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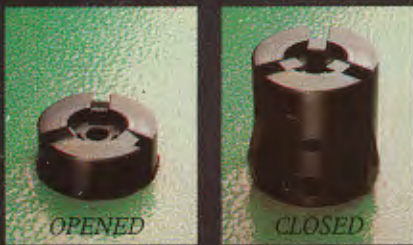
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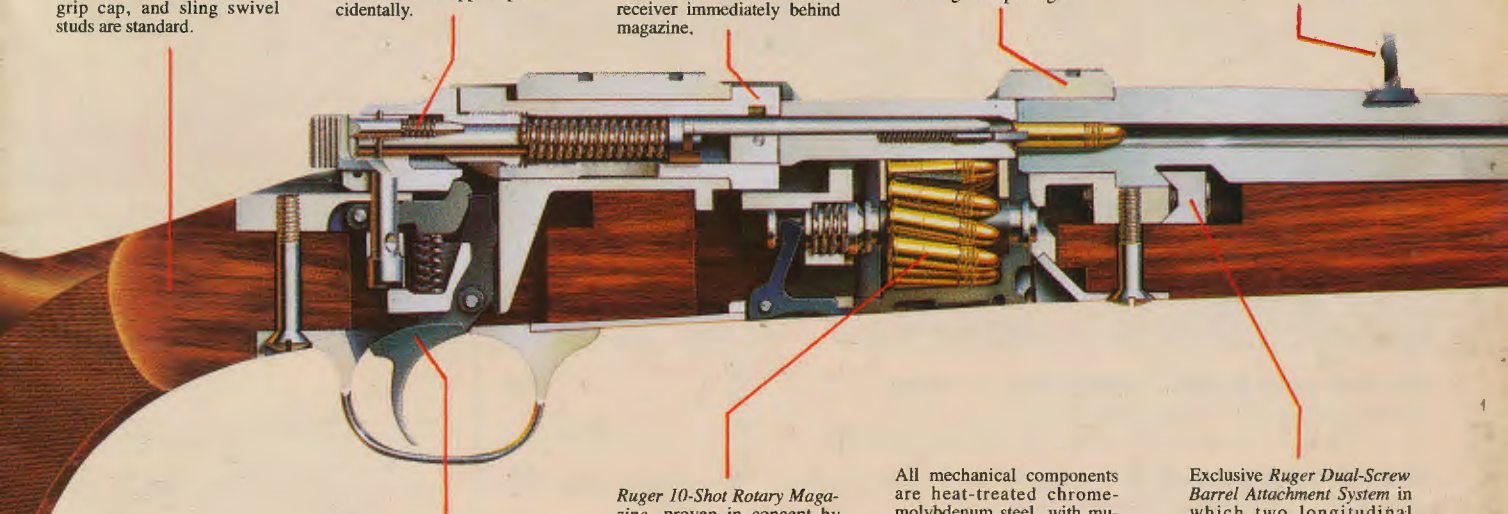
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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, 1984 Vol. 9, No. 49

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COVER: Brian Enos at Bianchi VI, photo by Massad Ayoob.

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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

COMMENTS ON POWDER BURNING RATES AND LOADS FROM READERS

The first burning-rate list, established a mere 20 years ago, included 60 powders then available to handloaders. Roughly two thirds of that number represented powders that were suitable to the stoking of at least a few of the many handgun cartridges. Since then, others have been introduced and the ladder, from Bullseye on down, has been extended. That's great, but anyone who is aware of the countless circumstances the handloader encounters in terms of case sizes, case designs, bullet weights, barrel lengths, and so on and on, also is aware that even this generous selection of powders is fraught with gaps. The problem, as concerns specific performance in every type of handloading situation, may never be solved to everyone's satisfaction. Still, it's reassuring to know the industry is trying.

Which leads to a letter from Marty Liggins, R&D man at Accurate Arms Co., Rt. 1, Box 167, McEwen, TN 37101. He writes: "The easiest way to explain the burning rates (of A.A.'s handgun powders) is to tell you which current commercial powders are closest in charge weight/velocity ratio to ours. The cw/v ratio for Blue Dot is quite similar to our #7; our #9 is close to 2400; our MP-5744 is an orphan in that nothing is really close, but IMR-4227 and IMR-4198 surround it. #7 was developed for the 9mm Luger, #9 is best suited for magnum handgun rounds, and MP-5744 is best in 'one-hand rifles' (Contender, Wichita, etc.). We've used MP-5744 in everything from the .22 Hornet to the .45-70, and have had at least acceptable success in most calibers. In some calibers results have been nothing short of excellent. Currently, we are listing MP-5744 as a general-purpose powder that is excellent for cast bullet loads.

"We are using standard primers for all three of these powders. All of the spheroid powders we are currently marketing are more consistent

with standard primers. Magnum primers tend to give more erratic velocity readings.

"At the moment we have another pair of powders in development that will be suitable for use in handguns. Hopefully, one or both of them will be suitable for target-load .38s. Currently, our powders are too slow for that use."

Liggins included a brief table of handgun loads so we could scan the performance of the three powders mentioned.

The foregoing is just a sample of handgun loading data available from Accurate Arms. If you'd like to see more, drop Marty Liggins a line at the address given. Meanwhile, tests will continue with #7, #9, and MP-5744. Also, I'll be working on bringing my original powder burning rate list up to date, for publication in a future issue of *American Handgunner*.

Gaylord D. Gorham, pistolsmith at the Vanishing Brook Gun Shop, 370 East St., Sharon, CT 06069, was interested in our comments on loading the .38 Super and the .45 auto. He writes: "I would like to pass along my loads and findings. In regard to cast bullets, I have been using several styles in .45 and .38 that are hard cast, moly lubed and wax lubed by Bob Foster, of Foster's Bullets, RD 10, Kent Shore Dr., Carmel, NY 10512.

"One is a .45, the H&G #292, 230-grain flat-base, similar in shape to Hornady's jacketed one. Using WW-231 in charges from 5.2 to 5.8 grains in increments of 2/10ths-grain, any primer, any brass, seated to 1.200" to 1.210" LOA and roll-crimped, it shoots like a bandit in any .45 auto it's been tried in. Also, by roll-crimping, it feeds flawlessly, even in an un-throated pistol, partly due to the shape, lube, and crimp.

"As to the .38 Super, I use Foster's 9mm 120-grain FNBB (121-122-grain) cast hard and lubed the same as the .45 bullet. As you have

Continued on page 10

Caliber	Bullet Wt. & Type	Powder	Grains	Velocity
9mm	90-gr. HP	#7	8.5	1063
	115-gr. HP	#7	7.8	1061
	125-gr. FMJ	#7	7.0	926
	125-gr. cast	#7	7.3	1020
.30 Herrett	165-gr. GC	5744	17.5	1570
	180-gr. GC	5744	15.0	1400
.41 Magnum	210-gr. cast	#7	11.5	1000
	220-gr. SWC	#7	11.5	930
.45 ACP	230-gr. FMJ	#7	10.5	870
.45 Win. Mag.	230-gr. FMJ	#9	20.0	1510
	230-gr. FMJ	5744	24.0	1400
.357 Magnum	158-gr. cast	5744	16.0	1085
	158-gr. cast	#7	10.6	1083
.44 Magnum	240-gr. cast	#7	15.5	1313



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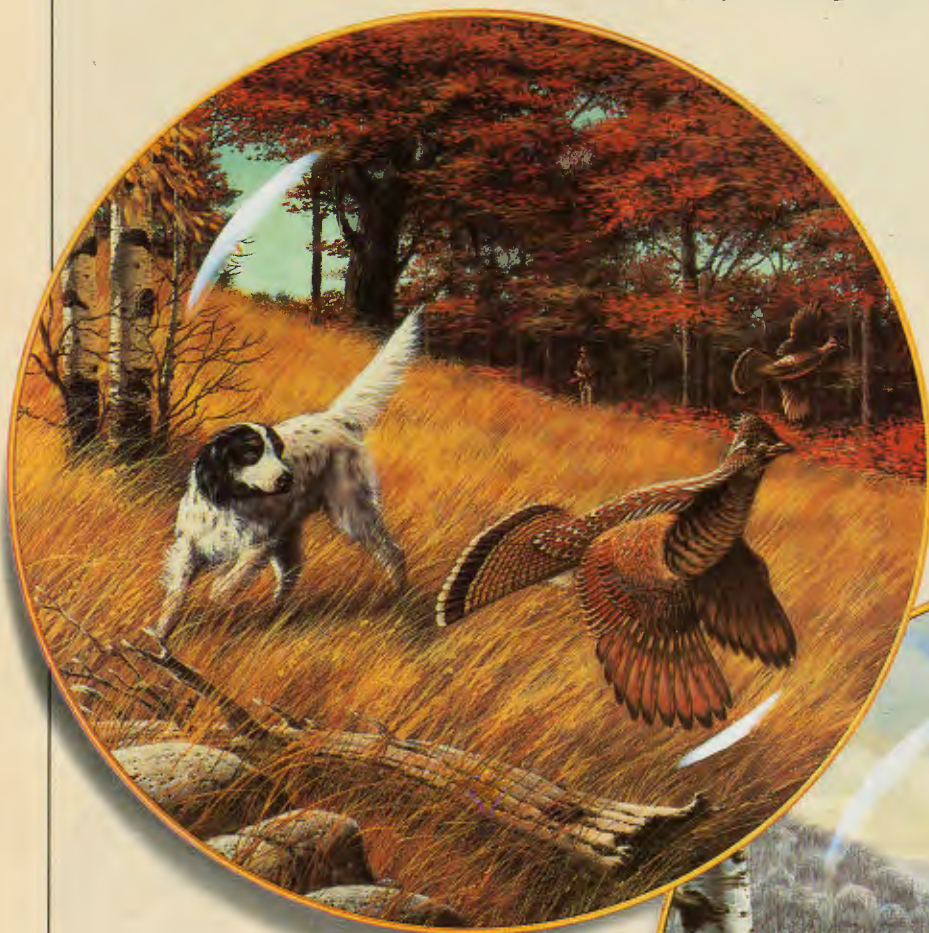
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For *intricate, authentic detail*, look closely at the *underside* of the Green Winged Teal — each feather meticulously defined — as the bird powers into the sky at the black Labrador's approach.

And for the thrilling *spirit of action*, consider November's plate — The Ruffed Grouse. Disturbed by the Setter, the birds seem to have *hurtled* into the air, to begin their streaking, low-level flight. The 'just-as-it-happened' feeling is superbly captured. And the *composition* — placing the action on a 'stage' bounded by a stone fence in the foreground and the reddish-gold foliage of the trees behind — is yet another demonstration of Michaelsen's abundant artistic talent.

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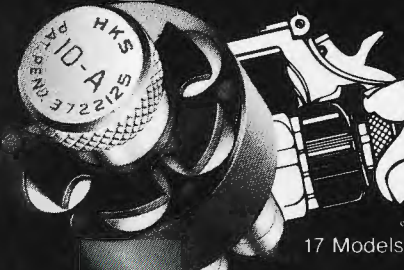
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HANDLOADING

Continued from page 6

found in your trials with the .38 Super, SR-4756 works quite well. I load this bullet with charges of from 7.0 grains, for fun, to 9.0 grains, for serious carry. These loads are hot, and make major in IPSC. This lead bullet is also sized .357" diameter for my particular Colt .38 Super. This load shoots 1½" to 2" hand-held groups all day if the shooter does his part.

"These charges should *not* be used in any of the older .38 autos, or re-chambered 9mm Lugers . . . also, don't use .357"-diameter bullets, because of the smallish bore and groove diameters often encountered in these older and somewhat questionable guns.

"I have been shooting these loads and bullets in two Colt .45s and my Colt .38 Super for quite some time, and to date the .45s have about 800 rounds of the lead bullets through them with no apparent heavy leading. The .38 Super has about 350 rounds, hot, with no leading at all."

Mr. Gorham adds a tip on hand-gun barrel care: "My procedure with a new barrel is to hand-lap with J.B. Bore Paste for half an hour, then follow through with regular cleaning with the Lewis Lead Remover. I firmly believe that leading problems can be cured or greatly reduced if the shooter tends to his barrel and treats it right."

Dave Corbin, of Corbin Mfg., P.O. Box 2659, White City, OR 97503, writes to let us know that his company is now making bullet swage dies for the .32 Magnum. This means handloaders will be able to turn out jacketed or swaged bullets in weights and shapes of their choosing. The swage die alone costs \$69.50, and you may be able to use it in your present reloading press, but it's a good idea to check with Dave before ordering. Otherwise, you can get one of his Mity-Mite swaging presses. I haven't had an opportunity to work with this set-up; however, judging from my experiences in testing Corbin tools for other calibers, I'll say his .32 Magnum bullet making tools will be good, and I'll follow in a few issues with a complete report. Meanwhile, if you'd like to have more information, send Corbin a stamped envelope.

Home swaging will solve problems involving the scarcity of bullets of specific shapes and weights in just about any caliber, especially the new .32 Magnum. It is, however, encouraging to note that Hornady is marketing good bullets in .32, notably their latest, an 85-grain JHP. Also, both RCBS and Hornady-Pacific are offering reloading dies for the .32 Magnum, and Federal Cartridge has two factory loads: a 95-grain LSWC and an 85-grain JHP, the latter exiting a 4%ths-inch barrel at 1100 fps. Also, in addition to Harrington & Richardson's considerable selection of .32 Magnum revolvers, Charter Arms' six-shooters in Police Undercover (two-inch), and Police Bulldog (four-inch, adjustable rear sight), and the Ruger Single-Six, in a choice of barrel lengths, will be available.

Gene Milner, Rt. 4, Box 203, Whitewater, WI 53190, found the beef; it was in assertions

Continued on page 13

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The tremendous firepower of the Thompson, with the knockdown punch of the .45 ACP cartridge, made it a favorite of the front line fighting men in Korea in stopping the human wave charges of the Red hordes. It is a proud American firearm to honor the brave Americans who defended freedom in this war.

When you hold this 12-pound weapon, it may bring back memories of those faraway places or — for the first time — let you experience what a friend or family member felt 30 years ago.

This project was created by The American Historical Foundation; each is specially built by Auto-Ordnance Corporation, official manufacturer of the famous Thompson.

Limited Edition of Only 1500

This is a strictly limited edition of only 1500, world-wide. Each is specially serially numbered between 0001 and 1500, with the prefix KW (for Korean War). This number is also inscribed on an accompanying Certificate of Authenticity. Each is being produced in a firing, semi-automatic version or, upon request, in fully-automatic for holders of Class III Federal Firearms licenses (please add \$350).

The fit and finish of each Thompson is presentation grade. Special inscriptions are roll-engraved and gold-gilt inlaid on both sides of the receiver.

Richly Plated with 24-Karat Gold

You sight across the 24-karat gold plated rear sight and the special, gold plated, two-ribbed activator knob. Your eyes move across the 35 deep cooling fins and along the high-polished and blued barrel to the hefty mirror-polished, 24-karat gold plated Cutts Compensator and

front sight. Your finger rests on the 24-karat gold plated trigger. Even the special, black, military style sling is affixed to swivels which are 24-karat gold plated and mounted with four 24-karat gold plated screws.

Genuine GI Stocks — Specially Finished

The solid walnut stocks are genuine GI production — originally made during World War II — as were most of the Thompsons used in Korea. They are now being removed from their original storage crates for this project. For the first time, they are being stained to a rich, extra-dark walnut shade, then given a finish as beautiful as the finest shotguns.

The rear grip is fitted with a black, red and blue cloisonne medallion, embossed with the Great Seal of the United States in the center and bearing commemorative inscriptions. The famous red and blue circular symbol of the Republic of Korea, worn by many GIs in the center of their Korean Presidential Unit Citation, forms the central design of the special cloisonne fired enamel medallions which are custom inset on both sides of the butt stock.

Not Just A Showpiece

But this is not just a showpiece. It is a firing Thompson. Because it fires in the semi-automatic mode, you do not need a special license to own it. Anyone who can own a standard hunting rifle can own the Korean War Commemorative Thompson. And because it's functional, it could even be called upon to defend your home and family — with the same famous .45 ACP ammo GIs and American shooters have used since 1911.

It is a dramatic symbol of combat. Designed by General John T. Thompson, this was the weapon that pioneered the use of General Thompson's term "Sub-machine Gun" — and the first weapon of this type ever issued to U.S. military forces.

The Thompson gained fame in the hands of all our service branches — Army, Marine Corps, Navy, and Air Force. It was the most highly desired, hand-held, close combat assault weapon of the Korean War.

Collector Interest

Only 1500 will be made — making it one of the rarest of all firearms. It is the first commemorative tribute ever issued to honor the Americans who fought in Korea, so it is also in the "first ever" class of distinction. At a time when collectors pay between \$2,000 and \$20,000 for a standard issue Thompson with a unique feature or two recognizable only to the advanced collector, the original issue price of this Thompson is particularly reasonable. It is a piece of workmanship you will enjoy owning and displaying, and you will be proud to pass it along to future generations of your family.

A solid walnut display case, lined with draped and fitted gray velvet, is also available. The entire gun is pro-

tected from dust and unauthorized handling by a clear, plexiglass lid, which is affixed with three solid brass hinges and three solid brass clasps with match-keyed locks.

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This is available exclusively through The American Historical Foundation. You may write, call, personally visit or use the reservation form below. Satisfaction is fully guaranteed, or you may return for a full refund any time within one month.

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The few men, museums and organizations who own one of these will have an extremely rare, firing showpiece which is assured a place of honor in any collection. It is a lasting, tangible embodiment of the courageous deeds and sacrifices of our countrymen who made that important first stand against Communism.

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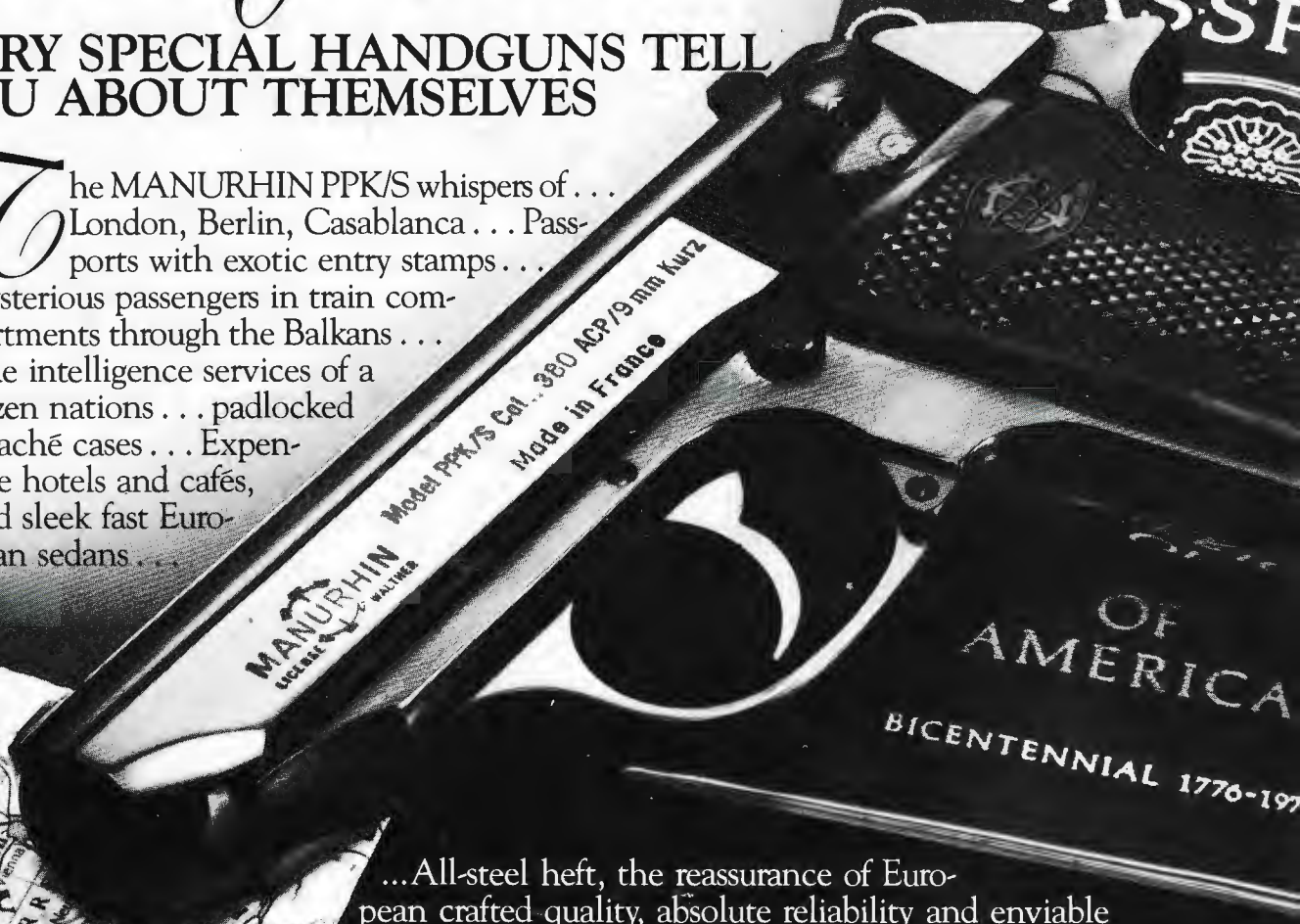
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that the .38 Special isn't enough gun. While he was working with the old Special, he ground out a solution to recoil in .357 Magnum snubbies.

Milner writes: "Over the years, I've read many articles about how inadequate the .38 Special is as a defense cartridge. I swallowed those articles, and looked at the S&W Model 10 in my bedroom as being inadequate.

"I've played with four .357 Magnum snubguns; three Rugers and one Smith. The S&W Model 13 three-inch is the gun that feels right for me.

"The only problem is that all these fixed-sight guns hit where the sights are pointed with 158-grain magnum ammo only, and that stuff is a real bear to shoot in a 2¾-inch Speed Six or 3-inch Model 13.

"I decided to try to come up with a handload that hit where the fixed sights were pointed, kicked less than factory 158-grain .357 ammo, and outperformed +P .38 Special ammo.

"Here's what I came up with . . . I must warn you that I have not spent much time working with this load: Once-fired .357 case, W-W primer (standard, not magnum), 6.1 Red Dot, 160-grain hardcast SWC. This is a maximum load in my Model 13.

"Here is a list of maximum loads taken from the manuals in my library: Speer #9, .357 Magnum, 158-grain LSWC, 5.2 grains of Red Dot; Speer #10, 158-grain JHP, 6.7 grains of Red Dot; Hornady #2, 158-grain LSWC, 6.5 grains of Red Dot; also Hornady #2, 158-grain JHP, 6.6 grains of Red Dot.

"All the warnings about working up to a maximum load and watching for pressure signs are definitely worth listening to. 6.0 grains of Red Dot was looking good . . . recoil was tame and there were no pressure signs. Ditto for 6.1 grains of Red Dot: no pressure signs, tame recoil, hit where the sights were pointed, etc. 6.2 grains Red Dot—extraction seemed a little sticky, 6.3 grains Red Dot, extraction was definitely sticky and the primers looked 'funny.'"

Milner concludes by noting that, had he begun his experiment with one of the 6.5, 6.6, or 6.7-grain charges the manuals list as maximum, he might have been "in big trouble."

And what of Milner's beef over the shortcomings of the .38 Special? Well, while he was working with the .357, he chanced to fire a variety of .38 Special +P loads into, of all things, wet newspapers. Good expansion of bullets resulted, probably somewhere in the sports section.

This handloader's observations on the value of heeding warnings with respect to approaching maximum loads with caution should be noted by all. Never begin your attempt to work up an accurate load by using a maximum charge.

We're holding back on publishing letters that deal with handgun accuracy using wooden versus rubber grips. There's been a lot of response, both pro and con, and we'd like to wait till all the votes are counted before we say more.

In the meantime, all of you—handloaders and manufacturers alike—are invited to share your information here. The new address is: Handloading, Rt. 1, Box 7, Llano, CA 93544.



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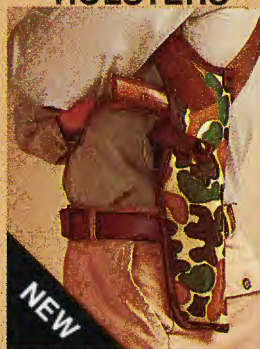
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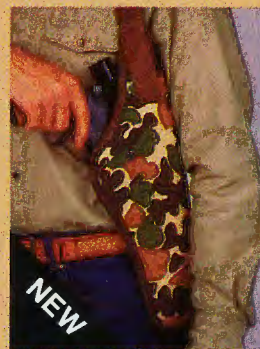
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NEW BOOKS

THE COMBAT .45 AUTOMATIC

By Bill Wilson and Michael Bane
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The past five years has seen Bill Wilson emerge as one of the best of the .45 combat automatic pistolsmiths. In addition to building winning guns, Bill has won many matches including two time winner of the prestigious Second Chance bowling pin match. Wilson has now collaborated with professional writer Michael Bane to produce the definitive book on "The Combat .45 Automatic."

This book will not tell you how to build a combat .45. It will tell you everything you need to know to have a pistolsmith build the best combat .45 auto for your personal needs. Two hundred forty pages long, Wilson's book includes chapters on such topics as "Combat Modifications," "Combat Accessories," "The Full-House Competition Gun," "Proper Maintenance of the Combat Auto" and "Equipment of Champions."

Wilson is surprisingly candid in his coverage of combat modifications and accessories, telling the reader what is necessary, what is only cosmetic, and what to stay away from. In the last category he includes hooked trigger guards and colored front sight inserts. Wilson points out that most current competition holsters won't accept a .45 with hooked trigger guard. About sight inserts he says that with changing light conditions "The point of impact can change as much as 4 inches at 50 yards." A popular modification is deactivating the grip safety, about which Wilson says "... I disagree with disabling any of the safety features on the 1911. Our shop doesn't offer this modification, nor do we recommend it." One can save many times the \$12.95 purchase price of this book by following the author's recommendations. Wilson recommends the Pachmayr rubber combat grips over the more expensive checkering of the frontstrap and mainspring housing. An accessory to stay away from is the extended slide release, about which Wilson says: "An extended slide release is the second "most worthless" thing you can add to a gun. The first "most worthless" is an *ambidextrous* extended slide release!"

"The Full-House Competition Gun" chapter includes a section on what Wilson calls the "Exotics" which include long slides, pin guns and compensated guns. As to the controversy over so called "gadget guns" in IPSC, Wilson says that one of Jeff Cooper's basic principles was that practical shooting presents a problem, and the shooter solves it in any way he/she feels is best. According to Wilson, "One of the most common problems presented is rapid shots against multiple targets, usually at close range." The gadget gun is designed to best solve this problem.

Continued on page 17



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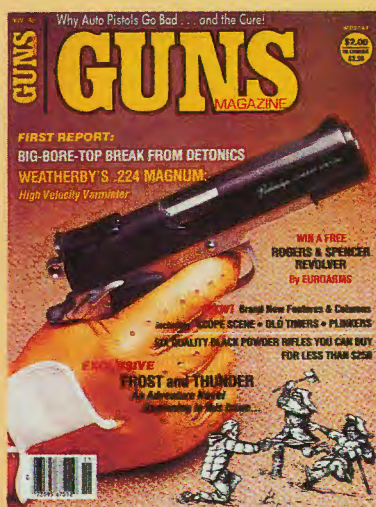
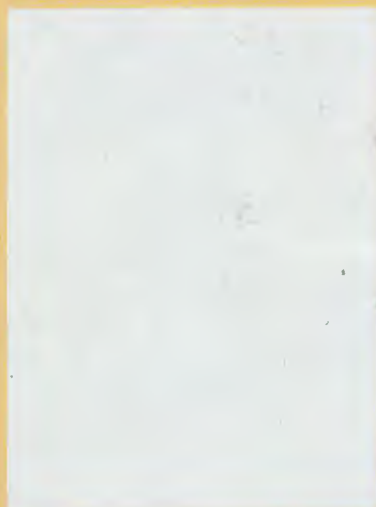
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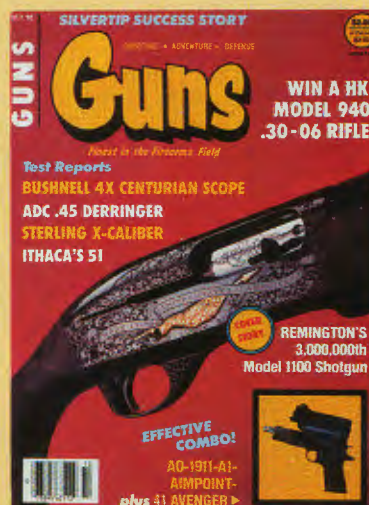
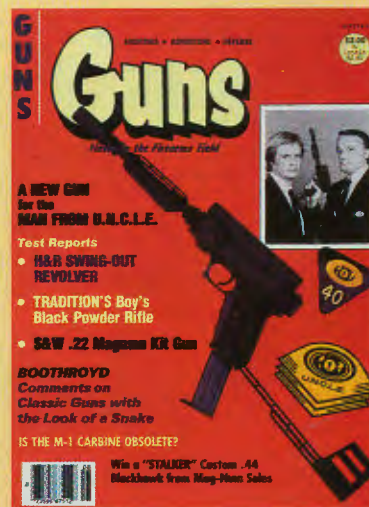
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BOOK REVIEW

Continued from page 14

The chapter on maintenance includes recommendations that recoil springs be replaced every 2000 rounds and firing pin springs every 5000. I was surprised to read that Wilson personally lubricates hammer-sear engagement surfaces with STP automotive oil additive, a trick we used on our competition Fast Draw single action revolvers some 25 years ago.

I found the last chapter, "Equipment of Champions," of special interest. It contains gun, load and leather gear information for 17 of the top IPSC shooters in the U.S., including current U.S. National and World Champion Rob Leatham (gun was a Wilson Accu-Comp).

Every active IPSC shooter, as well as anyone considering acquiring a combat .45 auto, needs a copy of this book. Bob Arganbright.

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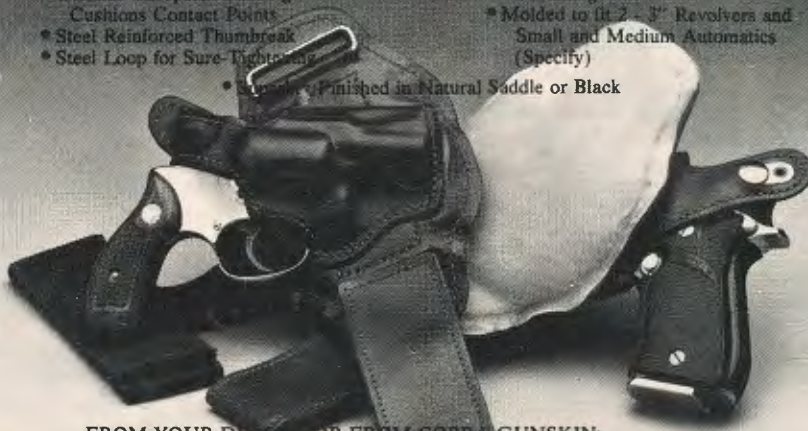
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SILUETAS

PHILIP C. BRIGGS

AN EARLY LOOK AT THE NEW WICHITA INTERNATIONAL SINGLE SHOT PISTOL

It's not often that a shooter designs and builds his own dream gun. Rarer still are those guns that finally end up in production. Bert Stringfellow, long time handgun silhouette shooter and IHMSA VP has done it, with what Bert originally called the Sierra. Now under production by Wichita Arms and marketed by IHMSA (PO Box 1609, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401) the pistol is available for the rest of us to try.

The pistol is all stainless, as you no doubt know by now, and it has a very solid, substantial look about it; the metal has a matte finish and the walnut grips carry a very low gloss finish—they almost look unfinished, in fact. Although all castings, save the barrel, the pistol has a very business-like one-off look to it (which may be due to the roll pins through it—a quality piece of work to be sure. Sights are Wichita's own target sight on the rear and a special Patridge back-slanted blade on the front.

The pistol is a single action—the exposed

hammer must be cocked to fire. This gun is the target version and as it has neither a safety nor an inertia firing pin, it cannot be safely carried loaded either on the range or in the field. There's a quarter-cock notch, but that's only there to hold the hammer off the firing pin while loading and preparing to fire (opening the pistol, by retracting the sliding latch, sets the hammer on quarter-cock).

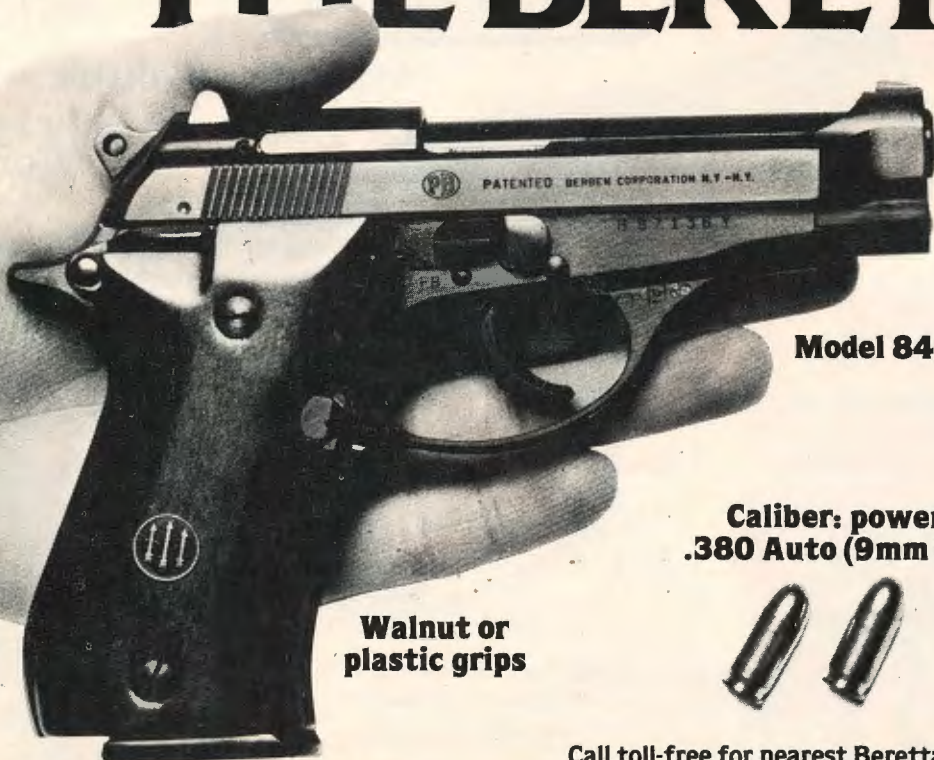
The trigger has an over-travel stop that can be set by the shooter, but no other adjustment. The trigger on the test gun was not only too heavy for competition use, but also erratic. Shooting it standing, the trigger pull felt about the same whether the gun was cocked or not; it'll never discharge if not cocked, but the trigger pull is so heavy the pistol never feels like it will fire—even when the hammer's back. Heavy trigger pulls are a product of our liability-crazed world I guess, but for those of us that can handle a light trigger pull, expect it, this situation is disappointing. Worse yet, the pull varied all

around. Ten tries on the trigger scale as I write this gives: 72, 70, 58, 65, 56, 56, 57, 56, 55 and 57 ounces. Thinking that it had settled down I tried another ten: 60, 64, 57, 58, 63, 69, 71, 70, 56 and 54 ounces. Obviously, it needs a trigger job; no wonder I had so much trouble while shooting standing. To be fair though, I must note that this is an early production gun (SN 45). Hopefully they'll get things worked out so that the later guns will come with a crisp three pound or so pull.

The pistol breaks open, and has a mechanical extractor. As with any break open gun, it has no mechanical advantage on closing, so if the ammo isn't right it won't close. With the tight chambers that are cut in this gun to give you target quality accuracy it means that you'd better start out with new brass and never stretch it with overloads if you expect to have trouble-free operation.

Handling is about what you'd expect for a 60 ounce Colt auto, as the grip angle and frame overhang match John Moses Browning's most famous design. The International points and feels right, with a good looking sight picture whether shooting standing or Creedmoor. Still, if you think that that natural grip angle is without problem, think again. The overhanging frame, in a heavy-recoiling pistol like this one, bites. No way around it; if you're snuggled tight into the frame it will (if your hands are as soft as mine) take a chunk of skin from your first thumb joint (just like my Merrill does). And, just like the Merrill, if you'll pad that joint

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The load table shown is but part of the test program I have planned and is limited to the loads that were recommended in the material that came with the pistol. The manual says that these are mild and they are. If you compare these to what you can get out of a ten-inch 7mm TCU, you'll find that the velocities are about the same. That's partly the result of trying to stay at or below the parent ^{30/30} brass' limit of 40,000 cups in the top loads (the 7mm TCU's limit is 50,000), and partly the backer's intention to keep everybody safe and sound. Still, doing so thwarts the intent of the 7R, that is, deliver a bit more wack from the production guns than the smaller cartridge does. Looking through Hornady's 1983 version of their "Silhouette Loading Data" booklet, I see they used a bit more powder than recommended, but they don't get much more velocity than shown in the table. Still, I plan to give them a try. The top loads shown do produce one to one and a half thousands of pressure ring expansion (in new brass), which means that with the tight chamber that the pistol sports I'm up near top charges for trouble-free operation.

As for the loads themselves, the cartridge seems to have too much capacity for a ten-inch tube; velocity variations are high with most loads, which means that it's liable to be fussy when out to develop accurate loads.

But then again, we won't know until we punch some paper.

I'll be back with the rest of the story.

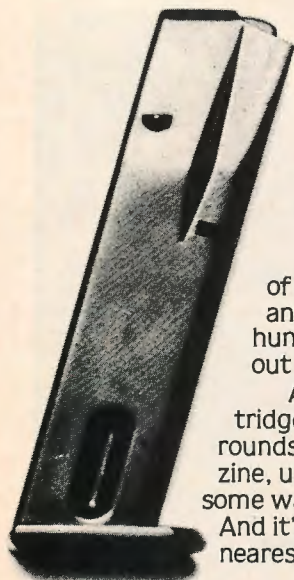


Load Data 7mm International Rimmed Wichita International

Bullet	Powder		Velocity		Remarks
	Type	Charge (grs)	Average (fps)	Spread (fps)	
120 gr. Hornady SP	H322	27.0	1898	228	Top.
		28.0	1941	148	
		29.0	1969	115	
139 gr. Hornady SP	H4895	24.0	1577	188	Top.
		25.0	1602	106	
		26.0	1676	165	
139 gr. Hornady BTSP	H322	24.0	1744	74	Top.
		25.0	1781	52	
		26.0	1811	130	
	748	31.0	1730	119	Top.
		32.0	1760	20	
		33.0	1866	99	
154 gr. Hornady SP	H322	23.0	1643	81	Top.
		24.0	1652	126	
		25.0	1708	131	
	748	29.0	1677	90	Top.
		30.0	1701	113	
		31.0	1746	61	

All velocity data is for one five-shot string, measured ten feet from the muzzle with Oehler Model 33 Chronotach and Skyscreens. Federal large rifle primers (#210) and new, unfired brass used for all loads tested. Data is for illustration purposes only, and should *not* be used as loading recommendations; indicated loads were safe in the test pistol.

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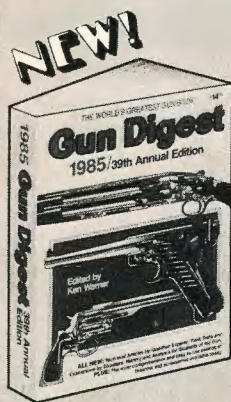


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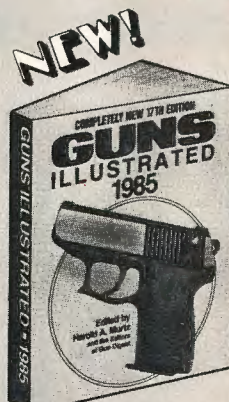
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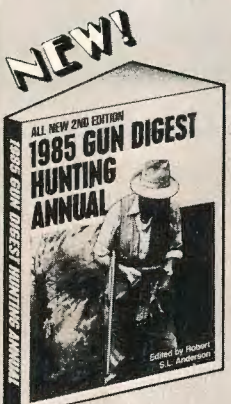
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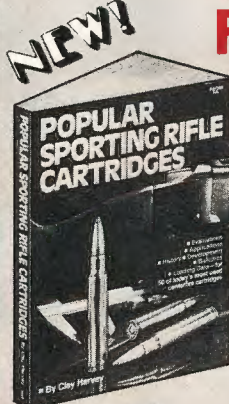
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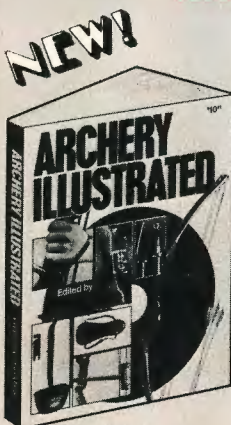
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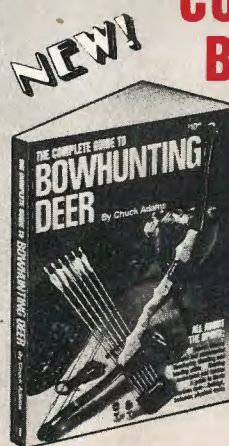
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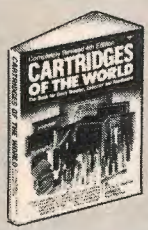
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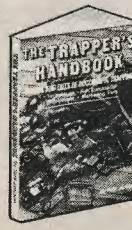
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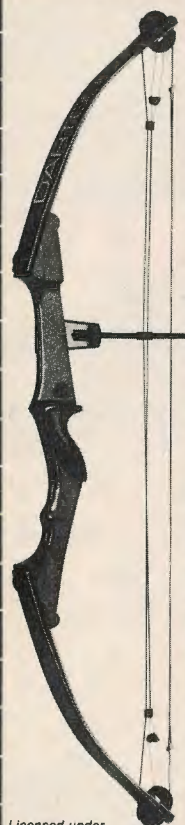
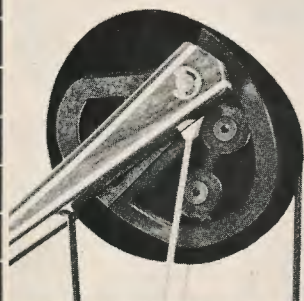
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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

THE AUTO PISTOL FOR POLICE—IT HAS SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS IN ITS FAVOR

Last issue, we discussed some of the numerous advantages of the double-action revolver as a standard service weapon. This issue, let's examine some of the strong points in favor of the service autoloader.

Firepower. Even if you buy the statistic of "2.3 rounds fired per real life gunfight" (which I don't), you can't count on your next encounter being "average." You *can*, if you're

a cop, statistically count on facing more than one offender, often with more potent weapons. The ability to deliver multiple hits and covering fire that can keep their heads down as you move for cover is, when applied judiciously, a possible life-saver.

On Illinois State Police alone, I know of three cases where the greater cartridge capacity and/or speed reloading capability



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saved the lives of four officers. Sgt. Les Davis, facing a charging gunman with an Ithaca shotgun loaded with deer slugs, dropped the man with either the 7th or 8th 100-gr. W-W Powerpoint softnose he fired from his S&W 39. Trooper Kenny Kaas used his 7th 95-gr. Federal softnose to dump a gunman coming at him with a Winchester 20-gauge automatic shotgun, also slug-loaded. There is evidence that the suspect had been counting Kaas' shots, and moved in after the sixth, assuming that Ken's sidearm was empty.

Troopers Bob Kolowski and Lloyd Burchette had to fire 21 W-W 115-grain Silvertip hollowpoints at a two-gun suspect, striking him 13 times; he didn't go down until the 13th bullet. Kolowski was able to reload his Model 39 auto instantly. Had the gunman perceived both troopers to be reloading revolvers instead, he would have been amply capable of moving in on them and murdering them as they crouched behind their squad car.

Required familiarity for operation. With the thumb safety on (so long as you don't make it an oversize thumbshelf of contrasting finish), it is unlikely that the average street punk will be able to figure out how the gun works for several seconds. In addition to the above-named troopers, we believe that at least seven more ISP troopers are alive today who would have been dead had they carried revolvers, because suspects who got their safety-locked 9mm autos away from them couldn't make them work in time to shoot that officer or a fellow trooper.

This has even been known to happen when the suspect had an autoloader stolen from a private citizen. Indiana State Trooper and renowned pistol champion Jerry Wilder once walked up to a suspicious vehicle to investigate it. As he bent down to the right-side window, the man behind the wheel levelled a P-08 Luger 9mm at him. Wilder instinctively drew his S&W model 19 from his Jordan holster and pumped a 158-gr. Remington .357 JSP round through the suspect's chest, right to left.

The gunman tumbled out the left side door, and Wilder moved into a cover position near the left headlights. The suspect apparently pulled the trigger several more times and worked the toggle action, ejecting a live cartridge and chambering a fresh one, before bleeding to death with the still-unfired Luger in his hand. Subsequent investigation showed that the would-be copkiller had failed to disengage the thumb-safety of the stolen Luger.

Autos deliver more accurate rapid fire under stress. Possibly the greatest argument in favor of the autoloader as a general issue weapon is the higher hit probability, due to the much greater ease of firing a self-cocked pistol instead of fighting the 14-pound double action trigger on a two-pound revolver. Police Foundation's studies show that American cops, armed perhaps 99% with the revolver, have a hit probability of only 25% in combat. My studies of the 15-year Illinois State Police experience with the S&W 9mm autoloader show more like a 65% hit probability, with many of the misses occurring with

the first, double-action shot.

ISP, and virtually every other department issuing 9mm or .45 autoloaders, has found a marked increase in range shooting skill on the part of what were formerly their lower-achieving shooters. An expert can learn to overcome the difficulties of double-action shooting . . . the less expert are proportionately more benefitted by the ease of accurate, rapid fire shooting with the auto.

Encouragement of excellence. In one of our few disagreements, my colleague John Farnam argues with my contention that seasoned officers with Master scores should be allowed to carry autos, because he doesn't like the sense of elitism that may arise there-

from. I like the policy for just that reason: if the autoloader in the service holster is a clearly visible "badge of expertise," the officer has more incentive to become skilled with his weapon.

Conclusions: For a number of safety and training reasons, the double-action revolver still makes most sense as a standard police duty weapon in most police departments. But a quality autoloader is in many ways a more efficient weapon for a variety of police combat situations, and if the officer has proven himself to be seasoned and cool under street stress, and to be expert with a high-powered autoloader, I would like to see him authorized to carry it.





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I first became aware of Davis Leather from an article in the July/Aug. 1977 *American Handgunner* by Ira A. Greenburg. A catalog was obtained, where I found Davis offered a full line of competition rigs for the Colt .45 Auto. The rigs in this first catalog showed a heavy Anderson design influence, including low hanging, tied-down, open front rigs and front welt holsters similar to the classic Anderson "Thunderbolt."

It wasn't until the first annual Shooting, Hunting and Outdoors Trade show (SHOT show) that I had the opportunity to closely inspect a Davis rig. The rig was an Usher International model, designed for former IPSC US World Championship team member Jerry Usher. The design had been updated, being a high ride cross-draw holster with adjustable tension screw and sight rails for the use of a high target front sight. I was impressed with the neat execution of the sight rails, which were sandwiched between the holster and lining. After examining this rig, I knew that Gordon Davis was a true master of his craft.

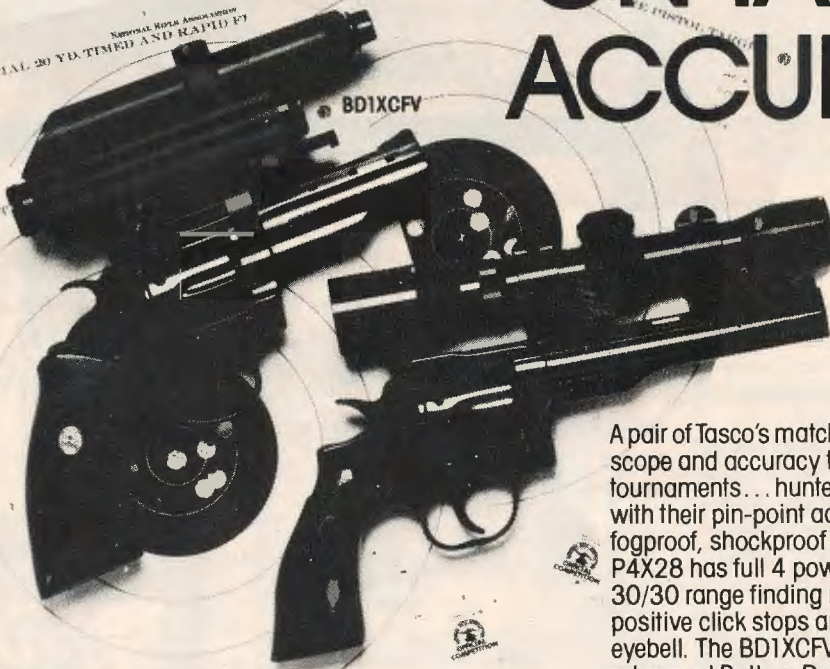
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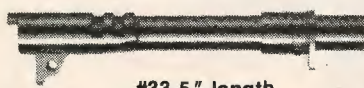
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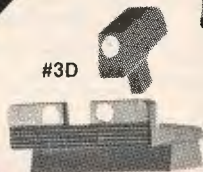
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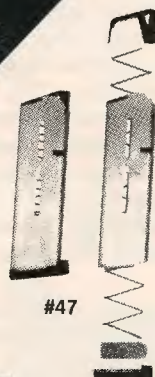
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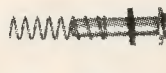
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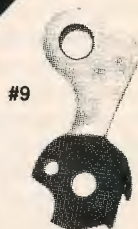
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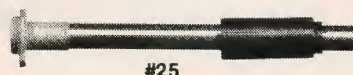
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Team member Jerry Usher, 1983 Bianchi Cup Champion Brian Enos and the new 1983 IPSC World Champion Rob Leatham have used Davis leather.

A recent visit with Gordon revealed how this came about. Forty years old, married with two children, Gordon started in the holster business shortly after finishing high school. His first job in the holster industry was with John Bianchi and Neale Perkins in 1964, when they were partners in Safariland Ltd. When the partnership split with Bianchi forming Bianchi Gunleather, Davis stayed with Safariland as Perkins' only full time employee. Davis eventually moved to Bianchi Gunleather, and then, from 1968 through 1976 he was employed in the saddle making industry. Though he has been a hobby leather worker since the age of 12, Gordon credits Ed Bissel, a third generation saddle maker, with teaching him more about the art of working with leather than anyone else. He points out that a saddle maker uses every part of a cowhide, and to successfully do so he must really know leather.

In 1967 Davis became involved with combat handgunning, shooting with the Southwest Combat Pistol League, known today as the Southwest Pistol League (SWPL). At that time, nearly all competition shooters were using rigs by Anderson or Alfonso of Hollywood.

Business and family pressures forced Gordon out of active competition for a few years.



Davis California Challenger

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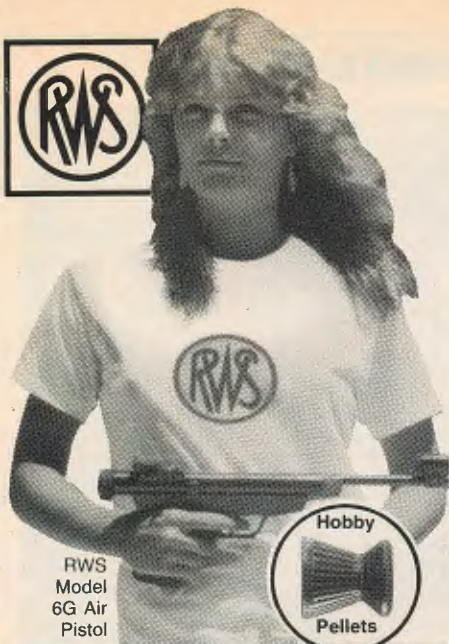
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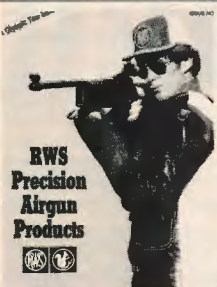
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Returning to combat shooting in 1976, he found that there was a shortage of suitable leather gear, with shooters using every thing from cut down GI flap holsters to Anderson speed rigs. Davis felt that the time was right; he had the necessary knowledge, skill and equipment, and 1977 saw him start Davis Leather Company, catering to the needs of the combat shooter.

While the Davis line of holsters shows the influence of the Anderson Gunfighter line of speed rigs, Gordon feels that Alfonso was very innovative and one of the greatest designers of special speed leather.

In addition to shooting, Gordon enjoys hunting, fishing and travel. He enjoyed vacationing in Paris, France in April 1983 and hopes to return for the European IPSC Championships in September 1984, as a competitor. Though he uses the Colt .45 Auto for IPSC matches, Gordon also enjoys shooting single action revolvers.

Davis Leather Company recently introduced a new front welt IPSC competition holster called the California Challenger. The front welt prevents holster gouging by target front sights, while the low cut front allows maximum speed of draw with the longer compensated .45 Autos that are becoming so popular. This steel lined all leather high ride speed rig is Davis' answer to the popular Rogers' Plaxco holster. Reaction to the California Challenger was so good that it was being back ordered for a good while after its introduction.

Gordon has recently developed a police duty holster. Jerry Usher has adopted it for standard issue to all Westec Security personnel. Westec Security is one of the world's largest private security companies. This holster, to be cataloged as the Westec Patrolman, covers the trigger guard and includes both an adjustable tension screw and a thumb break retaining strap, providing any degree of security desired. An FBI angled version (gun butt tipped forward), with muzzle plug, has been tested by the U.S. Border Patrol and declared acceptable as a duty holster for their personnel. This holster is also available for large frame automatics. Response has been favorable with both department and individual orders being received.

Gordon Davis is one of the organizers and sponsors of the annual End of Trail old west combat shoot. This major shooting event requires pre-turn of the century (or replica) single action handgun, rifle and shotgun (no autoloading allowed). The interest in this match has been such that Gordon expects to see Davis Leather Company producing more western SA rigs in the future. Asked what else is in the future for Davis Leather Company, Gordon indicated he is currently working on a shoulder holster for large frame auto pistols and hopes to have it ready soon.

Gordon has recently added to his staff in order to meet the demand for his superb leather. This gives him more time for research and development and I am anxious to see what the fertile design genius of Gordon Davis has in store for the practical handgunner.



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OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER—1984

The 12th Annual Outstanding American Handgunner Awards banquet, held on May 26 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was a double-barreled treat.

The announcement of the winner of this year's award, Larry Kelly of Mag-Na-Port International, was cheered by all. The selection of Kelly as recipient of this prestigious award was unanimous among the selection committee, and offered recognition of his great influence on the sport of handgun hunting. His achievements in the field are only overshadowed by his dedication to the promotion of the sport.

The 1985 Outstanding American Handgunner Award presentation will be made in Seattle, in conjunction with the 1985 NRA Meetings. Nominations are solicited from all who enjoy any of the facets of handgun shooting. For membership information write: Outstanding American Handgunner Foundation, P.O. Box 153, Station C, Buffalo, NY 14209.

Handgun Hunter's Hall of Fame

During the OAHA dinner, the first annual Handgun Hunters' Trophy was presented to Bob Good of Denver, Colorado. Bob gave a stirring account of how he took a 40" dall sheep with a handgun. The gun, a T/C Contender using a .375 J.D.J. wildcat with 200 grain hornady bullets—with a little help from the shooter—downed the



Left to right: Bob Good, with first Handgun Hunter trophy; Barb Kelly, and Larry Kelly, OAHA winner.

trophy sheep on the run at 160 yards. Bob commented, "Sheep hunting is very physical, demanding and expensive. When a man takes only a single shot pistol on a hunt like this, you know he's a handgun hunter."

The Handgun Hunters' Hall of Fame Awards are based on Safari Club Interna-

tional measurements, but also take into account the relative rarity and hunting difficulty of the trophy animal. Any hunter may enter his trophy provided it is taken legally with a handgun and in fair chase. For information, write: Mag-Na-Port International, 41302 Executive Drive, Mt. Clemens, MI 48045.

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Bill Blankenship

Six-Time National Pistol Champion
Double Gold Medal World Champion

Think back about one-hundred and fifty years of handgun history. From the Walker to the famous Single Action Army, to today's MK IV Series 80, good shooters have always known the basics of handgun safety. No safe shooter would point his gun at anything he did not intend to shoot. Nor would he ever carry his sidearm with a chambered round under the hammer unless his situation required this state of readiness. Handgunners have known for years that was dangerous. We must remember today what has been common knowledge for over 150 years.

Shooting is a sport of responsibility, a sport where the equipment absolutely cannot be taken for granted. No matter how classic or modern the firearm, no matter who made it, safety is the byword of our sport.

For example, if you drop almost any fully loaded gun, even a Colt Government Model pistol made prior to the MK IV Series 80 pistols, it can go off if it has a round in the chamber.

Also the "half cock" notch is not a carrying safety, because if the hammer is not securely engaged in its notch, the gun can accidentally discharge.

Does this mean that handguns, even Colts, are dangerous? No! But when people don't abide by 150

years of established safety requirements, they can make them dangerous for all of us. And honestly, in this day and age, we should know a lot more about the safe use of our handguns than our forefathers.

Never carry your revolver or automatic with a chambered round. Always read carefully all the literature on gun safety supplied by the manufacturer...and abide by it. Colt, with all of us, loves the sport of shooting. But it is a sport of responsibility. A sport where safety is paramount. Being a good shooter...means being a safe shooter.



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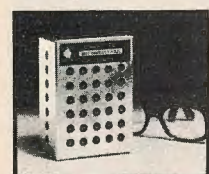
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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

THE .32 AND .45 MAGNUMS—A LOOK AT THEIR POTENTIAL FOR HUNTERS

The almost simultaneous introduction of the H&R .32 Magnum (which doesn't get into the bigger class) and a wide variety of guns to shoot it by H&R, Charter and Ruger, plus the availability of the LAR Grizzly in .45 Win. Mag. show the predominant disagreements among shooters and manufacturers of "which is best?"

If you are a big bore magnum fan you might well take note of the fact .22 LR ammunition is sold by the billions. No other caliber can compare with it in civilian sales.

If you are a small bore fan, taking comfort from the last paragraph, you might well remember that big roosters kick hell out of little ones.

The fact of the matter is that each has its place. The .22 is out of its class in hunting

ammo at about 100 FPS higher velocity. This is proof positive .32 Mag has potential when Federal adds a new loading to the line before guns are readily available.

Performance wise the .32 Mag isn't much when compared to larger cartridges. It does make sense from a marketing-manufacturing point of view. It also makes sense as a first centerfire or tractor or truck gun for those who want a rugged, accurate, relatively inexpensive gun with more punch than a .22. It should handle groundhogs, fox and coyote much better than a .22. I expect a lot of farm boys will have their hands on this gun. I found it to be an enjoyable gun to use. Factory ammo under poor conditions grouped five inches at 100 yards for me and I know it will do better under better conditions—that



LAR Grizzly

animals larger than small game. The .45 Win. Mag. won't appeal to the average "burn 500 rounds a day" plinker.

After having given the H&R 504 in .32 Magnum and the Grizzly a workout with factory ammo I find them to both be reasonable concepts that fulfill their intended purpose, which can really be condensed to the following: Make money for the manufacturer. In order for the product to make money it must fulfill a need or want of the shooter.

A lot of .32 S&W chambered guns are sold for defense purposes. The .32 Mag increases the power of the .32 to approximate the .38 Special without the need to go to a larger frame gun. Many .22 frames handle it just fine. The H&R and Ruger Single Six are two good examples. This keeps the costs down and ultimately the shooter as well as the manufacturer benefits.

The H&R 504 I've been using has a six-inch barrel and good adjustable sights. The Federal factory 95 grain semi-wadcutter lead bullet at 1000+ feet per second has a trajectory similar to a 22 LR. Even in the light H&R recoil is nil. I just received some of the newer Federal 85 grain jacketed hollow point

includes a better shooter.

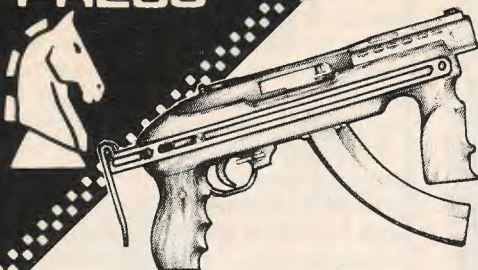
Under the premise that bigger is better, the LAR .45 Win Mag will fill the hole in gun-cartridge line up that has existed since the Auto Mag became defunct. The LAR is a 1911—only bigger where it needs to be. The .45 Win Mag cartridge approximates .44 Magnum ballistics. The only factory ammo available is the 230 grain hardball bullet in the Win. Mag. case and loading.

The gun is big and heavy as it should be for durability and comfort in firing. It's simply an old friend that's grown. The test gun has Millet sights of the shiny white type that are fine in poor light conditions but glare badly in bright sun. A black marker pen semi-fixed that problem although the sights remained shiny.

Mechanically the sights are good, as is the

Continued on page 32

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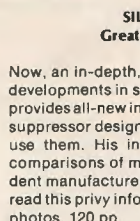
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Slip Off
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CATTLE BARON LEATHER CO.

A recent article on the "Original Dirty Harry" holster in the 1984 American Handgunner Annual caused some confusion among the readers and brought a quick response from Jerry Ardolino of Cattle Baron Leather Co.

The confusion stems from past performances of the former companies which produced the Dirty Harry holster. I'll let Jerry Ardolino straighten this out in his own words:

"In the fall of 1981, I decided to close Lawman Leather Goods and license my trademarks and designs. The company that I licensed my trademarks to was formed by a few people who decided to call themselves 'Lawman Leather, Inc.' I



*When ordering (1) state item model number (2) state make, model, bbl. length of gun (3) state color of item. *Add \$2.50 per item for hdlg. & shipping. *Get Brauer mini-catalog \$1.00. *Check or M.O., no C.O.D. *Missouri add 5% tax. *Prices and specifications subject to change without notice. *Money back if not satisfied.



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never owned stock in this company and was not an officer. As time went on, Lawman Leather, Inc. started to get into financial trouble, and royalties were owed to me, causing me to lose thousands of dollars when they filed a voluntary Chapter 7 bankruptcy.

"Obviously, they—Lawman Leather, Inc.—lost all trademark rights at that time. I then decided to form my own company, Cattle Baron Leather Co. That is the way it should have been presented in Al Pickles article, not by stating that I 'carried over' from Lawman Leather, Inc."

There are a couple of points in Al Pickles' review of the "Marauder" holster that Jerry Ardolino requested he be permitted to comment on.

1. The harness is made of top-grain cowhide, not "kip" as Pickles stated; the hide does get thinned down or skived to a prescribed thickness.

2. The ties or thongs are used on the harness because that is the way shooters in over 21 countries want it; they offer a much wider variety of adjustments than snaps.

3. The reason the retainer strap on the *unexposed* side of that particular unit was streaked was because the dye part was skived down to our spec thickness and then the flesh side re-dyed; some leather oil on the worker's hand undoubtedly caused the dye to not take properly. We have since perfected a sealant dye that works perfectly on the small inner part of the "Y" strap.

4. Our holsters, both the Original Dirty Harry and the Big Hawk, are available from dealers. While much of our business is done through the mail, we have dealers all over the U.S. and Europe."

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"Big Hawk" shoulder holster for scoped handguns; priced from \$94.95 to \$114.95 depending on barrel length.

New "Mercenary" shoulder holster for big bore auto pistols priced at \$79.95.

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Every few years an article appears in one or the other of the gun magazines describing how to tune up your revolver at the kitchen table. Now I have no objections to the writers making a quick buck, but the various authors keep dragging the same myths out of the closet and presenting them as fact.

One of the biggest myths is the idea that you can use cartridge cases for headspace gauges. This peculiar practice got its start after WW I when rimless cartridges started to gain mass popularity. In those days headspace gauges were owned by the arms companies and the government arsenals. This was not due to any monopoly but because of the cost of producing such an item.

It was fairly easy to find out that the difference between minimum and maximum headspace was 0.006 inches. As a result, a few enterprising people figured that an empty case with a 0.006 inch shim could be used as a no-go gauge. Heck, the armed forces generally kept a weapon in service until it accepted the "field" gauge. This was minimum headspace plus 0.010 inches and the service experienced few rifle failures due to excessive headspace.

I don't know who first extended this shaky practice to handguns but on page 296 of Nonte's *Pistolsmithing* he advises that a revolver that takes more than an 0.008 inch shim over a fired case is in need of repair. There's no record of when this was first published, however, in 1980 *The Gun Digest Book of Pistolsmithing* states that acceptable headspace on a revolver is 0.012-0.014 inches over a fired case.

The difference of opinion between the two authors is due to the production tolerances of the rimmed cartridge case. Mr. Nonte is basing his measurement upon the maximum allowable rim dimension, the *Gun Digest* author on the minimum allowable rim thick-

THE MANY MYTHS OF REVOLVER TUNE-UPS

By W. R. Moore

Here are some straight facts on the critical measurements involved in tuning a revolver.

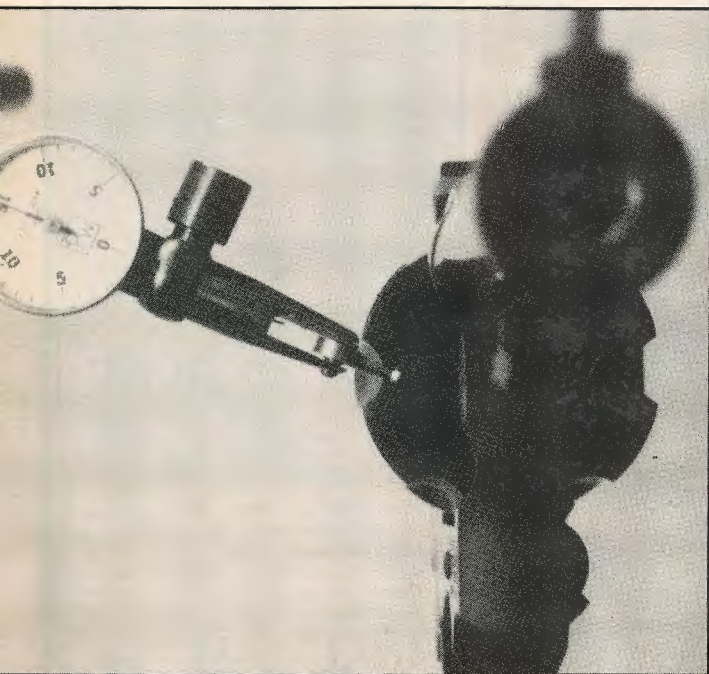
ness. What this means in practical terms is that since the rim of a cartridge case may be anywhere between 0.050 and 0.060 inches thick, *you cannot use them to measure anything!*

In actual fact, the proper headspace for most revolvers is between 0.060 and 0.066 inches (0.062-0.064 ideally). This is measured from the breech (recoil shield) to whatever portion of the cylinder that stops the forward motion of the cartridge case rim. If your revolver does not enclose the case rim this is the rear face of the cylinder and the headspace can be measured with feeler gauges alone. Cylinders with counterbored chambers *must be measured with headspace gauges!*

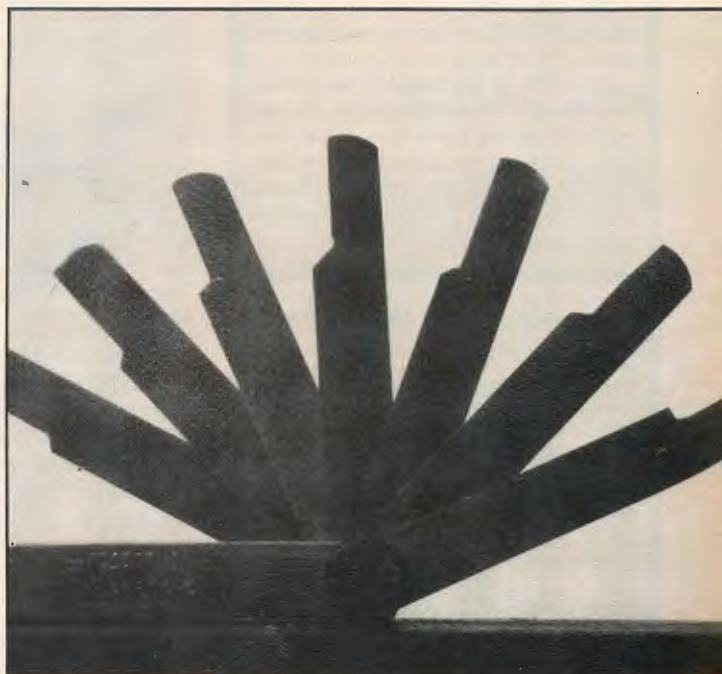
Headspace gauges for the rimmed cartridges may be easily made by a skilled machinist. They are also readily available from Clymer Manufacturing for a rather modest \$12.00 per gauge. A "go gauge" and a good set of feeler gauges is sufficient to determine the headspace of your revolver.

Another myth is that excessive headspace will always give you a sign—like protruding primers. Unfortunately, given the straight case walls and low operating pressures of most pistol cartridges and the comparatively light mainsprings, this just ain't so.

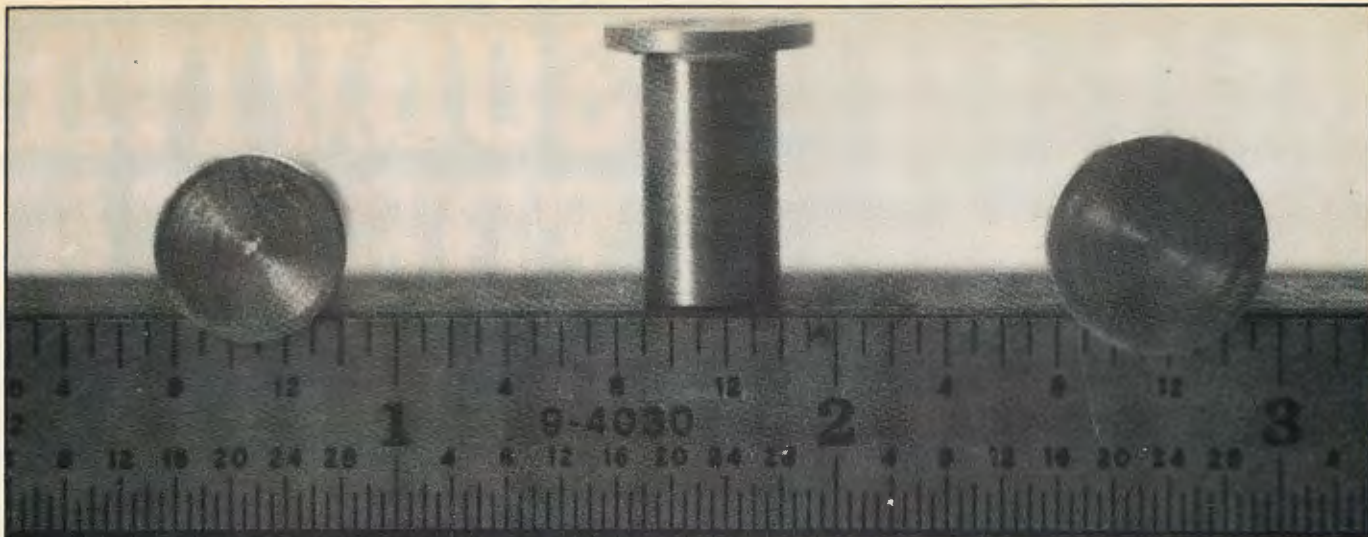
The explanation of this is quite simple. When the cartridge fires, gas pressure is created. This pressure is the same on all parts of the case. However, the bullet can move, *and the case moves the same amount in the opposite direction!* At least it will do so within the mechanical limits created by the headspace. Rifle cases tend to grip the chamber walls and retard this movement, called bolt thrust, better than pistol cartridges due to their higher operating pressures. One of the best illustrations of this is the now discontinued S&W Model 53 chambered for the .22 Jet cartridge. Maximum loads in the tapered cases would tend to jam the case against the breech, locking the cylinder. Reducing the loads would eliminate the problem, but they also eliminated the performance expected by the customer.



Cylinder end-play can be checked easily with a dial indicator; it should not exceed 0.0003".



Author's feeler gauges show clearance cuts made to clear ratchet on S&W K-frame guns.



Headspace gauges made by author for his own use; .38/357, .41 and .44.

Considering that I find the vast majority of handguns to have headspace that is excessive to some degree, I'm forced to the conclusion that the factories do not consider the condition too terribly dangerous. However, it does reduce the life of the revolver and adversely affects the accuracy.

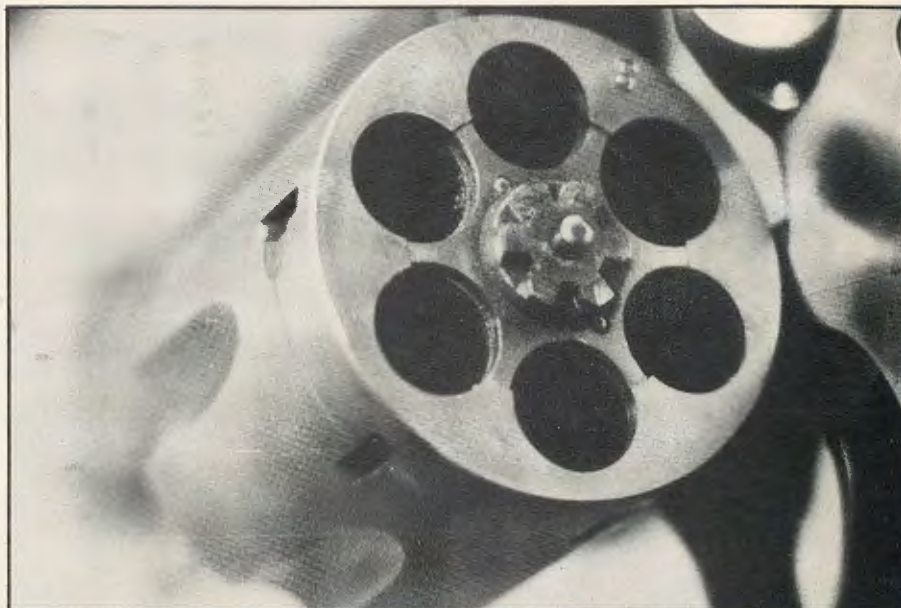
The next area of consideration is cylinder endplay; this is the amount of movement that the cylinder has between the recoil shield and the rear of the barrel. This is best measured with a dial indicator but it can be measured with feeler gauges using a method that will be described later. Cylinder endplay should not exceed 0.003 inches with the hammer cocked. The importance of proper headspace and endplay cannot be diminished. Excessive headspace and endplay is largely responsible for the condition described as "cylinder float" or "backspacing." This is where the cylinder becomes unlocked under recoil and rotates backwards one or more chambers.

This condition of "float or backspacing" is generally accompanied by poor cylinder lockup and a ratchet which may be poorly fitted, damaged or both. Since the ratchet will become damaged by "cylinder float" the condition will only grow worse. Some people have found temporary relief by replacing the cylinder latch (or bolt) spring with a stronger spring which will tend to force the latch into full engagement. However, this is at best a temporary solution. *Any revolver with "cylinder float" should be taken immediately to a competent service technician!*

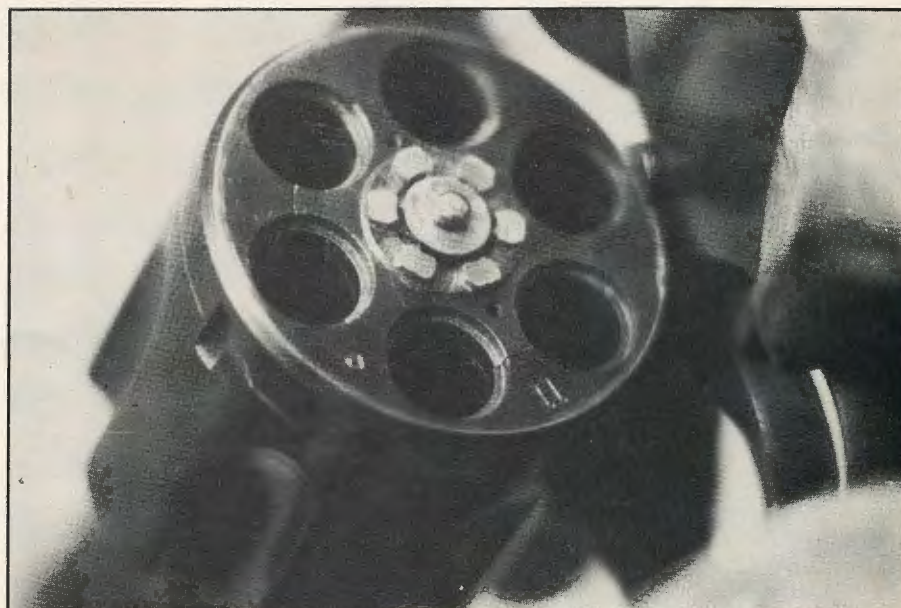
Since the subject of cylinder lockup has been introduced the lockup should be checked by slowly cocking the unloaded revolver. When the hammer has reached full cock, try to rotate the cylinder. If you hear a tiny click, the locking latch (or bolt) was not engaged to full depth and your revolver needs attention. Most probably all it will need is a new hand to replace the worn one—assuming that everything else has been correct!

The alignment of the cylinder and barrel is checked in a similar manner. The unloaded revolver is brought slowly to full cock and the hammer is slowly lowered down while

Continued on page 74



Flat-faced cylinders like this on Ruger Redhawk do not require special gauges to check headspace; this can be done with accurate feeler gauges.



With revolvers which have counter-bored cylinder chambers, a precise and specially made headspace gauge will be required for each caliber.


SURVIVAL FOR DEAD

By Robert S. McKay

because it will take too much time even if you could see them to begin with. While you might pick up the front blade, lining up the rear sight will take precious time you haven't got, even if they are both luminous. So much depends upon how adjusted your eyes are to the dark, and the effects of muzzle flash; in a dark room, your eyes may take 40 minutes to adjust, and a sudden shot from an opponent can create a muzzle flash blindness of sorts which can last for a few seconds, much like the strobic effects of a flashbulb. Distracting sounds and neon lights, or sirens and flashing squad car cherries may make concentrated aiming ludicrous at best, particularly at ranges of 21 feet or less. You are under attack! You have no time to think analytically about what you are doing; you only have time to do what you've been taught to do, reflexively.

And if you haven't trained to shoot quickly and accurately in the dark or subdued light, you probably won't.

For both law enforcement and civilians, a very effective, cohesive program now exists for low light shooting: The Night/Day Combat Handgun Course, devised by Julio A. Santiago of the Dakota County Sheriff's Dept., Hastings, Minnesota. Deputy Santiago, a 22-year veteran of police work and a former paratrooper with the 82nd




"A quick blaze of gunfire and it's too late to correct an indiscreet action or careless move . . ."

Julio A. Santiago

Night shooting. While many training programs or experts give it lip service, the vast majority of modern practical handgunning academies or programs don't emphasize or even teach it. When one considers that 80% of all policemen killed in the line of duty are shot in subdued lighting, and that the vast majority of muggings, hold-ups, rapes, and burglaries usually occur in the dark, it is difficult to understand why police departments or private academies allow their students to train in the sunny outdoors or on well-lit ranges. True, it's easier to find your brass in the light, and to score targets. But while such conveniences or contrivances may be justified in competition training, they are suicidal for actual street self-defense.

Effective self-defense training must attempt to simulate, as closely as possible, actual attack conditions if one wishes to derive the maximum possible benefit from practice. And this means learning to shoot *in the dark*, and to *hit* what you shoot at. To do this, you will not be able to rely on the quick sight picture of modern pistolcraft,



From the draw, shooter learns to shoot "into an imaginary box." After a bit instinct takes over.

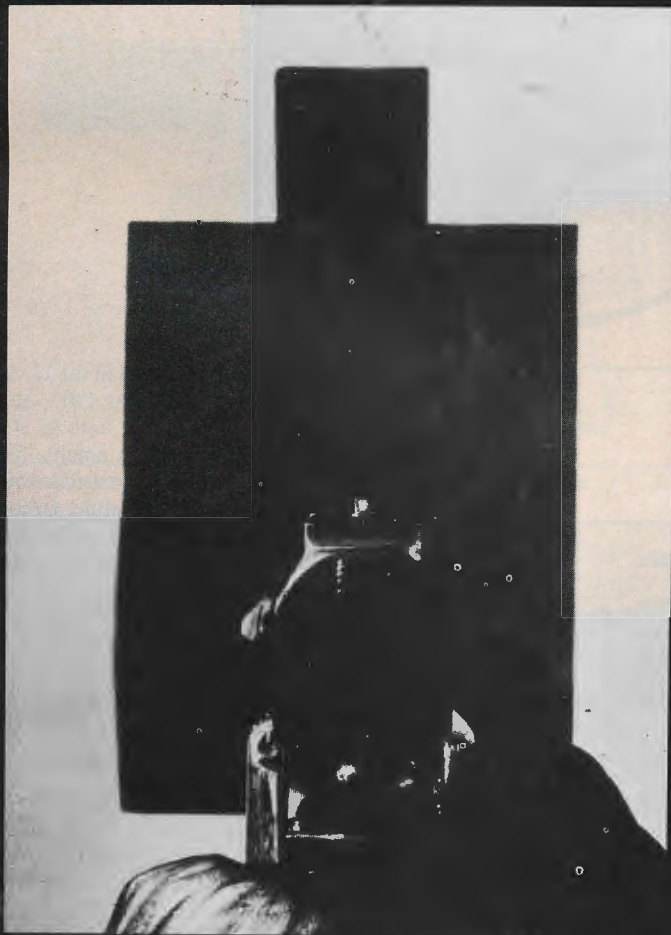
METHODS OF NIGHT

Airborne, has taught his relatively simple, extremely logical and effective methods of night shooting to a wide variety of groups, from police departments to railroad security forces to civilians. A former weapons instructor for the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Santiago has spent over 12 years refining his approach to instinctive subdued light shooting.

For the officer or civilian, the response time needed to deal with sudden attack is short enough in daylight, and presents its greatest danger in the dark. Speed and accuracy will likely determine the outcome. But the most interesting aspect of the Day/Night Course is that the techniques, designed to be used effectively at night, work equally well in daylight, when the sights are visible.

Santiago doesn't feel that many of the training regimens currently offered for night shooting provide anything truly beneficial to the student; merely introducing audible sirens or distracting sounds and lights, or encouraging the use of flashlights, is only adding stress to the scenario without improving or changing old daylight techniques. Flashlights, for example, are often unavailable, and can inadvertently serve as a beacon for an attacker's return fire.

"Any officer who has been through that critical situation of some-



A reference point luminous front sight helps to pin point moving targets in low light situation.



System works with both the hip level stance or the two-hand isoscolese; results are the same.

one shooting at him at close range and survived," points out Santiago, "realizes a basic phenomenon:

"When death is imminent, the mind is thrust into maximum acceleration.

"Time around him stops as one's attention is concentrated on the immediate danger.

"Tunnel vision takes over.

"All action seems to move in slow motion.

"It becomes almost hypnotic; while it is occurring, the mind is already recalling the situation."

It is clear that such conditions cannot be duplicated by any form of training. What Santiago's course is intended to provide is a basic, effective, and fast instinctive method of accurate shooting which can be brought to bear *despite* these psychological and physiological phenomena and *regardless* of lighting conditions.

In explaining the underlying concept of the Day/Night Course, Santiago uses the analogy of football's field goal kicker.

"No really successful field goal kicker reacts to a situation. He doesn't have to. He knows what will happen. The ball is snapped and the opponents will attempt to crash through the line to block his efforts. But he knows that the ball will be placed in exactly the right spot, so if he makes exactly the same movements to kick the ball into an imaginary square or box which is located directly above the line of scrimmage, the football will follow the proper path.

"He never even looks at the goalposts because he knows that if he makes the right moves in the proper sequence, the ball will pass through the imaginary target," continues Santiago. "This same strategy can be used for the night shooter. And anyone can do it, if he or she has the ability to close his eyes and touch his chin."

Continued on page 71

AUTO PISTOLS THAT DIDN'T MAKE IT

Looking back at some auto pistol designs that just never ignited the marketplace.

By J. B. Wood

Looking back over the past 80 years of U.S. automatic pistol design, it's fairly easy to pick out the reason that some pistols were not successful. The self-loader had its beginnings in Europe, and by the time American designers addressed the auto, the Germans, Italians, and others had already learned from earlier mistakes. With Characteristic Yankee stubbornness, the Americans struck out on their own, and the results were often textbook cases of poor engineering. This did not apply in the case of John Moses Browning, of course, but that's another story.

Faulty engineering may be the bottom line, but it's not the whole picture. Some pistols of good design didn't last because they were made during periods of economic unrest. Others suffered from an external appearance that was "not right" for sales appeal, being either strange by American standards, or just downright ugly. Other factors were more mechanical, such as complicated or unwanted features, difficult operation, or unpopular cartridges.

When I think of auto pistol designs that "didn't last," the first ones that come to mind



Today's liability attorneys would love the "Infallible."

are two rather grotesque entries in the U. S. Government Military Trials of 1907, the White-Merrill and the Knoble, both in .45 caliber. The White-Merrill was notable for having a "loading lever" that extended below the trigger guard, to retract the slide. Of the two models of the odd-looking Knoble that were submitted, the Ordnance Board had this comment: "A careful examination and several efforts to fire these weapons showed that they were so crudely manufactured as to render any test without value, smooth working being impossible. It was therefore decided that these arms would be given no further consideration by the Board." Only prototypes were made.

THE NOT SO INFALLIBLE

It was in the "pocket pistol" category that most of the short-lived U.S. autos were made, and one of these might well be awarded the prize for poor design. The Warner Arms Corporation of Brooklyn,

New York began around 1910 as an importer of the ill-fated Schwarzlose "blow-forward" pistol from Germany. By 1915, they had decided that the American buyer wasn't going to accept this odd design, and they turned to an American inventor, Andrew Fyrberg, for a new design.

Mr. Fyrberg had excellent credentials, having previously designed the "safety lifter" mechanism that later evolved into the "transfer bar" used in many modern revolvers. It was this feature that was the basis for Iver Johnson's "hammer the hammer" advertisements. In auto pistol design, though, Mr. Fyrberg was apparently out of his element. His 1915 patent was acquired by the Warner firm, and the pistol was made from 1916 to around 1920 as the "Infallible." In retrospect, the name is fairly amusing.

The most serious fault of the Warner "Infallible" was the retaining system for its internal bolt, or breech block. The twin recoil spring rods extended from the upper rear of the frame, and near their rear tips there were semi-circular cuts which were crossed, through the bolt endpiece, by a relatively small pin. If the pin broke, or the tips of the recoil spring rods fractured, the shooter had a very close view of the bolt—just before it hit his face!

Another dubious feature of the "Infallible" was a button-controlled lever in the upper rear curve of the frame, which, when pulled down into "set" position, blocked the sear. While this was an effective additional

safety, the sharp rear tip of the lever could actually cause injury if the pistol were hurriedly grasped with the lever in "set" mode. Finally, the striker (firing pin) system was retained by a simple cap screw, and if this loosened and fell out, the striker spring and its guide could be expelled to the rear with some force. Today's product liability attorneys would love the "Infallible," if it were still being made.

H&R'S WEBLEY

In 1905, Harrington & Richardson made an agreement with Webley of England to produce an extensively modified version of William J. Whiting's basic Webley automatic pistol. The H&R pistol was first made in a .25 caliber vest-pocket size, and later in larger quantity as a .32 auto. These guns were sleek, flat, and beautifully made, and included two features that were notable for their time: A loaded-chamber indicator, and a magazine safety.

These guns were reliable, and the takedown was ultra-simple. They were sold from 1916 to 1940, but the manufacturing period was from 1916 to around 1930. In spite of its good features and high quality, the pistol looked, unfortunately, like a Webley. To the average U.S. buyer, anything that didn't have a classic Colt/Browning silhouette was frowned upon. Also, the latter part of its era extended into a time of national financial crisis, the market crash of 1929. This latter factor also figured in the

demise of the Savage, Remington, and Smith & Wesson pocket pistols.

PEDERSON'S PISTOL

The Remington Model 51 was designed by John Pedersen, and was made from 1919 to 1927 in both .380 and .32 chamberings, with fewer made in .32 caliber. Before finalizing the design, Pedersen devoted a lot of time to developing a grip shape that was perfect for the average hand, and he succeeded. The Model 51 was renowned for its natural pointing qualities. It also had a wide matted sight track on top of the slide, and manual, grip, and magazine safeties.

Its most unusual feature was a unique hesitation-type locking system. When the pistol was fired, the cartridge case and a separate internal breech block set back about 3/32 of an inch. The breech block tapped the slide to start it moving, then locked against a shoulder in the frame. The slide continued to move, picked up and unlocked the breech block, and went on to full travel. This system reduced felt recoil and slightly increased velocity, and also allowed the pistol to have a lighter, slimmer slide.

Unfortunately, the small breech block was extensively skeletonized for the firing pin and the locking and pickup lugs, and it was subject to quite a bit of stress and impact during the firing cycle. Cracking and complete breakage of the breech block were not uncommon. The takedown was also fairly difficult, and the intricate machining of the



Good looks of S&W's .32 were not enough to save it.



Perhaps the H&R auto looked just too British.



Pederson-designed Remington 51 had perfect grip shape.



Did the .35 caliber chambering kill the S&W auto?

internal parts must have made manufacturing relatively expensive. These factors, along with the previously mentioned national economic picture, spelled its end.

After a .45 caliber version came close to matching the Colt entry in the 1907 Government Tests, Savage produced E.H. Searle's excellent design as a pocket pistol in .32 and .380 chambering. Made from 1907 to 1928 in several distinct models, the pistol had a locked breech system that used a rotating barrel. Some have called the Savage, and the Remington M51, "delayed blowbacks," but locked is locked, no matter how brief the dwell time.



Plainfield's Model 71 lacked promotion.



Whitney Wolverine—a pistol design before its time.

TEN SHOTS QUICK

The Savage had many good points. It was simple, with few parts, and had easy take-down. It had good handling qualities, and its stagger-type magazine held ten rounds in the .32 version. There were no screws used in the original version, and only grip screws in the Model 1917. The manual safety directly blocked movement of the hammer-like striker lever, and also locked the slide. The magazine catch was ingenious and convenient, and the turning-barrel locking system gave slightly increased velocity. The gun also had attractive styling that was not so European that it would turn off American buyers. It sold well.

It did, however, have a few minus points. The hammer-like striker lever was impossible to manipulate like a true hammer, and there was no safety step in the striker system. Thus, there were only two ways to safely carry the pistol: Fully loaded and cocked, with the manual safety applied, or, with a full magazine and an empty chamber, cycling the slide just before firing. The slide-in-hard-rubber grip panels tended to be fragile. These minor faults, though, did not cause the end of the Savage. The financial events at the end of its era, and the fact that Savage was mainly a rifle company, hastened its departure.

In 1913, Smith & Wesson made two errors. First, they purchased the rights to a

pistol design by Charles P. Clement of Belgium. Second, they decided to produce a pistol based on this design in a new chambering, the .35 S&W Auto. In original Clement pistols, the cartridges were the moderately-powered .25 Auto and 5mm Clement, and with these his system worked fine. When used with the heavier .35 S&W, with a similar light breech block, it was a disaster. In an effort to compensate for this, the Smith and Wesson engineers tried to recoil spring and a latch that allowed the breech block to be disconnected from the spring system for loading.

In those early days, they didn't realize that it's slide weight, not spring tension, that keeps a blowback auto closed during the



The Savage was a victim of a depressed economy.

instant of high pressure. Like all S&W arms, the .35 was made like a fine watch, but it was unpleasant to shoot, and its odd cartridge was not always routinely available. Unfortunately, the gun would also chamber the more powerful .32 Auto round, and many shooters used it, causing broken parts.

There were other detriments: The .35 S&W had an odd little one-finger grip safety on the frontstrap of the grip frame, and an equally strange disc-shaped manual safety, just below the upper curve of the backstrap. The earliest version even had a bottom-located magazine release that moved across, rather than back or forward. Also, the gun had an unmistakable European "look," and

Continued on page 62

ENOS TOP GUN AT COLUMBIA



Brian Enos picks up Bianchi Cup loot plus the NRA National Action Shooting Championship in the highest scoring Bianchi Cup Invitational Match to date.

By Massad Ayoob

It is like a convention of shooters, a smaller but more intense version of the NRA Annual Convention. The entire Columbia (MO) Hilton Hotel is occupied by shooters and firearms professionals. The atmosphere of camaraderie has beneath it only the slightest undercurrent of tension, because tomorrow, the men and women the Selection Committee describes as the "two hundred best handgun shooters in the free world" will vie against one another for the \$160,000 purse Bianchi Cup.

The night before the shoot, at a press party, John Pride unveils his supergun, a K-frame Smith & Wesson with an Aimpoint sight and a monster barrel that brings the gun's weight to six pounds six ounces. There is talk about a weight rule next year. They will probably call it the "John Pride clause." To practice holding this rifle-weight revolver, Pride, an LAPD firearms instructor, has been working out with a wrist-roller and a 50-pound weight, ten times the load you normally put on a wrist roller. "I had to brace it on a piece of steel," he admits with a smile.

John has been getting "monster gun" jokes all night. "You oughta' have to draw that from an ankle holster," one competitor half-jokingly tells him. I examine the gun and find myself saying, "My God, John, what is this, the Gun that Devoured Cincinnati?"

But the question in everyone's mind is, will this be the gun that devours the Sixth Bianchi Cup?

The First Day

On Wednesday, the shoot begins. There are several people to watch. Mickey Fowler,



In action, Enos shows almost no reaction to recoil of his S&W M-10.

who won the Cup three straight years (fellow competitors were beginning to call the event the Fowler Cup); Brian Enos, who finished second to Mickey in '82 by a point, and captured last year's event by his own one-point margin over Pride; John Pride himself, who doesn't need a monstergun to win; Rob Leatham, Enos' shooting partner, who captured the U.S. and World IPSC championships in a dramatic one-two punch last year; Tommy Campbell, who has been cleaning the entire match with a perfect 1920 points in practice; and Mark Duncan, the only one of the top wheelgunners who has not put optical sights on his revolver this year.

They are not alone. To get the coveted Bianchi Cup Invitation, you have to have done well at international championships, or very well at national matches, or been winning local and regional matches outright. From the day in the late '70s when it was conceived by John Bianchi and Ray Chapman, the Cup has been a "tournament of champions." When the smoke has cleared in four days, even the man who comes in dead last will be a man who consistently wins matches in his region.

There are probably a dozen men here who have shot perfect practice scores on the Bianchi Cup, a feat never achieved in the heat of actual competition. Several of us have shot perfect scores on one or more of the four events and only been down a few points on

the grand aggregate. But in the oft-quoted words of Tom Campbell, "Practice ain't race day."

The firing begins, and the intensity of this year's competition becomes apparent within the first couple of hours. (The main match lasts three days, and you shoot two of the matches on one day, one each on the other two. The top shooters have been "seeded" to shoot the most dramatically visual event, the falling plates, on the afternoon of the final day.)

When I shot the first Bianchi Cup, only one



shooter scored perfect on anything: Ohio cop Mike Murray cleaned the 48 falling plates. The five intervening years have sharpened the competitors: by the end of today, there will be eight perfect scores, and this is just the first day of shooting. John Shaw, Vance Schmid, Eddie Brown, Brian Enos, Frank Glenn, and Mickey Fowler will all shoot

perfect scores on the Barricade Event, with Glenn and Fowler tying for now on the tie-breaker with 43 of their 48 shots in the center "X" ring. Bob Denny will clean the Falling Plates, as will Ichiro Nagata of the Japanese magazine *Model Gun Challenger*, becoming the first full-time gunwriter to do so.

We of the gun press are particularly impressed with Ichiro's performance. It shows that intensity of commitment is what wins in a test that is highlighted by intensity of pressure. Ichiro has been driving four hours each way to sharpen up at the ISI range where he was trained by Fowler and his partner Mike Dalton.

Before we adjourn from the range, I talk to one of the top shooters, who will remain nameless. "How much did you practice in the past year," I ask.

"Seventy-two thousand," he replies.

"72,000 rounds," I say, not terribly awed; I know men who practice 100,000 shots for The Cup.

"No," he answers, "\$72,000 worth of factory ammo." Before my eyebrows can come down, he adds, "Of course, that's at wholesale."

The Second Day

Day Two finishes with an upset. Pride, favored to win with his supergun, went out early. What so many had feared would be the Gun that would Eat the Bianchi Cup



Brian Enos (center) receives trophies from James Reinke of NRA (left) and John Bianchi.

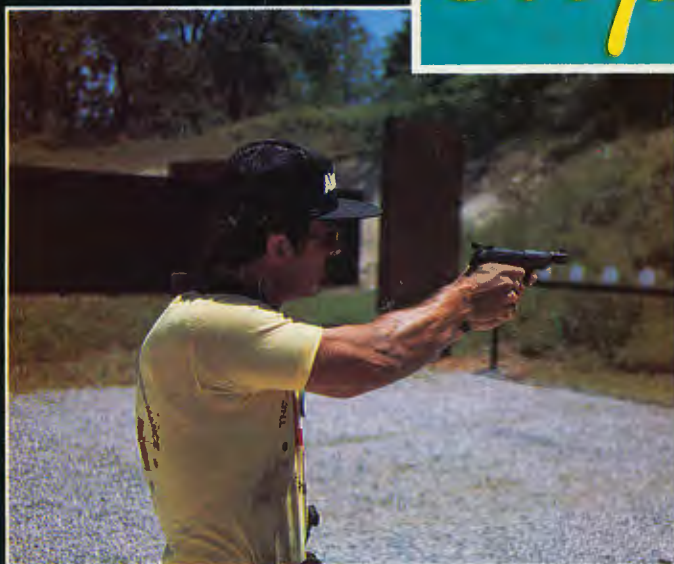


John Pride's 6 lb. plus gun was the talk of the matches.



Rapid fire .22 rimfire match, sponsored by Ruger/ Winchester.

BIANCHI Cup '84



Angelo Spagnoli won cash by being top H&K shooter.



Heavy gloves helped Enos and Leatham at barricade.



John Shaw (left) and Bill Rogers at the Speed Event.



ESPN cameras taped the event for later broadcast.

devoured Pride instead; it didn't work as expected off the barricades, and cost him a pile of points. Several of the shooters are doing well, including defending champion Enos, but the man who emerges from the front ranks of the pack to take the lead is Bill Rogers.

An ex-FBI agent who now makes some of the finest holsters in the country, Rogers is always a top finisher in matches on the professional handgun circuit, but never seems to take the ultimate championship. This year looks like his: he establishes two world records for NRA Practical Shooting in his first two matches. (The Cup is simultaneously the National Championships of NRA Action Shooting, and was the inspiration for that organization's entire Practical Shooting Program). On the barricades, his perfect 480 is augmented by a blistering 46-count in the four-inch center X ring; on the moving target, he shoots the first perfect 480 score ever.

The local press, which heavily covers the Cup, is eating this up. The sports page in a local paper leads off with a shot of Bill firing his Andy Cannon-custom S&W .38 with Aimpoint during the Mover: his lips are drawn back from his teeth as he pulls the trigger, and he looks for all the world like a karate master screaming "Kiaai!" as he breaks a board. Such is the pressure of The Cup.

The Third Day

Day Three begins. Scores are higher than ever, and as if that wasn't pressure enough, the other top guns are suddenly looking at the flying tail of Rogers leading the pack. If he maintains this pace, he owns the Cup. The others know now that he'll have to drop the ball before they can pick it up.

And so, of course, does Rogers. He tries to go smooth and steady . . . too steady. On the morning of Day Three, he shoots the Practical Event, and on the stage where one has to draw, place the gun in the weak hand, and fire three shots into each of two targets in eight seconds, he holds and squeezes a fraction too long. The horn for "cease fire" sounds as he is firing the sixth shot. The penalty costs him ten points. Rattled, he drops another four at the longer ranges.

There is still hope. He is only sixteen points down, and he is sure to clean the plates, giving him a 1904, higher than the record 1903 Enos won with last year.

But 1984 at the Cup is not the same as '83. The shooters are too hot, too good. That fraction of a second has cost Rogers the Bianchi Cup.

The pack is running too close together. Leatham and Enos, who practice together, will shoot side by side in some of the events like a drill team, shot for shot. They tie on points, both using S&W PPC revolvers in .38 Special and Aimpoint sights. A third S&W .38, with a scope, and in the capable hands of John Shaw, will tie for score.

Chapman designed the Bianchi match to make it impossible to shoot a perfect score; that was in 1979. But this is 1984. A few years ago, Bianchi inaugurated the "1900 Club,"

with a \$5,000 prize for anyone tallying that number of points. When the Cup opened, only three men had gained membership: Mickey Fowler, Brian Enos, and John Pride.

At the awards banquet tomorrow night, John Bianchi will open both his club and his checkbook to nine men who have hit the magic number. Right now, at the end of Day Three, we know that three of them are tied at 1910 points, a mark we had once thought impossible to achieve. They are Brian Enos, John Shaw, and Rob Leatham.

For two, it is the closest they've ever come to victory at the Cup. For Enos, it's the third time on the griddle, down to the wire, only this time not by a point one way or the other, but on center-X tie-breaker hits.

And, at the moment he goes on the line to

Continued on page 64

BIANCHI CUP 84

TOP 20 FINISHERS

	Score/Xs
(1) Brian Enos, Mesa, AZ	1910-257
(2) John Shaw, Memphis, TN	1910-214
(3) Rob Leatham, Mesa, AZ	1910-207
(4) Mickey Fowler, Glendale, CA	1907-165
(5) Paul Liebenberg, La Crescenta, CA	1906-177
(6) Frank Glenn, Glendale, AZ	1905-198
(7) Bill Wilson, Berryville, AR	1905-193
(8) Bill Rogers, Jacksonville, FL	1902-208
(9) J.P. Nelson, Whittier, CA	1902-180
(10) Tom Campbell, Huntington, MA	1886-135
(11) Mike Dalton, Mission Hills, CA	1885-127
(12) Vance Schmid, Marion, IL	1884-147
(13) Mike Kanazawa, Lawrenceville, GA	1883-132
(14) James Swain, Memphis, TN	1882-131
(15) Edward Deacon, Columbia, MO	1881-137
(16) Wayne Bowker, Torrance, CA	1880-176
(17) Eddie Brown, Perry, MO	1880-119
(18) Larry Haynie, Villa Rica, GA	1880-117
(19) Riley Gilmore, Tulsa, OK	1879-179
(20) Mike Plaxco, Roland, AR	1879-122

TOP WOMEN

(1) Lee Cole, Fayetteville, AR	1761-96
(2) Sara Van Valzah, Atlanta, GA	1759-90
(3) Joyce Faulkner, Pearl, MS	1746-88

EQUIPMENT LIST

GUNS

118 (20)* Smith & Wesson
66 (5)* Colt
7 Heckler & Koch
5 Ruger
2 Randall
1 Detonics

1 Auto Ordnance

Note: * = number in top 25. Of the Colts, 41 were Gov't Models. Of the S&Ws, 49 were Model 10 and 12 were Model 686. Most (70%) used S&W revolvers in the Main Event, then more than 70% switched to Colt .45 autos for the Speed Event.

SIGHTS

95 (16)* Aimpoint
25 (1)* Bo-Mar
12 (2)* Burris
11 (3)* Thompson/Center
8 Tasco
2 (2)* Safariland

Note: * = number in top 25. All of the above sights were either optical or electronic, except for the Wichita. While 95% used optical or electronic sights in the Main Event, none used them in the Speed Event.

HOLSTERS

21 (3)* Bianchi
37 (8)* Blocker
27 (7)* Davis
23 (1)* Reno
66 (6)* Rogers

Note: Other holster makers were represented by from one to three of the balance of the contestants. The holsters used remained generally consistent throughout the match with a 15% switch toward Rogers in the Speed Event.

AMMUNITION

Factory 77 (39%)
Reloads 123 (61%)

Bullet Type

Semi-wadcutter 95 (48%)
Round nose 60 (30%)
Wadcutter 29
Others 16

Caliber

.38 Special 99
.357 Magnum 21
9mm Parabellum 8
.45 Auto 66
All other 6

Factory Brands

Winchester-Western 25 (13%)
Federal 27 (14%)
Remington 10 (5%)
Atlanta Arms 6
Hornady 2

Note: Seven brands were represented by one shooter each.

Powder (Handloads)

W-W 231 61 (50%)
Bullseye 31 (25%)
700X 13
W-W 452AA 6
Red Dot 3

Note: other powders represented by one shooter each.

MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

Shooting Stance for Women

I know it's unorthodox, but I like to shoot with my elbows bent. It creates a shock absorber effect and gets the sights a lot closer to my eyes.

I position my feet slightly more than shoulder width apart, and I lean forward (but not nearly as much as Linda Zubiena).



LEE COLE, 1982 and 1983 IPSC Women's National Champion.

© Jon Winokur 1984

HANDGUNNER**Historical
Test Report****THE H & R
U.S.R.A.
TARGET PISTOL**

The competitive handgun scene today is a complicated affair, with more types, models and modifications available than ever before, but just a little over 50 years ago competitive pistol shooting was a less sophisticated sport with few accessories at hand. One of the main concerns at the time was the cost of equipment during the great depression. In the late 1920s Harrington & Richardson produced a single-shot target pistol called the U.S.R.A. This is a single-shot version of their popular .22 revolver, refined for target use and sold at a reasonable price, which seemed to hurt it more than help.

The first of these pistols were introduced in 1929, not too good of a time for expecting great retail sales. The following story is a reprint from the March 1930 issue of the American Rifleman and is the first field test of the single-shot by W. D. Frazer. The photo is of the U.S.R.A. model serial #256 and shown with a recent test target and the original issue of the March, 1930 American Rifleman. Also bracing the piece are several old shooting medals from the turn of the century. The pistol is from the Don Nygord collection.

**The Harrington
&
Richardson
Target Pistol**

By W. D. Frazer

Nowadays when one attempts to buy a good pistol at a low price he is reminded of the words of the countryman when he saw his first elephant, "There ain't no sich animal." For the last decade we have been paying about twice as much as we did before the war for high-grade, accurate, target pistols suitable for that highly specialized deliberate shooting that is so popular during the indoor season. The same is true of all the shooting games, and this fact has a very deterring effect upon the increase in enrollment in the pistol-shooting fraternity, for a novice does not take kindly to the idea of paying from \$35 to \$40 for a gun that is useful for only one form of target practice. He is much more apt to go out and buy himself a tennis racquet, or a set of golf clubs. Of course when a marksman becomes really interested in the sport of pistol-shooting nothing is too good for him, and he wants the very best equipment there is, barring highly dolled-up arms.

The few excellent American target pistols that have been on the market are all that we can expect as long as our competition rules restrict us to 10-inch barrels, 2-pound trigger pulls, and similar handicaps to the best shooting; but

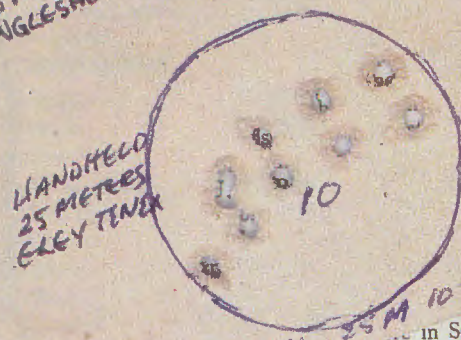
Continued on page 68

**The Harrington
& Richardson**

By

NOWADAYS when one attempts to buy a good pistol at a low price he is reminded of the words of the countryman when he saw his first elephant, "There ain't no sich animal." For the last decade we have been paying about twice as much as we did before the war for high-grade, accurate, target pistols suitable for that highly specialized deliberate shooting that is so popular during the indoor season. The same is true of all the shooting games, and this fact has a very deterring effect upon the increase in enrollment in the pistol-shooting fraternity, for a novice does not take kindly to the idea of paying from \$35 to \$40 for a gun that is useful for only one form of target practice. He is much more apt to go out and buy himself a tennis racquet, or a set of golf clubs. Of course when a marksman becomes really interested in the sport of pistol-shooting nothing is too good for him, and he wants the very best equipment there is, barring highly dolled-up arms.

H&R
USRA #256
SINGLESHOT



HANDICAPPER



Richardson Target Pistol

W. D. FRAZER

to buy for one can never tell by the looks of a frog how far he can jump.

First impressions of a new pistol are usually formed, first, from appearances; next, from feel; and, finally, from shooting it. The new arm did not look like the cut that was shown me, as the stock was quite different and more attractive than in the photo. But at best it did not strike one as being exactly handsome.

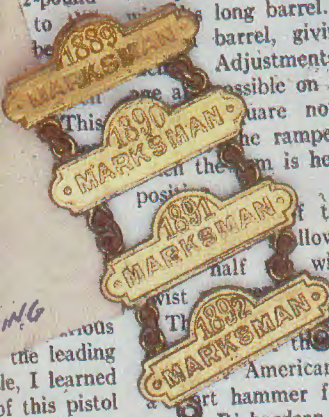
Close examination of the new pistol will soon convince one that he is handling a precision job, for the fitting and workmanship are excellent, and there is no evidence of wiggles and looseness so usual in cheap guns. The tip-up action locks when closed. The one-piece frame is fitted and nicely finished.

It may be said that the grip is a little hard on the hand, but the handle butt of the gun is made of a material that has never been made than that. The barrel is made of the trigger guard, the arm slightly muzzle heavy, hardly be avoided in this long barrel. Both sides of the barrel, giving a slight curve. Adjustments for elevation are possible on the rear sight. This square notch that is cut in the ramped rectangular frame when the gun is held in the normal position.

The barrel is right-handed, of the hollow-groove type, with lands half the width of the grooves, and about one turn in 15 inches. The nature of the new pistol is that in we find something that the American pistol possesses—namely, a port hammer fall. That of the Harrington & Richardson is just about half that of other target pistol made in this country, this feature alone is worth many points score. When one fires or snaps the hammer he gets a feeling of pleasant surprise he can not quite understand, for it is him of the wonderful quick action of foreign free pistols. Not only is the hammer made thin and actuated by a strong coiled spring of the usual flat type, but the hammer stud is so placed that the hammer stud so desires to take a full swing without danger of interfering with the springs the barrel so held horizontally the same height as the ideal is ap-

proached, for the barrel is in prolongation of the upper part of the forearm and points as naturally and easily as the index finger when the arm is fully extended in the most approved shooting position.

The next most pleasing thing about the arm to a shooter is the trigger action, which is smooth, clean, and crisp. The unusually wide face of the trigger is well grooved, and gives one a feeling of security when the finger rests on it. The trigger pull of the pistol that I possess tests slightly more than 3 pounds, and seems lighter. This can be reduced if desired, but is light enough for any but real experts. The space back of the trigger guard is a little too small for my second finger, but is not uncomfortable, as with other pistols there is no recoil to bruise the joint. The automatic ejector throws the shell out of the breech, and does not strike one's face if the gun is held properly.



INSPECTOR



to have a gun of good workmanship and scores it may be

(Continued on page 21)

The first 10-shot



WIN THIS LIMITED EDITION AIMPOINT HUNTER'S REDHAWK

A combination designed exclusively for the handgun hunter, only 1,000 of these Aimpoint Hunter's Redhawk packages will be made.

The powerful .44 Magnum Ruger Redhawk revolver, with the action smoothed out and the trigger and hammer jewelled, is fitted with the incomparable Aimpoint electronic sight. The mount is from Maryland Gun Works, designed to afford a rock-solid base for reliability under recoil.

To add to the package, the Ruger Redhawk is fitted with Pachmayr grips, and to carry this combo afield, the winner will get a hand-carved holster and belt specially designed for this hunting gun by Tex Shoemaker.

This is a handgun/sight combination made to be used. The New Aimpoint Mark III, with its red dot, offers quick and accurate sighting not available with scopes or open sights.

Each gun will be specially remarked with "Aimpoint Limited Edition," the redhawk symbol and the serial number etched on the side plate.

The recent successes of the Aimpoint sight—at the national matches and in the field—show it to be an invaluable tool for the competitor or the hunter. In the recent Bianchi Cup VI Match, 95 of the 200 competitors used an Aimpoint sight, and 16 of the top 25 were using an Aimpoint sighted handgun. If you haven't tried an Aimpoint on your favorite competition or hunting gun, you can get full information by writing: Aimpoint U.S.A., 203 Eldon St., Suite 302, Dept. AH, Herndon, VA 22070.

For information on ordering one of these limited edition Aimpoint Hunter's Redhawk packages, contact: Maryland Gun Works, 2600 Frederick Rd., Dept. AH, Hyattstown, MD 20871.



TO ENTER CONTEST: Use a postcard, follow sample; include name, address, HOM-N/D, local dealer name and address. Mail before December 1, 1984. Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Box 16025, San Diego, CA 92116.

Name _____

Address _____

City & State _____

HOM-NOV./DEC. 1984 Phone _____

If I win, please ship my gun through the following dealer: _____

Dealer _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

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





.22 CONVERSION UNITS DAY VS. KART

*This shootout
between two
conversion units
developed a
single conclusion
—both are winners.*

By Steven S. Petrick

Down through the years many inventors have tried to accommodate the dream of the three-gun NRA competitor for a single-frame, multiple-caliber handgun with X-ring accuracy capability. Success was there for the .38/.45 combo, but the reliable target grade .22 eluded shooters until about 1970.

One of the first to come to the commercial rescue was Robert Day of San Antonio, Texas. A retired U.S. Air Force master pistolsmith and 2600 shooter, Bob designed what he calls the "30-X .22 Target Conversion" which fits the .38 or .45 ACP frame without alteration or special tools.

Following the same lines but a few years later, was Fred Kart of Kart Sporting Arms Corp., in Riverhead, New York. What these two men have produced are designs of beauty, reliable function and target grade accuracy that will put many rifles to shame.

Devices that enable big bore automatic pistols to digest .22 rimfire ammo for both practice and target work have been around nearly as long as the fabled Model 1911 .45 ACP of John Browning design. Back about 1920 members of the Springfield Arsenal experimented with a .22 Short adapter. Unsuccessful trials over a several year span with the diminutive cartridge proved that reliable functioning would be obtainable only with the more powerful .22 Long Rifle casing. Enter at this time Colt Industries.

Colt's engineers and designers were not to achieve instant success, although they did invent a working blowback action that was to lead to commercial production of the Colt Ace Target Pistol. No, it took a number of more years of experimentation and the genius of David "Carbine" Williams of M 1 Carbine fame to develop the floating chamber principle for a reliable functioning conversion unit. True, the Colt Ace had been on the market but the major complaint about this pistol was that the changeover from .22 to .45 was very much an arm shaking experience as the Ace generated very little recoil. William's design, marketed in 1937, permits the expanding gases to act upon an enlarged breech area to both cycle the heavy slide completely and generate a recoil factor of about four times that of a normal .22 Long Rifle cartridge. Therefore, for the first time, a pistol shooter had the competition advantage of a one-frame, multi-pistol concept providing sameness of grip, heft, trigger pull, apparent recoil but, unfortunately, not X-ring accuracy.

Colt, indeed, had reversed direction. Its original Ace was accurate, but was known for unreliable case ejection. So accuracy was sacrificed for reliability, to give the shooter a low-cost ammunition practice pistol that simulated the apparent recoil of the big bore without the bark and bite of same. True, this conversion kit could be





Rear sights on both units resemble BoMars. White outline done by author.

tuned but it was an expensive proposition. And, with war clouds looming, there were other more important matters at hand.

After the conflict of the '40s, when people again started thinking of punching holes in targets, Colt resumed its conversion production (having stopped during the war) and others began to tinker with this unit in the hope of producing a target piece. Such were the likes of Day and Kart, and they succeeded.

As with the Colt unit, the Day and Kart units consist of a slide assembly (or shroud) housing barrel, springs, etc. Although all three have adjustable target sights, the difference among them is readily noticeable. Profile-wise, Kart and Day present a customized target look, while the Colt seems truly like a big bore auto; only upon close examination is the difference finally noticed.

Looking at both the Day and Kart conversions, one sees exterior housings that can be called "kissing cousins" in appearance. Each sports a one piece stationary rib topped with undercut Patridge type front sights and adjustable rear sights resembling a BoMar. From the top the Day is .785 inch wide with flat, matte finish; the Kart is .510 inch wide, matte and grooved the full length between the sights. Both have a sight radius of 8.25 inches.

The recoiling slide on both is of a modified design that originated and was patented in Belgium shortly after the turn of the century. Gunsmith-designer Charles Clement sold his patent rights to Smith & Wesson, who some fifty years later adapted the principle to their now famous Model 41. Simply stated, the slide recoils in the space between the frame and the stationary sights supporting rib.

Additionally, in external appearance, each has the company name on the left side of the

high polish blue housing—Day's to the front and quite large, Kart's in mid-shroud and with much smaller lettering but in gold. (I must point out one item. Too late, I read an American Rifleman article that pointed out one disadvantage of the cleaner WD-40. The spray is so effective a penetrating lubricant that it will "lift" gold and silver filled lettering. No longer does my Kart present its gleaming logo—it washed away after the second application of WD-40.) Ample deep serrations or grooves on each side of the slides

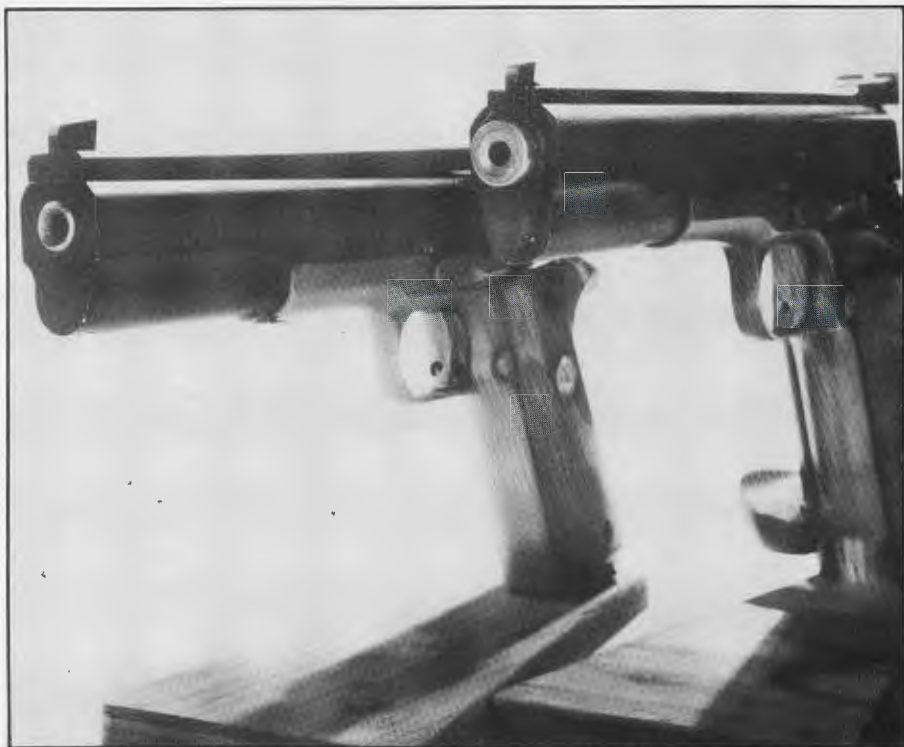
offer a firm grip of ease in operating the smooth actions.

There are differences. Housing (width and height) on the Day is slightly larger and is constructed of 6061-T6 aluminum alloy with a rated tensile strength of 45,000 PSI. The slide is of the same material and rating. There is no barrel link as in the Colt. Instead, a rectangular block beneath the chamber is drilled through to accommodate the slide stop pin. This hole is completely cut through at the bottom, but is enclosed by a "C" shaped hook. (This feature is evidenced in the photo of the stripped down unit.) Completing the interior is a steel breech block and a six inch Douglas premium grade "Ultra-rifled" steel barrel.

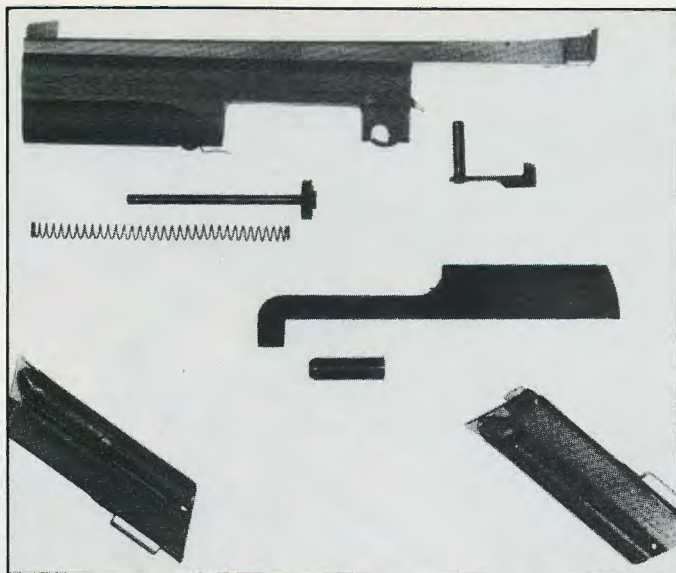
Another unique feature of the Day is that .22 magazines per se are not furnished. Instead, two inserts are provided which are pushed, and locked, into the .45 magazine. Each has a capacity of five rounds. For those wanting to pay the cost, Colt Ace .22 magazines that hold nine cartridges can be used. They may, however, require slight altering for positive ejection by silver soldering a small piece of metal on the left side near the lips.

Installation is simplicity itself. Just slide the unit onto the existing frame, insert the slide stop pin, load and commence firing. Although a pin is provided with the kit, original .45 frame stop pins will work. In using an AMT Hardballer frame, though, only the Hardballer stop pin would enter the frame completely. With other receivers there was no problem with either type.

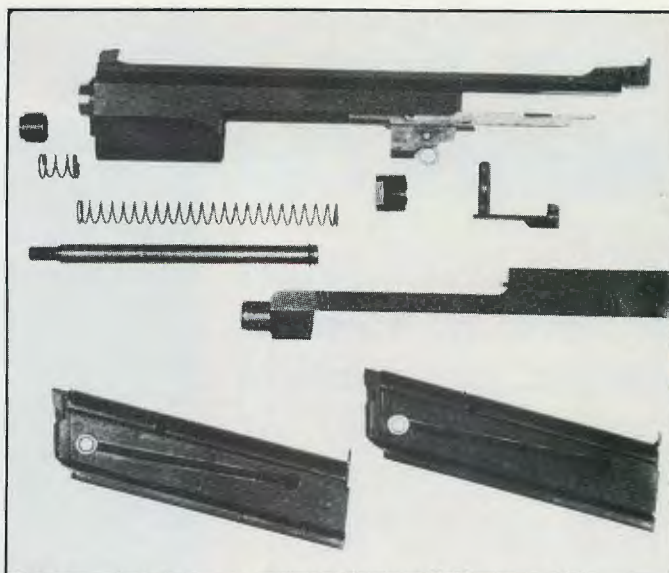
Former land surveyor, mechanical tinkerer and 2700 shooter, Fred Kart is the inventor of the conversion unit bearing his name. Of all steel investment casting construction, the piece differs additionally from



Front sights on both the Day and the Kart units are undercut Patridge type.



The Day 30X .22 conversion unit field stripped.



Field stripped .22 conversion unit from Kart.

the Day in that it uses a patented barrel locking system that, along with slide stop pin, anchors itself to the receiver. Although this may sound complicated, it takes less time to accomplish the procedure than to describe it.

First, the barrel bushing button (just like the .45) is depressed and the bushing is turned clockwise to release the button and short spring. At a depth of about one-half inch is the barrel locking screw, which is backed off approximately two turns. The unit is then slid onto the frame, the lower slide is moved to the rear and the slide stop pin is inserted in place. After the slide is released forward, the barrel locking screw is tightened and the spring and button are inserted and locked in place with the bushing. It may be necessary, though, to check the barrel screw

tightness after initial firing until the unit seats itself.

Length of the barrel, also produced by Kart, is 5.590". Magazines as supplied by the company resemble those of the Colt Ace, which interchange completely. Capacity is only five rounds for the Kart; six can be squeezed in, but reliable functioning suffers.

As stated earlier, both units are "kissing cousins" in appearance. However, when it comes to shooting they are true sisters. Fourteen brands of ammo available locally were tested in both units off a Ransom Rest. Ten-shot strings, five per loading, were used for each group, with each measured for size from center-to-center of edge holes with dial calipers. And what groups they were!

Because the moveable target holders were

already set at 35 yards when we arrived for testing at the range, there they stayed for the remainder of that clear but cold March afternoon. Our comfort was assured, though, as a number of bench rests are located within the converted farmhouse that accommodates, in different sections, both clubroom and shooting benches. We simply "C" clamped the Ransom Rest in place, removed a window, and proceeded to make the hulls fly. Actually, my daughter Marla had the fun segment of the day. She did the shooting while dad did the running back and forth with new targets. It had been planned the other way, but when a daughter smiles so sweetly, well . . .

All testing was done in alphabetical order, including conversion use. With the Day atop

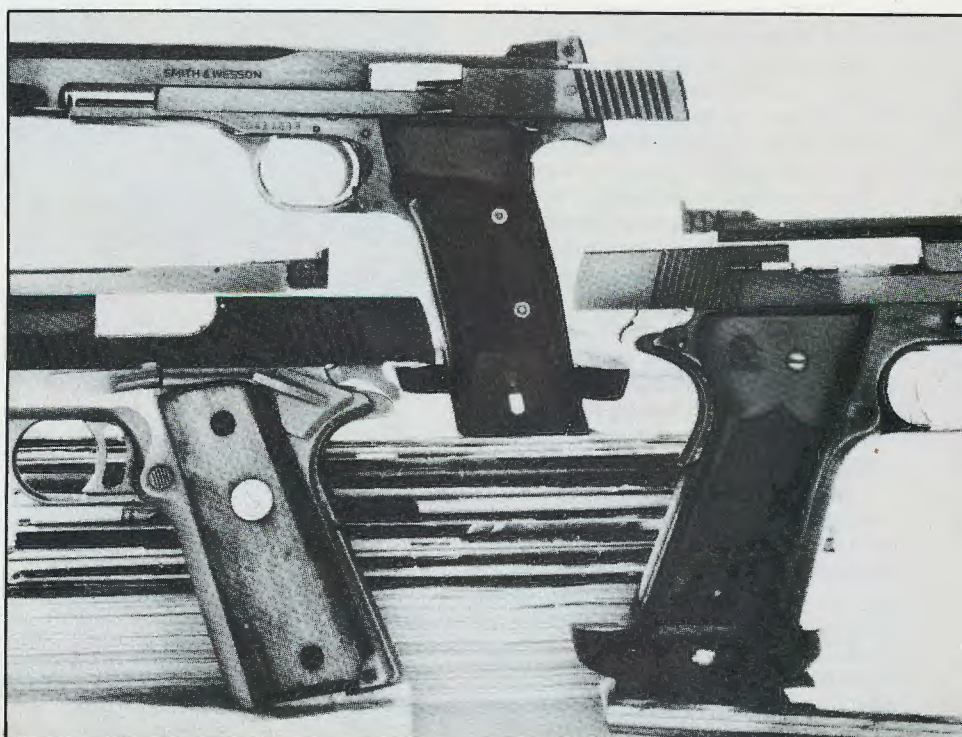
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COMPARISON CHART

10-SHOT STRINGS — CENTER-TO-CENTER — 35 YARDS

	DAY .22 CONVERSION	KART .22 CONVERSION
CARTRIDGE	GROUP SIZE (ins.)	GROUP SIZE (ins.)
CCI Mini Group	.890	.795
CCI Stinger	1.589	.975
Eley Club	.391*	.492
Federal		
Champion	.830	.780
Remington		
Target	1.319	1.239
Remington		
High Speed	1.667	1.499
Squires Bingham	1.400	1.247
Wards		
High Speed	1.500	1.395
Western		
Hollow Point	1.267	1.317
Western		
Super Match	.497	.415*
Winchester		
Expediter	1.369	1.664
Winchester		
Mark IV	.530	.425
Winchester		
Super X	1.683**	1.798**
Winchester T-22	1.148	1.287

*Denotes smallest group size fired. **Denotes largest group size fired.



Recoiling slide system of S&W 41 is evident in both Kart and Day units.

Has the Time Come For a Multi-Caliber Revolver?

Ray Herriott thinks so, and his Centaur System, while only in prototype may be the answer.

By Al Pickles

The notion of converting a basic handgun from one caliber to another has always fascinated the economy-minded shooter as well as the professional pistolero. While economy, especially today, is important to us all, the technical advantages of converting a single gun to additional calibers are even more important to the advanced handgunner. We all shoot our best with the handgun we use the most. If we can change from one caliber to another while maintaining the same "feel," it stands to reason that our shooting will remain consistent and even improve over the long run.

The term "feel," of course, includes balance, trigger pull and break, and all other mechanics of a given type of handgun action. Such a conversion becomes most practical if it can be accomplished in a relatively short period of time and with little or no gunsmithing skill on the part of the owner.

The truth of this concept is most obviously demonstrated by the astonishingly rapid success of Thompson/Center Arms with their Contender pistol. It would be almost a sure bet that over 95% of the Contender owners have at least one extra barrel in a different caliber. Some own a dozen barrels in various calibers and lengths.

The use to which one can put a Thompson/Center Contender is, however, limited by its being a single-shot pistol. It would be nice if someone could come up with an easily converted large caliber revolver to compliment the several autoloaders on the market that offer caliber conversions, such as the Colt and the Heckler & Koch. Handgun hunters, who generally appreciate a rapid second shot, often prefer the revolver to the autoloader.

I am sure there have been several past attempts at quick conversion kits with revolvers, but none have been successful enough to capture a portion of the handgun market. There are, indeed, considerable design problems to overcome and the end result must feature economy if it is to interest the average shooter. Economy has general appeal, and general appeal leads to the volume production and sales that generate more economy.

The problems in designing a revolver with quick conversion capabilities have interested Master Designer Ray Herriott for some time and, apparently, he has solved them. I have just finished a grueling test session with a Herriott prototype of just such a revolver.

The prototype is a large frame stainless steel single action utilizing a Ruger Super Blackhawk frame with certain modifications designed by Herriott. Special barrel and cylinder sets have been manufactured in .357 Magnum and .44 Magnum which can be

Continued on page 66





Interrupted threads of barrel, and cylinder locking device are shown in photos at left. Interchanging both cylinders and barrels is easy task.

DESIGNER PROFILE

Ray Herriott

To this day when I think of the term "gun designer" I get a mental picture of a man whittling away at a wooden working model of a handgun that will take the world by storm. These fascinating men did more than adorn the pages of history, they recharted the course that history would follow. Gun designers were, for the most part, self-taught and self-made men. Some could even visualize the most complex mechanisms without committing the design to paper. The key to their success was single-minded interest in their work. Multitalented men, like Sam Colt, were the exceptions.



While men who fit this mold still exist, it takes an entirely different background to earn the title "Chief of Designing" with a modern gun company. Nonetheless there is, at least in the instance at hand, a common denominator. Ray G. Herriott, formerly chief designer at Detonics Manufacturing Corporation, is a self-made man. While pursuing the various necessary disciplines at university level, he concentrated on math, physics, and electronics while having little time for those subjects that were not directly related to his goals.

Fun subjects for Ray consisted of drafting, graphics, schematics, and mechanical drawing—a far cry from some students who tend to relax with college level basket weaving. Academic studies were supplemented by mastering, to advanced journeyman level, a wide variety of shop equipment and skills. He foresaw the eventual relationship between machines and electronics.

A gun designer by today's standards does not whittle a model in wood—he uses computers. A gun designer of today becomes a master of general analog circuit design, digital circuits, and electro-mechanical design. He learns how to program computers to aid in

Continued on page 67

The .38 Super shares one thing with Mark Twain—reports of its death are greatly exaggerated. Having taken a long, hard beating, it is staging a fighting comeback.

The Super has to be our most maligned caliber. Gun writers have done more than their share of badmouthing. And gun writers aren't all wrong, so Super guns have been unpopular.

The gripes against .38 Super are quickly summarized. The worst is that the Super is "inherently inaccurate," and add to that the claim that it is a poor stopper. For what is supposed to be a serious defensive caliber, that is plenty to turn off shooters.

The technical experts may also explain that .38 Super's unusual semi-rimmed case headspaces on the semi-rim. But the small rim shoulder in typical guns, combined with over-long loose chambers, makes alignment of the round unreliable. Result: poor accuracy.

All of this was true years ago. Some Super guns *were* pretty inaccurate. The old military hardball ammo *was* and *is* a poor stopper, because it drills neat holes through everything. But what about the modern Super guns and ammo?

Even its critics have to admit that the Super has always been powerful. Muzzle energies are higher than either .45 ACP or 9mm Parabellum (Luger). With .45 ACP (up to 370 ft.-lbs. in regular factory loads) and 9mm (335-387 ft.-lbs.) about equal, the Super hardball load has both higher velocity (130-gr. bullet, 1280 ft. per second) and greater muzzle energy (475 ft.-lbs.) from test barrels.

Personally I have been a Super booster for years. Starting with conversion of an Astra 600 from 9mm to Super, I later added a Llama in the caliber. These Spanish autos combined good power with acceptable accuracy. Recently I began to wonder whether all of the badmouthing contained

THE -38 SUPER TODAY

By Russ Gaertner

A new look at this 50 year old cartridge and a dispelling of some of the myths surrounding its accuracy and suitability in today's world of the American handgunner.

liberal doses of hot air.

In order to learn the facts about modern .38 Super guns and present factory ammo, I decided to test the available guns in the caliber.

There are three factory loadings. Remington still makes the same hardball fodder. More useful are Remington's 115-grain jacketed hollowpoints (JHP), listed at 1300 fps and 431 ft.-lbs., and Winchester's 125-grain JHP (1280 fps; 454 ft.-lbs.) Both expand reliably at normal ranges and are vicious stoppers, disposing of one gripe against the Super. These loads also shoot flatter than either .45s or 9mms out to any range.

CAUTION: Never shoot Super loads in older .38 ACP guns. The newest Super loads are marked ".38 Super +P", but older loads may carry headstamps such as ".38 Auto" with no indication of high pressures. If in doubt, don't shoot them. .38 ACP guns will not handle Super pressures. All Super guns should be checked before firing, to be certain that no weakening pitting is present in chamber or bore. Shallow pits may be okay for both strength and accuracy, but have an expert look at the gun.

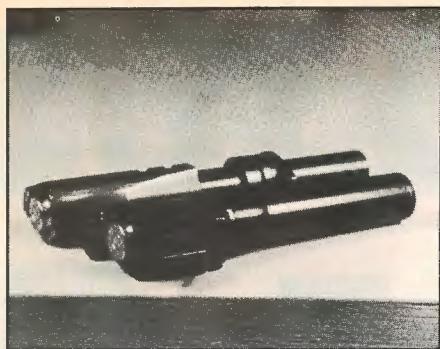
American Supers

More than fifty years ago, Colt invented .38 Super by loading the old .38 ACP case to high pressure. The company has chambered its heavy autos for it ever since. The newer guns still headspace on the semi-rim and have fairly loose, long chambers tapering into the bore. I was eager to test Colts because improvements have been made in .45 accuracy in recent years. If this extended to .38 Super, it could be a boost for the caliber.

Colt's Mark IV Series 70 auto is familiar to all handgunners, as is their shorter Combat Commander. Both are fine, well-fitted guns



Author-tested .38 Supers included, left to right, Astra A-80; Auto Ordnance 1911; Colt Combat Commander; Sig-Sauer P-220; Colt Mark IV Series 80.



Headspacing varies; Commander (top) headspaces on semi-rim; in the lower Astra barrel, headspace is on case mouth—much better system.



A variety of handloads and factory ammunition were used in the test.



with highly polished, attractive finishes. These high-quality guns are so well known that no further description is needed. Frankly, however, I had never fired either Super. Not many shooters have.

Shooting a .38 Super Colt is not much different from firing the same gun in 9mm. Both are mild and noticeably lighter in recoil than a .45 with full loads. If a shooter is bothered by .45 kick, the Super may help. The Commander is a little tougher to shoot well, but again the Super can help.

After preliminary shooting, I knew that my brand new test Colts were highly reliable out-of-the-box with factory loads and surprisingly so with my best handloads. So I set up the Lee pistol machine rest and the Oehler Model 33 Chronotach to start serious testing, firing 5-shot groups at 25 yards.

The best I hoped for, having read all about the Super's "inaccuracy," was mediocre accuracy. What I got was something else! The Colt Mark IV auto with Remington factory hardball ammo averaged 2.51-inch groups, and Winchester 125 JHPs were downright tight with a 1.85-inch average! This compares well with any other serious caliber in a standard gun out-of-the-box. If this is "inherent inaccuracy," I'll take it!

My handloads grouped even more uniformly from the Colt Mark IV. All groups ranged from 1.43 to 3.29 inches, and the four loads averaged 1.84 to 2.13 inches. I did a lot of grinning that day, having debunked the "inaccuracy" gripe. Writers have neglected to test Super guns recently, it seems.

Why are the Colts now more accurate than years ago? Colt uses the collet-type barrel bushing in its Series 70 guns, for tighter, more uniform lockup. The Commander still has the old barrel bushing, but the specs may be tighter for other key parts. Whatever the reason, the bottom line is that Colt Super accuracy today is good to very good. This was borne out by my testing of the Commander.

From the Commander on the Lee rest, the Remington 130s averaged 3.56 inches and the Winchester load, 2.35 inches. Handloads printed 1.75- to 4.24-inch groups, averaging 2.84 inches. Not up to the test Mark IV auto, but still good for a factory auto with no accurizing. Trigger pulls on both guns started out on the heavy side, but after shooting they levelled out at a good 5 lbs. with some creep, about like factory .45 pulls.

As expected, velocities and power were not up to data from factory test barrels. From the 5-inch Mk. IV barrel, Remington 130s clocked 1187 fps for 407 ft.-lbs.; their 115s, 1275 fps or 415 ft.-lbs.; and Winchester 125s, 1203 fps and 401 ft.-lbs. Commander figures were slightly lower from the 4 1/2-inch barrel. These numbers are still well above comparable .45 ACP and 9mm performance.

I like the Colts. They are hard to beat in any caliber. I handle these guns automatically (not a pun!), without thinking about it. I'm relaxed with them, and I shoot better because of that. In .38 Super, they are as much fun to shoot as a .45, maybe more.

The only other American-made Super at present is Auto Ordnance's 1911 model, which became available just as I was completing my tests. I have one of their .45s, a well-fitted surprisingly accurate auto, though not as nicely machined and finished as the Colts. The AO Super was similar, but not very accurate. This was disappointing, because the gun has a fairly tight chamber and headspaces on the case mouth, not the semi-rim. Of course, the lockup itself is a key factor in accuracy.

The Detonics people tell me that they no longer make a Super auto, due to low demand. The Llama rep said the same thing, thus unpopularity due to unjustified criticism hurts not only the caliber, but the gun companies. That limits the shooter's choices. But my enthusiasm grew as I expanded testing to foreign-made Supers.

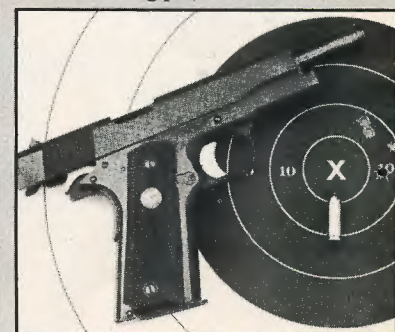
Continued on page 75

CONVERSION TO .38 SUPER

The conversion of a .45 auto to .38 Super is easy and economical, because only the extra slide and its parts are needed. No fitting or other shop work is usually required.

The extra parts are a .38 Super slide which will work on the rails of the .45 frame, the slide parts (firing pin, spring, stop, and extractor), Super barrel with link and pin, Super magazine, and possibly a Super ejector. With these parts, it is as easy as field stripping to go from one caliber to the other and back again.

If you want to save even more on parts costs, you can get by with just the slide, barrel, and extractor, but you have to switch firing pin, etc., back and forth.



The new Colt Super slide I used was a tight fit on my old Gold Cup receiver. I did no honing, and the .45 ejector cleared the slide channel. I simply cleaned the rails, lubed with Break Free, and reassembled the gun with .38 slide, using the old barrel bushing, recoil spring, and slide catch. Despite the snug fit, the gun was reliable with factory ammo or full-power handloads, but not with light handloads.

Accuracy of the converted Colt Super was not up to the factory Mark IV Super. From the Lee rest I averaged good 3- to 4-inch groups.

Conversion of my Auto Ordnance 1911 .45 was similar, but the AO .38 Super slide gave a looser fit on the AO .45 receiver. (The Colt .38 slide would not fit the AO frame.) The .45 ejector also stopped the AO slide cold, so a .38 ejector from AO was installed. The gun then worked fine, but from the machine rest it printed 4- to 6-inch groups.

Interestingly, by sighting from an arm rest, I got average groups under 2 inches, including 1.1- and 1.3-inch beauties. This is unusual, because it means that slide looseness spread out machine groups, but the lockup itself was good, giving fine aimed results. The converted AO Super was reliable with a wide range of loads.

This conversion to .38 Super has the advantage of low cost, and it lets the shooter try the caliber using the same trigger pull and feel as his .45. You can't make a better direct comparison than that.



Do You a Full-

Custom pistolsmiths can and do add just about anything to a combat pistol. But if costs are important to you, perhaps you should take a good hard look before you leap.

By Jim Weller

Combat .45! These days, the mention of something like that conjures up visions of compensators, expansion chambers, Bomar Sights, and enough extras to keep a gunsmith happy on one gun for a number of hours. In fact, looking at some of the price sheets that I have, I get the feeling that some of these people would only need to do a couple of guns a year to make a nice living. So I exaggerate a little, but these things don't come cheap, and price increases, when they come, are usually large increases.

OK, so you've decided that you can't live without one of these modern marvels and by golly, six kids and a wife or not, you're gonna find the bucks and get you one. If you haven't seen price sheets from about a dozen gunsmiths and compared prices, please do so. Many offer package deals on certain portions of the work which make it somewhat more attractive than paying for each step separately. As I start this article, I have in front of me four price sheets from four of the better known .45 magicians in the country today. What they offer in options, what it costs, and just how much of what do you need is just what I'm going to talk about. When we finish building your "master blaster" and you see what it will cost you, you may want some Alka-Seltzer handy. Then I'm going to give you my views on all it really takes to have a competitive .45 for either duty or IPSC use.

Assuming that you have a good, solid .45 to begin with, (if not, then add the price of

one to the bill), here, one at a time, is the list of the major pieces of equipment found on match guns today.

Right off the bat, let's get the most expensive piece of equipment out of the way. I've by no means fired all of the compensator types currently available, nor do I have the desire to. All of the current crop of compensators appear to do the job for which they are intended. Keep in mind that they do not reduce the recoil of the weapon, but only the muzzle rise. So what, you say, the .45 doesn't recoil all that bad anyway, but a reduction in muzzle jump would be just the ticket for rapid fire, so the end justifies the expense. None are cheap, and if you feel that you absolutely can't live without one, be prepared to make an initial cash outlay of anywhere from \$300 and up if you have the gunsmith do the fitting for you. This isn't really as bad as it sounds, since the compensator usually includes a new custom barrel, solid bushing if one is used, and a precise fitting of barrel to slide, along with the proper throating of the barrel ramp and polishing of the frame for reliable feeding. Done separately to a standard barrel, all this would add up to a hunk of change in itself. The top price I've seen in compensators is a cool \$500, including a new 6" Bar-Sto barrel. Let's go middle of the road and say that our particular one will cost \$400.

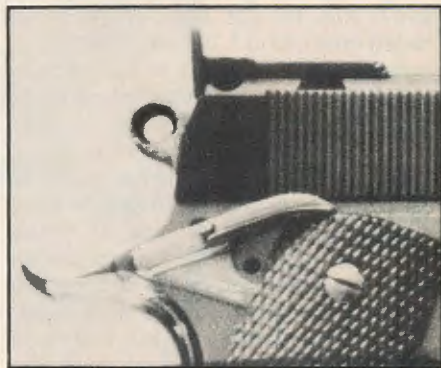
TRIGGER WORK

This is an item that you absolutely can't be

without. I don't know of a shooter worth his salt who doesn't have some kind of trigger work done to give him a clean, crisp pull. For a good match trigger, including a long trigger adjustable for overtravel, \$40 will leave your hands. Here you could save yourself a couple of bucks if you purchase your own new trigger and put it in the gun prior to shipping it for work.

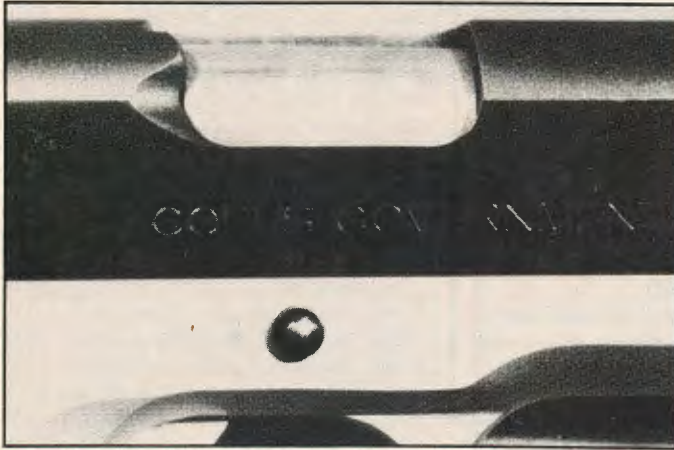
SIGHTS

I don't care whether or not you compete in matches or just carry for social use, good sights are a must on the .45. Fixed sights are far and away the sturdiest you can use, and when properly installed will hold their zero through thick and thin. My current favorite in this category are those sold by ace gunsmith

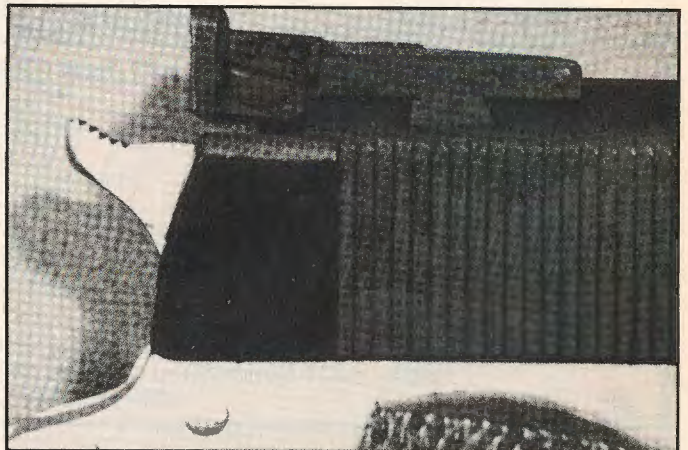


Spade grip safety and ambidextrous safety lever are nice, but?

Really Need House .45?



Functional option is relieved ejection port.



Bobbed hammer will prevent most auto "bites."

Richard Heinie. They'll cost you \$55 installed through his shop, and are a bargain. No way, you say; you shoot a dozen different loads, and besides, what would a true IPSC shooter do without his melted Bomars. Alright, let's go with the flow and get them. Cost is another \$120. Others you might wish to consider are the Millets and Micros. Stay away from the S&W adjustable sights, since they cost you as much to install as the Bomars and don't give you anywhere near the sight picture.

ACCURACY WORK

This usually consists of tightening the slide to the frame, and the custom fitting of the barrel to the slide. We already picked the barrel fitting with the installation of the compensator, so that leaves the slide/frame fit. Do you need it? If you're an avid shooter/competitor, and you must be or you wouldn't be building this, then the answer is yes. Your pistol will run many more rounds before needing a re-tightening if you start with the gun good and tight to begin with. Most pistolsmiths offer a "combat" tightening which allows good accuracy and reliability without the super tight fitting of a bullseye gun. Figure another \$60 for this extra.

LOWERING EJECTION PORT

This is a truly functional option that you shouldn't be without. Any .45 should be able to eject the standard hardball (loaded) with-



out the cartridge catching on the slide/port. That ability will enable the shooter to clear most malfunctions quickly and easily simply by pulling the slide smartly to the rear. Without this lowering, you can find yourself in a worse spot than you started with. This is \$25 well spent on a standard MKIV. A Gold Cup and Commander have this feature built in as does the new Colt "Combat" MKIV.

WIDE GRIP SAFETY

This is totally up to the shooter. I merely

requested that the hammer on my gun be bobbed, and the standard safety left in place. I have never been bothered by hammer bite that way, and I notice no difference in felt recoil with the wider safety. But, I forgot, you're building your "Star Wars" blaster, and it wouldn't be complete without one, so another \$60 will do it.

Practically everybody has one of those ambidextrous safeties these days, except me, that is. My gun sports the one that Sam Colt

Continued on page 62



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puts on at the factory, and I see no need to change it since I have no trouble using it. However, you might, and what about those weak hand matches? OK, add another \$60 to the tab.

STOCKS, METAL WORK, FINISHES

You'll find many people offering their work with the Pachmayr rubber stocks. I have nothing but praise for their new "Grip-Per" revolver stocks, but I simply don't like them on my .45's. It is hard to improve on the ones that come from Colt, meaning the checkered wooden stocks. You can, however, add something to those stocks that will give you the finest non-slip surface available. I'm speaking, naturally, of having the front strap checkered. Metal checkering, especially good quality work of 20 LPI, isn't cheap, but then this is a once in a lifetime buy and you want it all. Besides, this is another one of those extras that really is worth the money. \$85 is the going rate these days just for the frame, but it's worth every penny. Neither rain, nor snow, nor sweat can make your hand slip from a good metal checkering job.

Squaring and checkering the trigger guard is something I can do without since I don't utilize the guard for support of my index finger. Besides, it adds another \$60 to the price of your blaster, which is already going into warp drive on its way through your wallet. You can save yourself \$30 and just have the standard trigger guard left as is, but checkered, so let's do that instead.

As for the finish, I have a fondness for the two-tone method, and my own gun reflects this with a blued slide and Nyltex finish on the frame, but the end result is another \$75 added to the bill. I personally don't like the all stainless type finishes on my .45's whether they resist rust or not. I figure that when a weapon is taken care of, the blue works just fine. It might wear some and need replacing once in awhile, but it makes a much more pleasing finish when coupled with a brushed nickle style finish on the frame.

Well, if I were building a new blaster, and money were no object, then everything I just mentioned would go on the want list. What's that, you say? You want to know what ELSE you can have done? Well, alright, because there are a couple of other things that just might come in handy, such as an extended magazine release button (can be useful in a match); an extended slide release (only a boob would want one of those); have the rear of the slide checkered to match the frame (some say it helps to reduce glare, personally I can't see the difference; checker or serrate the top of the slide (same goes for this as for the rear of the slide); funnel the magazine well (it does help, so let's add another \$25 to the bill); and on and on.

Now that we've completed the work sheet for our new IPSC special, it's time to drag out the pocket calculator. Assuming that you already have a .45, let's get right into the custom end.

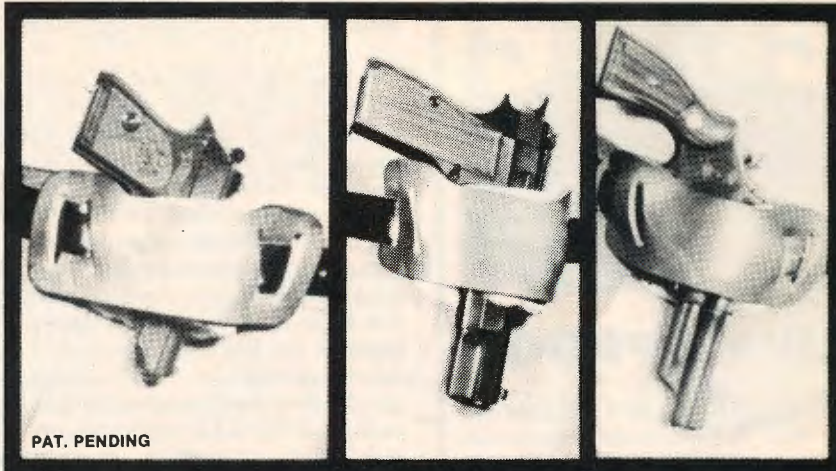
1. Compensator, barrel, custom fitting \$400.00
2. Match trigger job with adjustable trigger 40.00
3. Melted BoMars with new front sight 120.00
4. Tighten slide to frame 60.00
5. Lower ejection port 25.00
6. Wide grip safety 50.00
7. Ambidextrous thumb safety 60.00
8. Checker frame 85.00
9. Checker trigger guard 30.00
10. Nytex frame 75.00
11. Reblue slide 40.00
12. Add skeletonized Commander hammer 58.00
13. New 18½ lb. recoil spring 3.00
- Grand Total \$1046.00

If you don't already have a .45, you can add the price of that to the above. (Also add the price of one divorce if your spouse isn't a shooter or understanding. If she is the former, then double the price since she's not going to stop until she has one, too.)

Keep in mind that these prices are what's being charged on the average for the work shown. By the time you read this, prices will, I'm sure, have gone up, and when the prices go up on work like this, they don't usually go up a couple of dollars, they go up a BUNCH! For instance, the gunsmith who built my gun checked the frame for \$60. Now, one year later, the going rate is \$85. Don't be afraid to get a bunch of price sheets and phone the gunsmith. You can tell by speaking with them whether or not you're going to get treated as a human being, or just another piece of gravel in the driveway. Prices will vary quite a bit from one shop to another for certain work. While I sit here typing this, another folder from a gunshop was delivered to my door. When I saw the prices being charged there, I promptly threw it away. I wouldn't pay those prices to old J. Browning himself.

Do all these items that you stuck on your dream gun make any difference in the way you shoot? Psychologically they might, and for the first match or two you attend, you may be looked on as the next world's champion because you'll do so well. However, your old habits will come back and your true colors will show through eventually. Only when you reach the caliber of shooters like Mike Plaxco or Rob Latham will a lot of this foofaraw make one whit of difference, and let's face it guys, there just aren't that many of us who will ever get that far. I can hear some of you now saying to yourselves saying that you bet that jerk Weller shoots one of those "funky" guns himself, and you know something? You're right, I do. But, like the top shooters in the game, I feel that when I do poorly, no gun would have helped me, and when I'm having a good day, I could win with a length of sewer pipe if I were inclined to shoot it. There isn't anything on the market that's going to hit the target for you, no matter what you pay for it. In a column in another shooting publication, a former world's champion and top IPSC competitor made the statement that when sizing up the competitors at a match, the sight of one of these chrome and

Completes Your Holster Inventory



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New adjustable holster fits most any handgun: autos and revolvers alike, regardless of barrel length or frame size.

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The A.G.P. has even created a new market all its own. Since the A.G.P. works like a gun-rug it appeals to those who already own holsters for all their guns. These are people who don't need another conventional holster. They buy the A.G.P. as an investment in their guns' resale values.

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blue pin guns that cost \$1000 didn't bother him. What *did* bother him was the sight of a .45 worn shiny from thousands of draws, and the knowledge that the guy using it had just spent the \$1000 on powder and primers for practice!

Believe me, I have nothing against the fancy guns nor those who build them. Indeed, a well crafted .45 is a thing of beauty, and the future is bright indeed for good .45 craftsmen. However, for those of you who want something accurate, reliable, and a couple of hairs out of the ordinary, many gunsmiths offer what they call a "Duty" package for a lot less money. A perfect example of that is the "Personal Defense Package" put together by Richard Heinie (821 East Adams, Havana, ILL 62644). In this package, the shooter will find everything he needs to SUCCESSFULLY compete in any IPSC match, and it also doubles as a top notch carry piece as well. Included are a set of his absolutely top-notch fixed sights, beveled mag well, open and flared ejection port, trigger job, throat for all ammo, adjust extractor, fit solid bushing, re-crown barrel, bob hammer, 18 1/2 lb. recoil spring, shock-buff, and deburr all parts. The price on this is a measly (comparatively) \$170.00. Add \$20 for a long trigger and even another \$85 for checkering the frame, and you're still way ahead of the game. This is a true bargain by any standards, and if you can't win with this one, I doubt that you'd win with anything you could come up with. The only top shooter that I know of that is currently using the standard length .45 sans compensator/muzzle brake of any kind is Ross Seyfried, and I think that anyone would have to say that he does really well with it. So can you.

AUTO PISTOL FAILURES

Continued from page 40

was expensive. It lasted until 1921, and 8,350 were made.

By 1924, Smith & Wesson had redesigned the pistol, and wisely chambered it for the popular .32 Auto round. The unlockable breech block and the one-finger grip safety were retained, but the new pistol had a true slide, elegant good looks, and impeccable quality. Unfortunately, it was still much more expensive than its competitors, and its production period—1924 to 1927—was not the best of times to market a costly pocket auto. Exactly 957 of them were made.

STAR WARS PISTOL

Our next example is a .22LR pistol that had no serious design defects, and many excellent features—the Whitney "Wolverine." Made from 1955 to 1963, it was reliable, accurate, and reasonably priced. Its grip shape and angle were perfect, and its pointability and other handling qualities were superb. Its only mechanical minus points were a poorly-shaped hammer and a tricky takedown.

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So, why did it fail? Principally, I think, because many American gun buyers tend to have very conservative taste, and the Whitney had an outer-space look, as if it might fire a laser beam, not a .22 Long Rifle cartridge. Also, it made extensive use of non-ferrous alloys, in a time when materials of that type were mostly used in guns that were considered to be "junk." The basic design, though, was excellent. Someone should bring it back now.

ESCORT

In 1970, Smith & Wesson introduced a pocket auto in .22LR, designated the Model 61, and called the "Escort." Enough time had passed, apparently, that they had forgotten the lesson of 1913. The basic design was borrowed from the Belgian 1908 Bayard pistol, and the results were less than pleasing. Made with characteristic attention to detail, the Model 61 was nicely finished and worked perfectly. The Bayard-based design, however, limited the magazine capacity to five rounds, the pistol had poor handling qualities, and it was ugly. By 1973, it had been dropped from the line.

PLAINFIELD

Our final example, the Plainfield Model 71, was designed by Gary Wilhelm, whose fine work is seen today in the .22 Stoeger Luger and the Llama Omni. There was also a Model 72 Plainfield, which differed only in slide length and some of the materials used. The Plainfield had two strikes against it—external appearance, and marketing.

The pistol was chambered for .22 Long Rifle, and was offered with a conversion breech block, barrel, and magazine which allowed it to also use .25 Auto cartridges. The original plan was to have it convertible from .22LR to .380, giving the short pistol a very fat, "boxy" look and feel. The Model 71 was of all-steel construction, finished in Lubri-Bond, and had hand-checked walnut grip panels.

It's a very well-engineered pistol, with a wide trigger and a true hammer-block manual safety. The Model 71 that I own works perfectly in both calibers. The conversion is quick and easy, the takedown key being a heavy steel cross-piece that is locked in place by the rear sight. During the time the gun was made, from 1971 to 1978, Don Hume even produced a nice belt-slide holster for it. Also, during that time, I saw practically no publicity on the gun, neither articles nor advertisements. The Plainfield company was later purchased by Iver Johnson, and production of their version of the U.S. Carbine was continued, but the Model 71 and Model 72 pistols disappeared.

There are numerous other U.S. Autos that have appeared and vanished over the years—those noted here are just a sampling. Even though they're now in the realm of the collector, they're worthy of the attention of shooters, firearms designers, and manufacturers, because some contain design elements that are worth copying—



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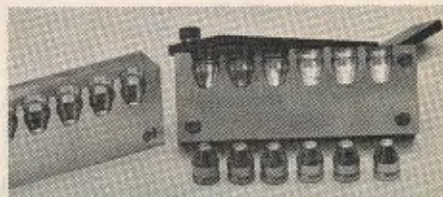
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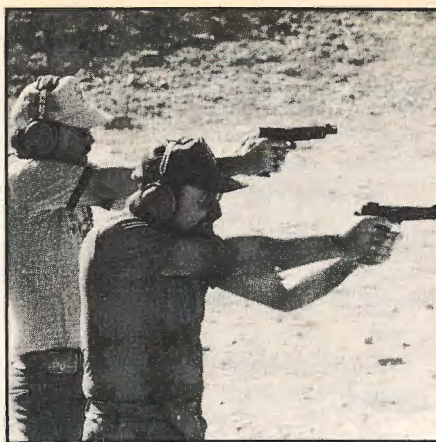
BIANCHI CUP VI

Continued from page 44

shoot the falling plate match, *he knows it*. So does Leatham, who has weathered this ultimate heat twice before last year in the national and world IPSC shoots.

And so does Shaw. The difference is, Shaw has already shot his falling plate match, and done it perfect and run 119 plates before he missed one, bringing his total X-count to 480-119X. Under the new rules of the Cup in '84, when you go clean on the plates, you shoot the whole match again: two sets of six each at 10, 15, 20 and 25 yards. On each successive tie-breaker run, they take one second off the usual times of 6, 7, 8, and 9 seconds respectively.

The range officers at Bianchi Cup—a highly skilled and dedicated cadre, as would be expected from a group trained by NRA, and by the IPSC national range officer training school, *and* not only trained but hand-picked by former world champion Ray Chapman himself—call this rule change the “Enos Clause.” Until now, those who cleaned the plates repeated the toughest stage of 6 plates in 9 seconds at 25 yards until they missed one. Last year, I watched as Enos set an awesome record of 505 plates.



Only a few of us saw a little known fact: Enos in '83 deliberately shot 504 plates. Having finished that bank, and realizing that other shooters were “on hold” until he was done and were steaming in the cauldron of match pressure, Brian had said, “Can I stop now and finish later? Those people are waiting to shoot.”

“No,” a range officer told him, “you have to shoot until you miss.”

We saw an unfamiliar expression set itself on Brian's face, and he nodded, almost to himself. He reloaded and took the line again. On the command, he drew and fired rapidly. The bullet hit the bottom edge of his plate, and it teetered before it fell.

And Enos waited for it! Enos, who knew like any of us that a Master doesn't watch the

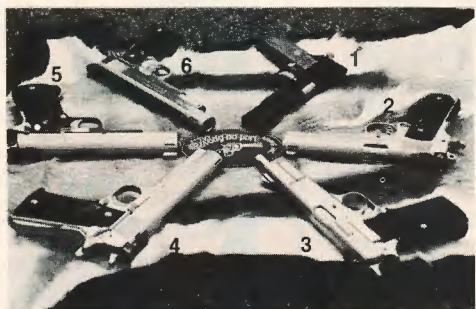
plate, but shoots six fast sight pictures and then looks to see if anything is standing, paused.

I saw a surprised look on his face, and then he lowered his revolver and fired a round two feet low into the dirt below the plates. Then, BRRRP, he emptied the other four shots and dumped four plates.

That was in '83. In '84, with one second chopped off your time each run, Brian went three sets of plates before losing, and he didn't lose by missing a plate. I was standing on the deck to shoot the Barricade Match a hundred yards away as I watched him clear the Aim-pointed gun from his Gordon Davis holster and shoot the six plates so fast that the first wasn't all the way on its back by the time he put a slug into the sixth. It looked like a row of dominoes going down with automatic fire playing in the background. But playing in the background too was the stop signal; Brian's last shot was simultaneous with it, or perhaps a little after, and it stopped his time with five plates down.

As long as you run the plates, you build your X-count for tie-breakers. Brian lasted longer than any of us. You see, he was going from a shoulder-high ready position to a draw against six plates in three seconds when the timer caught him on the fifth plate.

Leatham had kept pace with Enos until he missed his 94th plate. That left the finish, Enos 1910-257X, Shaw 1910-214X, Leatham 1910-207X. The other top twenty shooters appear on an accompanying table.



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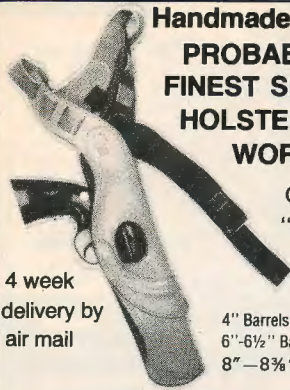
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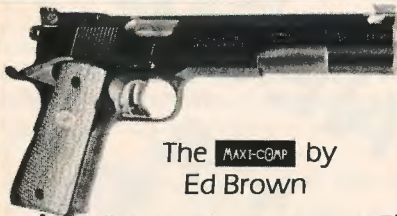
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It was a professional tournament, and others would take big money, too. Angelo Spagnoli, a relatively new shooter, would use a Bruce Gray-customized H&K P9S Sport-Target 9mm to take first place for a Heckler and Koch shooter; though 68th overall, his \$5,000 prize from H&K was more than the \$4,000 in cash and merchandise given for third place in the overall tournament. Craig Wood, an ace PPC shooter from Vermont State Police, placed 47th and won \$250. for that, plus \$1,000. for high Tasco scope shooter. The games is getting *professional* folks.

Enos took home a total of \$18,550., when the Cup was coupled with his sub-event prizes. Brian's big chunk of change from the second place in the '82 cup paid the down payment for his family's home, and his winnings as last year's champion augmented that substantially. This year's purse, he says, will go to make a down payment on his own auto body shop, since he is a mechanic by trade.

There are people from all walks of life in the "great equalizer" world of the handgun, where that term applies whether you're talking social strata, or face to face confrontations. There are a few rich kids who can afford to practice their hearts out and don't need the money, and there are a lot more like Brian who make us all glad when they win that fat purse. But the fact that Enos could use the money better than some rich dilettante who had nothing to do with his life but practice with a pistol isn't the thing that made so many of us glad he won.

What impresses this writer is a comparison between Enos and his friend but arch-competitor, Mickey Fowler. Mickey is nobody's dilettante; when I call him at his business number, *he* answers. Fowler's excellence in competition comes from the same commitment he gives to his flourishing business, which supports a lot of people, and he takes his practice time out of his private time, just like the rest of us, contrary to unfounded rumor.

No, the difference between Mickey and Brian is one of presence. Fowler is the quintessential competitor, a former race driver who is enfolded by an invisible curtain of "cool" when he takes the firing line for the top stakes. Enos, 28 years old to Fowler's 36 and with far fewer years in the game, shows his reaction to the pressure: he licks his lips and wipes his hands on his thighs before he shoots, showing the enormous tension of shooting for a year's salary in a couple of minutes, but when the whistle blows, his tremors disappear and he locks into his isosceles stance and shoots down whatever has been put in front of him with an exactly appropriate rhythm. Each man, in his own way, represents a triumph of human will.

In short, Fowler is the shooter you always wanted to be, but Enos is the shooter you identify with. Both are gentlemen, and both are the sort of men we were all proud to have as our champions in this richest of handgun games, the sport that has become known as "the Wimbledon of pistol shooting."

I am one of only ten men who have shot all

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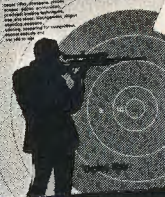
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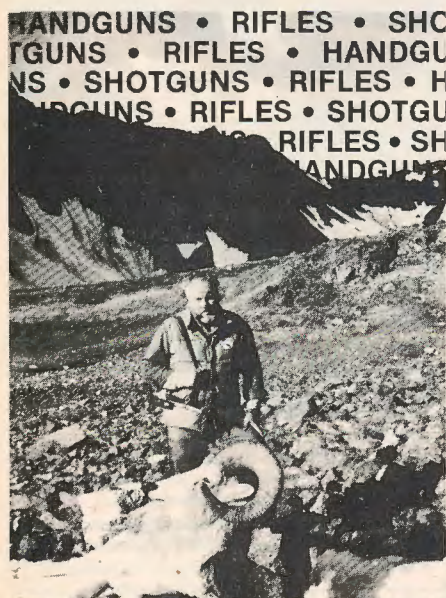
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MULTI-MAG

Continued from page 55

interchanged on the frame in less than two minutes and using only two Allen wrench sizes. A single special tool for this purpose is supplied with the conversion set.

What Ray has done to make all this possible is design a lug system to replace threading the barrel into the frame. While it was complicated to design and manufacture, it is extremely simple to execute. To change barrels you just remove the ejector rod and housing with the small end of the Allen wrench, then remove a threaded bolt which replaces the cylinder pin. This bolt locks the barrel in place. A pull and twist on the barrel disengages the lugs and the barrel comes free. The cylinder is removed in basically the same manner as most single action revolvers, but it too has been redesigned by Herriott. Replacement of components with those of another caliber is accomplished by reversing the disassembly procedure.

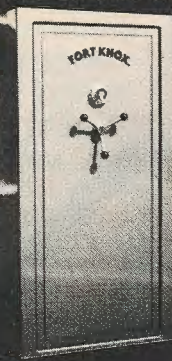
In test firing the prototype I continually switched back and forth from .357 Magnum to .44 Magnum. My reason in doing this was to ascertain if barrel changes had any effect on point of impact since ease of conversion could be an indicator of loose tolerances which, in turn, could cause drift in point of impact. This did not prove to be the case, and point of impact remained as consistent as it was possible to determine within my marksmanship capabilities. Different brands and types of ammo did, of course, change point of impact, but that happens with the best of non-convertible guns.

To test the strength of the system I tried some very heavy loads, trusting almost entirely in my respect for Ray Herriott's integrity—and a pair of quality shooting glasses. Undoubtedly I flinched a mite but the gun held up with less signs of fatigue than I did. Of course, this also speaks well for Bill Ruger's frame because a few of my loads were equal to proofs, and I do not recommend this type of testing with a hand-held

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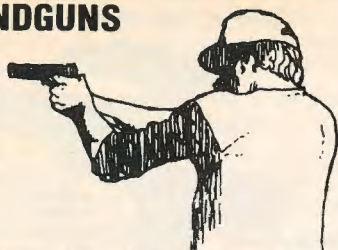
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gun. As a personal note, I am now building a remote mechanical rest for this type of shooting since I receive several untried prototypes a year on my shooting ranch. In any event, the gun held up beautifully and performed exceptionally well.

While the prototype utilized a Ruger frame, production models will be built on an "in-house" large single action frame. The gun will be called the Multi-Mag and the new company goes by the name of Centaur Systems, 2500 Samules Rd., Sandpoint, ID 83864. I want to emphasize that no Multi-Mags are yet in production as the company is still seeking funding for the project. Projected prices are very competitive and I hope they can hold because I want to be first in line.



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Ray Herriott informs us that Centaur Systems is initiating a special limited edition of the Multi-Mag revolver. This will be offered on a pre-production basis, with only 1,000 units to be made. These guns will be unique, in that they will be completely new guns—not re-worked Rugers.

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For full details of this special offer, contact: Ray Herriott, Centaur Systems, Suite 114, 15127 NE 24th C-3, Redmond, WA 98052 (206) 644-8240.

RAY HERRIOTT

Continued from page 55

designing as well as run the machines that build the firearms of the day.

Ray Herriott's background could, of course, qualify him as a design engineer in almost any modern industry; and Ray has worked for several seemingly, but not actually, unrelated companies including Xerox, Conrac, Consolidated Electro-Dynamics, and Giannini Controls. His interest in firearms, however, led him first to Wilkinson Arms in Covina, California, where he was engaged to analyze and solve certain feeding and ejection problems for a small .22 caliber

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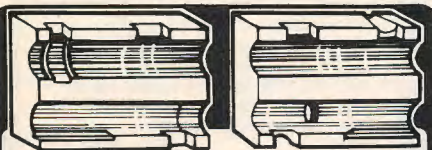
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pistol. It proved no mean project, and he had to re-engineer certain portions of the pistol and design tooling and fixtures to accommodate the changes.

It probably would not come as a surprise that Ray's background spans the solving of problems with .22 pistols all the way to working with various facets of the Patriot Missile. Be that as it may, working at handgun design did present a basic fascination, and that fascination ultimately led him to one of the most modern and progressive gun companies in the industry—Detonics Manufacturing in Bellevue, Washington.

Gun designing is an entirely different proposition when compared to the pocket pistols of the 1800s, some of which are still very much in service. It is done with considerable aid from the computer. Seemingly insurmountable problems are solved in microseconds. It is what they call "state of the art" which is also a very good description of Ray G. Herriott.

Does that all mean there is no longer a place for a mechanically inclined man with a block of wood and a pocket knife? Even Ray would be quick to tell you—
"Not quite."

H&R USRA

Continued from page 47

there has always been a feeling that a cheaper gun could be made that would serve our purpose nearly as well as the high-priced ones have done. This seems to have been verified by Harrington & Richardson, of Worcester, Mass., by the issue of their new .22 single-shot target pistol (U.S.R.A. model) in its final design.

For some time rumors of the good attributes of this new arm have been traveling by grapevine to the ears of the pistol shooters; and, like many others, I became curious to see it. Upon inquiry made of the leading sporting-goods store here in Seattle, I learned that the buyer thought so little of this pistol that he had not even ordered a sample for display, his reason for this omission being that he did not think it "looked like much" in the illustration sent him by the distributors. Upon looking at the picture I was inclined to agree with him; but, as it was recommended to me as an honest-to-God shootin' gun, I asked him to get a sample, for one can never tell by the looks of a frog how far he can jump.

First impressions of a new pistol are usually formed, first, from appearances; next, from feel; and, finally, from shooting it. The new arm did not look like the cut that was shown me, as the stock was quite different and more attractive than in the photo. But at best it did not strike one as being exactly handsome.

Close examination of the new pistol will soon convince one that he is handling a precision job, for the fitting and workmanship are excellent, and there is no evidence of the wiggles and looseness so usual in cheap weapons. The tip-up action locks tightly and

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solidly when closed. The one-piece stock of walnut is well fitted and nicely checkered on the sides and upper rear surface, and when the butt is seated in the hand it makes one realize that he has a man-sized grip that is not unlike the feel of the plow-handle butt of the Frontier model revolver; and there has never been a better stock grip made than that. The balance comes just in front of the trigger guard, which makes the arm slightly muzzle heavy, but which can hardly be avoided in this type of weapon with its long barrel. Both sights are on the 10-inch barrel, giving a sight radius of 9 inches. Adjustments for elevation and windage are possible on the rear sight, which contains a square notch that is comfortably filled by the ramped rectangular front sight when the arm is held in the normal shooting position.

The rifling of the barrel is right-handed and of the shallow-groove type, with lands about half the width of the grooves, and twist apparently about one turn in 15 inches.

The greatest feature of the new pistol is its action, for therein we find something that no other American pistol possesses — namely, a short hammer fall. That of the Harrington & Richardson is just about half that of any other target pistol made in this country, and this feature alone is worth many points in a score. When one fires or snaps the arm he gets a feeling of pleasant surprise which he cannot quite understand, for it reminds him of the wonderful quick action of the foreign free pistols. Not only is the fall short, but the hammer is made thin and light and is actuated by a strong coiled spring, instead of a spring of the usual flat type. The short distance the hammer stud comes to the rear when the piece is cocked will enable anyone who so desires to take a very high grip on the butt without danger of the web of his thumb interfering with the hammer action. This brings the barrel so low that the thumb when held horizontally along the frame comes at the same height as the bore. In other words, the ideal is approached, for the barrel is in prolongation of the upper part of the forearm and points as naturally and easily as the index finger when the arm is fully extended in the most approved shooting position.

The next most pleasing thing about the arm to a shooter is the trigger action, which is smooth, clean, and crisp. The unusually wide face of the trigger is well grooved, and gives one a feeling of security when the finger rests on it. The trigger pull of the pistol that I possess tests slightly more than 3 pounds, and seems lighter. This can be reduced if desired, but is light enough for any but real experts. The space back of the trigger guard is a little too small for my second finger, but is not uncomfortable, as with this gun there is no recoil to bruise the joint.

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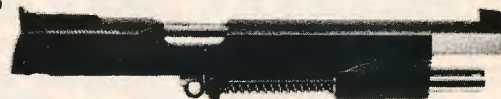
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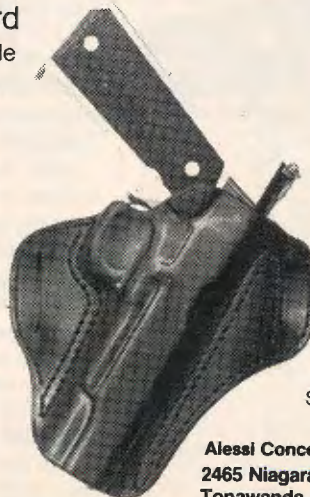
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All of the foregoing description is, after all, not what a pistol shot wishes to know about a new arm. What a real marksman does desire to be informed on is the shooting ability of the weapon. This, after all, is the real test of any arm. A pistol may be of good appearance, of satisfactory weight, and equipped with suitable sights; but until one is convinced that it is accurate and capable of making good scores in the hands of a good shot, all the other attractions it has to offer carry little weight. It is one thing to have a nicely functioning and handling gun of good weight and balance, and quite another to get out of that gun the groups and scores it may be capable of producing.

When one has been accustomed to a favorite pistol for many years it is not likely that he can do nearly as good work with a strange gun as with the one that seems like second nature to him. For this reason every new pistol has a hard row to hoe in establishing itself in the confidence of the older shots. The interesting thing about the new Harrington & Richardson is that it resembles in weight, shape, and balance one of the old favorite target pistols, with the additional advantage of a better grip, weight, action, and hammer fall. Information passed on to me from a reliable source states that the factory requires that each barrel group five shots in one hole at 15 yards when the arm is fired from a machine rest. Failure to reach this standard results in the rejection of the barrel, if my information is correct. With these things in mind, and the target that came with the pistol to support me, I ambled down to the indoor range in the armory, and in the presence of a brother officer and an old civilian shot of national reputation in indoor shooting, prepared to make the real test of the pudding.

Without changing the sights or firing any sighters I very deliberately fired, in the regulation manner without a rest, five shots for a group at 60 feet on the indoor Standard American target. Four of the shots got off in good shape, and one was called a little high. Four of the shots could be completely covered with a dime, while the wide one was within half an inch of the others. The center of impact of the group was a little low, at 7 o'clock.

After changing the sights and firing a few sighters, the first 10-shot string I fired gave me a 94, and by continuing until I had completed twenty-five shots, the number required in each of the U.S.R.A. Indoor League Matches, I found that my score was 227, which is nearly 91 per cent and good enough for me at any time. The ammunition used for the 5-shot group was Remington Keanbore, and for the other twenty-five Western Marksman, with Lubaloy coated bullet.

The new pistol was a pleasure to shoot, for one could call his shots with unusual accuracy, which was helped, no doubt, by the quick-acting, nonjarring hammer; and al-

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though the trigger pull was just enough heavier than my regular pistol to be noticeable, it apparently did not affect my firing adversely. When I had finished my string of twenty-five I was fully convinced that at last there was available for the fraternity an excellent single-shot target pistol at a reasonable price. Time alone can tell how it will hold up and what popularity it will have; but I do know that there are five of the best indoor shots in the country using them right now, with good prospects of their continuing to do so. Dr. I. R. Calkins, the best indoor deliberate-fire pistol shot in the country, is using the new arm, and in the first and second matches of the U.S.R.A. Indoor Pistol League he made scores of 241 and 242, respectively, for 25 shots; and that is "some shooting"!

After firing sufficiently to make a thorough test of the new pistol with different makes of ammunition, I do not hesitate to recommend it as an excellent target arm for deliberate small-bore shooting, possessing as it does, fine accuracy, a super quick action, a very satisfactory stock, and capable of being pointed, aimed, and fired with ease and comfort. A marksman who uses this pistol and cannot shoot it well has no alibi to offer on the arm he is using.



NIGHT SHOOTING

Continued from page 37

His basic concept here is quite simple; the idea is to place the gun in an imaginary box, or square, over and over and over again, forming a mental and physical index in the center of the shooter's body. Training is started in the daytime, to better facilitate checking the position of the weapon, from a shoulder-width stance, as opposed to crouching stance.

A firm, high grip on the revolver or auto is emphasized from the draw and through the firing of the gun. At seven yards, the weapon should be held straight out from the chin with both hands, arms equally extended into a triangular hold. In this position, an immediate sight picture is available over the top of the gun, although it will not be used if the lighting is insufficient. There is no cocking of the head over one arm or another to facilitate aiming, which takes precious time and is of little value without adequate light. By concentrating on the target with both eyes open, a shooter will discover that the front sight post becomes immediately visible with what Santiago describes as "secondary" vision if it is light enough to do so. The gun is thrust into the imaginary box into its instinctive position, both eyes focused on the target over the sights. As soon as the weapon is in this position, it is fired, sight or no sight.

Initially, students practice repetitiously placing the weapon into the "box" until it is properly indexed just below the chin level and held straight out from the center of the body. After the student is comfortable dryfiring in this position, the weapon is loaded and slow-fired one round at a time, both eyes still

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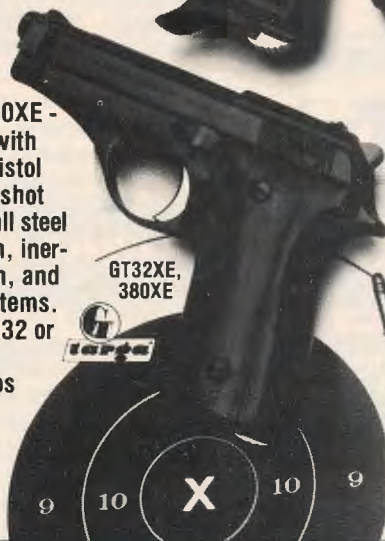
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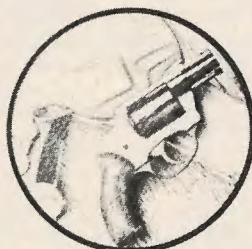
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open, using secondary vision to place shots in the center of mass. Santiago also emphasizes pointing at a spot below the chest, to compensate for the tendency to shoot high, and also tries to discourage worrying about tight groups. Two fast shots that hit are better than one slow one in the five ring.

With the gun still positioned, the student is directed to close his or her eyes and to print a mental picture of how the weapon felt. Next, the student is required to keep the eyes closed, and to then bring the weapon up and into its position in the box. Does it all feel the same? Next, the shooter will fire the weapon with eyes closed. The gun is drawn and fired from the box, one shot at a time. After each shot, the shooter opens his eyes to check the position and the resultant target hit. Corrections are made before moving on.

With closed eyes, the student next draws and fires tandem series of shots—three shots in four seconds, or five shots in six seconds. This sequence is repeated continually, until most acceptable hits are being made from ranges up to 10 yards, far beyond the distance that most shootouts occur in—day or night.

"At night," contends Santiago, "you keep both eyes open and just thrust the weapon into the box. It's a real confidence builder when you discover how accurate you can be—even when you can't see your sights."

One recent graduate of Santiago's Night/Day Combat Handgun Course remarked that, "I was shown how to best use my weapon in basically the worst shooting situation (night) and still be able to hit the kill zone." One policeman claimed that "It (Night/Day) should be mandatory training." Another recent student admitted that, "I shoot very well at targets through sights, but had to relearn shooting all over again for combat situations."

One thing that Santiago points out to those who go through his fully-accredited course is that there is a loss of efficiency with such an instinctive method once the target begins to move quickly. In this case, he recommends that a luminous dot be installed on the front blade, giving the shooter a reference point with which to follow the target. This, says Santiago, will give the shooter the capability of doing as well at night as he would in daylight, using the same basic technique.

"A quick blaze of gunfire and it's too late to correct an indiscrete action or careless move," warns Deputy Santiago. "Seldom is there a second chance."

The Night/Day Combat Handgun Course is currently being offered by Mr. Santiago nationwide, as well as in Canada, to interested law enforcement, security, and civilian groups. If you or your organization feel that effective night shooting techniques might save your life, write or call: Julio A. Santiago, 13713 Susan Lane, Burnsville, Minnesota 55337, (612) 890-7631.

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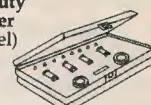
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KART VS DAY

Continued from page 53

the AMT Hardballer receiver and locked in the rest, 20 shots were fired to settle it in place. Starting with CCI Mini Group, we proceeded to punch holes over a four hour span. Our hopes had been high because of previous hand held shooting at 50 feet, but what was achieved was beyond expectation. Five sub one-inch groups were turned in by the Day, with the Kart unit firing six groups under one inch. But what was more incredible was that three of the Kart clusters were under one-half inch while the Day had two!

Tiniest group of the testing belonged to the Day and Eley Club ammo, at .391 inch. Next best for this unit was .497 inch with some dated Western Super Match. Its largest offering came from Winchester Super-X, at 1.683 inch.

The Kart conversion was the overall winner, turning in nine tighter groups over its Texas competitor. The three sub one-half inch clusters measured .415 inch, Western Super Match; .425 inch, Winchester Mark IV, and .492 inch, Eley Club. Winchester's Super-X also provided the biggest span with this piece, a 1.798 inch.

Both units also functioned flawlessly with the match type ammo, recording no jams. Stovepiping in each was experienced with some of the high speed cartridges; there were some failures to feed from both, also. From the overall testing, both from the rest and handheld, I tend to believe that the bullet coating has much to do with the ease of feeding. We also discovered that if a round was hand fed into the chamber, then the slide closed before the magazine was inserted, it resulted in fewer cases of failing to feed or eject properly. This, of course, was confirmed after the group firing.

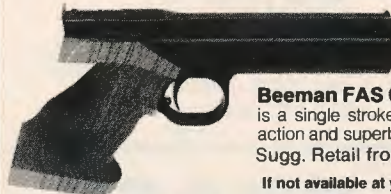
Now come the \$64,000 questions. Which piece do I judge best? And which would I keep if limited to only one unit? Right now the Day lists at \$119.50 and the Kart at \$240.00. But selecting from monetary and performance standpoints is like the ancient Chevy-Cadillac argument. Both will get you to your destination, but one does it with more luxury and style. But I'm lucky. I have both. And so I don't have to choose. Actually it comes down to availability, and therein lies some bad news and some good news.

Because of the jamming on the Day unit, there is a very slight indentation between the slide and ejection port. I called Bob Day about this apparent "softness" and was told that incorrect feed ramp or rail alignment would cause this problem, but that it was a matter of simple correction. This is really not the bad news, however. What is, is that he no longer is producing his 30-X conversion unit at this time. But the good news is that plans are being formulated to manufacture a new unit with much broader consumer appeal, in that it will be targeted towards the general shooting public instead of the precision paper punchers.

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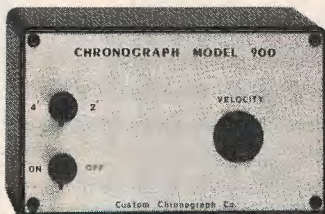
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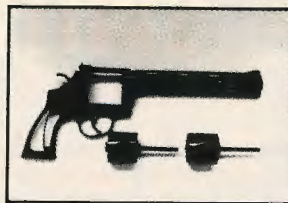
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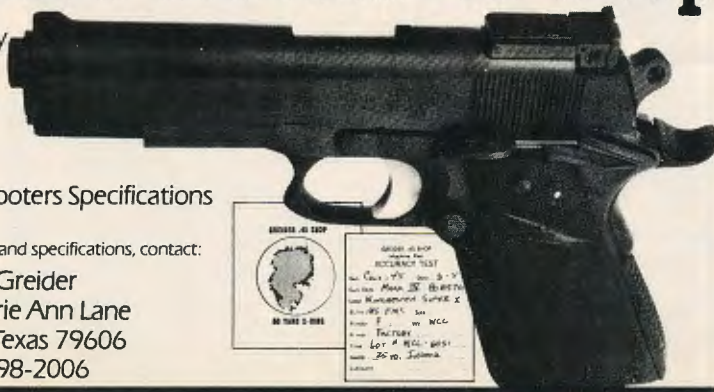
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From Riverhead, New York, there is nothing but good news. Waiting time for one of the tight shooting Karts is only four weeks. When I purchased mine there was a 14 week shipping delay. And now there is available a five inch barrel unit for those who want the same length shooting piece as their Government or Gold Cup model Colts. Price, though, is \$15.00 more. Whichever way you choose, you will undoubtedly have a unit that will lay them in the black with the best of pistols.

There is additional good news on the .22 conversion front. The famed Pachmayr Gun Works, Inc., of Los Angeles, California, is on the verge of importing units from Germany that will fit not only Colt .45s, but also the Browning Hi-Power and the Smith & Wesson Model 39. On a custom basis, I have been told, the L&B Metalworks in Van Nuys, California, will rebuild the Colt conversion to fit the Colt Commander and the autos produced by Detonics Associates of Seattle, Washington. So whatever your choice in big bore automatics, it finally looks like the day of the multiple conversion-one frame target pistol is finally here.



TUNE-UP TIPS

Continued from page 35

holding the trigger fully to the rear. The gun is then pointed straight up and the range rod lowered into the bore *without releasing the trigger!* If the range rod does not pass through the barrel/cylinder gap freely the revolver is not "ranged" properly and is in need of attention. Like the previously noted problem with cylinder lockup, known as being "out of time," this is usually due to a worn hand if the headspace and endplay are correct and the ratchet undamaged.

The last dimension we shall examine is the barrel/cylinder gap. This should be not less than 0.003 inches nor more than 0.008 inches with the cylinder fully forward. Ideally, the gap is 0.004 to 0.006 inches.

Now then, to check the headspace, endplay and barrel/cylinder gap start with an unloaded revolver and clean it—make sure you get under the extractor star and all the counterbores. A quick look at the firing pin hole or bushing for burrs is next; carefully remove any you find. If you are using a headspace gauge make sure you know what its specs are (ask the manufacturer when ordering). Make sure you measure every chamber and write down the results. Then, with the headspace gauge and shim(s) in place in each chamber in turn, check the barrel/cylinder gap, write this down also. If you then check the barrel/cylinder gap *without* the headspace gauge in place you will then see the cylinder endplay is the difference between the two measurements. You'll also want to check to see if the gap is uniform at the sides, top and bottom of the barrel shank. An uneven gap can cost you velocity and accuracy and may indicate a bent crane. Should you find that your headspace and

endplay are excessive, recheck the headspace with the cylinder held to the rear by shims between the barrel and cylinder. This will show whether the excessive headspace is due to excessive endplay or to improper machining of the extractor star/ratchet.

I've ignored crane misalignment. Alignment spuds are available to check this but the correction is best left to a competent professional. Cranes are not released outside the factories and ruining one is expensive.

Now that we have all the figures, what do they mean? If, for instance your piece has excessive cylinder endplay but the headspace is OK and the barrel/cylinder gap will be within specs with the endplay corrected (cylinder set to the rear) all you need is a couple of Ron Power's endshake bearings. Correction of your problem is of nominal cost.

If, however, your headspace is excessive and the extractor/ratchet has to be faced off to bring it within specs you have a problem. The barrel/cylinder gap will most likely become excessive when the headspace and endplay have been corrected. This will require that the barrel be set back in the frame. This is not difficult in principle but it requires extreme accuracy and is therefore expensive to do right. Leaving the barrel/cylinder gap excessive will cause your revolver to spit lead and will cause erosion of the top strap (gas cutting) if high pressure loads are used.

What I've tried to do in this work is to provide the proper tolerances for revolvers and the means of measuring those tolerances. The individual owner can decide whether to turn his revolver into a do-it-yourself project or not. I would like to point out, however, that this is an area where small changes can make a big difference. A clod can readily turn a small problem into a major one.

As an example, a New York customer's Model 27 S&W required corrections for excessive cylinder endplay, a bent crane and an uneven barrel/cylinder gap. Once this was corrected, the machine rest groups dropped from 6 inches to 2-2½ inches at 50 yards using the same lot of ammo.

So you see, it does make a difference.



38 SUPER TODAY

Continued from page 57

Next I turned to two premium double action autos, the Astra A-80 by Unceta of Guernica, Spain, and the Sig-Sauer P220 from Sauer of West Germany. Both are imported by Interarms (10 Prince St., Alexandria, VA 22313). These guns are made in 9mm and .45 ACP also, but I was especially impressed with them in .38 Super.

If you are unfamiliar with modern double-action semi-autos, you have some learning to do, as I did. Once learned, they are as safe as single-action Browning-type guns.

These are billed as combat pistols, intended for military and police use, but like the Colts they are excellent for general shooting. In the hands of a master, they are very fast.

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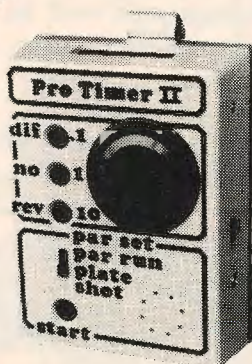
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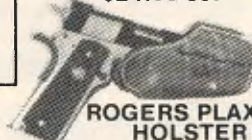
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reliable, and rugged, and they are mechanically similar. Both have two flat, serrated thumb pieces at the top of the left grip. The use of the slide catch release is obvious, but after you chamber a round from the clip, there are no regular safeties. A single-action pull on the trigger fires the gun.

If you are not going to shoot, press firmly down on the decocking lever, dropping the hammer. The gun is safe to carry with a round chambered and the hammer down. A long double-action pull on the trigger fires the gun. After this first shot, regular single action takes over.

Never touch the trigger or hammer when you want to lower the hammer. These guns have a trigger-released firing pin lock, like the newest Series 80 Colt autos. The pin is locked as long as the trigger is not pulled. If you always use the decocking lever, you can't go wrong. Of course, the gun can be cocked manually to fire the first round single-action. But if you're in a hurry, double action is very fast.

It's a neat, fast system. The only problem with it is that you have two trigger pulls to learn, not one. I have trouble trying to keep the first DA shot in the group with later single-action shots. Most shooters complain of the same thing.

Double-action auto pulls are not as good as good DA revolver triggers. They tend to "stack up", getting stiffer near release. The Astra seemed to show this effect more than the Sig-Sauer, and the Astra had a longer DA pull. Although the Astra was smoother and lighter (13 lbs.), I still shot the Sig (15 lbs.) better in this mode.

Single-action pulls were very good and right at 5 lbs., with little creep. The Astra had a graduated pull, not really creepy, but unusual. The Sig had the best SA pull among all of my test Supers.

From the Lee rest, the Sig was also amazingly accurate for an out-of-the-box gun. First I tried Winchester loads—and printed a great 1.04-inch 5-shot group. That seemed to be pure luck, so I tried another, which spanned 1.02 inches! I ran out of that ammo, but Remington 115 JHPs averaged 1.19 inches, and my handloads ranged from 1.07 to 2.58 inches, averaging 1.89 inches. With best loads, this gun would match or beat many accurized .45s. The Sig-Sauer never heard of .38 Super "inaccuracy."

From the Sig's 4 3/8-inch barrel, velocities dropped a bit, compared to the Colts, and from the Astra's 3 3/4-inch tube, a little more loss was seen, muzzle energies falling well below 400 ft-lbs.

Despite its compactness, the Astra A-80 is no lightweight at 34.4 ounces. It is all steel, while the Sig has a light alloy frame with a steel slide. This is no disadvantage for the Sig at 28 oz., because no noticeable increase in recoil is felt. Shooting friends who tried these guns remarked on their mild recoil, and they like their handling properties. These men were dyed-in-the-wool Colt and Browning shooters.

I did not have a Lee adapter to fit the Astra's big 15-round magazine well, but the

gun is certainly accurate. I easily fired single-action 1.5-2+-inch groups from an arm rest, so the Astra has to be capable of very tight machine rest groups. The obvious question was: why are these guns so accurate?

Again I have no definite answers. Both headspace on the case mouth in pretty tight chambers. They have no barrel bushing, the barrel working through an integral bearing in the front of the slide, like the Browning P-35 Hi-Power. The answers have to be in fine design, close-tolerance machining, and expert fitting. That sums up high quality. At any rate, they are fine, accurate guns.

Both guns are nicely finished, but the Astra looks slicker with its polished slide sides and frame. The Sig has a tough matte black finish on all visible surfaces; it won't reflect light. Both black plastic grips fit my hand and the trigger guards have finger holding notches. With white-spot combat sights they are fast to line up on the target, and they shoot close to where the sights point.

Are the Astra and Sig-Sauer "perfect" combat pistols? They seem very close to that ideal. There are a few minuses, though they seem niggling compared to the pluses. For example, a buyer at these prices should be able to choose low adjustable rear sights, so that he can zero handloads.

The decocking lever of the Sig is too far forward to be worked by my right thumb easily. I'm actually left handed, so I use my index finger, but again my hold must be shifted. The Astra's decocking lever can be reached by stretching my thumb. This may seem unimportant, when you're just decocking, but it really takes two hands, to operate positively.

The same is true of the magazine catches, located on the bottom of the grip frame. These are serrated, but the Astra's is flat and hard to push. The Sig's catch is a loop, but it still takes two hands, and you have to hold the catch and pull out the clip. I prefer the faster Colt release-and-drop. However, with 15-(Astra) and 9-round capacities in .38 Super, you don't need to reload as often. The Sig has a tapered magazine well, the Astra does not.

Some shooters may not care for the use of stamped small parts in these guns. The designs are complex and compact, and it seems necessary. These parts are probably stronger and more dependable than more expensive machined parts. The parts have no rough edges or sharp corners; they work smoothly. But amateurs should not try to tune these guns, in my opinion. The factories have already done most of what anyone but an expert might accomplish.

Handloading the Super

The standard reloading manuals have good data for .38 Super, using 90-130 grain jacketed bullets of .355-inch diameter, i.e., 9mm bullets. This is fine if you lean to highest velocities for all shooting, but for most purposes I prefer heavier cast bullets at somewhat lower velocities. One advantage is that cast bullets lead less below 1200 fps.

Although the use of .355-inch bullets is

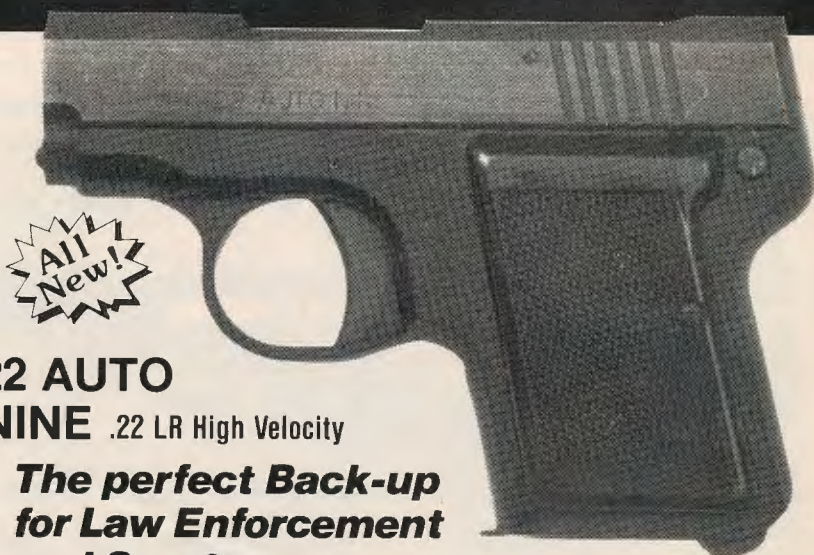
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standard for .38 Super, I have often seen mediocre accuracies in both 9mm and Super with such slugs. So I measured and slugged the bores of a series of guns in both calibers. Only a couple slugged less than .356 inch. All but one of my test Supers slugged over .356 inch. One expert told me that the larger bores are the rule, not the exception.

For best accuracy, the handloader should slug his barrel first, then select his bullets. I use a soft swaged .357-inch wadcutter, and push it through the bore with a long wood clamp and a wooden dowel, then mike across the ridges left by the grooves in the rifling. If the ridges aren't shiny, I know that the bore is larger than .357 inch.

Using .357-inch (.38 Special and .357 Mag.) bullets gives noticeably better accuracy in .356-.358-inch bores in Super guns (and in 9mm autos). My favorite cast bullet is the SSK Industries 148-grain truncated cone (TC). It casts easily, feeds well, and can be pushed pretty hard before leading is noticeable. Best of all, it is the most accurate I know of, bettering factory ammo in the best loads. I size it to .357-inch, lube in the last groove, and use it in Super, 9mm, .38 Spl., and .357 Mag. guns. It is equally good in all four calibers. SSK (1 Della Drive, Bloomington, OH 43910) supplies NEI molds for this J.D. Jones design.

My standard load for the SSK 148-gr. TC uses 5.0 grains of Unique and Winchester 1 1/2M magnum small pistol primers, with bullet seating to 1.24 inches overall length in Remington R-P brass.

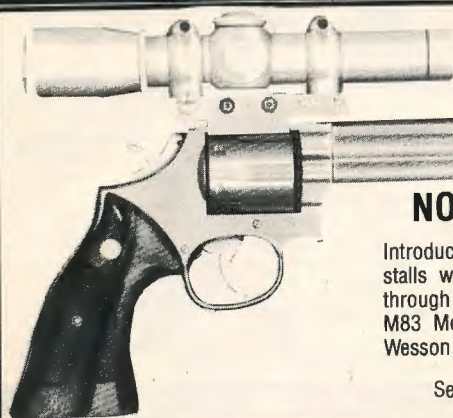
Seating length is important in .38 Super. Shorter seating of heavier, longer bullets pushes up pressures, but the rounds must be kept short enough to work through the clip. This load was pretty reliable in all of the test guns and very accurate. Velocities were in the range 1030-1080 fps from the test guns, highest in the big Colt and dropping off a bit from the shorter barrels.

For hunting and other serious purposes, the above cast-bullet load will work but it does not expand. I prefer Speer's 140-grain JHP with 6.0 grains of Unique, with bullet seated to 1.20-inches overall, and crimped into the cannelure. Crimping is not critical if a tight resizing die and a .353-inch expander is used. The Speer bullet is also a .357-inch slug intended for .357 Mag. use, but it works fine in Supers. Velocities run from 1150 fps up to over 1200 fps in these guns.

For highest velocities with good accuracy, I use the little Sierra 90-grain JHC, a .355-inch bullet. My charge is 6.8 grains of Bullseye, and that needs to be worked up carefully, seating to 1.19 inches overall length. No crimp is needed with proper sizing, but the flare is taken off of the case mouth. I do this with a tapered .357 Mag. RCBS carbide sizer. Velocities are at least 1503 fps from my test guns, higher in the Colts.

Summing Up The Super

Where is the Super today, and where is it going? It is still at a low ebb, but the signs are up. I hear that more shooters are going to Supers for the big matches, including the



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Bianchi. There have been a few competitors trying Supers here and there, but if others join in and do well, it could make a big difference for Super guns and for the caliber.

For competition, a Bar-Sto barrel is often fitted in a Colt and the gun carefully accurized. SSK target barrels, properly fitted, also are said to be very accurate.

From my results, there is no doubt that the Super has the accuracy, power, and other marks of an outstanding defensive, police and military caliber, as well as a great general auto cartridge for civilian shooting.

There are now newer, more powerful auto calibers. Bren 10 and .451 Detonics Magnum outpower the Super, but they are not easy to handle and the guns are expensive. .41 Avenger is a very superior conversion, but it is a wildcat for those who have outgrown the .45 ACP.

For most handgunners who need a fine, practical semi-auto, .38 Super is very probably the best all-around caliber.

In the course of my work on .38 Super, I developed a couple of suggestions to gun makers. I would like to see more good autos in the caliber; the Smith & Wesson Model 659 would make a fine Super. Also I see a place for a good double-action revolver, such as a Colt Python, S & W Model 19, Ruger Speed-Six, or a Charter Bulldog. .38 Super is a small round and it could fit in a small, light revolver.

I am confident that handgunners are willing to change their minds, if the facts call for it. I have tried to pin down the facts about the Super today. They seem very impressive to me.

Only handgunners can give the Super the success it deserves. That process could get going in 1984.

SPEAK OUT

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Wheelgunner Aroused

Sorry—I've just gotta squawk about this one...

In my 20-some-odd years of newspaper and magazine writing and editing, I've been guilty of "reaching" for headlines for stories. But I hereby surrender my "Faulty Font" honors to *American Handgunner*.

I refer specifically to the article by J.D. Jones in the May/June, 1984 issue headlined "Revolver 'Practically Useless' for Big Game Hunting in Africa". As a subscriber to *American Handgunner* for over a year, I have been painfully aware of the publication's bias against wheelguns and wheelgunners—but this one goes a bit too far, folks.

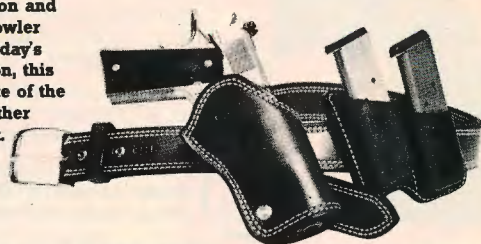
Why not a subsequent piece under the headline, ".380 Auto Questionable for Use on



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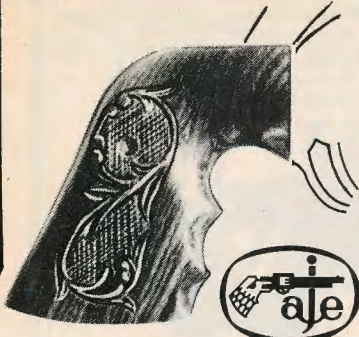
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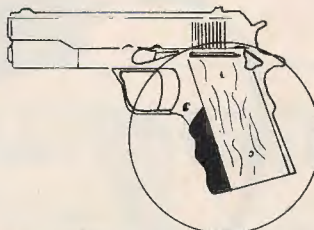
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Moose"? Or maybe ".25 ACP Can't Cut It as Mule Deer Handgun"? Those heads would make as much sense as the one over J.D.'s article.

Don't get me wrong—I have no quarrel whatsoever with fanciers of the T/C and other single-shot handrifles, or with champions of the auto pistol. All I'm asking is that American Handgunner cease and desist these haughty editorial sniffs at those of us who fancy the wheelgun.

We aren't second-class citizens, and I for one am beginning to resent this continuing editorial bias against the revolver. I'm not going to let your magazine's put-downs stop me from enjoying my fine Smith & Wesson 25-5, Cal. 45 Colt. I'm not going to cancel my subscription at this point, but I have been thinking that the yearly re-up would buy a few rounds of new Colt Ctg. brass.

Gene Shelton
Sulphur Springs, TX

First 80 Straight

To Phil Briggs:

I was reading your report on the 1983 IHMSA Internationals. It was a good report on the new guns, new records and load data of the winners.

I have to disagree with you, however, when you say that Lon Pennington shot the first 80X80 with his Dan Wesson Super Mag. Granted he won the revolver class, but it was not a new record and was not the first 80X80.

If you'll refer to the 1982 International scores you'll see that the first 80X80 International competition was fired by myself with a Ruger Super Blackhawk. I was the 1982 Revolver Champion as well as the 1982 Standing Champion with a score of 67X80.

I would appreciate it if you would set the record straight with your readers, as it is something of which I am extremely proud.

Claude Kinard

Weaver vs. Isosceles

Dear Mr. Romero:

As a police officer, firearms instructor, and graduate of the American Pistol Institute, I was very interested when I first saw your article on the Weaver stance in the July/August *American Handgunner*. I was, however, extremely disappointed in the lack of in-depth reporting in your article. I also saw no mention that either you or any of the instructors that you talked to had taken the time to attend a class at the American Pistol Institute. I will admit that not all of what Jeff Cooper espouses will work for a police officer, but how can anyone who has not actually seen what the course at API does give a really valid critique of the use of the Weaver stance by police officers? You will find below my more detailed criticism of the points you bring up in your article.

1) Must turn your side towards the opponent.

This is totally incorrect. The Weaver as taught at API only involves moving the strong foot slightly back, and does not

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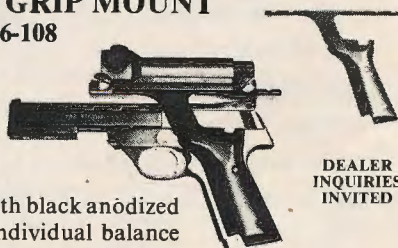
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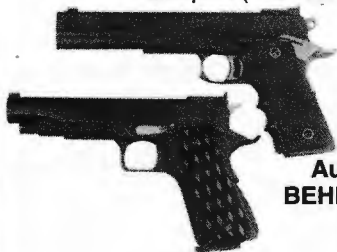
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SPEAK OUT

Continued from page 80

mean any body movement is necessary.

2) Night shooting scores go down.

I really have to wonder what version of the Weaver was being taught that produced lower night shooting scores. I have found that those who use the Weaver properly increase their night scores. This is due to two different reasons. The first of these is that those who consistently use the Weaver learn that you do not have to see your sights to know that they are perfectly lined up when you are in a perfect stance. Secondly, the Weaver is the only stance I know of that allows the shooter to use a flashlight and still maintain an excellent two-hand hold on the weapon using either the Harries or Chapman method.

3) Weaver is a crutch for .45 shooters.

I cannot really believe you put this one in the article. Are you really going to try to tell me that Jeff Cooper, Ray Chapman, Mickey Fowler, et al., are using a crutch? Besides, must I remind you that the inventor of the Weaver was a revolver shooter?

4) Revert to Isosceles.

Of course, any police officer will revert to the isosceles after only a short exposure to the Weaver, just as I did when I first attended API. The officer will have to work with the stance, like with anything else new. After all, a police officer will revert to almost anything if it is drilled into him long enough, like putting empty brass into his pocket, or placing an empty weapon in his holster during a firefight—all of which have gotten officers killed in the line of duty.

In closing, I would like to recommend that you read Robert E. Fairburn's article in the May/June 1984 *Police Marksman*. Better yet, contact John Bowman at the University of Illinois Police Training Institute, where they have been teaching a modified Weaver to their recruit classes for close to two years. Still better would be to take the time to go to API or Ray Chapman's school and find out what the Weaver stance is all about.

C. Allen Reed
Chicago, ILL.

Pistolsmith Moves

As a member of the American Pistolsmiths Guild, I'd like to personally thank you for including a list of our members in the March/April edition of the *American Handgunner*.

At the time the list was given to you by our organization I was in the process of moving. I wonder if it would be possible for you to list a change of address for me. Current address follows:

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PISTOLSMITH PROFILE

ED BANKS

He makes 'em short and mean.

By Len Davis

The name of the game for Georgia law enforcement officers working undercover is a relatively compact, lightweight .45 auto—one that is easily concealable, totally reliable and extremely accurate.

Edward K. Banks, a custom pistolsmith in Fort Valley, Georgia, a small (9,000 population) city situated about 25 miles southwest of Macon, believes he has come up with one that fills the bill in every respect (his backlog of orders—at \$550 each—indicates he is on the right track).

He calls his custom-built .45 auto SAM, an acronym for short and mean. It is short (a half-inch shorter than a Colt Light Commander) and it is mean (he produces 1¾ inch groups from a Ransom rest at 25 yards). His six-round modified GI magazine fits in a butt that is ¾ inch shorter than a Commander's.

SAM weighs 26 ounces with an empty magazine, only one ounce heavier than a lightweight Commander, mainly because of the gun's recoil system (modified Detonics).

"The weight's out front where it counts," said Banks, who opened his shop in 1973, a year after he retired from the U.S. Air Force as a master sergeant.

To produce SAM, Banks starts with a Ranger high-strength aluminum alloy frame. He cuts ⅝ inch from the bottom of the butt, adds a Colt slide, which he trims 1-7/16 inch up front, and installs a shortened 3.8 inch barrel. From it he removes the front locking lug, so it will mate properly with his modified recoil system.

SAM comes with MMC front and rear combat sights, a grip safety, Pachmayr wrap-around grips, an exposed round spur hammer and a ported receiver. The loading ramp is ground and polished to exactly the right angle for smooth feeding, the trigger pull is honed to perfection and the trigger guard forestrap stippled with hammer and chisel (Banks doesn't use an air gun) to help provide maximum controllability during recoil.

His Parkerized finish is one of Banks' trademarks.

"Most of my law enforcement customers," he said, "want their guns Parkerized, because the process reduces reflection (compared

with blued finishes) and holds up better during inclement weather conditions."

His law enforcement customers include members of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI), the Georgia State Patrol and several county sheriff and municipal police departments in Georgia.

Banks said that most narcotic agents in Georgia "stake their lives" on a reliable .45 auto—their number-one choice when it comes to a backup gun.

I interviewed one of his customers, a GBI

agent who asked to remain anonymous. He told me that Banks produces "the best customized autos for undercover work I've ever seen; they are super-accurate and rarely malfunction."

Being somewhat of a cynic when it comes to such superlatives, I suggested a range session with SAM.

A few days later we met at a local range and test-fired SAM. We fired more than 100 rounds of .45 ACP ammo, with various loads and bullet shapes/weights. Result: no malfunctions and accuracy comparable to a match-grade auto, at 25 yards. SAM's felt

recoil was surprisingly pleasant—not bad for a lightweight "shortie."

Banks has been working on guns since he was fourteen (he's now 53), when he built his first pistol from a Stevens Crackshot .22 rifle.

And he has a box full of medals for shooting, attesting to his marksmanship skills which earned him a berth on one of the USAF pistol teams at Camp Perry in 1958.

More than 70 percent of his custom pistolsmith work involves autos, mainly for combat shooting and police undercover use.

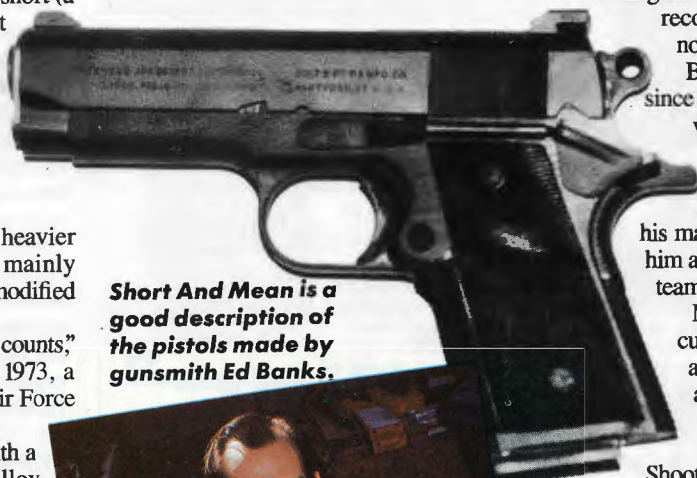
He customizes autos for IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) and bowling pin shooters throughout Georgia, does no advertising and acquires his burgeoning cadre of customers strictly by word-of-mouth praise for his work.

Every so often he gets what he calls an oddball request for some off-the-wall alteration of a handgun. One such request involved the installation of a 2⅝ inch barrel on a .45 Long Colt revolver ("a real pocket cannon").

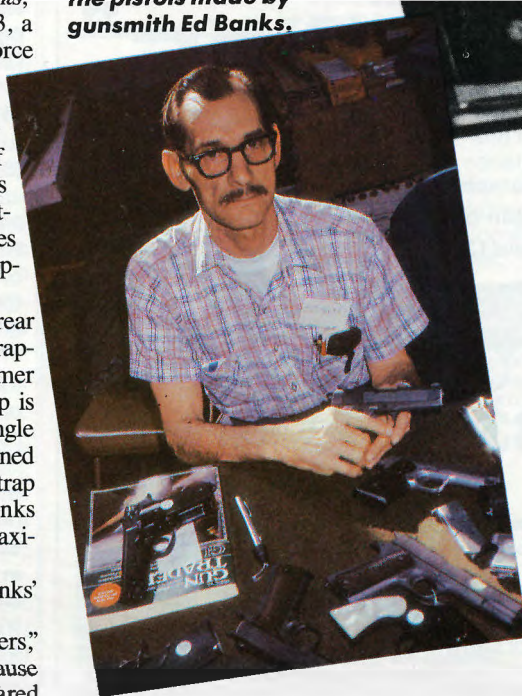
Another customer—a Georgia county sheriff—asked that he install a 1⅞ inch barrel on his .44 Special Bulldog.

"He wanted it for a hideout gun. The barrel just cleared the extractor rod, and the muzzle flash was almost blinding," said Banks.

His son, Randall, a 26-year-old deputy sheriff in Houston County, Georgia, helps his father work on guns in the shop (2762 Highway 41 North, Fort Valley, GA 31030) during his off-duty hours.



Short And Mean is a good description of the pistols made by gunsmith Ed Banks.



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CONVERSATION WITH A CHAMPION

By Jon Winokur

Jack Breskovich is a man of seemingly boundless energy. A civil engineer by profession, he joined the Southwest Pistol League in 1976 and has been a regular competitor ever since. He serves as Match Director for the Steel Challenge, and is President of the Shooting Machine Practical Pistol



Team. But shooting isn't Jack's only passion: he collects vintage Mustangs, preferable fast ones. (He owns five of them at present). In the field of handgun design, he is both theoretician and craftsman, having conceived and developed an innovative line of add-on competition hardware which he markets by mail. (Advantage Competition Accessories / P.O. Box 828 / Whittier, CA 90608). He's a keen student of ballistics, and his two-pound trigger jobs are legendary among world class shooters. With all the emphasis on equipment in practical shooting, I asked Jack to talk about some of his favorite things:

Winokur: As semi-official "chronographer" for the Southwest Pistol League, you've tested thousands of rounds of competition ammunition. Can you give our readers any ammunition tips?

Breskovich: In order to make "major" caliber in IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) competition, your ammunition must equal or exceed a power factor of 170, which is based on a mass times velocity formula. The minimum requirement works out to a 200 grain bullet travelling at 850 feet per second.

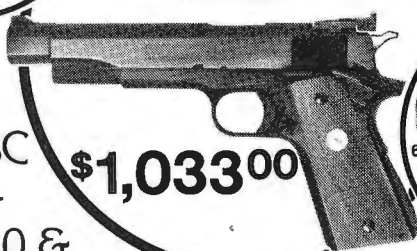
In my experience, shooters often fail to make major caliber with ammunition they believed they had carefully loaded to exceed 850 fps. Getting "dropped" to minor caliber in an IPSC match because of faulty ammunition can cost a competitor a bundle of points. It's demoralizing, and some people find it a little embarrassing. It happens because shooters ignore the many pitfalls involved in

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handloading. There are all kinds of variations in the components of a round of ammunition, including measured powder charges, the dimensions and weight of the bullets and cases, and even the size of the cavity where the explosion takes place. Any one of these factors can account for a loss of velocity or accuracy or both.

Lack of uniformity in components available to the reloader generally balance each other out, but if all the tolerances stack up in one direction, a variation of only 2% can vary your load seventeen feet per second. The lesson is that you can't afford to cut it too close . . . you have to give yourself a cushion of at least 20 feet per second and load for 870 to 875 fps.

Winokur: What load do you recommend for IPSC competition?

Breskovich: First of all, keep in mind that any powder charge I specify is not an absolute but only an indicator based on the equipment I use. I've found substantial variations between scales and between different lots of the same brand of powder.

Using *my* scale, I find that in a five-inch match grade barrel, you can sometimes make 850 feet per second with as little as 5.5 grains of WW231 powder. With a stock Colt barrel, you may have to go to 5.7 or 5.9 grains to make major caliber. For example, my gun, with its rather worn stock barrel, takes at least 5.8 grains of WW231 to reach velocities in the 855 to 860 range. In a gun with a six-inch match grade barrel you'll gain as much as 50 to 70 feet per second. So you can sometimes get down to 5.2 or 5.3 gains and still make major caliber with a six inch gun.

These loads should give you a reasonable margin for error, but try them in your gun and chronograph them to be absolutely sure.

Winokur: You've been on a kind of quest to reduce recoil, haven't you?

Breskovich: That's right, because the less a gun recoils, the easier it is to shoot accurately. The less the gun jumps, the less you have to concentrate on the gun and the more you can concentrate on sight picture and trigger squeeze. The faster you can get the gun back on target, the faster you can re-acquire the sight picture for the next shot. Reduce recoil and you increase speed and accuracy.

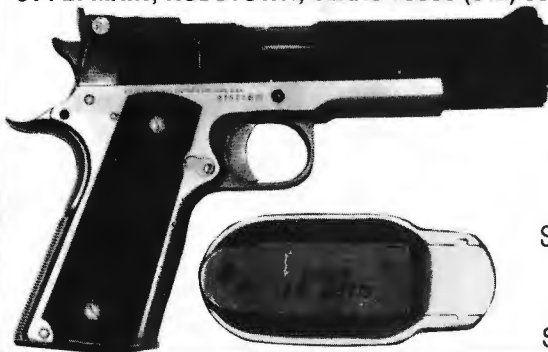
Winokur: How does your Advantage Grip System reduce recoil?

Breskovich: It's axiomatic that the heavier the gun, the less it's going to kick. When we fire a shot, we have an object with a high velocity and a relatively small mass—the bullet—exiting the barrel. Coming back at the shooter as an equal and opposite reaction we have an object with a relatively large mass—the gun—and a very small velocity in the form of recoil. If we make the gun heavier, we have the same mass times velocity going out the front, but a greater mass resisting the momentum to the rear. So the rearward velocity of the gun is reduced with a corresponding reduction in free recoil.

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system provides an even greater benefit: it helps keep the gun centered in the hand and eliminates the bad habit that so many people have of wrapping their fingers too far around the gun. We find that it reduces recoils by 17 per cent.

Winokur: You've also developed a recoil system that uses a heavy guide rod.

Breskovich: Yes, I was looking for a place to add more weight to the gun. And, like the grip system, I wanted a simple, drop-in item that would require no gunsmithing. Now, the stock Colt recoil spring guide weighs about half an ounce, while the typical full-length guide rod weighs a little over an ounce. I realized I'd have to put something bigger in there if I wanted more weight. I finally decided to take the recoil spring plug out, increase the spring's outside diameter to half an inch, and put a massive tungsten guide rod into the gun. Tungsten is two-and-a-half times heavier than steel. The new guide rod is more than 40 per cent greater in volume than the stock rod, and weighs five-and-a-half ounces. The grip and recoil systems combined give a total recoil reduction of 25 per cent.

The only modification necessary to install the recoil system is the removal of the little flange on the back of the lower part of the slide that houses the recoil spring plug. Anybody who can file metal and has a little patience can file that flange away with a round file and then polish the hole with sandpaper wrapped around a wooden dowel.

Winokur: Do you sacrifice reliability or accuracy with the system?

Breskovich: No. Removal of the flange in the bottom of the slide in no way affects the gun. It doesn't reduce the recoil bearing surface that strikes the flange, and if you ever went to sell the gun and keep the rod, all the standard Colt parts can be replaced. Nothing is done to render the gun "altered."

Winokur: Your trigger work is renowned for extremely light pulls without being prone to "following." How do you accomplish that?

Breskovich: I get a light, crisp, two-pound pull by carefully polishing the mating surfaces between the hammer and sear, not by shortening the engagement. Doing a trigger job is like fine tuning an automobile, which is simply putting it together the way the manu-

facturer meant it to be put together. All I do is polish the edges on the hammer and sear—without changing any of the angles—to the point where the shooter can no longer feel the two surfaces shear.

Winokur: You recommend these two pound triggers for competition only, correct?

Breskovich: Absolutely correct. I would never, ever recommend that light a trigger for a defense gun, for obvious reasons. My Lightweight Commander is regulated at a crisp four pounds, and I strongly suggest that any kind of defense or carry gun have a trigger pull of four pounds or more.

Winokur: I understand you're now working with Randall on a new gun.

Breskovich: I'm involved as a consultant in their efforts to build an affordable, out-of-the-box combat auto. The gun will have high visibility fixed sights, a trigger guard squared right out of the casting so it doesn't require stretching, a beavertail grip safety, a commander style hammer and all the other function goodies we've come to expect from a competition gun. The gun is completely stainless, including the hammer and sear.

Winokur: What about the conventional wisdom that says stainless steel is impractical for an automatic because of possible galling?

Breskovich: I suspect that that "wisdom" is the backward thinking of the traditionalist who is unwilling to face up to modern technology. To date I've done experimental trigger jobs on two Randall guns. They were both set at one-and-three-quarter pounds. After thousands of rounds, I examined the hammers and sears on both guns and found them to be much "rougher" than I would normally expect, but the trigger action was still glass smooth, crisp and holding at the original one-and-three-quarter pounds. I'm enthusiastic about the stainless auto.

Winokur: A lot of people say the inexperienced shooter can't take advantage of sophisticated modifications and should stick with a basic gun. Do you agree?

Breskovich: No. Why shouldn't he have the most sophisticated weapon he can afford? Granted, he isn't going to beat "A" shooters with equipment alone, but it's almost certain to help him in his own class, even if he only shoots 50 per cent of a possible score. If the equipment accounts for one or two extra points, that may be all it takes to win in his class. At a typical Southwest Pistol League match while testing ammo on the chronograph, I'll shoot 150 different guns in one day. Some are so bad I almost feel sorry for the shooter. There's nothing that feels better in the hand than a well accurized competition gun. Such a gun can do nothing but help. It instills confidence in the shooter.

I've heard shooters say they can't hold well enough to really take advantage of an accurized gun. Well, if your gun has a six inch spread and you've got six inches of wobble, your average group would measure twelve inches. If the wobble stays the same but your gun is capable of shooting a three inch group, you've immediately increased your accuracy by 25 per cent. The less shooting ability a person has, the more he's going to benefit from good equipment.





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Beeman has determined that a very small number of HW 70 air pistols has developed a condition in which the gun may discharge when the action is snapped shut after cocking.

Anyone in possession of HW 70 pistols is advised not to sell or use them until the sear has been replaced with a new, different factory unit.



Owners and dealers of HW 70's sold or distributed by Beeman (these are identified by the Beeman name factory-stamped in the gun's metal) should send them to: Beeman, Inc., Dept. HW 70, 47 Paul Drive, San Rafael, California, 94903. Beeman will rebuild the sear units and return the converted guns free of charge in the United States (foreign—add \$20 for postage).

Beeman advises returning non-Beeman HW 70's to the original seller. As a courtesy, Beeman will rebuild the sear unit of non-Beeman HW 70's for \$13.50 plus \$6.00 shipping/handling.

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Catch That Brass

Auto pistols are notorious for tossing brass in all directions. For those who want to reload, or for keeping ranges clear of litter, M.A.M. Products (153-B Cross Slope Court, Dept.



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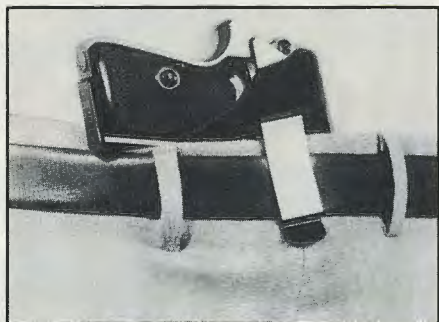
CHARTER ARMS

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Outers Laboratories has introduced five new aerosol gun care products. Named The Protectors® they are: Gun Oil, Nitro Solvent, TR-3 Teflon® Lubricant, Crud Cutter, and Water Shed. Crud Cutter is a powerful penetrating solvent; Water Shed is a silicone based water and stain repellent for leather, cotton and nylon fabrics. Available in gun shops everywhere.



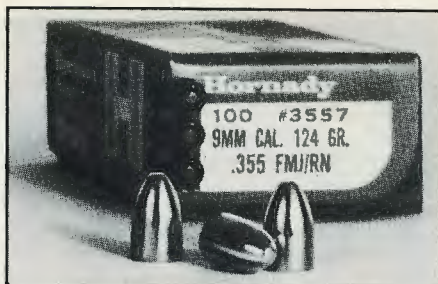
New ITP Holster

The new inside-the-pant holster from Michaels of Oregon is made of a soft, thin and pliable laminate. The outside surface is suede-like and soft, the lining is tricot nylon for a smooth draw. Available in five sizes to fit most popular revolvers and auto pistols, in black, right hand draw only. Price, \$6.95. For complete catalog of all Michaels products send \$1.00 to Michaels of Oregon, Dept. AH, Box 13010, Portland, OR 97213.



Reloading Catalog of Catalogs

The National Reloading Manufacturers Association is offering a collection of catalogs and brochures from its members. The package covers equipment for all phases of reloading—rifle, pistol, shotshell, bullet casting and swaging. Most popular brands are represented. To order the package, send \$4.00 to NRMA Catalogs, Suite 101, Dept. AH, 4905 S.W. Griffith Dr., Beaverton, OR 97005.



New Hornady Bullets

Hornady has added to their line of swaged lead bullets with a 124 grain round nose 9mm, a 150 grain SWC hollow point .38 and a 240 grain SWC hollow point .44. All are swaged, knurled and lubricated. There is also a new 9mm 124 grain FMJ bullet for trouble free feeding in auto pistols. Details on these and the entire line of Hornady rifle and pistol bullets for reloading are in the new Hornady Shooter's Guide. Free from Hornady Mfg. Co., Dept. AH, P.O. Box 1848, Grand Island, NE 68802.

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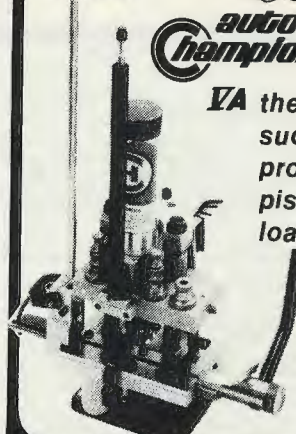
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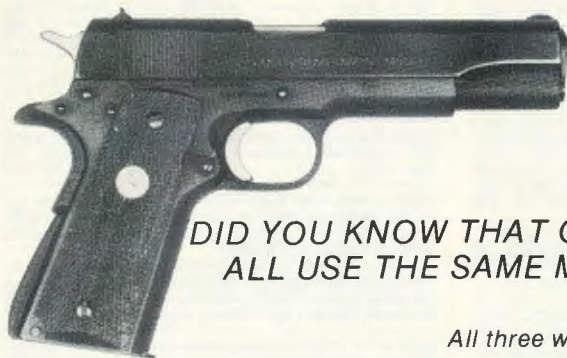
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