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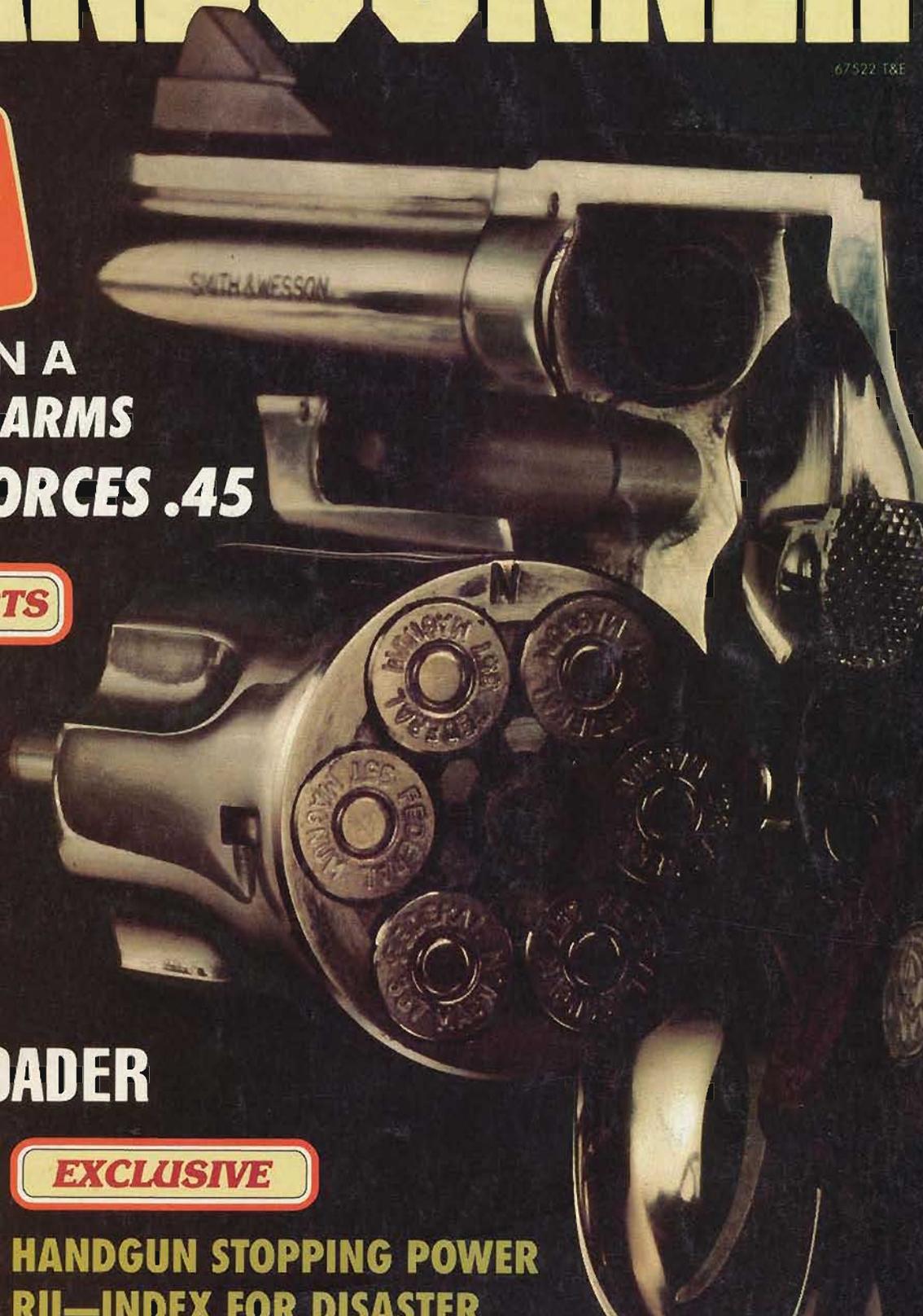
**AIMPOINT
SIGHT**

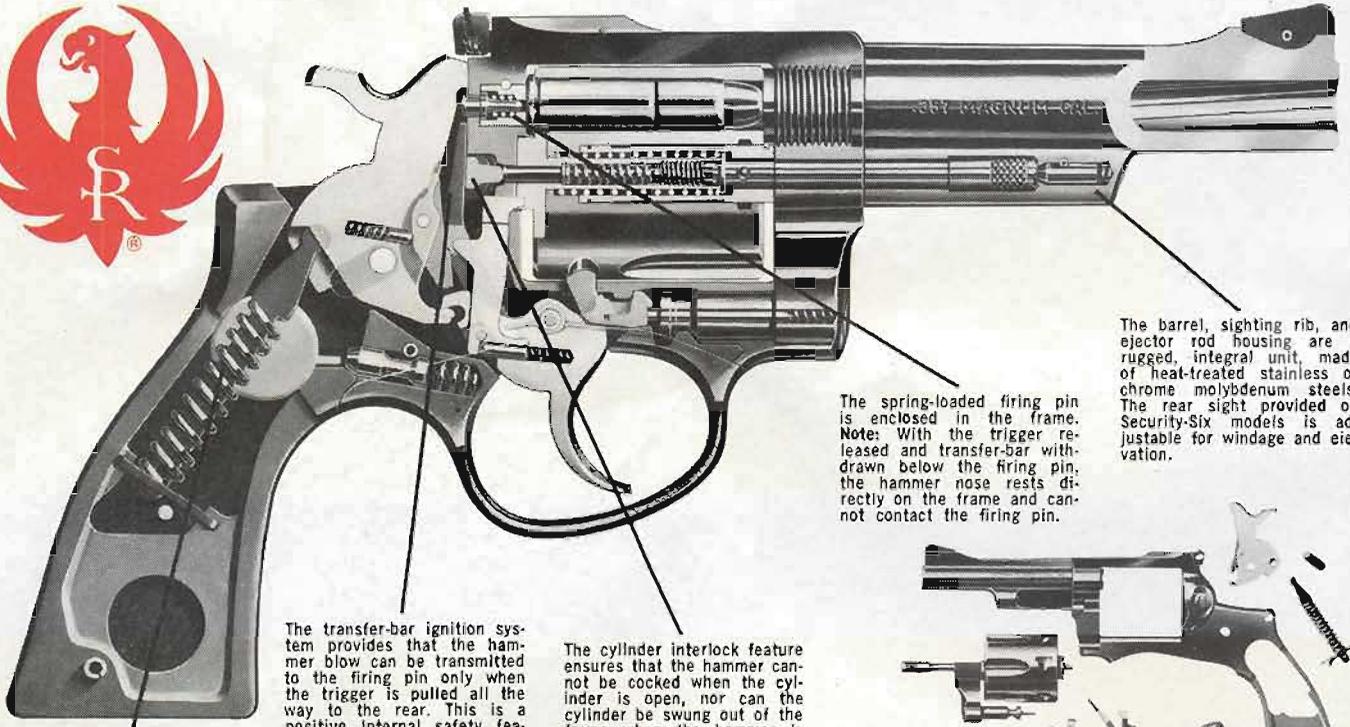
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**HANDGUN STOPPING POWER
R11—INDEX FOR DISASTER**





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.

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 Note: With the trigger released and transfer-bar withdrawn below the firing pin, the hammer nose rests directly on the frame and cannot contact the firing pin.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

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



FIELD STRIPPED VIEW

RUGER® Double Action Revolvers

These are the revolvers created by Ruger engineers who started with a fresh sheet of paper and an unlimited budget! There is nothing in the design of these Ruger double action revolvers which is there simply because "it has always been done that way"; nothing which reflects a commitment to outmoded production methods or obsolescent factory facilities. Representing a significant improvement in design, these revolvers incorporate creative Ruger engineering, sophisticated manufacturing techniques, and superior materials.

The Ruger design philosophy of strength, simplicity, and ease of maintenance has been applied throughout the design of these revolvers. Composed of a series of integrated subassemblies, the Ruger double action revolver can be field stripped to its basic components in seconds, without the use of tools. The entire lock mechanism is installed through the bottom of the grip frame as a unit, permitting the use of solid frame side-walls which contribute to the great strength of these revolvers. The complex milled-out frames and delicately fitted side-plates of other double action revolvers, and the difficulties of maintenance and weaknesses inherent in older designs are eliminated entirely.

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.

In addition to traditional Ruger quality and dependable performance, the shooter enjoys the advantages of the durable stainless steel mechanism parts, even in standard blued models.



Ruger Security-Six Revolver in 357 Magnum caliber with rear sight adjustable for windage and elevation. Choice of 2 3/4", 4", or 6" barrel in blued finish or stainless steel.



Ruger Police Service-Six Revolver in 357 Magnum, 38 Special, and 9 mm parabellum (blued model only) calibers with fixed sights. Choice of 2 3/4" or 4" barrel in blued finish or stainless steel.



Ruger Speed-Six Revolver with compact round butt in 357 Magnum, 38 Special, and 9 mm parabellum (blued model only) calibers with fixed sights. Choice of 2 3/4" or 4" barrel in blued finish or stainless steel.

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 Southport, Connecticut 06490 U.S.A.

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Some of the Good Ol' Boys squeezing off a few rounds near the Wapshel grade on the Salmon River breaks.



GET THE WHOLE SHOOTIN' MATCH
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YOU'LL SEE OUR NEW, ALUMINUM CASE 38s IN SMALL GROUPS EVERYWHERE.

It seems about half the Good Ol' Boys at CCI are plinkers. And the other half are paper punchers. But they all have one thing in common. They like the idea of shooting more and spending less. Which is exactly why they got together and developed the new, non-reloadable aluminum case Blazer 38.

In fact, an independent lab compared Blazer with brass cartridge 38s, and found that Blazer performed as well as all other factory ammo. Yet they cost less than a normal round.

So if you like plinking or paper punching, we think you'll like our new Blazer 38s.

Especially when you see them perform in small groups.

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

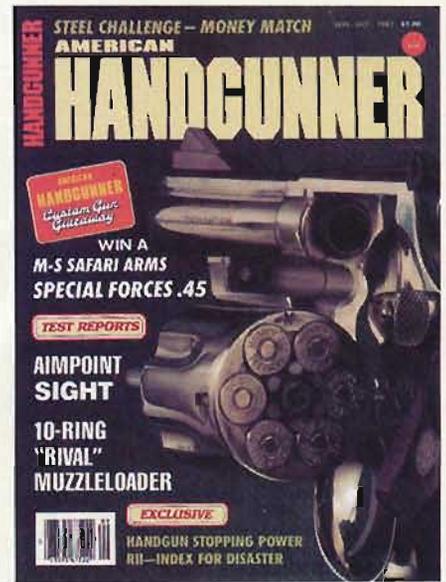
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SPEAK OUT

NEW .40 CAL. 'SUPERIOR TO LEGENDARY' .45 ACP

In the May-June issue of the *American Handgunner*, you received a letter from C. Dan Hoots of Rowland, North Carolina in which he makes several comments about his perceived decline of IPSC. He also made an interesting statement concerning a "new .40 caliber round."

For Mr. Hoots' information, as well as your general reading public, the .40 caliber round that he makes reference to has been conceived by none other than Jeff Cooper, with the engineering and development having been carried out by my firm. This round was developed to be the most efficient and optimum cartridge specifically for use as a defense combat round. All testing we've done to date indicates it is superior in stopping power to the legendary .45 ACP/230-grain hardball round.

This cartridge, designated the "10mm auto" soon to be manufactured by Hornady Manufacturing Company and to be mated with the already famous Bren

Ten combat pistol, propels a 200-grain JTC projectile at between 1,100-1,200 fps and produces between 538- and 640-foot pounds of energy at the muzzle. It retains more kinetic energy at 100 yards than the .45 ACP does at the muzzle. This cartridge, combined with the 12-round capacity of the Bren Ten and its amazing controllability, might help to shed a little light on the question Mr. Hoots asks. "How would it fare in a fire fight?" My answer quite simply is, better than any other combat cartridge.

Michael W. Dixon
Cerritos, California

COP SEEKS MORE ON-RANGE PRACTICE

I have recently become involved in our department's shooting program as range officer. The plan is that we will all be trained and certified as instructors by the state and the NRA.

I have read many of your (Massad Ayoob) articles in the *American Handgunner* and I am pleased with what I read.

The reason that I am writing is that I believe that our shooting program is not only lacking in practice, but there is very little in the way of practical training, in my opinion. Our qualification course involves shooting at close range and we do some

reloading; however, the firing and reloading is designed for those officers who carry their extra rounds in loop carriers. The majority of our officers, however, use speedloaders or drop pouches, therefore, reloading is done from pockets. Not very practical.

Would you please suggest some training techniques for a police department where the majority of officers carry S&W 66s; please include courses of fire, reloading, and night shooting. In regards to night shooting, we have had next to nothing in the way of training.

Mark R. Jones
Police Dept.
Ann Arbor, Michigan

STICK WITH .38 SPEC. INSTEAD OF .357 MAG.

The letter from the Mississippi reader who says he can't qualify with the ammunition he carries on duty (May-June issue of *American Handgunner*, disturbed me intensely, and prompted me to write and express my views on the subject.

"Officers," such as that writer, collectively form one of the major obstacles faced by those dedicated to the professionalization of law enforcement. That letter illustrates the best argument I know *against* allowing police to carry .357 Magnum revolvers: Your (Massad

Continued on page 50

When you know the facts you'll think these knives are beautiful

At first glance, you'll probably think they won't win any beauty contests. But that black rubber "Posi-Grip" handle makes Smith & Wesson American Series fixed blade hunting knives real hard working beauties. Just look at the facts. **FACT:** The Posi-Grip handle gives you a sure, slip-proof grip no matter what the weather—it simply doesn't transmit cold.

FACT: The flat sides of the

Posi-Grip snug into your hand to insure perfect edge control whether you're working blade up or blade down. **FACT:** American Series knives have full length tangs to help keep the Posi-Grip handle securely in position for years of trouble-free service. **FACT:** These knives are so good they come with a full five year warranty!

FACT: Blades are 440 stainless, shaped for maximum strength and flat ground to a razor sharp edge. **FACT:** You've got a choice of four blade styles on the business side of that solid brass guard. So heft one at your S&W dealer. Then you'll agree. Here's one beautiful family of hunting knives. And that is a fact. Smith & Wesson, Springfield, Massachusetts 01101.



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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

GUN CONTROL OUTLOOK HINGED TO WHAT SIDE HAS MOST MONEY

Looking ahead... we have seen drawings of a .45 auto with double-action first shot and single-action thereafter; non-Colt National Match .45's; L frame-type barrels for S&W K frames; Ruger Security Six and Redhawk revolvers; a S&W M19 converted to handle .38, .357, 9mm, 9mm mag. and .380, interchangeably, and a S&W M25 that will handle .45 Colt, .45 and .45 Mag. in one cylinder.

We understand that the .357 Super Magnum that has been whispered about is fast becoming a reality, with ammo already in the works and a revolver in the testing stage.

BANGOR PUNTA

One of the problems of being part of a big conglomerate is that you have no control over what the corporate people say. The remarks of Bangor Punta's chairman, at a recent stockholders meeting, that there may have been "... some kind of monkey business" in the Defense Department's decision that none of the bidders for the new military pistol had met required specifications, and his views on gun control, are sure to cause some consternation at Smith & Wesson.

COLT

Colt had multiple problems at the NRA Show in Philadelphia; first, the show manager said its booth was too high, and threatened to prevent them from exhibiting. The problem was solved when the NRA announced that the show manager was being replaced. The other problem was caused by the strike at the Colt plant, which prevented some of its key people from attending the show.

NRA SHOW

Speaking of the NRA Show, it was one of the best attended shows in a long time. It's too bad that more people didn't have a chance to see some of the new items that were shown at the SHOT Show in Atlanta earlier this year. The NRA has a rule that only production guns can be exhibited, so outfits like Magnum Research didn't have its Eagle on display.

AMERICAN PISTOLSMITHS GUILD

It was good to see the booth of The American Pistolsmiths Guild, where the folks had a chance to meet some of the

great pistolsmiths the readers of *American Handgunner* have come to know. Lou Ciamillo, Jim Clark, Ron Power, Alan Marvel and Jerry Moran were a few I spotted at the booth; Joe Kassay and Jim Arbes, who had their own booth at the show, were also available to anyone who wanted to examine some of the finest pistolsmithing in the U.S.

SIGHT TREND

If there was one "trend" evident at the show, it was a feeling that within the next couple of years, every handgun in the world will be fitted with either a scope, or one of the non-optical sights. The booth of Aimpoint was packed almost every minute of the show, and the number of people showing handgun scope mounts seemed to increase almost hourly. Keeping some of the heavier sights on hard-kicking pistols is a problem, and we saw mounts that tried to solve the problem with everything from having four-to-six screws going into the gun, to those that looked like trestle bridges.

BIANCHI FRONTIER MUSEUM

In the more than 25 years I've been around the gun business, I've seen handguns by the thousands, and single-action Colts by the tens of thousands. But I was mighty impressed the other day when I attended the opening of John Bianchi's Frontier Museum. Located next to his holster plant in Temecula, California, this 25,000 square foot building houses Western memorabilia in displays that are amazingly authentic. No plastic gun models or reproduction holsters here. And single-action galore—many owned by famous and infamous gunfighters. One section of the museum is dedicated to the



late John Wayne, and the 8-foot bronze of the "Duke" alone is worth the trip to Temecula. If you're within 100 miles of Southern California, and if you have any interest at all in the Old West, a visit to this museum is a must. For information, write Frontier Museum, 27999 Front St., Temecula, CA 92390.

CALIFORNIANS, NOTE

In a concerted effort to stop passage of the California anti-gun initiative, a coalition of pro-gun groups has been formed.

Made up of such organizations as the California Wildlife Federation, California Pistol & Rifle Assn., Gun Owners of California and the Southern California Arms Collectors Assn., the coalition will coordinate all of the efforts required to defeat the initiative.

Isn't it a hell of a note when the future of one of our constitutional freedoms is dependent on who raises the most money? I think it was Julius Caesar who said: "You need three things to win a war; money, money and money." What ever happened to right and wrong, logic and justice?

For information on how you can help, contact The Citizens Against the Gun Initiative, 1543 W. Olympic Blvd. (526), Los Angeles, CA 90015.

There is no time for dilly-dallying!



IPSC orders unique handgun targets

The International Practical Shooting Confederation (IPSC) has authorized TM-Industries of Santa Monica, California to produce a unique target for its handgun competitors.

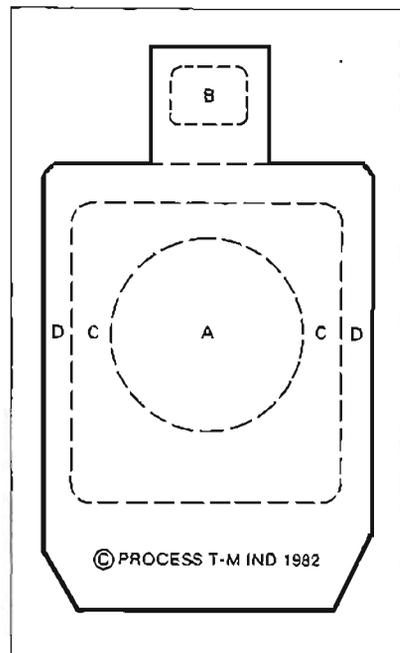
Art Benjamin, T-M president, said the target ("Milpark") is man-size, has no aim point and features perforated, rather than printed, lines to facilitate scoring.

The heavy cardboard target makes for easy handling, said Benjamin, who produces the official "tombstone" targets for the Bianchi Cup matches.

Benjamin came up with the idea for perforated lines in 1977, when he noticed the conventional printed lines on IPSC targets were irregular and too wide for accurate scoring.

When asked why there was no aim point on the target, Benjamin replied, "No 'attacker' presents himself, gun in hand, with an 'X' ring painted on his chest, does he?"

For more information on the "Milpark" targets, write Benjamin at POB 68, Santa Monica, CA 90406.



With this "Milpark" target, major caliber (.357 Mag., .41 Mag., .44 Mag. and .45 ACP) hits score 5 (A), 4 (B and C) and 2 (D); minor calibers (.38 Spec. and 9mm, for example), score 5 (A), 3 (B and C) and 1 (D).

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Available in three barrel lengths and chambered for 22LR, it's perfect for plinking, target shooting, or small game hunting. The rugged, dependable and accurate New Frontier, with fully adjustable rear sight and ramp-style front sight, at your Colt dealer—right out of the old West.

Because only Colt makes a Colt.

Be a safe shooter—Never chamber a round until you are ready to shoot.

Always read and follow the instruction manuals which accompany each firearm. Free instruction manuals are also available from the factory on request.

An Investment in Precision



New Frontier with 4 3/8" barrel.

New Frontier with 6" barrel.

New Frontier with 7 1/2" barrel.

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 like Massad Ayoob, Mason Williams, J.D. Jones and James Mason. They're men who really know handguns and who excel in writing about them in The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER magazine.

If you're a man who wants to gain a thorough knowledge of handguns and their uses or about reloading and pistolsmithing, and to keep up with the latest action concerning handguns today, it's time to subscribe to The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER.

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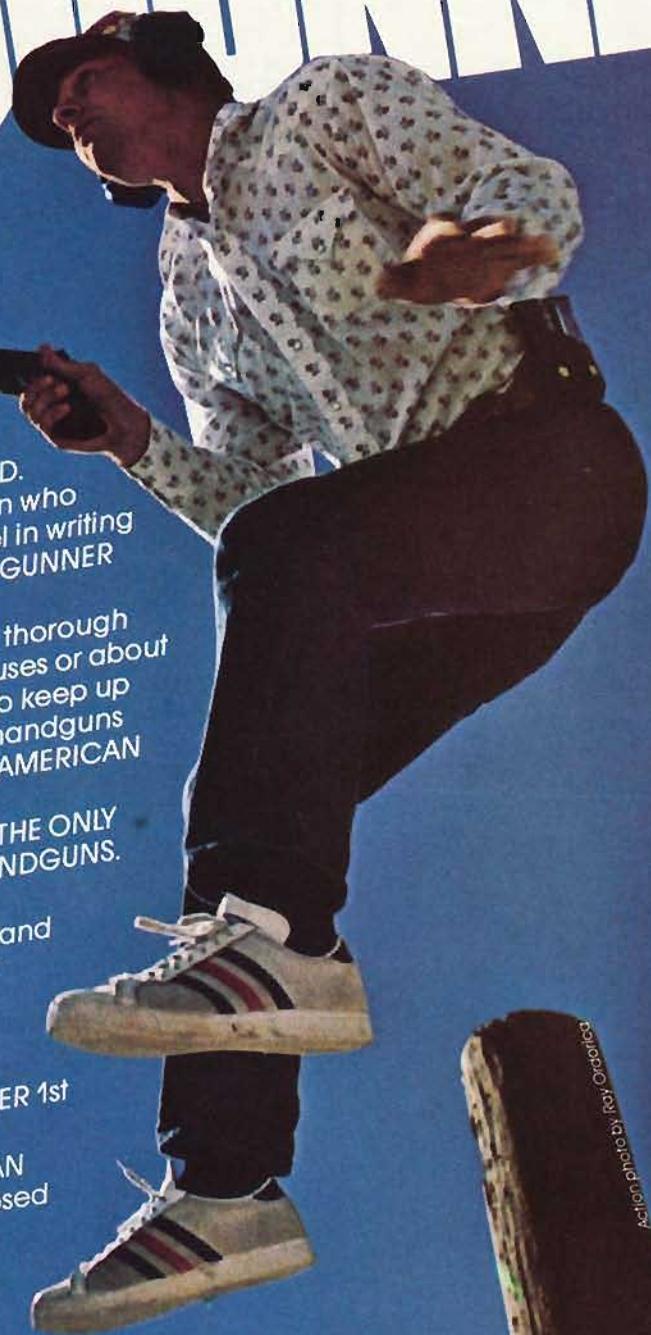
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Action photo by Roy Orbright



HANDGUN LEATHER

BOB ARGANBRIGHT

NEW INTERNATIONAL SHOOTISTS' COMBAT MATCH RIG IS A WINNER

The current trend in IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) practical pistol holsters was started in 1976, when IPSC was formed and Ken Hackathorn was designated top shooter for the week.

That year, he used his Milt Sparks "Hackathorn Special" rig, a high riding, muzzle-raked .45 auto holster with tension welt and sight rails for a target front sight. It was designed by Ken to be worn on a 1½ inch waist belt on the strong side, just in front of the hip. The holster works equally well in the cross-draw position.

The Hackathorn, along with more recent rigs of similar design, are fast, secure and comfortable.

The FBI raked version, currently made by Sparks and used by IPSC World Champion Ross Seyfried, is also ideal for concealable and combat use.

With the popularity of this type rig, similar rigs were soon to follow.

Bianchi Gunleather offers its excellent "Chapman Hi-Ride," inspired by the first World Combat Pistol Champion, Ray Chapman.

Davis Practical Leather produces the "Usher International," designed for Jerry Usher, a member of the U.S. Team in the 1977 World IPSC Championship match. Designed for the high cross-draw, these rigs work equally well when worn on the strong side.

Rogers Holsters have recently introduced a Bill Wilson version of their "World Shoot Holster." Cut low in front, this is a strong-side hip holster with a muzzle rake angle, rather than the vertical carry design of the original.

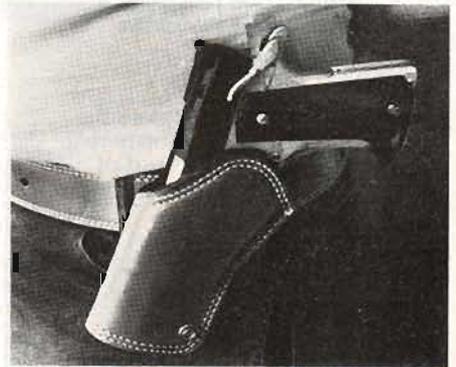
Unique among these signature rigs is Milt Sparks' latest. Limited to a total production of 50 rigs, each is a duplicate of a deluxe fully hand-carved FBI raked rig, as presented by Milt to Ross Seyfried, in honor of his winning the World IPSC Championship.

Recently, Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters has offered its *Jayhawker* rig, made to my specs. This includes his new Tef-Lok double magazine pouch, which uses flat springs in the pouch to maintain a constant friction fit on the magazines. The belt is cut on a contour, so it will lie flat across the back; the holster includes muzzle rake, metal lining and an adjustable tension screw. It works equally well as a strong-side or cross-draw rig.

I have just finished testing Ted's latest combat rig, a slightly modified *Jayhawker* he is marketing as the ISI rig, named for International Shootists Inc. The holster is modified, as suggested by Mickey Fowler of ISI. Mickey is famous in handgunning circles as the man who took *second* place in the first Bianchi Cup match, because a mental lapse caused him to forget to replace an empty magazine, which cost him five shots on the falling plates. But Mickey came back to win the Bianchi match the following two years. Mickey, along with Mike Dalton and the rest of the ISI team, will be using the new ISI rig.

Modified specifically for use in the cross-draw position, the Tef-Lok magazine pouch has the slots for the belt modified, allowing the wearer to position the pouch immediately to the rear of the holster, on the gun belt itself.

The Teflon-coated retention springs replace the usual leather strap separating the two magazines at the top of the pouch. This enables the shooter to carry both magazines facing to the front, without the risk of the tension strap stripping the top cartridge out of the second magazine, as it is drawn from the pouch.



New ISI rig designed for cross-draw; it works equally well on strong side.

The holster has been modified by raising it higher on the gun belt. While Mickey wanted his holster higher for cross-draw use, the modified belt loop—which raises the holster—causes the front to be cut lower than the *Jayhawker* version, which works equally well for a strong-side carry.

Continued on page 35

THE 'CYCLONE' GETS IT ACROSS!



Bianchi's "Cyclone"® Cross-draw Model #111 features a versatile design equally suited to field hunting and concealment applications. Its unitized belt loop allows the pistol to be carried at the optimum angle for comfort and drawing, and pulls it compactly into the body. The "Cyclone"® is fully lined with soft silicone suede and features a convenient thumbsnap strap and covered trigger guard. You will agree that it is the finest crossdraw holster to come along in years!

"Cyclone" 2-3" D.A. Rev., 3-4" .380 Autos, \$42.00. "Cyclone" 4-6½" D.A. and S.A. Rev., 4-5" Lg. Auto, \$47.00. "Cyclone" 7½"-10½" D.A. and S.A. Rev., \$54.50.

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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

READER LIKES NEW .32 MAG AMMO; WANTS JACKETED HOLLOW POINTS

Good functioning and long-term preservation of our guns is important to successful reloading. For this reason, a tip from Charles Melchi II is especially welcome: A simple and inexpensive way of cushioning recoil in his long slide .45 auto.

"I have tried everything from Bar-Sto recoil buffers to the Wilson-type rubber piece over the recoil spring guide.

"The idea I finally came up with involves a 1/8 inch thick piece of semi-soft neoprene cut round to fit snugly inside the spring plug. Figuring a 50-percent compression of the neoprene, this super-inexpensive setup allows at least 1/16 inch of clearance between the spring plug and spring guide when the gun is in full recoil. This completely eliminates violent metal-to-metal contact that occurs when M1911-type autos cycle. So far, this modification has had no effect on ejection, feeding, or any normal function of the gun."

After mentioning the fact that he has now put his recoil cushioning modification on the .45 autos of three friends, Melchi continues with the results of another successful experiment; this one involves a .38 Special handload and bullet alteration.

"I needed a man-stopping load for my customized S&W M60 stainless Chief's Special. It sports a three-inch modified 36 barrel that has been Mag-Na-Ported. It has a blaze-orange sight insert, and is stainless steel metalized to match the stainless frame, which has Bianchi Lightning grips.

"The ammo is custom, too. I get good-to-acceptable accuracy with a 148-grain Hornady hollow-base wadcutter seated upside down on top of 4.5 grains of Red Dot."

He notes that dime-sized expansion results from shots fired into sand, then goes on to confess, "Normally, the one big disadvantage to this load is its awkwardness in speedloaders. However, I solved this by seating the upside-down wadcutters with 3/16 inch of the lead protruding past the case mouth. The mouth of the hollow of the bullet is then carefully and precisely outside-chamfered with my RCBS case deburring tool. In seating the bullet out a bit, and chamfering the sharp outside edge, ease of loading with a speedloader is greatly enhanced.

"As far as pressure is concerned, 4.5 grains of Red Dot is not a +P-listed load,

and the cases extract as easily as standard factory loads."

Melchi concludes by noting that he has not experienced any loss of accuracy, as a result of tumbling or keyholing out to 25 yards. He says, however, that he intends to switch from the inverted Hornady HBWC and begin using the Alberts 146-grain Hydra-Shok bullet. The proposed change apparently is motivated by the idea that hollowbased wadcutters, when fired base-forward, will fail stabilization tests. The Hydra-Shok bullet, however, is made with a small post at the center of the large forward-facing cavity, the idea being that the post will act as a stabilizer.

The idea seems to work well. Some time ago, I received for testing two boxes of Hydra-Shok .38 Special loads. They included the subject bullet, with its center post. I had, many years earlier, experimented with Northridge 146-grain HBWCs. They performed astonishingly well, expanding to two-caliber diameter, even at moderate velocities. Offhand accuracy, testing at the Pasadena Police pistol range, yielded groups of three to four inches, firing from a six-inch barrel. There was no evidence of keyholing; what's more, I wasn't particularly concerned about it. After all, the bullet had been inverted to obtain added stopping power; tumbling would have taken nothing from that objective.

The Hydra-Shok loads have performed well, too. They are mild to shoot, yet expand dramatically at velocities of around 700 fps. I've had, in fact, as much expansion as was evident in my original experiments with the Northridge inverteds, and near-maximum weight retention. I can't restage the offhand shooting I did with those originals, simply because I can't shave 15 or so years off the calendar and regain the eyesight and steadiness of hand I once possessed. The Hydra-Shoks, however, stabilize well all the way out to 50 yards.

David Van Riper of Taos, New Mexico, is one of many *American Handgunner* readers who have volunteered comments of enthusiasm regarding the prospect of the new .32 Magnum revolver round.

"I am pleased to find reference to a .32 Magnum," he writes, "I, too, have been hoping for such a round. I have H&G (65BB and 66BB) and Star loading and siz-

Continued on page 56

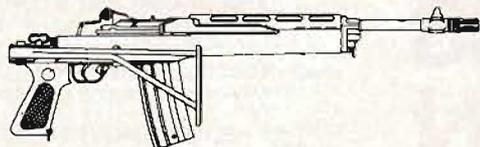
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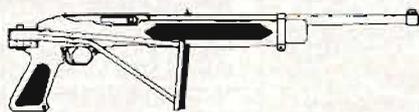
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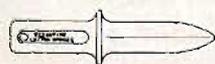


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1417	DRASEN	Flashider	6.50
1420	FED ORD	Magazine (20-rd)	6.50
1430	FED ORD	Magazine (30-rd)	8.25
1440	FED ORD	Magazine (40-rd)	17.85
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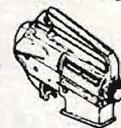


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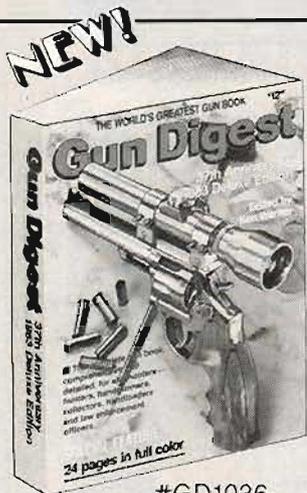
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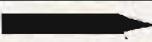
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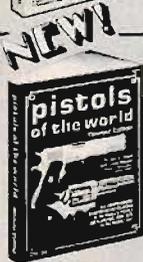
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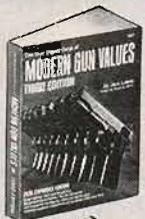
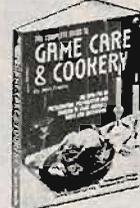
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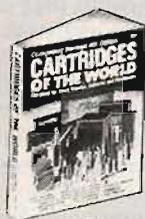
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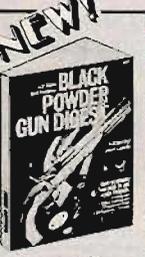
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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

LETTERS REFLECT NEED FOR INFO ON POLICE GUNS AND AMMUNITION

A little more than a year ago, I was shot at by a "section eight." While the man was captured, and I suffered only minor injuries, my emotional "injuries" were considerably more serious. I have been in therapy almost since the incident, and while I'm getting squared away, I think policemen who almost get killed need as much support as those who have to kill felons. While my problems are squared-away now, I had to seek proper counseling myself. No one in my department asked me about what I was going through. No one asked me if they could help. No one realized at first that what had happened to me was affecting me on my job.

I would like to know your own feelings and have your comments on this incident. Do not use my name.

California patrolman

I hear where you're coming from. The poets call it "intimations of mortality," or suddenly realizing that there are people out there who would end your life like stepping on a caterpillar, and that in your job, you're the guy most likely to encounter them.

That feeling first hit me when I was a young cop of 24. My partner and I, at gunpoint, put a couple of armed robbery suspects in a rather tense confrontation; one of them told me that if he had had a gun he would have blown my head off. I lost a night's sleep coming to terms with that moment. The fact that I had met a man who would have ended my life if he could have, weighed equally with the fact that I had been poised to end his, if he had made his move, and I was wondering what sort of person I was. I eventually realized that what sort of person I was, was a live person, and I didn't lose any sleep over anyone else I ever pulled a piece on.

But getting shot at is an excruciating experience that makes you reassess a lot of your values and a lot of your attitudes about the public. It's something police departments haven't explored a whole lot. I find that a lot of guys who come close to buying it, get a lot "harder-line"; a man who was Officer Friendly before turns into Dirty Harry for a lot of reasons, some of which are healthy and some of which are not.

If any of our readers have similar problems and could use some guidelines, two of the most intelligent approaches are the program being designed for the Illinois Department of Law Enforcement, and the debriefing and counselling program

developed for the NYCPD by their then-police psychologist, Dr. Harvey Schlossberg. Harvey has retired, but information on the program is available from Lt. Frank McGee, Firearms and Tactics Unit, NYCPD, Rodman's Neck, City Island, Bronx, NY. The Illinois program hasn't taken full shape yet; but it promises leadership in counselling for officers whose lives on the job have been jeopardized. Contact Bob McDonald, or Patricia Kelly, at the DIE Academy on I-55 in Springfield. Both organizations require that requests for information be made on police letterhead.

PRACTICAL TRAINING TRAGEDIES

What's your reaction to the incident recently in southern California, where one of the country's leading police instructors was shot twice by accident during a practical training exercise?

Texas cop

This officer refers to a "house-clearing" exercise in which each officer, using live .357 ammo, went through a "dark house" surprise course designed to measure his survival skills. According to reports, someone apparently left silhouette targets stacked against a wall that was supposed to be a "no-shoot" area. Behind that unarmored wall was a master instructor in the control booth. The officer going through the course saw the targets, figured they were part of the program, and fired. Two .357 hollowpoints went through the wall and hit the instructor in the torso. Luckily, he survived.

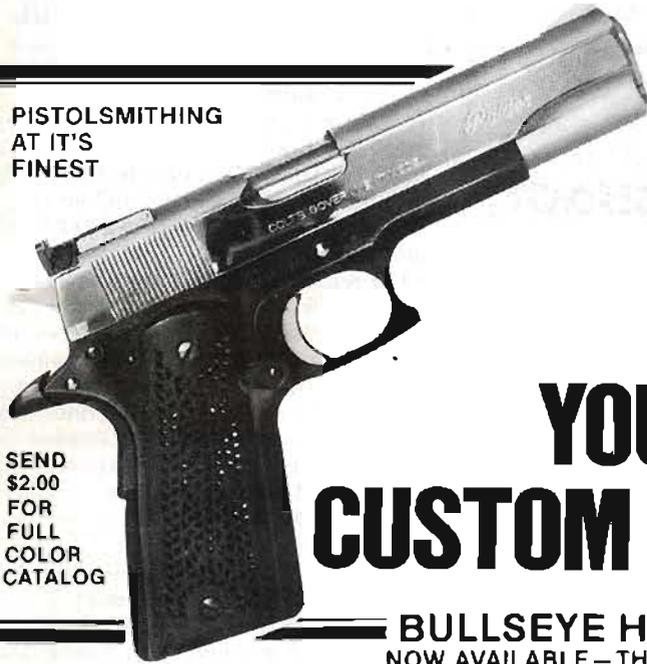
This sort of training requires scrupulous care by all concerned. I can't fault the rangemaster who got shot; the training he gave his men, under those realistic conditions, probably will save some of their lives one day, if it hasn't already. Using live ammo under stress is, nonetheless, a tricky exercise. In New Mexico last year, one officer was killed and another wounded when live .357 ammo got into a supposedly "dummy gun" during a Police Survival exercise.

The police instructors have to seek a fine balance between realism and training safety. It's a thin line. Some things are best practiced man-on-man with toy guns. Whenever you complicate the training exercise, the safety precautions are likewise further complicated, and more demanding.

Continued on page 68

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PHILIP C. BRIGGS

YOU DON'T NEED MAGNUM TO SHOOT METALLIC SILHOUETTES; .22 IS FINE

The handgun silhouette sport started with long ranges and magnum handguns. It's a great sport for magnum fans, but not for everybody. There are many ranges that don't have the room for the long course, and a lot of shooters that are too small or don't have the time or interest to master the big blasters, or the funds to afford the ammo.

It's no surprise then that both sanctioning organizations have developed short courses to fit these constraints, and meet these needs.

The NRA took one of the evolving short course games under its sponsorship a few years back, called it *Hunters Pistol* and limited it to stand-up shooters and straight-walled pistol cartridges. Recently, this has further evolved into centerfire and small bore matches, so as to give the little guns a better chance.

Hunters Pistol is shot on half-size targets, set at 25, 50, 75, and 100 meters, exactly half the long-range distances. The targets for the centerfire course are cut from 3/8-inch hard steel to withstand the substantial forces involved, especially from full-power magnum loads.

The small bore targets are the same size, but of thinner steel for all but the chickens. The .22LR produces a gentle impact, and the thinner, lighter targets are easier to knock down.

Any action type is allowed in *Hunters Pistol*, as long as the pistol weighs no more than four pounds, has a barrel no longer than 10 3/4 inches and is essentially unmodified. Scopes are allowed at club option and are a useful addition.

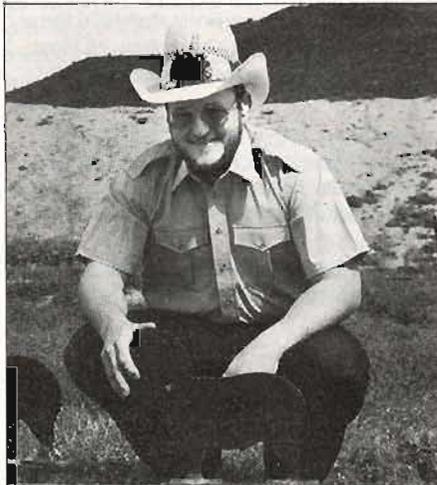
The International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association (IHMSA) has developed a smallbore-only course that has separate classes for freestyle and standing, or offhand, shooters.

IHMSA designed the targets to be fired at 25, 50, 75 and 100 yards, making them less than half-size to remain proportional for the roughly 10-percent shorter distance. These targets are also thin (3/16 or 1/4 inch) to allow reliable knockdown with the only cartridge allowed—the .22LR.

Any action type may be used in the standing position. In recognition of the various action types and potential accuracy, revolvers compete in separate

classes from single-shot pistols and semi-autos. Barrel length and weight limits differ for the various pistol types, with semi-autos limited to 7 1/2-inches and 50 ounces. Revolvers and single shots are similarly limited to 10 inches and 55 ounces. Scopes are not allowed.

In contrast to the long course, where stringent demands for accuracy and power have led to the introduction of several new pistols in recent years, there has yet to be a short-course silhouette pistol developed. I expect that's because the existing target-quality revolvers and semi-autos do nicely, as do the .22LR barrels hung on the long range's popular single shots.



For either centerfire or smallbore courses, knockdown on that pesky ram is not a problem; but sufficient accuracy to hit small targets at long ranges is still a requirement. That means pistol and cartridge selection should be based on accuracy criteria. High-quality pistols with good sights, trigger pull, grips and handling qualities are necessary. So are cartridges/loads that can deliver bullseye target performance.

Accuracy requirements are the same for the long course, due to the reduced-size targets. The turkey is still the toughest target on the course, spanning but six minutes of angle (MOA)—discounting extremities—which translates to slightly less than three-inch groups at 50 yards.

Knockdown requirements are a lot less than for the long course. This allows women, minors and small adults to compete on equal footing with the macho magnum man. Besides, less powerful loads will lower your ammo costs. The .38 Special, in a round nose target load, is more than enough here; and the .22 WRM works fine. The .22LR works on this course, but has a low level of reliability on the rams, producing results much like the .357 Magnum does on the long course.

For reloaders, the economical cast or swaged bullets work fine, but should be assembled using standard procedures for target loads. The disposable Blazer ammo from CCI might be of interest if you don't reload, and want to shoot centerfire. The smallbore courses are even cheaper to shoot, and there is a wide variety of target, standard and high speed ammo available for you to select for the most accuracy for your pistol.

The only advantage a magnum has for *Hunters Pistol* is its flat trajectory, which will eliminate sight adjustments; but don't suffer through anything more than a .357 Magnum. (If you're a one-gun, one-load man, the .357 Mag is it; there is a distinct advantage to using it both at the long and short range.)

When firing in the offhand position, the accuracy potential a pistol may have is not nearly as important a consideration as the shooter himself.

The many target .22LR semi-autos available were developed to help offhand shooters do their best in NRA bullseye competition. They are an excellent choice. Thompson/Center Contenders were developed as hunting pistols. The high hand position on the grip, the downward stretch for the trigger and moveable trigger guard combine to make a pistol that I find hard to shoot in the standing position. The Merrill doesn't have these problems; it works fine offhand. Centerfire target autos are also available; a Colt Gold Cup in .45 ACP or a S&W M52 in .38 Special should work well, at least through the pigs.

There are target revolvers suitable for both short courses. I've found S&Ws K22 and K38 to be eminently suitable. A matched pair of pistols, with target hammers, triggers, stocks and sights would make an outstanding battery for both courses. Colt's .22LR Diamondback and its .38 Special Target Python are also suitable. The Snake with an eight-inch barrel is a dandy centerfire gun for .38s; the Diamondback's only drawback is its short (six-inch) barrel.

In IHMSA freestyle classes, the action types are segregated, and any of the above guns will do fine. You'll shoot better scores with a single shot, but then you'll be up against singles, so all things will even out. Long barrels are preferable in freestyle, for the added sight radius, and muzzle/leg clearance. The Contender works as well here as it does on the long range, Target revolvers work fine in the prone position,

and the 9½-inch barrel Single-Six is a good low cost choice.

The short course games are very popular, as most all ranges can fit one in; and the little targets, shorter ranges and modest pistols are less intimidating.

But they're not any easier.

A couple of issues back, I discussed changes in NRA long-range rules, gave you my thoughts, and asked for yours. Only a few of you wrote, but some good thoughts came through.

The NRAs *Hunters Pistol* and *Conventional Long Range Pistol* rules allow modifications to production pistols, such as finishes, sights, grips, porting and rebarreling. So, the cost of a pistol could get very much out of hand. Although I doubt the efficiency would be improved significantly, this could lead to a massive equipment race.

Richard Gilmore of Fremont, California objects to the NRAs equipment and rule changes, wondering if he has invested in a sport that changes at the drop of the hat. He notes that silhouette is a growing sport, but feels it won't continue to grow if the rules keep changing.

Richard Pickering of Decatur, Georgia says the changes in long range competition make it hard on the clubs, as they'll need to keep more targets, and it will be hard on the shooters trying to figure out the complex rules.

This hasn't proved to be any problem for the two NRA clubs that shoot long-range here in the Phoenix area—they just stopped following the long range rules. I suspect a lot of other clubs have done the same. (I would remind those of you who liked the old rules, that IHMSA hasn't changed its regulations. Write to Idaho Falls if you want to learn more about IHMSAs local clubs.)

I still think the NRA silhouette committee is out of touch with the masses. What is your opinion? Write me at
POB 22074, Phoenix, AZ 85028.

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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

AFRICAN HANDGUNNER SAFARI SCHEDULED FOR JULY 1, 1983

A successful African hunt is within the financial reach of many handgun hunters.

Is a handgun safari a practical thing?

There is no doubt in my mind that an African hunt is more practical than many handgun hunts here in the United States, for the simple reason that there are more animals, and they are easier to approach within handgun range than most domestic big game animals. I've never heard of anyone coming back from an African safari without having bagged a respectable number of trophy animals. That includes handgun hunters. The cost per animal harvested is also usually less than that encountered in the United States.

What kind of African game can be taken with handguns?

Contrary to what you might have read, African game is not bulletproof. Much of it is large and a heart-shot 2,000 pound animal takes longer to go down than a heart-shot 100-pounder, no matter if it's in South Dakota or Africa.

A bullet in the spine or brain kills a 10-tonner just as quickly as one in the brain of a 10-pounder. Bullet placement is of utmost importance in large animals. I, for one, believe some of the stories of a Cape buffalo taking a dozen hits from a .458 before going down; but, I certainly don't believe they were well-placed shots, or that the animal stayed on his feet more than half-a-minute after being heart-shot. As much of the Cape buffalo shooting is done at distances of 15-25 yards, a half minute can turn into an eternity damn quick. The buffalo's reputation for seeking revenge for being hurt is well justified. However, in the last eight months or so, I'm aware of three Cape buffalos that have been harvested with .44 Magnum revolvers. Peter Horn dispatched two with SSK 315-grain cast bullets from a 7½ inch barrel Super Blackhawk. Trying for dangerous game with a handgun is a task for an experienced hunter—and a good shot.

What game is suitable for the average handgun hunter?

Africa has an enormous amount of plains game—sable, eland, kudu, zebra, waterbuck, wildebeeste, bushbuck, reedbuck, impala, steenbuck, plus a large vari-

ety of "varmints," such as baboon, jackal and lynx, that are readily taken with adequate hunting handguns. That boils down to practical factory load calibers of .44 Magnum and .30-30 for some of the smaller species. The more exotic custom Thompson/Center calibers such as SSKs .375, .411, .430 and .45-70 are capable of handling any African game.

What sort of costs can I expect to encounter?

Paul Merzig of *International Sportsman's Adventures* (72 W. Adams, Chicago, IL 60603) and *Handgun Hunters International* are now in the process of jointly setting up the first *African Handgun Safari* for a group of handgunners. Paul's reputation for excellent hunts for his clients is unexcelled. He is a full-time professional in this field.

As of this writing, a 16-day trip runs \$4,150 (roundtrip from NYC). Trophy fees, taxidermy and costs of shipping trophies back to the United States are not included. You pay for what you shoot in the form of trophy fees. For example: sable \$750, eland \$475, kudu \$325, zebra \$350, waterbuck \$400, wildebeest \$300, reedbuck \$150, impala \$75. On a two-week hunt, a good handgun hunter can expect to harvest at least one trophy of each of the above, and still have time for bird shooting and fishing. If you're not too particular about selecting only trophy heads, a lot more shooting can be had.

It's also possible to visit another country for a day, both going and returning, without encountering much additional expense.

The *International Sportsman's Adventures/Handgun Hunters International* safari is set to leave around July 1, 1983. If you are interested in joining us, contact me at HHI (POB .375 MAG, Bloomingdale, OH 43910) for further information and updating. At this point, we plan to go to South Africa or Zimbabwe. We're not going to finalize our schedule until as late as possible, in order to take advantage of the most current information available. Individual preferences can be handled in the event someone wants to try for one or more of the "Big Five" game animals.

We invite you to join us for the hunt of a lifetime.

'Shumba the Lion' in .44 Mag.: \$1,000

For \$1,000 you can buy "Shumba the Lion," the third in a series of five Limited Edition handguns from Magnum Sales Limited, Inc., a division of Mag-Na-Port Arms.

"Shumba" is an elaborately customized Ruger Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum revolver, with a Mag-Na-Port barrel cut back to 5½ inches and the muzzle recrowned. The finish is highly-polished blue/black.

Engraving includes the lion's head on the cylinder, and the word "Shumba" on the backstrap. The Mag-Na-Port logo is silver inlaid on the top-strap.



The revolver is fitted with custom rosewood grips; an ivory scrimshaw insert picturing the lion's head is flush-mounted in the right-hand grip.

Sights are the Omega white insert in front, and that company's "Maverick" range-finder in the rear.

The gun is delivered with the Mag-Na-Port seal, a collector's assurance the hammer has never been in a cocked position, since leaving the factory.

"Shumba" is packed in a hand-crafted walnut box with padded velvet lining.

For more information, write the company at 30016 South River Road, Mt. Clemens, MI 48045.

New catalog lists firing pins only

An unusual catalog—one that lists firing pins only—is offered by Bob's Gun's Shop (POB 2332, Hot Springs, AR 71901) for \$1.

Bob Brown, owner, claims to have "the world's largest supply of firing pins for 1,000 models."

Brown said he has an inventory of more than 20,000 firing pins, including many for contract guns "which are cross-referenced and a great help to the average gunsmith just trying to identify a contract gun."

The shop does not repair guns and asks that broken firing pins be sent with orders for new ones.

Brown also supplies foreign gun parts and provides a catalog for \$2, which lists more than 150 models in stock, including parts for cap and ball handguns.



ALUMINUM FRAME FOR .45 AUTO

By Karl Bosselmann



There's a new high-quality aluminum frame for the .45 auto on the market. Manufactured by the Ranger Machine and Tool Company (536 N. Vincent, Covina, CA 91722), it will fit all models except the Colt Commander.

With the Colt lightweight (aluminum frame) Commander somewhat difficult to obtain, this RMT frame should be of interest to those persons wanting a .45 considerably lighter than all-steel models.

As supplied, the frame is designed to fit standard .45 autos and the .22 conversion

width—to fit the slide properly.

Test firing with Hornaday/Frontier 230-grain round nose ball ammo, in a Colt Gold Cup fitted with the RMT aluminum frame, went superbly. There were no malfunctions; cycling was positive.

I did some more firing, after installing a recoil spring guide. Recoil was lessened and recovery time reduced.

Until corrections are made by the RMT factory, I would suggest that you remove the existing plunger tube, bevel the inside edges of the two pin holes, and install a

**Fits all models except Colt Commander.
It's lightweight, well-made, inexpensive.**

unit; with appropriate ejector change, slide assemblies for the 9mm Parabellum (Luger) and the .38 Super will function with the RMT frame.

The felt recoil, compared with all-steel models, is slightly greater; but not as pronounced as with the Commander.

The new aluminum frame retains the longer sighting radius of standard all-steel models.

I examined several randomly selected frames and found them to be consistent in manufacture. The external finish was reasonably good; interior tolerances were excellent. All pin-holes lined up perfectly.

The aluminum frame comes with a stainless steel ejector, held in place by a roll pin 3/16th inch long; ideally, this pin should be a solid part of the ejector and of normal length, or 5/8th inch.

With a little file work, the inner magazine well sides were smoothed to insure proper magazine travel.

Additional file work to the trigger travel recesses freed up the trigger movement.

The ejector was filed—both height and

Colt-made part, properly staking it in place.

Upon the purchase of any new frame, one should expect to fit many parts, in their proper sequence. Sometimes fitting can be minimal—such as it was with the RMT frame—or it can result in extensive, and expensive, alterations. The degree of work required depends on manufacturing tolerances, and the parts themselves.

Contrary to the belief of many individuals, all M1911 parts are not completely interchangeable, but must be tailored to the individual gun for maximum reliability, safety and accuracy.

Of utmost importance is the proper fit of the thumb safety, particularly if the pistol is carried cocked and locked, with a round in the chamber.

If one doesn't know how to fit M1911 parts, he should seek the services of a competent gunsmith.

The RMT aluminum frame may be purchased from J&G Sales, Prescott, Arizona. The retail price is \$34.50, or two  or more for \$29.95 each.



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AMMO SCENE

BY MICHAEL DIXON

BREN TEN 10MM AUTO ON HORIZON; COMBAT PISTOL MARKET IS EYED

Editor's Note: This article was prepared by, and the opinions expressed are those of, Michael Dixon of Dornaus & Dixon Enterprises, Inc. of Cerritos, California, a manufacturing company.

In the United States, at the turn of the century, John Browning designed and developed what was later to become known as the Colt Model 1911 .45 ACP.

His design started out as the Colt Military Model 1902 .38 Automatic Pistol. After the British had requested something larger than .38 caliber for their ordnance tests, Browning designed the .41 Colt Auto Pistol in 1903, based on the 1902 design.

The British, like the Americans, were strongly influenced by the cavalry officers of that era, and eventually stayed with their Webley .455 revolver.

Because of the ineffectiveness of the then-in-use .38 S&W caliber revolvers against warring aborigines in various parts of the world, Colt increased the cartridge size to the Browning-designed .45 ACP in its auto pistol.

This pistol/cartridge combination was later adopted by the United States Government as the official military sidearm. Influencing the government's decision was the aborigine warrior experience (known as the "Philippine Insurrection"), the Thompson-LaGarde tests of 1904 (Col. J.T. Thompson, later of Thompson sub-machine gun fame, and Col. L.A. LaGarde), the U.S. Cavalry officer's "horse pistol" inclination, and the increasing possibility of World War I.

In 1910, Browning, seeking to improve the .45 ACP cartridge, designed and developed the experimental 9.8mm Colt auto. By 1912, Winchester was producing some quantities of 9.8mm Colt auto cartridges.

In 1913, he further refined the pistol/cartridge design and developed the first Browning Hi Power prototype in 9.65mm. At that time, this pistol/cartridge combination was Browning's first choice as the optimum pistol/cartridge combination.

In 1923, the French Ministry of War wanted the Hi Power, but insisted that it be in 9mm Parabellum. The reason for this decision by the French is unclear, but was definitely contrary to Browning's original concept.

If it wasn't for the U.S. Cavalry's influence on the ordnance boards, and the outbreak of World War I (thus firmly entrenching the .45 ACP), combined with the French influence in Europe, there might have been in use as standard pistols the Colt 1910 in 9.8mm made in America and the Browning Hi Power 1913 in 9.65mm made by FN in Belgium.

In 1927, the last Browning design was patented, the forerunner of the Browning P-35 Hi Power, as we know it today.

There is evidence that John Browning had been working on the development of a 10mm cartridge at the time of his death, ultimately to be mated to a more improved and refined version of his Browning Hi Power.



History indicates there have been other attempts to produce 10mm cartridges: the 10mm Mars (1900) chambered in the Gabbet-Fairfax Mars Pistol, the 10mm Bergmann (1901), the 10mm Hirst (1901), the 10.3mm Roth (1909), the .39 caliber BSA (1925) chambered for the Hiram Maxim Pistol, the .401 caliber Eimer/Boser (1925) and, more recently, the .40 G&A (1972). But these are of relatively little significance, when compared to the genius of John Browning.

Because of the interrelationship between pistols/cartridges and revolvers/cartridges, as well as the strong influence of Colt and Browning, a sort of evolution can be shown as:

- .40 cal. Colt Paterson Revolver (1800s)
- .44 cal. Colt Walker Revolver (1800s)

Continued on page 56

Unique Shooting Course Offered

By Charles E. Petty

One of the greatest problems facing aspiring pistol shooters is finding a source of competent instruction.

Often the instruction is provided by well-meaning friends or gun club members, without any organized method to the training.

Pistol shooting can be frustrating at best; I've seen more than one beginner give up without ever learning that jerking the trigger causes misses.

A novel new product has been introduced that will go a long way toward filling this gap. Frank Green of Montrose, Colorado has produced a Basic Pistol Marksmanship Course which includes a taped lecture and range instruction. The course is designed so that the shooter can listen to the tapes, study an accompanying book, and then take both to the range for practice. All that is required is a portable cassette player.

Green has won many shooting honors, including the National Pistol Championship. Using a gun he designed and built, he won gold medals at The Pan American Games, and a silver medal in the Olympics.

The skills required for any form of pistol shooting are basically the same; Green presents these in a simple and logical manner.

The first part of his program is intended for home study; here the shooter is introduced to the techniques of grip, trigger control and sight alignment. The book is keyed to the tapes, and shows both the right and wrong way of doing things. Green teaches simple exercises for the shooter to practice at home, before he ever goes to the range.

The second part of the course takes the shooter to the range to practice the skills learned in the first part. Following the taped instruction (using an ear-phone under hearing protectors), the shooter is coached, just as if he had a live instructor beside him. Green uses time-proven techniques of both dry-firing and live-firing.

As the tape progresses, Green talks to the shooter and leaves plenty of time for the student to practice. Emphasis is on the quality of each shot.

The objectives of the course are not limited to the target shooter; the basic principles taught are equally valid for plinking at beer cans. Green's course provides excellent instruction in an easy-to-follow format. The course retails for \$28.50 postpaid, and includes two cassette tapes and the book. It is available from Frank Green, 530 W. Oak Grove Rd., Montrose, CO 81401.

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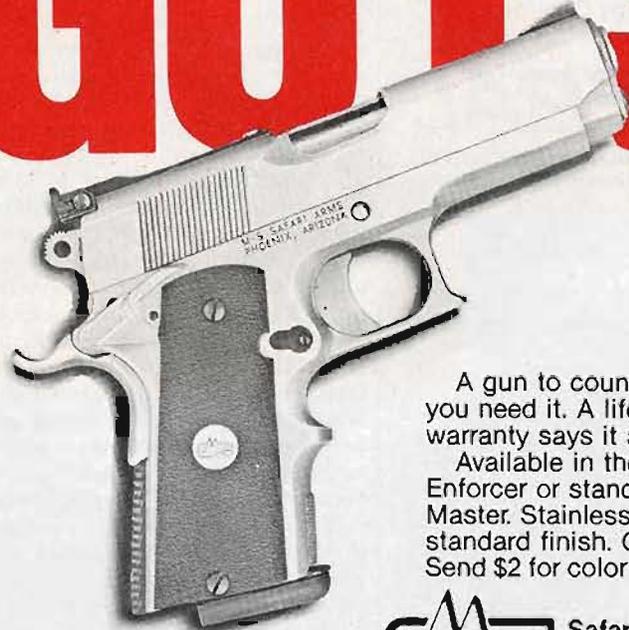
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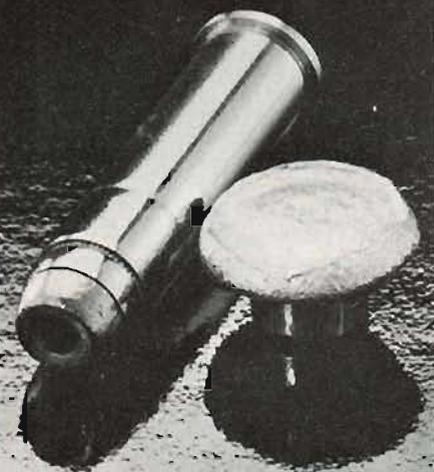
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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN G. LAWSON

'SLIDE TIGHTNESS HAS NO EFFECT ON POINT OF IMPACT WITH .45'

This issue's pistolsmithing column covers such subjects as the S&W M15 handgun finishes and trigger pull, in question-and-answer format.

Q. What do you say when you are firing a string, getting a tight group and suddenly get a lighter trigger pull, resulting in a flyer?

A. Examine the base of the hammer's full cock notch to be certain it is square, and the sear to be certain it is relieved enough to drop into full engagement. Check tension of the sear spring. Lube the parts when re-assembling. Then check trigger pull 10 times. It should be near uniform, or right on.

Q. Why do you feel that tightening a M1911 slide is not necessary? I have heard it is essential to accuracy.

A. Slide tightness has no effect on point of impact, provided the barrel locks up properly and the lugs and slide stop pin do not pry the barrel out of uniform seating. Any pistol alteration that precludes replacing a part with an unaltered part is unwise, in the long run. An overly tight slide retards pistol functioning. If you want to remove side-play, use one of the full length recoil spring followers; they are cheaper and do not adversely affect functioning. Furthermore, they can be replaced with the original parts, in seconds.

Q. My perspiration is very acid, and everything I touch turns to rust. I do not care for plated firearms. What can I do to keep blued pistols and revolvers from being affected.

A. Detail strip the piece, wash in hot water, to which a few drops of dishwashing detergent and two teaspoons of baking soda have been added. Blow out recesses and dry with a soft, lint-free rag. While still warm, carefully apply a thin coating of a good quality silicone car wax. Really rub and work it in, until it is uniform and you can see no streaks or high water marks. Re-assemble the piece in the normal manner, being careful to replace proper amounts of lubricant for smooth functioning. Handguns so treated have been known to have no signs of rust after up to 10 years on boats in salt water. If you ever have the piece re-blued, or plated, do not fail to inform the people doing the work about the silicone coating, since it will have to be totally removed before the new finish will "take" evenly.

Q. What is your opinion about stainless

steel weapons and parts that are currently so popular?

A. As an ex-soldier and cop, I try to avoid anything that will reflect light. (*Editor's note: this is a controversial point; all do not share this opinion.*) The stainless steel used in firearms can be hardened both by heat treatment and by work-hardening. This means that with use, some parts may become brittle. One pistol frame recently brought to my attention had a hairline fracture at the slide stop hole.

Q. Who do you consider to be the best authority on pistol combat? Who has the highest score of kills of anyone you know?

A. Mortal combat isn't a competition. The two men most proficient at actual pistol combat, who I know personally, don't speak in terms of "score." Rather, they speak in terms of personal survival. Neither is a trophy hunter. One is a Special Forces sergeant, the other captain of a SWAT team. Both have talked with me at great length about weapon reliability, delayed stress syndrome; both have admitted fear. Oddly, these men are only passable shots on the range; neither has the slightest interest in competitive shooting, where "score" is paramount.

Q. I'm a pharmacist who carries a pistol for protection. Do you feel that silhouette targets with scoring rings are an adequate basis for practice?

A. The "B-27" genre of silhouette target is at least 15 years outdated, when it comes to scoring. Today's criminal wears a flak jacket; if you hit him twice in the "5" ring he will probably become angry and may blow you away as you try for your third shot. You have to try for the area above the jacket, which leaves you with a throat and head shot, for which the antiquated B-27 allows you to score, because the makers considered a head shot too difficult. This is nothing new; even Ivanhoe had to try for a head shot when he faced the Black Knight in the lists.

Q. I have an old model Colt Trooper revolver that I would like to update with a six-inch Python barrel. Is this possible?

A. Yes, but costly. The end of the frame will have to be built up by arc welding, or there will be an unsightly dip. The threads and tenon depth are compatible.

Q. When I ship a pistol to a custom gunsmith and want to insure it for full value, I have to declare the contents. I'm

Continued on page 35

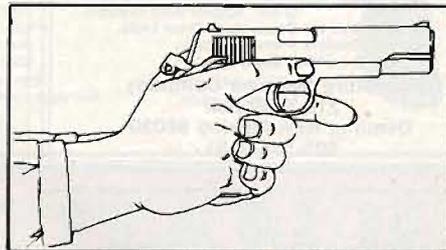
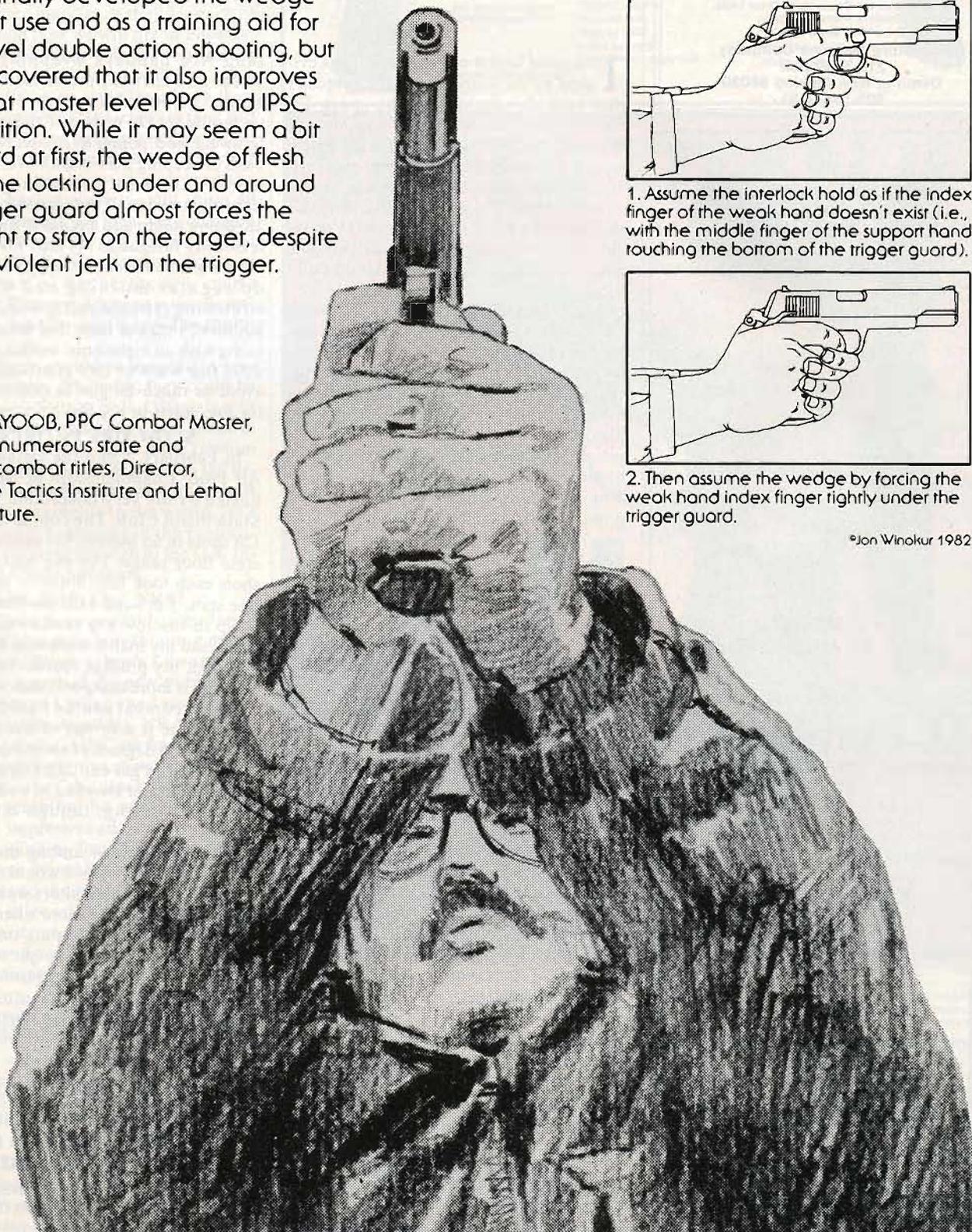
MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

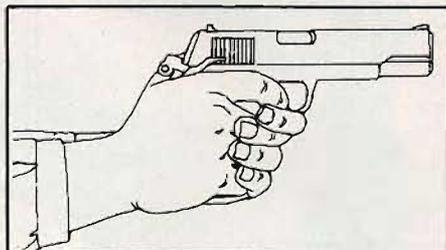
The Ayoob Wedge

I originally developed the wedge for street use and as a training aid for basic level double action shooting, but later discovered that it also improves control at master level PPC and IPSC competition. While it may seem a bit awkward at first, the wedge of flesh and bone locking under and around the trigger guard almost forces the front sight to stay on the target, despite even a violent jerk on the trigger.

MASSAD AYOOB, PPC Combat Master, holder of numerous state and regional combat titles, Director, Defensive Tactics Institute and Lethal Force Institute.



1. Assume the interlock hold as if the index finger of the weak hand doesn't exist (i.e., with the middle finger of the support hand touching the bottom of the trigger guard).



2. Then assume the wedge by forcing the weak hand index finger tightly under the trigger guard.

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SIGHT SETTINGS

LUCY CHAMBLISS

A POTPOURRI: RETAILERS, BOOTS, STANDARDIZATION, NRA PUBLICITY

The good health of handgunning is evident by the many new retail businesses that keep developing for the sport. I'll mention two. The Southpaw Suppliers of Washington, Illinois sell stocks, grips, leather and rifles for left-handed shooters, and puts out a newsletter on new products.

Thirty years ago, left-handed pistol shooters, except for those who could afford custom items, struggled along the best they could, or went to a sport that could outfit them.

The International Shooters Service of Ft. Worth, Texas is run by J. Neal Stepp. He can supply what the handgunner needs by mail, quickly, and many times at a discount. I first met Neal at the Phoenix matches, where he had a merchandise display; I have since ordered from him a .22 pistol, match ammo and pellets and have found his service and merchandise excellent. Neal's inventory of glasses, boots, grips, ammunition and handguns must be enormous, because if you write or call him, he'll have your order in your hands within about 5 days. ISS is not a big advertiser or dealer, but if we civilians are to stay in this sport, we must have low prices and quick access to the many helpful accessories, guns and ammunition available to the military shooters.

SHOOTING BOOTS

Speaking of boots for shooting, in some 34 years of shooting, I have tried several different kinds of footwear. I wore tennis shoes before the days of the good-fitting leather sport shoes. I was sometimes beaten by others wearing low-heel leather shoes, or by those wearing lace-up military combat boots. I did a shooting demonstration for some 18 years, firing the .22, .38, and .45, sometimes under stress; for these, I usually wore low-heel dress shoes. During the World Matches in 1970, I wore desert boots; I have won with a variety, and lost to a variety.

I like a lace-up ankle boot. Before investing in the \$70 shooting boot Neal advertises, I went to a self-service shoe store and tried on boy's leather basketball shoes that felt good laced tightly at the instep, and just moderately tight at the ankle, over two pairs of tennis socks. My feet feel well-cushioned and the ankle support seems to reduce body sway. I have kept a record of match and practice scores fired with a good pair of low-top running shoes, worn with a

snug Ace bandage wrapping around arches and ankles. I prefer the roll elastic wrap to adjust tension, to the slip-on elastic bandage. Do either of these types of footwear add points to my score? On the basis of keeping a six-month average of my scores, I think so. But nothing replaces sight alignment and trigger control. What I am doing might add a point to my score by lessening fatigue to my legs which, after all, are the foundation for that handgun. I do regular morning and night leg stretching/strengthening exercises. In addition, I bike at least four times a week, along with an eight-hour working-walking day. You want to feel comfortable, and avoid as much fatigue as possible which, for me, starts in my feet and legs.

SLOW FIRE IS TIRING

In February, I shot the Delaware State Air Pistol Championships in New Castle, hosted by the very hospitable Delaware State Pistol Club. The course of fire was 120 shots in an indoor, but unheated, concrete floor range. The two matches of 60 shots each took four hours of standing in one spot; I noticed with the Ace bandage wrap in the low top shoes I did not get tired, and my match score was within four points of my practice scores. To me, such slow fire is more tiring and tedious than the 150-shot combat course I used to shoot, where there is a variety of stances, times, and varying degrees of shooting difficulty. I never could get enough ankle freedom sitting, prone, or kneeling to wear boots for combat shooting, though many good shooters do.

Noticing footwear among the best and the rest of the shooters, I would say 50-percent of the best competitors wear an ankle support shoe, maybe more when you consider they may be wrapping under socks, as I sometimes do. You might want to try some of my footwear suggestions. Shoes, like other items in handgunning where scores are largely controlled by your mental outlook, should be what you feel comfortable and confident in; also what your shooter's diary shows—accurate scorekeeping—makes you shoot higher scores, or what makes the sport more enjoyable, because you go home less tired.

LET'S STANDARDIZE

Looking over matches within commuting distance of my generous relatives in Virginia, who house me, I picked Dela-

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ware this winter over the Phoenixville, Pa. match I attended last year, because Delaware listed a slightly better award schedule; but mostly it involves more shooting. When traveling 1,000 miles, I like to shoot every shot I can. Entry fees, and I usually pay my own, are not a big expense consideration. But the airfare or gasoline costs, ammunition, and meals are the big expenses.

I wish we could get standardized on 40 shots for ladies and juniors and 60 for men in the air pistol matches. I don't mind shooting three matches, if they are each of the regulation type we will fire in Phoenix. You set a very definite pace for yourself for the 40 shots, and 60 does not fit that pace. Juniors and women sometimes have their own awards anyway; in Delaware they had an excellent junior awards schedule and it did attract many young shooters. Some Florida matches are still confused the other way, having everyone still shoot 40 shots, even though the men were changed to 60 about two years ago. Take a look at this problem, NRA Air Pistol division, and get all sanctioned matches the same course of fire as in Phoenix. Training is too expensive not to have it exactly like the championships.

Also, triggers should be weighed in preliminary tryouts; otherwise, they could be shot with any weight pull. Officials will surely weigh the pull before you shoot in Phoenix, though even there some random trigger checking should be done on the firing line. If we are preparing for the best shooting tournaments in the world, let's train properly, beginning in the preliminaries and carrying through to the U.S. International Championships.

ARE YOU THE NRA?

By now, you have probably seen the "I am the NRA" ads in non-shooting magazines, such as Esquire, Boy's Life and others. This is a part of the new public relations campaign I mentioned several columns ago. John Aquilino, NRA Director of Public Affairs, is the one finally able to get good publicity out so we are not just talking to other shooters. We are now positively reaching the non-NRA public with these impressive ads about our sport. A small beginning for a big job, but how long we have waited for someone like John to understand the problem and have the ability to solve it! Write both John and Harlon Carter at the NRA and encourage them to continue this fine campaign.



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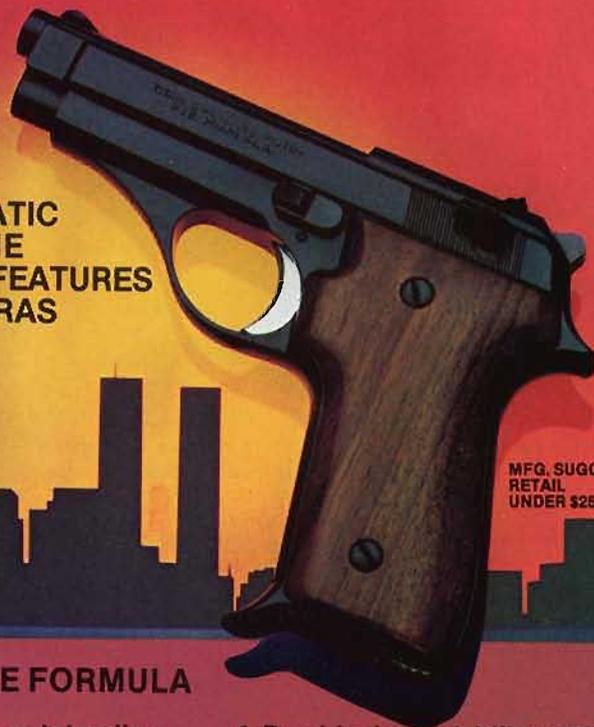
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SCOPE-TYPE HANDGUN SIGHT

By David Bradshaw



Rail mount for Ruger single-actions works fine on this Redhawk. Installation is more compact than most conventional scopes. Note low profile.

It's fast and direct on moving targets. With electronic reticle, it may revolutionize combat shooting. Cost: under \$200.

Under pressure to wring every last drop of performance from his equipment, the competitive handgunner is turning his attention to auxiliary sighting systems.

Sights are the register of aim, the touchstone of accuracy. Where speed is not critical, a variety of iron and glass sights is adequate. The three focal planes of the handgun—the target, front sight, and rear sight—may be coordinated with positive exactness with optical sights.

Where time is short, as in the field, events unfold so swiftly that a man must fire the instant his sights flash upon his mark. Sight picture may be no more than a blur. Iron sights are indisputably fast, but indisputably imperfect.

An optical sight is a two-edged sword. It takes the three focal planes of iron sight shooting and flattens them into one. This great advantage is dimmed, however, by

certain unremedied drawbacks. The scoped handgun shooter must contend with bulk, slow acquisition of reticle, lim-



Unity magnification (IX), electronic reticle enhances tracking / moving target.

ited eye relief, and obscurity of target area by the scope itself.

I don't know whether a conventional scope of unity magnification (IX), with unlimited eye relief, is feasible. Such a scope—incorporating a “floating” dot or circle reticle—should prove a versatile scope for handguns.

Aimpoint of Sweden manufactures an optic/electric sight that is certain to arouse the interest of marksmen who like to shoot fast. Known as the *Aimpoint Mark III*, this sight has unlimited eye relief and may be mounted on revolvers, pistols, rifles, and shotguns. Its reticle is a dot of red electrical light that is powered by replaceable batteries. On-off modes and the intensity of the red dot are controlled by turning a knob at the front of the control housing. The red dot is further modulated by a sensor in the control knob, which adjusts reticle intensity to the ambient light. Bright light requires more red, dim light less.

Turrets housing coin-slotted screws are provided for adjusting point of impact. Of ball and detent persuasion, adjustment is precise. Each click moves the point of impact 1/4 inch at 100 yards.

The body of Aimpoint is a sturdy aluminum die casting, with an integral sight tunnel, control housing and mounting rail. Mounting is accomplished by fastening the Mark III to Weaver bases, either one- or two-piece models. Screw clamps are provided with each Aimpoint sight.

With its unlimited eye relief, it is only natural that the Aimpoint should be tried on handguns. The distinct red dot draws the eye immediately and enables the shooter to rapidly track the target, lead it, and fire at the right moment.

To help make the Ruger Redhawk .44 Magnum perform diverse tasks, I equipped the revolver with an Aimpoint. I obtained from James Piacentini of Aimpoint/USA a mount (\$29.95) designed for the Single Six Blackhawk series. The top strap of the Redhawk was then drilled and tapped to accept it. All contiguous surfaces were cleaned with lacquer thinner and coated with flock reinforced epoxy; then the mount was screwed down.

The Aimpoint Redhawk was then sighted-in with an excellent deer load; the Hornady 240 JHP with 24.5 grains of 296, the Federal case and the CCI 350 primer. At 25 yards, the point-of-impact was four inches low and 3½ inches to the left. That required 64 clicks up and 56 clicks right windage to correct the POI.

Pistols and rifles should always be sighted in at 25 yards. That conserves ammo and throws an immediate fix on how well both sight and ammo are coordinated.

By keeping a log, sight adjustments may be recorded for various loads, permitting the shooter to shift the sight from one gun to another. Also, elevation settings for different distances may be recorded and used to determine bullet drop. Bullet drop may not matter to the combat shooter, but it is of vital importance to the silhouette shooter.

More than 700 rounds of full load ammo have been fired in the Redhawk since installation of the *Aimpoint Mark III*. I have replaced the batteries only once in a span of three months.

Recently, I tested the gun against another Redhawk—fitted with a 2X scope—over an improvised assault course. This course involved trotting 200 yards across three-foot-deep snow and shooting at targets as they came into view. The targets



Unlimited eye relief permits Aimpoint to be mounted on handguns, such as this .44 Magnum Ruger Redhawk. Aimpoint dampens the effect of heavy recoil.

consisted of 18 steel plates, one-inch thick and alternating four and 10 inches on the square. The plates were suspended at ranges of 35 to 80 yards. One hundred rounds of Remington 240 JSP were allotted each revolver.

My hit count with the Aimpoint Redhawk was slightly higher than with the 2X Redhawk. It must be recorded, however, that the elapsed time was, in every in-

stance, faster with the Aimpoint Redhawk.

I predict the Aimpoint will see increased use in combat competition. It has proven itself in hunting and is fast and direct on moving targets.

Suggested retail price of the *Aimpoint Mark III* is \$199.95. For more information, write Aimpoint/USA, 201 Elden St., Suite 103, Herndon, VA 22070.



Aimpoint and full-house loads in guns such as this Government Model .45 auto and .44 Mag. make shooting more pleasurable; click adjustments improve accuracy.



Porvair...

NEW SUBSTITUTE FOR LEATHER

Polyurethane material now used by Smith & Wesson, Safariland, other makers of police leather goods. Said to wear better, longer than leather.

By AH Staff

Some manufacturers of uniformed police officer's leather goods—his holster, belt and ammo pouch, for example—are using a new solid polyurethane material that reportedly wears better and longer than leather.

It's *Porvair*, now the choice of many of the nation's leading leathergoods manufacturers, including Smith & Wesson and Safariland.

The makers—Inmont Corporation of Somerville, Massachusetts—claim *Porvair* is not only replacing leather, but also the "patent leather look" synthetics, such as *Clarino* and *Corfam*, even though it is more expensive than many leathers and other materials, according to Mike DeCamillo, a company spokesman.

DeCamillo told *American Handgunner* that *Porvair* is unlike thin layers of polyurethane laminated to a fabric or non-woven backing material.

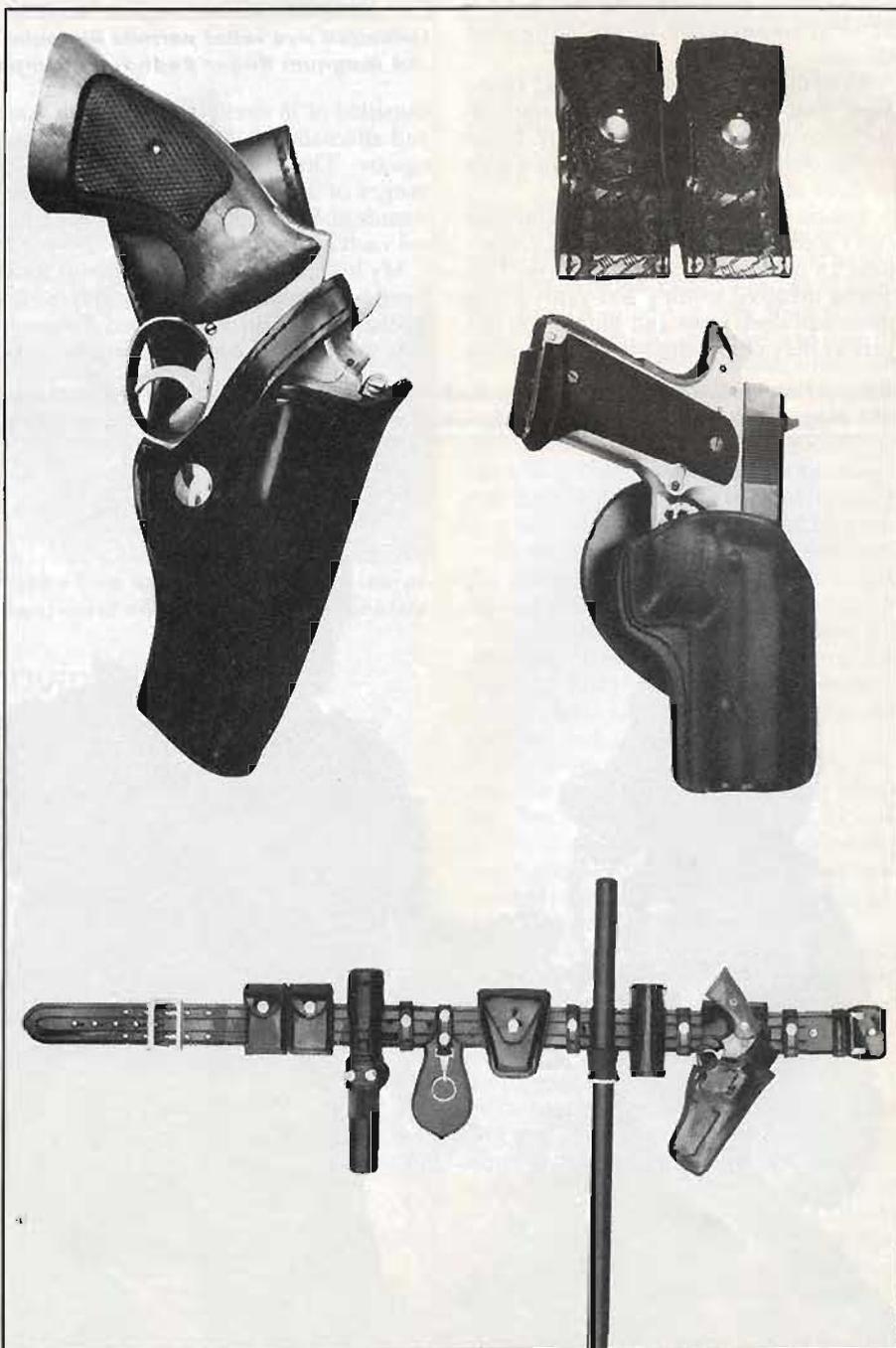
"It's solid polyurethane—not PVC, or vinyl—and does not crack, chip or peel," he said.

What are the other advantages of *Porvair* over leather and synthetic materials?

DeCamillo listed the following:

- Non-corrosive, unaffected by moisture, humidity or perspiration. Ammo and magazines can be stored without the worry of leather-caused corrosion.
- Oil and scuff resistant, easy to maintain (needs only a wipe with a damp cloth, rather than the polishing and buffing process associated with leather). For the last eight years, *Porvair* has been used in military hat brims and shoes.
- Flexible and resilient, even at temperatures below -20 degrees C.
- Can be embossed with a basketweave or other design and molded to a contour without having to thin the material, as required of laminated substances.
- Available in smooth or high-gloss finishes, and many colors and textures.

Continued on page 71



Porvair is replacing some leather and synthetic products. These Porvair products are made by (clockwise, from top) Mixon, Rogers, Rogers, Safariland.

To a certain extent, all automatic pistols look alike to me. However, when the Taurus PT99 arrived for testing, I couldn't help but notice that it is almost identical to the Beretta 92.

At one time, Beretta owned a plant in Brazil where they manufactured many well known models, including the 92. A few years ago, they sold the plant to Taurus, apparently with all tooling equipment intact. The Taurus people moved in and made a few minor changes before pushing the go-ahead button. Production began with two 9mm pistols, the PT92 with fixed sights and the PT99 with adjustable sights.

By Dave Reynolds

The PT99 is a double-action 9mm semi-automatic pistol with a 15-round magazine capacity. As such, it promises the instant readiness of the double-action revolver, and the rapid reloading features of the automatic pistol—the best of both worlds. To see how well it fulfills that promise, I decided to put it through the Seecamp Series, a test battery that compares the gun's performance in double-action vs. single-action fire. The idea for a program to quantify DA/SA capabilities came to me while I was testing a Colt .45 auto converted to double-action by Louis Seecamp, thus the name.

As visualized, the Seecamp Series begins by firing the gun single-action only, from the bench and then offhand, to establish its basic accuracy potential. Then it is fired double-action only from the same positions, to determine accuracy in this mode. The second phase calls for multiple two-shot groups from each of several shooting positions, first in SA only, then in DA/SA.

I had been advised that the Taurus' recoil spring was designed for full-power loads, and that some loaded-down American ammo could cause malfunctions. During the test, a couple of hundred rounds of Federal FMJ and S&W Nyclud SWCHP were used; the gun fed and ejected perfectly, every time. It didn't throw the empties very far, which was good. On one occasion, the slide failed to stay open after the last shot. That was the only functional problem.

Results of the Seecamp Series were not so clear cut. The PT99 has smooth, wood grips. They are thicker and slicker than the checkered plastic panels on the PT92, and aren't as good for shooting, even though they look nicer. Though the shooting was not timed, I'm sure that many of the double-action shots were slower than their SA equivalents, and were slower than they would have been, had more practical grips been on the gun.

In Phase I, from a sitting position, leaning back against a barrel, with elbows on knees, five-shot groups averaged about three-inches at 25 yards in single-action fire, and about five-inches or a little more

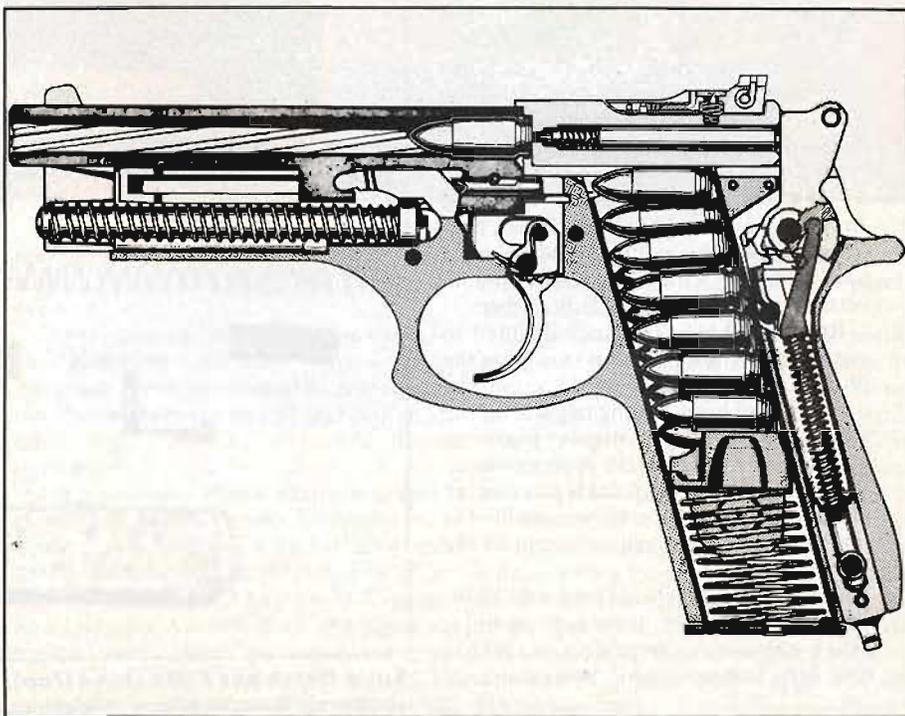
Continued from page 54

Looks like Beretta M92 . . .

TAURUS DA 9MM AUTO



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functionability with 15-round magazine.
Comes with fixed and adjustable sights.**





From "Tommy Guns" to...

THE NEW AUTO ORDNANCE .45

Frame and slide are investment castings. It costs less than a Colt Mark IV/Series 70 auto, and can be easily tuned for combat shooting.

By Dave Reynolds

Auto Ordnance Corp. started in business about 2.5 million "Tommy Guns" ago. That translates to the mid 1920s, when the company was formed. AOC literature states that it has sold that many Thompson submachine guns.

In the late 1950s, when business wasn't too good, the firm was bought by Numrich Arms Co. and moved to West Hurley, N.Y. It still makes "the gun that made the '20s roar," along with more modern semi-auto versions in .45ACP and .22LR calibers.

Recently, Auto Ordnance decided to start manufacturing its own version of the 1911A1 Government Model .45 pistol. The company had been dealing in parts for the gun for some time: as surplus parts ran out, it tooled-up to make replacements. When AOC got to the point it was making virtually all parts, the company decided to take the extra step: manufacture of the complete gun.

The AOC auto is solid and well built. Frame and slide are investment castings, which provides near-perfect parts that need very little machining. Several brands

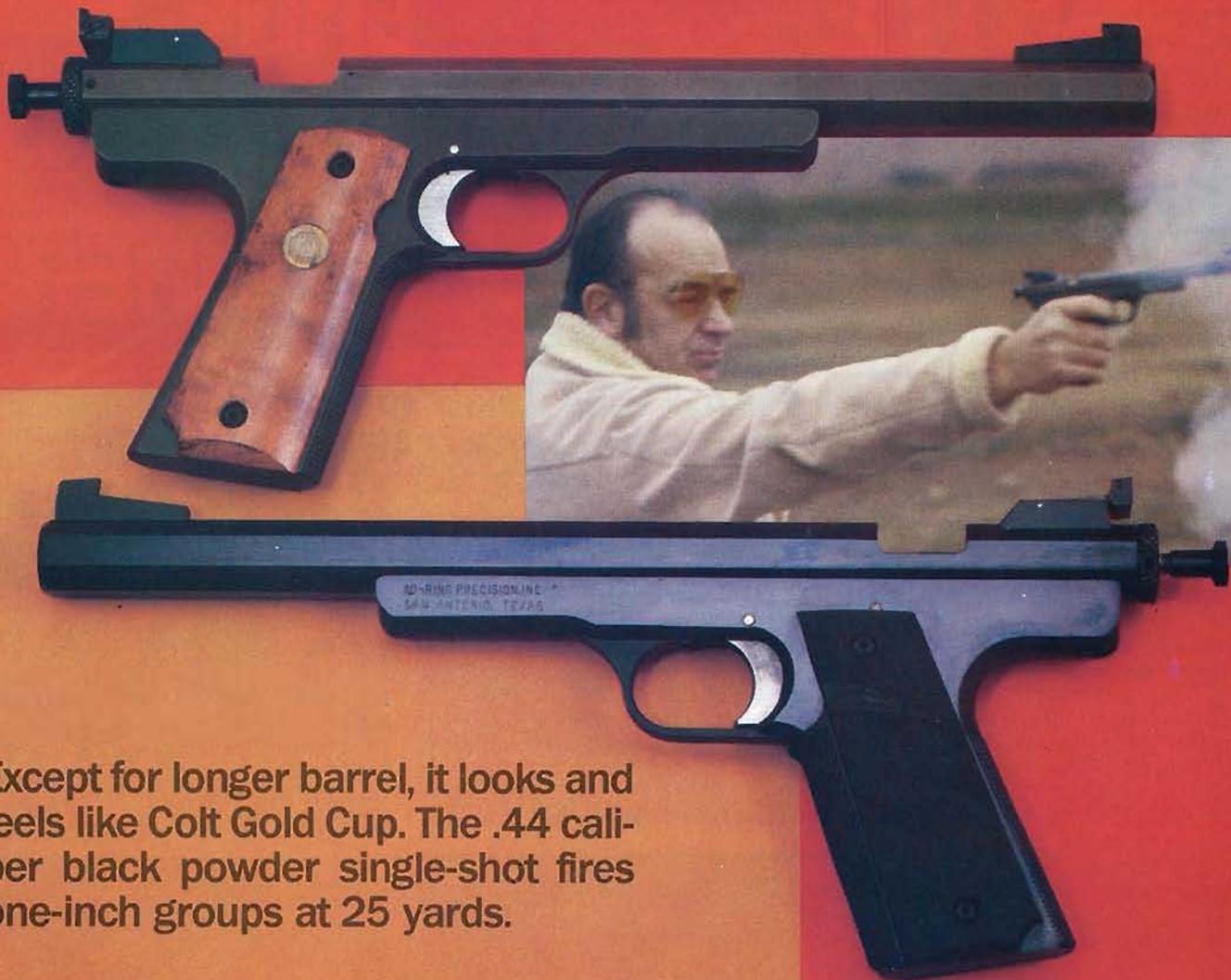
Continued on page 72



Satin finish has little shine (top). All parts interchange with M1911 autos (bottom). Despite heavy trigger pull, gun functioned flawlessly with hardball.

The Rival pistol...

TEN-RING COMPETITION MUZZLELOADER



Except for longer barrel, it looks and feels like Colt Gold Cup. The .44 caliber black powder single-shot fires one-inch groups at 25 yards.

James D. Mason

American handgunners do not generally look upon black powder guns as the epitome of accuracy. Yet, within the competitions held by muzzleloading shooters, some remarkable—if not authentic—handguns are firing amazing scores.

We tested several of the handguns that are winning black powder matches, namely the single-shot pistols from 10-Ring Precision.

Alex Blaine, president of the company, is a meticulous man. He makes some of the best commercial percussion muzzleloading competition pistols. Many people disassociate gilt-edged accuracy with

muzzleloading equipment, so it may come as a surprise to some that such equipment exists.

My muzzleloading percussion experience goes back quite a few years, when it was much more recreational than competitive. Nevertheless, a test project intrigued me . . . what makes a muzzleloader shoot tight groups?

I remembered that a number of specialty items were necessary for proper percussion shooting. So, I called my good friend, Bill Bracken, proprietor of Patch 'n Ball Gun Shop (3683 University Avenue, San Diego, CA). Bill is an old hand at muzzleloading, black powder sports and has made a business out of his expertise. Bill said he was interested and told me he

could furnish a variety of special accoutrement associated with competition patch and ball shooting.

Blaine makes the 10-Ring Rival pistol, using barrel blanks made by Bill Large of Irontown, Ohio. Bores are cut .440 inch on 13/16 inch octagonal stock. Effective barrel length (plug-to-muzzle) is nine inches. The one-turn-in-22-inch rifle twist has proved to be optimal for round ball shooting.

The guns have what appears to be an investment cast replica of the M1911 Colt frame, with a long adapter base to attach the barrel. This arrangement provides the same feel as a Gold Cup or National Match pistol. Of the two sample guns sent, one had Pachmayr rubber grips and the

Continued on page 65



From 21 states, Guam and Australia...

'STEEL CHALLENGE'

TOURNAMENT

DRAWS 154 HANDGUNNERS

J. Michael Plaxco wins, takes top prizes worth more than \$6,000 of \$62,489 purse.

By Len Davis

One hundred and fifty-four handgunners from 21 states, Guam and Australia braved flurries of inclement weather March 26-28 to fire in the grueling, highly-competitive "Steel Challenge" practical pistol tournament held on the Juniper Tree range in Canyon Country, less than an hour's drive north of downtown Los Angeles.

Sponsored by the Southwest Pistol League, the second annual shoot—with a purse of \$62,489—personified speed, accuracy, firepower and intense concentration over four quick draw-and-fire stages on steel targets (round and rectangular) placed at ranges from seven to 35 yards. Each competitor fired a minimum of 75 rounds during the first two days of the three-day shoot.

Of the 154 competitors, 10 were women, eight fired revolvers and eight were sworn law enforcement officers, six of whom were from the Los Angeles Police Department.

Last year's winner of the World Speed Shooting Championship (another name for the "Steel Challenge" tournament) was John Shaw of Memphis. Called by many the "World's Fastest Gun," Shaw placed eighth with an overall score of 49.42 seconds.

The 1982 champion was J. Michael Plaxco of Roland, Arkansas with a score of 44.43 seconds (see profile).

Plaxco's score was almost three seconds faster than Chip McCormick's second place score of 47.21, which may be likened

to winning the Master's golf tournament by 10 strokes, or the Indy 500 by one minute.

The difference between second and third place (Nick Pruitt with a 47.28) was only 7/100ths of a second.

All finishes, from second down to 124th, were decided by less than a second.

Names and scores of the high 20 competitors are carried elsewhere in this article.

High police score (51.21) was fired by Sergeant Dave Wheeler of the Los Angeles

Police Department, who placed 13th.

High women scorer was Pamela Morris of Phoenix, Arizona. She placed 78th with 69.59 seconds.

High wheelgunner was Arizona shooter Fred Wardell with a 60.65 for 46th place.

The youngest competitor was Donald Burgher, a 15-year-old shooter from Grand Junction, Colorado. He fired a score of 68.93 seconds for 77th place. His brother, Eugene, 16, fired a 78.23 for 106th place. Their dad, Gary, placed 84th with a 71.17. A real shooting family!



Mickey Fowler (foreground) and Nick Pruitt (barely visible) fired the best single run of 3.76 seconds in the Bianchi Gunleather team championship.

Mike Dalton, executive director of the Southwest Pistol League (SWPL), told the *American Handgunner*, "Donald certainly is someone to watch; already, he's a formidable competitor."

Winners of the four individual match stages, their sponsors and their times were:

Flying M: (International Shootists, Inc.), John Shaw, 9.63 seconds.

Speed Option: (Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc.), J. Michael Plaxco, 8.08 seconds.

Double Trouble: (Police Products West), Chip McCormick, 9.06 seconds.

Five to Go: (Safari Arms), J. Michael Plaxco, 13.98 seconds.

Overall scores were tallied over the first two days of shooting. The third day was devoted to two-man team shootoffs on *knockdown* steel targets.

Sixteen teams were formed from the 32 highest overall shooters, all of whom fired Colt .45 autos (both customized and out-of-the-box).

The Bianchi Gunleather team championship was won by Plaxco and McCormick, who averaged 4.3 second runs.

The best single run of 3.76 seconds was turned in by Mickey Fowler (winner of the 1981 Bianchi Cup Match) and Nick Pruitt.

Match director Jack Breskovich described the team shootoffs as "one of the best spectator events ever held."

The four-stage match on *stationary* steel targets also had tremendous spectator appeal, because non-shooters were able to identify hits on the steel targets, both audibly and visually (all targets were painted white and repainted for each shooter).

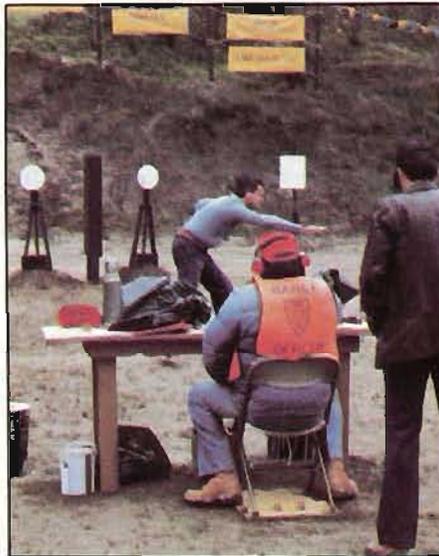
Despite cold, rainy weather, several hundred spectators from virtually all walks of life watched the shooters go through their paces over the four stages of fire and in the team shootoffs.

A local television camera crew covered the event.

Each competitor fired two stages each day, shooting five times over each stage. His four highest scores—or times—at each stage were averaged to comprise his four-stage, two-day total score, *plus* any penalties imposed.

Following are descriptions of each of the four stages:

Flying M: Shooter stands with one foot touching the starting line of the 16-foot foul line. At the signal, he runs toward the end of the foul line, knocks over a tin can from a rest placed three feet above the ground with his gun-drawing hand before touching his holstered pistol. He then turns down range, draws his gun and places at least one hit on three targets (*two 18x24-inch rectangle and one 12-inch round*) from outside the foul pole. The rectangles may be hit in any sequence, but the round impact target must be the last one hit.



An unidentified shooter stands poised and ready for the signal to fire.

If the shooter fails to hit the impact target to stop the timer, he receives an automatic 20-second string. A five-second penalty is charged for each of the rectangles not hit, a premature start and for touching the pistol with the gun hand before knocking over the tin can.

Ranges: 7, 10 and 15 yards.

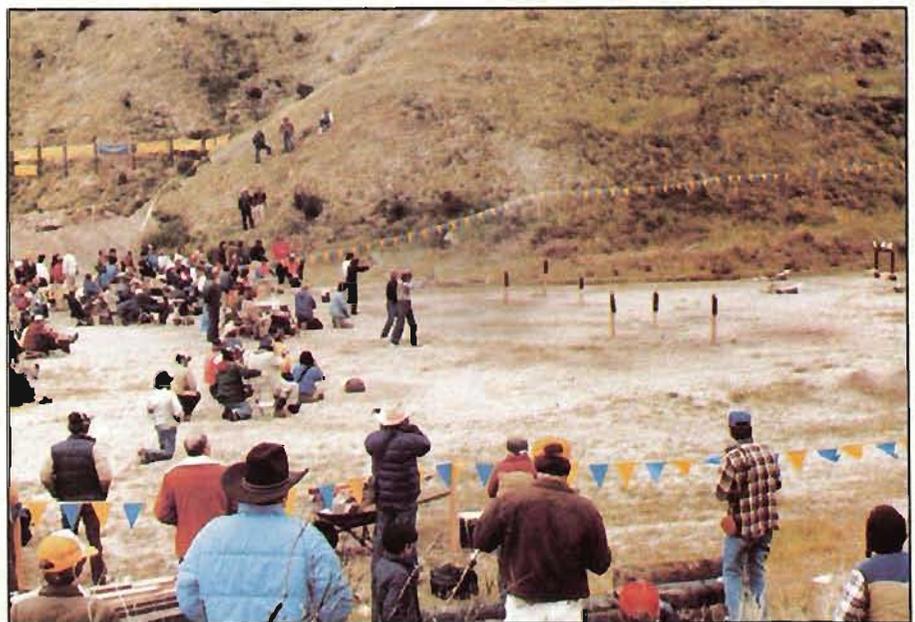
Speed Option: Shooter stands facing the targets (*same size as Flying M course*). At the signal, he draws and fires at three round plates, placed at 8, 10 and 15 yards. A round plate at 25 yards is an optional target and does not have to be hit. If the option target is hit, a bonus of two seconds is deducted from the shooter's total time.

The bonus is awarded only once in each string, and then only if all other (3) round plates and the rectangle stop plate are hit in the string. The four round plates may be fired in any order. But the shooter must fire at the rectangle plate (at 35 yards) last. Failure to hit the rectangle, and stop the timer, automatically gives the shooter a 30-second string. A five-second penalty is imposed for each premature start, and for each of the mandatory targets not hit.

TOP 20

1. J. Michael Plaxco (Arkansas)	44.43
2. Chip Mc Cormick (Texas)	47.21
3. Nick Pruitt (Michigan)	47.28
4. Mickey Fowler (California)	48.00
5. Robert Leatham (Arizona)	48.01
6. Leonard Knight (California)	48.36
7. Brian Enos (Arizona)	49.09
8. John Shaw (Tennessee)	49.42
9. Jim Zubierna (California)	49.55
10. Jeff Wassom (Texas)	50.90
11. Ray Neal (California)	51.02
12. Bill Wilson (Arkansas)	51.03
13. Dave Wheeler (California)	51.21
14. Stephen Knab (California)	51.35
15. Steve Martins (California)	51.75
16. Paul Walker (California)	52.36
17. Pentti Kumpulainen (California)	52.47
18. Craig Gifford (California)	52.50
19. Pete Flynn (California)	52.53
20. John Pride (California)	53.56

Double Trouble: Shooter stands facing two targets at seven yards. The targets (12-inch round) are positioned in a vertical plane, with their centers spaced three feet apart. The center of the lower target is 30



This overall view of the two-man team championship shows the firing line, spectators (foreground and left-background) and the falling plate targets.

inches above ground. The top target is equipped with an impact switch. Upon signal to commence fire, the shooter must draw his gun and hit the lower target first, and then the top target to stop the timer. A five-second penalty is imposed for a premature start, and for not hitting the lower target first. Maximum time allowed for each string is 10 seconds. The final score for this stage is *multiplied* by two to keep all stages on an equal par.

Five to Go: Shooter stands facing the targets. At the signal, he draws his gun and fires at four 10-inch plates. They may be shot in any order, except that the 12-inch stop plate (at seven yards) must be fired at last. Upon striking the stop plate, the string ends with the total time being the competitor's score. A five-second penalty is imposed for a premature start and for not hitting a 10-inch plate. Maximum time allowed per string is 20 seconds. The final score for this stage is *divided* by 2, to keep all stages on an equal par.

Ranges: 7, 10, 12, 15 and 18 yards.

Up to this point, all targets have been stationary.

Knockdown targets were used in the two-man team shootoffs, at ranges of 7, 15, 20 and 25 yards.

The event was controlled by the match director, four line judges, two electronic timers and two stop plates. The team that knocked down all the plates and stopped the timer first won the run. If the stop plate was hit and any knockdown plates were left standing, the run went to the other team, provided it accomplished its task. In the event of a double fault, the run was shot over. The reason for using two timers was to make sure the winning interval was greater than 5/100th of a second; if not, the run was declared a tie. A tie, like a double fault, was re-run.

Teamwork was an absolute necessity. Several faster teams were defeated because they fired too quickly and hit the stop plate *before* the last plate was knocked down.

The action was fast and furious—certainly one of the highlights of the three-day shoot.

Early-on in this article we alluded to a \$62,489 purse (bet you thought we'd never get around to mentioning the money and prizes that were disbursed to the winners of various match categories).

Last year, the purse totalled about \$20,000, according to Mike Dalton, who

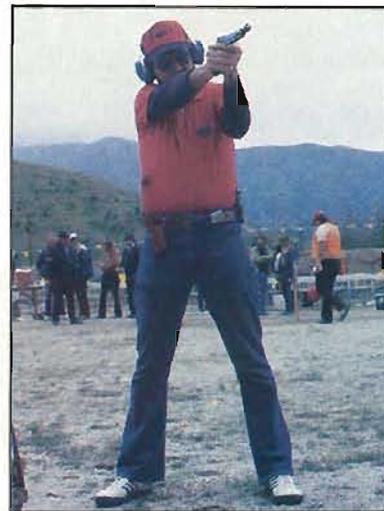
Continued on page 59

PLAXCO WINS 'STEEL CHALLENGE'

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating," wrote Miguel de Cervantes (1547-1616).

This truism came home to roost at the 2nd Annual Steel Challenge Practical Pistol Tournament, in which first-place winner J. Michael Plaxco shot a blistering 44.43 seconds over the tough, four-stage course with a .45 Colt Government Model auto customized—by himself.

The 29-year-old custom pistolsmith from Roland, Arkansas (population 85), which is situated about 20 miles west of Little Rock, holds many top shooting honors, including the Mid-Winter U. S. Championship held in Cincinnati (1980 and 1982). He was a member of the five-man U. S. IPSC Gold Team that fired at Roodepoort, south Africa in 1981. Plaxco placed third in the U. S. Nationals held at Hampton, Virginia in 1981.



Unquestionably, Plaxco is one of the top IPSC shooters in the United States, in addition to ranking high among top quality custom pistolsmiths.

Plaxco started firing IPSC competition about four years ago, two years after he bought his first handgun, a Smith & Wesson Model 29 .44 Magnum.

Prior to that time, his shooting experience consisted only of hunting with rifles and shotguns.

Born in Little Rock, Plaxco majored in engineering at the University of Arkansas. He has been a fulltime custom pistolsmith for about two years.

A major feature of Plaxco's match-
Continued on page 64

COMPETITOR	HOLSTER	GUN/ COMPONENTS	GUNSMITH/ STATE
1. Michael Plaxco	Rogers	Plaxco compensator; 6" Bar-Sto	Plaxco, AR
2. Chip McCormick	Rogers	Pin gun	Clark, LA
3. Nick Pruitt	Davis-X	Gold Cup; 6" Bar-Sto, Mag-na-ported	
4. Mickey Fowler	Blocker-X	Plaxco compensator; 6"	Hoag, CA/Plaxco, AR
5. Robert Leatham	Davis	Pin gun type w/comp.	Hammond, AZ
6. Leonard Knight	Davis-X	6" long slide	Hoag, CA
7. Brian Enos	Davis	Accu-Comp	Wilson, AR
8. John Shaw	Davis-X	Accu-Comp	Wilson, AR
9. Jim Zubiena	Davis-X	Pin gun type	Mae's 45 Shop, CA
10. Jeff Wassom	Rogers	5" Gov't.	Ted Ford, TX
11. Ray Neal	Davis-X	Pin gun type	Bill Donovan, CA
12. Bill Wilson	Davis-X	Accu-Comp	Wilson, AR
13. Dave Wheeler	Rogers	5" Gov't.	Hoag, CA
14. Steven Knab	Snick	Gold Cup; 6" Bar-Sto	Bruce Gray, CA
15. Steven Martins	Davis-X	6" long slide	Bruce Gray, CA
16. Paul Walker	Davis-X	5" Gov't.	Don Nygord, CA
17. Pentti Kumpulainen	Snick	6" long slide	Hoag, CA
18. Craig Gifford	Snick	Pin gun type	Boland, CA/ Hammond, CA
19. Peter Flynn	Snick	6 1/4" long slide	John Spilborghs, CA
20. John Pride	Bianchi	Long slide	Clark, CA
21. J. Bartell	Snick	Pin gun type	Chuck Ries, CA
22. Jim Vaughan	Sparks-X	5" Gov't.	Oliver Smith, CA
23. Mark Day	Bianchi-X	5" Bar-Sto	Boland, CA
24. Will Ramsey	Davis-X	6" Bar-Sto	Hoag, CA
25. Mark Duncan	Rogers-X	Gammon	Devel, OH
26. Mark Moore	Ted Blocker-X	5" Master Grade	Wilson, AR
27. Tim Robertson	Davis	6" Bar-Sto	Burke Hill, AZ
28. Jim Scordato	Davis	5" Gov't.	Crawford, NY
29. Doug Haipt	Davis-X	5" Gov't.	
30. Jim Albright	Bianchi-X	5" Gov't.	Hoag, CA

X: Crossdraw

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PISTOLSMITHING

Continued from page 22

leery about this, because of the high incidence of mail theft. Is there an alternative? A. You are *not* required, by Federal law, to note that there is a firearm in the package. You may list the contents as "precision tools" or some other label you choose. You may be better off wrapping the package entirely in paper tape and insuring it for the full amount. These packages are expensive, but they get through. Blue Label UPS is also very good.

Q. Years ago, Chic Gaylord wrote in his book on pistol combat shooting that adjustable sights are too fragile for use on a combat weapon. What is your opinion?

A. Gaylord was a holster maker. His connection with combat shooting was based on interviews with his customers. Period. The best combat revolver for police of his day was the S&W M15. There was seldom a problem with its adjustable sights. The adjustable target sights of the 1920s and 1930s were, indeed, fragile things. By the 1950s, some reliable and rugged adjustable sights were available. It is regrettable that Gaylord could not overcome his prejudices to give them a try. I've always felt that one test is worth one thousand "expert opinions."

Q. Can I mount an adjustable Kit Gun rear sight on my S&W Chief's Special?

A. It will just fit, but the front blade will be too low, with virtually no way to add height. One could be silver-brazed on a blued revolver, and the entire weapon re-finished if the heat discolors the barrel around the ramp. It would, however, be expensive, tricky, and would not look well.



HANDGUN LEATHER

Continued from page 9

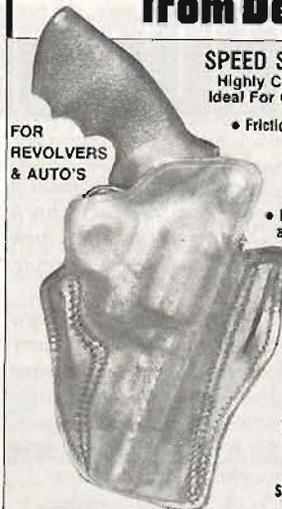
The most impressive part of the complete rig is the 1 3/4 inch gun belt. Fully contoured out, to prevent the annoying wrinkle in the middle of the back, this is the heaviest gun belt I have seen. Constructed of two thicknesses of 7/8 ounce cowhide, it is double-stitched for attractiveness. This belt needs replacing only if you outgrow it. I can't imagine anyone wearing one out.

I will continue to use my beautiful fully hand-carved *Jayhawker* rig. But if I were to need a replacement, I would select the new ISI rig. It's available from Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters, POB 821, Rosemead, CA 91770, or Jayhawker, 4704 Upshaw, Northwoods, MO. 63121. Cost is \$127.

Mickey has another winner!



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HANDGUN STOPPING POWER

Editor's note: One of the most frequently asked questions from readers—both civilian and law enforcement—is "Which bullet/load caliber has the best stopping power?"

There are theories; studies have been made, and we have the so-called expert opinions. Those that are credible have some basis, either in fact or experimentation. The question, however, is so important that we felt it imperative to publish some solid thoughts on the subject.

Here, then, is the beginning of our exclusive multi-part discussion of handgun stopping power.

To those who may be unfamiliar with the history of modern stopping power theories, we include a thumbnail description. Space restrictions make it impossible to detail the various methods of theory development or total results, but references will be made to each in this special series.

(1) Thompson/LeGarde Committee.

Report issued in 1904, after much experimentation; it stated that no pistol smaller than .45 caliber should be considered for military service.

(2) Hatcher's formula for Relative Stopping Power. First offered in 1927 by General Julian Hatcher, as follows: $RSP = E.A.y$; where E = kinetic energy at the muzzle, A = cross sectional area of bullet in square inches, and y = a shape factor which favors blunt-nose bullets and penalizes round-nose projectiles.

Hatcher, in 1934, confessed that his formula unduly favored the velocity factor, since energy is a function of the square of velocity. His new formula for relative stopping power was: $RSP = M.V.A.y$; where M is the mass of the bullet, V its velocity, A is the cross-sectional area of the bullet, and y is the shape factor.

(3) LEAA program. In 1973, the U.S. government, through various law enforcement agencies, had Aberdeen Prov-

ing Ground conduct a study of police handgun ammunition. A summary report of the findings was published in 1975, and a revised report was issued in 1980. This multi-faceted study was done to determine ricochet factors and, most importantly, a Relative Incapacitation Index (relative stopping power). The study used ordnance gelatin to determine the temporary wound cavity of each round, and a computerized model of the human anatomy in three dimensions, designed to plot wound trajectories.

In this American Handgunner series, we have enlisted the talents of several knowledgeable writers; they will explore not only the three theories and studies mentioned above, but will delve into the practical aspects of handgun stopping power, based on actual experiences of law enforcement agencies.

Your comments will be welcomed.

By Robert M. Price

The RII, or *Relative Incapacitation Index*, is taken from an increasingly well-known document which attempts to list common cartridges according to their ability to stop, or instantly disable, an assailant during a gun fight.

While it is a grand idea, the report contains many gross errors; anyone heeding its recommendations is following a prescription for disaster.

Did you know, as the report indicates, that the venerable .45 ACP round is really inferior to all loads of the 9mm Luger, most loads of the .38 Special, and even (according to the revised list) the standard loading for the .380 ACP? How's that you say?

Since the report is such a radical departure from all the prevailing evidence, it demands definite proof for its statements; but such proof is lacking.

The RII, as it is known, is part of a report entitled: *An Evaluation of Police Handgun Ammunition: Summary Report*, which was prepared for the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice (NILECJ), now the National Institute for Justice (NIJ).

The Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) was the next rung up from the NILECJ, and the next was the U.S. Department of Justice.

The tests were conducted under the Law Enforcement Standards Program (LESP) by the Law Enforcement Standards Laboratory (LESL), which is under the Na-

tional Bureau of Standards, which is under the Commerce Department. The LESL contracted with the U.S. Army Ballistic Research Laboratory at the Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, for production of the report, which the NILECJ was sponsoring.

The .45 ACP is sub-standard, according to the RII findings.

While all this may sound very confusing, it shows that this report—actually started in 1973 and with the final draft only now being written—was not a fly-by-night quickie, but a serious effort by the top echelons of the Federal Government; one in which they meant well. But the mountain labored—and it brought forth a mouse.

To start at the beginning, so as to better understand how a report so grandly conceived and well-intentioned could go so wrong, we must look at the testing criteria.

Desiring to rule out all subjective material, because it can not be quantitatively evaluated, the test excluded incidents of actual use.

To establish uniform standards, the testing was done on gelatin blocks, and the size of the temporary cavity created was measured.

This measurement became the principal indicator of the RII number. In addition,

measurements were made of the dynamic behavior of each bullet as it entered the gelatin, such as whether it deformed or not, and how the cartridges performed in various handguns and barrel lengths.

Also taken were measurements designed to determine the ricochet and penetration potentials of each bullet.

But testing bullets and cartridges alone is not enough, as the testing people realized, since they must be considered in relation to their targets, which in this case are humans.

So, they went to a panel of medical experts "... to identify those parts of the human anatomy which, when rendered temporarily or permanently non-functional, will result in the instantaneous incapacitation of the criminal ..."

A scenario was presented to the medical team of a criminal in a stressful situation attacking a police officer, who would have to use his gun to "incapacitate" him.

Although death was considered incapacitation, the main attempt was to judge incapacitation by the criminal no longer being able to function in a dangerous manner, not necessarily his being killed. Unconsciousness, for example, was equally acceptable, but being in pain was not.

THE COMPUTER MAN

Now, to marry the test of bullet performance to the idea of what wounds would be the most disabling, we introduce a third element—The Computer Man.

The Computer Man is a three-dimensional computer figure in which the area of

the body has been broken down into small areas, and into which have been encoded all tissue types within a specific area.

With the addition of the Computer Man, it becomes a snap to superimpose the test results of the bullet onto the theory of the doctors as to what would be most disabling onto the neat, 3-d, computerized human form.

Just press the button and out come the results, no muss, no fuss, no blood—just nice, neat numbers.

Obviously, the test went to a great deal of trouble to accomplish what it determined, but before evaluating those determinations, let's evaluate some of the RII's *subjective assumptions* that have a decisive bearing on the outcome. If the premise is

faulty, then the conclusion is faulty.

Assumption #1. That the *Maximum Temporary Cavity* (MTC) produced in ordnance gelatin by a bullet will be duplicated in flesh, that the size of such a cavity is indicative of the damage in flesh which a bullet will do, and that this is the most important factor.

This is a large, triple assumption, and

EXTRACTS FROM: PERFORMANCE, COMMERCIALY AVAILABLE HANDGUN AMMO

Revised November 1980

CALIBER	WEIGHT (grains)	BULLET TYPE	MANUFACTURER	BARREL LENGTH (in.)	VELOCITY		RI INDEX
					Nominal (fps)	Measured (fps)	
9mm	96	Safety Slug	Deadeye	4	1365	1839	54.5 ⁽¹⁾
9mm	115	FJ (FMC)	Win.	4	1140	1126	10.3
9mm	115	JHP	Rem.	4	1160	1192	28.2
9mm	124	FJ (FMC)	Rem.	4	1120	1084	11.3
.357 MAG	96	Safety Slug	Deadeye	4	1120	1725	49.2 ⁽²⁾
.357 MAG	110	JHP	Western	4	1500	1309	29.9
.357 MAG	125	JHP	S&W	4	1775	1227	22.9
.357 MAG	140	JHP	Speer	4	1780	1221	41.8
.357 MAG	158	JSP (III-VEL)	Federal	4	1550	1255	25.6
.357 MAG	158	LRN (Lubaloy)	Western	4	1410	1230	21.0
.357 MAG	158	SWC	Rem.	4	1410	1088	17.3
.38 SPEC	95	JHP (+P)	Rem.	4	985	1187	28.9
.38 SPEC	95	JHP (+P)	Rem.	2	985	1019	16.4
.38 SPEC	96	Safety Slug	Deadeye	4	1800	1585	41.9
.38 SPEC	96	Safety Slug	Deadeye	2	1800	1496	37.3
.38 SPEC	110	JHP	Speer	4	1245	857	11.4
.38 SPEC	110	JHP	Speer	2	1245	789	9.6
.38 SPEC	125	JHP	Rem.	4	1160	1108	23.2
.38 SPEC	125	JHP	Rem.	2	1160	911	13.9
.38 SPEC	148	WC	Federal	4	770	737	14.0 ⁽³⁾
.38 SPEC	148	WC	Federal	2	770	674	13.0 ⁽³⁾
.38 SPEC	158	LRN	Win.	4	855	919	7.5
.38 SPEC	158	LRN	Win.	2	855	780	5.5
.38 SPEC	200	LRN	Speer	4	850	710	3.8
.38 SPEC	200	LRN	Speer	2	850	598	2.4
.41 MAG	210	JSP	Rem.	4	1500	1260	51.6
.41 MAG	210	Lead	Rem.	4	1050	944	6.2
.44 MAG	200	JHP	Speer	4	1675	1277	67.3
.44 MAG	240	SWC	Rem.	4	1470	1286	32.2
.45 AUTO	185	JHP	Rem.	5	950	895	18.0
.45 AUTO	185	WC	Rem.	5	775	821	3.5 ⁽⁴⁾
.45 AUTO	185	WC	Federal	5	775	751	6.3 ⁽⁴⁾
.45 AUTO	230	FJ	Rem.	5	855	839	5.4
.45 AUTO	230	FJ	Win.-West.	5	850	740	2.6
.45 LC	255	LRN	Win.-West.	7.5	860	821	3.7

Footnotes:

(1) & (2): Note how much higher the measure velocity is than the nominal velocity.

(3): Note the 14.0 and 13.0 ratings on this wadcutter loading, making it better than the Speer 110-grain JHP, supposedly. Note also that the Speer load is given a much lower measured velocity than the nominal velocity would indicate.

(4): Note in these two .45 wadcutter loadings, the Federal load is given a 6.3, despite a velocity substantially lower than the Remington load, which commands only a 3.5. This apparently contradictory result is not explained.

HANDGUN STOPPING POWER

one which has been hotly contested by various sources over the years.

Gelatin is obviously easy to test with, but that does not mean the results are valid. For one thing, no animal body is composed of a solid mass of gelatin, but is made up of varying layers and quantities of quite dissimilar materials, some of which are extremely elastic, while others are quite rigid. There is no bone, for example, in gelatin, and bone is a hard substance to which force can be directly transmitted.

Assumption #2. That medical people can predict with any degree of accuracy what a given wound will do. They cannot. This is not an indictment of the medical profession, but rather a statement about the resiliency of the human body and spirit.

Assumption #3. That a computer mock-up, which in theory is supposed to take into account these various dissimilarities, does in fact take them into account.

This is a very large assumption and does not seem borne out by the report.

Back when the army was considering adopting the Model 1911 semi-automatic pistol in .45 caliber, it ran extensive tests.

The need for these tests, as is well known, had been demonstrated by the failure of the .38 Long Colt cartridge to stop a determined adversary.

In those days, there were no computers; so the tests were conducted on live animals and human cadavers.

Now, this is certainly not as sanitary as a computer, and one can well imagine the screams from various groups which would go up if the government tried to repeat such a test today; but it would seem that the old procedure would have far more legitimacy, and that the results would be far more comparable to actual combat circumstances against live, human opponents.

Assumption #4. That Assumptions 1, 2, and 3 are correct; that is, that the size of the bullet cavity, in which should be the vital organs, as told to you by a computer, are what will really produce instant incapacitation. If I must ever face a Computer Man made of gelatin blocks, I may be very sorry that I was armed with a .45. On the other hand, if you are armed with a 9mm which fails to stop an opponent, whip out your copy of the RII and read to him about how incapacitated he really is.

RII CONCLUSIONS

The RII is too long to fully reproduce here; but some of its parts, and some of its conclusions, are included in this story.

The first conclusion, and the one on which the report and the RII is based, is that the size of the *Maximum Temporary*

Cavity (MTC) is the principal indicator of a bullet's performance. This conclusion is not surprising, given the assumption about the MTC in the first place, but it is stated several times in the report.

The second conclusion is that *velocity* is the single most important factor in determining bullet performance, i.e., that faster bullets produce a bigger MTC, because the cavity is determined by the total energy of the bullet and the deformation of a particular bullet type. It has long been known that hollow-points require a certain velocity in order to expand, but this conclusion falls back to the first, that the size of the MTC is the most disabling factor.

Other conclusions were pretty conventional, and it would hardly have seemed that a test such as this was necessary. For example, small, light, fast-moving, frangible bullets tend to fragment when they strike something hard; thus, they pose less of a ricochet hazard than heavy, slower, solid bullets. Light, fast, expanding bullets

Note: Next issue, Masaad Ayoob discusses stopping power, as it really happens on street.

are poor penetrators—they will not penetrate an engine block, even in magnum loads! And finally, that all the bullets tested posed a significant ricochet hazard.

Now, to get directly into the problems of the RII, let us first consider which RII we are discussing. There are two, so far, with another on the way. In 1975, when the report was issued, there was one in the text, although it was broken down into two tables—listing cartridges in ranking order of power, then in caliber sequence. The second RII, revised in November 1980, lists them only in ascending caliber order.

However, there are far greater differences than this. Several cartridges or calibers, which were on the first RII, are not even listed on the second; such as the .22LR, .380 ACP, and .44 Special. Worse still, the RII number has changed for a number of cartridges, some up, some down, even though the velocity, bullet weight, bullet type, and barrel length remained unchanged. The .44 Mag. 200-grain Speer JHP jumped from 54.9 (1975) to 67.3 (1980). The .45 ACP 230-grain FMJ Remington round slumped from 6.7 (1975) to 5.4 (1980). No explanations were provided on either the omissions or changes, other than that the report is not yet final.

No hard recommendations were given as to what a particular number meant on the RII scale, but a lower end figure of 10.0 was suggested as a minimum, thus making the .45 ACP and .45 Colt cartridges both substandard, according to the RII.

At the upper end, 25.0 is the approximate figure beyond which additional power becomes unnecessary or undesirable, again according to the RII. However, the figures are supposed to be relative, that is, a 20.0 is twice as good as a 10.0, or a 25.0 is five times better than a 5.0.

ENERGY FACTOR

Yet another omission was that the RII included *no* figures whatsoever on the energy a particular cartridge had, and this energy figure can be far more telling than the velocity figure only.

For example, both the Winchester 9mm Luger FMJ and the .45 ACP FMJ have about the same foot-pounds of energy, although the 9mm bullet is lighter (115 to 230 grains) and faster (1,155 f.p.s. vs. 810 f.p.s.), according to the latest Winchester catalog.

The RII, incidentally, gave the published (nominal) figures as 1,140 f.p.s. for the 9mm and 850 f.p.s. for the .45. They tested the 9mm at 1,126 f.p.s. and the .45 at 740 f.p.s. I do not know where the RII got its "published" figures for these cartridges, nor why they tested lower—the .45 in particular—or if indeed they did. In any event, despite nearly identical energy ratings, Winchester's 9mm scored 9.7 (1975) and 10.3 (1980), while their .45 declined from 6.5 (1975), a figure just below the same Remington round at 6.7 (1975) to a figure of—now brace yourself—2.6 in 1980, putting it below the 4.0 of the .380 FMC load (1975).

This 2.6 figure is substantially below the Remington .45 cartridge (5.4 in 1980), and barely edges out the Winchester .22 LR, lead hollow-point round fired from a two-inch barrel in 1975, which scored 2.3. Just think of what this means: A snub-nosed .22 shooting hollow-points is nearly as good as a full-sized .45 shooting military-type loads!

But perhaps I dwell too much with the incongruities at the lower end of the scale; so, let's work up, and what better cartridge to do it with than the ubiquitous .38 Special.

A great many .38 Special rounds were tested, and they scored all the way from 41.9 down to 2.3 in 1980, making the "top" scorer almost 20 times better than the bottom.

The top scorer, by the way, was the 96-grain Safety Slug by Deadeye Associates, fired from a four-inch barrel, while the bottom was the 200-grain Remington

Continued on page 74

Easy to make; and it works!

Unique Shoestring Holster

By Don Shuman

During World War Two, Camp Perry, Ohio—home of the National Matches—was a POW Detention Center. Prisoners were assigned to little shacks, which held four beds and not much else. Now in slight disrepair, these abodes were used to house shooting competitors after the war. While a bit primitive, it was fun living in them, and you got to meet some interesting bunkmates.

George, as I'll call him, worked as an investigator for one of those agencies you're not supposed to talk about; that is, when he wasn't out "going clean" on a rapid-fire string.

One day he came in with a little plastic suitcase and offered to show me what he called his "working kit." Inside were two much-carried, but well-cared-for Colt automatics, one a .45 and the other a .32. Also a spare magazine and a box of cartridges.

In one corner I noticed a short piece of leather with a loop on each end. "What's that?" I asked. "A shoestring holster," he answered. I was still young enough to think I knew everything, so I exclaimed, "Never heard of such a thing!" "I'll show you," he replied, and he did.

Take a piece of leather boot lace, (even a cloth lace or heavy string will do) and make a loop for your belt to go through. Tie or sew it closed. Then measure off about four inches and make an identical loop on the other end. Thread your belt through the two loops, with the resultant larger loop turned up like an inverted "U." Slip the gun muzzle through that loop, and push your pistol down inside your waistband. The lace, which is now around the gun, will secure it from slipping down your leg.

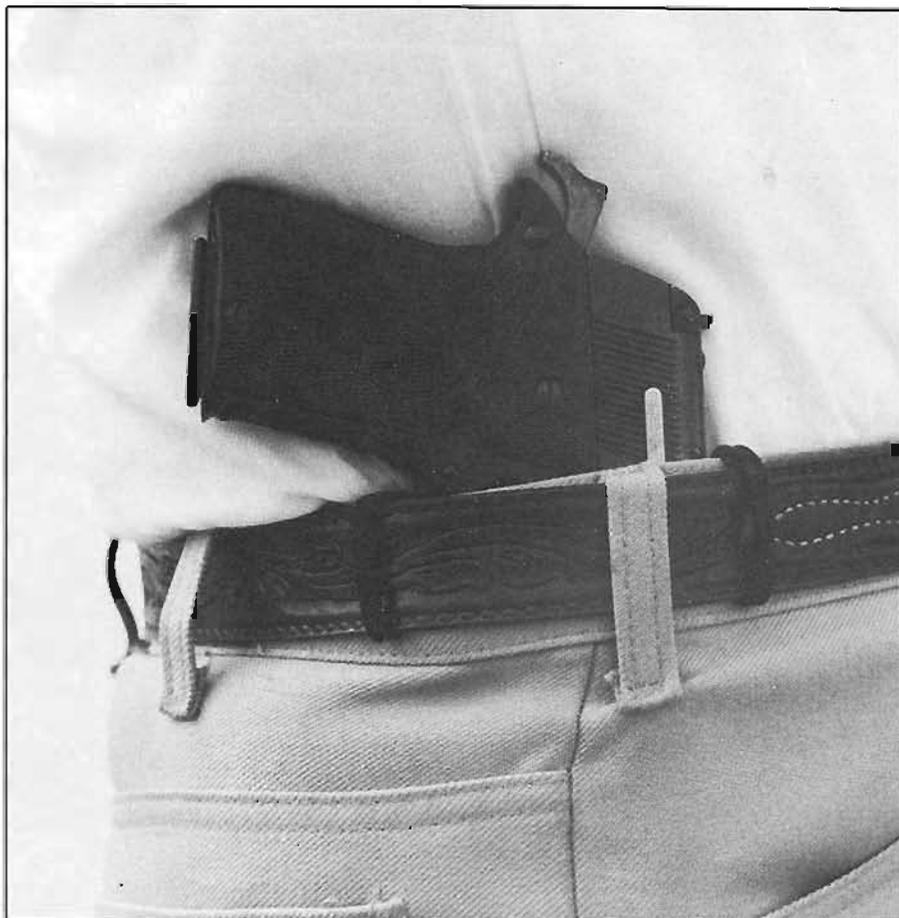
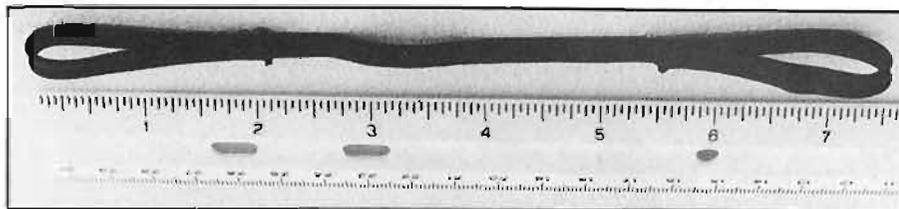
A few advantages of this simple outfit are:

- You can use it with almost any mid- or large-size automatic by spacing the belt loops closer or further apart, depending on the size of the pistol.
- It can be worn anywhere on the belt, with the gun slanted at any angle, butt for-

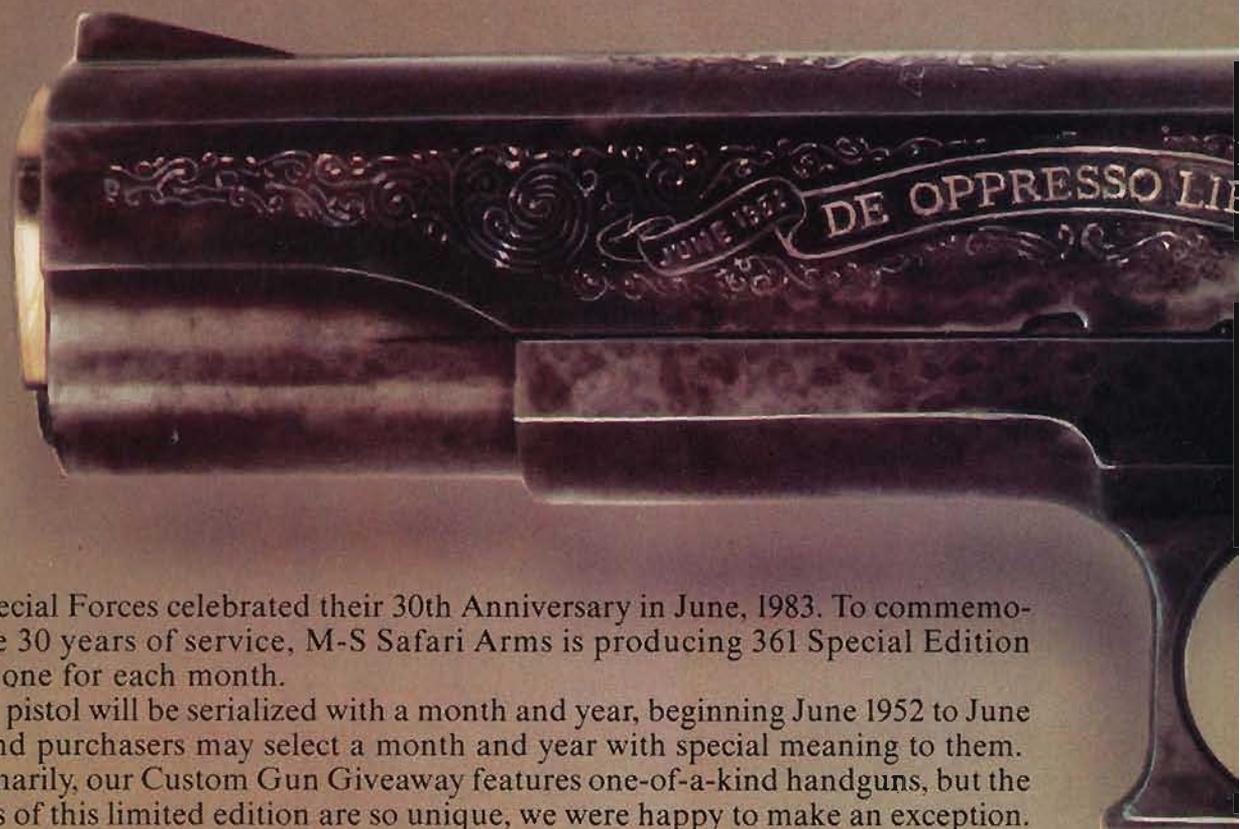
Continued on page 76



This is how Starr PD .45 auto looks inside pants (top). Note the "string" (center), which is attached to belt on the other side, coming over the top edge of pants and around the gun. At bottom, gun is seen from outside pants.



Win this SPECIAL FORCES Ltd.



The Special Forces celebrated their 30th Anniversary in June, 1983. To commemorate the 30 years of service, M-S Safari Arms is producing 361 Special Edition pistols, one for each month.

Each pistol will be serialized with a month and year, beginning June 1952 to June 1982, and purchasers may select a month and year with special meaning to them.

Ordinarily, our Custom Gun Giveaway features one-of-a-kind handguns, but the features of this limited edition are so unique, we were happy to make an exception. You can see that these .45's are almost completely color-case-hardened. The work is being done by J.J. Jenkins of Golita, CA, under the direct supervision of Pete Mazure. The process not only imparts a unique pattern to each gun but also maintains the integrity of the steel and its *Continued on page 63*

TO ENTER CONTEST

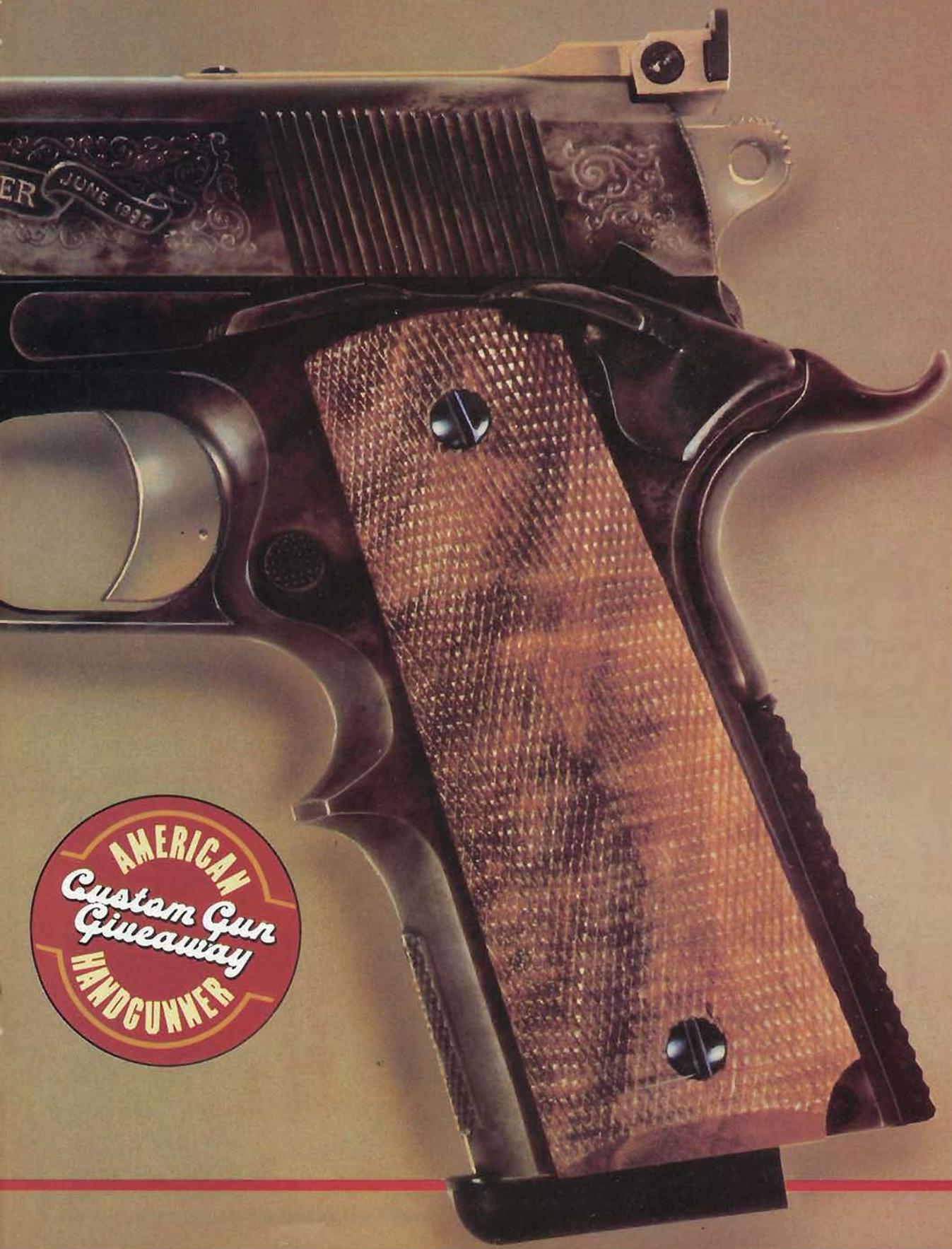
Use a postcard, follow sample; include name and address, HOM-S-O, local dealer name and address. Mail before October 1, 1982. Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Box 16025, San Diego, CA 92116

Name _____
Address _____
City & State _____ Zip _____
HOM-SEPT-OCTOBER
If I win, please ship my gun through the following dealer
Dealer _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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



Ed. .45 from M-S SAFARI ARMS



Few shooters are aware that the M1911 pistol represents Colt's *second*—not first—production status .45 caliber semiautomatic service handgun. Actually, it was the little-known M1905 pistol that marked Colt Patent Firearms' entry into the big bore auto-pistol field.

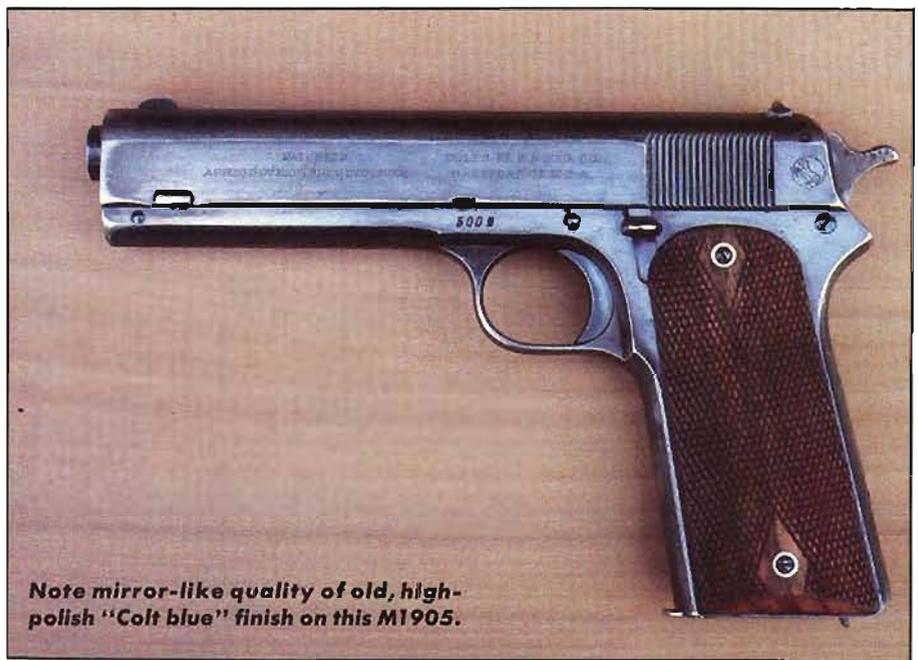
One rarely sees a M1905 in use today; only about 6,300 such guns were ever completed, so few survive. Even the most poorly refinished ones bring more than \$350 today.

The result of such scarcity is an unfortunate gap in the experience of the majority of .45 enthusiasts. Most have never had, and never will have, a chance to fire Colt's "truly first" .45 auto-pistol, and thus learn where it all began, insofar as their favorite self-loader is concerned.

So, it was with much pleasure that I recently had an opportunity to test and evaluate a finely preserved M1905 pistol, provided by collectors' arms dealer Syd Rachwal (3412 Mackin Road, Flint, Michigan 48504).

The M1905 represented Colt's third attempt in five years to interest the U.S. military in a self-loading, major caliber holster pistol. Earlier efforts had centered around the Hartford firm's models of 1900 and 1902. Both were .38ACP-chambered, Browning-designed sidearms, employing a twin-link prototype of what was later to become the Browning lock, and a unique "slide lock" bar designed to hold the slide and frame together. Both guns failed to win acceptance, due largely to their caliber—which brought to mind the anemic .38 Long Colt—and both had a limited production status for the civilian market, seldom a path to greatness for any handgun design. Still, an upscaled version of the 1900-1902 pistol, chambered for a robust new cartridge of formidable ballistic properties—the .45 rimless-smokeless—promised to answer satisfactorily the services' major objection to the earlier Browning designs. Accordingly, the M1905 entered production during the last month of the year of its designation, and proceeded almost immediately to fare somewhat better than its predecessors in attracting military interest.

In 1907, several M1905 pistols were submitted for testing by the Army Ordnance Department, against a variety of competitive pieces submitted by Savage, DWM, Bergmann, Webley and S&W; only the Colt and Savage models were deemed worthy of more intensive service evaluation. Consequently, an order for some 200 pre-production guns was placed with Colt. This contract brought out what was to become known as the M1907 pistol, basically a stock M1905 incorporating a lanyard loop, loaded chamber indicator and grip safety. These arms were delivered in March of 1908, at a unit price of \$25. Savage's efforts to produce its 200 competitive self-loaders—which sold for \$65—falter-



Note mirror-like quality of old, high-polish "Colt blue" finish on this M1905.

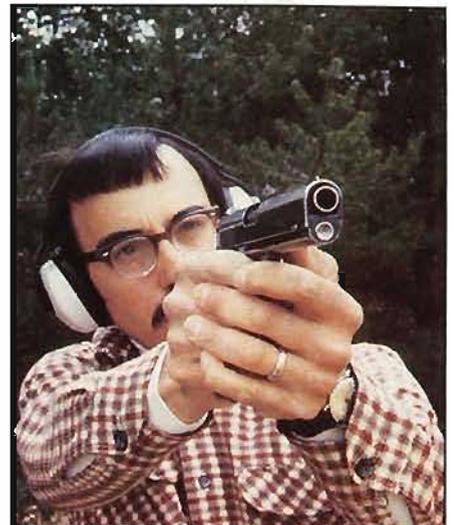
M1911 was second...

Colt's First .45 Auto is Test-Fired

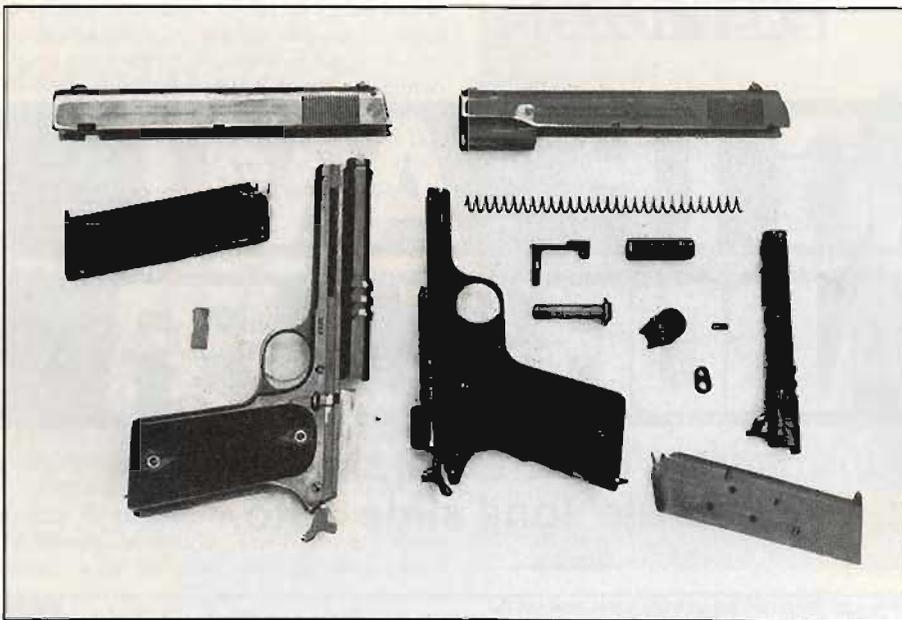
The little-known M1905, although scuttled in 1911, is the proud grandparent of today's Commanders, Star PDs and "hardballers."

over the first of what was to be a long series of production obstacles.

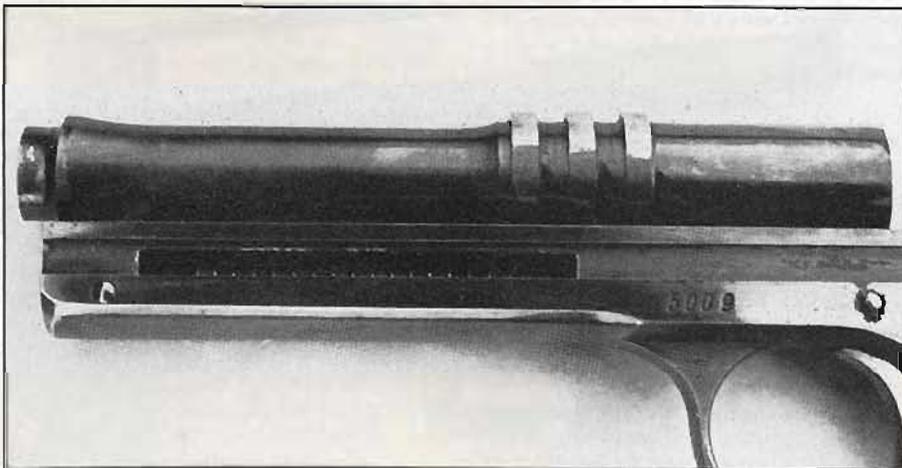
Despite its advantageous headstart over its competition, the M1905-1907 failed to win for its producer the long-sought military contract. Although Colt clearly emerged as the front-runner in its competition with Savage (which experienced nightmarish difficulties in even *shipping* its test guns), it was obvious to the Army that what the M1905 represented was little more than an upscaled rework of a design rejected some years previously. Apart from the addition of a rebounding firing pin and a slide stop (which the M1902 had also featured) and the impressive new caliber, there was little to distinguish the M1905 from the batch of M1900 pistols evaluated by both the Army and Navy right after the turn of the century. So, the M1905 reverted to the limited civilian production limbo inhabited by its predecessors, where it re-



Author fires M1905; "recoil was heavy, hammer-bite unpleasant, rear slight bad!"



Simplicity was the keynote of the M1905 design. Note relative complexity of M1911 field-strip, right. The M1905 weighed six ounces less than the M1911.



Field-stripped view of the M1905 frame shows locking lugs, captive recoil spring, barrel links. It measured eight inches overall, with a five inch barrel.



The original .45 rimless-smokeless caliber load, as stamped on the slide of the M1905, featured a 200-grain FMJ bullet with a muzzle velocity of 900 f.p.s.

mained until dropped from the Colt line in 1911.

What the Model of 1905 had accomplished, however, was to commit the Army to Colt as the producer of its next service handgun; it was the continuing and constructive critique of Colt designs by the military that was to result in the eventual development of a prototype M1911, in 1910. Furthermore, commitment to the .45 rimless-smokeless cartridge, had also been conceded, although this round's original 200-grain FMJ bullet with a velocity of 900 f.p.s. was eventually altered to 230-grain FMJ bullet/860 f.p.s. specs in the same casing. The resulting .45ACP cartridge was thus dimensionally similar to its rimless-smokeless predecessor and only marginally, if at all, more energetic.

Accordingly, it was standard .45ACP ammunition that I carried when, on a relatively mild winter day, Rachwal's superb M1905 pistol was taken afield for range testing. A thorough safety check of the test piece was conducted prior to firing, and revealed a condition apparently adequate to withstand the stresses imposed by modern ammunition. (Safety can never be guaranteed in a 75-year-old pistol firing ammunition for which it was not originally chambered.)

Some test firing preceded my first bench-rest shooting session. That's because shattering of the slide lock under stress is not unknown in early model Colt-Browning guns; when this occurs, the slide departs from the frame—into the shooter's face! So, firing these now quite-aged pieces cannot be recommended.

Performance of the test gun—a 1911-produced model with an eminently serviceable bore—proved admirable, from the bench. Initial "on-command" groups at 25 meters measure a consistent 2 7/8 inches—adequate mechanical accuracy from a military sidearm possessing a curious (and optically unsatisfactory) "dimpled hemisphere" rear sight, and an elusive, narrow front blade.

Still, what left the deepest impression—no pun intended—during the course of initial testing was neither sights nor targets, but the M1905's spur-type hammer, which proceeded to draw blood from the web of my hand as of round-number-three! So severe was the hammer-bite with this pistol that, as of round-number-eight, time out had to be declared at the end of each shot, so my blood could be cleaned from the pistol's backstrap and my wounds treated.

A glove provided a partial solution, although the pistol responded by devouring it, too.

Without protection for the hand, "fliers" quickly became a problem, despite a backlash-free, five-pound trigger pull with only modest creep and a configuration that seemed to lend itself ideally to an efficient, isometric two-hand hold.

Pointability of the pistol seemed grossly

Continued on page 47

TUNING THE AMT .45 HARDBALLER

An amateur gunsmith can make a real shooter out of this 'most versatile' long slide auto.

By Russ Gaertner

The .45 auto undoubtedly is our most popular big-bore handgun, the pistol most frequently accurized, customized or modified.

There is a .45 for almost every conceivable purpose, from chopped, easily concealable guns for law enforcement to the many accurized competition pieces for bullseye shooting, combat shooting—even bowling pins.

Having owned several tight, accurized .45s, I have always wanted a more versatile, general-purpose gun, one which would handle any reasonable load and a range of bullet weights and nose shapes with good field accuracy and power.

The modified .45 which comes closest to this kind of versatility is a long slide. However, sawing off two slides and precisely welding the rear section of one to the front part of the other, then properly mating the slide to a long barrel and a receiver is a job for a top pistolsmith. The custom long slide commands a stiff price. Such target guns usually are too finely tuned to risk loosening with heavy loads.

When AMT first offered a factory long slide .45, my old interest revived. The idea seemed valid, because the long barrel would add a kicker, raising velocities and power with heavier loads. The custom-type features included as standard equipment on AMT's guns and the stainless steel construction became too much to resist. Finally, I purchased a new Hardballer Long Slide .45 (HBLS).

When the gun arrived, it looked good, but it was definitely rough, out-of-the-box. This was no surprise. I had heard complaints about AMT's .45s; after handling the gun, the reasons were obvious. I was willing to do my own smoothing and tuning, in the hope that the HBLS was basically sound and accurate.

Detailed hand-fitting is too expensive today for factories to market slick actions at moderate prices. The HBLS has been discounted at just over \$300, a bargain



This four-shot group was fired at 25 yards with Sierra 240-grain JHC and seven grains of Unique, producing a muzzle velocity of 943 f.p.s. The hot load functioned perfectly. Shots were fired with two-hand hold, from a rest.

price for a good long slide .45. And the gun does sport a "custom-fitted" barrel bushing (old type), a key requirement for good accuracy.

Although the brand new gun seemed rough, no pistol should be judged until it has digested enough ammo to seat the action and knock off a few rough edges. After swabbing out the excess factory grease and cleaning the chamber and bore, I gathered up various loads on hand and headed for the range.

As expected, the gun's roughness made handling and shooting more pain than pleasure. It would not cycle reliably with any of the loads I tried, not even hardball. It jammed at least twice in most five-shot strings, failing to eject the empties. Feeding was also erratic with anything except roundnose slugs.

On the positive side, the HBLS did produce fair accuracy. Groups ran 2-4 inches at 25 yards, using a two-hand hold from an

arm rest, in spite of a creepy trigger pull of more than five pounds, and the hard-to-see stainless front sight. The black-finished rear sight is a good adjustable combat type. Ignition was highly reliable, and I liked the muzzle-heaviness, mild recoil, and longer sighting radius.

The untuned gun was anything but a match-ready .45, but it was basically tight and well made. It was a reasonable challenge for my amateur pistolsmithing abilities. The work turned out to be simpler than I had expected. The best news is that smoothing and tuning alone produced a versatile, reliable, accurate pistol, with no need to attempt accurizing, which is beyond my capabilities.

This article does not claim that the unaccurized HBLS can be made to perform as well as a top-grade custom gun, especially with very light target loads. Personally, I don't need X-ring accuracy at 50 yards. But my gun does give very acceptable accuracy

with a wide range of factory and hand-loaded ammo, especially with loads which have been carefully tailored for it.

Smoothing the HBLs involves removing minor roughness and tool marks, but not altering the shape of parts. Since disassembly directions are identical to those for the government model .45, they will not be repeated here.

The job could have been done without power tools. But I'm lazy, and my favorite is a Dremel Mototool with Cratex rubberized abrasive tips in fine and very fine grits. This combination smooths surfaces with a very light brushing motion; a sharp edge can be radiused in one or two quick passes, not enough to remove detectable amounts of metal.

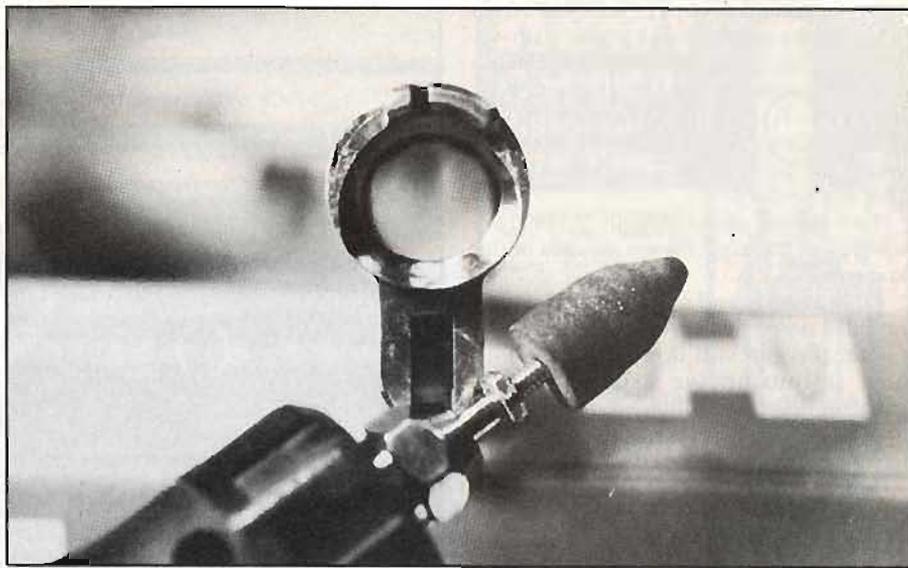
First, the rounded magazine follower stuck when the first round was pushed down on the tongue. The follower's sharp edges were smoothed and radiused with a fine Cratex tip. The strong spring was shortened by cutting one turn from the bottom end, then bending up the cut end to the original angle. The magazine lips were also smoothed. The slide catch had a tendency to wedge against the follower "foot" on the last shot, so the foot was bent out slightly toward the left side. The inside surface of the clip was polished down an inch or so below the lips. After cleaning and reassembly, the clip loaded easily and worked smoothly.

Next, the slide and its parts were tackled. The custom-fitted barrel bushing was not touched, nor was the barrel ahead of the lugs, inside or out. The final 1/8" of slide travel before lock-up was hard. This was eased by smoothing the barrel and slide lugs and lightly radiusing their sharp corners. I also polished the barrel ramp and radiused the chamber mouth; but I did no throating, at this time.

The firing pin stop was polished on the curved section, which cams back the hammer. The firing pin was polished lightly. The extractor hook was sharpened with a fine-cut needle file and polished. The rear sight pin had worked out during firing; it was removed and cleaned. After cleaning the pin hole with a pipe cleaner, the pin was cemented in place with Duro Super Glue-3; a small drop on each side of the slide did the trick.

The slide traveled freely on the receiver and the rails showed only slight wear. Slide fit to receiver was not as tight as in my Colt Gold Cup, but it was acceptable. There was some side-to-side play in battery, but I consider tightening of this kind beyond my ability.

Finally, cast receiver parts showed only a few bright wear marks. Even the sear edges and hammer notch retained most of the gray stainless steel casting finish, contact areas being limited to the extreme right sides. This explained the creepy, heavy trigger pull. The trigger moved freely in the frame channels, which had been smoothed at the factory. I did polish the sides of the trigger arms and smoothed some roughness here and there.



Chamber was throated to feed any bullet nose shape. Dremel with rubberized abrasive tip is fine for polishing, radiusing. At right, barrel/receiver are taped together to show feed ramp, partial barrel throating before extension to form smooth path for bullet nose.

The sear edges were polished with a flat Arkansas stone, bearing down harder on the high right-side. Some dull gray remained on the left edge when I stopped. The important point was to keep the angle unchanged, and the edges flat.

Then I used a trick I've found useful in other handgun sear and hammer notch work. I mounted the sear and the hammer on their pins on the left side of the frame. Holding the parts in engagement, I can see the contact areas. The hammer notch was then polished down with a triangular Arkansas stone, again bearing harder on the high right-side, until a partially gray surface remained on the left side and engagement seemed uniform. Again the angle was carefully retained on the full-cock notch. Then I lightly polished the sides of the sear and hammer where they contact the frame.

I polished the disconnector tip. Hardballer owners should note that these guns are *not* all stainless steel. The disconnector, hammer strut, some other small parts, and the springs are alloy steel, for better wear. Water-dunking tests are not for these pistols, but they *are* resistant to corrosion from sweat or sea water spray, if water is not allowed to enter the lockworks. On the outside, only the rear sight is regular steel; it needs a light coating of Break Free, or another water-displacing oil, for protection.

The magazine catch worked stiffly, so I cut a turn off the spring and polished the tapered catch. The safety and slide stop pins were smoothed lightly, but none of the holes in the frame was touched. Action springs were not altered, but rough and sharp spots on several parts, including the sear/grip safety spring, were smoothed.



All parts were cleaned to remove grit, relubricated with Break Free, and reassembled. AMT recommends using both a synthetic oil and a grease/oil mix; but I clean frequently, and the oil alone seems to prevent wear and eliminate galling. Next I needed a firing session, to determine the progress of my work, before attempting to tune the gun.

Smoothing had greatly improved general handling. The gun was nearly reliable with several bullet shapes, and had only occasional feeding failures with semi-wad-cutter loads. Accuracy seemed better, probably because the trigger pull was fairly smooth and under four pounds. But the trigger movement before the break was irritating. All things considered, I began to feel that the problems were going to come around.

A trigger pull which is crisp, yet safe, is tricky to obtain—even for the pros. I owned

an accurized .45 set up for hardball target matches by a well-known pistolsmith. When it was brand new, the gun grouped brilliantly, and the trigger pull was an even four pounds, with no detectable movement before the break. After shooting about a dozen boxes of target loads, the gun double-fired.

Two almost simultaneous shots from one pull of the trigger is *not* my idea of fun and games.

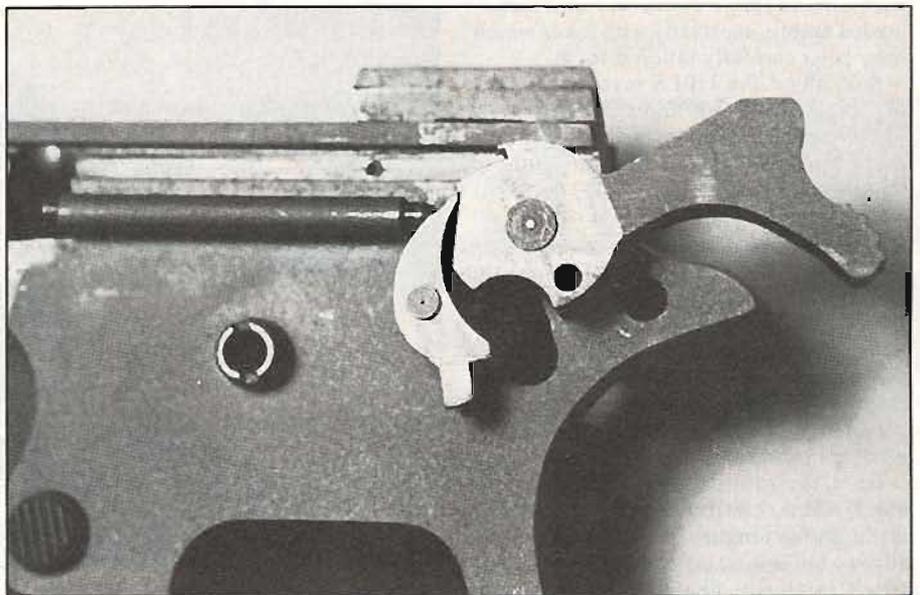
Disassembly and a thorough cleaning revealed no obvious problem. Back at the range, the gun still double-fired about once in four or five strings. The engagement had been thinned down a hair too fine. From that experience, I know better than to try for the perfect hair trigger.

Tuning, in this case, meant throating the chamber and refining the trigger pull to eliminate creep, and possibly lighten it a bit more.

The HBLs had been partially throated at the factory, and my smoothing had helped, but feeding was still far from perfect. I deepened the barrel ramp, tapering the angle around to 10 and 2 o'clock with a ceramic abrasive cone in the Dremel. A light touch kept the angle uniform, and the throating symmetrical with no humps or troughs. The HBLs has a sleeved chamber, so the hairline juncture remained after careful polishing. This job was not difficult, but it was critical. You can't put back the metal, so I worked cautiously, modelling the throating after that in my Colt Gold Cup.

When the throating seemed to be as good as I could make it, the ramp in the frame was mated to the barrel by grinding and polishing, until the two formed a smooth path for the bullet nose when the barrel was pushed back all the way with the slide open. This sounds more difficult than it was; the complete job took less than an hour-and-a-half.

Finally, the sear/hammer notch engagement had to be cut back to eliminate creep. I used only a flat Arkansas stone on the hammer face above the notch. I again used the method of mounting the parts on the left side of the frame, to visualize the engagement. I tried to keep the angle of the stoned surface unchanged, and to maintain the edge square to the hammer sides. When the job seemed not quite finished, I stoned and reassembled the receiver, to try the trigger pull. After a couple of such stages, each smaller than the one before, the creep seemed barely



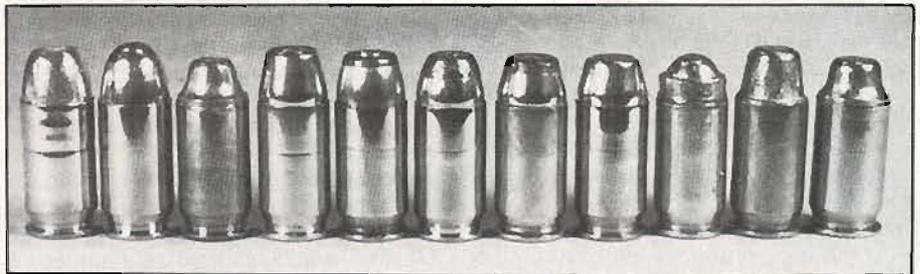
Mounting the hammer and sear on pins on the left side of the receiver frame enables the pistolsmith to observe engagement of parts, as stoning proceeds.

detectable; engagement was solid and reliable.

Cleaning, oiling and reassembling completed the shop work. Another shooting session proved the reliability and safety of the tuned gun. But I admit that I loaded two rounds at most, until I was sure that the gun would not fire full automatic!

The firing pin and sear springs were installed, and the trigger pull dropped to just under 2½ pounds. That's about perfect, as long as it is safe, and it has been to date.

The grip safety leg of the sear spring seemed too stiff, and I bent it to give lighter grip safety tension. I decided not to lighten



The tuned AMT Hardballer Long Slide .45 handles all of these different bullet weights, shapes with no problem. Length of round is critical, each specimen.

There were no jams from good loads of the right lengths, except cycling failures with light bullets below 800 fps, which is just too mild to operate the big slide with the standard springs in the gun.

The trigger was clean, the pull a nice 3½ pounds; movement before the break was almost nil. I wondered how the trigger would hold up with a custom spring kit, so a Bullseye kit from Trapper Gun was installed. The recoil spring in the kit seemed too stiff, but it would work with heavy

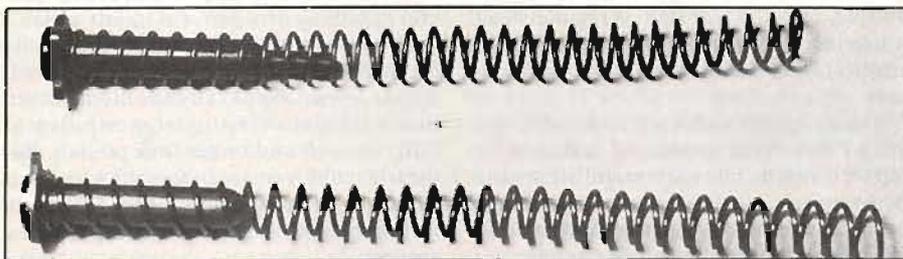
the hammer spring and take a chance on misfires.

I keep the original recoil spring in the gun, since it works well for a wide range of loads. For the heaviest loads, I substitute a recoil buffer for the original spring guide. The buffer, obtained years ago from Gil Hebard, has a spring-loaded plunger in its nose to prevent the slide from banging against the stop.

I had used the buffer in an accurized .45 as a backup gun on a bear hunt, with no damage from stiff loads.

I estimate that complete smoothing and tuning of my long slide took less than 15 hours of shop time. Diagnosing and solving the problems gave me a lot of satisfaction, as well as saving me money for a custom .45, which would run from two to four times the discounted price of my gun. The custom .45 lacks the advantages of the long slide. To prove out the gun completely, a series of tailored handloads was developed.

Continued on page 58



To protect gun against damage from heavy loads, author favors original spring/recoil buffer, instead of stiff "bullseye" spring on factory spring guide.

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FIRST COLT

Continued from page 43

inadequate: It printed a consistent eight to 10 inches low at 10 meters, without sights, even when looking down the ramp from the point-shoulder position. The barrel and slide point divergently, rather than coaxially, a curiosity one seems also to note in the Russian Tokarev pistol.

Recoil was heavy, much more so than in any 1911 variant, and the result was such as to seriously compromise controllability.

My standard test of six rounds at 10 meters in two seconds on a silhouette target revealed an ability to stay on the paper, but not much more. The 1905 squirms viciously in the hand upon discharge, and proves a bear to fight down from recoil and torque, due largely to the near 90-degree angle formed by the stock and barrel.

Other eccentricities which came to light during test firing included an unusual heel-clip style magazine retainer, which must be pressed against the magazine body for release—a slow process requiring nimble fingers. Similarly remarkable was the total lack of any sensible carrying mode; one chooses between unloaded, which is slow, or loaded but on half-cock, which is unsafe.

Functioning—often a problem in very early auto-pistol designs—proved flawless. (even though original trials by the Army resulted in 30 assorted failures in 959 rounds, performance which was deemed unacceptable).

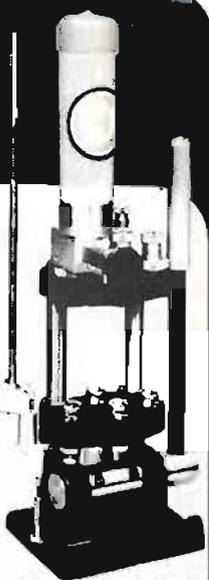
Simplicity was similarly a virtue. One can still take down a M1905 more quickly—or at least as quickly—than any other auto-pistol in the world. That includes the various blowback designs, which provide far less strength than this moderately robust, recoil-operated action.

Primarily, the M1905s best feature is its cartridge, of such ballistic excellence as to influence the course of American combat pistol development for many decades.

The M1905 was one of a few auto-pistols of its era that was capable of truly *stopping* a determined adversary—a fact too easily forgotten, as one picks at its shortcomings from the vantage point of 75 years of hindsight.

As one studies the M1905, it becomes apparent that what is being examined is a piece of pre-World War I developmental firearms history, *not* a handgun practical for service in the 1980s. All of which lessens one's pleasure in testing such a piece not a bit, for the M1905 provides one with a unique historical perspective he otherwise would never have gotten. It shows us just how far we have progressed in combat pistol development over three-quarters of a century, and makes us appreciate all the more the Commanders and hardballers and Star PDs that are, in a very real sense, the M1905s grandchildren.

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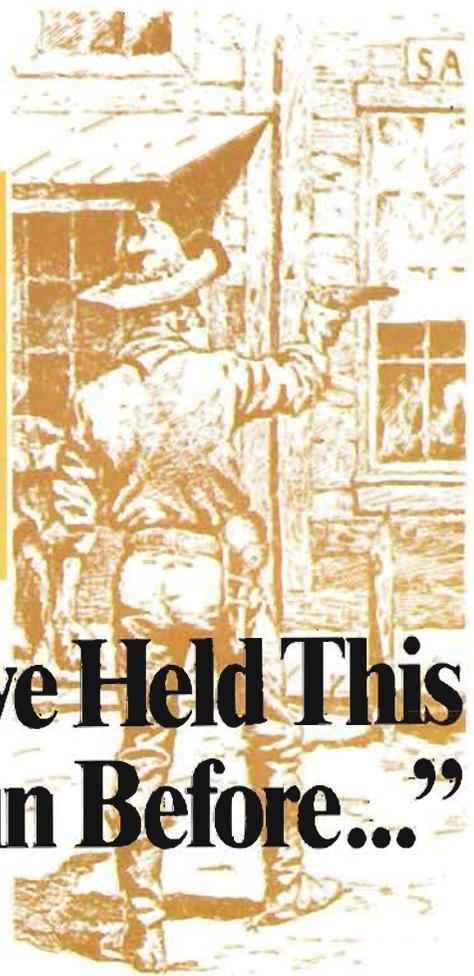
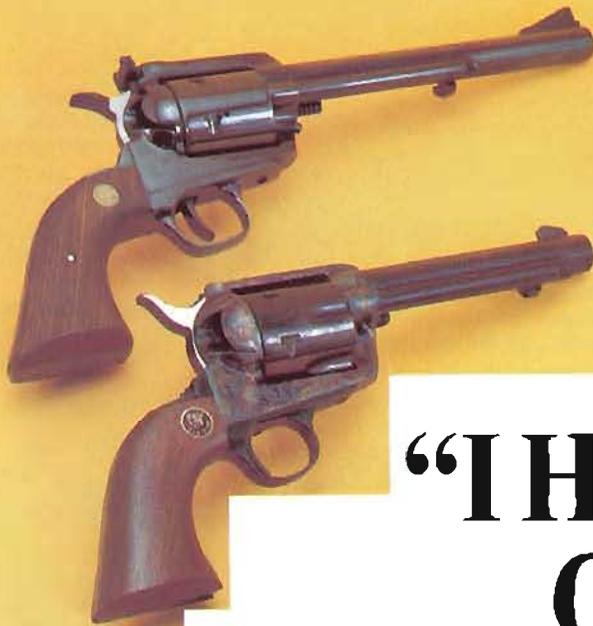
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“I Have Held This Gun Before...”

By Al Pickles

Few readers would deny that the old Colt Single Action Army Revolver possesses a mystique that is shared by few other handguns.

Policemen are certainly not immune to this fascination with the old sixshooter. Every now and then I come across a cop who carries a single action thumb-buster, either on or off duty. Here we are, the most advanced country in the world, at least as far as technology goes, and it is not really uncommon to find a county deputy equipped with a Colt .45 single-action revolver and, stowed away in his patrol unit, a Winchester lever action .30-30 rifle, as well as a shotgun of 1897 vintage. On the other hand, if you travel to some remote jungle village in a poverty stricken nation, you are likely to find a village “policeman” armed with a Browning Hi-Power auto-

loading pistol and an FN-FAL .308 automatic rifle.

The answer to this enigma is wrapped up in the fact that the old single action is part of our heritage. Most all of us grew up reading books or watching movies and TV about the old west. Many of today's young cops were babysitted by the boob tube with a steady diet of Rawhide, Bonanza, The Rifleman, Lawman, Maverick, Paladin, Gunsmoke; to name just a few TV shows. Not long ago, my oldest son walked into my den and picked up an old and authentic Colt 1851 Cap and Ball Navy revolver I had just acquired at a gun show. “Dad,” he said, “I have held this gun before. It must have been in another life, but I know I have held it.” It was most likely in a daydream after watching TV, but then again, who knows?

Most of us, however, carry modern guns on and off duty. A small percentage who, I like to think, have their heads screwed on right, even carry modern autoloaders on duty. Even more of us carry autoloaders off duty. But yet these same cops are often seen walking out of a gunshop with a newly purchased Colt Single Action Army or, most likely, one of the many copies of the Colt. Some of these copies are far bet-

ter than the original ever was. The mystique is still there. They do not carry them as police guns but, instead, use them as fun guns in the .22 calibers and hunting handguns in the big calibers, such as the .44 Magnum and .45 LC. Sometimes, although we rarely admit it, as we hold and cock the gun, we flash back to the OK Corral, and our heritage.

Since these guns are so popular, and since there is a fair chance you will buy one of the copies which are far less expensive than the originals, I thought I'd evaluate a couple for you.

I am going to pretty much skip the Ruger Blackhawk line. It is the most famous single-action “copy” and thousands of pages have been written by a multitude of gun scribes.

It is constructed to handle the most powerful revolver cartridges made. Better steels and coil springs make the Ruger one of the strongest hunting guns on the market today. They are a hunting handloader's dream, and you just can't go wrong with a Ruger Blackhawk. They are offered in a variety of calibers.

One of the newer copies of the old line gun is the Abilene as offered by O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Inc. Actually, Mossberg

absorbed a company called U.S. Arms, which produced the Abilene single action revolver, as well as some other interesting handguns. I lucked out and was able to purchase a low serial number Abilene in .45 Long Colt caliber. Although the general outline appearance is traditional single action, it does favor the Ruger in many respects. Like the Ruger, it is constructed of the best chrome-molybdenum steels and high tensile alloys. All but one of its springs are of superior coiled type music wire. Only the trigger spring is of the flat type.

The Abilene has a patented "anvil hammer" which, only when properly cocked and fired, transfers the force of the hammer to the firing pin. You may safely carry six rounds in the cylinder. For those of you who don't know, this is not advised when carrying a "traditional" single action revolver. Dropping an old Colt, or even some of the copies, on the hammer could cause a discharge.

I was really impressed with the appearance of my .45 LC Abilene. The gun was well finished and the bluing was top quality. That would, of course, mean little to nothing if the gun wouldn't shoot well. As I snuggled down into shooting position at 25 yards, I was anything but ready for what was to come next. Since the gun had a nice set of adjustable sights, as any good hunting handgun should, I took five shots and as many adjustments to zero—in the gun for dead-center hold. I was using Remington .45 Colt lead 250 grain ammo (Index 6345) and my second five shots were for group. I really could not believe the target when I walked down range to examine it. All five shots were in one ragged hole which measured a shade under 1½ inches. Going through the rest of the box in five shot strings, I never shot a group over 1/6 inches. My best five-shot group was 7/8 of an inch. It is quite possible that some other brand of ammo would deliver better results, but I'll never know because that is as steady as I could possibly hold off the bench, and I don't own a machine rest. The Abilene took up a most favored status in my hunting gun battery.

I have already found the perfect matching holster in the form of Chet's Bushmaster Flap Holster. This is not a play, quick-draw-type holster, although I have one of those that fits also, but rather a serious hunting holster with a unique flap to protect your gun in the woods. The flap un-snaps and swivels forward. Although this holster was form-fitted for a Ruger Blackhawk, it fits the Abilene perfectly. Chet's leathercraft matches both the Abilene and Ruger, quality for quality.

The Abilene, as offered by Mossberg, presently comes in .357 with 4½, 6 and 7½ barrels. It can also be had in .44 Magnum with the same barrel lengths, plus 10 inches for the IHMS shooter. The .45 Colt version is only available with 6-inch barrel. Finishes are offered with blue or Magnaloy, the latter being a hardened finish with

the appearance of stainless steel. For serious hunters, I would recommend the blue, because the lighter finish will spook a deer. It just doesn't make sense to get all camouflaged up for a deer hunt at close range with a handgun, then flash a silver colored revolver.

Firearms Import & Export Corporation is exactly what the name implies. They import a wide variety of brand name guns from all over the world.

I obtained one of their single-action re-

Newer model Frontier sixshooters, such as the 'Abilene' and 'Arminius,' bring back the good old days.

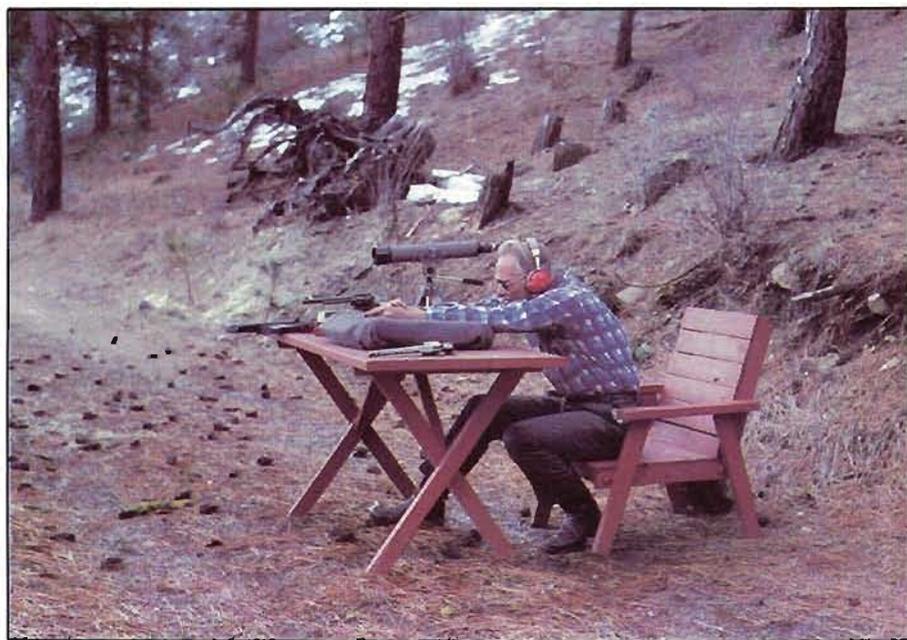
volvers, sold under the brand name "Arminius," manufactured in West Germany by Hermann Weihrauch KG. Since most German products have always enjoyed a superior reputation, I tried to research the history of this plant. I could not locate it in my rather extensive and complete listing of plants that operated before and during WWII, so I can only hazard a guess that the manufacturers are a post-war enterprise. In any event, my model was "The Hombre," appropriate for a single action, in .357 Magnum caliber with a 7½ inch barrel. The case-hardened frame showed beautiful color and the bluing was nicely done. Machine marks were absent and the gun, as well as the walnut grips, looked and felt good.

The pleasant surprise came when I squeezed off a few rounds to see where this fixed sight gun was shooting. I have never in my life felt a single action trigger pull that smooth. It let off at about three pounds and was an absolute delight to shoot. Point of impact is always a worry with fixed sights but, with this particular gun and load, it was right in the black at 25 yards. I used a handload consisting of a Keith design 173 grain SWC bullet ahead of 13.5 grains of Hercules 2400 powder.

The Hombre is offered in .357 Magnum, .44 Magnum, and .45 Colt. Each caliber can be had in either 5½ or 7½ inch barrel. Price was relatively low considering this gun was made in Germany. Most German guns, because of the instability of our shrinking dollar, are priced right out of consideration; but this one is an exception.

Just for comparison, and for kicks I guess, I broke out one final gun for this series of tests. It was an authentic Colt Single Action, marked "Colt Frontier Six Shooter" on the barrel, and in .44-40 caliber. I had researched the gun and found it had been manufactured in 1899, then a year later shipped to a hardware store in Portland. It was well used and the bluing had turned mostly grey. It, too, had an action smooth as glass, but from use rather than tune-up. Somebody had used this old one as a daily working gun, but the wear was honest as there were no signs of abuse. I sort of like to think it belonged to some cowtown marshal at the turn of the century.

I made up a batch of modest handloads and, although I fired a reasonably tight 3½-inch group at 25 yards, it was shooting about six inches high and to the left. Kentucky windage was just something you had to live with back in the old days. Still, it WAS a real Colt! 



Author Al Pickles test-fires an "Abilene" single-action revolver at 25 yards with two-hand hold on a sandbag. Next up, on the table, is a single-action "Arminius."

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SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 5

Ayoob, Cop Talk) advice in reply, while, very practical as far as it went, failed to address what was to me glaringly apparent as the main issue.

Please don't misunderstand me. I carry a Magnum myself, and I wouldn't consider anything else for duty use. However, any so-called "officer" who knows and openly admits that he cannot qualify with a certain type of ammunition on a paper target, probably in broad daylight, under ideal conditions, then carries that ammunition on duty, is begging for civil lawsuits or criminal charges when he kills some innocent bystander during a shootout because he can't hit the suspect. Does he think it will be easier to shoot a human being who is shooting at him, probably in poor light, possibly moving, and with fear making his guts churn? Anyone who has been in such a situation knows better.

What's more, if his department condones his use, on duty or off, of ammunition he can't qualify with, it had better prepare itself for lawsuits.

Should someone ever ask my advice on this problem, it will be: Stick with .38 Specials until you can control the hotter loads. A .357 Magnum may be powerful enough to stop a horse, but it's worse than useless if you can't control it well enough to hit what you shoot at. Remember: if you miss the suspect and kill a child five blocks away, saying "Oops, I didn't mean it" just doesn't help. You are liable!

In addition to your advice on different weapon models, lighter weight bullets, and rubbery grips, you should have advised him *emphatically* to experiment on the range for the proper combination of weapon and load, then practice, practice, practice until he can qualify with it before he carries it on duty.

Since your column deals with officer

survival, I offer this as the best practical solution to his problem if he hopes to survive a shooting confrontation, both physically and financially.

Edward D. Hostetter
San Diego, California

CLOTH MAY MAR METAL FINISHES

A local firearms dealer sold me a new gun-cleaning cloth—WIPE AWAY.

The firearm I proceeded to clean with it was a Colt single-action .45; it has a color case-hardened frame.

Whatever is in WIPE AWAY really cleans the lead out of the barrel and cylinder. But it also dulls the finish of color case-hardened steel.

Instructions with the cloth read, "Lightly wipe the exterior with the WIPE AWAY cloth, follow up with a clean cloth and the job is finished."

An ad on the cloth reads, "This amazing cloth kit cleans, leaves a sparkling finish, is inexpensive and long-lasting."

I think information regarding WIPE AWAY, and the possible harm it does to Colts and other color case-hardened firearms, should be passed on to as many people as possible.

I also believe Belltown (makers) ought to change their instructions on the package, and in its advertising.

As I look at my damaged Colt, I know WIPE AWAY is harmful to color case-hardened steel, and might also be harmful to nickel, Armoloy or other metal finishes.

Thomas Hoppe
Woodstock, IL 60098

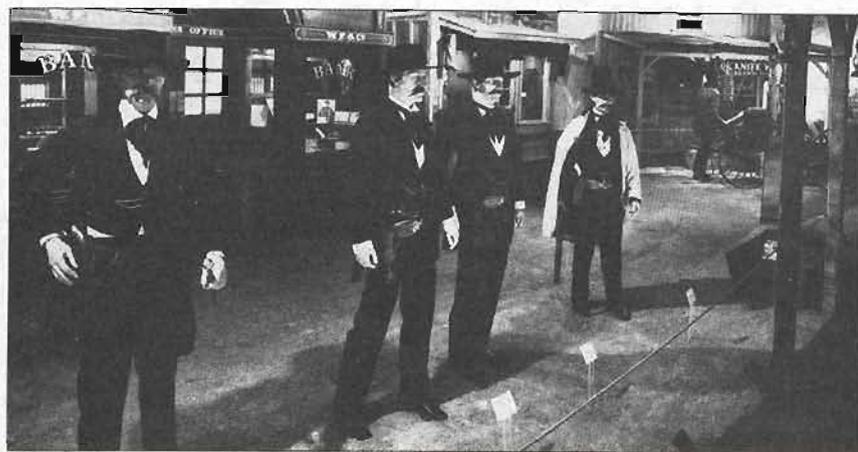
(Editor's note: You are right. The maker and distributor of WIPE AWAY cloths have changed package instructions and copy, to reflect the fact that the cloth is fine for lead-removal; period. It was never intended to be a conventional rust-removal or gun-cleaning cloth.)



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BIANCHI OPENS FRONTIER MUSEUM

An estimated crowd of 1,000 people attended the grand opening preview April 18 of the Bianchi Frontier Museum Historical Center in Temecula, California, about 50 miles north of San Diego.

Situated adjacent to the Bianchi Gunleather factory, the museum features the largest privately owned collection of Western Frontier memorabilia in the world.

Occupying 25,000 square feet of display space, the museum represents an investment of more than \$5 million, according to John E. Bianchi, director and founder.

Highlight of the preview was the unveiling of an eight-foot bronze of John Wayne, created by sculptor-artist Dave Manuel of Joseph, Oregon. The dedication was performed by Michael Wayne, son of the late actor.

Master of ceremonies was Jack Linkletter, son of Art Linkletter, well-known author and international raconteur.

The museum's interior, constructed by skilled craftsmen of the Old World Carpentry Company of Temecula, is a re-creation of the early western town of Tombstone, Arizona.

Overall design was done by Ronald

Stevens of Beverly Hills, California, who received his early training as an architect for Disneyland in Anaheim.

On display are 65 life-size figures of gunfighters, gamblers, cowboys and lawmen, created by Henry Alvarez, a prominent wax sculptor.

Also featured are restored Wells Fargo and Butterfield stage coaches, and original Colts, Winchesters and Smith & Wesson firearms used by legendary lawmen, gunfighters and outlaws in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Bianchi took the first step toward building the museum when he purchased—about seven years ago—a Colt Single Action .45 owned and carried by Marshal Wyatt Earp. It is a plain-looking piece and cost Bianchi \$20,000.

Other single-action Colts—dozens of them—are on display in the re-created gun shop, typical of the ones seen in the West about 100 years ago.

No expense was spared to provide total authenticity and attention to the most minute detail, according to Bianchi.

He said the museum is now open to the public, seven days a week.



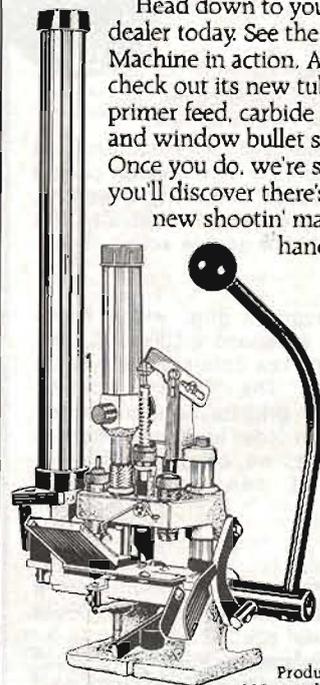
On Target

If you've had your eye on progressive loaders—but found them out of your range—the Good Ol' Boys at RCBS have one you can set your sights on. The new Green Machine progressive loader.

Now, you can turn out upwards of 600 rounds per hour with the Green Machine. And it's priced right around \$500. So it makes high volume production of reliable, accurate pistol ammunition available to a lot more shooters.

The Green Machine comes all set to load .38 Special ammo. But you can convert it to .357 Magnum in minutes.

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Hal Swiggett named 'Outstanding American Handgunner' for 1982

Hal Swiggett of San Antonio, veteran handgun hunter, firearms consultant and author, was named this year's "Outstanding American Handgunner" at ceremonies in Philadelphia, held in conjunction with the NRAs annual meeting there in April.

The award, founded in 1973 by Lee E. Jurras, a former manufacturer of high velocity handgun ammo, was established to "give recognition and reward to those relatively few individuals who have devoted their lives to furthering handgun shooting as a legitimate sport."

Swiggett was presented a Navy Arms black powder revolver by Jean Clause Kappler of that company.



Hal Swiggett—the winner!

J.D. Jones, chairman of the handgunner awards foundation in Bloomington, Ohio, presented Swiggett with a bronze statue of a handgun shooter firing from a two-hand position. The statue, approximately three feet high, remains in Swiggett's permanent possession.

In addition to Swiggett, 10 other nominees for the award were made.

Each received an engraved plaque and a handgun, in recognition of their contributions to the sport of handgunning.

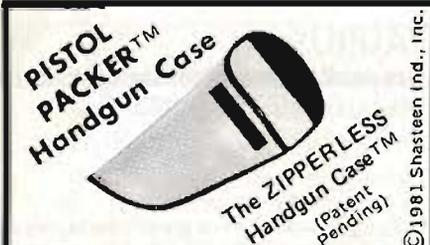
The 10 other nominees, their guns and presenters are:

Ohio Congressman John Ashbrook, a Dan Wesson .357 Magnum, Seth Wesson; Lucy Chambliss, former NRA Director, national pistol champion and *American Handgunner* columnist, an ornate, pre-production model stainless steel Charter Arms .38 Spec., Dave Ecker, CA president; James Clark, a custom pistolsmith and holder of 64 national pistol records, a Remington 7 BR XP-100, Tom Rawson of Remington, Keith Gaffaney, NRA president and 30-year veteran of the Los Angeles Police Department, a stainless steel Ruger Old Army revolver, Tom Ruger; Dean Grennell, an experimental ballistician, a Colt Python, Steve Ferber, on behalf of Colt.

Also Larry Kelly, inventor of the Mag-na-Port gas venting system, a S&W Model 586 (the new L-frame) .357 Magnum, Roy Jinks of S&W; Idaho Senator James McClure, a strong advocate of pro-gun legislation, a T/C Contender, Wayne Brockney of T/C; Frank Pachmayr, a "pioneer" in .45 ACP accuracy and holder of more than 100 firearms patents, a limited edition H&R revolver, Ted Rowe, H&R president; and Harry Reeves, former NRA director and six times national champion with the handgun, holder of four gold, five silver and two bronze medals in international competition, former coach of Olympic shooting teams and member of Marine Corps pistol teams in the National Matches at Camp Perry, an Abilene .44 Magnum, Art Hill of O.F. Mossberg Co.



Charter Arms proxy Dave Ecker presents *American Handgunner* columnist Lucy Chambliss with handgun and plaque won for her "continuing contributions."



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S&W Academy has new director

Lt. Col. Robert E. Hunt, formerly commanding officer of staff operations for the Massachusetts State Police, is the new director of the S&W Academy in Springfield.

Joining the force in 1959 as a trooper, Hunt became an instructor, then assistant commandant, State Police Academy. He was promoted to barracks commander in 1975.

Hunt was promoted to captain in 1977 and designated troop commander. In 1979, he received his oak leaves as a major and became commander, Bureau of Administrative Services. He has served in this capacity since 1980.

He is a 1973 graduate of the FBI National Academy, and has a master's degree in public administration from Northeastern University.

As director of the S&W Academy, Hunt expects to adapt and develop programs designed to meet the training needs of all police agencies.

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	Taurus	Beretta	Colt
Large-Frame	X	X	X
Semi-Automatic	X	X	X
Used by the Military	X	X	X
World Wide	X	X	X
9MM Parabellum Cartridge	X	X	X
Plastic or Wood (extra) Grips	X	X	X
Double Action	X	X	X
Lanyard-Style Hammer	X	X	X
15-Round Magazine Capacity	X	X	X
Chamber-Load Indicator	X	X	X
Combat Trigger Guard	X	X	X
Rear Sights Adjustable for Windage/Elevation	X	X	X

You can bet your life on the performance of your Taurus pistol, and it costs substantially less. Two models—PT-92 (fixed sights, thermo plastic resin grips) and PT-99 (walnut grips, adjustable rear sight).



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Senate group backs 2nd Amendment

A 200-page U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee report—*The Right to Keep and Bear Arms*—supports the essence of the Constitution's Second Amendment: the right of a private citizen to own and carry firearms in a peaceful manner.

The report, covering 11 centuries of legal development, contains findings on Second Amendment history, an analysis of firearms law enforcement, an anthology of legal decisions and articles by constitutional scholars.

The historical evidence overwhelmingly supports the individual, rather than the collective interpretation given the Second Amendment.

The report gives unqualified endorsement to reform of the federal Gun Control Act of 1968 and states that such reform "is necessary to protect the most vital rights of American citizens."

Reform legislation has been introduced by U.S. Sen. James McClure and U.S. Rep. Harold Volkmer.

CORRECTION

The two one-line captions on pages 44 and 45 of the July/August issue were transposed. We regret the error. Editor.

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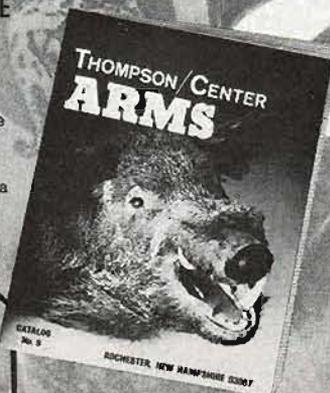
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TAURUS

Continued from page 29

in double-action. Most groups had three or four shots in a tight cluster, but there was always a flyer, I didn't get a two-incher all day.

In Phase II, four shooting stances were used: sitting, elbows on knees, with a two-hand hold; standing, with two hands; standing, with strong hand; standing, with weak hand. Ten shots were fired in each stance in two-shot groups, all single-action, for a total of 40 rounds; then the sequence was repeated with each first shot DA and second shot SA. The total course of fire was 80 rounds. Firing was done at 15 yards, using 25-yard slow fire targets.

Because of the large number (40) of two-shot groups to be fired, it was decided to fire five like groups on a single target, photographing the target after each group. This technique would permit ready identification of each group, while simultaneously offering an integrated view of cumulative performance, at each step. Good theory, but if the film isn't loaded into the camera properly (and it wasn't) there are no pictures. Thinking that all details were preserved on film, I made no effort to save the targets. Needless to say, when the film came back blank, I was disappointed; and there wasn't time to do it again. But I *did* make careful mental notes of accuracy results, as already noted.

TAURUS PT99 SPECIFICATIONS

Caliber:	9mm
Action:	DA/SA auto.
Capacity:	15 rounds
Barrel:	4 7/8"
LOA:	8 1/2"
Weight:	33 1/2 ounces, empty
Sight:	Adjustable rear
Stocks:	Smooth wood
Finish:	Blue
Price:	About \$450.
Importer:	International Distributors 7290 SW 42nd Street Miami, FL 33155

With better grips and some work on the long trigger pull, the difference between SA and DA accuracy could be narrowed.

I suspect that revolver shooters who switch will be more impressed by DA autos (and shoot them better) than people who have grown up shooting SA autos. The difference in hit probability, using the Taurus PT99, between DA and SA for the first shot is fairly small, if the shooter is into double-action work. What the shooter may lose in pinpoint accuracy should be more than made up in increased speed and safety.



Quinetics Comments Concerning Handloading (Number Two in a Series)

The Coriolis effect refers to a deflecting force, due to the earth's rotation, diverting horizontal motions to the right in the northern hemisphere and to the left in the southern hemisphere.

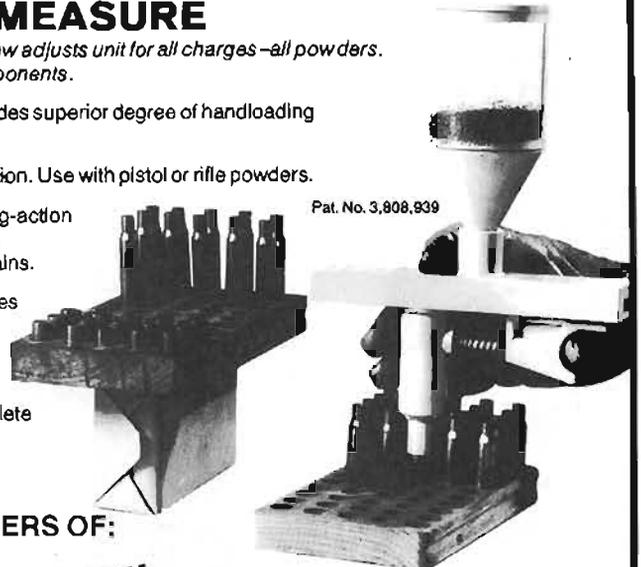


The Coriolis effect on the path (trajectory) of a projectile fired from a rifle or pistol can best be envisioned by taking the innermost coil of a clockspring, pulling it out to make a cone of coils of ever increasing diameters. (See above illustration.) This explains why the path or trajectory of a bullet can be at 6 o'clock, below the line of sight at 50 yds., at 9 o'clock at 100 yds., on the line of sight at 150 yds., and at 3 o'clock at 200 yds., and again below the line of sight at 6 o'clock at 250 yds. These distances are for example only as they will vary depending on velocity.

Crimping or otherwise retaining the projectile in the case achieves different case or chamber pressures. These control the burning rate of the propellant, which in turn dictates the muzzle velocity. By varying the muzzle velocity, the trajectory cone diameter of fire is varied and the Coriolis effect will place the point of impact different than the preceding shot.

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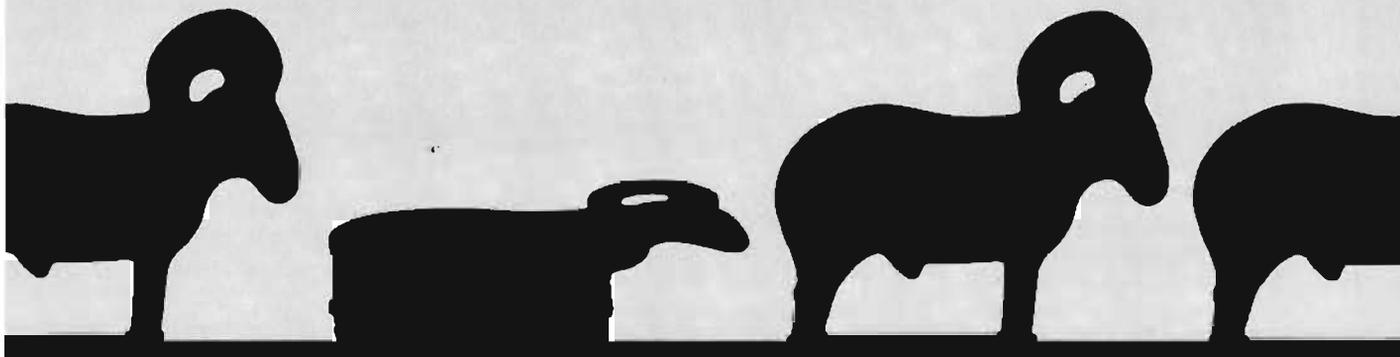
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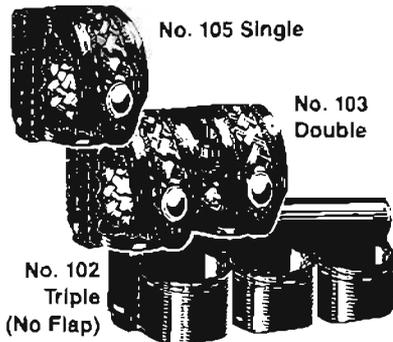
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HANDGUN RELOADING

Continued from page 10

ing dies (.3125, .3130, .3135, and .3140) for .32 S&W Long and believe that, as a caliber, it still has much to offer.

"After buying two Colt Officer's Model target revolvers with six-inch bull barrels in .32 Long, I now notice they (J&G Sales) have dropped their prices considerably. I used to have a S&W K32 in Massachusetts, but let it go before I knew how valuable it was. Now, the Colts are fine, and probably stronger. For a .32 Magnum pistol I probably would opt for a S&W M30 stainless; that is, a J-frame stainless. This would be a first-class back-up gun."

Van Riper ends his letter with a suggestion that we contact the people at Sierra about jacketed hollow-point bullets for the .32 Magnum. We'll be talking with some bullet makers, before the new round is blessed with a full selection of proper bullets for reloading. There'll be a need for a variety of bullets suited to the many purposes for which reloading is done.

The explosion has only begun, not just in behalf of the .32 Magnum, but also with the numerous wildcat handgun rounds that continue to hatch. In the next few months, we'll be devoting an entire column to a look at new developments in this area.

Meanwhile, letters packed full of valuable information continue to arrive. It takes a while to get them into print, simply because our space is limited. Remember, however, your input is appreciated and will be published, if at all possible. Contact me at Handgun Reloading,
Box 222, Pinon Hills, CA 92372.



AMMO SCENE

(Continued from page 20)

- .38 cal. Colt Revolver (1800s)
- .38 cal. ACP Colt Auto (1900)
- .38 cal. Auto Pistol Colt's Military Model (1902)
- .41 cal. Colt Auto Pistol (1903)
- .45 cal. ACP Colt Auto Pistol (1903)
- .45 cal. ACP Colt Government Model (1911)
- .38 cal. Colt Experimental (1910)
- 9.8mm Colt Auto (1910)
- 9mm FN Model (1903)
- 9.65mm Browning Hi Power (1913)
- 9mm Browning Hi Power (1923)
- 9mm Browning Hi Power (1927)
- 9mm Browning P-35 Hi Power (1935)
- .41 magnum cal. S&W Revolver (1963)
- .40 cal. G&A Modified Browning P-35 (1972)
- .45 ACP Bren Ten Prototype (1980)

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- .10mm Auto Bren Ten Prototype (1980)
- 10mm Auto Bren Ten Production Model (1982)

There have been several individuals who have recently worked on 10mm size wildcat cartridges: Whit Collins, Ralph Glaze, Bob Beal, Michael Bejian, and Charles Kelsey, Jr., to name a few. Not until the emergence of the team effort of Jeff Cooper (providing the design criteria), Hornady Manufacturing Co. (providing the technical experience), and Dorna & Dixon Enterprises, Inc. (providing the development and the pistol), did a truly viable production cartridge become a reality.

The 10mm auto cartridge is a center-fire, rimless, brass-cased, straight-walled, large-caliber pistol cartridge. It measures approximately 1 1/4 inches in overall length, with the bullet measuring 10.16 (.40 inch) millimeters in diameter. It uses standard pistol powder and a large pistol primer. The bullet is a full copper-jacketed lead core design, with a truncated cone shape. Recent experiments indicate the possible desirability of slightly bulging the flat sides of the truncated cone shape to improve feeding reliability. This would result in an appearance similar to a hardball round, with the end cut off, leaving a flat frontal area exposed. Bullet weight is 200 grains. Other bullet configurations probably will become available at a later date.

Out of a five-inch barrel (the length of the *Bren Ten* barrel), the muzzle velocity is 1,100 to 1,200 fps. Muzzle energy is 538 to 640 foot pounds. Relative stopping power on the Hatcher Scale is 64 to 83. The 10mm auto moves the striking pendulum farther than the .45 ACP from the same distance, out of the same gun. (The *Bren Ten* shoots both rounds.)

Because of the unique design of the *Bren Ten*, the 10mm auto cartridge has the felt recoil of the .45 ACP 230-grain hardball round out of a Colt Government Model, yet it retains more muzzle energy at 100 yards than the .45 ACP has at the muzzle.

The first commercially available 10mm auto cartridge will be manufactured by Hornady Manufacturing Co. Brass cases will be subcontracted to Winchester-Western. Tooling for the production of the cartridge will be coordinated simultaneously with the tooling and production of the *Bren Ten*. The cartridges will be boxed and marketed under the *Bren Ten* name, and will be sold wherever the *Bren Ten* is sold.



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AMT HARDBALLER

Continued from page 46

The gun is not finicky, as are many custom .45s, but it does need well designed handloads. Cast bullets were satisfactory for most of my shooting, but jacketed bullets are superior when you want the best results.

My favorite cast target bullet is still the 185-grain SWC, which serves for a lot of other uses as well. The usual target charge is 3.5 grains of Bullseye for about 730 fps, too light to cycle my tuned HBLs reliably. I use 4.0 grains of Bullseye and the load averaged a warm 885 fps from the seven-inch barrel. This bullet was seated with its shoulder showing less than 1/16 inch in front of the case mouth (length overall: 1.155 inches), then separately taper-crimped to avoid bullet shaving. The length of .45 rounds is critical to reliable feeding, and the best length varies with the nose shape.

Groups with the above load, with the CCI 300 large pistol primer, were a bit over 1.5 inches center-to-center of the widest hits at 25 yards, firing from a two-hand hold and arm rest in the sitting position. Not quite match accuracy, but close to it. These loads were good enough for anything but actual match competition.

The popular 200-grain SWC also shot okay with 4.0 grains of Bullseye, but was not quite as accurate (two-inch groups); the bullets I used were a utility grade, selected for good bases, from Ohio Shooters Supply.

The best accuracy from my HBLs was obtained with Sierra's Match 185-grain jacketed SWCs, seated to 1.17 inch over 4.5 grains of Bullseye to give 822 fps. Groups averaged 1.3 inches with some under one-inch, when I did my part. That is better than X-ring accuracy at 25 yards, and in the 10-ring at 50 yards. My average aiming error is probably over 1/4 inch; thus the gun must be capable of very close to one-inch groups. That proves the accuracy built into the Hardballer Long Slide.

Commercial target loads, such as Remington's 185-grain Targetmasters, were also very accurate, but too light to be reliable. Federal Match 230-grain hardball ammo shot tight groups (1.5 inch) and was reliable at 860 fps (377 ft. lbs.). Winchester-Western 185-grain Silvertip hollowpoints at 966 fps (381 ft. lbs.) were not quite as accurate.

No .45 auto is a true, high-performance gun. But a souped-up light jacketed bullet gave a good imitation of H-P results.

Sierra's new reloading manual (Second Edition) lists a maximum charge of 8.5 grains of Unique for 1,100 fps with the 185-grain JHP. My seven-inch barrel produced 1,155 fps with that load, with 548 foot pounds of muzzle energy; they grouped into two inches. It's as much power as

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many heavy .357 Magnum loads produced from a six-inch barrel. The 185-grain JHP expands explosively, but sheds only a few small shreds of lead in Duxseal. The main core formed a cup-shaped button 1.1 inch in diameter; a fierce defensive load.

I consider AMT's Hardballer Long Slide .45 a sleeper among .45 autos. If an experienced shooter were to pick up an untuned HBLS, handle and fire it, he probably would be turned off by its roughness. The thought of a costly tuning job, plus accurizing, would be discouraging.

My experience with the HBLS has shown that smoothing and tuning even by an amateur can bring out the fine handling characteristics and accuracy built into the gun. Other guns may not be as tight and accurate as mine, but shooters who want a long slide .45 could do worse than to consider trying their hands at tuning a Hardballer, and saving enough to buy another gun or two.

The owner may elect to have his HBLS tuned by a pistolsmith; savings should be sizable, since accurizing should not be required.

I believe the HBLS to be our most versatile .45 auto. The custom features and superior power, combined with milder recoil, make the tuned gun a pleasure to shoot.



STEEL CHALLENGE

Continued from page 34

said he is shooting for a \$100,000 purse in 1983.

There were 127 registered shooters in last year's "Steel Challenge" tournament, approximately 20-percent fewer than the 1982 total.

Dalton told the *American Handgunner* that his goal for 1983 is 200 registered shooters.

Already this event has become the second largest and richest of its kind in the world, bested only by the annual Bianchi Cup Match.

"The object of the 'Steel Challenge' tournament," said Dalton, "is to test the skill of the shooter under conditions that best utilize the short range and rapid fire capabilities of the handgun."

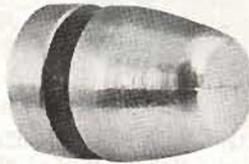
He explained that even though matches may vary in format, "they are all intended to encompass the three elements of practical pistol competition—speed, power and accuracy."

Those who were the fastest, the most accurate and displayed maximum firepower shared handsomely in this year's \$62,489 purse, which included cash awards totalling \$10,700 and a wide variety of merchandise prizes donated by companies, individuals and the SWPL.

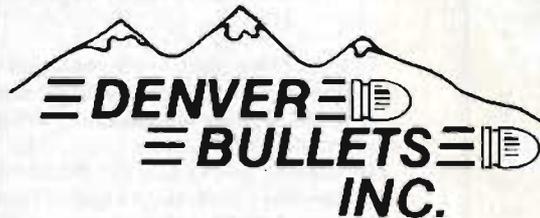
In many cases, attractive trophies accompanied cash awards.

Continued on page 61

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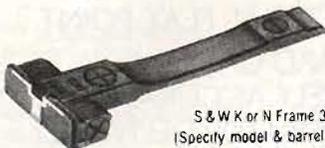
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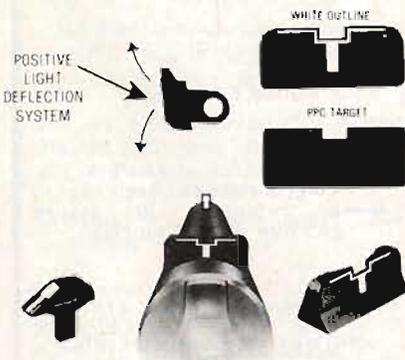
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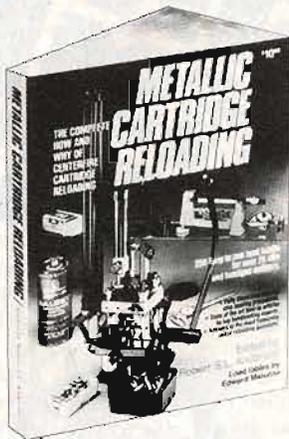
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NEW BOOKS



Metallic Cartridge Reloading, edited by Robert S.L. Anderson. DBI Books, Inc., One Northfield Plaza, Northfield, IL 60093. \$10.95.

I've probably read more gun books than most people, and yet it amazes me that in each new book, I find something of interest.

Reloading books are, for the most part, boring, and the information therein useful to any one reader could be printed in less than half the pages published.

This new reloading book by DBI, however, has one important thing going for it. In addition to a dozen interesting articles on just about every phase of metallic cartridge reloading, there are 256 loads for more than 70 rifle and pistol cartridges that are not boring; the comments on each of the calibers make very interesting reading, for both novice and veteran.

Compiled by Ed Matunas, these load tables are the most informative I've seen in a long time. The 21 most often asked questions and answers are excellent, and reflect the many years of prac-

tical experience amassed by Matunas.

I learned many new facts, and gained an insight into valuable reloading techniques by reading this book; unless you are one of the few real pros around, my guess is that you will, too. (J.R.)

Hand Cannons of Imperial Japan, by Harry Derby. Derby Publishing Co., Box 221474, Charlotte, NC 28222. \$34.95.

Definitive books on handguns in general or specific types have, in the past, tended to be little more than a multitude of photos and little text.

In "Handcannons..." Harry Derby has reversed that trend, and published a book about Japanese handguns that would make interesting and informative reading, without the photos.

The book is well illustrated, but hardly repetitious.

Joe Schroeder, in his foreword, says it best: "... **Hand Cannons of Imperial Japan** is a well researched, well organized, well presented work of enthusiastic scholarship that is a major contribution to arms literature."

Even if Japanese handguns do not, in themselves, interest you, the story of their development is exciting reading, and will lead the reader right into today, where the Japanese arms industry is a major factor in the marketplace.

Too often, books like this are bought only by the arms scholars; I would recommend that it be read by everyone with an interest in firearms and the men who developed them. (J.R.)



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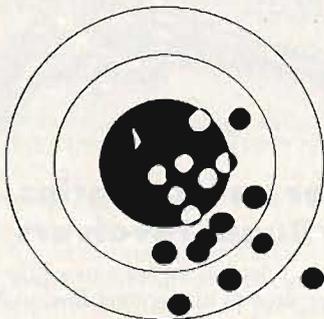
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STEEL CHALLENGE

Continued from page 59

For winning the match, Plaxco took home \$3,500 in cash, broken down as follows:

First place overall (sponsored by *American Handgunner*), \$1,500; first place in "Speed Option" and "Five to Go" stages, \$750 each; and \$500 for teaming up with McCormick to win the team shootoff.

Plaxco also won a .45 Colt automatic pistol customized by Jim Boland (JB Enterprises), a custom holster (Ted Blocker), a gun case (The Reloading Bench), a Pro Steel gun safe (Police Products West), a cased Ruger Redhawk .44 Magnum (Sturm, Ruger & Co.), a customized .45 auto (M-S Safari Arms), and a .22 Colt Trooper (B&B Sales).

Shaw, who won the "Flying M" stage, received a cash prize of \$750 and a Remington Model 1100 shotgun (International Shootists, Inc.).

For winning the "Double Trouble" stage, McCormick took home \$750 in cash and a S&W Model 520 .357 Magnum revolver (Police Products West). He also won \$500 for teaming up with Plaxco to win the team shootoff.

The top woman shooter, Pamela Morris, won \$250 in cash (SWPL) and a Charter Arms .38 Special stainless undercover revolver (CA).

The high wheelgunner, Fred Wardell, won \$250 in cash (SWPL) and a Dan Weston Pistol Pack (DW).

Contributors numbered 74, for a total of \$48,564, both cash and merchandise value (at retail prices).

Stage sponsors totalled \$13,925.

The largest contributor (\$6,587) was the SWPL, which presented the second place winner (McCormick) with \$1,000 in cash.

The tournament was officially opened by California Senator H. L. Richardson, who is spearheading a drive to keep an anti-gun initiative off the state's ballot in November.

His talk was followed by a fast-draw exhibition given by Bob Munden of Butte, Montana. A shooting pro since 1960, Munden has won more than 2,500 trophies for his prowess in fast-draw artistry. Firing a revolver, Munden placed 65th with a score of 65.40 seconds.

Even though spectators and participants were handgun-oriented, John Satterwhite entertained the crowd with a masterful display of shotgun shooting, highlighted by breaking seven clay pigeons with as many shots before any of them hit the ground.

Satterwhite, who holds many national and international records with the scattergun, operates the American Shotgun Academy in Dewey, Arizona.

Topping off the three-day event was a barbecue sponsored by Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc.

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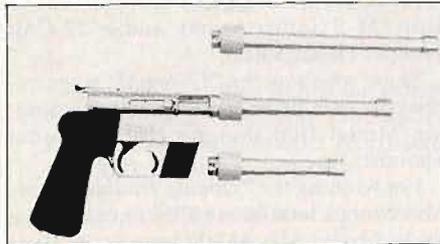
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WHAT'S NEW

Charter Arms has new .22 auto for campers

Charter Arms Corporation has come out with a new eight-round, clip-fed .22 LR semi-automatic pistol that comes in three barrel lengths: 6, 8 and 10-inch.

An ideal "first gun," the 20-ounce Explorer S-II has an anti-corrosion finish, a snag-free blade front sight and an adjustable rear sight with square notch.



It comes with a standard 8-inch barrel, which is easy to remove, making the gun appealing to campers and backpackers.

The 8-inch barrel is interchangeable with the other two, which are priced extra.

Other accessories include a scope mount, which accommodates any standard 1" dovetailed ring, extra magazines and a humidity-proof vinyl case.

For more information, write the company at 430 Sniffens Lane, Dept. AH, Stratford, CT 06497.

Metallic 'silhos' now made for .22 shooters

Short-range metallic silhouette targets for .22 caliber practice shooting are available from Target Masters.

Made of 1/4-inch steel plate with a sturdy steel base, they are painted a flat black and come in turkey, chicken, ram and pig designs.

They meet NRA specifications. Larger sizes are available for big bore handguns and rifles.

For more information, contact the company at 8341 Canoga Ave., Canoga Park, CA 91304.



Tyler now has grips for Ruger revolvers

Melvin Tyler has added a new grip and trigger shoe to his product line, to fit Ruger revolvers.

They are shown in the accompanying photo on the new Ruger Redhawk .44 Magnum.

The company has been making Tyler "T" grips for more than 40 years.

For more information, write Tyler at 1326 West Britton Ave., Oklahoma City, OK 73114.

Winchester expands Silvertip line to 8

Three more calibers—the .357 Magnum, .38 Auto and .45 Colt—have been introduced in the Winchester Silvertip hollow-point bullet configuration this year, expanding that line to a total of eight different offerings.

The Winchester Group of Olin Corporation said the Silvertip hollow-point bullet was designed to provide excellent bullet upset and functional reliability in autoloading pistols. Its jacket has less resistance to lead flow than do conventional brass jackets.

Information is available from Winchester Group, Olin Corporation, East Alton, IL 62024.

Southpaw Suppliers has 'lefty' directory

Southpaw Suppliers, Inc. has just put out a new directory of guns and accessories for left-handed shooters.

Price of the directory is \$7.50, which includes a periodic newsletter that keeps southpaws informed of any new products or services the company offers.

Information is available from Southpaw Suppliers, Inc., 307 Belaire Drive, Washington, IL 61571.

Fury Leather has new shoulder holster

Fury Leather Ltd. recently designed and released another inversion shoulder holster—the Super "14" for T/C Contenders and the Ruger Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum revolvers with square-back trigger guards. The holster accommodates barrels up to 14" and can be used with or without a scope. It comes in black basketweave leather and sells for \$44.95. Information is available by sending two first-class stamps to Fury Gun Leather Ltd., S-14 (AH), 2204 Niagara St., Niagara Falls, NY 14303.

Helwan has new U.S. distributor

The Helwan 9mm semi-automatic pistol (or Beretta M951) will be distributed exclusively in the U.S. by Steyr Daimler Puch of America Corp., Secaucus, New Jersey.

It has been used by both Israeli and Egyptian military units, and currently is the official side-arm of the armed forces and police of the United Arab Republic.

With a magazine capacity of eight rounds, it is one of the lowest priced 9mm autos available anywhere (suggested retail price: \$345).

Manufactured under license from Beretta of Italy by the Maadi Company for the Engineering Industries of Egypt, it takes its name from the ancient Egyptian district of Helwan—site of a major astronomical and meteorological observatory.

The Helwan weighs 33 ounces (with magazine), has an overall length of 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches and a height of 5 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches; with a 115-grain bullet, muzzle velocity is 1,110 f.p.s. Muzzle energy is 340 foot pounds. Barrel length is 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches.

The Helwans being distributed by Steyr Daimler Puch are regular production models.

For additional information, contact the company at 85 Metro Way, Secaucus, NJ 07094.

GUN OF THE MONTH

Continued from page 41

inherent structural strength. The hammer and trigger are strawed stainless steel; the rear sight body and barrel bushing are made of beryllium copper, and the rear sight blade and grip screws are nitre blued.

Since it is against federal law to utilize actual military insignia without written approval of the Department of Heraldry, and this approval is never granted for use on firearms, it was necessary for M-S Safari Arms to commission an artist to design their own decorations, incorporating as much of the original design as possible while maintaining the drama and dignity required.

The gun comes encased in a handsome box made of American walnut, French fitted with green velvet.

One lucky AMERICAN HANDGUNNER reader will win one of these very special guns; the other 360 people will have to buy them. If you are interested in more information and prices, contact: Don McNabb, M-S Safari Arms, P.O. Box 23370, Phoenix, AZ 85063.

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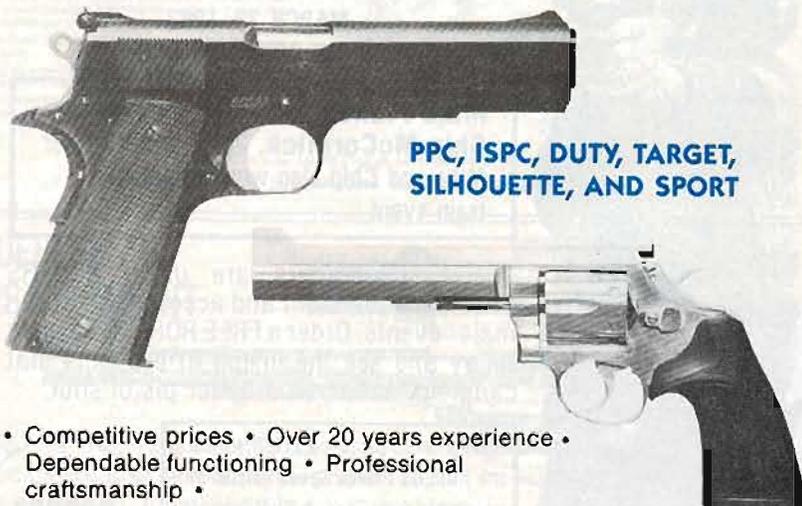
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PLAXCO

Continued from page 34

winning, IPSC-type auto is its unique compensator system, which he designed. It helps redirect combustion gas to reduce muzzle rise and felt recoil.

His Mark IV, Series 70 auto, with full-house combat modifications, has a crisp 3½ pound trigger pull, and a wide funneling of the magazine well, which makes for rapid speed-loading. The frame and related parts are hard-chrome plated. The slide is finished in high-luster blue. The rear sight is a Bomar De Luxe, mounted low and contoured to the slide. A new design improved ramp front sight is silver-soldered in place.

A key to accuracy is barrel lock-up, and Plaxco takes great care in fitting his guns for solid, reliable barrel alignment. All contact surfaces are mated and polished for top functioning. Plaxco makes sure that extractor tension and polishing are perfect. An extended recoil spring guide was installed. The ejection port was lowered. Metal checkering was done in just the right places for the best possible grip. All this topped off with a Bar-Sto barrel, a super-accurate tube for pistol shooters.

But it takes a helluva lot more than a finely tuned gun to win the kinds of matches in which Plaxco competes.

It takes speed, superb accuracy, lots of practice—and a high degree of self-discipline.

Plaxco doesn't smoke. He drinks only socially. Each week on his private range in Roland he fires more than a 1,000 rounds of reloaded match ammo (5.7 grs. Winchester 231, behind an H&G #68 200-gr. SWC bullet). He steps up this number to about 2,000 rounds a week, just before a major match.

His private range, adjacent to his custom pistolsmithing shop, is part of a 35-acre tract. On it are two other ranges (100 and 300 yards), designed for use by the general public.

Plaxco doesn't consider himself a fast-draw artist. Rather, he views his shooting talents as a combination of accuracy and "quick speeds" at ranges between 5 and 60 yards.

This winning combination is bound together by what Plaxco calls "controlled aggression" and "conditioned reflexes." These factors, along with a strong sense of personal dedication to the application of basic shooting fundamentals and conditions, add up to his prize-winning talents—and overall consistency.

Plaxco shoots from his strong side with a Bill Roger's holster. He doesn't like cross-draw holsters, although he noted that they are increasing in popularity in matches he fires (the present ratio is close to 50-50).

He sights-in his customized auto at 50 yards, using a point-of-impact aim, which produces a group about 1½ inches high at 25 yards.

Plaxco wears rubber-cleated shoes made by Adidas. They provide the necessary support, and enable him to move quickly—and positively—into firing position.

Accompanying Plaxco to the Steel Challenge Tournament were his wife, Yvonne, and their six-year-old son, Jason.

Plaxco told the *American Handgunner* that his wife, who shoots handguns only informally, does most of his reloading.

"She reloads my practice ammo," he said.

"I reload my own for competition. In this way, should something go wrong, then all of the blame is on my shoulders.

"Yvonne understands this and is in no way offended," he added.

RIVAL

Continued from page 31

other standard M1911 wood panel grips. Virtually any grip that fits the Government Model will fit the 10-Ring Rival pistol.

The pistols weighed-in at a hefty 48 ounces, unloaded. Overall length is 11 inches. Balance was slightly ahead of the trigger guard. I found both guns to be adequately muzzle-heavy for steady aim, but not too heavy to cause fatigue during sight alignment.

The current model 10-Ring pistol is parkerized (baked zinc phosphate) on a light matte surface produced with glass peening. It is non-glare and quite functional around the muzzleloading game.

The lock features a straight-line striker assembly mounted in the barrel extension at the rear of the barrel. This design produces a fast lock time. The barrel is plugged at nine inches and mounts the nipple. This design provides straight-line ignition directly into the powder charge; the remaining two inches of the barrel is the striker housing. A top section of the barrel is milled away to expose the nipple, for fitting percussion caps.

The grooved swing trigger is adaptable to short, normal or long pull by selecting one of three separate pin holes drilled in the trigger assembly. The sear is a second-class lever with a short arm to the trigger and long arm to the striker. Very slight trigger movement will disengage the sear. A

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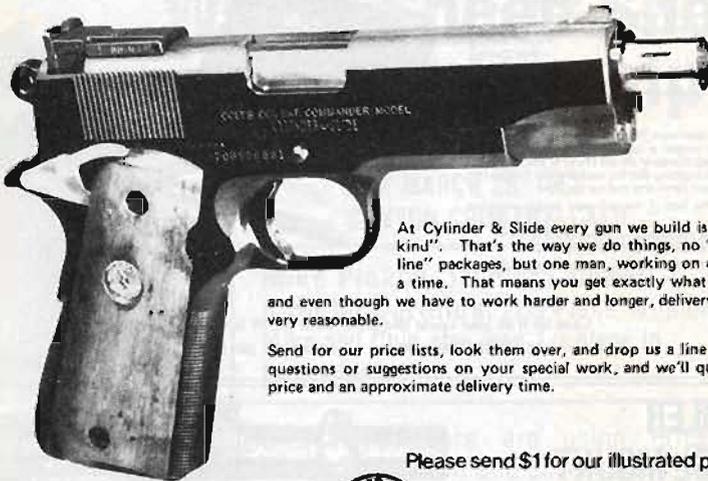
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dish-shaped striker lug, machined integral with the striker body, engages the sear. The trigger assembly is completely adjustable for pull, overtravel, engagement and length of pull.

A striker guide pin (1/16 inch diameter) aligns the striker for uniform trigger release, and also doubles as a safety. Pulling the striker plunger back exposes the guide pin. Turning the striker a few degrees off the guide pin hole makes the gun safe. This safety procedure should be observed for loading and primer-capping. Trigger sensitivity calls for carefully letting the striker down on the sear. When this is done, the gun is ready to fire.

The trigger pull on factory guns is set for 2½ pounds. If shooters want a lighter pull, they should be aware of the possible danger of jarring off a round accidentally. Always set the striker with the gun muzzle pointed downrange. An internal limit keeps the striker from contacting the nipple. The gun can be dry-fired without concern for lock damage.

Trigger pulls on both 10-Ring Rivals we tested were quite light, under a pound. That light a pull took some getting used to! But trigger characteristics were uniform from shot-to-shot, and after a few rounds, the whole releasing process was quite predictable. The release had no creep and broke with no apparent overtravel.

Miking the bores showed that one gun took the prescribed .440 inch Speer swaged balls. The other gun required a .433 ball to allow proper patch sizes. This is but one of many details to observe when shooters are seeking maximum accuracy. Poor fit of the ball in the bore, and too thin a patch, can result in burned-through patches that can plague uniform ballistic performance.

Experimenting with different sized balls, patch thickness and compositions, proper patch lubrication techniques and lubricating materials, plus using proper intensity primers, are all vital for maximum accuracy in muzzleloaders. Variations in powder charge and granular size can make significant differences.

The powder used in these tests was FFg instead of FFFg, which is usually recommended for a pistol. The large .440 inch bore on these pistols allows the use of slower-burning, large-grained black powder normally used in long guns. One powder charge was used (33 grains of FFg) for all record shots with the Rival, since trial rounds indicated that this combination gave the best results. All shooting was done offhand at 25 yards.

The patch and lubrication combination (see box) produced groups that were closely clustered about half the size of some other combinations. The potential accuracy of the Rival appears to be around one-inch, at 25 yards. This will translate to two or two-and-a-half inches at 50 yards, on a par with machine rest groups from many self-loading, match-grade handguns. The best five-shot offhand group measured 3.5 inches. This is quite respect-

table for a front stuffer, but by no means does it match quality accuracy. In the hands of a competitive pistol shooter, this gun shines brightly.

Our shooting was done on a cool, overcast day with practically no wind.

Loading procedures for black powder guns follow centuries-old practices. As comparatively inefficient as the whole process is, one cannot escape the sense that this all meant survival many years ago. After a couple of fouling shots, the bore was brushed and swabbed to remove residues that could hamper accuracy. Powder was measured and poured down the barrel. A lubed patch was then laid on the muzzle crown and a ball placed on it; the two were started into the bore with a sharp blow of the hand on the ramrod knob; a finishing stroke sent the patched ball down to rest snugly on the powder charge.

The striker was cocked and put on safe, then a cap was placed on the nipple. The

BEST COMPONENTS

The best patch and lube combination was with .020 inch *Ox-Yoke* (130 Griffin Rd., West Suffield, CT 06093) patches and 103 Lube Young Country Arms (1626 Newport Blvd., Costa Mesa, CA 92627). *Ox-Yoke* patches are cut to fit the caliber ball, without binding the rod. They are woven from 100-percent cotton and maintain a uniform thickness from lot-to-lot. The weave is coarse and designed to take and hold the lube. The 103 Lube contains no petroleum derivatives and is made from natural substances. The lube does not burn or break down in the bore.

Remington #10 primers were used for all test groups. This is a mild primer, used whenever the flash hole enters directly on the powder charge, as with the Rival and underhammer percussion guns. Primers of greater brisance are designed for turning corners and negotiating long flash tubes. Such "hot" primers can cause erratic chamber pressures in guns with short, direct flash tubes.

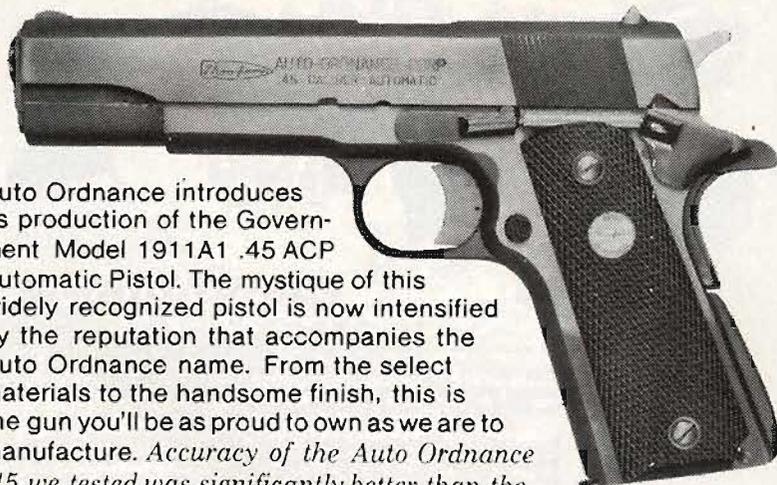
striker was then eased forward onto the sear. The fat, octagonal barrel was raised to the target. The sight picture was refined. Simultaneously, the trigger finger entered the guard and eased up on the trigger. As sight motion converged on the target center, more trigger pressure sent the round on its way.

The Rival is hand-assembled and fitted. It will require factory service to keep the one-year warranty on parts and workmanship intact. Pistols can be ordered directly from the maker at \$245; allow six weeks for delivery. Serious muzzleloader competitors will find the 10-Ring Rival pistol a challenging handgun to shoot.

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COP TALK

Continued from page 14

'JUNK AMMO'

I grew up in a police family. I'm the only one whom you could say was into guns. Even so, my father and uncles have all told me how useless the standard 158-grain round nose lead bullet is as a man-stopper. This is from their experience. A friend of the family down south lost his job for shooting a bad guy with a .38 Glaser Safety Slug.

I realize that you do your best to encourage police chiefs to endorse higher powered guns and ammunition. Nevertheless, I would be curious to know your views on why most policemen carry this junk ammo.

California cop-to-be

Tradition is part of it. About the time the .38 Special came out the New York City police were just standardizing on the Colt New Police .32 revolver. This was under Police Commissioner Teddy Roosevelt, who was later to write in his journals why he preferred a single-action Colt .45 for dangerous game. Give Teddy credit. He had a .38 Long Colt when he stormed San Juan Hill.

Seriously, there is a tendency for police administrators to believe that the men working under them are a whole lot less competent than they are. A chief in America's largest police department once said, "Any equipment we adopt or permit has got to be idiot-proof." If that chief had expected excellence, and shown his men he believed that they could deliver it, he might have led a better PD than he did during his reign. Subordinates only deliver what they're expected to.

The .38 Special is easy to shoot, and the double-action .38 revolver is, indeed, the most screw-up-proof gun. That's why in my book, *In the Gravest Extreme: the Role of the Firearm in Self Defense*, I recommend that gun for the beginner. However, we both know that even within the .38 Special caliber, you can go a long way beyond round nose lead bullets for ensuring the public's safety.

I could write a book about this. When a California police union sued to have guns issued to them, because they were too cheap to buy their own, they set the stage to lose their privilege to carry Magnums, since the court ruled that the public safety agency they worked for could set its own standards on what its issue safety equipment would be—including police guns and ammo.

Police chiefs in big cities generally are appointed and "serve at the pleasure" of the mayor, or whomever. If that mayor gets a lot of heat about cops using high-powered guns—heat that usually comes from militant minority groups looking for public relations victories—he's gonna transmit the heat to the chief. As an ap-

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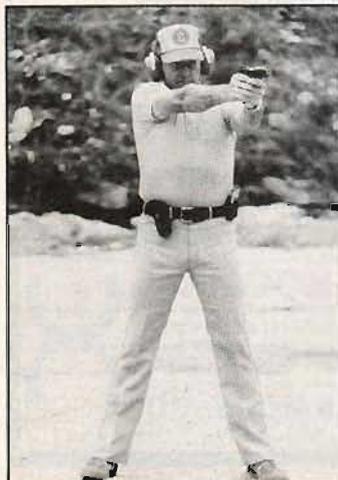
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pointee, the chief has a choice of keeping his \$40,000 a year job and doing what he's told, or fighting the boss and being bounced back to his Civil Service rank of Captain at \$25,000 a year. You figure out what he's going to do.

CHIEFS SPECIAL

I enjoyed your column on the rationale of the .38 Special for self defense, but I don't understand why you didn't place more emphasis on the three-inch Chiefs Special .38. This gun is far more accurate and delivers far more ballistic capability than the two-inch guns you were talking about. Aren't you aware that these guns exist, and how superior they are to the belly guns you recommended?

Westerner

I am well aware of the three-inch Chief. I've owned and carried them, also the longer barrel versions of the Police Pocket Magnum and the D-frame Colt. I think they've got the best balance of any light revolvers. They do, indeed, offer better accuracy and an edge in ballistics; and they are also superbly balanced to both hand and eye.

But I like 'em for the street. A two-inch belly gun can be packed in the pocket, in any ankle holster, or inside the belt under a tucked-in shirt. For most people, a three-inch Chief is just long enough to prevent any of those carries. That means you wear it on your belt; and on your belt, there are a whole lot more potent defensive firearms that will be just as comfortable and discreet, ranging from the four-inch .38 or K-frame S&W .357 to the .45 automatic, in any of its several forms.

If you are limited to a .38 Special revolver, and you want something compact that you'll be carrying constantly on or in your belt, by all means check out a three-inch Chief. Frankly, for that purpose, I prefer a four-inch, round butt Airweight M&P Model 12; but I can understand why the Chief's compactness appeals to you.

FOUR QUESTIONS

Please excuse the paper this note is being written on. I am sitting in the front seat of my patrol vehicle, and the paper was torn from my police notebook. My sergeant would barbecue me alive if he knew what I was doing. It is very seldom that I kinda "bend the rules," but this is important. I hope you can help.

My department will authorize me to carry any holster I want, as long as it is not mechanically operated (à la clamshell), and it must have a Clarino finish. I like the Bianchi model 27A, but it is not available in Clarino. This leaves me carrying the standard Border Patrol style, which isn't my favorite. I just plain don't feel confident. Any suggestions?

My issued weapon is the S&W M66. I'm authorized to carry any Smith, Colt or Ruger .357 with a four-inch barrel, as long as it is nickel or stainless in finish. I can't

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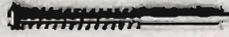
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afford a \$450 Python or \$375 for a M27. I like the S&W Highway Patrolman M28, but it comes only in blue finish. I have seen several M28s finished in chrome, but I don't like them. A friend of mine has one that binds up after firing 200 rounds of reloads, unless it is cleaned. Anyone you could suggest who does a good chrome job at reasonable prices, in a reasonable length of time? Someone should inform the factory that we need a nickel M28!

We are allowed to carry any ammo "within reason" in our Mossberg 500 pump guns. I'm using #1 Magnum buckshot, alternated with rifled slugs. Anything I can improve there?

Where in my state can I get the Glaser Safety Slug? Our two largest police supply stores don't carry them. My backup gun is loaded with .38 Special Xploder ammo. What do you think?

Thanks a lot for your assistance. Please don't use my name or location. We all read the American Handgunner.

Southern patrolman

That's a string of worthwhile questions. Let's start in order.

Like you, I consider the S&W Highway Patrolman much superior for police service to the same firm's stainless steel Combat Magnum. It isn't made in nickel, partly because your region is about the only one where nickel guns are popular for police bidding. More cynically, I know that if I was in Smith & Wesson management, I'd never make the gun in nickel. The only difference between the M28 and the more expensive M27 is the finish. With both guns brightly plated, the visible difference between the expensive gun and the bargain priced one would be nil. I've found S&W management to be genuinely concerned with giving their customers value. The bad rap S&W gets about black market pricing, and so forth, is blame that should actually be falling on unscrupulous dealers, but I wouldn't ask them to cut their throats financially.

There are several good hard-chroming outfits around. Check the advertisers in this issue for gun platers.

Too bad you're stuck with Clarino. Check with Bianchi one more time, and then take a look at S&W's Security Plus, which I believe is available in that shiny "patent leather" exterior format.

I've never been a fan of the alternate loading concept in combat shotguns. Even the most highly trained people lose count of their shots in real-life gunfights, especially when there's lots of shooting. If that happens when your gun is alternately loaded, you literally don't know whether you're holding a shotgun with buckshot or a .72 caliber carbine, which can be just plain disconcerting in a moment when you need all your confidence, and can even lead to tragedy.

I prefer to stay with one load. Your choice of #1 buckshot couldn't be better. I suggest you stick with it and put your slugs



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in reserve, say in one of those carriers wrapped around the stock. Your Magnum load is giving you 20 .30 caliber pellets, as opposed to the 16 in a standard "Express" load, and also noticeably more recoil. Try the gun rapid-fire on silhouettes, with both loads, and if you can see a marked difference in control and recovery time, drop back to the standard #1 buck.

Since you're talking about an actual explosion at the instant of contact, I'm a little leery about Xploders for a backup gun. Backup is usually drawn at point-blank range, and an exploding bullet in this situation could conceivably damage the weapon, or injure your gun hand, leaving you helpless.

A lot of cops are writing in about where they can get Glasers, and KTW armor-piercing ammo. Both are available, *to police only*, from Second Chance,  POB 578, Central Lake, MI 49622.

PORVAIR

Continued from page 28

Porvair products can be found in the catalogs of the following manufacturers:

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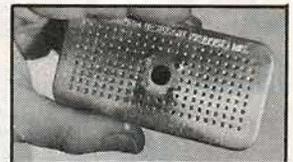
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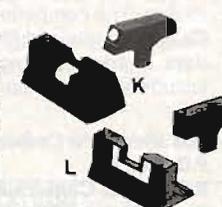
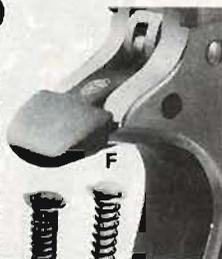
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AUTO ORDNANCE

Continued from page 30

of hollow-point and wadcutter ammo hand-fed through the action of the test gun worked perfectly, indicating a smooth finish and proper angle on the feed ramp. But in a couple of other areas it needed help. Trigger pull was excessive, and there were several sharp edges and rough spots that needed touching-up with a stone.

It's been a few years since I've been inside the back-end of a .45; so it took several attempts to get the sear release down to what seemed respectable. When I thought the gun was range-ready, off I went for some test firing. The first thing I learned was that the gun's recoil spring was too strong for reliable functioning of target wadcutters, which isn't a fault of the gun. Shooters of target ammo regularly use lighter recoil springs; they have to. No functioning problems were noted when using full-power loads, either hollow-point or hardball.

I also learned that the "much-improved" trigger pull was still a little too tough for holding proper sight alignment, while squeezing 'em off. The trigger pull had been so bad at the start that, by comparison, a less than adequate performance seemed great. At the range, the truth came out. I hadn't done nearly as good a job as I thought. Resulting targets weren't good enough to photograph for publication. The still-too-hard trigger pull caused horizontal dispersion, producing what I call "football accuracy". Back to the shop for more work.

Considering that the Auto Ordnance 1911A1 will cost \$75 to \$100 less than a Colt Mark IV/Series 70 auto, it should make an interesting alternative for those who like to tinker, or want to build a combat pistol. The gun is, as claimed, a nearly exact replica of the GI auto. All military, civilian and custom parts made for .45s will fit. Auto Ordnance managed to keep the price low by skipping the hand polishing and fitting of parts that you naturally would expect to find when you go first-class.

Comparing this gun with its WWII predecessor, it doesn't fare badly. I've seen plenty of GI .45s with "white knuckle" sears and "bushel basket" accuracy. This one is better than average. It's worth spending your time to improve.



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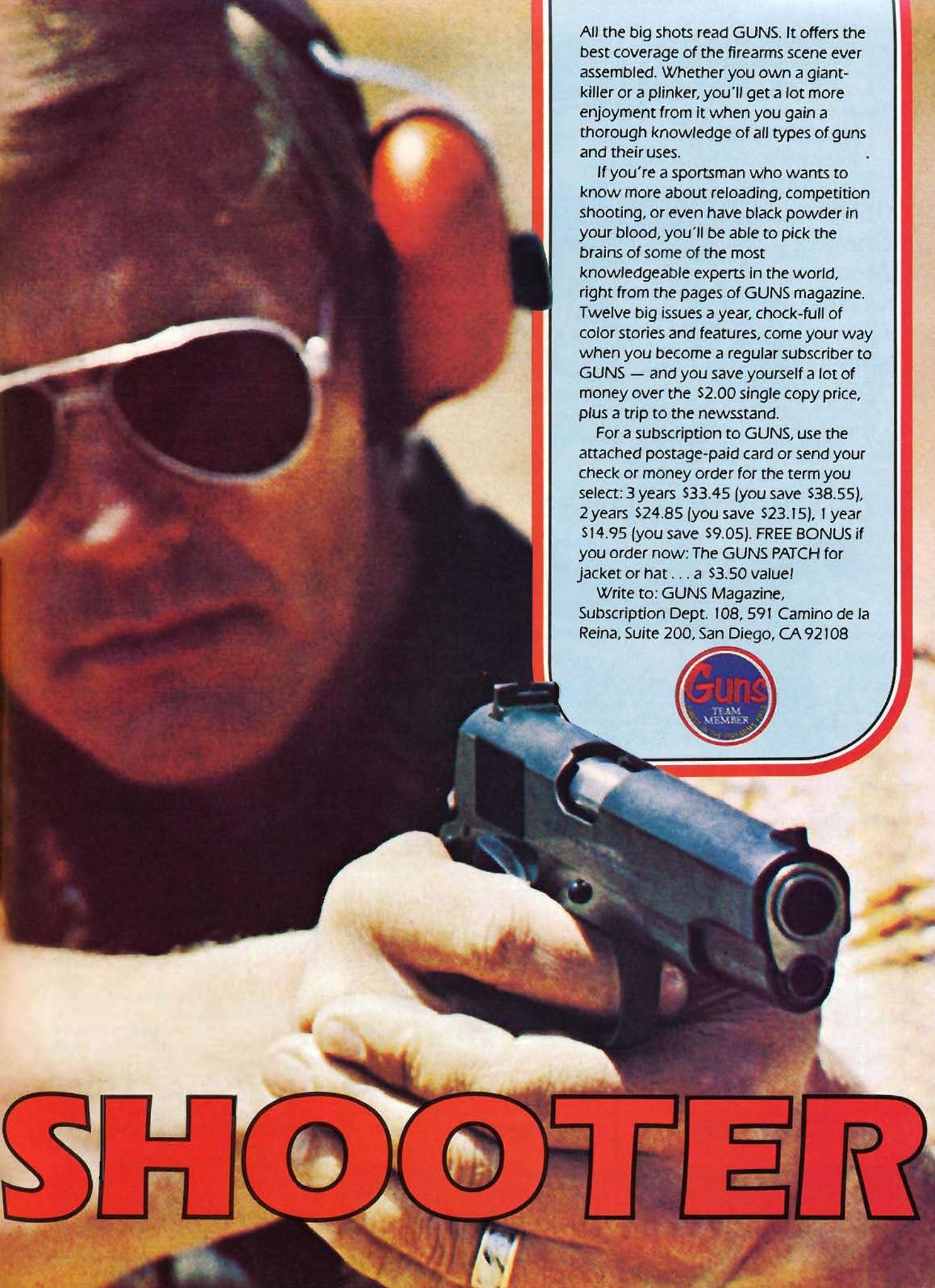
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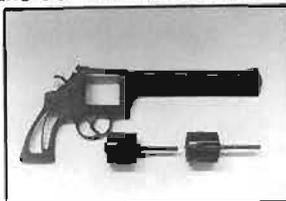
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STOPPING POWER

Continued from page 38

LRN, fired from a two-inch barrel.

Remington's 125-grain, JHP +P .38 Special, a very good round, was in the middle, with 23.2 and 13.9, depending on barrel length, although the much lighter 95-grain bullet did better with 28.0 and 14.0.

While I believe these figures are misleading, a couple of extra inches on a barrel can add velocity and energy to the same cartridge, which is a point worth remembering.

REPORT MISSES MARK

Even the report seemed to realize at least a measure of its errors, as shown in the next to the last paragraph: "If an RII of 10 is elected as a lower limit, a number of cartridges which fall below this value, as well as above it, are sure to raise questions." Or, further on, "The position on the RII scale is primarily due to the size and shape of the temporary cavity formed in the gelatin block. A change in velocity or construction can have considerable effect on RII..."

The report is so flawed that its results become quite unreliable, and therefore not worth considering. So how did they go wrong, and what could they do to correct their expensive testing procedures?

Following are the reasons why I feel the report missed the mark, and what areas will require further research for proper evaluation:

(1) The *delivered energy* of a bullet—or knock-down power—is the most important factor in instantaneous incapacitation. It has little or nothing to do with the size of the wound as such; perhaps two examples will demonstrate this:

In two separate incidents in San Francisco, a security guard was shot by an assailant with a .32 automatic, and a policeman by a motorist with a .45 caliber revolver. Both were shot at extremely close range, the security guard in a hospital corridor, and the policeman immediately next to the car of the motorist, whom he had stopped for a traffic violation. Both were instantly knocked down and incapacitated, but neither received a wound. The guard had a Zippo lighter in his shirt pocket, which the .32 auto bullet struck and lodged in. This stopped the bullet and transferred its force to the entire lighter, which slammed into the guard's chest, bruising him, knocking the air out of him, and forcing him to the ground. But he was *not* wounded. The situation was similar for the policeman, who was wearing a bulletproof vest.

(2) Different bullet shapes and types will produce greater wounds, less penetration, and assist in transmitting energy; their employment may be quite useful, but the size of a wound is not a viable indicator of knock-down power, or instantaneous incapacitation. Both war casualties and automobile accidents provide graphic, if gory, examples of people sustaining absolutely terrible wounds without being knocked out of action—even though they later died from those wounds. In any event, the human body is not composed of solid masses of flesh into which a bullet could blow a hole, such as that in a gelatin block. As mentioned earlier, we are layers of dissimilar materials, and the most solidly fleshy parts of us tend to be the more non-incapacitating, at least instantaneously.

(3) Inside a body, and to stop a human assailant, hitting bone delivers much more energy and is more disabling, even though bone is generally not a vital organ, and such a wound may not be lethal.

Lighter, faster bullets are easier to stop or breakup, while heavier bullets will continue on, which even the report commented upon. Thus a heavier and bigger bullet is better in this regard.

Again, let us take two examples:

In the first, two American MPs were on patrol when a situation arose where they had to arrest a drunken soldier. Resisting arrest, he broke a bottle and came at them. One MP drew his .45 automatic and fired one shot, which hit the soldier in the left hip, spun him around, and knocked him down. He was disabled and had a broken hip, but he survived.

In another incident, which was reported in "Guns" magazine a while back, a South African soldier was being choked by a terrorist who was so close in front of him that he could not really raise his pistol. The terrorist absorbed all eight shots from the soldier's 9mm automatic, and the soldier had to reload and continue shooting—while he was being choked! Finally, the terrorist collapsed and died. It is not known what organs were hit, or whether bone was or was not struck. But according to the RII's figures, the terrorist should have received approximately 20 times as much "incapacitation" as the drunken soldier. Are both of these instances flukes, or did the RII miss the input of some essential data?

If we are going to have a report which purports to index *all* the available cartridges according to their incapacitation effect, then that's what we should have.

Such a report should be based on *realistic* criteria, a careful examination and evaluation of actual incidents of use, and then tested thoroughly under conditions which, as closely as possible, duplicate actual use.

Unfortunately, with the *Relative Incapacitation Index*, that is not what we got.

One wonders how many good lives it will cost before the lesson is really learned.



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SHOE STRING HOLSTER

Continued from page 39

ward or back, for either right- or left-hand.

- When not in use, the two belt loops can be slid together, and the larger one tucked inside the waistband. Thereafter, it's unlikely anyone will recognize what it is. If necessary, take it off and drop it into a pocket or wallet.

- Without question, this is the lightest and least expensive carrying rig I've ever seen. So much so, you can't afford not to have one.

- Unlike similar devices, you can reholster with one hand. Just remember to put the muzzle through the big loop before shoving you gun back inside your trousers.

There are a couple of points to watch. It doesn't work very well with revolvers because of their shape, and you should make sure your front sight isn't too high, or constructed in such a way that it will snag the string.

Over the years I've shown it to a number of holster makers, but none ever bit. Any leather shop should be able to produce one quickly. Or you can easily  make one yourself.

Small arms ammo sales: big bucks

Small arms ammo is a big item in the U.S. defense budget, according to the May issue of *Nation's Business*.

A breakdown of the "Defense Share of Output by Industry" reveals that the sales of small arms ammo—based on Department of Defense reports—was 40.4 percent in 1981, compared with 32.3 percent for the "Aircraft" category.

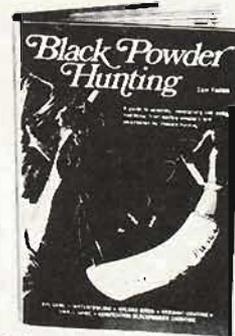
The sales of small arms ammo was exceeded only by "Shipbuilding and ship repairing," "Radio and TV Communications equipment" and "Aircraft engines and engine parts."

An even more revealing statistic is the fact that the sales of small arms ammo in 1987 are expected to rise to 59.1 percent, or an average annual growth between 1981 and 1987 of 6.5 percent.

There are 35 categories of defense expenditures listed in the *Nation's Business* article, including such items as electronic components, aluminum castings, metal-cutting machine tools, optical instruments and lenses and telegraph equipment.

With the Pentagon poised to spend \$1.6 trillion between now and 1987 to rearm, things are indeed looking up for many companies, large and small, including the manufacturers of small arms ammo.

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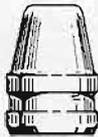
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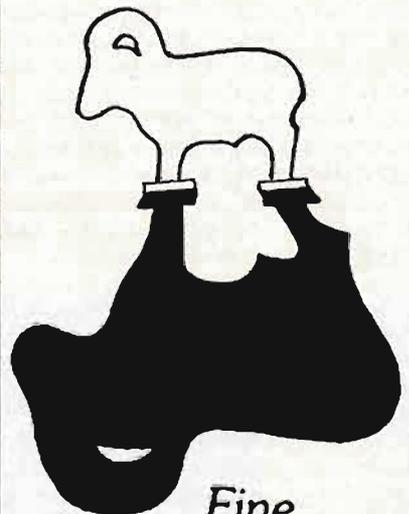
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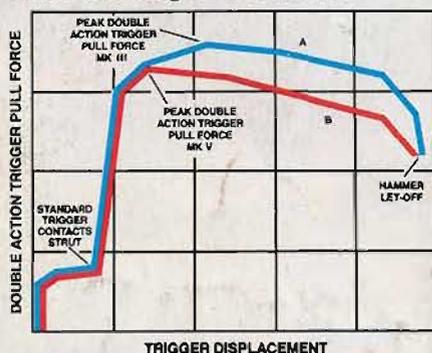
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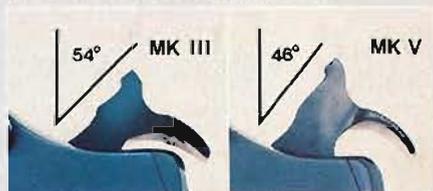
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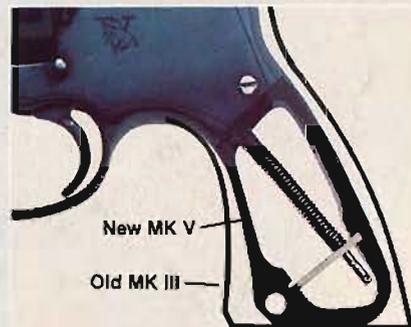


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