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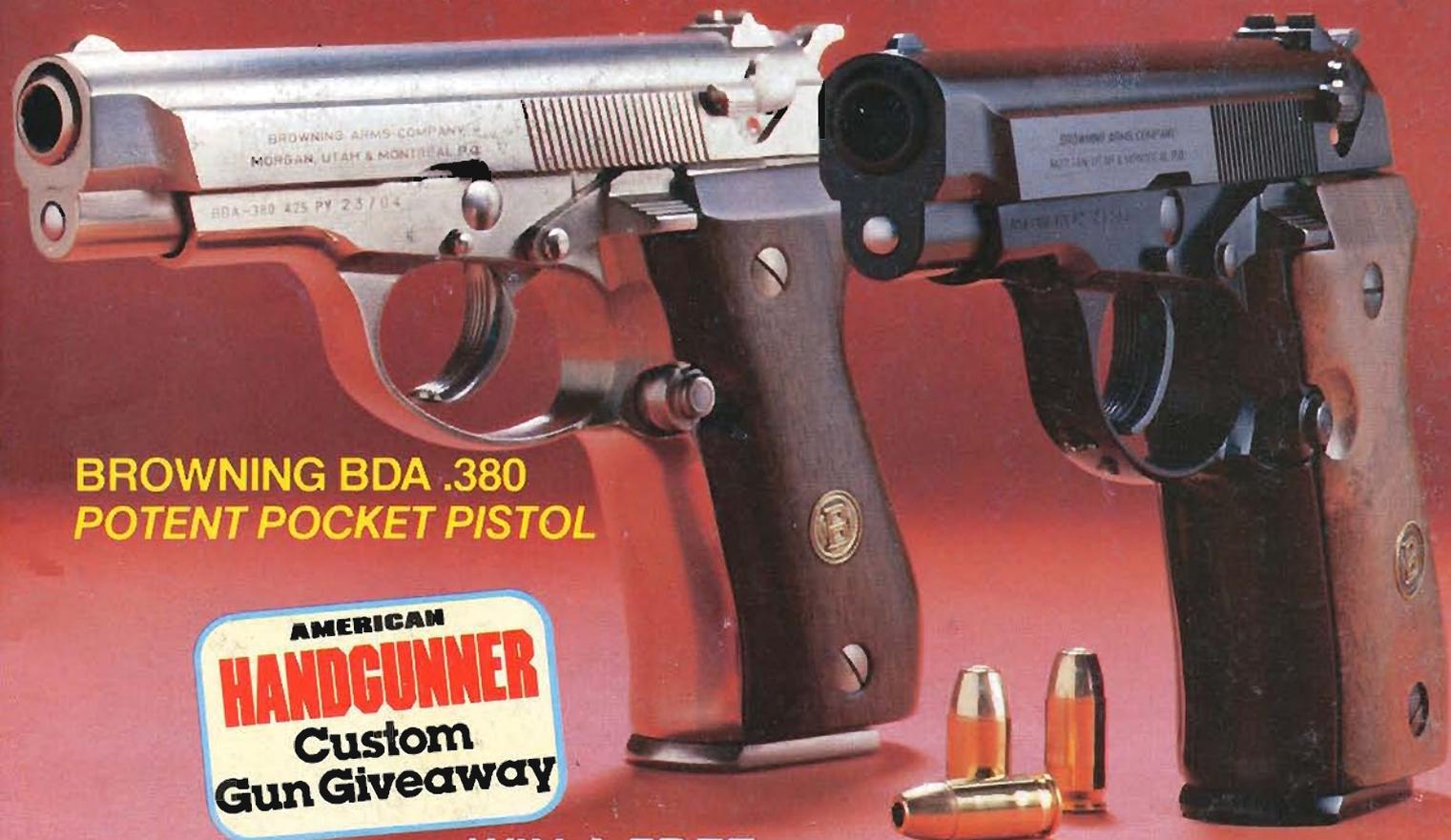
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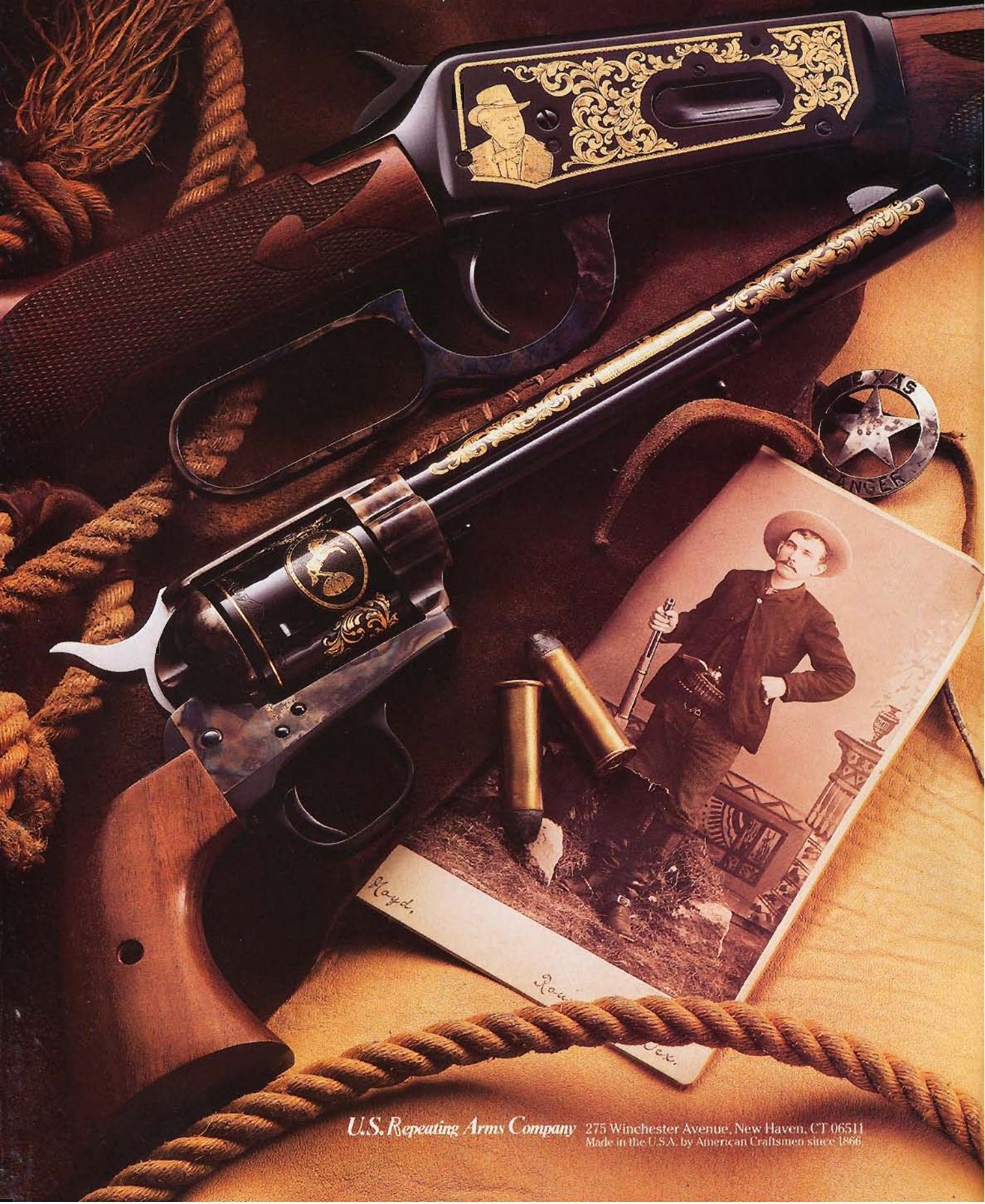
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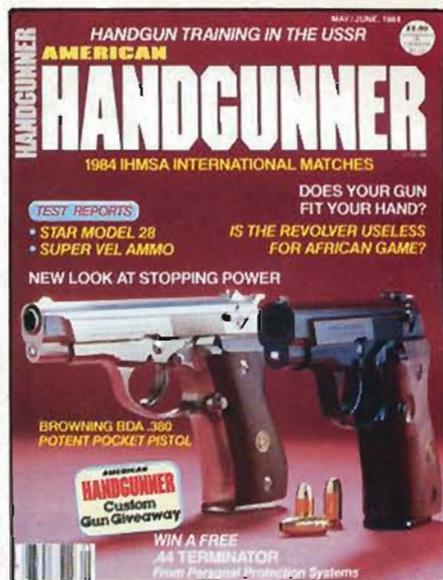
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COVER: Browning BDA .380 pistols in blue and nickel, photo and story by Stan Trzaniec.

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EAST COAST ADV. REPS.: Buchmayr Associates, 980 Post Rd., Darien, CT 06820 (203) 655-1639

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER (ISSN 0145-4250) is published bi-monthly by Publishers Development Corp., 591 Camino de la Reina, San Diego, CA 92108. Second class postage paid at San Diego, CA 92108, and at additional mailing offices. Subscriptions: One year (6 issues) \$11.95. Single monthly copies \$2.00 (in Canada \$2.50). Change of Address: Four weeks' notice required on all changes. Send old address as well as new. Contributors submitting manuscripts, photographs or drawings do so at their own risk. Material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient postage. Payment will be made at rates current at time of publication and will cover reproduction in any or all **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER** Magazine editions. Advertising rates furnished on request. Reproduction or use of any portion of this magazine in any manner, without written permission, is prohibited. All rights reserved. Title to this publication passes to subscriber only on delivery to his address. **SUBSCRIPTION PROBLEMS:** For immediate action write to **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER**, Attention: Christi McCombs—591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92108 or call (619) 297-8524. Ask for Christi McCombs or Tom Hollander.



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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

EXCHANGING AMMO IN STREET BATTLE? IT JUST DOESN'T HAPPEN THAT WAY!

One of the standard arguments against carrying largebore revolvers or auto-loading pistols of any caliber as optional police duty sidearms is, "What if you have to exchange ammo with an embattled brother officer who is armed with a standard .38 or .357 service revolver?"

Damn . . . I cringe every time I hear that!

A freelance writer recently published an article in a national police professional journal quoting a sheriff on why he wanted his guys all carrying the same caliber six-gun, during which he used that "exchange" argument.

One of the several officers who wrote in to critique the comment was Mark Moritz, a savvy young combat pistol instructor from Arizona. Mark noted that never in the history of law enforcement had an officer had to exchange ammo with another. The sheriff answered that he considered

this an "embellished" statement.

I've been studying police gunfights for a lot of years, debriefing the survivors when the cops won and debriefing the homicide investigators when the cops lost, and I have never yet encountered a situation where officers involved in a shootout actually threw ammo to one another. I'm sure it's happened on military battlefields, but fellas, we ain't soldiers and the streets ain't Chateau Thierry.

I'm talking personal encounters, not the war-like, all-night shootouts between *contrabandistas* and Border Patrolmen across the banks of the Rio Grande during the depression era, when the patrolmen sent relays back to the post for fresh ammo to continue the *scheutzenfest*. That stuff just doesn't happen anymore.

Urban riots? In Watts and Detroit, fifteen or so years ago, things became so

intense that police armorers drained the Sears & Roebuck sporting goods counters of their buckshot supply . . . but things were *also* sufficiently intense that officers' wives were driving in from the suburbs to give their husbands their hunting rifles and sporting shotguns to go back on the streets with. You'll notice, incidentally, that in Detroit, officers *do* carry everything from .38 to .357 to .41 and .44 Magnums to 9mm autos, and there was no notable ammo shortage.

We're talking street gunfights here, and one officer (throwing ammo to another pinned-down cop just doesn't happen. The main reason is that the average cop today carries at least six rounds in his gun and twelve more on his belt, and if he hasn't hit anything with eighteen rounds, no other sane policeman is going to give him *his* precious ammo to throw away. That would be like pouring sand down a rat-hole. A man who has fired eighteen rounds without effect is either too badly wounded to fire effectively, or in the grip of panic.

Besides, *if I'm close enough to the officer to throw him ammo and cool enough to throw it right to where he can reach it, I'm also close enough and cool enough to shoot the guy who's got him pinned down, right?* An officer who is wounded or panicked or otherwise incapacitated should either stay right there until brother officers deal with the problem, or brother officers should move in under mobile cover or sup-



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pressing cover fire and drag him the hell out of there. The only hypothetical situation I can think of where this wouldn't be possible would be a James Bond gun battle in a labyrinthian maze . . . and if that were the very hypothetical case, I would take my very real HK-91 assault rifle out of my patrol car trunk and start shooting through the maze at the bad guy.

What I *do* run across occasionally are documented cases of officers under heavy fire who've shot down the attacker with a gun taken from a fallen brother officer after their own weapon went dry. If any chief thinks this is a reason *not* to have one partner carrying a .38 revolver and one a .45 auto if they both so choose, I would like that chief to tell me how he expects his officers to safely disarm suspects and unload their non-standard weapons? Every officer should be cross-trained on revolver and semi-auto pistol, to the point where he/she can fire effectively with either!

When I worked for a chief who worried about the ammo interchangeability thing, I just carried a Bianchi Speed Strip of .38 Special FBI loads in my shirt pocket, and kept my .45 auto and spare magazines on my duty belt. That Speed Strip would function in any .38 or .357 revolver, including the Colt Detective Special strapped to my ankle for backup. And frankly, if my partner ever *had* been pinned down under fire and screaming for more ammo, I would have just thrown him the whole, loaded Detective Special anyway.

We can't base street cops' weapon policy on hypothetical theory, gentlemen. Only reality counts, and reality tells us that the whole idea of ammo interchangeability is a joke.

Let me challenge the readership. If any of the thousands of readers of this magazine can give me a *documented* case of officers having to throw each other ammo in a street gunfight, I'll print it. Send the info to: Massad Ayoob, Director Lethal Force Institute, P.O. Box 122, Concord, NH 03301.

I can change my opinion in the face of new and documented evidence, but frankly, I'm not holding my breath. I'll continue to carry my backup Detective Special and a Speed Strip of .38s . . . but my primary weapon when on routine patrol will continue to be my Colt .45 automatic, a policy approved by a wise and street-seasoned police chief who wants each of his individual officers to be as functional and confident as possible with the handgun of his or her choice.



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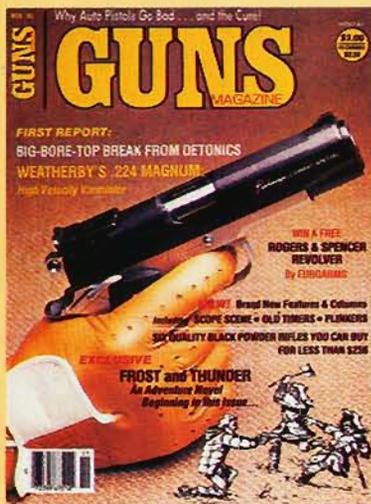
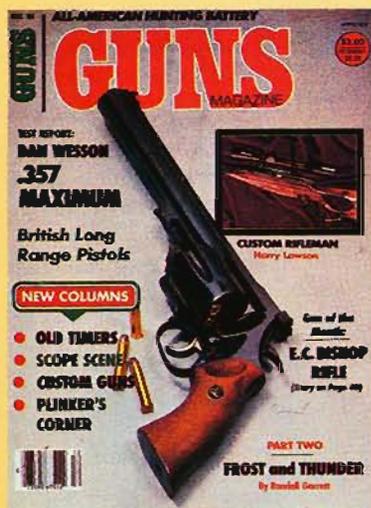
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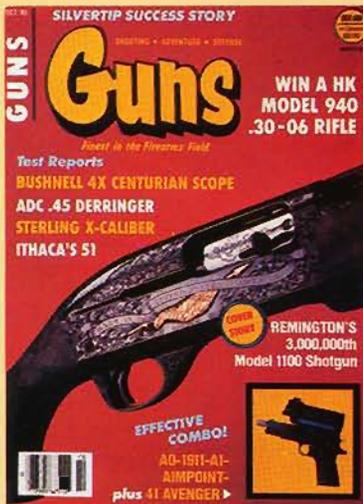
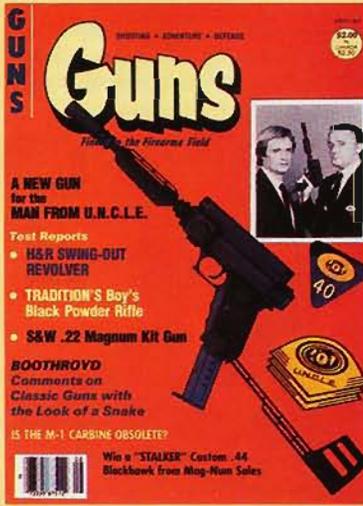
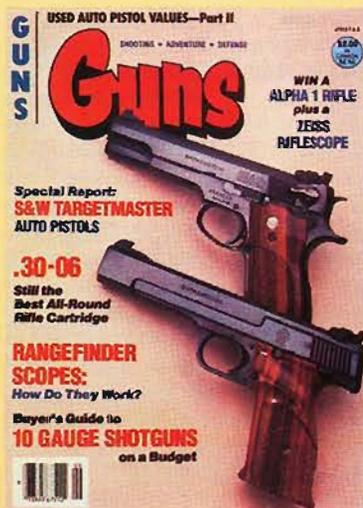
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SILUETAS

PHILIP C. BRIGGS

1983 INTERNATIONALS BRING RULE CHANGES AND NEW LOOK AT TOP GUNS

I knew I was in with a crowd of serious silhouette shooters—caps adorned with patches and pins attesting to straights shot, matches won, guns and components used; T-shirts and jackets emblazoned with championships attended. Then there were some of the folks I recognized. Dave Whittman, first to shoot a straight with a revolver; Jim Jonasen, unlimited champ-1980; Mike Averre, unlimited champ-1981. But I didn't realize how deep the talent went until IHMSA President Elgin Gates asked the nearly 200 shooters attending their annual meeting for a show of hands of those in the 100 and 140 Club. (Membership requires three or four gun match ag-

years—small but mighty!

A long-term dream of many IHMSA stalwarts has come true in 1983 with the purchase of land and the development of a home range for the annual championship match. Located on a 100 acres of land just three miles from downtown Idaho Falls, the range is being built in a natural amphitheater formed by centuries of wind blowing across a giant sand dune. Surrounded by farm land, the bowl provides a ready made backstop for bullets and a baffle for muzzle blasts. All the earthwork had been completed by fall, and as the snow settled in for the winter it appeared that the late summer-early fall struggle to install an irri-



gregates of 100 x 120 or 140 x 160.) Half the damn crowd raised their hands!

In that bunch my only claim to fame was longevity; there were only six of us that could claim a membership number under 500. This year that and a 80 x 80 would get you into the shootoffs!

IHMSA Growth

With the preliminaries out of the way, Elgin launched off into his report to the assembled delegates on the growth and accomplishments of IHMSA over the past year.

Membership applications are still coming in at a rate of 300-400 a month and in the seven years since the organization's formation it has signed up over 30,000 members. About 15,000 of those are currently active, shooting in the hundreds of matches the organization sponsors each year. Not a large group, but remember these are shooters; IHMSA leaves the political and legislative activities to the NRA. Remember also the tremendous affect these dedicated shooters have had on the shooting sports industry in the past seven

years—small but mighty! The firing line for the twenty banks of targets has been compressed by overlapping the targets somewhat, but it's still 950 feet long. Once winter lifts its icy hand, work will start on the stat house/concession stand/control tower building, parking lot, bunkers and campgrounds. The range will be operating for the 1984 Internationals, according to Elgin.

Match Rule Changes

After the election of officers (Elgin was reelected by acclamation), the delegates discussed and voted on several suggested rule changes.

As Elgin observed, IHMSA has developed a workable set of rules over the years, and only a minor fine tuning was under consideration (unlike another sanctioning body's rules).

After open and widespread discussion the delegates agreed upon a number of minor changes for 1984, the most significant of which are the following:

Continued on page 20

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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN G. LAWSON

YOU MAY HAVE THE CAPITAL TO START PISTOLSMITHING IN YOUR DRESSER

Every trip to the mailbox yields at least one letter from a reader who asks how he can become a professional pistolsmith. Over the years, I have noticed that these letters usually fall into a certain pattern: The writer expresses his dissatisfaction with a variety of jobs held in the past, then lists his qualifications in the gunsmithing field. This listing may include graduation from one of the full or part time gunsmith training schools. Next, he hints very strongly that he would be an ideal candidate for the next available apprentice opening in my shop or "a shop in your area." And finally, the letter ends on a rather sour note, something like: "If I had fifty thousand dollars to capitalize my own business, I'd open a shop tomorrow."

If any of this sounds familiar, read on; there is a route you can take that won't require heavy capital outlay, and the results are immediate.

First, convince yourself, that any accomplishment requires some degree of personal sacrifice. Take inventory of all of your abilities, tools, cash on hand and negotiable assets, such as the modest gun collection in the bottom dresser drawer. Do you want to be a pistolsmith, or a gun collector? If the former, go to the next gun show, sell what you can and trade the rest for gunsmithing tools. Then complete your library. "Pistolsmithing" by George C. Nonte and "Pistolsmithing" by Jack Mitchell, and whatever other titles concern themselves with your chosen area of gunsmithing are musts.

A Federal Firearms License is essential before you even turn a screw on a firearm that belongs to somebody else. A good FFL Application kit with all basic questions answered and forms illustrated is \$4 from Metro, Box 2161-AH, Boulder, CO 80306. You will need a State tax number and a local business license before the FFL is issued to you. If your shop is to be in your home, it must have an outside access door and be separated, in some manner, from the dwelling portion of the residence.

Your work bench must be sturdy, provide ample working space and have as large a vise as you can afford mounted in a convenient location. Pegboard makes an excellent storage solution for tools and cutters, etc. Be certain to get tempered pegboard with the small holes, and hooks with a second mount peg, since most complaints on pegboard mounting of tools re-

late to the hook coming loose with the tool.

Brownell's catalog, Gil Hebard's catalog, Ralph Walker's giant catalog and any others you can obtain will be valuable in the future for selecting tools, parts, etc.

Then consider the large ticket items; machine tools. I have a low budget solution to this usually expensive problem; I'll talk about that in just a moment. But, first, just to assure you that this is not all theoretical verbiage, let me relate my own recent experiences.

I had a visitor to my shop about a month ago. He stepped through the door, looked at the machinery and began the now familiar theme: "If I had all of this machinery, my shop wouldn't be treading water and sinking." The only machine tool in his shop was the small Unimat lathe. He continued to catalog his woes. I asked him if he had ever heard the old Irish saying, "I cried because I had no shoes; then I saw a man who had no feet." A good many readers, I'm sure, would love to be as well equipped as he was. This happened on a Friday evening. After a friendly cup of "tea and sympathy" my visitor left.

On Sunday, I called him. "Have you ever considered taking in a partner?" I asked. After a long pause, he replied that he had, but the right person had not arrived on the scene. "What about me?" I asked him. Again that long, long pause. "What did you say?" he asked. So, to cut a long story short, we signed a partnership agreement and I set about furnishing the shop with the necessary tools and parts for resale.

Let me explain that I have a modestly successful one man shop and I needed another business like a swimmer needs a large Danforth anchor. Mostly, I liked the man and I needed to research this column on starting a Pistolsmithing business on a thin shoestring.

At the last gun show I sold some of my collection and virtually everything I could find around the house or the shop that I could turn into cash. It's amazing how easy it is to sell used sights, pistol and revolver parts taken from bottom drawers, and duplicate books and manuals.

The following week, using the proceeds, I bought a drill press and a grinder. The grinder was used, bought at a flea mart, the drill press was an import that happened to be on sale at a reduced price. I had a milling machine in storage, and this was

Handgun Hunters Have Nothing To Hide...

mounted on a bench we hurriedly erected in the back room, leaving space for a lathe. I bought a used 10" Logan lathe.

If I hadn't happened to have an extra mill, I would have bought one used. The local papers are full of large mills and lathes for sale at reasonable cost, but there are virtually no small machines available. I have bought several machine tools, major portions of lathes and many small components from a used machine shop equipment dealer in the East and had them crated and shipped to me with good final results. Some only required a thorough cleaning and oiling, others needed some repair and reconditioning. David D. Sobel, 93 Garry Rd., Closter, NJ 07124, (201) 768-1084, usually has 10" and 11" Logan lathes, 10" and 12" Atlas lathes in inventory, as well as an occasional Atlas or other small bench milling machine and sometimes 7" shapers and drill presses, grinders, etc. They will not be pretty, but will, with much work and perspiration, become useable machine tools. If you have no idea of how to recondition a lathe, you can buy a book on the subject, "Machine Tool Reconditioning" by E. F. Connelly, from Lindsay's Technical Books, PO Box 12, Bradley, IL 60915-0012. Send \$1 for his catalog, which includes books on how to run a lathe, mill, shaper, machine shop, etc.

An excellent source of chucks, tool bits and other small shop supplies is Campbell Tools, 2100 V Selma Rd., Springfield, OH 45505. Catalog is \$2.

There are many other sources of supply; these are mine, so they come to mind first.

Many local businesses discard show cases, display racks and other display items, such as pegboard and hooks. Often, if an item is not exactly what you can use, it can be traded to somebody for an item you can use. A small sign offering to trade part of the cost of a pistolsmithing job for tools will sometimes work wonders. Recently, we obtained a torch, tanks and regulator in just that way. And several small signs offering your services, placed in local shops that sell pistols but who have no pistolsmith will turn up business. You might even work out an agreement with the manager to handle all of his potential repair or modification work for a fee or percentage, on referral.

Another lucrative area, believe it or not, is cleaning handguns. A good supply of rods, solvents, oils and greases, brushes and patches of every size will be your total outlay. A really thorough cleaning often turns up broken or worn parts that mean another ticket added to the first. Customers appreciate this conscientious attention to details; they may never notice a potential source of stoppage or personal danger.

Next time you find yourself crying because you don't have a lathe, open that bottom dresser drawer and ask yourself whether you want the P-38 and Nambu more than you want the lathe. I've found that to be an excellent way to clean out a dresser drawer.



Until now, warmed-over concealment rigs were all handgun hunters had to choose from. But, it takes more than just an oversized holster to meet the demands of handgun hunting. That's why we designed the Buffalo Bandolera. We put practical comfort in and took the nagging problems out. The Bandolera reflects the size and bulk of heavy revolvers. An open holster design eliminates hammer catching straps, keeps game-scaring motion to a minimum. Also, there's no need for belt tie downs... perfect when wearing heavy outdoor clothing.

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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

BIG BLAST FOR THE .357—A FAVORITE PIN LOAD—PLUS MORE FROM READERS

We're pushing up on half a century since Phil Sharpe and Doug Wesson got together and begat an elongated version of the .38 Special. They called their lean baby the .357 Magnum and began establishing convincing evidence of its superior performance.

But little did they realize they had started a new age in the plunge toward ever greater power for handguns.

The idea of a revolver that would discharge a 158-grain bullet at a dizzying 1510 fps and amass nearly 800 foot pounds of kinetic energy created a sensation that was heard throughout the realm of handgunners, a sensation that kept on ringing even after we learned that the advertised 1510 had been milked out of a lengthy test barrel that included no flash gap. We could, with our feet planted firmly in reality, accept the idea of having to whittle over 250 fps off the sensational 1510 and still feel

proud to be toting quite a potent handgun.

But the zealous among us weren't content, so, in 1963 gunsmith Keith Davis and I decided to beget something hotter. The result was the .357/44, a .44 Magnum case necked down to accept .357 bullets. Davis did the brainwork; I chanced to toss in a suggestion here and there along the way.

We checked chamber wall thicknesses and overall strength on several revolvers and wound up deciding on the Smith & Wesson Model 27, with 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch barrel, for the original conversion. RCBS came up with our forming and loading dies, and we were ready to begin testing loads and velocities.

Late one evening, a couple of months after Davis's idea had blossomed, we set up a chronograph in his shop and began rattling windows all over the neighborhood.

The first string of five shots to traverse

the screens consisted of 17/2400/CCI 350/158-grain bullet. Readings averaged 1235 fps. We weren't getting standard .357 Magnum velocity; but we'd purposely started with quite a conservative charge. Before that initial session ended, we had worked our way up to 20/2400/CCI 350 behind Remington's 158-grain soft point B22846 and recorded 1483 fps. Muzzle energy was calculated at over 770 foot pounds!

We'd have had it made, then and there, except for the nagging reality of difficult case extraction. The sharp shoulder of the original .357/44 was reshaped to a more gentle slope. The modification cured the extraction problem.

Then the velocity picture brightened with the introduction of Ruger's New Model .357/9mm Blackhawk. A thicker chamber wall and sturdier construction raised the ceiling on loads. Ultimately, 16.5/Blue Dot/CCI 350 lofted the 158-grain bullet to a speed of 1520 fps. If you like lighter bullets at higher speeds, note that a near-maximum charge of 18.5/Blue Dot/CCI 350 launched a 125-grain swaged, half-jacketed bullet at over 1850 fps. And, if you're really into bullet speed, what your expectations over a 90-grain Sierra .355" JHP at over 2180 fps! This was achieved with 14.5 grains of Unique from a 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch barrel, as were all the Ruger loads I've mentioned.

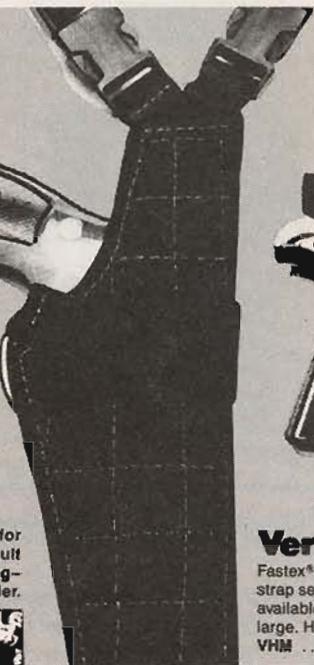
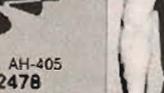
The Bain & Davis shop, where all this began, and continues to flourish, is located

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at 559 W. Las Tunas Dr., Dept. AH, San Gabriel California 91775. Get in touch with Red Little, the gunsmith in charge, if you're interested in having a .357 revolver that provides the performance Wesson and Sharpe only thought they'd achieved back in 1937.

Rick Hartman, of Simi Valley, California, sends us this tip: "I have continually told myself to pass along this time-saving idea . . . For guys that must lube their cases, both pistol and rifle, for sizing, no longer must you wipe each one individually. Buy a 15-ounce can of starter fluid (ether) at my auto parts store. Lay your sized and lubed cases out on an old towel, give a good blast of ether and it cuts the lube. Fold over the towel and roll 'em. *Caution, this stuff is liquid dynamite! Don't smoke or use near sparks or flame. Use in well-ventilated areas (driveway).* This is a sure way to clean lube from the brass."

I'll underline what Hartman said about the flammability of ether, and support to the max his recommendation for using the stuff out of doors. He's right, though; it cuts lube from brass cases very effectively.

A while back we published a letter from a reader who'd had trouble keeping his .45 autoloader's Bo Mar rib in place. So, Gary Woodworth, of Davenport, Iowa, came back with a suggestion. "The man who blew his Bo Mar rib off twice should try this: grit-blast the area covered by the rib, grit-blast the bottom of the rib, then apply

double-backed tape, such as is used on a surface grinder table for non-magnetic material. Tighten the *new* screws securely with Loctite. (This method gives 'tooth' to the mating surfaces.) Then go out and blast away!

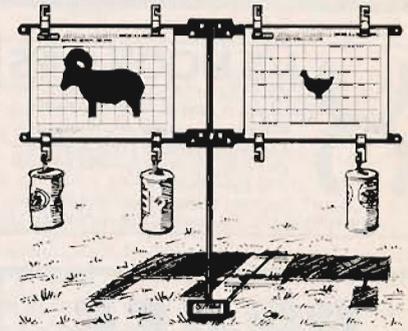
"My IPSC/Bowling Pin gun has fired at least 3,000 heavy loads without any indication of loosening. My pin load is the Hensley & Gibbs 292-grain bullet ahead of 9.0 grains of Blue Dot. Very good medicine on pins."

Woodworth also says he's re-used bullets he's recovered (as does another reader who says he plucks 'em out of snow banks), and that he can tell no real difference in their accuracy performance. Considering the cost of bullets, that's a good tip.

Phil Mahoney, of Lime Rock, Connecticut, picked up on an idea advanced in the November/December 1983 column. He writes: "On the .45 L.C. Max—I just can't see why people keep flogging the same old horse—when we have the .45 Win. Mag. created for Wildey's auto, and which I gather can be utilized in the Ruger Blackhawk .45 Colt (ACP) cylinder by running the chambers out just a bit. The case capacity and strength is there, without going to an oddball case like the Vom Hofe that may be almost unavailable. T/C chambers both a 10-inch and a 14-inch barrel for it and tests compare favorably with the .44 Mag. for both power and accuracy." 



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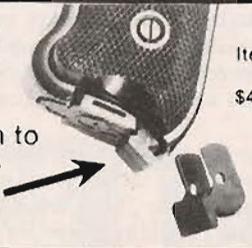
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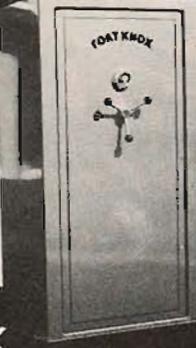
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CONVERSATION WITH A CHAMPION

By Jon Winokur

Editor's note: Gavin Carson was a Combat Master, was twice South African ISU National Champion, and captained South Africa's formidable Springbok Team three times. He was an articulate, thoughtful man with a contagious enthusiasm for the sport of practical pistolcraft. Winokur had the opportunity to question him recently, just before his untimely death, about one of his specialties—assault courses:

Winokur: How do you approach an assault course?

Carson: My approach depends on whether it's a "surprise" or a "published" match. If it's a "surprise" match, there's little more you can do than walk the course through, note the difficulties, and then rely on your general experience and skill. If it's "published" in advance, you can learn a lot from the course description. I generally read it several times, making mental notes about how I'll deal with each stage.

try to shoot all A's as fast as I can. I don't haul out the gun and blast away; rather, I make a concerted effort to shoot A's. That way, in the heat of the action, I might miss the A-zone, but the shot probably will stay somewhere on the target. Because of the nature of the Comstock system of scoring (score minus penalties divided by time), that's exactly what you want: all your shots somewhere on the target.

Another technique that helps me on any type of assault course is to mentally run through the course while I'm waiting to shoot. I watch other shooters. I'm not interested in what they're doing, but rather what I'm going to do. It takes willpower, especially if you're watching one of the better shooters and he does something different from what you're planning to do. The temptation to change your plan and copy what he's doing is strong, but you must resist it. It is absolutely fatal to



Normally, an assault course consists of a number of separate problems linked together, so I try to break the course down into a series of smaller speed-shoots. The usual assault course will have a group of targets, then a bit of running, then more targets, maybe a wall to climb over, another group of targets, and so on. But no matter how complicated the course, I approach it as a series of individual problems.

For example, suppose there are two very close targets, say at seven meters, and one long range target at 25 meters. These are two separate problems: two close-range targets which can be double-tapped, and one long-range target, which cannot.

Then there's the overall problem of assault courses, which is the most difficult aspect for most shooters, myself included: You have to shoot fast and accurately. I just

change your game plan just before you shoot.

Winokur: What if the other shooter has a better "solution?"

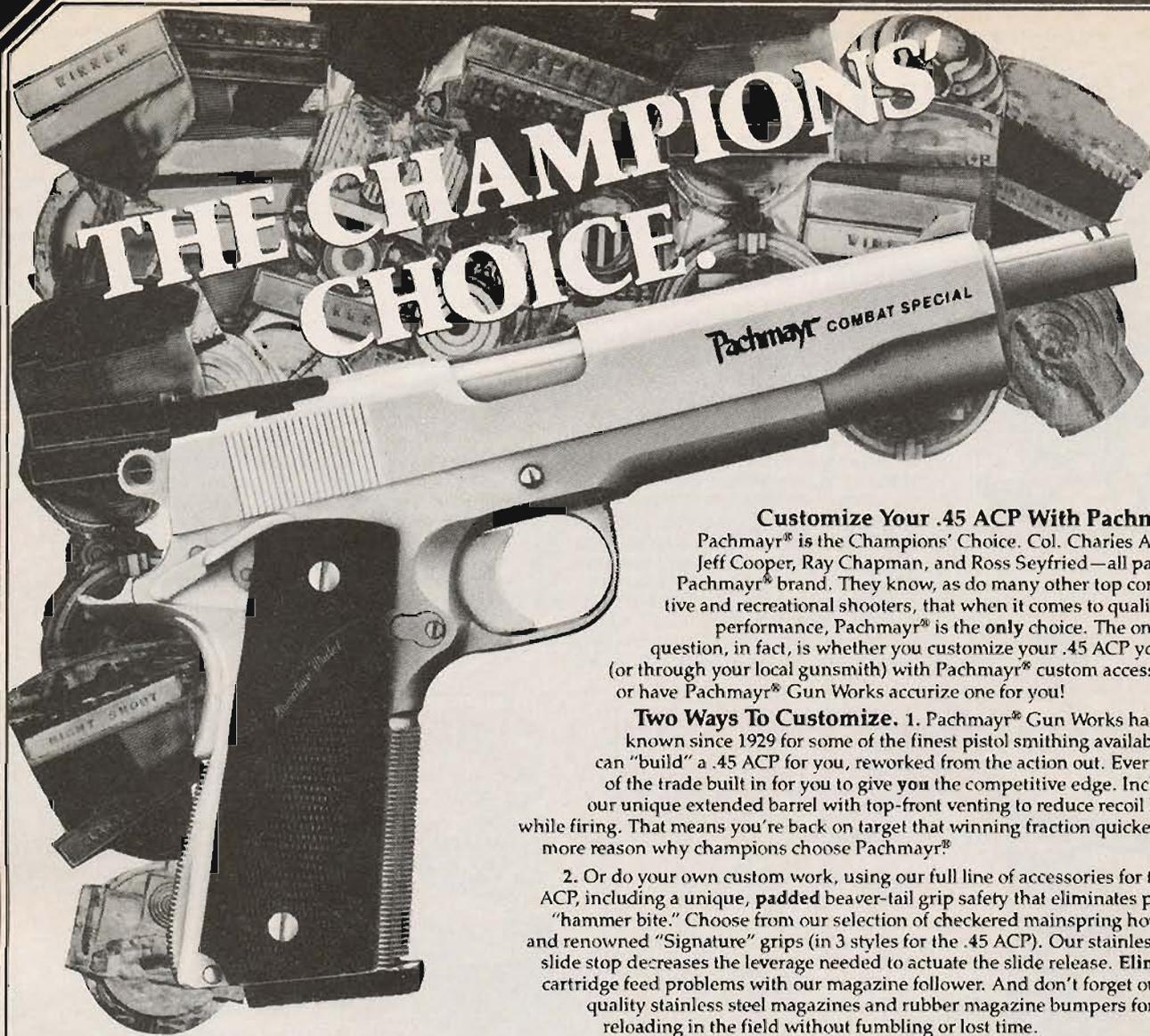
Carson: You can always learn from other shooters, and anything superior should be noted and filed away mentally, for possible future use. But I think it's best to develop your own approach and style. That way you'll avoid the trap of trying to become a carbon copy of someone else, which isn't possible or desirable.

Winokur: How do you go about practicing for an assault course?

Carson: You're probably not going to believe this, but we don't practice them *per se* because the courses the South African designers dream up are extremely difficult to copy. They use electronic targets, which appear and disappear and run

Continued on page 29

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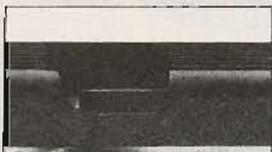
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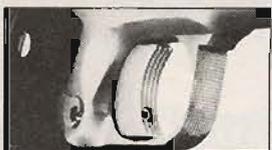
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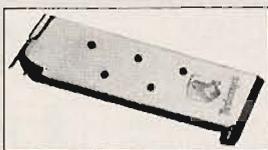
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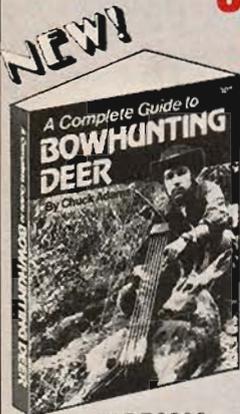
By Tommy L. Bish

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metals. How to make and install a new firing pin in a variety of models. The best method to treat leather holsters and slings. Explains what work can be done safely by an inexperienced gunsmith and what shouldn't be attempted, based on Bish's experience. Bish suggests assembling a kit as a first project, and chooses the Dixie Gun Works' Philadelphia Derringer. "This kit will quickly separate the wood-and-metal butchers from those with natural ability as craftsmen." He lists many other projects for the amateur and displays work done by amateur gunsmiths. All the would-be gunsmith needs to supply is a lot of patience. 256 8½" x 11" pages.

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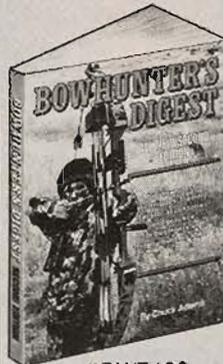
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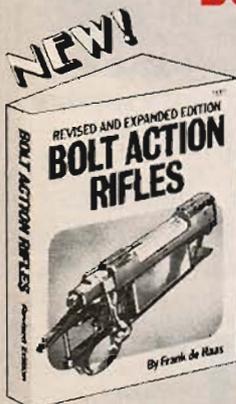
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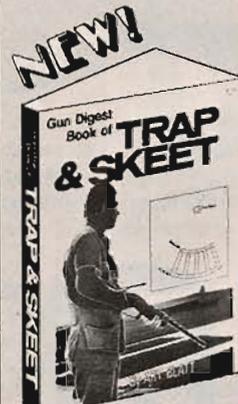
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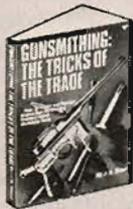
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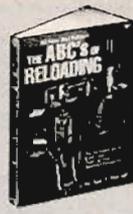
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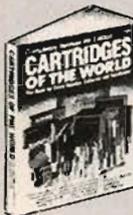
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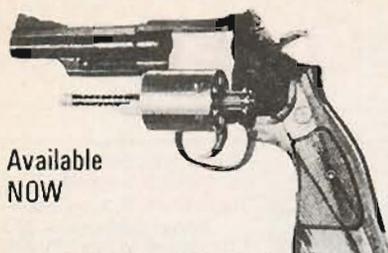
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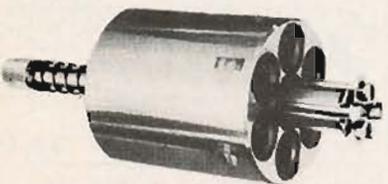
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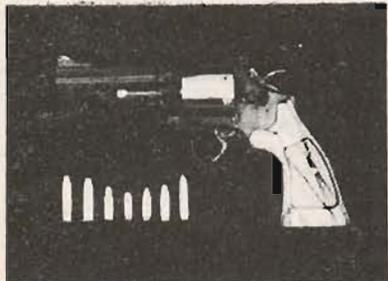
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HANDGUN LEATHER

BOB ARGANBRIGHT

SPEED IS THE NAME OF THE GAME FOR TED BLOCKER AND HIS HOLSTER DESIGNS

Those familiar with the predecessor of "practical" shooting, fast draw, will remember that fashions in fast draw leather changed almost as fast as the speeds obtainable from these rigs. Combat shooting is similar in its specialized leather. I became actively involved in combat shooting in 1976, and saw holsters by Milt Sparks and Gordon Davis become sought after by many top competitors. Lately, more and more of the top shooters are beating a path to the shop door of Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters.

In 1972, Ted Blocker was running his own construction company and spending most of his spare time practicing Single Action Fast Draw. Becoming one of the better shooters in the sport, Ted began experimenting with making his own leather. While largely self taught, Ted did receive some early guidance from Bill Bacon, of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Depart-

If one thing separates Ted from his competitors it is his innovativeness. He is not content to blindly do things the traditional way. A good example is his technique for producing the stippled background on his beautiful scroll carved rigs. Traditionally, this is done by hammering a small background tool into the damp leather and continuing this slow process until the complete area is covered. I was surprised to see Ted produce the stippled background for one of his custom holsters in a matter of a few seconds by using a piece of window screen, impressing it in the wet leather.

With the popularity of the "pancake" style holster, Ted introduced his "Security" model available for most popular auto pistols and revolvers. It is unique in the use of a Teflon lining to reduce blue wear, as well as an adjustable tension device in place of the traditional thumb break retaining strap.



ment, also a part time holster maker. In 1977, Ted founded Western Leather Products and began producing western fast draw rigs. This has expanded from a one man garage operation to a full time custom shop with Ted and three employees.

Recently, a trip to Las Vegas for the World Fast Draw Championship allowed me to go by Ted's shop, located at 4945 Santa Anita, Temple City, CA (mail address: P. O. Box 821, Rosemead, CA 91770). A pleasant seven hours was spent examining Ted's operation and learning the "secrets" of his success.

Ted is justifiably proud of a letter from combat shooting legend Jeff Cooper, indicating his satisfaction with a sample "Security" model holster. Currently, Ted is experimenting with an adjustable belt slot on the "Security" model which allows it to be worn as either a strong side hip holster or a cross draw.

Being a custom shop, rigs are available plain or as fancy as the customer desires. Ted personally does all of the decorative hand carving, and this is especially evident in many of his Hollywood fast draw rigs. I inspected a beautiful full carved, black, sil-

ver mounted double single-action rig used by professional exhibition shooter Thell Reed in many of his shows.

The combat competition leather available from Ted Blocker has changed a great deal over the past three years. Much of this is due to the influence of combat shooting super star Mickey Fowler. He, along with other personnel of International Shootists Inc., uses Ted's leather exclusively for competition.

Ted's latest combat offering, called the "Fowler Speed Master" is designed specifically for crossdraw use; it differs from all others in its unique belt loop design which allows the holster to sit 1½ inches higher than others. This provides a slight edge in speed when drawing from the hands up, or "surrender," position. This new belt loop design attaches to the belt very rigidly, offering a more stable platform to draw from. While Ted recommends the "Fowler Speed Master" with optional standard belt loop for strong side use, I found it to be equally comfortable on either side.

Another example of Ted's design process is in his magazine pouches. Of the open top design, these are offered at any angle desired, in single or double versions. The Ted Blocker pouch uses a Teflon-coated flat spring inside the pouch. This works as a friction retainer, and holds the magazine securely, even as the leather stretches with wear.

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Ted recently introduced his own version of a PPC rig. It was used by the LAPD team in winning the team award at the 1983 Bianchi Cup match. The holster is a steel lined, open-front version with adjustable tension around the cylinder. In addition to being extremely fast, this design allows the use of any sighting system, including scopes and the popular Aimpoint. Included is a double speed loader pouch different from most. Ted's version incorporates a projecting spring at the back lip which retains the loaded speed loader yet allowing it to be easily drawn.

Both the PPC and the combat rigs come with what many think is the best belt in the industry. Full contour cut so as to lay smoothly across the shooters back, it is double stitched around the edges and is heavier than any other 1 1/4 inch belt I have examined. The brass buckle set, originated by Andy Anderson, are hand made by Ted.

What can we expect from Ted in the future? He showed me a molding press, so we might expect to see a line of fully molded hip holsters. It is possible that the future holds a Blocker shoulder holster.

Ted is currently developing a police duty rig based on his PPC holster, with FBI personnel from the L.A. office showing interest. The new duty rig will include a speed loader pouch which will solve the problem of security and speed. As Ted pointed out, the full flap pouches tend to take a "set" and the flaps want to stay closed. With Ted's pouch, the flap will be spring loaded so as to stay open once it is unsnapped.

Ted is planning on installing a Fast Draw timer in his shop. He feels Blocker holsters will show a definite speed advantage. As Ted said, "If a police officer cannot draw faster out of one of my holsters, why should he buy one?"

While the Fowler Speed Master is well excepted, Ted isn't completely satisfied with it. A refined version will have no leather at the root of the trigger guard, and Ted is experimenting with bonding agents which permit him to add a Teflon lining.

Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters offers top design, quality materials, professional craftsmanship and good looks in their handgun leather. What more can one ask? 

SILUETAS

Continued from page 9

Competitor qualification requirements for championship matches were reduced by merely requiring that the competitor be classified, dropping the existing four or five match minimum.

Shootoff targets were standardized for all sanctioned matches with the requirement that they must be visible, steel silhouette-shaped targets—chickens, javalina, turkeys, rams, placed at any distance up to 200 meters.

After much discussion, prompted by several incidents of shooters using more pistol than they could control, it was decided that the existing muzzle control rule (i.e. don't point the muzzle at anybody—

before or after firing—whether self, competitor or spectator, under pain of disqualification) was explicit and appropriate.

Another change for the new year, was the formal acceptance of the unlimited 22LR class made previously by the entire membership via a referendum. The class had been shot on a trial basis in 1983 under a tentative set of rules. In formalizing the class the members set the criteria the same as for the centerfire unlimited guns: 15-inch barrel; iron sights, 15-inch sight radius; and four and a half pound weight limit. To deal with the problem of imported Olympic-class pistols being used in direct competition in the existing production classes with less sophisticated American pistols they also decided that imported pistols would also shoot in unlimited.

The class has already lead Thompson/
Continued from page 9

Center to chamber their Super 14 in 22LR and custom smiths to offer long replacement barrels for the High Standard auto pistols. Another choice for competitors is the replacement barrel/receiver combo's for the Ruger Mark I or II auto's that are now being built by AMT (the Backup and Hardballer guys). A 10-inch, adjustable-sighted bull-barreled version would be just right. Remember though, whatever you do, don't cut up a bolt action rimfire rifle to build a pistol as this is a Federal no-no.

(I currently have a Super 14 and an AMT here for testing and will be reporting on them next issue, but I'll tell you this much now—these things are FUN.)

The meeting ended with the announcement that the 1984 Internationals will be held August 4-12 in Idaho Falls. Write headquarters (P.O. Box 1609, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401; 208-524-0880) for info and entries, and remember it's first come, first served.

Winning Pistols

Once a year, Felix D'Albor, a dedicated IHMSA member, reports the results of his unofficial tally of what guns are winning in IHMSA competition in the organization's newspaper, *The Silhouette*. The production class is dominated by 7mm TCU Contenders as you would suspect, with the gun taking 3751 first-places in 1983. The .357 Mag. T/C was next with 749 wins and T/C's in .30/30 (696) and .30 Herrett (315)

following. Jim Rock's Merrills broke up the rout, with guns in .30 Merrill, .357 Mag. and 7mm Merrill finishing fifth, seventh and eighth respectively. T/C's in assorted chamberings finished out the rest



Co-match directors, Bert Stringfellow and Walt Brantingham, caught smiling on the last day of the Internationals.

of the top ten.

In revolver, the Ruger Super Blackhawk is far and away the leader, holding down first place with 2343 wins to Dan Wesson's .44 Mag. second place with 668 wins. The new Ruger SRM 357 Maximum landed in third with 375 wins. The 357 Mag. continues to be popular with the Dan Wesson (319), Colt (261), and Ruger (207) guns holding down the next three places, while the Smith & Wesson versions (66) finished ninth. The M29 Smith & Wesson, which was the revolver to have just a few years ago, placed seventh with only 93 wins. The Ruger Redhawk finished a disappointing tenth, with but 59 firsts. (It's brawny enough to stand the strain, but Ruger has yet to offer a long-barreled, target-sighted version of this large framed DA. This, combined with the difficulty of getting an acceptably light trigger pull on the gun has left it far behind the big DW. I find this odd, as Ruger has shown quite an interest in the silhouette market lately bringing out a new 10½ inch Super and of course the SRM. Their reliance on the single-actions to carry the Ruger banner is odd, as the big double-actions are easier to shoot accurately, and in time they will come to dominate the winners circle—look at Dan Wesson's sweep of this year's International class if you don't believe me.) The DW .357 Super Mag is still too new to show much; look out next year though.



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HANDGUNNER PROFILE

ELGIN GATES

The growth of handgun metallic silhouette shooting is the result of the energy and dedication of one intense man from Idaho

By Phil Briggs

One of the things that came out of that first match was the realization that magnum handguns had come up against a worthy opponent." Elgin paused, reflecting back on that first handgun silhouette match held a little over eight years ago. "So here we had an organized game for big bore, magnum handguns. This spawned a great deal of development in the sport."

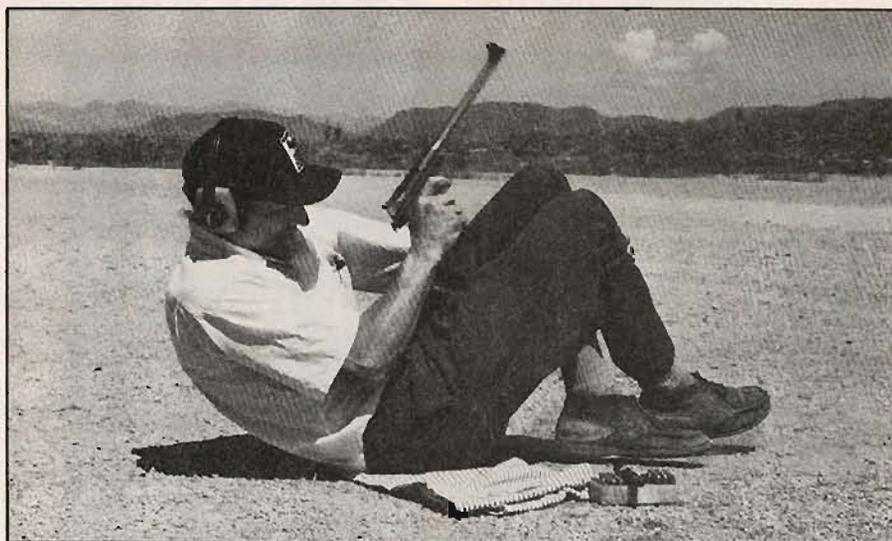
With that minor understatement, Elgin went on to describe the early years of the sport and his involvement. I plied Elgin with a few questions, but mostly listened and took notes as he sketched out a career as a world champion sportsman that spans 35 years.

Unless you've spent the last few years in a cave in Montana you've no doubt heard of Elgin Gates, The International Hand-

"I've done some big game hunting around the world," he observed, "38 safaris to Africa and 14 to Asia and other parts of the world—that was during the period 1946 to 1974."

Although modest about it, Elgin's greatest renown is probably that achieved as a big-game hunter. In 1960 he was awarded the Weatherby Trophy, which is the Oscar of the hunting world. He has hunted all of the continents of the world, and pioneered and opened up new hunting areas in several far away places. Elgin has 121 heads in Rowland Ward's record book; together with 43 record specimens from Asia and others from North America he has a hundred more in other major record books.

Elgin has had two books published, *Trophy Hunter in Asia* and *Metallic Silhouette*



gun Metallic Silhouette Assn., and handgun silhouette shooting. Elgin's been involved in the sport since that first match and intertwined in IHMSA since its formation at the second national match, first as Executive Director and for the last few years as President.

I've known Elgin personally since 1977 when he came to Phoenix to help run and shoot in one of the first local matches. But I'd known of him since the mid-1960s when, as a novice hunter and shooter, I began to read of his big game hunting exploits in Africa, Asia and North America. Not only was he a world renowned trophy hunter by then, he was also an excellent story teller.

Shooting.

"I've written about 70 odd articles on hunting and guns for *True* magazine, *Field & Stream*, *Outdoor Life*, *Sports Afield*, and most all of the gun magazines at one time or another," he recollected.

"After getting into the job as President of IHMSA, I've had to let my writing set on the shelf. I've several books in process—or I did have six years ago—companion volumes called *Trophy Hunter in Asia*, *Trophy Hunter in Africa* and *Trophy Hunter in North America*. I've also done a reasonable amount of research and study on immigrant crossings of America for a book I've titled, *Immigrant Desert Trails*. It follows

Continued on page 50

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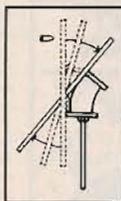
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MICKEY FOWLER

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Q: I am having Bo-Mar adjustable sights installed on my Government model .45 auto.

What front sight width do you recommend and how wide should the rear notch in the rear sight be? Should the front sight be the ramped design or should it be undercut?

A.: For a low Bo-Mar sight installation on a five inch slide pistol, I like the front sight to be .120" wide and the rear notch to be .110". On a pistol with a one inch longer sight radius, like a pin gun, six inch long slide or with a compensator, I like the front sight to be .130" and the rear notch to be .115". These dimensions work best for me. Some top shooters like to open up the rear notch a bit to get more light showing on each side of the front blade. The theory being that they are able to pick up the sight picture faster. If your pistol is to be used for competition only, then have the front sight slightly undercut. Don't round the "ears" or top outer edges of your rear sight. Leave them square. This will give you the sharpest sight picture possible. By leaving the top outer edges of your rear sight square you can quickly see if you are canting the pistol as you fire. "Canting" means not having your sight picture lined up vertically with the target. This will cause your bullets to group off-center as distances increase. If you plan on using your pistol for self defense, I would choose the ramp front sight design and radius the outside top edges of the rear sight blade. This will keep the sights from snagging on clothing when drawing from concealment.

Q: How do I zero my pistol for practical shooting? Do you prefer fixed or adjustable sights?

A.: You can base your choice of fixed or adjustable sights on the following: You will need adjustables if you plan on shooting a number of different loads, especially bullet weights. I like the Bo-Mar adjustable with its wide blade. It is very durable and gives a clear, precise sight picture. Load flexibility and sight picture are the only advantage I see with adjustable sights. If you confine your shooting to just one load, fixed sights are a good choice. If properly installed, they are more durable than adjustables. Fixed sights are now available with a rear blade which gives a sight picture almost identical to the Bo-

Mar adjustables. These sights mount in the standard dovetail and are made so the blade is back over the rear of the slide, giving you maximum sight radius. I like the models made by Armond Swenson, Bill Wilson and Jim Boland. If you are on a tight budget, fixed sights, installed, are about one third the price of adjustable sight installations.

Sight in your pistol from the prone position or off a bench, don't sight in from the standing position. You must be shooting consistent groups to do the job correctly. If you have sandbags, use them under the frame to steady your aim. Always zero with the sights in the shade. If you don't zero with your sights in the shade, the position of the sun will affect the bullets' point of impact, especially at 50 yards or more. I use a standard NRA type 25 yard slow fire bullseye target. Use a six o'clock hold on the bottom of the black. I like to leave a small line of white showing on top of my front sight. It looks about the thickness of a hair below the black bull. Make sure your pistol isn't canted to the right or left, this will cause your shot to be off center and not give a true indication of where your gun is grouping. Fire a six-shot group, take your time and be consistent. Check the target and make the necessary adjustments. My .45 autos are sighted in to shoot about 1 1/2 inches high at 25 yards. This puts my bullet on point of aim at 50 yards. Once you have your bullets printing where you want, shoot at least four more six-shot groups and check for consistency. When sighting in a pistol with a fixed sight be sure you are using the load you settled on. To adjust fixed sights you will need a file, vise, brass punch and hammer. The rear sight is adjustable right or left by drifting it with the punch and hammer. Move the rear sight in the direction you wish the group to move. The front sight must be filed to adjust for elevation. If you are not experienced in using a file, I would recommend you shoot some groups then go back to the gunsmith who installed the front sight if elevation adjustments need to be made. Bring the target with you so the gunsmith knows how much to file off the front sight. If you do the job yourself, be careful not to remove much metal before rechecking your groups.



Ex-colleague commends Harry Reeves for award

It's an amazing fact to many of this nation's most dedicated handgun shooters that the one man who holds more records and has represented the United States in International Olympic competition six times has not received the *Outstanding American Handgunner Award*.

His shooting career is unique in its length of span and honors won. This man rewrote the entire record book. From 1936 through 1955 he compiled an unequalled shooting record, including six National Championships, eight Mid-Winter championships and a berth on six Olympic or World Championship teams.

In 1940 he broke 2600 a full seven years before anyone else. And in 1950 he registered 2649, a score and feat undreamed of at that time.

His entire adult life has been dedicated to shooting, instructing and fighting for the sport he loves and excels at. No shooter has ever equaled this man's record, and it is doubtful if anyone ever will.

For many years he has served on the NRA's Board of Directors and was the authority always consulted when a problem arose as a shooter, judge, coach or instructor.

He was a U.S. Marine Corps shooting champion and Detroit Police officer, who led his pistol teams to many victories and championships.

Today, Harry Reeves is a retired Detroit Police inspector. At the age of 72, he still labors for the handgun world.

There is no handgun shooter today who can match his record of dedicated service to the shooting fraternity. As a director of the NRA, his judgment has been eagerly sought when questions and events of pistol competition—national or worldwide—were raised.

The OAHA (Outstanding American Handgunner Award) people could at least take a leaf from the book of the Motion Picture Academy and present this man the award, in the name of its foundation, this year.

Of all previous award winners, not one could match this man's long record of dedication to the sport of shooting.

I served with this man in the Marine Corps and on the Detroit Police Department. I've known him for 45 years and no one is more deserving of this honor.

Richard W. Lace
Sanford, North Carolina

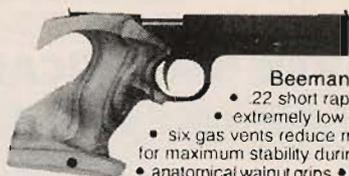
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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

REVOLVER 'PRACTICALLY USELESS' FOR BIG GAME HUNTING IN AFRICA

I've recently returned from a Handgun Hunters International-sponsored African safari.

Six of us hunted with Don Price of Nuanetsi Hunters (P Bag 2008, Mwenzi, Zimbabwe).

We flew into Johannesburg, South Africa and then took a charter flight into Nuanetsi. Had we wanted to, we could have been hunting 10 minutes after touchdown. Don runs a highly efficient outfit with excellent accommodations, food, vehicles and staff.

Generally, we hunted with one professional hunter and three trackers.

A typical day started with a 5 a.m. wake-up. Tea or coffee and cookies or cake were served for a light breakfast; then we left about 5:30 to hunt. It was cool—around 50 degrees F.

If, for example, we were hunting waterbuck, we would go to one of the dry rivers

and the trackers would take over. After finding a track, we would follow it until we lost it or gave up, found the animal wasn't a suitable trophy, or either killed it or missed it.

There are virtually no wounded and lost animals in this part of Africa. Trackers will follow anything hit and you are bound to stay on it until you kill it—even if it takes a couple of days. Normally, even with a bad hit, the animal is found and killed within two to three hours. It's probably useless to tell about the skill of the trackers, because I doubt if you would believe it without experiencing it.

Frankly, I've never believed the tales of how tough African animals are. I've always figured that animals of equal size would generally be equally strong and tough. Pound for pound, however, African animals are a lot tougher to put down than game found in the states.

CARTRIDGES GET WORKOUT

Certainly, one safari doesn't make me or anyone else an expert. It does, however, put me 38 animals in experience ahead of where I was before the safari got underway, plus what I observed other handgunners shoot.

We gave the .375 JDJ, .45-70, .358 JDJ, .44 Magnum and .41 Avenger a good workout.

For African hunting, any revolver is practically useless unless you want to wait at waterholes and ambush whatever comes in with close-range shots, or spend a lot of time in unsuccessful stalks. A scoped revolver, as a primary arm, would be far more effective than iron sights. Just seeing animals in deep shadows through heavy brush is a problem.

Extensive testing of various .44 caliber bullets showed my 320-grain hard-cast bullet to be far superior to anything else we tried—including FMJ .44s. Obviously, a 200-grain hollowpoint bullet would do better on a 60-pound impala than a 320-grain hard bullet, but if you need to shoot something that weighs a ton, and you have a 200-grain hollowpoint in the cylinder you're up that proverbial creek without a paddle. The hard-cast 320-grain bullet will kill that 60-pound impala as sure as the sun will set tonight.

The .41 Avenger, with a 185-grain cast bullet at 1,385 fps velocity penetrates fairly

Continued on page 28

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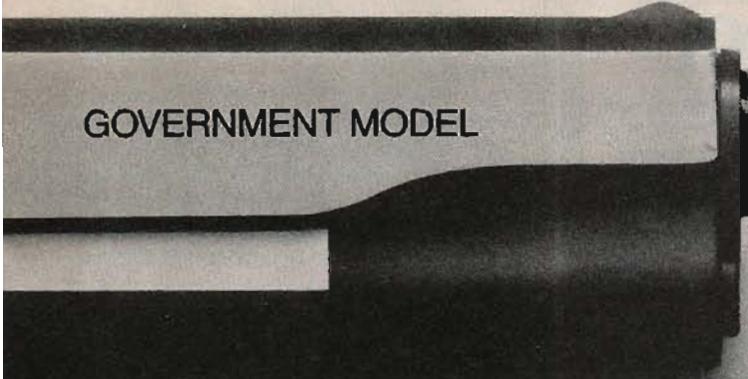
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well, and it will take 200-300 pound animals under perfect conditions. Perfect conditions, however, seldom—if ever—occur.

A scoped T/C .44 would do considerably better than any revolver, but it just isn't enough gun for the hunting we encountered, although I'll probably take one on my next trip, along with a 6.5mm JDJ for some of the little guys. I'll take them simply to experiment, not because they are the "right" guns.

EXCELLENT PENETRATION

I think a "back up" gun, when hunting dangerous game, is a good idea—although not a necessity. A professional hunter with a .458 is going to shoot fast if he sees a potentially dangerous situation occur.

The .358 JDJ did well on animals up to zebra-size, but would have done better with tougher 250-grain bullets. The .375 is far superior on the big guys.

The .375 JDJ and .45-70 were the work-horses. They took everything, including hippos, giraffes and Cape buffalos. With one rare exception, if the shot was well placed, they did well. Penetration of the 270-grain soft point bullet, Hornady .375 full metal jacket bullet (1,900+ fps) and 500-grain .458 (1,400+ fps) couldn't be faulted. Penetration will run four to six feet, unless exceptionally large bones—such as both shoulders and spine—of large animals are hit.

I disintegrated a couple of 400-grain Speer soft points on large bones at 1,650 fps. When large bones weren't hit, the 400-grain bullet did very well; it would be my first choice on anything elk-size or smaller, in the .45-70.

I took a 12½ inch barreled .45-70 SSK T/C with a 2X Leupold, and a 12½ inch barreled .375 JDJ SSK T/C with a 4X Leupold. I'll do the same thing again, even though I wished for the 4X on several occasions when I had the 2X.

Most of my shooting was done between 80 and 130 yards with about half a dozen shots close to 200 yards. You usually shoot offhand within about three seconds of sighting an animal, and must be prepared to shoot both walking and running animals from any angle. I found that kneeling on one knee to get under the brush was a useful and steady position.

As in any hunting, I can't overemphasize the importance of placing the first shot—properly. The heart shot is by far the best. It's much easier than a spine shot. Lung shots on some African animals aren't too good. I put a 400-grain Speer .45-70 through the center of a wildebeeste's lungs at about 100 yards. A mile later, he was still on his feet. That's just one example of what I mean by Africa's *tough* game!

For information on Handgun Hunters International (annual membership is \$15), write POB 375 MAG, Dept. AH, Bloomingdale, OH 43910.



GAVIN CARSON

Continued from page 14

away. So we just look over the course and find the piece which is going to cause the most trouble. It's usually easy to identify, and we set up *that piece only*.

The most important single movement to practice is the actual shooting position. The best assault course shooter I've ever seen is Jimmy von Sorgenfrei, the 1979 IPSC World Champion. Jimmy is blessed with almost perfect natural balance, so that when he arrives at a barricade, or comes off an obstacle, he lands balanced and ready to shoot. Most shooters stagger around, catch their balance, and *then* start to shoot. Jimmy lands in the shooting position ready to go.

Since most of us don't have that natural ability, we must practice jumping and landing on a firm, solid footing. I recommend practicing the run from station to station. Some people can run flat out, come to a screeching halt, and still make good shots. Others shouldn't try it. They should slow down as they approach the shooting station. They might think they're losing time by slowing down, but they're really gaining time because they're more in control. Smoothness is what does it.

Winokur: What are some of the most common assault course mistakes?

Carson: A lot of shooters lose valuable time by hanging around too long after shooting a stage. It constantly amazes me how many shooters fail to reload while they're moving. A static reload is going to cost you two seconds. like it or not.

I've also observed that the average shooter will engage the farthest target first. I think it's better to shoot the *closest* target first. It allows you to settle yourself after the run from the previous shooting station, and it gives you confidence because you can *see* your hits on the target.

Finally, too many shooters ruin a good run by missing the stop plate. They don't take that extra second to get a good sight picture and squeeze the trigger. Most assault courses are designed so that you only have one or two shots left for the stop plate, so a miss can be very demoralizing. It puts so much pressure on the second shot that you wind up taking *three* seconds.

Winokur: On the subject of "match pressure," you've said that conquering it is the key to winning.

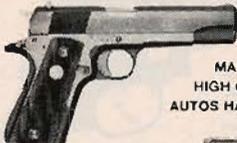
Carson: The difference between an ordinary shooter and a champion is how he handles match nerves. In my opinion, shooting is 15 percent ability and 85 percent mental control. Almost anyone can master the mechanics.

Winokur: As you have so ably demonstrated in many a pistol match, Gavin. Thanks for sharing your knowledge with *Handgunner* readers.

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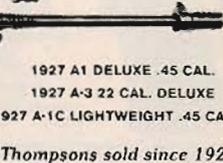
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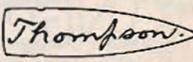


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SPEAK OUT

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER WELCOMES letters to the editor of no more than 350 words. They must include the writer's full name and address and be typewritten. Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity or space. Editor.

Top-break revolvers good for 'southpaws'

Recently, I have been reading some interesting articles about the top-break revolver. I am 60 years old and have owned some real good top-break revolvers, and find that they have advantages over the swing-out cylinder.

As I am left-handed, the top-break is the only revolver that has no disadvantages for us "southpaw" shooters. I feel sure the top-break can be made strong enough for any sensible load, and I would like to see more of them on the market. I especially like the Webley design. W.F. Martin
Kenova, West Virginia

Cop dislikes J. D. Jones and hunting with handgun

I'm getting tired of J. D. Jones killing big game for what appears to be "sport hunting."

As a law enforcement officer I carry a .357 and a .45 Auto for protection only. I feel every citizen should have this right; however, to kill for sport only is a real shame. I can understand if there are mitigating circumstances, such as disease.

I would like to see Mr. Jones hung upsidedown and a lion holding a file by his teeth and claws.

You can print this, but I doubt you will. You can use my name.

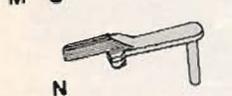
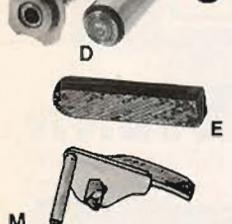
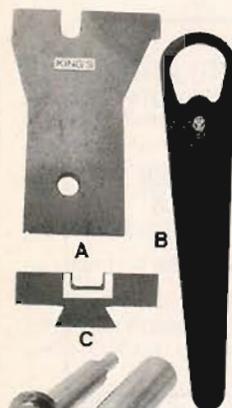
George J. Foster
Hazlet, New Jersey

Sig Sauer owner praises Interarms for its service

On July 7, 1983 I purchased a Sig Sauer P220 .45 ACP double-action auto. At the range, the pistol shot very low. I contacted the area representative for Interarms, and he put me in touch with Richard Alexander of Interarms in Virginia.

By phone, I described my problem. A few days later I received in the mail a new rear sight, *no charge*. Two weeks later, I broke the right grip panel. Another call to Interarms, and a new grip panel by return mail, *no charge*.

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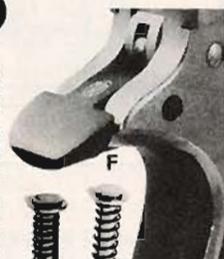


- A. King's Arsenal Type Staking Tool for King's, Micro, Bomar front sights 18.95
- B. King's Bushing Wrench 3.00
- C. King's White Outline Blade will fit Ruger, Colt, Micro sights 5.50
- D. King's Recoil Buffer & Heavy Duty Plug Set for Colt 45 Auto; 416 stainless steel, RC 30-35 (specify Government or Commander) 26.50
- E. Magazine Base Pad 1.25
- F. King's Wide Combat Grip Safety—no alteration to frame (specify Gov't or Commander) 26.00
- G. King's Recoil Spring Guides; 416 stainless steel, ground, heat treated finish (specify Government or Commander) 26.00
- H. King's Trigger Boot for Colt 45 Auto, acts as stop, Gold Cup Width 12.50
- I. King's Target Bushing (blued), 45, 38, 9mm 9.95
- J. King's N.M. Bushing; 416 stainless steel RC30-35; 45, 38, 9mm 16.50
- K. King-Tappan Combat Sight, the famous original for Colt 45 Auto Set 29.95
- L. King Hard Ball Sight Set 20.00
- King's Hard Ball w/white Outline Set 23.00
- M. King's Combat Speed Safety 19.00
- N. King's Extended Slide Stop 30.00
- O. King's Recoil Compensator—with National Match Bushing, machined from one piece .416 stainless RC30-35 for 45 Autos. Must be fitted 34.00
- P. Kit will do 50/60 inserts, glass mixing bowls, dropper, and detailed instructions included 13.50
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To date, I have fired more than 2,000 factory and reloaded rounds through this pistol; with no malfunctions of any kind. Its accuracy is comparable to my combat customized Colt Gold Cup .45 auto. The P220 shows no wear on its anodized alloy frame, and is now my #1 duty gun.

Ray L. Robinson
Santa Ana, California

French reader extols .32 S&W Long revolver

Here's my subscription renewal—a great magazine!

I was very surprised to read in Jerry Rakusan's *Industry Insider* column about the hybrid Manurhin-Ruger revolver ("MR Spécial Police") being a collector's item. We have a MR73 barrel and cylinder mounted on a Ruger frame; 11,000 were made for the French police as their standard weapon.

The reasons for this are simple: money.

In 1971, the *Service d'études techniques de la Police Nationale*, headed by master shooter Valéry Carmona, began a study with Manurhin plants for an ambitious program of producing a dual purpose (police-sporting) .357 Magnum revolver.

The first prototype was issued in 1973, the then-named MR73.

It was the first French-made big bore revolver since the *Modèle 1892* (often wrongly referred to as the "Label revolver" by some American gunwriters).

The MR73s were given to some special units, such as motorcyclists, who were unable to operate their single-action autos while riding, and marketed (in small quantities) to shooters in six barrel lengths, from 2½-inch to 8-inch.

The MR73 was required to shoot 9mm Luger ammo. The first shooters to use MR73 in ISU matches had to face the problems of firing .38 Special WC ammo in its .354 inch bore.

This year, the gun was successfully developed for sporting use (such as ISU matches, which are well developed in Europe). Manurhin is offering two fine single-action revolvers: the MR38 match in .38 Special caliber, and the MR32 Match, for .32 S&W Long WC only.

The latter may be considered the finest revolver available today in the Western world to fire ISU matches (a French shooter won a bronze medal

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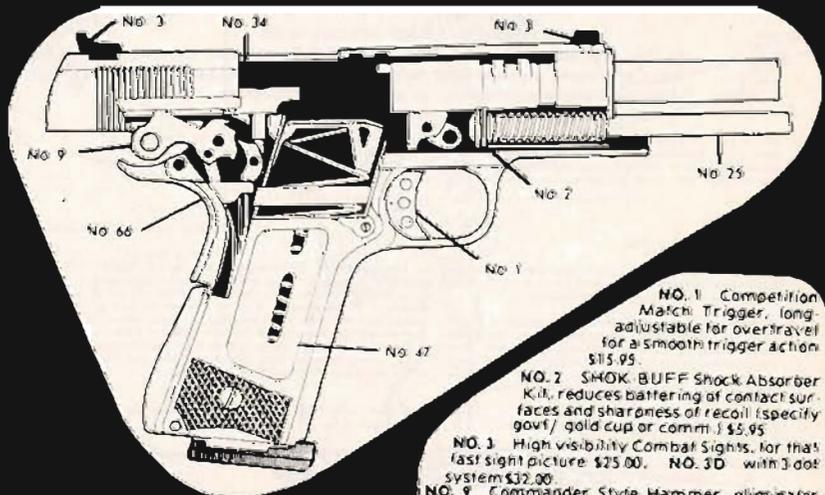
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(3) All entries must be received by March 25, 1984.

(4) Firearms will be transferred in accordance with Federal, State and Local laws. Prizes will be shipped to a Federal Firearms License holder within the winner's State and within reasonable driving distance. Transfer fees will be paid by Crown City Arms. It will be the responsibility of the winner to meet prevailing requirements of firearm transfer. In the event a winner or his representative fails to fulfill legal requirements, prizes revert to Crown City Arms. Local and State sales taxes, if any, are to be paid by the recipient.

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in the Caracas World Championships with this gun).

Manurhin is also marketing two long-barreled MRs—a 9-incher for long distance shooting (a typically British activity) and a 10-incher for IHMSA matches, for which a special .357 ram-busting cartridge was developed.

For police use, officials finally realized that to have every cop armed with such a costly weapon as the MR73 would be a luxury French police couldn't afford. (like having all California cops using Pythons).

The *Service d'études techniques de la Police Nationale* works with Sturm, Ruger & Co. (GIGN and other French SWAT teams have Mini-14s, .44 Magnum carbines and even scoped, bipod-fitted Redhawks!)

The decision was naturally taken to produce the hybrid gun Mr. Rakusan wrote about—the MR Spécial Police.

Thierry Valat
Kinésithérapeute
35, Rue de Nantes—56450 Theix
France

Service pistol issue: 'Back America'—100%

In reference to your article in the May/June issue of the *American Handgunner* on the service pistol controversy, we feel the issue is: what American company makes the pistol?

With our economy in such turmoil and unemployment on the rise, our military should be helping to employ Americans. Just recently, Smith and Wesson laid off 300 workers (actually, more than 500).

Any American company can produce any caliber. Just use American steel and American labor. This is the issue. We are going to write our congressmen about this matter and encourage them to buy American.

We would like to encourage all your readers to write to their congressmen and also urge them to back America—all the way.

Walter J. Briggs
Ronald A. DeMena
Pavillion, New York

Writer offers more info on scarce WWII pistol

I have some additional info on the .45 ACP "Liberator" Pistol (reference one of your recent "Info Quickies"). It was originally called a .45 caliber "Flare Projector" for security reasons. I believe some .45 ACP Flare ammunition was issued

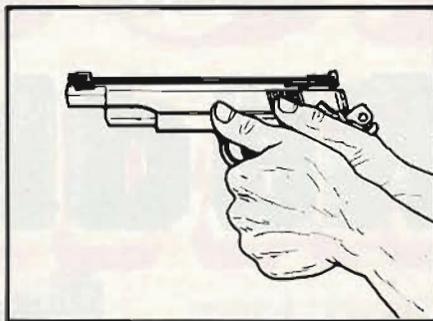
Continued on page 36

MASTER TIPS

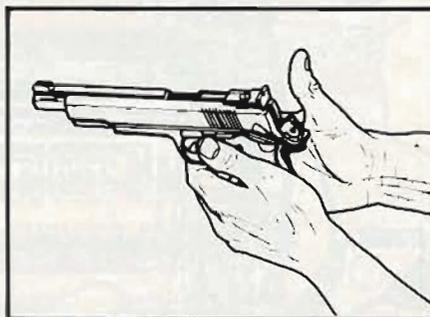
Collected by Jon Winokur

The Switchover

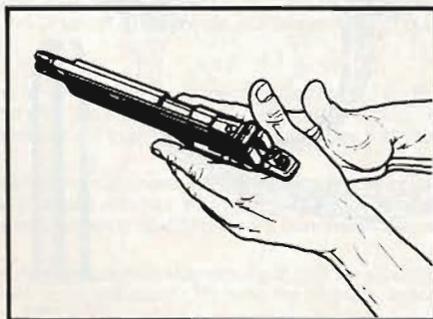
A solid grip is essential in practical shooting, and it's especially important when shooting with the weak hand only. My technique allows a quick, safe switchover and gives maximum control over recoil.



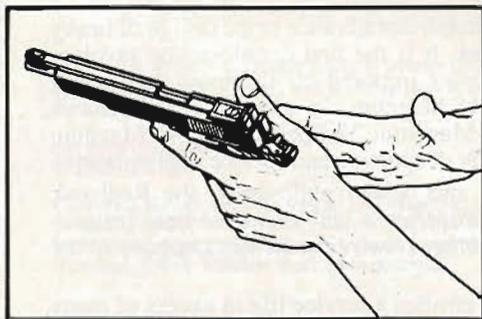
1. From the draw, as soon as the muzzle is pointing safely down range, disengage the safety with the right thumb.



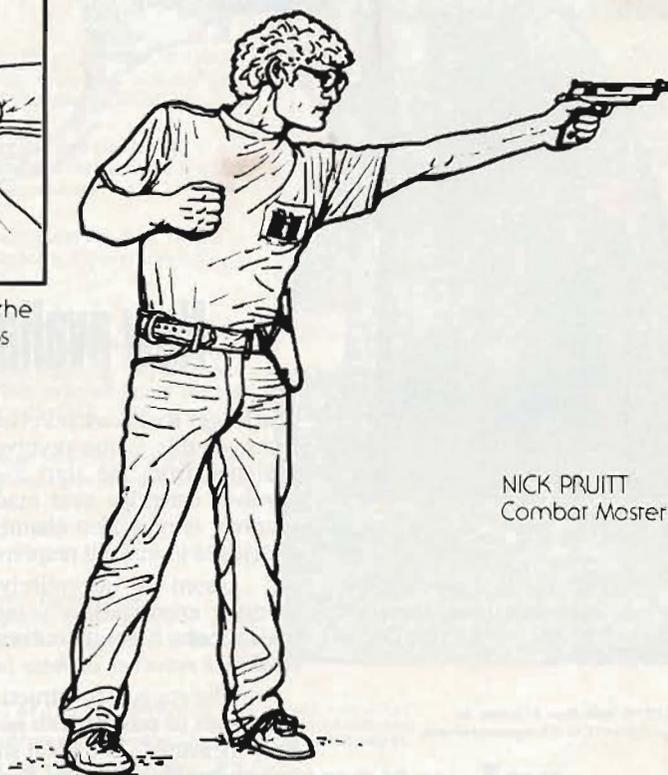
2. Tilt the left palm slightly upward while moving the thumb and trigger finger away from the pistol.



3. "Rock" the gun into the web of the left hand, thumb following thumb around the grip safety.



4. "Wipe it off." That is, draw the right hand sharply to the rear along the plane created by the extended fingers.



NICK PRUITT
Combar Master

5. Elbow points downward, arm and wrist are locked. Keep the left shoulder lower than the right in order to get more weight over the gun and thereby dampen vertical recoil.

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This detailed cross-section of the REDHAWK mechanism shows this massive double-action revolver actual size.

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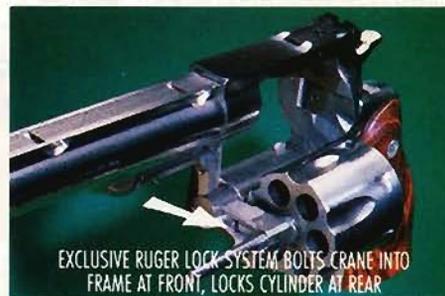
- 1 Heat-treated 416 stainless steel with extra metal in top strap and critical areas around barrel threads.
- 2 Barrel forged with integral rib and ejector housing. Note thick walls of barrel breech and largest diameter threads of any production revolver made ($3/4" \times 20!$)
- 3 Massive cylinder with wall thickness greater by 25% than that of comparable competitive models. Locking notches are offset — not cut into thinnest part of cylinder wall over center of chamber.
- 4 New, patented Ruger Single-Spring Mechanism — hammer and trigger are powered by a single heavy coil spring that provides reliable ignition with a light, controllable double-action trigger pull. Parts linking hammer and trigger transmit spring energy with minimum friction loss.
- 5 Strong solid side-wall frame eliminates need for removable sideplate and contributes to the great strength of the Redhawk revolver. Field stripping for cleaning and maintenance is quick and simple — entire mechanism is readily removed from frame without tools.
- 6 Grip frame contoured to provide full Magnum-style grip for security and comfort, results in better control and less perceived recoil. No need for adapters, spacers, or overhanging grip panels.
- 7 New Front Sight System features interchangeable front sights. Standard steel red insert front sight mounts with spring-loaded plunger and is matched to adjustable steel rear sight with white outline notch. Colored Nylon front sights or gold bead front sight with matching "V" notch rear sight leaf are optional accessories. Scope sight model incorporates patented Ruger Integral Scope Mounting System, with one inch stainless steel scope rings included.
- 8 New, patented Ruger Locking System locks cylinder in firing position by bolting crane directly into frame at front, with a strong pilot bearing at rear of cylinder. No reliance on ejector rod for locking.

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Calibers: .357 Magnum/.38 Special, .41 Magnum, and .44 Magnum/.44 Special; Barrel Lengths: $7\frac{1}{2}"$, $5\frac{1}{2}"$; Overall Length ($7\frac{1}{2}"$ Bbl.): 13"; Weight ($7\frac{1}{2}"$ Bbl.): approx. $3\frac{1}{2}$ Lbs.; Sight Radius ($7\frac{1}{2}"$ Bbl.): $9\frac{1}{2}"$; Scope Sight Model: Equipped with Ruger Integral Scope Mounting System, with one inch stainless steel scope rings furnished; Finish: Stainless Steel, satin polished.



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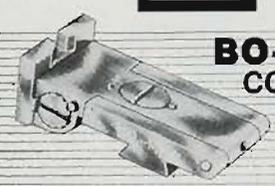
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Continued from page 32

during World War II, but it probably went to Air Force crews who were issued standard Model 1911 or 1911A1 pistols. The ammo packed with the General Motors "Liberator" pistols was standard ball ammo.

I have read two interesting claims with respect to this pistol. The first is that more enemy soldiers were shot with the "Liberator" pistols than with all the Model 1911 or 1911A1 pistols, because they were used by desperate resistance workers, or guerilla soldiers, who had to make every shot count, and fired at very close range.

The second claim is that the "Liberator" was the only gun ever manufactured in less time than it would take to load and shoot it. This was due to its simplified riveted-and-stamped construction, on an assembly line.

It is my understanding that the "Liberators" were issued mainly in the Philippines, not occupied Europe. European resistance fighters were more likely to receive *Sten* guns from the British Special Operations executive. (The *Sten* gun may qualify for the cheapest submachine gun title.)

The illustrated instruction sheet that came with each gun had no written words. Such an instruction sheet would have been especially useful in the South Pacific, where there were so many different languages and dialects (some were only spoken), and so many natives who were illiterate.

James B. Eckel
Farmington, Michigan

CORRECTION

In the interest of accuracy, we publish the following letter, and our apologies to all parties concerned.

To: American Handgunner:

I am writing concerning an error in the March/April issue.

In Mike Dalton's article on the 1983 IPSC World Championships, he lists fifth place winner Rick Castelow as using a Pachmayr Special in the match. This is incorrect. The gun used was a custom Craig Westein of the Auto Shop in Culver City, California.

Mr. Westein was rather shaken by this error and we would greatly appreciate a correction.

Rick Castelow
Madison, Indiana

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SHOOTING TIMES Rick Jamason

Dillon's RL-450 Press: "A masterpiece of simplicity in a progressive reloading tool."



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World combat pistol champion Rob Leatham says, "I soon realized the accuracy and consistency of the ammo assembled on the Dillon 450 was better than the ammo I had loaded on my single stage press. Not only was I spending less time reloading — I was getting better ammunition."

A PLAN

We at Dillon Precision Products had a plan to make shooting easier for everyone. We wanted to create a progressive loading machine that would be versatile enough to load both rifle & pistol calibers. It had to be easy to operate. It had to out-perform, out-produce and out-class the competition. Most of all it had to fit within the budget of any serious shooter. Now, by factory direct sales we are able to realize that goal.

TWIN MYTHS EXPLODED

For years gun writers had advanced the notion that progressive loading machines did not produce ammunition as accurate as that loaded on a single station press.

At the same time the factories were telling us that factory ammunition was better than any reloads. Well, when the smoke cleared at the three biggest matches of 1983, *not one* of the winners had shot factory ammo — *all* of the winners had loaded their ammo on Dillon 450 Progressive Machines.

TRUTH IN OLD SAYINGS

"When you want something done right, do it yourself."

In these days of government interference, large factories are no longer free to hire who they want or fire those who don't give a damn about the quality of their work. So if the quality of your ammunition is important to you . . . load it yourself. Ask Ray Chapman of the Chapman Academy in Columbia, Missouri. A factory round with NO FLASH HOLE knocked him out of the running in the 1977 world match in Rhodesia. Chapman says, "I have a whole collection of factory rounds that failed. Some had no anvil in the primer, some had burred necks that caused jams, some had no compound in the primer cup

and several had no flash holes. Chapman emphasizes, "One of the first things I tell the students who come to my academy is that they can reload better ammunition than the factories make. On police duty I always carry my own reloads — *I know mine work.*"

If you are a serious match shooter or if you're loading that "one good bullet" that you may have to one day use to "shoot for your life," do it yourself.



The RL 450 uses standard 7/8-14 dies. Rotary, sequential method of cartridge handling makes rapid consistent ammunition assembly a snap.

SYMBOL OF EXCELLENCE & STANDARD OF THE INDUSTRY

Last year more than one hundred million rounds of ammunition were loaded on Dillon machines. That's probably more ammunition than was loaded on all other loading presses put together. As the stainless steel Dillon RL-1000 became the standard of excellence among commercial loaders, the Dillon RL-450 has become the standard of the industry among serious shooters. How could a small company like Dillon claim such a large part of the ammunition market in such a short time?

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The Dillon 450 is a major breakthrough. The 450 is not only efficient, it's simple. As the 450's four position shell plate rotates, the cartridge cases are carried around first to the size and decap die (where it is sized, decapped and primed), second to the powder and expand die and then to bullet seat die and finally to the crimp die. A loaded round is removed after each stroke and an empty case fed in. This means it only takes 50 strokes to make fifty rounds, or about eight minutes. The 450 comes with an easy to use primer system and match accurate powder measure.

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We feel that users of precision reloading equipment are entitled to deal with experts. That's why we've decided to sell DILLON direct from our factory. When it comes to customer satisfaction, we take full responsibility. Knowledgeable support and professional service are only a phone call away.

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DO IT TODAY

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NOTE: This \$185.00 price now includes the shell plate, powder funnel AND both large and small powder bars and large and small primer systems.

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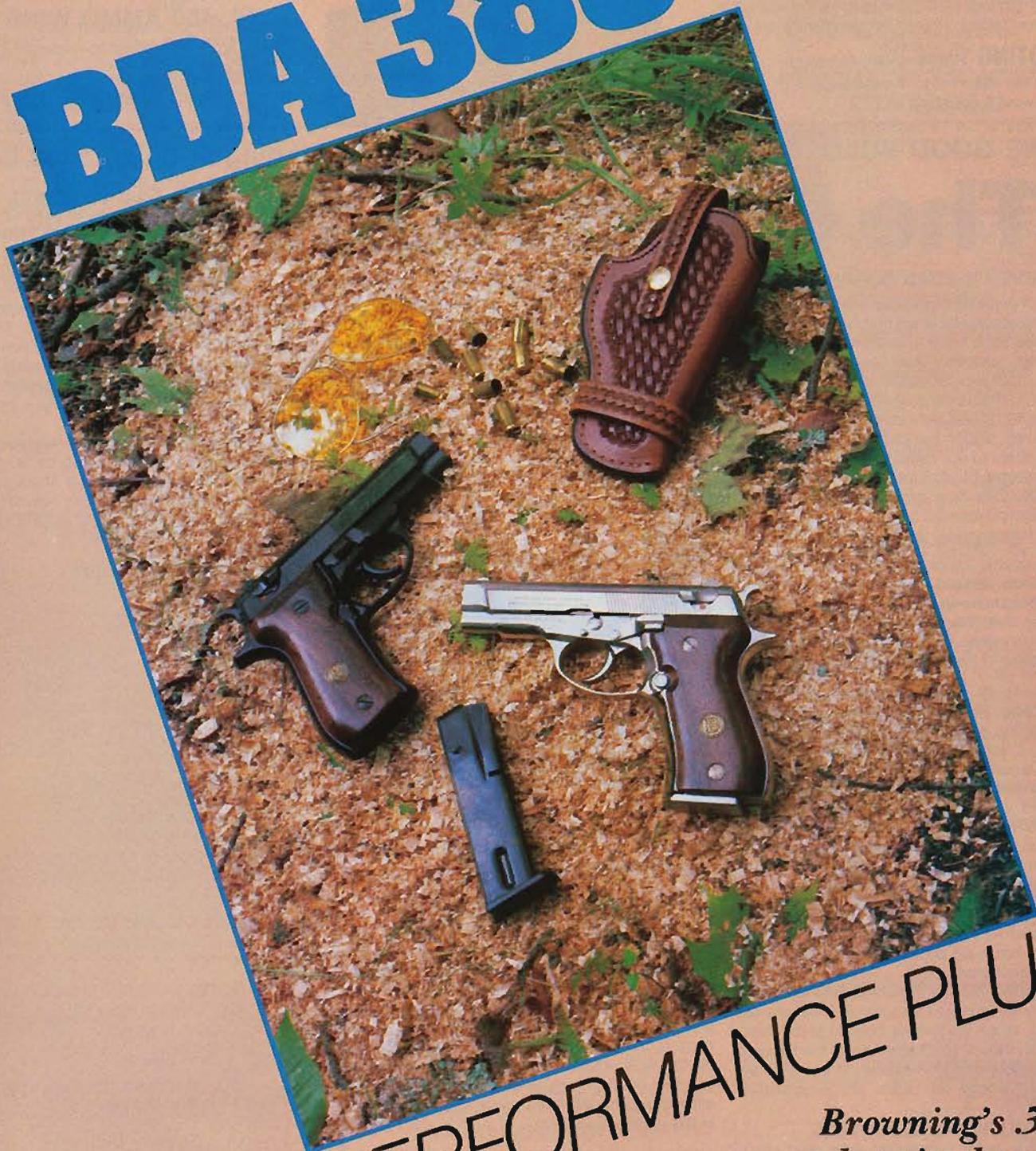
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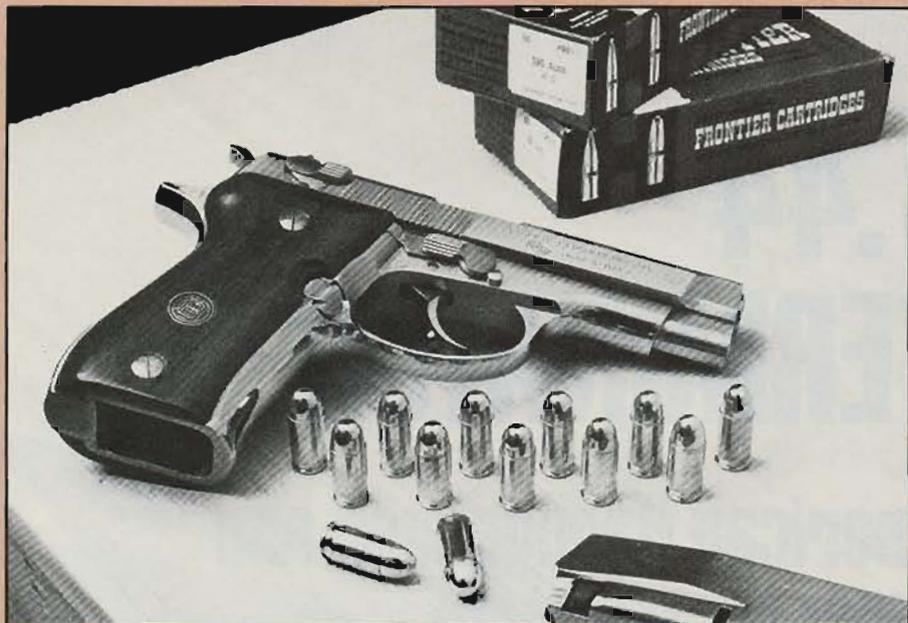
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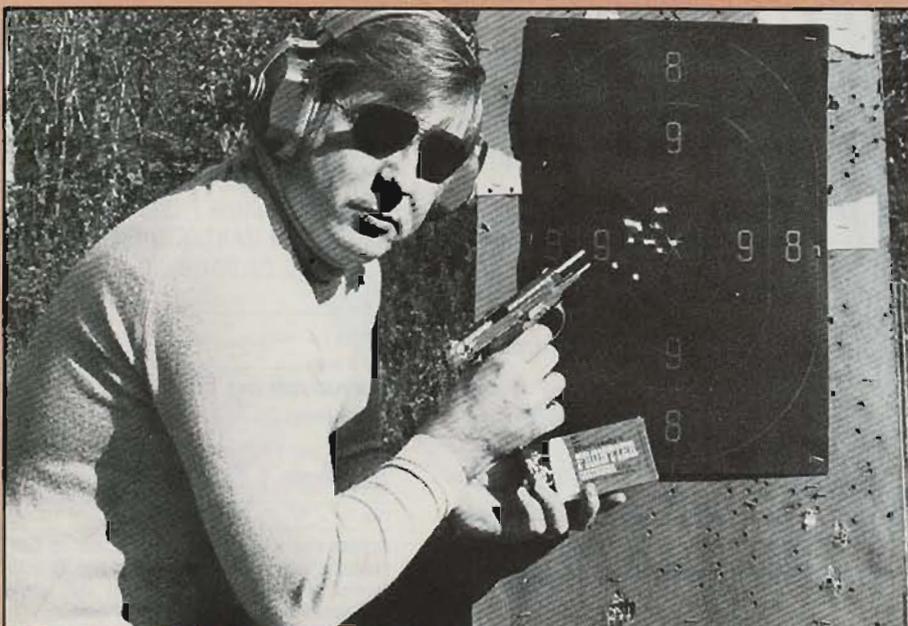
By Stanley Trzoniec



With 13-round capacity and quality workmanship, BDA is a potent pistol.



The BDA offers such features as an ambidextrous safety and walnut grips.



On the range the Browning BDA was accurate and completely reliable.

Designed by John Browning in 1908, the .380 Automatic cartridge as we know it today, saw the light of day as the 9mm Kurz (Corto) in Europe.

Current factory loadings show bullet weights of 85, 88, 90, 95, and 100 grains; bullet types from the newest "Silvertips" through hollow points and full metal jacketed designs. Velocity is right up there punching the 1000 fps mark, but energy, because of the light bullets only averages 193 pounds. Not excessively powerful, but no slouch either.

Pitted against the average homeowner's protection piece of either the .32 ACP or the .38 Special, the .380 really shines; especially in a high capacity 14-round modern automatic pistol. Where the standard 8-round .32 ACP auto will deliver roughly 1032 foot pounds for the total magazine, or the .38 Special about 1200 fpe for six rounds, the .380 will spit out more than double, or 2702 foot pounds of muzzle energy. It doesn't take long to realize that a high capacity .380 auto will give you a better shot at the odds—no matter the odds.

Browning's entry into the market with its version of a 13-round .380 auto is sure to be a winner. Made under contract by Beretta for Browning, and showing only minor differences between the Beretta Model 84 and our test sample Browning BDA, they are basically the same gun.

Where the Beretta has a semi-opened top slide, the Browning is fully enclosed. The Beretta has its safety lever pivoting on the frame, the Browning has its safety on the slide. The Model 84 has a "Commander" type hammer, the BDA's is profiled much like the standard government models. Other than that and a small difference in price or exterior finishes, they can be called brothers.

Straight from the box the BDA (Browning Double Action) is a handsome gun. Browning forwarded both blue and nickel models for testing and since I am extremely bias to nickel finished automatics, that one immediately caught my eye.

The exterior finish of the piece was outstanding. The front and backstrap is highly polished, the rest of the automatic is final buffed to a satin sheen. The side benefit here is a reduction in glare coming back to you over the top of the slide into the sights. The gun is complemented by a pair of uncheckered walnut grip panels with a high gloss finish.

It was while reading the instructions in the Browning owner's manual for field stripping that I noticed the procedure for taking the gun down in any easy manner did not quite match the written text.

After locking the slide open, removing the magazine and inspecting the chamber for live ammo, Browning states that you should rotate the takedown lever downward to remove the slide assembly. I found that I had a hard time getting the lever to rotate in this direction, about 90° from its rest position.

Continued on page 55

WIN THIS .44 SPECIAL TERMINATOR

Sponsored by American Handgunner and Personal Protection Systems, Ltd.

The .44 Terminator was developed as the ultimate defense revolver. It is a remanufacture of Charter Arms Model 74433P Stainless Steel Police Bull-Dog. Remanufacture is done by Trapper Gun of Fraser, Michigan to Personal Protection Systems specifications. The remanufacture consists of:

1. Complete re-work of the action removing single action completely and removing grooving on top of hammer and trigger, accomplishing a smooth double-fast tuned action with a 9 lb. plus or minus 10% smooth-staged pull along with installing adjustable trigger stop with wrench provided.
2. Grooving front of trigger guard for two-hand hold.
3. Chamfering and polishing of chambers.
4. Slabbing sides of barrel, milling front sight for nitesite phosphorus paint, milling back of frame for nitesite phosphorus paint, accomplishing a three-dot-sighting system which during day appears white, but upon exposure to natural or artificial light will glow violet in darkness.
5. Glass beading entire revolver to create a non-glare finish.
6. Tasteful engraving on barrel and frame which includes serial number of conversion. Serial numbers start with 0001 and continue on.
7. Test firing for accuracy with .44 Special ManStopper ammunition and, for police use, .44 Special Glaser Safety Slugs.

The .44 Terminator comes with its own leather carrying case and includes a special wallet of 10 rounds of .44 ManStopper ammunition.

Those interested in the .44 Terminator and other specialized handguns, ammunition and accessories should have their dealer contact Personal Protection Systems, Ltd., 101 Pittston Ave., Scranton, PA 18505. Personal Protection Systems deals only through full time firearms dealers.

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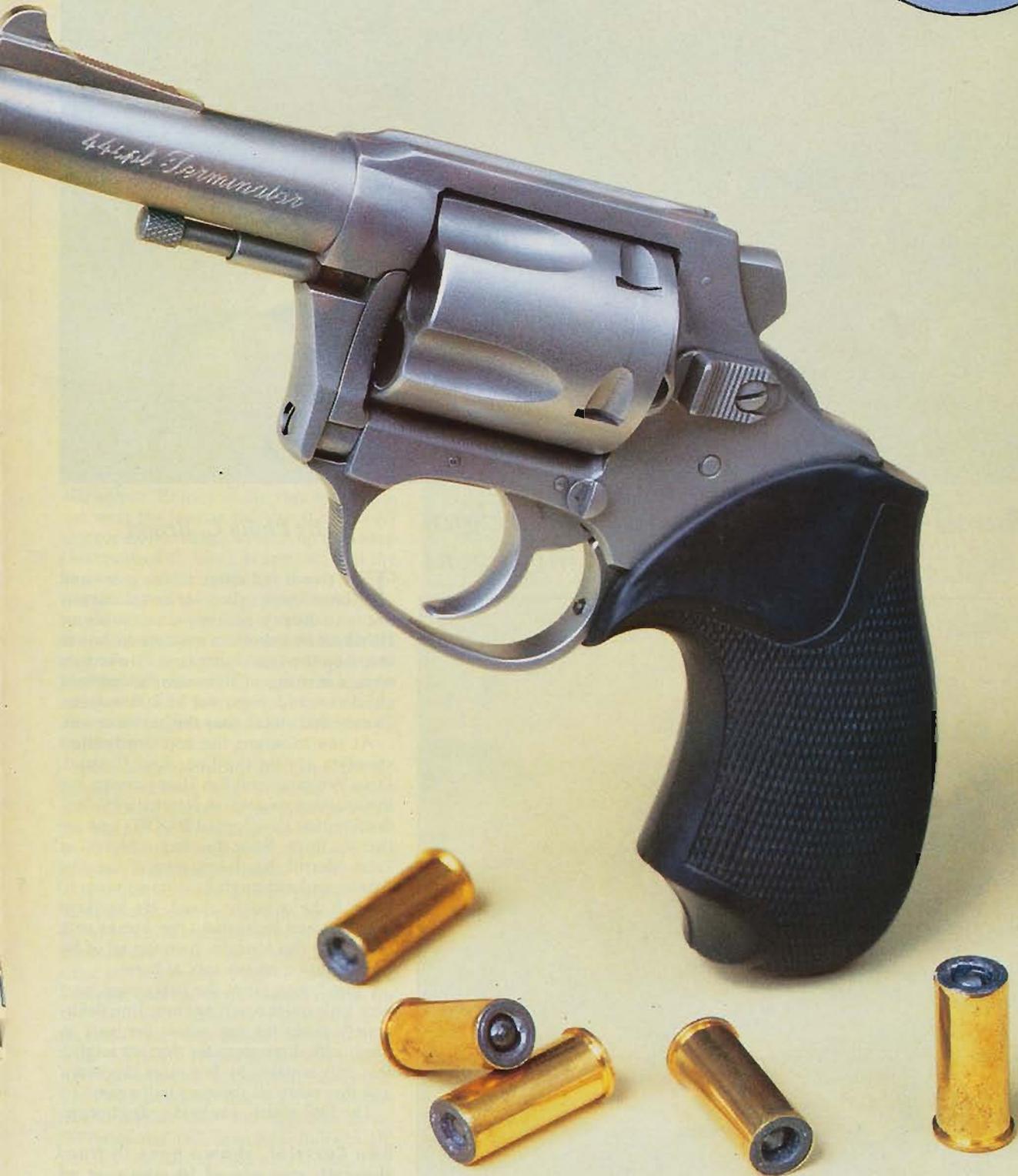
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1983 IHMSA INTERNATIONALS



More than 1400 shooters compete in handgun shooting's fastest-growing sporting event

By Philip C. Briggs

The crowd fell silent as the command "Load" was called. After six days of hot and heavy competition, some of IHMSA's best shooters were on the line to settle up the remaining ties. The targets were a mixture of short-course, half-size chickens and pigs, set at 200 meters. Twenty shots total; may the best man win.

At the moment the top production shooters are on the line. Ron Cottriel, Dave Whitman and Jim Henry are among the fourteen shooters in International Production that have logged 80x80's and are tied for third. Ron, shooting a Merrill in 7mm Merrill, has taken nine of the first fifteen and although he doesn't seem to know it, he is safely ahead. He has kept quiet counsel throughout the breaks with his coach, Jim Jonasen, focusing all of his concentration on the task at hand.

"Fire." Ron takes the first target, and with little quiet coaching from Jim, deliberately works his way across the bank to finish with three more for thirteen total; a feat only equaled by five other shooters—and they were all shooting unlimiteds!

The 1983 match was held near Phoenix,

Ron Cottriel, shown here in final shootoff, was one of 14 who shot an 80x80 in the production class.



Arizona at the nationally known Black Canyon Shooting Range. This was the third national match in Arizona; the first ever was held near Tucson at the Three Points Range in 1975.

The Internationals have grown a lot since those early years and it takes a large range to accommodate the crowds now—larger than anything that existed in the country—even this range had to be built for the event. With twenty banks of targets, the firing line was over 1600 feet long. With all targets backed by bare dirt berms target contrast and definition were excellent. The match was a major operation, with over 100 target setters, score keepers, safety officers and untold volunteers working in the stat shack and elsewhere.

A great deal of advance planning and effort goes into a major match like this one and it all paid off as everything ran like clockwork during match week. The bulk of the credit for a successful event goes to Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department's Lloyd Van Sickle (it's a county park), Arizona State Director, Walt Brantingham and IHMSA reps Bert and Shirley Stringfellow.

There were over 1400 entries this year, down about a 100 from last year's mid-summer match in Indiana, due partly I'm sure to the November dates (it's far too hot in Phoenix in the summer for all but lizards). The entries were split nearly equally between the classes, with Revolver and Standing drawing about 300 each and Production and Unlimited attracting about 400 apiece. Entries in the various categories were the least in the lowest skill-level categories, increasing in each up to the top (International) level. It appears that the beginning shooters, those in C or B categories don't feel they can compete in a national match—which is a mistake as the lower classes often had fewer shooters than the ten places that were trophied! Competition was really tough in the upper categories, and International was nearly always the largest, with nearly 200 shooters in the top Unlimited group.

Silhouette shooting (all forms, but especially the long range handgun version) has had a big impact on the firearms industry, but not on all of them, as they have to work at it to develop the products the shooters want and/or need.

Hornady ascribes a large part of their business this past year to silhouette shooters of all kinds and they were at this Internationals in a big way as they have been since the beginning. They've developed a veritable handful of specialized bullets for the silhouette shooter, including new (revised?) jacketed pistol bullets to cope with the jacket shedding problem some have experienced in the .357 Maximum. They've figured out that a lot of shooters like to display their accomplishments on the range and have been awarding straight patches and hats to successful shooters for some time now (on the spot at the Internationals!). Naturally the patches

NEW GUNS AT THE INTERNATIONALS

The past year saw work proceeding on a few more new guns. Of most interest to the silhouette shooter will be the Wichita International. This is a high-quality break-open single-shot pistol that looks a lot like a Merrill with exposed hammer. Designed by IHMSA Vice-President and longtime silhouette-shooter Bert Stringfellow, the pistol will be manufactured by Nolan Jackson's Wichita Arms firm. The octagon barrel wears a short wooden forearm ala the Navy Luger. Barrels will interchange, but due to the tolerances that must be held to obtain the desired level of accuracy, they must be fitted at the factory. There were a couple of pistols from the first test run of the production tooling on Wichita's display table at the Internationals; the guns picked up a lot of fingerprints and a fair number of orders. The pistol will be available in early 1984 in .357 Magnum, .357 Maximum, 7mm International Rimmed and .30/30. Price will be right at \$400.

Another new pistol at the Internationals that was also subjected to a lot of fondling is from a firm new to the silhouette game. M.O.A. Corporation (110 Front Street, Dayton, Ohio 45402; 513-223-6401) has adapted an old action style, the falling block, to

pistols for the first time, to provide near bolt action rigidity while maintaining the light weight, compactness and handling qualities of single-action or break-open pistols. Still, by fitting extra barrels at the factory the pistol can be converted to another cartridge through the simple expedient of unscrewing the installed tube using a special spanner wrench. Whether or not this interchange idea will all work out or not is unknown at this time; it's an interesting concept though, and I'm eager to try one. The pistol is a single action, with more than a passing resemblance to a Colt Bisley from the action back. The operating lever lies along the front of the grip/frame and is shaped in a closed loop like that of a traditional lever action rifle. The pistol, dubbed the Maximum, is currently available in .223, .22-250, 6mm BR, .243, .250 Savage, 7mm BR, 7mmTCU, 7mm-08, .30 Herrett, and .308 in either 10 or 14 inch barrels. Prices are \$499 for a complete pistol and \$129.95 for an extra barrel.

Farther away from competition use is a new break-open single-shot from Butler Creek Corporation (P.O. Box GG, Jackson Hole, Wyoming 83001,

Continued on page 3



MOA Maximum falling block pistol.



Wichita International, available in 1984.



Seville in .375 Super Mag from United Sporting Arms.

bear the Hornady logo.

Speer was there, too and just like Hornady's troops some of "the good old boys" shoot silhouettes and have an understanding of the market. Hence they've brought out new FMJ pistol bullets for those that want them, and moulds to cast similarly-shaped slugs for those interested in results and saving money as well.

Sierra showed with a small display and was interested enough to provide enough samples of their newly redesigned .44 caliber silhouette bullet so that everybody that signed up got twenty to try.

Accurate Arms Company (615-729-5301), who got their start selling surplus

powders, has now begun to handle a line of newly manufactured powders, and they were there with the latest additions to the line, four of which (#9, MP 5744, MR-223, MR-2460) look to be just right for handgun silhouette shooters.

Western Gunstocks (408-688-5884) was there, as always, with a large selection of their fancy thumbhole stocks for the XP, and a new set of wood for the Unlimited Contenders.

Silhouette shooters reload by necessity and both Pacific and Redding were there to show off their wares. Pacific's new Pro-7 progressive reloader may be just the ticket for the competitor that needs a lot of

ammo and doesn't have a lot of time to pull handles.

Dan Wesson was there to see how well their guns would do and to minister to the needs of shooters campaigning the marquee; their 'smiths did a lot of business, some of which I'm sure was needed to bring the guns up to snuff (I know mine was ailing) and some of which were just checked because they were there and the price was right.

Thompson/Center has gotten involved in the sport in a big way, and the pistols have been improved tremendously because of their interest. A few years ago the lines outside their trailer were long and ever present. This year they weren't too busy, in fact the guns have gotten good enough now that one of the group told me he felt a lot like the Maytag repairman.

Jim Rock of RPM (714-990-2444), the manufacturer of the Merrill pistol, was there to shoot and to service competitors shooting the pistol; Jim and others shooting his guns did well on the line, and he wasn't too busy fixing them.

Wichita was there, and their display table held several of their bolt guns and two copies of early production versions of their new pistol, the Wichita International single-shot Production gun. I never did see a tool box in evidence so I must assume that the Wichitas in use were trouble free.

Both Ruger and Remington have silhouette versions of their pistols out, and have been represented at other International matches, but neither were in attendance at this episode. Hopefully they will be back next year to recalibrate.

The handgun silhouette sport is still just

Continued on page 62

LOADS OF THE WINNERS — 1983 IHMSA INTERNATIONALS

Place	Score	Shooter	State	Pistol			Bullet	Powder	Load		
				Make	Cartridge	Charge			Case	Primer	
International Revolver Class											
4	78	Mike Averre	WA	DW	.44 mag		H240SIL	296	23.5	WW	CCI350
						Rams	H265FP	296	23.0	WW	CCI350
5	78	Jim Jonasen	CA	DW	.44 mag		S240JHC	H110	23.5	WW	W7-111
6	77	Dave Whitman	CA	Rug	.357SM		H180SIL	H4227	21.5	FC	F210
International Production Class											
2	80	Adrian Jaroslavici	CA	Mer	7 Mer		H154SP	748	31.5	WW	F210
3	80	Ron Cottriel	CA	Mer	7 Mer		H175SP	748	30.0	WW	F210
4	80	Dave Whitman	CA	T/C	7 TCU		S140S	H4895	24.0	WW	F205
5	80	Jim Henry	CA	T/C	7 TCU		S140S	H4895	24.0	WW	F205
International Standing Class											
2	62	Jim Jonasen	CA	T/C	7 TCU		H162SP	H4895	22.5	RP	R6 1/2
						Rams	H162SP	748	25.0	RP	R6 1/2
3	62	Jim Musser	AZ	Mer	7 Rkt		S140S	748	29.0	WW	F210
4	61	Dave Whitman	CA	T/C	7 TCU		H139SP	H4895	26.0	GI	CCI400
						Rams	S160S	H4895	25.0	GI	CCI400
5	61	Mike Stimson	TX	T/C	7 TCU		R125S	H322	26.0	WW	CCI400
						Rams	N162S	H322	26.0	WW	CCI400
International Unlimited Class											
4	80	Jim Jonasen	CA	XP	7 INT		H162SP	H4895	32.0	INT	F210
5	80	Mike Averre	WA	XP	7 INT		H175SP	748	36.0	RP	F210

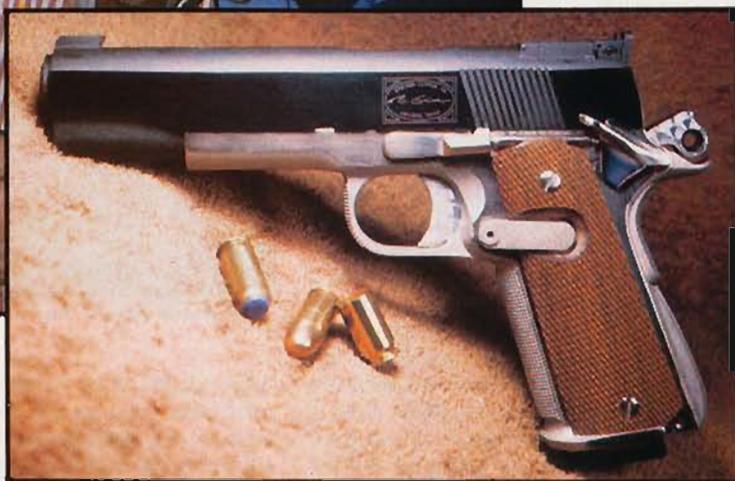
Note: Loading data in the above table is for information purposes only — do not use as recommended loads.



Ginny Greider

WOMAN

PISTOLSMITH



By Sam Baiocco

Traditionally, pistolsmiths have for one reason or another always been men. Seeing or even hearing about a female pistolsmith was indeed a rare event. Female shooters sure; but a female pistolsmith—*never!*

This could be the beginning of a new era; I recently met my *first* female pistolsmith.

She is Virginia (Ginny) Greider who lives and works in Abilene, Texas. Ginny is married to a military pilot (Bob), who also is a competitive shooter. Together they run Greider's Custom .45 Shop, which specializes in target, IPSC and combat conversions of the .45 auto.

She does it all, including fullhouse accuracy jobs on .45 autos. And she's mighty talented on lathes and milling machines. Her fine-line checkering is superb.

Ginny acquired a background for pistolsmith work through some of her earlier jobs. Working for Timex Corporation in Little Rock, Arkansas, she developed a fine touch for fitting and assembling parts. Over a 10-year period she worked her way up to quality control supervisor. Later she went to work for an oil survey company, where she learned to use precision tools such as lathes and milling machines.

During this period she met and married Bob Greider, a pilot in the Air Force. Bob was also a competitive shooter who had a big interest in building his own guns. He eventually expanded his interest and

Continued on page 56

**EXCLUSIVE!
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PISTOL SHOOTING IN THE SOVIET UNION

By *Heinrich Härke*

Pistol shooting in the Soviet Union may not be everyone's idea of an adventure-holiday. It wasn't mine either when I went to the Ukraine in the summer of 1981. And it was neither an adventure nor a holiday that I was heading for; rather, some hard and interesting work: three months on a joint Soviet-West German archaeological excavation in the southern Ukraine.

If you are an avid pistol shooter, you will appreciate my glumness about the prospect of going about three months without the feel of a gun, and the smell of cordite!

Yet, I did not acquiesce to the prospect of such a long interruption of my target pistol practice; I questioned my Soviet colleagues about the possibility of attending practice sessions at a local gun club. Their reactions ranged from incredulity at such an "exotic" desire to outright embarrassment. One of my Ukrainian friends spotted an opportunity to score a few points over his more wary colleagues. We went together to the sports complex in a small town just down the road from our camp, Ordzhonikidze, in the district of Dnepropetrovsk. There, my friend cut through all the red tape by walking straight into the director's office. After a few minutes, he was back with the good news: "No problem, in principle. But the coach is still on holiday, and we have to wait another fortnight."

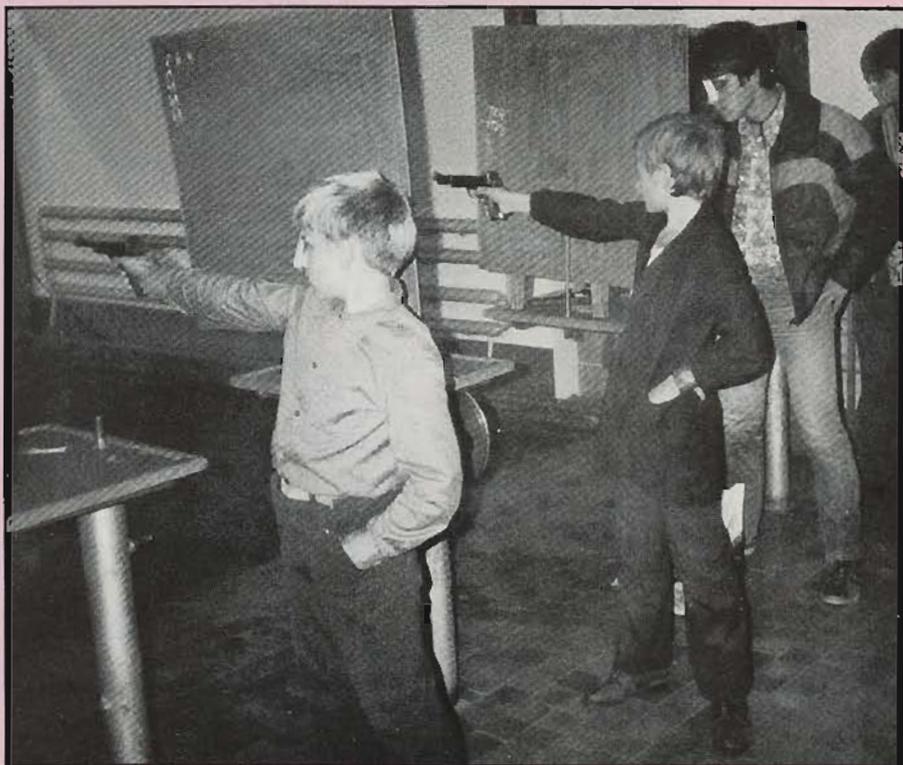
This tiny provincial town, somewhere between Kiev and the Crimea, has a full-time target shooting coach!

WOMAN INSTRUCTOR

Two weeks later, we tried again. This time, my friend returned with a middle-aged woman whom he introduced as the target shooting instructor.

Together we walked the hundred yards to the range, located within the same sports complex.

"In the way of pistols," the woman apologized, "we have only the Margolin here." That sounded fine to me. I never expected a tantalizing choice of Hämmerlis and Hi-Standards here in the Ukrainian steppe.



Two small Soviet boys practice shooting with their Margolin MC .22LR pistols.

After all, Margolin's creations have been considered good enough for the Soviet national squad (and, perhaps even more significantly, for export to the West).

As it turned out later, that apology was a nice bit of understatement.

I was still waiting for a date to be fixed for my first practice session when we arrived at the range. There I was introduced to two other women, Olga, the charming 18-year old top pistol shot of Ordzhonikidze, and Raissa Ivanovna, the armorer. Yes, the range has a full-time armorer, too.

The formidable armorer gruffly ordered me to show her my right hand. Somewhat baffled, I complied. A moment or two later, I was handed a smallbore target pistol—a Margolin MC with wooden target stocks that fitted my hand—a box of *Vostok* ammo, a target scope and ear protectors.

Perplexed by such quick service, I signed the armorer's book for the gun and followed the instructor to the 25-meter in-



Full-time armorer Raissa Ivanovna issues .22 free pistol and spotting scope.

door range, trailed by my archaeologist friend, Olga and Raissa Ivanovna who had locked up her armory. We had the range to ourselves because it was August and everyone was still on holiday.

FREE AMMO

After some firing, I was told that I could come to the range any time I'd like, with the exception of Mondays when the range was closed all day. The range is open six days a week, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

When I offered to pay for my ammo, I was told it was free! Such generosity extends to big bore ammunition as well, and it is not limited to foreign visitors.

I resolved to burn as much of the free ammo as would be compatible with my work at the excavation site and in the camp.

After another two or three weeks, the quiet scene on the range was drastically transformed. At the beginning of September, the school holidays ended; from that day on, the range was always packed with school children, ages 10 to 19.

The range is owned by the GTO, the state organization for technical and sport instruction of the Soviet youth, the Ukrainian section being called *Avangard*.

There were no shooters over the age of 20; the organization does not concern itself with anyone beyond school-leaving age. Adult shooters are offered similar facilities at the sports clubs of their factories, *kolkhos* (state farms), army units, or universities—wherever they may be working, serving or studying.

Systematic sports instruction in the Soviet Union starts at an early age; pistol shooting is no exception. At Ordzhonikidze, school teachers send interested children at the age of 10 or 11 to the GTO, where they have an opportunity to learn the sport properly. Everything is free; there are no financial burdens.

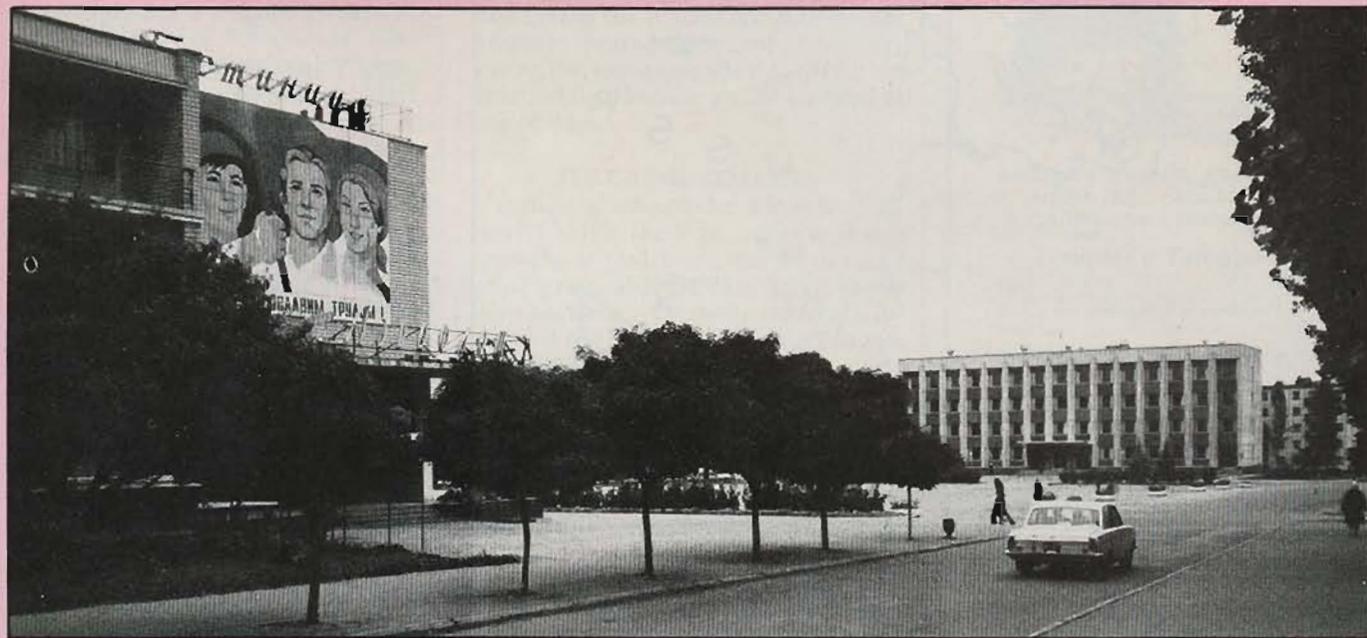


Entrance to the Soviet stadium and sports center. Board of honor is on the right.

Small town range caters to young shooters. Everything is free, including ammo. Range has full-time armorer and full-time instructor. Range is open nine hours a day, six days a week.

Ordzhonikidze is a small provincial town, as Soviet towns go, numbering about 42,000 inhabitants. The local GTO is open to all children and youths of the town. At the time of my visit, the shooting section had about 60 to 70 members practicing regularly. Most shot smallbore rifles, but about 20 or 30 youngsters fired pistols.

At the beginner's level, this generally was smallbore precision shooting, supplemented by smallbore duelling to make up the full U.I.T. Standard Handgun course (or Ladies' Pistol). More experienced shooters would later graduate to U.I.T. Fullbore Pistol shooting, or move into Free Pistol or Rapid Fire, according to inclination and talent. In this process, they are supervised and supported by four full-time staff members—a coach, two instructors (one each for pistol and rifle), and an armorer.



Note typical political propaganda poster and broad streets and trees in this new town of Ordzhonikidze (see map).

The range is part of a sports complex in the town center. There is a 50-meter range with 11 indoor firing points for rifle and Free Pistol, and an indoor 25-meter range for smallbore and fullbore pistol shooting, with five firing points and a bank of German LRM turning silhouette targets. Precision targets are simply fixed to a wooden bar with drawing pins. The range building also accommodates a wash room, a changing room (with shooting jackets and shoes provided free), a common room, the coach's office, and the armory.

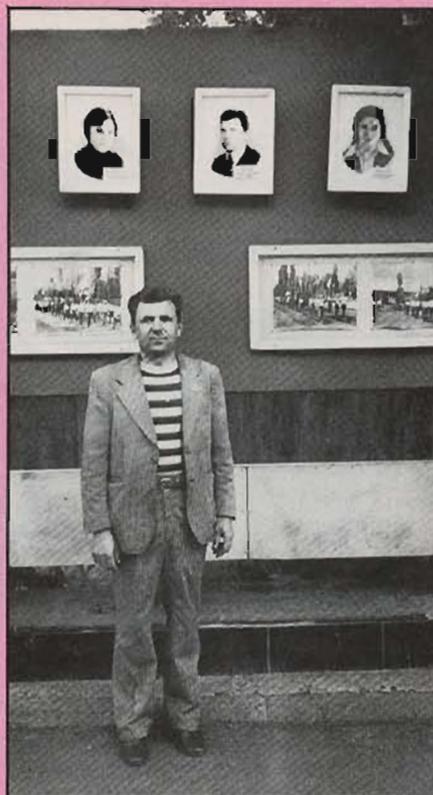
GUN OWNERSHIP RESTRICTED

All guns used on the range are kept behind the solid steel doors of the armory, in the care of the armorer, Raissa Ivanovna. Soviet legislation effectively bars private ownership of firearms with rifled barrels—in contrast to shotguns, the acquisition and possession of which is much less of a problem. In this case, all guns are the property of the GTO, which buys the ammo and any new guns required.

Only the armorer and the coach have access to the two rooms. Club shooters are handed their guns and equipment through a window in the armory door. They must sign the armorer's book for each gun taken out. There are about 40 target pistols and a roughly equivalent number of rifles at the Ordzhonikidze GTO, most of them of Soviet make.

Being a pistol shot with very little interest in conventional target rifle shooting, I took a close look at their inventory of semi-autos and revolvers. It comprised:

- Standard Pistol Margolin MC .22 L.R.
- Rapid Fire Pistol Margolin MCU .22 Short.



Full-time pistol/rifle coach Grogorij Alexandrovich beside board of honor.

- Free Pistol TOZ-35, caliber .22 L.R.: a conventional single-shot falling-block pistol with a set trigger.
- Fullbore Revolver TOZ-36, caliber 7.62mm Nagant, still using the Nagant gas-check system and cartridge developed for the service revolver of the Tsarist Empire, but with

a fixed cylinder and single-action lock only.

- Fullbore Revolver TOZ-49, caliber 7.62 Short, built along the same lines as the TOZ-36, but shooting a round that appears to be identical to the .32 S&W Long.

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Pistols of the Makarov, Stytchkin and Tokarev types are conspicuously missing from this list, reflecting the absence of Practical Pistol, Police Pistol, and Service Pistol disciplines in the Soviet Union (for civilians, at any rate). But for conventional U.I.T. and club target pistol shooting, the armory's basic inventory covers all needs and requirements. There are enough guns and equipment to insure that a number of shooters sharing in the use of any one gun is kept to a minimum. The advanced team members each have their own guns, which no one else may use.

All ammunition is supplied free, and in any quantity required for practice and competition. Fullbore ammo comes in white or yellow boxes, labelled "7.62 sport revolver ammunition." It seems to be remanufactured ammo; empty cases are returned to the armory. No reloading is done on the premises. Smallbore ammo offers a wider choice of brands:

- .22 Short *Siluet* for Rapid Fire.
- .22 L.R. *Vostok*—the standard Soviet brand.
- .22 L.R. practice ammo with grey steel cases.
- .22 L.R. *Tseleyve* for Free Pistol and rifle shooting.
- .22 L.R. *Temp* and *Extra* for competition.

Special competition ammo is rarely found at this lower level. Steel cases for smallbore rounds may sound unusual, but they do have one big advantage: clearing up the range after shooting is fast and easy, with a strong magnet on a string!

STRICT DISCIPLINE ENFORCED

Target practice is considered hard work, and the coach enforces an accordingly strict discipline. One of the main reasons Soviet kids are required to submit to such discipline is based on the high prestige of successes in this sport and the sometimes hidden, sometimes more obvious, prerequisites. If you qualify for the title of "Master of Sport," your picture will go up on a "Board of Honor" set up in front of the main entrance to the sports complex and stadium of your town.

Among the more tangible effects of successful practice and competition are the frequent trips to matches within the country, all expenses paid. In September, shortly after the end of the vacations, the town's top pistol shot—Olga—travelled 200 miles to Kiev and stayed there for about a fortnight to compete in the Ukrainian Championships. Olga is still a high school student in Ordzhonikidze. She began

Continued on next page



Map of Europe shows (at X) location of Soviet shooting range at Ordzhonikidze.

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pistol shooting at the age of 14 (rather late for a Soviet youngster aspiring to top honors in sport), and it took her four years of daily practice to work her way up to the level of "Master of Sport."

This is the highest level of a hierarchy of awards that have been created for all sports disciplines in the Soviet Union. In target shooting, this award may be acquired from the age of 16 by fulfilling the minimum requirements twice within one year. For lesser awards, you must meet the conditions only once.

'MASTERS OF SPORT'

To give you a standard of comparison, the Soviet "Master of Sport" designation is the equivalent of Regional Squad levels in most Western countries, and close to National Squad performance in many of them. The small provincial town of Ordzhonikidze takes pride in having five "Masters of Sport" in pistol shooting alone.

Hardly anyone bothers to wear ear protectors, not even for fullbore shooting in the indoor range.

Psychological training comes later, at the National Squad level.

Range safety was not quite as strict as I would have wished; but then, you may say the same about a disturbingly large number of clubs in the West. At any rate, I never saw an accident, or even an accidental discharge, not even with all those school kids in their early teens having a first-go at pistol shooting.

If the observations I've made on practice discipline, range atmosphere, and shooting standards generally give you the impression that young Soviet shooters are tight-lipped pedants, with just one purpose in life, to become a "Master of Sport," forget it! The ones I met at Ordzhonikidze were a good bunch, having at least as much fun as any Western pistol shooters. They made me feel welcome and after but a few days I really felt at home on the range. My presence created quite a bit of curiosity among the youngsters when I arrived, but after awhile I became totally accepted as one of them.

FULL-TIME COACHES

Is there a lesson to be drawn from all this? I think there is, because pistol shooting at Ordzhonikidze is, in many ways, a representative case. Target shooting is not the only sport offering free facilities and full-time coaching staff in this small Ukrainian town. The entire sports complex has about 30 full-time coaches for most disciplines. Have you ever heard of a coaching staff members for youth instruction alone? In the Soviet Union, these figures are considered to be perfectly normal.

Ordzhonikidze is also typically representative of Soviet pistol shooting at local levels. The training of coaches is centralized at a coaching academy in Moscow; this means that the general ap-

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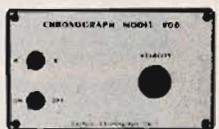
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proach, and very probably even details of technique, are basically the same everywhere in Russia. It also implies that the promotion of target shooting, as I experienced it in the Ukraine, is not an exception but the rule. Such an intensive instruction system, and the strict training attitudes described do have their disadvantages; the attentive reader will already have spotted some of them.

There are also limitations to certain, orthodox target disciplines. The plinker or aspiring Practical Pistolero, for example, is unlikely to get any free ammo in the Soviet Union, let alone official approval.

And yet, when comparing East and West, one wonders why so many countries display an increasing urge to harass shooters and confine their activities, while the socialist Soviet Union offers free use of ranges and guns, free coaching, and free ammunition.

I, for one, feel I am a bit nearer to understanding the "secret" behind Soviet successes in international sports.



ELGIN GATES

Continued from page 22

the trails used across the plains in the 1840's and on into the gold rush period."

Elgin's first involvement with an organized sporting event came when, as a distributor for a line of outboard motors, he became involved in outboard boat racing. During the period from 1948 to 1960 he won several national and a number of international championships and set 26 U.S. and international records.

Throughout his life though, Elgin has been most interested in firearms and shooting. Toward the end of the 1950s, Elgin took up clay-target shooting, winning 17 national and international championships.

"My father was quite a shooter and re-loader and as a young boy I can remember working and watching him—I used to do some of the odd things like weighing powder.

"I watched my father develop a cartridge—a .30-06 necked to twenty-five. He wasn't the first one to do it," Elgin allowed, "but it gave me an interest in wild-cattling and later, when I was hunting in Africa in the mid '50s I developed a series of oddball short-cased cartridges. Every trip I made to Africa I took a rifle in one or two of these experimental cartridges.

"On one trip to Africa with Roy Rogers (an old hunting, boatracing buddy) I took a single shot that used a cartridge that later was to become the .357 Maximum. It was a long .357 cartridge based on an old Ballard cartridge (probably the .38 Ballard extra long)."

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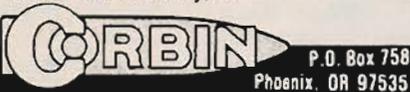
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derstand one of Elgin's earlier statements. We'd been talking about the second national match and the beginnings of the game as we know it today.

"At the second day of the match (October 2, 1976) we formed IHMSA—there were 12 founders. Having been involved in several types of racing—boat, car and motorcycle—I was well aware of the matter of modifications and the equipment-race syndrome. So I proposed two categories of competition (Production and Unlimited) that have basically survived to this day."

A full and satisfying career to be sure, but not one Elgin dwells on. His conversation, in fact his life, now evolves around the handgun silhouette sport he has been so instrumental in creating. After living most of his life in southern California, Elgin now resides in Idaho Falls, Idaho, home of IHMSA.

I concluded the interview by asking what was next, what were his goals.

"Current goals, right now?" he inquired, "Well... the permanent range project... that has occupied virtually 18-20 hours of my time seven days a week for the last year and a half (Elgin is handling the entire project himself, designing, contracting, supervising—and this last summer he adopted the herculean task of growing grass on the sand dune on which the range is built), and will continue to do so until the range is completed.

"Above and beyond that I'd like to finish some of the books I have in process, and hopefully slow down enough to do some fly fishing again. I've got a cabin up near West Yellowstone (not too far from Idaho Falls) that I've been to twice this year—I'd like to get up there a few more weekends—I would say that would be a worthy goal."

Elgin's family consists of wife Dollie and five children. All the children are grown and save Robert have moved on. Only Randy, who is on the Army marksmanship team at Ft. Benning and Robert, who is part of the IHMSA headquarter's staff have followed their dad's interest in shooting.

The interview over, I turned off the recorder.

Elgin, thoughtful at the memories we'd brought back, observed, "I've been involved in a lot of things in my life, but his silhouette game is the best."

There are a lot of us that think that, too. Thanks Elgin for helping make it all possible.



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By Al Pickles

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The last one, which I still own and favor, is the much-touted Star PD. The PD, a cut down and lightweight .45 auto, was developed around 1975 and is the pistol most younger shooters and many law enforcement officers associate with the firm bearing the trade name "Star." It is a high demand back-up gun still marketed in the U.S. by Interarms.

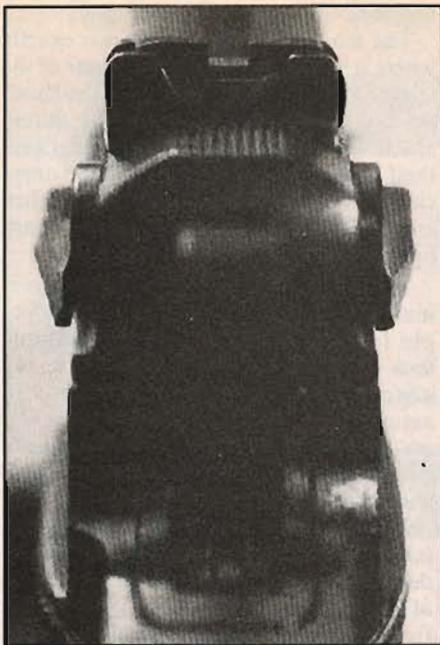
My first Star dates me. It is a war souvenir Model B in 9mm Luger (Parabellum). Introduced in about 1928, the Model B roughly resembled the Browning/Colt design. Mine had the German markings "WaA 251," indicating it was one of the 35,000 purchased by the Nazis for use in World War II. I picked up my copy in Italy a few years after the close of hostilities, and lost it when my gunsmith was burglarized in 1958.

The Star Model B and the Star PD are what one might categorize as "world famous guns." The new Star M28, however, might easily outclass them and become at least a contender for the term "classic." It is a good bet that the double-action M28 will again be submitted for the next session of the Joint Service Small Arms Program (JSSAP) tests to select a new U.S. military service pistol.

The new Star M28 double-action autoloading pistol was introduced in 1979-80. I'm not trying to be vague on the date. The first one was "seen" in the U.S. in 1980, so I assume they were in Spanish production before that. The first "quaint English" printing of an operating manual went to press in December 1980.

STAR FEATURES

The gun, as far as operating principle, locking system and controls are concerned, may be roughly compared to the Browning Hi-Power, except that the Star is double-action.



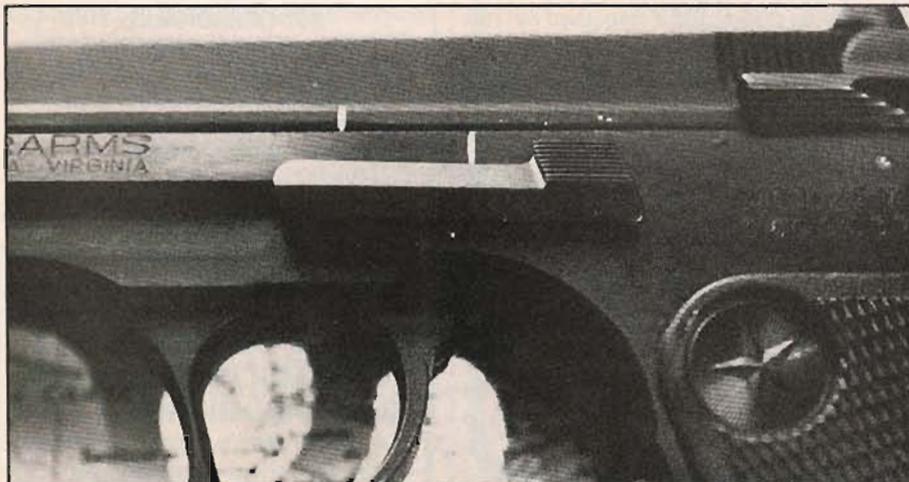
The M28's square notch rear sight is adjustable for right and left movement.

The manual safety is ambidextrous and pushes up to disengage. It operates smoothly and once you've gotten used to the seemingly opposite (for those Colt users) direction, it can be quickly engaged and disengaged with the thumb of the shooting hand—whichever hand that may be.

Engaging the safety forces the firing pin into its recess, where it cannot be struck by the hammer—a rather novel approach. There is also a magazine safety, which prevents the gun from being fired when the magazine is removed. This can be a big safety-plus, or combat-minus—depending on how you look at it. In any event the feature could be cancelled quickly by a competent pistolsmith.

There is also a live-round indicator, visual and tactile, in the form of a bar forward of the rear sight that pops up slightly when a round is in the chamber. This is a great feature that I wish more American

Continued on page 54



The slide release serves multiple functions, including that of a key pin for its disassembly. The M28 looks and feels good and is a mechanically sound pistol.

STAR HISTORY

Have you ever wondered why it is often difficult to gather historical data about arms plants, or munitions factories?

Actually, there are several logical reasons. By the very nature of their operations, they are subject to accidents. More importantly, during times of war or civil strife, they are obviously prime targets. Often, good records were not kept, simply because the gunmakers never thought anyone would be interested. Even the requirement of serial numbering is relatively recent.

The historical background on *Star Bonifacio Echeverria, S.A.* is, unfortunately, somewhat vague. The company has always been located in the City of Eibar, Spain but all of its records were destroyed during the Spanish Civil War (1936-39). When the victorious General Francisco Franco took control of the country he "allowed" only three quality handgun makers to remain in business: Astra, Llama, and Star. This government policy did much to improve the image of Spanish gun manufacture, which had been marginal at best.

As best we can guess, Star had its beginnings around 1908 with a pistol designed by Jean Echeverria. From that beginning the guns were called "Star," but it did not become an official trade name until 1919.

SOUTH AMERICAN NATIONS

In those early years Star 6.35mm (.25 ACP) pistols were fairly close mechanism copies of the Mannlichers of a few years earlier, except for caliber. There have been dozens of Star models since then; and later examples, while still utilizing modifications of proven existing designs, are well made.

Several South American nations adopted Star pistols, at one time or another, as their standard service arm. The famous Model B became the official Spanish service handgun, and the Germans picked it up as a substitute service arm during World War II.

An historically interesting Star was the Model MD, which was a modified Model B with selective fire, shoulder stock and an extended magazine holding up to 32 rounds—depending on caliber.

These rare guns were once purchased by the Nicaraguan government and are resurfacing in that much troubled nation.

As you can see, some Stars, such as the old Model MD and the brand new M28, are busy "making history."

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manufacturers would incorporate.

The magazine release button is exactly where it belongs, at the bottom-rear of the trigger guard on the left side. Right-handers can easily punch it with their thumb and lefties can just as easily depress it with their left index finger. The magazine drops clear with considerable force, even when empty. Seating is positive, due to a forward lip on the base plate.

The slide release, as with the Colt, serves multiple functions including that of a key pin for disassembly. At first my sample took considerable pressure to operate, but once the gun digested its first box of ammo, all was smooth and easy. This was my first indication that the gun had not been doctored, preparatory to a gun evaluator's test.

The all-black finish is perfect for a military pistol. Surfaces that might pick up undesirable glare are nicely dulled. The top of the slide is lightly grooved; so are the front and back straps. The black, high-impact plastic stocks are perfectly checked for positive gripping. The square notch rear sight is adjustable for right-and-left-impact adjustment, with no rough or sharp edges. Disassembly is simple.

Magazine capacity is 15 rounds and, theoretically, with one in the chamber this would give you a total of 16 rounds. As of late, however, I have gotten away from this practice. It overtaxes the magazine spring, sometimes to the point of being unable to seat the magazine, and it just seems to be an unnecessary practice. Loaded with 15 rounds of military type ammo, the gun weighs just under 47 ounces.

One interesting feature of the Star M28 is that it can be converted into a single-action-only pistol, like the Browning or Colt, simply by replacing the trigger assembly with another available from the factory on special order.

The M28 looks and feels good, and is mechanically sound. I did not expect any malfunctions and was not disappointed. It chambered a wide variety of cartridge makes and bullet types, with no hang-ups. Single-action trigger pull was about four pounds, with a crisp let off. Double-action was a little creepy, but it smoothed out just prior to break.

Accuracy was excellent. Of three brands of ammo tried—Federal 123-grain full jacketed (#9AP), Winchester 115-grain STHP, and obsolete S&W 100-grain JHP—all grouped under 3½ inches, shooting rapidly from a Weaver stance at 25 yards.

The trigger pull was so nice in the single-action mode that I was tempted to fire for target pistol accuracy with both the Federal and Winchester ammo. Shooting slowly, off the bench, I was able to deliver one-inch groups at 50 feet.

My sample Star is stamped "MOD. 28 M" while the instruction manual calls it the Star M28.

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BDA 380

Continued from page 39

An easier solution for me, after inspecting the pistol for live ammo and removing the magazine, rather than locking the slide back via the slide stop, is to let the slide return so that it is exactly even with the rear of the frame. A little pressure with your hand is needed here to hold it in place. Then, push in on the takedown lever stop, turn the takedown lever 90° downward and proceed to draw the slide off the frame.

The same will work in assembly. If I insisted in locking the slide back in order to turn the lever up, my two samples would not field strip. Line up the slide with the frame backstrap after the barrel is in, and it goes together as easy as 1-2-3.

Barrel length on the BDA is three inches. Complete with its alloy frame and carbon steel slide, the Browning .380 checks in at 24 ounces, empty. Add 14 rounds—13 in the magazine, and one in the chamber—and you're approaching 28 ounces. But thanks to the wider than normal girth over the grip itself, the gun still feels very comfortable in the hand in both purchase and balance.

Safety features abound, and the Browning incorporates both a thumb safety decocking lever, plus a magazine disconnect to make the gun inoperable during re-filling or charging.

The thumb safety is ambidextrous, a thoughtful consideration for the south-paws in the group. It is also the "decocking lever" in that it allows the hammer to fall in a rest position without touching the firing pin. In that mode, the hammer will not stay back when cocked, nor will the trigger function. This is not only a definite plus in this safety-conscious world, but it allows the user to carry the gun completely loaded, yet safe, even with a round in the chamber. When doing so, the shooter is also reminded of a loaded pistol by a loaded chamber indicator conveniently highlighted by a red mark on the extractor.

The gun operates in either single or double action. While some people of note do not favor both modes on any automatic, to me an autopistol without the double action feature is like a rifle without a scope. Pull registered five pounds single; about 11 to 12 double action.

Sighting equipment is straight forward, basic and adjustable for windage only via a drift. Taking into consideration the gun, cartridge or range used, they are adequate for all intended purposes.

Blowback in operation, the BDA's slide travels rearward to extract, eject and cock the hammer. On its forward momentum it strips a new cartridge from the magazine, feeding it into the chamber, allowing the pistol to come to complete readiness for the next shot. All this happens in about

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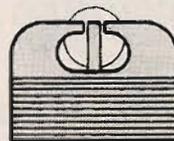
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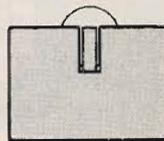
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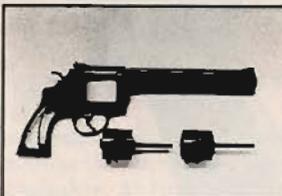
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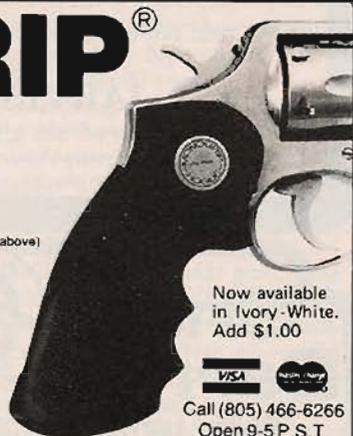
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Considering the non-adjustable sighting equipment, accuracy was on par with other guns in its class. At 15 yards from a braced rest, three inch groups were no sweat. Thanks to a good grip configuration, the BDA held steady throughout all strings. Off the bench, with a two-hand hold, the Browning was again easy to control, obviously due in part to the mild recoil of the .380 cartridge.

On shooting subsequent strings, the loading of the magazine is always a strong consideration. On high capacity autos, most will load well up or until the last couple of rounds. It's then that the magazine spring is fully compressed giving way to broken finger nails or a few choice words muttered under one's breath. The Browning's were no exception, although only moderate pressure was needed to fully seat the last cartridge.

The Browning BDA .380 is one of the better autos. I found it to be a highly reliable, fully dependable automatic pistol.

For more information contact, Browning Arms, Route One, Morgan, Utah 84050.



LADY 'SMITH

Continued from page 45

started to build or modify guns for his fellow military shooters. During this time, Ginny's interest also grew and she began to specialize in working on the .45 auto. She picked up considerable knowledge in accurizing the .45 pistol from her husband. She also developed her own design philosophy and style by studying the work of some of the Master Pistolsmiths she met.

Soon, Ginny was working alongside her husband. Their specialty was accurizing and building combat-style .45 autos. Ginny would do all of the work on the lathes and milling machines—such as cutting receivers for beavertail safeties, turning barrels and fitting bushings—while her husband would perform all the precision fittings and final assembly. Her interest soon grew to the point where she wanted to do the complete gun, from start to finish. As time passed, she became more and more proficient and soon took on the responsibility of building the entire pistol.

USEFUL INNOVATIONS

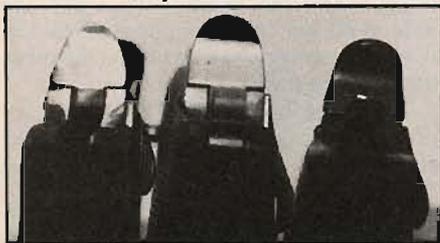
A recent visit to the Greider's shop in Abilene showed a now-thriving business in which Ginny plays an important role. A tour of their workshop revealed some useful innovations for building combat .45s. Pistol frames are modified so that the

shooter has a choice of three different types of beavertail safeties; each is a bit smaller than the other. A homemade sear jig enables Ginny to use a stone that operates on rollers. The rollers place the stone at precisely the same angle to the sear, thereby always insuring the proper angle is cut.

Match barrels are turned on a lathe to insure maximum uniformity. Special match bushings are fitted to the barrels to provide the proper barrel/bushing mating.

Ginny also features such options as fine-line checkering of the receiver grip and mainspring housing. If the customer specifies, the rear of the slide and front of the trigger housing also can be checkered. Several grades of beveled magazine wells are offered, depending on what the customer requires for his specific pistol.

To complete the job, Ginny offers a choice of finishes—black oxide, blue/black, electroless nickel or tempered electroless nickel. The latter two can be done on steel or alloy frames.



Greider's Custom .45 Shop offers two basic packages; the Combat, or the IPSC/Match package. The Combat Package is the basic "functional" package. From that, a natural progression adds more features until the desired degree of modification is reached for a given purpose.

The Combat Package focuses on those items directly affecting reliability: polish feed ramp; throat barrel and install solid bushing; polish breech face and firing pin hole; bevel and stone bottom of slide bearing on disconnect; contour, polish and tension extractor; port slide and bevel magazine well; check mainspring, hammer, sear, disconnect and trigger stop setting. In addition, a trigger job, sights and additional parts and finish are added, requested by the customer.

Ginny offers virtually all services and parts for the .45 auto. Trigger jobs to refinishing can be ordered separately. I found her prices to be reasonable, and was impressed with the fine work she did on some of the trigger jobs I tested.

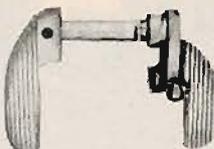
She said it takes from three to four months to complete a pistol job, depending on what the customer specifies, and she won't accept a pistol unless she can start work on it within a reasonable period of time.

One thing about female pistolsmiths: I found it harder to say no to a woman. I placed an order for a pistol before I left.

For an attractive brochure and price sheet, write to her at Greider's Custom .45 Shop, 4625 Carrie Ann Lane, Abilene, TX 79606.



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HUMAN ENGINEERING

Some handguns feel much better than others; here, the author explains why.

By Richard Savino

Ergonomics. Biotechnology. Both mean human engineering in design; in our case, *gun design*.

To an engineer, for example, ergonomics means the physical arrangements on a machine that make it easy or hard to operate.

The word is derived from the Greek *ergon*, for work.

Some handguns are relatively easy to work with and learn to shoot well; others are just the opposite, despite the talents of the person behind the sights.

It's about time that handgunners start considering the "ergonomics of" their tools, because if they do they'll stand a better chance of being able to give intelligent input to manufacturers, so they can improve their products. As an added bonus, a result also could be more people having more fun shooting. And shooters might apply more cold, calculating thought to the modification and customizing of certain handguns.

An ergonomically-good gun is not necessarily one that has many special accessories and space-age features, but one which in its basic form *feels* right to the hands, and whose parts are arranged sensibly. End use is important. A handgunner training for combat work, for example, would have little use for a set of target stocks on his .45 auto.

I recently had the opportunity to examine a particularly evil design, in the form of a .32 auto marked "Spain." It had a nearly 90-degree grip-to-barrel angle, making it feel like a T-square in my hand. Making matters worse were its poor safety (a lever that turned through a full 180-degree arc and positioned just about the front of the trigger guard) and a bottom-mounted magazine release. You know the type—a little serrated catch at the lower end of the buttstock. This one had about a 40-pound spring behind it; the first time I tried to drop the magazine, I ended up releasing its floorplate, instead.

It was the worst gun I've seen in many years, one of the *least* ergonomic imaginable. Its owner did not have the pleasure of handling other small-caliber pocket guns for comparison; so it was hard to explain the difference.

ENTER THE LUGER

Let's examine a few guns, with our eyes peeled for ergonomics. We'll look at some popular models and see what makes them tick, or not tick—and why.

The Luger pistol long has been known as a well-pointing gun. The photo gives us a good indication of *why* this is so. The Luger's grip angle of about 58 degrees matches up quite well with the form of the human hand, as it is outstretched and relaxed.

The human hand seems to wrap nicely around something, when that something is shaped like its own profile. The angle the thumb makes with the rest of the hand is similar to the angle of the Luger frame. Aiming the German pistol is very close in "feel" to pointing one's own finger.

Look, too, at the shape of the Luger butt and grip stocks. The hand is not symmetrical: the little finger and ring finger aren't as long, or as well-situated, as the others when it comes to curling around an object. So it helps if the shape of the tool provides a perch for the weaker little finger by virtue of the slight forward bulge at the bottom of the butt.

Also, the gun shows good ergonomic design in the gentle curve of its backstrap, which nestles in the web of the shooting hand firmly in place. And the trigger face, where the pad of the index finger will exert effort in pulling it, is in line with the web. This makes for comfort and, a natural "feel."

All in all, the Luger is an excellently designed gun and looks like a winner on all counts; most of its thousands of enthusiasts probably would agree.

But comfort in shooting is only one of the necessary qualities of a handgun. Because the handgun is such a versatile tool, more is demanded of it. A handgun is for recreational use, also for use in an emergency. It might have to be used quickly, without prior warning, to defend a life. Certainly, if any tool is kept in constant readiness for that purpose, it must be kept safely.

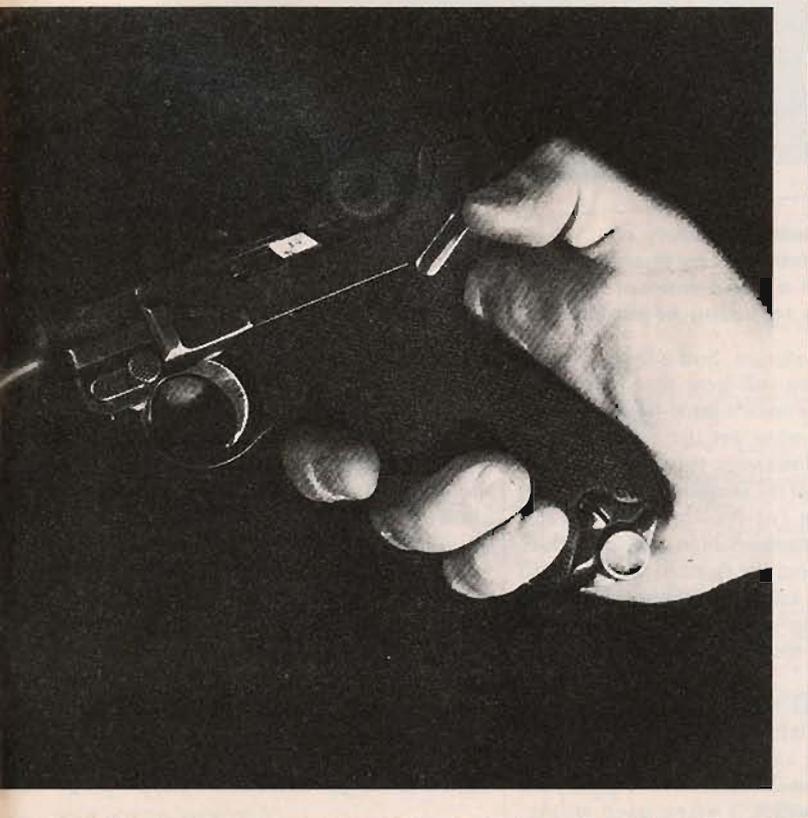
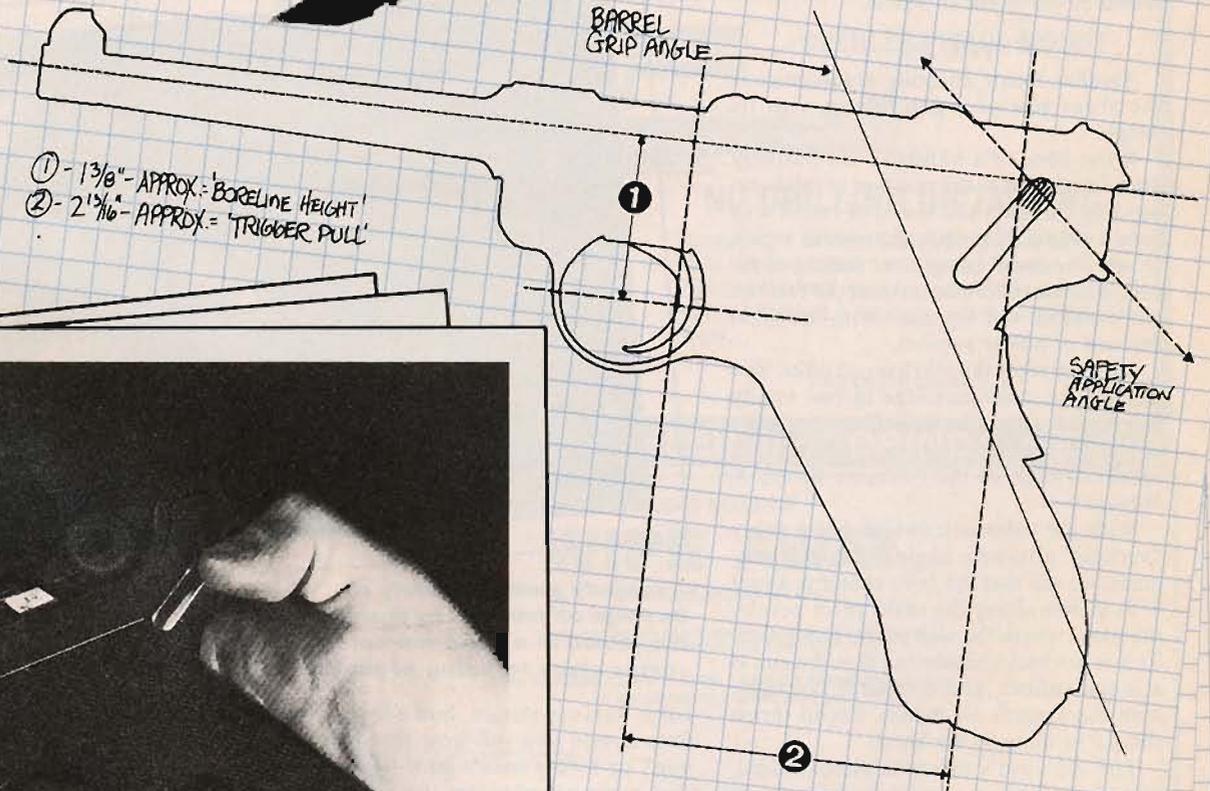
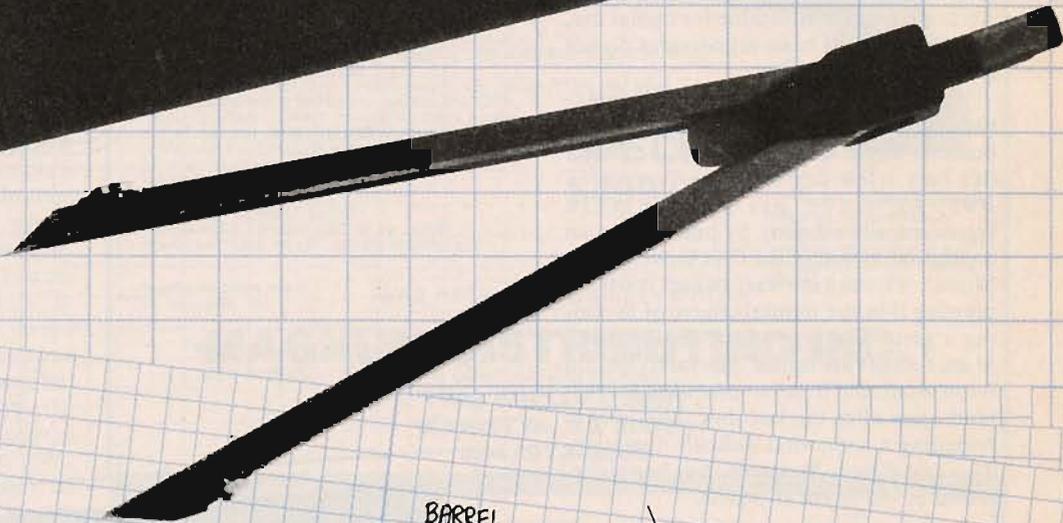
The second photo shows the Luger's main failing: its safety. While positive-acting and prominent, the safety lever is

located in a position that makes it all but impossible for the normal hand to actuate it while assuming a good shooting grip. Worse still, the thumb (of a right-handed person) must sweep the safety "off" by rotating it *upwards*. In assuming a grip, the natural movement is the opposite; that is, it wants to sweep *down* to rest on the other fingers or against the stock.

The Luger safety defeats the gun's readiness function. It simply can't be used easily, with a minimum of *work*, in an emergency. I have met one man who advocated carrying a Luger in a modern, butt-forward combat holster (cocked and locked as any good single-action auto should be), and sweeping the safety off before clearing leather. But this is a ques-



IN HANDGUN DESIGN



Gentle curve of Luger's backstrap nestles in the web of the shooting hand: a feature that makes this German handgun rate high in basic ergonomic design. Above, note Luger's grip angle (58 degrees), which matches excellently the form of the human hand outstretched, relaxed.

tionable practice, and *even if practiced intensively* it could be a distinct danger to the shooter.

The Luger toggle-lock action requires a two-part motion to work it, as in jacking a round into the chamber, or clearing a jam. It has to be pulled a bit upwards, as well as toward the rear. As a practical shooting tool, the Luger is not ergonomically sound. Accurate, yes. Comfortable for casual use, definitely. But its basic ergonomics do not contribute to versatility.

When Bill Ruger designed his revolutionary Mark I Auto, he adopted a grip-to-boreline angle close to that of the Luger (it's only a few degrees more "vertical"). *But*, he made his safety more ergonomically efficient, by putting it in an arc similar to that of the Colt Government Model. The thumb can sweep it off by pressing it in the natural course of assuming a grip. The ergonomic faults of the Mark I Ruger are minor. The safety button is too small, and it has no provision for bolt hold-open after the last shot. That makes reloading a somewhat difficult operation. This condition, however, has been corrected in the Mark II pistols.

THE .45s

Another factor affecting ergonomics is the sheer *size* of a gun, along with its *weight*.

If the bore of a handgun is relatively high, in relation to the position of the hand holding the gun, the force of recoil will have a relatively greater distance in which to act. The result is a greater feeling of recoil, if for no other reason than the fact the gun's muzzle will flip more with the same amount of power applied.

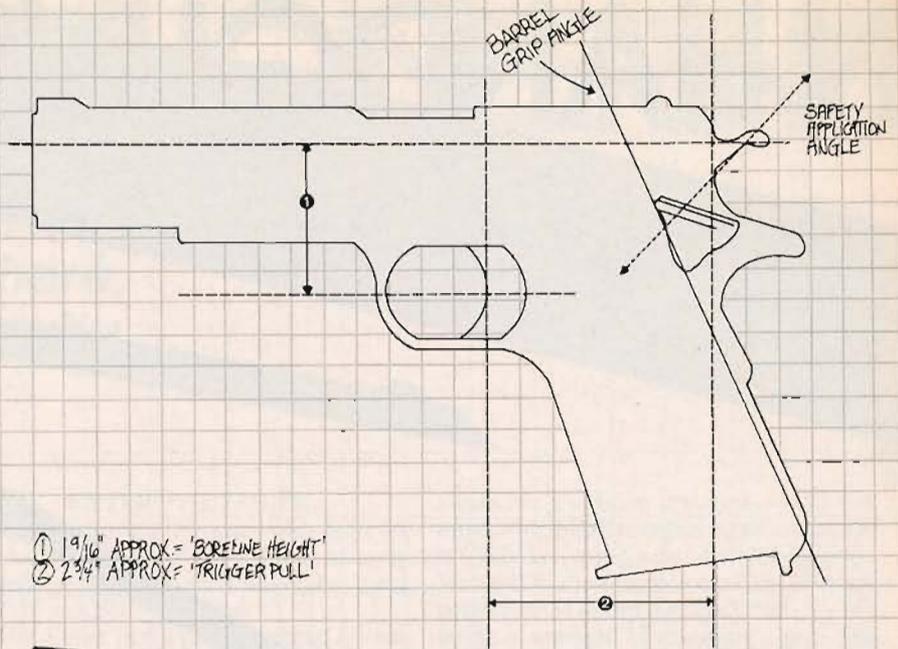
Let's see what the .45s have to offer. You can get the same cartridge in two totally different designs—the Colt/Browning auto of combat competition fame, and a six shot revolver, such as the N-frame Smith & Wesson.

With the automatic, which has a fairly "vertical" grip-bore angle of about 72 degrees, we see that the bore center is about 9/16 inches above the main pivot point—the place where the web of the hand rests. This is not bad, considering that the gun is a major caliber, and compares favorably with the Luger's 1 1/8 inches. Recoil thrust should be close to the hand.

The .45 auto's safety is almost ideal, placed as it is in a natural thumb-arc just above the web. The magazine release, too, is right where it can be used quickly, and by the same thumb that operates the safety. You pull the .45's slide straight back to rack it, and the hammer usually is reachable by the shooting hand thumb.

From these considerations, it would seem that the Government Model has the ergonomics licked: even its slide release is accessible, and sensibly-shaped. Just add one of the "ambidextrous" safety kits, perhaps a lengthened slide release, and we're in business, right?

Well, maybe. It seems that the old Colt



A properly positioned safety can be swept off naturally by thumb; fingers are joined in a good combat grip. This Colt comes close to being ergonomically perfect.

has a dual reputation. Some love it, some hate it, and you still hear that it's a "big gun" or a "big man's gun." Plus the fact that many shooters get the webs of their hands pinched between the gun's hammer and the grip-safety tang.

One reason for its "bigness" is the trigger-pull distance, which measures close to 2 3/4 inches from the front of the trigger to the web of the hand, assuming that it's fitted with a "long" trigger (as in the original M1911, or late-model custom jobs).

AUTO VS. REVOLVER

Now, compare the auto with the revolver in the same caliber. The S&W measures about 2 3/8 inches in trigger pull, and even less (2 1/8") when used single-

action. Does that make it a "smaller" gun, a gun easier to use and get the feel of?

Hardly, when we consider that on most double-action revolvers the trigger centerline is located considerably (1 3/8") below the centerline of the supporting hand. Used in double-action mode, the Smith requires the gripping hand to remain level, while the trigger is cranked through a substantial arc, against a strong spring.

The human wrist, a great universal joint, is asked to do an awful lot of work, learning to handle a double-action revolver. This may help explain why really good double-action shooters are fairly scarce. There are too many motions going on in the use of the gun to make it a simple prop-

Continued on next page

osition. And the same wrist has recoil (in the case of the .45 S&W) operating over a whopping 2 9/16 inches from boreline to pivot point—an inch more advantage for the recoil over the .45 auto.

Remember, we're measuring angles from the *boreline* to the grip. We find that the Smith & Wesson .45 revolver's grip angle is almost exactly the same as the Colt .45 auto. But, owing to the low trigger of the Smith, the guns don't point the same; and because of the high bore of the revolver, they don't flip the same in recoil. The S&W is technically an ergonomically "easier" gun to learn to operate, because its controls are simpler. This conclusion is validated by the universal use of double-action revolvers in police work, where extra training funds are seldom available.

So, how do we come out of the discussion on ergonomics, the "work factors" in handgunning? I hope with some appreciation of the effort that has gone into modern gun development. Slowly, but surely, gun manufacturers—some still groping around in the dark—have started making handguns that are easier to use.

Answers to the ease-of-use equation lie with such automatics as the Heckler & Koch VP70Z (with fewer than six moving parts and a double-action only mode of operation) and with revolvers such as the Dan Wesson (with its clean profile and a grip that can be custom-contoured by the shooter).

We probably never will see an ergonomically perfect handgun, although some—such as the Colt .45 auto—come close. Mass-marketing of any product entails compromises, and it seems to be as true today as it was 70 years ago, when gunmakers had to make their products for the "average" hand.

What we have seen in this brief exploration is that some guns lend themselves to certain tasks well and are simple to operate, while others are sure turkeys.

To achieve maximum versatility, choose a gun that is ergonomically sound. The chances are it also will be a gun that shoots accurately, and has controllable power.



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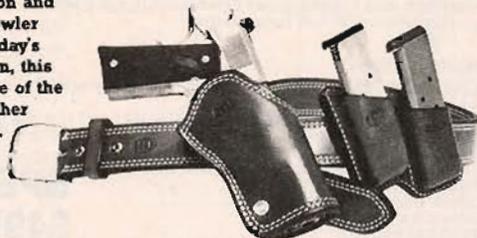
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IHMSAGUNS

Continued from page 43

Farther away from competition use is a new break-open single-shot from Butler Creek Corporation (P.O. Box GG, Jackson Hole, Wyoming 83001, 307-733-3599). This one also has a great resemblance to a single-action revolver. I should say will, as the pistols at the Internationals were prototypes displayed to gauge shooter interest. The barrel is permanently fitted into a monoblock that is mated to a specific frame. Once paired, drilling a hole for the cylindrical latching bolt through both frame and monoblock insures a perfect fit and a precise lockup. The prototypes engendered a lot of looks. Availability and price are unknown at this time.

The other newcomers are variations on .357 Maximums, chambered for a new cartridge that has been dubbed the .375 Super Mag. Sig Himmelman, impresario of United Sporting Arms (2021 East 14th St., Tucson, Arizona 85719; 602-623-4001) had one of his Seville's chambered for this shortened .357 Winchester at the Internationals. I expect there probably have been several folks that have done some work on the cartridge down through time, including Elgin Gates and Sig himself, who had a dummy round worked up a year ago, but the major factories are still in the chute on this one. The long cylinder the Seville inherits from the .357 Maximum version will allow the use of long, heavy bullets and this combo should be the cast bullet fans dream. Formed by trimming .375 Winchester brass (or any other .30/30 head size case) to 1.600 inches, the round is not the terror it seems on first glance; recoil is less than the .44 Magnum but this caliber's better sectional density will give the new round near-equal knockdown at 200 meters.

There will be an initial batch of .375 Super Mag Sevilles available to IHMSA members early in 1984. Even more surprising, Dan Wesson will be building some .375 Super Mags too, with a trial batch promised to IHMSA. Prices to IHMSA members are to be \$319.50 and \$299.50 respectively. For more details contact IHMSA at Box 1509, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401; 208-524-0880.



IHMSA REPORT

Continued from page 43

for amateurs; competitors shoot for trophies only, and there is in fact a strong ethic to keep it that way. In the face of this, the manufacturers seem to have chosen to sponsor the entire sport through donations of merchandise and award programs for

state, regional and national matches rather than sponsor a few top shooters. Without financial awards, factory support or military teams, the game has not become dominated by a few professional shooters. In fact it's hard to cover a big match in the traditional sense as anyone of a large number of folks could come out on top.

That's not to say that these folks aren't talented shooters, they are, nor that there isn't a cadre of top shooters, as there is. Especially in the top categories, perfect scores just get you into the shootoffs, where a blink of an eye or a lapse in concentration at the wrong moment will drop you out of contention. Shooters like Jim Jonasen, (California) Mike Averre, (Washington) or Lon Pennington (Colorado) can be counted on to be in the hunt at any championship match. Jim was Unlimited champ in 1980 and shot perfect scores in '81 and '83 but wasn't able to stay on top in the resulting shootoffs, ending up twenty-seventh and fourth respectively. Mike was Unlimited champ in 1981, and went on to pull a fourth and fifth out of the shootoffs in '82 and '83. Lon was Production champ in 1981 with an 80x80 and shot to the top of the Revolver heap in '83 with another 80 and another championship.

The pistols and cartridges used this year reflect not only the growing acceptance of the new introductions of the past couple of years but also the tendency of the shooters in the higher categories to select the best of the available equipment.

From the beginning the sport was dominated by Ruger Super Blackhawks and T/C Contenders; in .44 Mag or .30 Herrett or .30/30 respectively; if you were really serious, you'd hunt up a Model 29 S&W.

That has changed, and nowhere is that more apparent than in the Revolver classes; there were 101 Super Blackhawks entered at the Internationals this year and 76 Dan Wesson .44's. Add in 29 Ruger SRM's and 24 Dan Wesson Super Mags (.357 Max) and you can see that the shift is away from the single actions and to the better handling and easier shooting double action guns and the lower-recoiling .357 Maximum. This trend was most apparent in the top categories; in AAA it was 38 Super Blackhawks to 35 of the big Dan Wesson .44's, and in International it was 16 to 26 respectively with 5 SRMs and 10 Super Mags. With the abandonment of the SRM it's beginning to look like the Ruger is going to have to build a silhouette-version of their double action, the Redhawk if they want to continue to be a force in the handgun silhouette game. The International category revolver shooters looking for the extra edge a high-quality pistol provides, picked United Sporting Arms (602-623-4001) .357 Maximum Seville (8 in the category—more than the SRM!). And the results in this category testified to correctness of the choice as seven of the top ten places went to Dan Wesson shooters (Super Mags were First, Second, Third and Ninth, 44's were Fourth, Fifth and



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Sixth), Ruger shooters took but two places (a SRM in sixth, a Super Blackhawk in Eighth) and a Seville 357 Maximum shooter took Tenth. Combining all makes of guns there were 195 .44s, 81 .357 Maxs., 25 .357 Mags., nine .41 Mags. And if you had any doubts, the .357 Mag. is dead in the Revolver class.

The Contender still reigns supreme in Production Class with 329 entries to the 43 Merrill entries, still there has been a tremendous shift away from the old favorite cartridges; the 7mmTCU is now the uniform of the day with 233 of them on the line. The shooters have stayed away from its metric mate, the 6.5mm TCU in droves, with but five in attendance. Again, at the higher skill levels the more accurate, yet more expensive pistol was selected by those shooters looking for the extra edge, as there were nine Merrills in AAA and 27 in International compared to 98 and 148 Contenders, respectively. And again the choice paid off as four of those Merrill shooters finished in the top ten (Second, Third, Seventh and Tenth—the latter won by Merrill's builder, Jim Rock). For both of the single-shot pistols calibers were, 36 in .30/30, 28 in .30 Herrett, 24 were .357 Mag., 17 in .30 Merrill, 14 in 7mm Merrill and 10 of the .357 Maximum.

The single-shot pistols now dominate standing, with 195 Contenders, 32 Merrills versus 33 revolvers total for all brands combined. As you would expect the majority of the guns were 7mm TCUs.

Unlimited started with custom-built guns, mostly reworked XP-100's and in spite of Remington's entry into the market with their little orphan ammo (the 7mm BR) that's still the case; 283 XP's of all persuasions entered but only 63 were BR's. It's not uncommon in the lower unlimited categories for shooters to choose to compete with a 7mm TCU Super 14 to match their Production gun, and they'll do well as long as they can suppress the urge to buy their way into more targets with an XP. So it was no surprise that there were only 60 Contenders in all unlimited categories, and that most of those were in the lower ones. (There were ten T/C's in the International group, but they were all custom guns and most had been built by Vern Juenke in his preferred 270VJ a .223-based wildcat). Again, the high-quality guns show up in the higher categories, with 11 and 24 Wichitas in the top two, respectively. The big vs. small cartridge battle is still not settled, with 175 large to 145 small; 105 of the large cartridges were the popular 7mm INT (IHMSA) wildcat. Other than 17 of the .308's and seven 270 VJ's they were all some sort of 7mm.

With perfect weather (save for one windy morning) and excellent range conditions, scores were high and competition was tough, especially in the top classes.

Sheldon Williams (California) shot one of the 14 straights recorded in Production with his T/C 7mmTCU and went on to take eleven of the first round of shootoff

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targets to become Production Champion. Lon Pennington set a record for competition at the Internationals, shooting the first Revolver 80x80 with his Dan Wesson Super Mag (which he backed up with seven shootoff targets just in case) to become Revolver Champion.

John Dunn (Nevada) took 66 targets with his T/C 7mmTCU, four full targets ahead of second place, to become Standing Champion. Pete Ball (California) shot one of the 54 straights posted in the International category and 14 of 15 targets in the first shootoff round with his XP 7mmBR to become Unlimited Champion.

But don't let this litany mislead you into thinking that the sport is too easy—it's just that this level of competition often brings out the best in the shooter.

There was a young man from Georgia, Johnny Butcher, shooting next to me Friday morning. It turned out that we were both shooting Production and both 357's (his a Maximum, mine a Magnum; his a T/C, mine a Merrill). After each of us cleaned a couple of banks of chickens we started to compare notes. He'd been shooting silhouettes but two months, and had never shot at 20 chickens before, let alone taken them all. But he did, and then 20 pigs and pretty fair number of turkeys and rams. His 67x80 was not only his personal best, it was good enough for ninth place in AA. It was his first International, but I'm sure it won't be his last.

Handgun silhouette shooting has come a long way in nine years, not only because it's fun and filled with good people, but also because it's an equal opportunity sport—a place where the ordinary guy can not only do well, but win. Try it,  you'll like it.

WHAT'S NEW

New .22 cartridge for silhouette shooting

Winchester has announced a new .22 rimfire cartridge especially designed for silhouette shooting. The Winchester Super Silhouette .22 Long Rifle has the heaviest rimfire bullet available for the sport, and offers higher muzzle and down range velocity than .22 standard



velocity rounds. The 42 grain truncated cone bullet is similar in design to the big bore silhouette bullets, and functions smoothly in automatic pistols and rifles.

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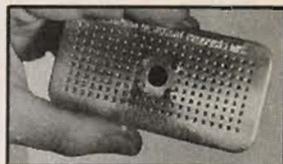
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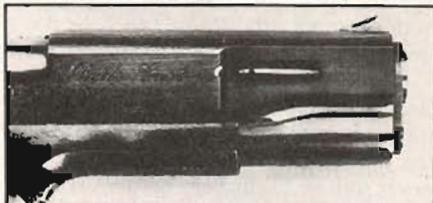


XS 83-1

WHAT'S NEW

Auto-Port reduces recoil of big bore autos

Bell's Custom Shop recently introduced "Auto-Port" a system of porting auto pistol barrels. The barrels are ported on the sides (not on top) and the slide is relieved at the position of the ports. Bell's claims that this method of porting keeps the barrel in a relative state of equilibrium (it is not pushed down as in top-ported barrels) and reduces the muzzle flash which impairs the view of the front sight.



The Auto-Port system can be applied to all autos and revolvers. From Bell's Custom Shop, 3315 Mannheim Rd., Franklin Park, IL 60131.

Three new revolvers from Charter Arms

Responding to the introduction of the .32 H&R Magnum, Charter will have its Police Undercover revolver chambered for this cartridge. The Model 83320 will feature a 2" barrel, blued finish, and regular or "pocket" hammers.

The Charter Arms "Bulldog" .44 Special is now available with a 2½" barrel and full length ramp front sight. Other features include a smooth "pocket" hammer and walnut Bulldog stocks relieved for use of speedloaders.



The 1984 models of the Charter Arms .357 Magnum Bulldog Tracker will include a 2½" barrel version with full length ramp front sight and an adjustable wide-notch rear sight.

All of these new models should be available from your local dealer, or contact Charter Arms, 430 Sniffens Lane, Dept. AH, Stratford, CT 06497.

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THE NEW *SuperVel* AMMO

High-performance line includes Qualifier loads, which are assembled in remanufactured brass. Qualifier ammo is less costly than Super Vel; almost as accurate. Sierra jacketed hollowpoints are used.

By Don Zutz

The concept of driving jacketed hollow points at maximum velocities for positive bullet upset started with *Super Vel* ammunition during the 1960s.

The man behind this venture, which brought handgunning into the 20th century, was Lee Jurras; shortly thereafter, he was also involved with the Auto-Mag pistol design.

Jurras never did patent his jacketed bullet concept; soon after his ideas and



Author tests ammo by chronographing and shooting for accuracy at same time. Here, a Ruger .44 Magnum reaches full recoil with 240-grain Super Vel load.

loads hit the market, other manufacturers came up with the same type fodder. Business vicissitudes being what they are, the Indian-based *Super Vel* plant eventually changed ownership, and the product which once excited handgunners began to fade from the market.

But the *Super Vel* slide seems to have ended with another change in ownership, which has brought the company to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.

Now operating under the corporate banner of FPC, Inc., *Super Vel* is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Prestige-Pak. Its president, Jim Kuber, is an ardent military

collector who reloads his own .50 caliber machine gun ammo.

That FPC, Inc. is determined to make a success of the business by restoring the name and prestige of the product is made obvious by the totally new building and equipment it has acquired; to date, I'm told, the start-up cost was roughly \$2 million.

Jim Kuber's son, Chris, is manager of operations at the new *Super Vel* plant. As he guided me through the plant I was impressed by the orderly operation and concern for quality. All the machines acquired from the original *Super Vel* plant were reconditioned prior to start up, which cost the new owner dearly in time and dollars; during that period, in 1982, the *Super Vel* name virtually fell out of sight, because there was no product around and no advertising was done. But the reconditioning has paid off in better quality ammo and a more efficient operation.

VISUAL INSPECTION

To maintain quality, *Super Vel* produces small runs of 10,000 rounds. Loads are given close visual inspection along the way, and machine operators and packers are expected to eyeball each round. There is a triple check on powder charges. All ammo is packed by hand.

What impressed this writer was the testing area. The new building embraces a 50-yard indoor range—complete with closed-circuit TV—a universal receiver and many barrels for pressure checks, a Ran-

Continued on page 76



Bullet pull tests are important in maintaining uniform ballistics with 110-grain .38 Special loads; especially +P's.

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ducer and oscilloscope tandem for reading
the burning curves. The latter instrumen-
tation is especially important when de-
veloping the maximum-velocity loads for
which *Super Vel* strives to achieve as the
best guarantee of bullet expansion.

Next to the range is a well equipped
loading room, complete with a primer sen-
sitivity tester, bullet pull tester, a delicate
Ainsworth electronic scale, and case after
case of virtually every handgun imagina-
ble for velocity, accuracy, and function
testing.

But the bottom line is *how does the am-
munition perform for customers?* With that
question in mind—and with some help
from an enthusiastic shooter named Mike
Drossel—I gathered a variety of *Super Vel*
loads to check their velocities and accuracy
on the range.

Before getting into the exact results,
however, I must note that there are two
distinct lines of ammo coming from the
new plant. One is the original: *Super Vel*.
The other is a new line with a trademark
established by FPC, Inc.: *Qualifier*.

SPARKLING NEW BRASS

The theory behind *Super Vel* is the same
as always: it's loaded to high velocities for
high impact and the best insurance of
proper hollow-point expansion. It is made
of sparkling new brass drawn with the
Super Vel headstamp, packaged in bright
yellow boxes, and is ideal for combat
events, bowling pin shoots, or law enforce-
ment duty usage. Where appropriate,
some handgunners have employed *Super
Vel* for certain hunting situations.

Qualifier loads are also given equally
high velocities, but they are assembled in
remanufactured brass, as supplied by law
enforcement units or target ranges. This
keeps the cost of production down; *Qualifier*
ammunition, therefore, is consid-
erably less costly than top-of-the-line
Super Vel. Otherwise, the same quality
components—American-made powders
and primers, plus mainly Sierra jacketed
bullets—are the same as in *Super Vel* loads.

The theory behind *Qualifier* ammo is in-
teresting. Jim Kuber has long believed that
law enforcement personnel are wrong in
using light wadcutter loads to practice, or
to qualify; for such mild rounds, 2.7 grains
of Bullseye and a 148-grain wadcutter bul-
let have entirely different recoil, blast, ac-
curacy, and point of impact than do the
more potent duty loads. It is his contention
that law enforcement departments would
be saving their officers' lives by insisting
they use full-power duty loads while going
through annual, semi-annual or monthly
qualification courses. Thus, he has come
up with the *Qualifier* concept—a less costly
version of the potent *Super Vel* duty
loads—and has gradually convinced police
chiefs and county sheriffs all over the U.S.
that he's right. Many departments are
shipping him their used brass to be re-
loaded with *Qualifier* recipes of various
sorts. Combat and bowling pin shooters

may also be interested in *Qualifier* ammo, which gives them much gusto for their money.

VELOCITY TESTS

Our chronographing was done with an Oehler M33 and Skyscreens five feet apart for 10-foot instrumental readings. A target stand was propped up 25 yards away, in line with the screens so that accuracy could be checked simultaneously with velocity.

We ran all three types of .45 ACP ammo through a Gold Cup auto, modified for combat. According to *Super Vel* data sheets, the 190-grain JHP in *Super Vel* persuasion should produce 1,050 fps., from a five-inch pressure barrel, and 960 fps., from a shorter Colt Commander. The Gold Cup gave it an average of 977 fps., with a high reading of 1,037 fps. and a low of 939 fps. This I deem a good showing, as guns seldom give the same high readings as a pressure barrel. The speed was obviously enough to enhance bullet upset within .45 ACP ranges.

There are two .45 ACP loads in the *Qualifier* line: A 185-grain jacketed HP and a 230-grain metal cased RN. With the 185-grainer, which has a slightly smaller cavity than the *Super Vel* 190, we got an average of 968 fps., while the 230-grain loading averaged 841 fps., both five-shot stings. I have no established *Super Vel* standard for the 230-grain *Qualifier* load, but the company reports 950 fps. for the 185-grain JHP, which our shooting topped by 18 fps. on average. Thus, our test loads were indeed doing what FPC literature said they would on a velocity basis.

Shooting loads designed mainly for high velocity isn't the way to go for optimum accuracy. The groups shot by the above .45 ACP loads, however, were considered totally adequate for combat and bowling pin shoots, running 3-3½ inches at 25 yards.

Switching to a new S&W L-frame with a 6-inch barrel, we fired .38 Special +P and .357 Magnum loads. First came the premium *Super Vel* +P rounds with 110-grain JHPs that FPC listed at 1,325 fps. from a 7.71 inch test barrel. We averaged 1,080 fps., ranging between 1,053 and 1,109 fps.

'ADEQUATE FOR DUTY WORK'

When we switched to the lower-priced *Qualifier* loads, also +P, with the same 100-grain JHPs, we got a higher average of 1,093 fps. Here, the high load was 1,138 fps. and the low was 1,063 fps. Groups with both were considered adequate for duty work.

Getting 110-grain +P loads to fire uniformly has been difficult for me as a handloader, since that light pill is pushed ahead quickly by initial pressures and can, therefore, create uniformity woes.

Chris Kuber tells me he has worked out a new method to produce a 50-pound bullet pull on the 110s, thereby improving uniformity. Our samples didn't yet reflect that loading subtlety.

'On another trip to the range, with a
Continued on page 76

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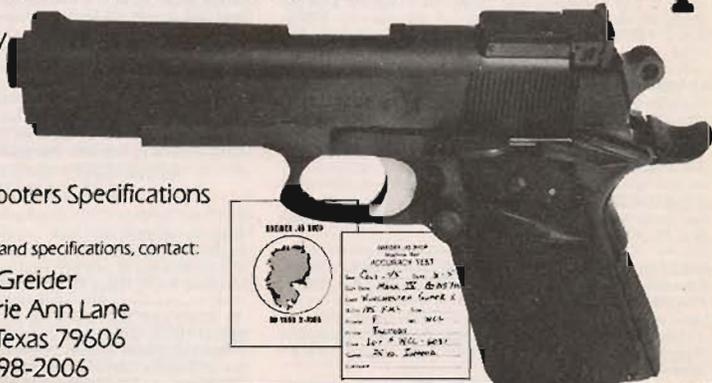
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Pictured with Charter Arms Revolver.

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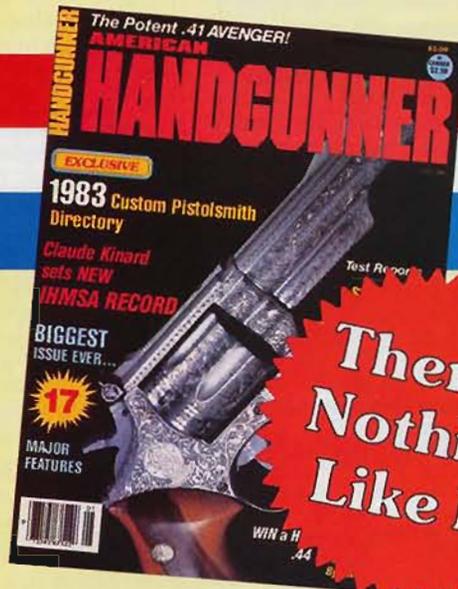
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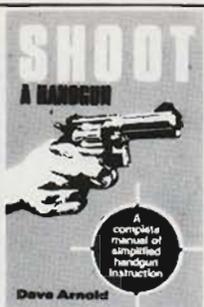
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FOR YOU TECHNICALLY-ORIENTED READERS, A LA JULIAN HATCHER

By Chandler A. Phillips, M.D., P.E.
and J. Draper Phillips

I am writing this story in response to Hampton A. Wallace's letter (March/April 1983 issue, page 64 of the *American Handgunner*), in which he makes the eloquent plea, "all good shooters are looking for a method to predict Relative Stopping Power, one that will be acceptable to everyone."

As an associate professor of biomedical engineering at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio, I often receive copious amounts of cold water doused on me by my associates whenever there is too much academic theorizing. However, I decided to tackle Wallace's challenge. I started with the basics, expanded the problems, amplified upon the expansions, and finally—in order to preserve my sanity—came right back to basics, where I should have stayed in the first place.

The second law of thermodynamics tells us that although energy cannot be created, nor destroyed, it can be transformed. This simply means that the kinetic energy in a speeding bullet (one-half the mass times the velocity squared) can be transformed into use-

ful work (weight times distance), assuming 100 percent efficiency in the transformation. The useful work is that of pushing the weight (of an object struck by the bullet) a given distance, which we shall call the *displacement distance*. Mathematically speaking, it looks like this:

$$dd = \frac{W_b (V_i^2 - V_o^2)}{W_o (450350.)}$$

Where *dd* is the displacement distance in feet, W_b is the bullet weight (in grains), W_o is the weight of the object (in pounds), V_i is the velocity of the bullet entering the object and V_o is the velocity of the bullet leaving the object (in feet per second).

STOPPING POWER DEFINITION

Let us consider the rationale for *dd*, the displacement distance. In simple terms, it is a measure of effective pushing power. This verges on a definition of stopping power; if you push something backwards hard enough, you will stop it. Basic physical principles can define pushing power as a displacement dis-

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tance (see my equation). Stopping power, however, is a physically much more difficult concept to define, since it implies a pushing power which is sufficient enough to "break" the object (and consequently submerges us into a netherworld of the mechanics of bio-materials, which we will studiously avoid).

If one also considers what may be necessary to "break" various psychological factors, it is patently impossible to define stopping power in any quantitative sense. The question really is: *What is "effective" pushing power?*

It is not "kinetic energy" *per se*. For example, if a high-energy bullet punches completely through the object, it exits with some of its kinetic energy still retained (so only a portion of that energy is expended on doing useful work). It is *not* "momentum." The conservation of momentum equation will show any interested problem solver that a 150-pound person, moving at four miles per hour when impacted by a 230-grain bullet (moving at 850 fps), will be slowed down by less than four percent of the original velocity. This equation would lead us to believe that the person would have to be hit by a .45 bullet at point blank range *more than twenty-five times*, in order to reduce velocity to zero.

Effective pushing power is "effective displacement distance," which we shall now examine, using our equation. The d is proportional to the bullet weight (giving an edge to the heavier calibers). It is also proportional to the *velocity squared difference* between entering velocity and exiting velocity. Once understood, this allows some interesting observations.

A heavy bullet (or a lighter bullet which "expands" or "tumbles") presents a larger cross-sectional area for impact. This means it encounters more resistance to penetration and is slowed down more. Consequently, it exits at a lower velocity (than a light bullet which punches through), or does not exit at all. In this (non-exiting) case, all of the kinetic energy is transformed into useful work.

PHILLIPS' RULE OF THUMB

Finally, displacement distance is inversely proportional to the weight of the object. These latter two observations (that is, non-exiting bullet and effect of the object's weight) lead to the useful "Phillips' rule of thumb for displacement distance."

Simply take the bullet's kinetic energy in foot-pounds (as published in any standard ballistics table) and divide it by the weight of the object to be stopped (in pounds). The result of this simple operation will be the displacement distance (in feet).

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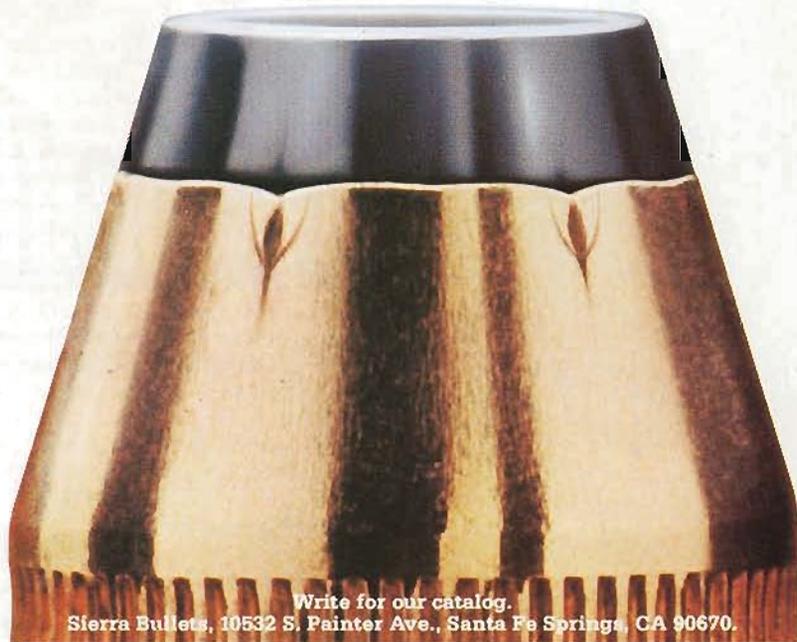


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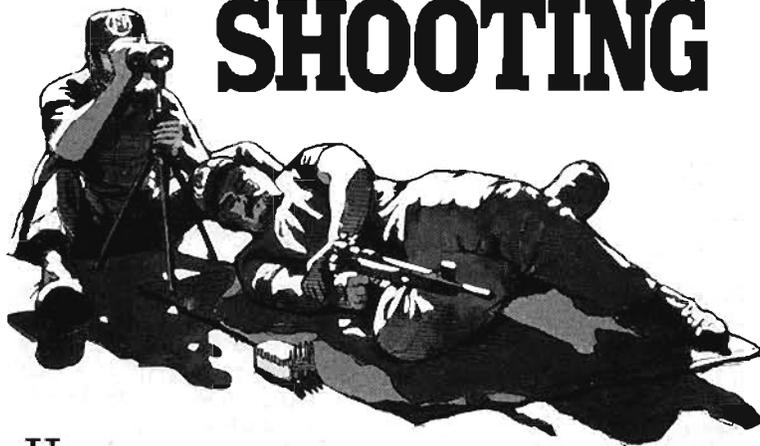
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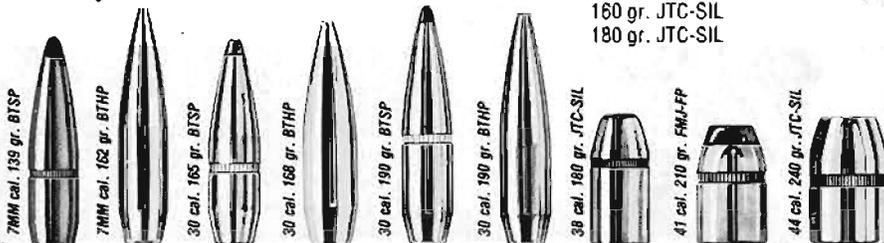
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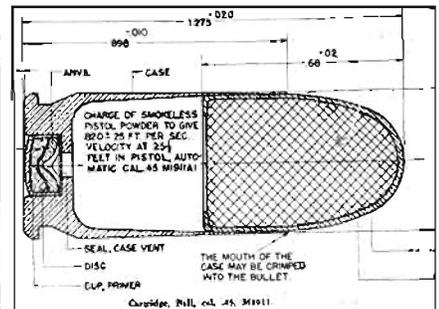
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known, but only bullet weight and velocity (at a given distance), simply plug this data into our equation (and let the exit velocity, V_0 , be zero).

I obtained interesting results when this method was applied to three popular calibers. Using a published ballistics table for Federal ammo (page 475 of the 1982 edition of Stoeger's *Shooter's Bible*), I used "Phillips' rule of thumb" for a .357 Magnum jacketed hollow point, a .45 ACP full metal case, and a



.38 Special lead wadcutter (Federal load nos. 357E, 45A, and 38A). Displacement distance for a 150-pound person was slightly over 3½ feet, slightly under 2½ feet, and slightly over one foot, respectively, for these three popular rounds.

First, by performing this exercise, one gets a clear mental picture of how all these bullet weights, velocities, and kinetic energies translate into *physical reality*. Second, the analysis shows that the .357 Magnum is more effective than the heavier .45 caliber. Third, this approach indicates—to those of us who keep a .38 Special loaded with lead wadcutters at home for personal protection—that a displacement distance of *at least one foot* is probably the lower limit for effective pushing power.

The search to "predict relative stopping power" certainly will continue, especially for a quantitative index. I hope my approach will prove useful to many readers of the *American Handgunner*. Certainly, it will be interesting for them to sit down with a standard ballistics table and "check out" the displacement distance of their favorite gun/ammo combination.

Just like Julian Hatcher did, many years ago.



SUPER VEL

Continued from page 76

S&W K38, I got some excellent five-shot groups with the 110-grain Super Vel offerings. Apparently the company has things pretty well under control for this loading.

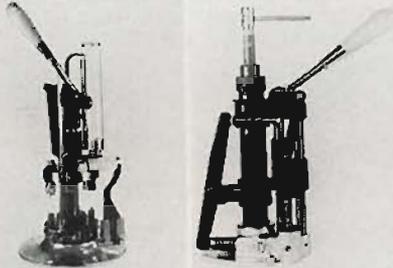
Of the groups fired, the best came with .357 Magnum loads in the L-frame. The 158-grain *Qualifier* loading clocked an average 1,205 fps., having extremes of 1,181

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and 1,236 fps. Its initial five-shot group looked good, so Mike Drossel plastered five more into the same target for an entirely acceptable 10-shot cluster. According to my data sheet, this load is regulated for about 1,200 fps. by FPC, so the samples were up to promises.

Super Vel .357 Magnum rounds with 150-grain JHPs pounded out at 1,205 fps., somewhat below the published figure of 1,300 fps., for a six-inch Colt Python. These loads were quite uniform, producing 1,199 fps. at the low end, and 1,220 at the high. Its group was just slightly larger than the .357 *Qualifier*'s.

Using a Pachmayr grip, the L-frame was easy to handle with either of the .357 Magnum offerings.

The final loads we checked were .44 Magnums with 240-grain JHPs. The gun was a 7½ inch barrel Ruger. The *Qualifier* loads hit an average of 1,334 fps., close to FPC's published 1,350 fps. for the same package. It, too, was very uniform, ranging from 1,298 to 1,320 fps.

Switching to *Super Vel* with 240s, we also had a basic performance over 1,300 fps., except for one light load that tumbled to 886 fps., which dragged the overall average down. Without the light load, this number also would have measured above 1,300 fps. Some loads reached 1,333-1,353 fps., nudging the published average of 1,385 fps. from the factory's 7½ inch barrel Ruger.

Groups fired with the .44 Magnum loads had a vertical pattern; the light ones fell well below the point of aim. In general, they were three-to-four-inch strings. Later, during random plinking, I fired two of these .44 SV loads offhand at a target 100 yards out; I held both bullets within six inches of each other horizontally. The loads are potent enough, and they should interest both silhouette shooters and some handgun hunters.

On another day at the range, I used 9mm Luger ammo in a Browning P35. The company lists 1,285 fps. for the 112-grain JSP from such a gun; my loads fell a mite short at 1,236 fps. These were top-drawer SV loads. *Qualifier* 9mm loads did about the same, and groups were virtually identical—about 3½ inches—at 25 yards.

On an overall basis, the various *Super Vel* and *Qualifier* loads come close to their published data. Although I reported accuracy as we found it, there is no doubt that other guns in other hands will do differently. Our test loads were not specially run; rather, they were drawn from inventories at random. A complete listing of current loads and prices may be had by writing Kevin J. Murphy, POB Box 757, Salem, NH 03079; or FPC/Super Vel, Rt. 2, Hamilton Road, Fond du Lac, WI 54935.

Qualifier ammunition may be less costly than *Super Vel*, but it shoots almost as well and could be a bargain for those who want high performance without high prices.



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A LEFT-HAND .45 AUTO? HOW ABOUT A .32 MAGNUM FROM FEDERAL & H&R!

There are a few new items known at the time this is written; the bulk of the new guns and ammo being announced at the big SHOT Show in January. However, we have learned that Federal is introducing a new handgun cartridge that may seem familiar to American Handgunner readers. This is the .32 H&R Magnum, named for a series of revolvers chambered for the round, introduced by Harrington & Richardson.

The round will feature a 95 grain semi-wadcutter bullet and a muzzle velocity of 1030 fps. That's comparable to the .38 Special 110 gr. +P. I'm sure that Dan Cotterman will have something to say about this loading as soon as guns and ammo are available.

I wonder just how many left-handers there are out there who shoot .45 autos? There must be a good number, for Randall Firearms Co. will soon be introducing the first left-handed .45 to the market. This will be a mirror image of the Randall .45's now on the market (with the 9mm to follow shortly). It will be noted that the ejection port on the left side will be most apparent, but how about a left-handed magazine? Even the twist of the Randall 10-groove barrel will be reversed.

We will be watching for a new cartridge from Devel, a super .38 Super. Impressive ballistics, and well above major power factor for IPSC shooting; this cartridge will be offered in a new Devel Gammon pistol.

Bill Wilson is expanding his product line and services. He recently acquired Metaloy Industries, formerly of Tulsa, Oklahoma, and now offers this finishing service. Metaloy is a hard R/C 72 surface finish that is rust resistant and attractive satin silver in appearance. Bill also offers his new Beavertail Grip Safety for the 1911 style auto pistol; available in either blued steel or stainless, it requires some frame contouring and fitting to the trigger stirrup.

As of this date, according to Bill Ruger, Jr., the .357 Maximum Ruger revolvers are still not ready for release. Ruger engineers are still working on the several problems—top strap cutting and barrel forcing cone erosion—that have plagued this revolver. Bill also admitted that they have made up a couple of experimental Hawkeye single

shot pistols for the hot .357 Maximum. I believe these were made up during the early stages of experimentation, and probably do not foretell future production.

Speaking of Ruger, we hear of a stainless .22 auto pistol from AMT that resembles the Ruger Mark II. AMT has had good success with their stainless steel add-on barrels for the Ruger .22, and a complete gun, if of good quality and priced right, would be a natural.

In the world of big business, we hear that Lear-Siegler (not the Lear Jet people) are making a bid to purchase controlling stock of Bangor Punta—which would include the Smith & Wesson operation. No word at this time if the bid is successful, nor what plans Lear Siegler has for the gun business.

Here's a scoop for AH readers. Wildey Moore, who left Wildey Arms and all of the financial and mechanical problems associated with it, is back on track with several new and innovative designs that should be ready this year.

The first is a completely new gas operated pistol for the .45 Mag., 9mm Mag., and the .30 Carbine rounds. Secondly, Will is working on a conversion unit for the 1911-type .45's which will convert it to the proper calibers and into a gas-operated pistol. We will alert our readers when production is started.

Aron Lipman of Personal Protection Systems, Ltd. (101 Pittston Ave., Scranton, PA 18505) has contracted with Bob Cogan of Accurate Plating of Clearwater, Florida to produce a compensator-counterweight system for most auto pistols, from .22 through .45 caliber. For under \$300 PPS will make up a new barrel, threaded to accept their compensator. When you want a carry gun, you merely slip off the compensator and slip on a protecting bushing; you do not have to send your gun for fitting. This should be available by the time you read this.

PPS is also offering The Max, a stainless Walther PPK/S with an action job, grooved rear slide, relieved front trigger guard, glass beaded finish, three-dot sighting system, the compensator system mentioned above, and Pachmayr stocks with special engraved medallion. Cost, about \$1095.





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