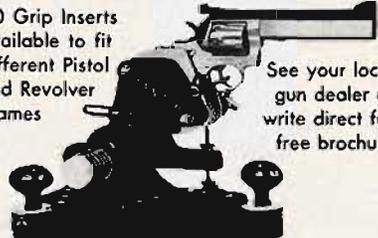
and a long-nose. Gavin "conservatively"
estimates that each of these has fired over
100,000 shots. H.P. Mathee of Vereeniging
belongs to a club with six Rugers. They
were smuggled in during the 1960s, and are
used by all new club members until they
buy their own guns. He says that these six
pistols are cleaned perhaps once a year, "if
someone feels inclined to do so." They are
fired at least weekly. The guns remain
accurate and reliable.

By the way, a senior Ruger executive
asked that I stress that Ruger goes to great
lengths to ensure that its guns don't go to
South Africa or other lands under U.S.
embargo. Any suspicious orders from third
world countries must be refused, and the
attempt to order is reported to American
authorities. Guns entering the Republic of
South Africa must be smuggled, probably
from Europe.

This has done very little harm to South
Africa, which makes its own military arms,
and the only result has been to drive up
prices to the point that the poor people the
U.S. law hoped to protect can't afford
expensive consumer goods. This is not

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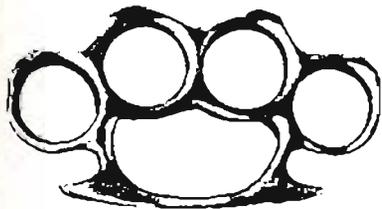
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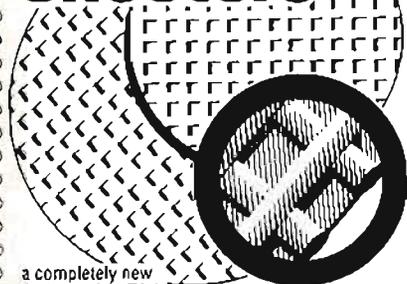
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limited to guns, of course. Guns do get into South Africa on a fairly regular basis, and anyone with enough money can get pretty much what he wants. This applies even to Communist arms.

Politics aside, Ruger said that some European clubs have racked up even more impressive records with the guns they rent to members. Some of these guns have burned over a million rounds!

Very few problems seem to arise with the Ruger autos. I once spent some months as a range officer at a busy public Winchester franchise, and saw quite a few Rugers. The only problem encountered was an occasional failure to feed, and this could often be cured by swapping brands of ammo. A break-in period is usually enough to clear up any other bugs. Keith Dyer of Cape Town wrote that he has seen the little wings at the rear of the recoil spring assembly break, but the gun continued to shoot well, until the damage was discovered on disassembly. A friend of his has a "gadget" to repair this part.

When I was in the Air Force—note my pronunciation—we called the Ruger Mark

**"James Cowan of
Johannesburg owns a
Ruger with about
150,000 rounds
through it. Bought
used, his gun has had a
crack in the magazine
welded, and works fine!"**

I the "quarter gun" because so many spare parts cost only 25¢. The armorers considered the Mark I the sweetest thing this side of Racquel Welch, for the money. (I don't know what a date with Welch would cost; the gun was \$67.50 at the time.)

At \$118, the Mark I remains one of the few things that is both cheap and good. On order (only) the factory will furnish walnut grips at \$10 or \$15, depending on whether you want a thumbrest. (If the gun sits deep in your favorite holster, pass on the thumbrest.) Spare magazines are just \$7. Until 1970, a muzzle brake was an option. For hunting and plinking, the gun is fine as it comes, but the match shooter may want some tuning. James Clark of Shreveport, LA, is a top specialist in the field, and his Rugers have done so well that Clark received recognition for his efforts at the luncheon honoring Ruger's thirtieth year, in San Antonio, Texas, during May of 1979. I am indebted to James Triggs, Ruger's talented advertising head, for the opportunity to attend that function. Mag-na-Port has just issued a slicked-up Mark I

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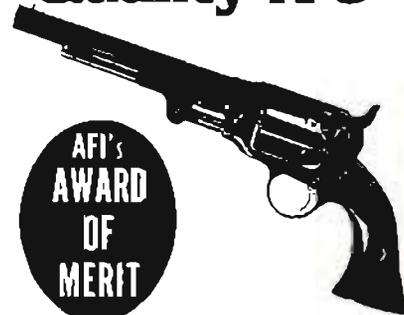
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with a hard chrome finish that became an instant collectors' item, and a very practical tool for the wet-weather trapper.

There isn't a whole lot more to say. There are fancier guns than the Mark I, but it is better-finished than anything close to its price, and is overall such a fine pistol that it's easy to see why Ruger has been back-ordered on the gun since he introduced it. At this writing, the situation doesn't seem likely to change. The line forms on the right, folks, and mine isn't for sale.



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PRE-WAR FUN
(Continued from page 33)

striding purposefully toward his designated firing point, his shoulders thrown back and a look on his face as though he's moving in on a guerrilla machine gun.

He'd probably shoot a score when he gets there which, if he'd fired it in the Thirties, would have started some of our top shooters to thoughts of suicide, but does he ever have any fun doing it? It doesn't seem so. They stand around at a tournament, each with his own group, looking suspiciously at everyone else.

In the Thirties there were funny things happening all the time. I remember going up to Camp Perry from Laredo, Texas, a year or so before the war put the shooters out of business for the duration. I went through Washington, D.C., for a short visit before going on to Ohio, and in the lobby of the Hilton Hotel, I ran into a friend from Laredo, a well-to-do Mexican Customhouse broker. He invited me up to his suite and after a drink, he asked me if I knew any girls in Washington, saying we should corral a couple and take them out to dinner. I called up two secretaries at the Bureau of Customs, telling them my friend was a stickler for decorum and it might be well if they dressed up for the occasion. They arrived at the hotel right on time, wearing long, flowing evening gowns.

We enjoyed an excellent dinner at the Watergate Inn, walked back up to the flow of traffic to find a cab and came upon a huge roller-skating rink full of happy, laughing skaters.

Both the girls grabbed on to us and steered us right in. Before we knew what was happening to us, they'd rented four pairs of skates, put theirs on and were gracefully gliding around the room, their evening gowns flowing behind them. They returned after a couple of rounds and demanded that the Mexican Customhouse broker and I put ours on and join them.

I explained to them that I'd never had a pair of skates on my feet in my life and that I had all sorts of trouble just walking, without handicapping myself with a juggernaut of destruction such as a pair of

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roller skates. My Mexican friend re-monstrated loudly, too, saying he didn't come to Washington to get himself killed.

The girls would have none of this. "We'll all get in a line," one of them said as she forcefully fastened them to my shoes, "We'll hold you up and there will be no possibility of your falling."

The next thing my friend and I knew, we were out there on the huge rink. One of the girls and I were in the middle and the other girl and the Mexican were on the ends.

I gingerly tried my skates by moving my right foot forward. It went right out from under me, as did my left one, and I felt myself falling over backward.

Now, most pistol shooters have strong shoulders from hours and hours of holding their weapons out, dry firing, and I was no exception. In wild desperation, I gave a mighty pull forward on the arms of the girl on my left and my friend on my right. This managed to get me, temporarily, back into an upright position all right, but the force of my exertion sent the Mexican spinning off into a long, slithering bellyflop and he landed on his face, some fifteen feet in front of me. The girl rolled off to the left and she and the other one continued with their elegant, gliding motion around the hall as though nothing was happening at all back where my friend, the Mexican Customhouse broker, and I were literally fighting for our lives. My skates began going out in front of me again and although I tried desperately to right myself again, it didn't work. It didn't work at all, and both my feet went straight up in the air and I began falling backwards.

It is impossible to describe the fear that assails and grips a man when he is six or eight feet in the air, his legs spread out and the great weight of his body is crashing

"In the Thirties there were funny things happening all the time."

him backwards. I threw my left arm back behind me in an effort to keep my brain stem from disintegrating when I landed on it. I accomplished that, all right, but my entire weight went right onto my left thumb. I felt it—even heard it—crack and shatter, and as I'm so left-handed I can't even wave "hello" with my right hand, I knew my troubles would not be puny ones when I got to Camp Perry.

The Mexican Customhouse broker was unconscious for several minutes and when he finally came out of it, he opened his bloody mouth and spat out four of his front teeth.

Suffice it to say, when I arrived at Camp Perry, my left thumb was in a splint and

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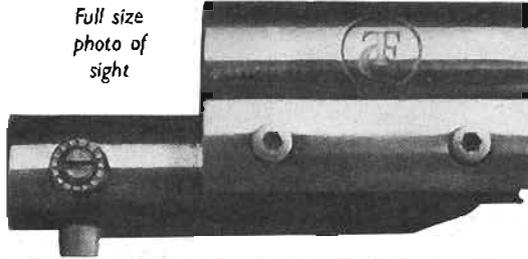
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wrapped up like an Afghan's head. I was walking along the display corridor with it stuck out in front of me, feeling sorry for myself, when I accosted Jesse Woody. Now, Jesse was a barber from Stanton, Texas, and one of the toughest shooters in the Southwest. Whenever you beat Jesse Woody for the Texas State Pistol Championship you could go home feeling not only well-pleased with yourself but extremely lucky.

As Jesse came toward me, I could see that he too had thumb trouble. He was walking along, pointing his right hand in the air like a well-digger reaching for his lunch and the thumb was in a splint and wrapped up even warmer than mine. I can't remember his explanation but it seems like he said he'd either got it caught in a corn sheller or a milking machine, but we were condoling one another when "Smitty" Brown came on the scene. Smitty was a left-handed shooter and a mighty good one and he, like all the rest of us, was always looking for some little something he could do which was fairly honest, but which might bring his three-gun average up a point or two.

He looked first at my sore thumb and then at Jesse Woody's. A sly, cunning look

"... when I arrived at Camp Perry, my left thumb was in a splint and wrapped up like an Afghan's head."

covered his face. "What does it do for you?" he asked us, his eyes darting around to make sure no one would hear our answer but him.

"What does *what* do for us?" Jesse wanted to know, but I could see Smitty Brown would not be easy to sidetrack.

"Gimme the skinny on it, boys," he said, in the tone of a true conspirator. "You two have learned something that I don't know. How does it help you?" He assumed a knowing, astute expression. "Let me know what it does, fellers, and I'll try it too! God, I'll beat mine to a pulp with a six pound ball-peen hammer if it will move my aggregate score up as much as three points!"

Smitty didn't get around to hammering his thumb, but he was a hard-hitting left-handed pistol shooter. In fact, one year four of us left-handers challenged any four right-handed shooters to a four-man team match. We didn't get any callers, but it would have been interesting.

We planned on using Smitty Brown, Walter Walsh, Charlie Askins and me and if all of us had held together, we might just have won it, although when you consider some of the prospects who could have opposed us, we'd certainly have had our work well cut out for us. Just one of them

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which comes to mind would have been composed of Emmett Jones of Los Angeles, Al Hemming and Harry Reeves of Detroit and maybe Pete Chapman of Treasury. You will note I didn't list Joe Benner in that group. He didn't get real good until the Forties, so he would have had a little trouble making it.

The more I look at just that one team of right-handers, the happier I am that they didn't take us serious enough to have a go at us. The race isn't always to the swift, nor the battle to the strong—but bet on 'em.

Smitty staged the high-class National Mid-winter Pistol Matches each March in Tampa and everyone looked forward to going down there for a couple of weeks. We'd shoot at the Palmetto Range in Coral Gables first and then on to Tampa. Fun was the name of the game in both places and although all of us were doing everything possible to improve our scores, we refused to let it interfere with the general highjinks and big doings which were always taking place.

One year, Smitty Brown tried to make a pistol shooter out of a Barbary ape, or some such simian, before we got down there to the tournament. His plan was to teach him all the rudiments of sight align-

"The monkey stuck the gun out at the target . . . and eased off his first shot."

ment, stance, squeeze and safety and then enter him in the first match, setting him up right next to Harry Reeves.

He got the baboon, or whatever it was, up on the line, and it watched him with wide-eyed wonder as he fired five shots slow fire. They went up to the target and Smitty pointed out to the lowland gorilla where the bullets had entered the target, solemnly pointing them out while the monkey nodded his head in complete agreement.

Then Smitty took the Gibbon ape's revolver and, unbeknownst to the simian, he loaded it with five blanks. The monkey stuck the gun out at the target—his stance was excellent, weight equally divided on each foot—and eased off his first shot. When the blank went off with a black-powder roar, the monkey jumped about four feet in the air, looked inside the barrel, stuck the gun high over his head and fired the next four so fast that Smitty couldn't count them. Then he threw the revolver at the target and ran for a high palm tree, which he climbed like a Polynesian coconut picker. It took Smitty two days to get him back down.

Then one time at El Paso, Charlie Askins made the acquaintanceship of a Ringling Brothers Circus Brobdingnagian



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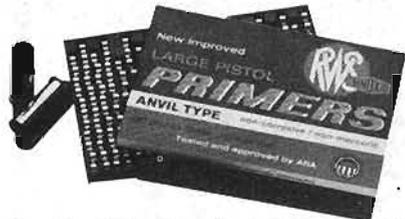
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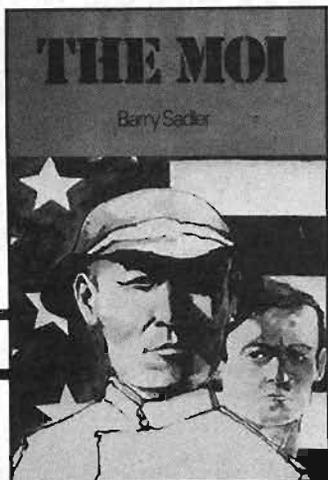
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giant, Jake Ehrlich, who used the circus name of Jack Earle. Charlie, always one for a little fun, took Big Jake, who stood eight feet and six and a half inches from the West Texas gravel up to the top of his colossal head, out for some pistol practice.

Charlie's plan was, he would slip the gigantic man into a registered match, without any fanfare, just to see how many of us would be able to keep from breaking down the brush in our run for the brakes of the Rio Grande River bottom.

It didn't work much better than trying to teach Smitty's orangutan. The big problem Charlie encountered with Jake Ehrlich was, his hand was bigger than Charlie's revolver. There wasn't any place where he could take hold of it without completely covering the entire gun: sights, hammer, grips, cylinder, trigger and barrel. Charlie loaded Big Jake up in the bed of a two-ton Ford truck and hauled him back to El Paso.

We were always trying to improve our score, but not if it interfered with our pleasurable diversion.

Incidentally, when I got back from Camp Perry to Laredo that year, my friend, the Mexican Customhouse broker, met me at the airport. His wide grin proudly displayed four new gold teeth.



BIANCHI SHOOT

(Continued from page 37)

the other competitors, choose from merchandise that was available as their turn came up, according to their overall standings.

If there is any doubt as to the Bianchi Invitational Pistol Tournament being the richest shooting match ever, let the very impressive numbers speak for themselves. First, cash awards totaled \$11,000. Winners and high place finishers' trophies and plaques cost an additional \$7000. Merchandise donated by six dozen manufacturers, distributors, and gunsmiths totaled another \$21,000. Add to this total, so far at \$39,000, another \$21,000 in the shooters' gift sets and other freebies and courtesies like a couple of cocktail parties, hosted by Heckler & Koch and Colt Firearms, a barbecue dinner, and the awards banquet dinner, and the grand total is \$60,000.

There were no losers. Entry fee for shooters was \$85, and each shooter realized more than that amount in gifts and awards. Merchandise awards were available for everyone, down to the last place finisher.

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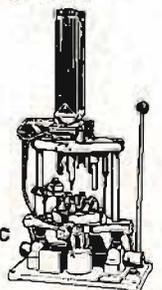


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Another new award category this year was the International Winners. As with the ladies' competition, no special match was held, it's just that those who qualified in the category were grouped for a special award, but their overall standing in the tournament put them in contention for the overall prize awards.

International competitors, numbering 37 in all, represented Germany, Belgium, South Africa, Austria, France, Switzerland, Rhodesia, Luxembourg and Guam. The winner of the International trophy and prize money was Gavin Carson of South Africa who also placed 7th overall. Gavin used a borrowed .45 auto to post his total score of 1821-73X.

The Ladies winner, Edith Almedia, who placed 73rd overall, is also from South Africa.

The courses of fire for the individual matches in 1980 remained the same as those of the initial tournament in 1979. There was a major difference in the targets for all but the Falling Plate Event, but the difference was political, not functional. The combat silhouette used the first year gave way to a headstone-shaped target of the same overall dimensions, for the 1980 shoot.

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headstone shaped
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rather than printed—scoring rings. X-rings, exactly in the center of the target, measured 4 inches in diameter; the A-ring, worth 10 points, is 8 inches, the B-ring, worth 8 points, was 12 inches. The remainder of the target, the C-area, was worth 5 points anywhere it was hit. Targets for the Falling Plate Event were 3/8-inch thick steel plates, 8 inches in diameter.

Match One, the Practical Event, had paper targets at 10, 15, 25 and 50 yards, and two targets at each stage. The total, as it was for each of the four events, was 48 shots for a possible 480 points. Shooters were permitted to go prone for the 25- and 50-yard segments.

Match Two, the Barricade Event, was fired at 10, 15, 25, and 35 yards. Six shots were fired at each of two targets, from each side of the barricade. Shooters stood within a 2x3-foot box at each stage, and awaited the start whistle with gun holstered and both palms flat against the barricade.

Match Three, the Moving Target Event, was fired at 10-, 15-, 20-, and 25-yard stages. A paper target traveled 60 feet in

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12LR in .232 Rem	22WMB in .223 Rem	30M1 Carb in .300 Win M
12LR in .233 Rem	22WMB in .223 Rem	30M1 Carb in .300 Win M
12LR in .234 Rem	22WMB in .223 Rem	30M1 Carb in .300 Win M
12LR in .235 Rem	22WMB in .223 Rem	30M1 Carb in .300 Win M
12LR in .236 Rem	22WMB in .223 Rem	30M1 Carb in .300 Win M
12LR in .237 Rem	22WMB in .223 Rem	30M1 Carb in .300 Win M
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12LR in .225 Rem TC	12LR in .225 Rem TC	12LR in .225 Rem TC
12LR in .226 Rem TC	12LR in .226 Rem TC	12LR in .226 Rem TC
12LR in .227 Rem TC	12LR in .227 Rem TC	12LR in .227 Rem TC
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six seconds. Shooter areas were 3-foot squares at each stage, at the center of the target's travel.

Match Four, the Falling Plate Event, had steel plates set up in sets of six, which had to be knocked over to score. At each of the four stages, 10, 15, 20, and 25 yards, a total of 12 plates in two sets of six, were fired at. Shooters could fire from the prone position at the 25-yard stage.

The minimum caliber permitted at the tournament was 9mm, and the lower power limit was that achieved with .38 Specials with 158-grain lead bullets. Handloads that met these minimum requirements were acceptable, but were subject to a power rating test at the range.

Since each segment of each stage required no more than six rounds, and since there were no speed reloading requirements, revolvers competed with pistols on an equal basis. Last year, there was lots of discussion about which handgun, revolver or pistol, was better for which event. If such an advantage exists for either persuasion, it's very slight. In 1979, only two of the top 10 shooters used revolvers. In

"... the predominant gun was, like last year, the Colt .45 auto in some configuration."

1980, the top 10 shooters were split right down the middle, in selection of revolver or autopistol.

A wide variety of handguns was in evidence, and although PPC revolvers were more in use than last year, the predominant gun was, like last year, the Colt .45 auto in some configuration. PPC revolvers were generally built around Smith & Wesson K-frames, although runner-up David Bates proved that the Colt Python in PPC dress is a top gun. A few Ruger Security Sixes were used as well. Other autopistols included H&K P9, H&K P7 (PSP), Beretta M-92, Browning BDA and Hi Power, and the Sig 210/6. Many of the International shooters were equipped with the Sig 210.

Everyone who shot in the Bianchi Invitational Pistol Tournament in its first year, and also shot in this, the second annual event, practiced the courses of fire that make up the tournament. Many improved their scores and places in the standings this year over last year as a result of that practice. One competitor, Charles Grabatin, placed 43rd in 1979; 14th in 1980. Another, John Shaw, who finished 16th the first year, went all the way to 6th in 1980. David Bates went from 4th in 1979 to a strong runner's up finish this year. Tom Campbell went from 5th to 4th. But Mickey Fowler made the biggest advance of all—that giant step from a chagrined

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TOTAL OF 196 competitors, representing the U.S. (159), Germany (17), Belgium (1), South Africa (5), Austria (7), France (1), Switzerland (2), Rhodesia (2), Guam (1), Luxembourg (1); total 37 international entries.

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WILSON COMBAT

(Continued from page 39)

throated, the magazine wells funnelled, and sported long, adjustable, well-tuned National Match triggers.

We shot the brushed-nickel street gunabout enough to make sure it cycled with hollowpoints and SWCs, and grouped about like any Combat Commander. The good trigger, throated barrel, high fixed sights, and other features gave it practical accuracy and "handle-ability" far above a stock gun, though. In general, just what a customer ordering this package would want.

We focused our attention on the Master Grade. Two things concerned us from the start. First, the Commander-style hammer had a nasty tendency to follow the slide when the latter was dropped, though it always caught on the half cock notch. Second, it rattled like an Army Issue piece. "This," we thought, "is supposed to give us three-inch groups at fifty?"

We chunked the gun into a Ransom machine rest and let fly. Federal 230-grain Match Hardball was used, because its proven accuracy and consistency is a constant factor I've come to rely on in testing guns of this caliber.

Groups averaged about 2 1/2". I think some judicious handloading could have cut that to an even two.

The Bar-Sto? Maybe. The Bar-Sto coupled with the Dwyer? Likelier yet. The combination of both components with some light and careful tightening of slide and frame by Wilson's own hands? Yeah, I think so.

The accuracy testing done, I sought to

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check out the pistol's human engineering. For me, the best way to do that is to shoot it in a tournament. The pressure of the spectators, the tension of the running time-clock, and the knowledge that awards hang in the balance all give you a realistic appraisal of how a gun's trigger, handling characteristics, etc., will do the job for you when the chips are down.

At the time I got the samples, the free-style combat season in my cold climate had run its course, but a couple of indoor PPC events for automatics were open. I signed up for both.

By the time I finished the first, I was in third Master position and feeling rotten about it. Though I knew the trigger was a crisp four pounds, the sights seemed to be moving as the hammer fell with every shot. Was I jerking, or was it the gun?

The same thing happened in dryfire, too, and a couple of topflight competitors who tried the gun had the same sensation. A stripdown gave us the answer.

In his top grade guns, Bill uses the excellent Wolff springs. This is all to the good, even though I'm one of those reactionaries who went back to the Colt 17 to 18

“... a gun you can count on in a match or on the street, or whenever the chips are down ...”

pound recoil spring. This pistol, however, had a mainspring that would have done justice to Black & Decker's heaviest staplegun. A 1911 hammer doesn't need too much in the way of impetus, and the over-heavy spring was slamming the gun before the bullet was probably clearing the barrel.

I called Bill, who said that his guns usually come with standard-weight mainsprings, and my sample must have been an oddity. In any case, insertion of a GI mainspring solved the problem. Trigger and hammer now worked like a good hardball target pistol, though hammer-follow when the slide dropped was still a little unnerving. In fairness, Bill says this sample was a gun of his own that was due for re-tuning.

In any case, the next match netted me second place in Master class. In the Wilson, I had a better gun than the fellow who won; his gun, unfortunately, came equipped with a better shooter.

The gun had proven its excellent handling qualities to me, and something more important. Both matches were held at a club in one of America's major cities, which happens to be located smack in the center of an intensely high crime area. I

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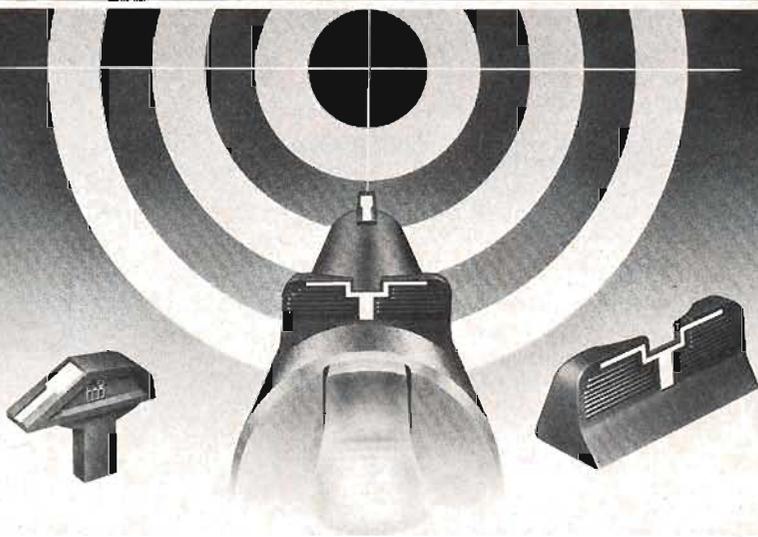
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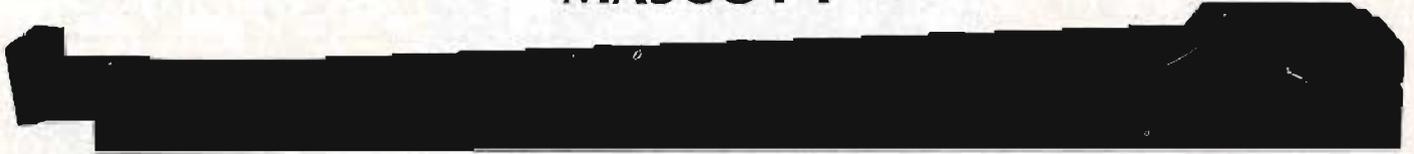
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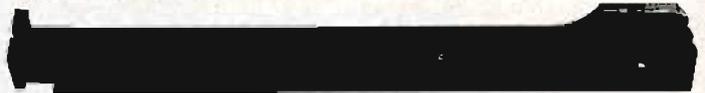


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shoot there often, and I go down with my competition guns in a case and a loaded, condition one .45 on my belt. After testing the Wilson Master Grade with all manner of ammo from reject handloads on up, and experiencing no malfunctions in several hundred shots, I went to both these events with my competition gun loaded in my waistband, and left the same way.

Like I said, a gun you can count on in a match or on the street, or whenever the chips are down . . .

I'll tell you how confident Bill is in his guns. After he lent me my samples, with no further contact between us, he started using me as a "blind referral" for potential customers, and my phone started ringing at 11 p.m.

I told them what I'll tell you now. Three-inch 50 yard groups *are* all you need for freestyle combat shooting, but you need more for bullseye, or Laramie's long range, tiny target, or big money match. And you probably want something a bit tighter for 50 yard shooting in PPC, now that NRA and NMSS have opened Police Combat to the auto. But any gun tight enough to win those matches, is a gun I for one would never carry on the street.

If your game is IPSC on the range and survival on the street, a top grade Wilson will do it all for you, and your ticket is in the \$500-600 range, which is reasonable these days. Especially when you're getting two guns in one. Reliability? I couldn't make one jam, in my tests.

If you've read me at all, you know I don't hand out praise lavishly. Take it from whence it comes, then, when I tell you Wilson's Master Grade .45 auto is the most versatile custom Colt I've yet seen, and probably, the best dollar value.

Current price lists and delivery date projections are available from Wilson's Gun Shop, 101-103 Public Square, Berryville, Ark. 72616. 

SOKOLOVSKY .45

(Continued from page 43)

dry comfort. Paul set sand bags on the bench and fired a few shots to demonstrate the weapon's function and to set the sights. We used cartridges loaded with 4.6 grains of Bullseye behind a 200 grain Hensley and Gibbs 68 bullet for the test. This load has always been very popular with practical pistol competitors because of the power and accuracy it provides. When Paul was satisfied, he handed me the pistol and a magazine full of ammo and told me to give it a go.

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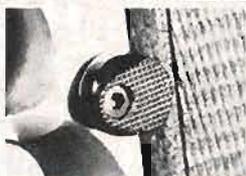
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place the tip of the right forefinger on the safety bar and press firmly to the rear until it stops, then release the safety bar; the safety is now set. As a quick check on the condition of the weapon, the shooter may view the safety indicator at the rear of the piece; if the indicator is protruding from the rear of the pistol, the safety is engaged. To take the piece off safety, the shooter need only press the safety bar to the rear again and release it. I sat down at the bench and loaded the piece. The action was smooth without the clicks and other noises related to the auto pistols currently on the market. The slide moves easily fore and aft with no other apparent parts movement. I held a sight picture as close as I could, considering the rain and poor light in which we were shooting, and fired a six-shot group. The trigger was a clean crisp three-pound let-off with no detectable overtravel and to my surprise the piece delivers very little recoil to the shooter's hand. The muzzle raises only a bit in recoil and cycle time is almost instantaneous. When the Sunnyvale Range Master called a cease fire, we retrieved my 25 yard target which showed the proof of the pistol, a 1 7/8" extreme spread six-shot group.

We recovered the spent brass for exam-

"I believe that this pistol could have an impressive future as a big bore target gun."

ination. The cases showed no swells at the head or any other signs which might indicate that the action had started to open before the bullet left the barrel. From all appearances the delayed blow-back system worked perfectly.

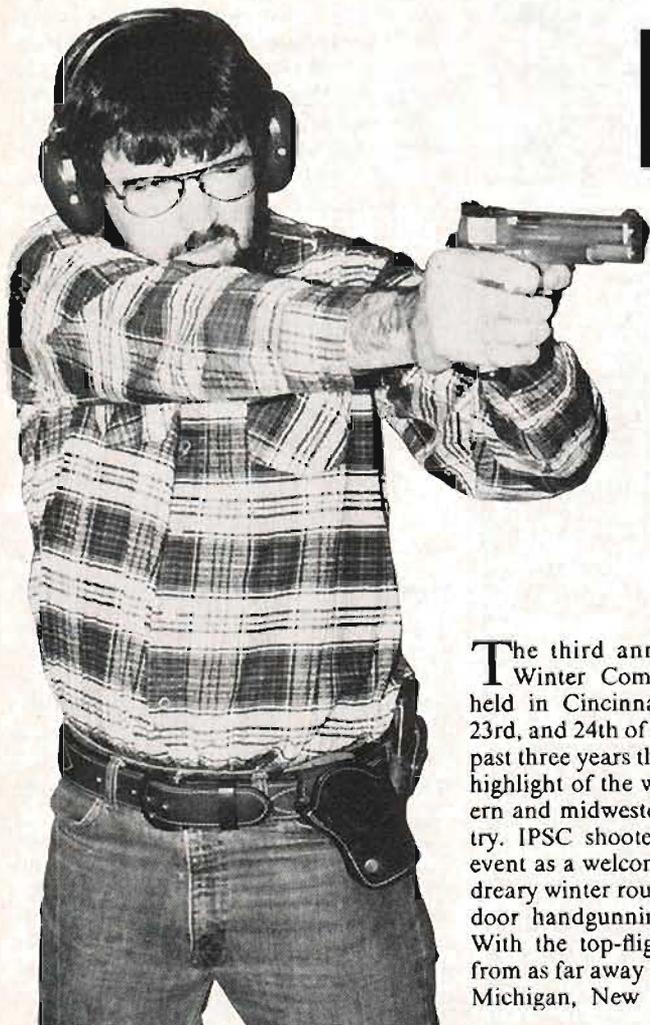
Due to the pistol's heavy weight, its safety which requires the use of the trigger finger for disengagement and the magazine release which requires the use of both hands, Paul's pistol will never be in contention with Colt or Browning as a Combat or service pistol. However, because of the pistol's virtues, such as its very mild recoil, its fine trigger action provided by the striker firing mechanism and its accuracy potential, I believe that this pistol could have an impressive future as a big bore target gun.

I would like to see Paul redesign his pistol to reduce the size of the grip frame and reduce the weight a bit, but I think he should retain his other features, including the six-inch barrel.

Paul J. Sokolovsky and his pistols are well worth watching. His first prototype met all his design objectives of function and accuracy. It is a pleasure to shoot. I am looking forward to getting my hands on his next model.



TARGETWORLD MATCHES



A Transplanted Southern Californian Brings IPSC Shooting To Midwest To Break Up The Dreary Winter Routine...With Targetworld Of Cincinnati The Host Club.

By Rick Miller

The third annual Targetworld Mid-Winter Combat Championship was held in Cincinnati, Ohio, on the 22nd, 23rd, and 24th of February, 1980. Over the past three years this match has become the highlight of the winter season in the eastern and midwestern sections of the country. IPSC shooters look forward to this event as a welcome break in the cold and dreary winter routine that stifles most outdoor handgunning at this time of year. With the top-flight pistoleros coming in from as far away as Arkansas, New Jersey, Michigan, New Hampshire, New York,

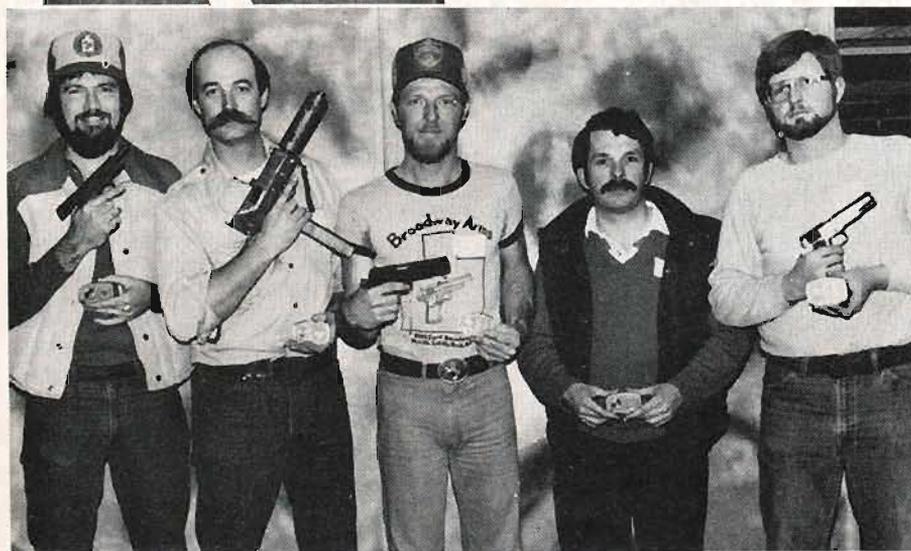
Florida, and many other states, this gathering also provides a good chance for practical shooters from all points of the compass to get together, visit, and trade the latest news. A total of seventy-five signed up to compete this year.

This unique match got its start as the brainchild of Dave Churilla, a practical shooter who was introduced to the sport in southern California with the Southwest Pistol League. When Dave moved to Cincinnati he was appalled to discover that very little freestyle practical shooting activity existed in this area. With a little encouragement, coaching, and advice from Ken Hackathorn and myself, Dave decided to promote an off-season match to introduce the IPSC shooting program to the Cincinnati area.

In February of 1978 the first Mid-Winter match was held at the Targetworld indoor range facility, 12117 Princeton Road, Cincinnati, Ohio 45246. Fifty-three shooters participated, and by all accounts that initial effort was a resounding success. Dave Churilla and his pretty wife, Barbara, did a first-rate job of organizing the match and introducing practical shooting to the southwestern Ohio region. Ken Hackathorn took top honors.

The Cincinnati locale has a very active PPC program, with many participating shooters. Quite a few of these handgunners turned out at the first Targetworld Mid-Winter Match to participate, watch, and find out what the IPSC shooting program is all about.

So much interest was generated as a result of the first Targetworld match that the nearby Butler County Sportsman's



The winners at the 1980 Targetworld Mid-Winter Combat Championships. From left: Mike Plaxco, High Overall; Ken Hackathorn, First A Class; Ron Talley, First B Class; John Fetters, First C Class; Denny Malone, First Novice.

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Club of Hamilton, Ohio, got into the act later in the summer of 1978. A trial four-match program was sponsored to test shooter participation and to pave the way for a full schedule of shoots in 1979. Two shooters who took part in the 1978 Targetworld Match were responsible for the involvement of the Butler County Sportsman's Club. These two are Marshall Todd and Dale McGee, and they continue in their important leadership roles to date. As of this writing, club activity has been highly successful, with a full season under its belt in 1979, and a full program scheduled for 1980. Interest, influence, and par-

"When Dave moved to Cincinnati he was appalled to discover that very little freestyle shooting activity existed in the area."

ticipation have been spreading throughout the entire area. One key to this highly successful program has been the fact that club leaders and members alike have listened to and readily accepted advice on match administration and shooting technique, thereby avoiding many frustrating mistakes.

When Dave Churilla moved out of the Cincinnati area, Bill Lippmier, owner and operator of the Targetworld facility, decided to host the 1979 match himself. This second shoot, like the first, was a simple stand-up match, with no unusual movement or action required of the shooter. Chappie Gennett of Ashville, North Carolina, always a top contender, won this one.

The 1980 match, also organized by Bill Lippmier, was set up on a different format than the first two shoots. This year's match was an indoor assault course, and proved to be very demanding indeed. The course was laid out across the range, so that on his first run the shooter traversed from right to left, and on the second run from left to right. Along the way he had to shoot through windows at shoulder level and ground level, crawl through a tunnel, and carefully avoid "innocent bystander" targets that got in the way!

At the left side of the range the shooter even had to cope with a small dark house. As the contestant moved into the doorway he stepped on a floor switch that activated a light in the room. When the light came on the shooter had three seconds to engage two targets with two shots apiece before the room went dark again.

In running the course it was permissible to fire as many shots as you wished at each

target, but only the two highest hits from each run counted for score. To stop the clock at the end of the course it was necessary to knock over an eight-inch steel plate at fifteen yards.

After the shooter's second run, the top four hits were scored on each target. The total score was then divided by the total time for both runs, and multiplied by one hundred. A modified form of the Comstock scoring system.

This year Mike Plaxco of Little Rock, Arkansas, took high overall honors with a score of 264.41. Mike's times for the two runs were 35.09 and 35.26 seconds, respectively. These were very fast times, and were backed up by a respectable point total of 186.

Ken Hackathorn of Marietta, Ohio, won A Class with a score of 264.15. High B Class shooter was Ron Talley of Little Rock. John Fetters, also of Little Rock, captured C Class. While Denny Malone of Cincinnati was the top shooter in Novice Class.

The duel between Mike Plaxco and Ken Hackathorn for top honors was very close. They each fired identical numerical scores of 186 points. But Mike's total time for the two runs was faster by seven one hundredths of a second! In this particular instance these two pistoleros were about as evenly matched as it is humanly possible to be.

While this match could not compare with some of the larger and more liberally funded events of recent memory in the total value of prizes awarded, it was quite

"This year, Mike Plaxco of Little Rock, Arkansas took high over all honors..."

respectable, nonetheless. Mike Plaxco took home a new Colt MK-IV, Ken Hackathorn a MAC 10 plus \$200.00 for Federal tax, Ron Talley a Colt MK-IV, John Fetters a certificate for one week at the Chapman Academy, and Denny Malone also took home a Colt MK-IV. Prizes were awarded through third place in each of the four classes.

Prizes were donated variously by the Wetzel Arms Company, a Class III dealership, the Ray Chapman Academy, Bianchi Gunleather, Behlert's Custom Gunshop, and Wilson's Gunshop. Altogether, the total list was valued at approximately \$3000.00.

Additional to the match itself, in the lobby of the range complex, a number of display tables had been set up. These were occupied by Behlert's Custom Gunshop and Wilson's Gunshop, both of which cater to the practical handgunner; Devel Corporation, with their S&W M39 and

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M59 conversions, and the Top-Line Company, makers of soft body armor. All of these displays generated quite a bit of interest on the part of spectators and shooters alike.

All in all, the third annual Targetworld Mid-Winter Combat Championship came off very well. As might be expected, things did not go absolutely perfectly. There was some dissatisfaction expressed over the modified Comstock scoring system, and one or two other points. However, the match was well run and administered in most respects. Next year should see these details ironed out, and hopefully, this unique off-season shoot will continue to grow. Bill Lippmier, of Targetworld, deserves the thanks of all freestyle practical handgunners for continuing to promote this match, that has done so much to spread interest in the IPSC shooting program through the midwestern United States.



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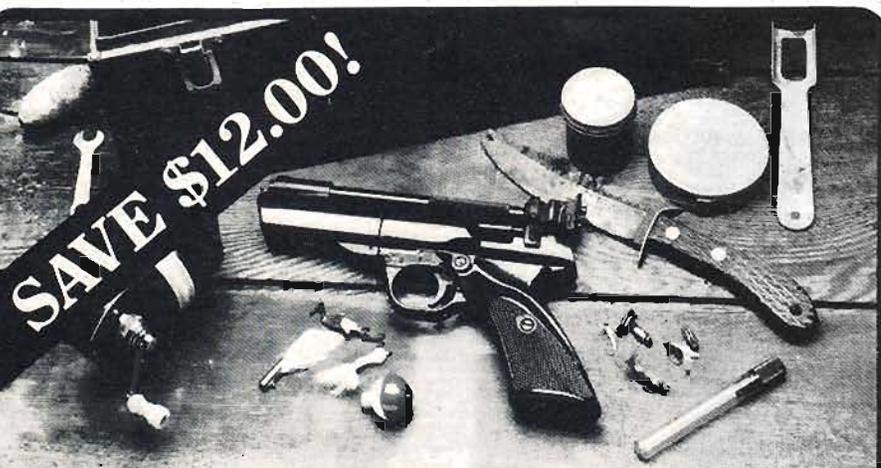
Page 4, July/August edition says: "AMERICAN HANDGUNNER is published bi-monthly . . ." etc. If this is true, I and all subscribers have not received two issues per month. That's the meaning of "bi-monthly." Suggest you either publish twice per month or change your masthead!

Sincerely,
Richard S. Ramos

Sorry Richard, according to the Standard Directory of Publications, "bi-monthly" means every two months. "Semi-monthly" would be twice each month. AMERICAN HANDGUNNER Magazine is published six times a year—call it what you like.—Ed.

SERVICE GUN MATCHES FOR POLICE SHOOTERS

I wholeheartedly agree with Lucy in her column SIGHT SETTINGS. I am a school teacher and auxiliary police officer. I just had a custom job done to my Model 19 that included: Pachmayr grips, smooth trigger and an action job. Speaking for several shooting acquaintances, pistol matches using service revolvers with no more customizing than I have listed would be a welcome sight. Your



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article came at the right time because a few of us are in the thinking stage of planning a combat shooting range. Any advice concerning rules, regulations, etc., would be appreciated. This will be our first attempt at competition shooting. Over-customized guns had really put a damper on us even thinking of getting into competition.

Gary Thibodaux
Thibodaux, Louisiana

CHANGING NRA RULES TO LIMIT CUSTOM PPC

I have noticed Lucy's comments in her column on necessary changes to the PPC rules, and I agree with her basic premise. I would like to suggest the following: A) Trigger pulls minimum of 2½ S.A. and 6 lbs. D.A. in revolvers. B) Sights: factory or reasonable replacements—Behlert, Clark or Elliason. C) Times: Reduce time in all matches . . . especially 7-yard stage. I am a custom pistolsmith and feel that the pieces we furnish for the PPC are impractical. I'd like to see the NRA-PPC opened to civilians. I'm afraid most cops feel competition shooting to be an infringement on their spare time. I am speaking of my area, of course.

W. R. Moore
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

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I love holsters. I read all the ads. I buy. I've bought them for .380, for .45 and .38 S&W Chiefs. But more than half of them don't fit. In fact, I'll make available absolutely free the last three holsters I've bought just to prove my point. (I wish I'd saved the four that I threw away.) Guns don't fit. The gun doesn't fit comfortably into the holster and/or the leather strap guard is not long enough to reach the snap. I'd pay double the advertised price for a holster that does fit. I wish I knew somebody that would give me a fair shake.

Fred Thomson
Evansville, Indiana

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Hooray for Lucy Chambliss and her plea to get more international shooting events out of that sweat tank up the road from here (Phoenix). But I'll bet she ruined the digestion and disposition of some mossbacks at NRA headquarters. They have a fix on inflicting heatstroke, sunburn, grit,

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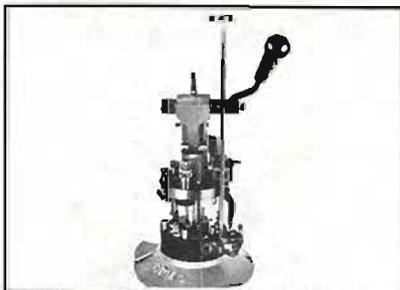
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glare and the sweats on international shooters (along with some other interesting anachronisms).

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Bill R. Davidson
Tucson, AZ

Norma is loading this .38 magnum with a 110 gr. JHP bullet. Watch for our Test Report in the March/April issue.—Ed.

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Bob Bajor
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We read with great interest the feature article, "How to coach a woman's pistol team," by A. C. Greenstein in the May/June 1980 American Handgunner.

Please be advised that Mr. Lowell W. Raines, subject of the article, is not "the only man in the U.S. who is presently coaching an all-woman civilian pistol team." Dominick M. Iannelli, an NRA certified pistol instructor, has coached our all-woman team since its inception one year ago.

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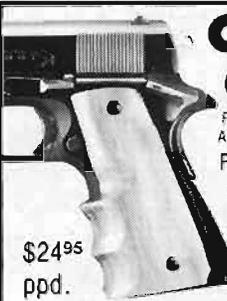
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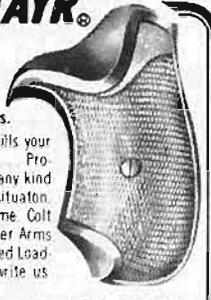
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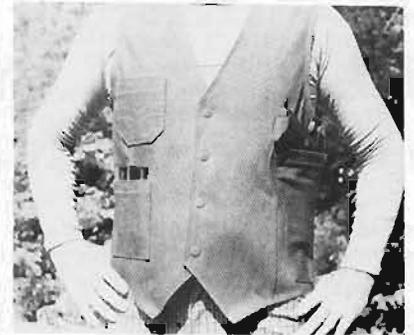
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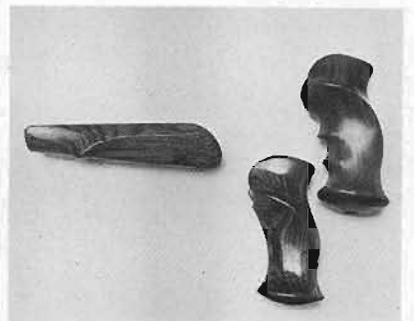
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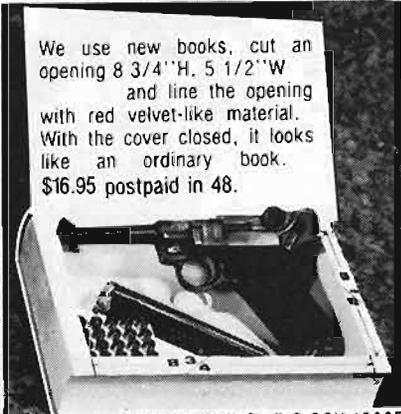


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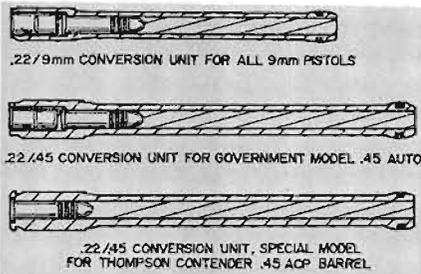
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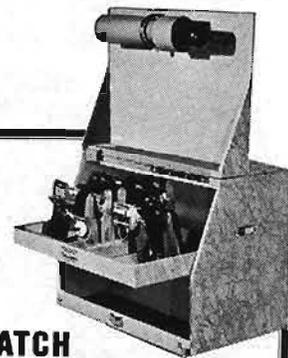
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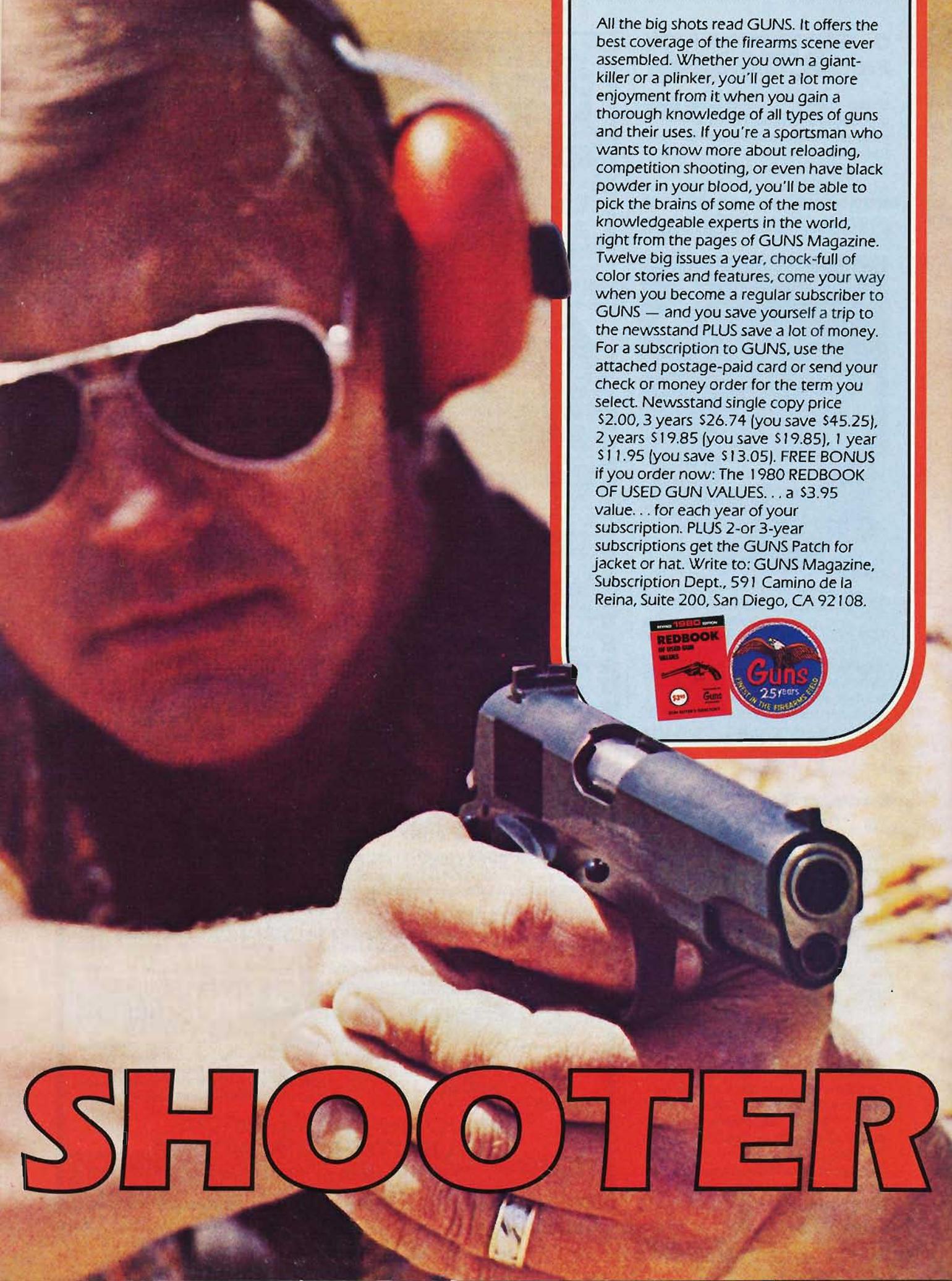
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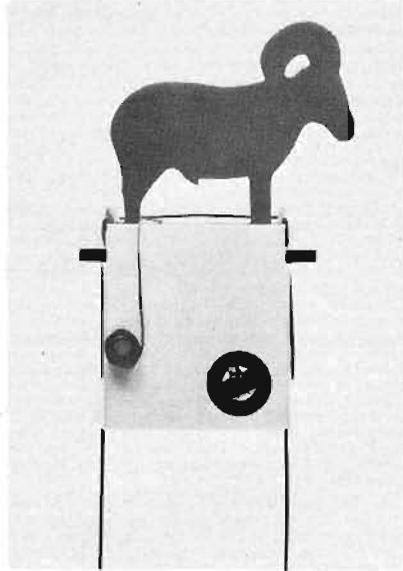


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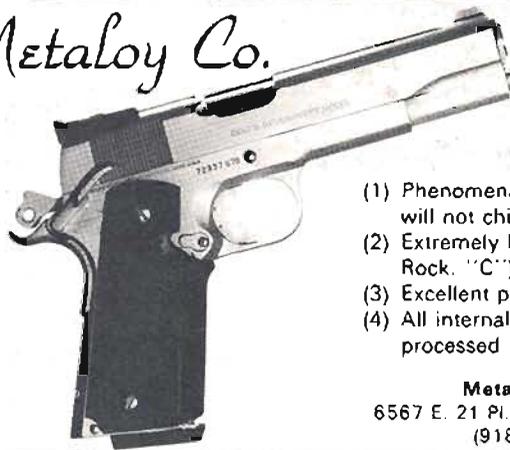
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WHAT'S NEW

(Continued from page 73)

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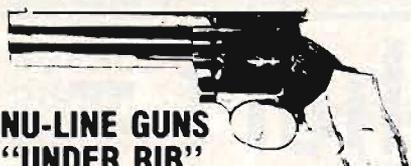
Beeman's No-Hole Resetting Targets have a suggested retail price of \$9.98. For more information contact Max Cooperstein, National Sales Manager for Beeman's, at 47PR Paul Drive, Dept. AH, San Rafael, California 94903.

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Bushnell Optical Company, a division of Bausch & Lomb, announces the introduction of a 16 to 36 power rubber armored field telescope. Ideal for hunters judging trophy heads or gauging the size of distant game, the new zoom Trophy is especially designed for rugged field use. Non-slip rubber armored covering makes the Trophy 50mm prismatic spotting scope easy to grip and hold.

The new zoom Trophy has a compact prismatic optical system, and



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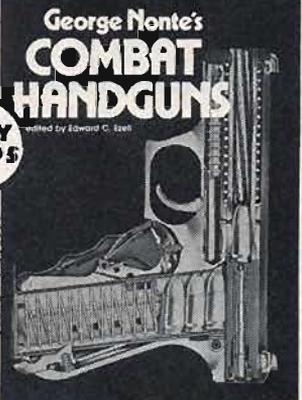
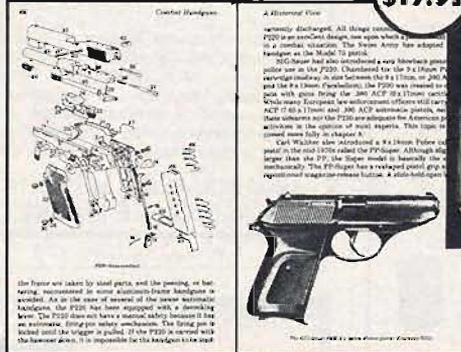
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For further information, write Bushnell Optical Company, Dept. AH, 2828 East Foothill Boulevard, Pasadena, CA 91107.

Reloaders Die Set Box Features Stem Storage



Pacific Tool Company, of Grand Island, Nebraska, has announced a new die storage box that features built-in convenience for reloaders. Starting with 1980 production, all Durachrome and Deluxe Carbide die set boxes will feature cut-outs in the inner box wall for storage of extra seating stems and a locating pin in the center die station for storage of the shell holder when not in use. These features were incorporated into the die box to help reloaders save bench space and organize their components for storage.

All die sets produced after January 1, 1980, will be delivered in the new die box, and extra die boxes are available from your Pacific dealer for \$2.00 each. For more new ideas on reloading, send 50¢ to Pacific Tool Company, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 2048, Grand Island, Nebraska 68801, and receive the 1980 Pacific catalog.

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O.A.H.A. NEWS

The time will soon be drawing near when the Selection Committee will be searching for the one person who will walk away with the honors at the 1981 Awards banquet. They will be studying the list of nominees provided by the Nominating Committee under the chairmanship of Bill Jordan. But where does Bill and his group get their list of people who should be nominated? Not from the Yellow Pages, but from input by you and every other member of the OAHA Foundation.

If you have been saying to yourself: "Why don't they ever nominate guys like my friend Joe, who has worked his ass off to promote handgunning?" Well, the answer is that we don't know Joe, and unless you, or someone like you tells us about him, we'll never know.

How do you go about getting your favorite's name in front of the Nominating Committee? Simple, just drop a note to: Bill Jordan, OAHA, Box 45-70, Bloomingdale, OH 43910. Give us his name and address, and a few lines on why you think he (or she) should be nominated. Bill and his crew will give careful consideration to every nomination sent to them. Get yours in before November 15th. Remember, though, no one can be nominated two years in a row. The nine nominees who did not win the award this year cannot be nominated again until 1982.

Chairman J.D. Jones has everything under control. The office, files and paperwork are all on track after the move from the offices of the past Chairman, Larry Kelly. About the only thing missing is a big stack of mail from new members. Those who now support the Foundation with their membership dues are not expected to do a whole lot of leg work. But too many seem to forget all about the Foundation after they send in their check. At the bottom of this page is a handy coupon. Why not stick it in your wallet or gun box, and take it out whenever you are talking handguns to friends. I know that you guys do not hesitate to talk up a new load, bullet, sights or whatever; why not the same enthusiasm for your handgunning organization?

If anyone out there has any bright ideas on how we can recruit new members, let us hear from you.

For membership information, please write to the OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS FOUNDATION, P.O. Box 45-70, Bloomingdale, Ohio 43910. (Note: Annual, Life, and Endowment memberships are available.)

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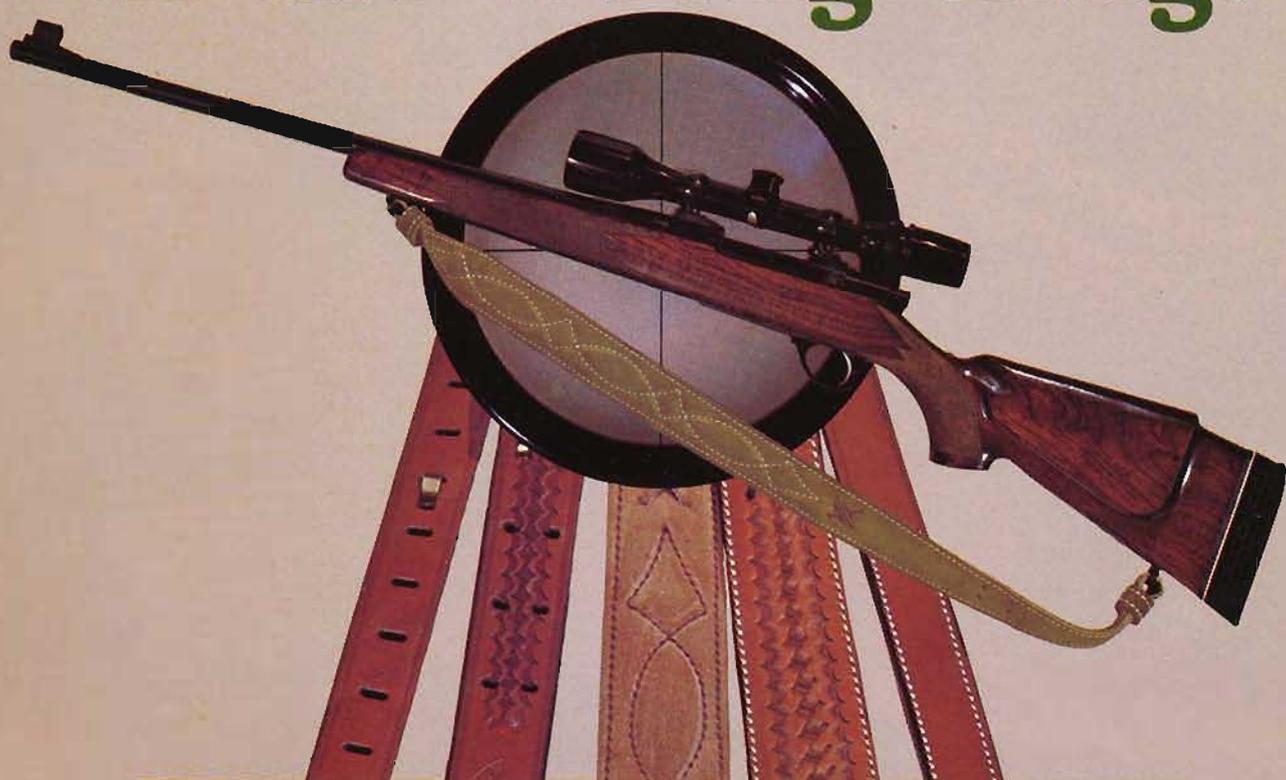
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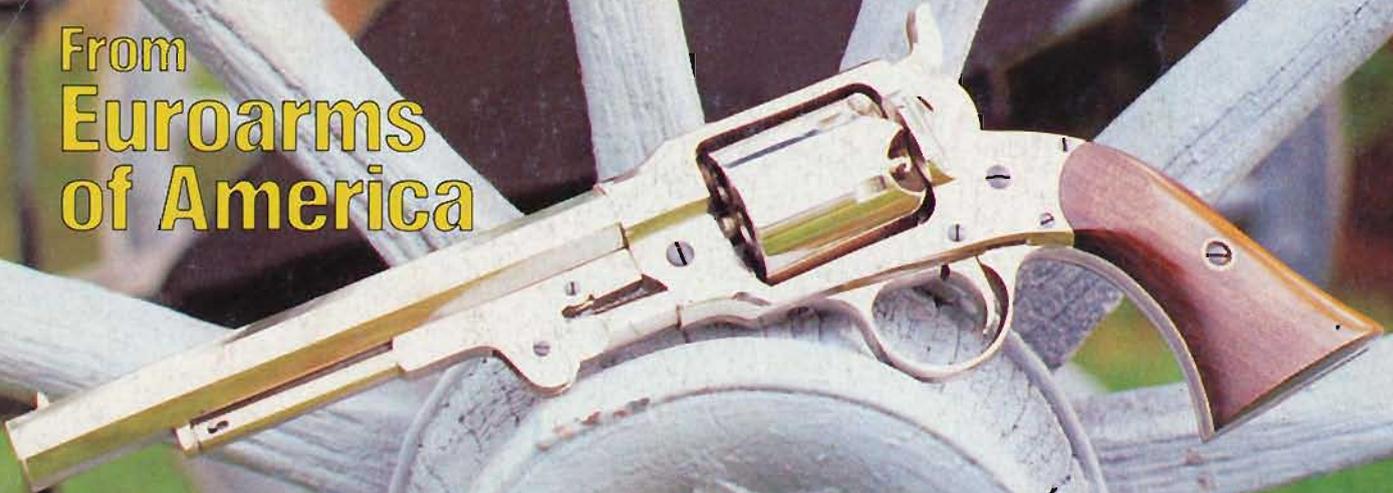
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