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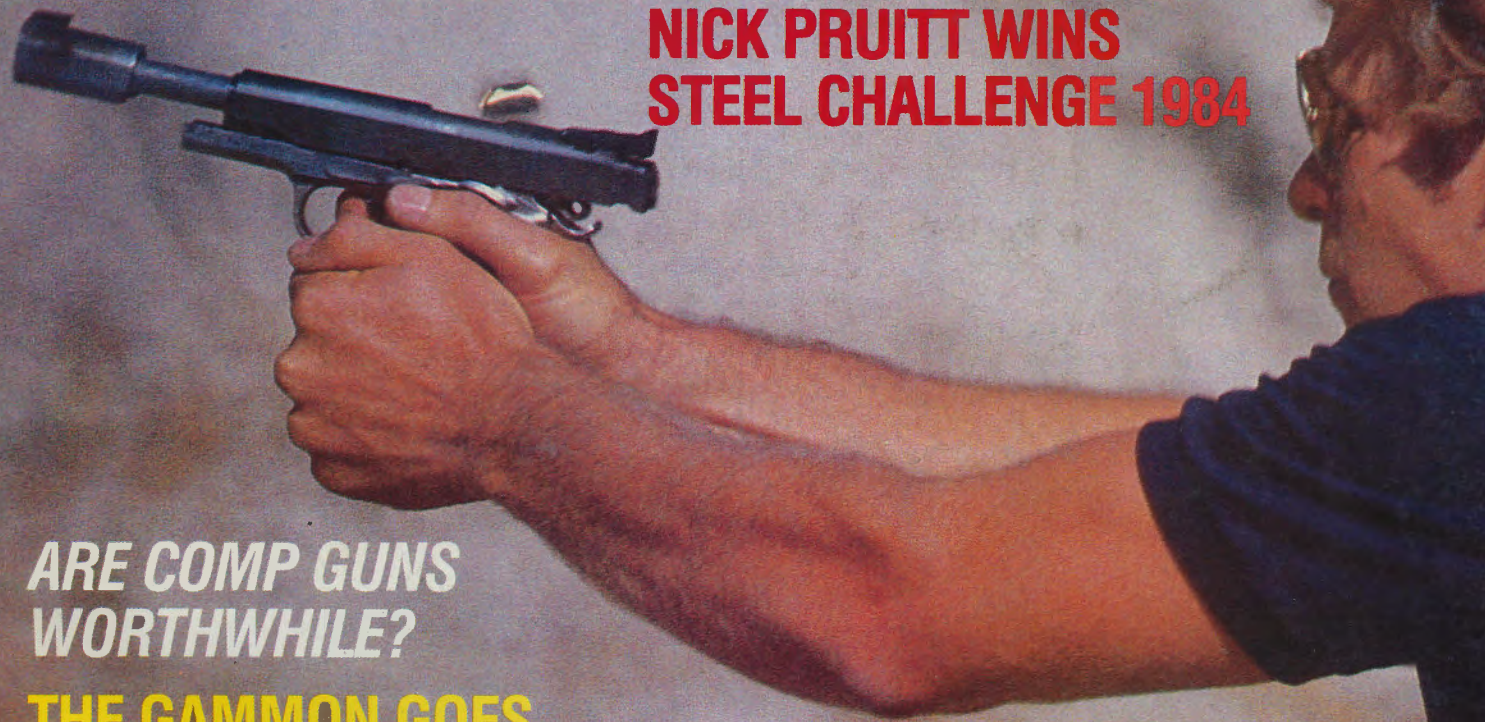
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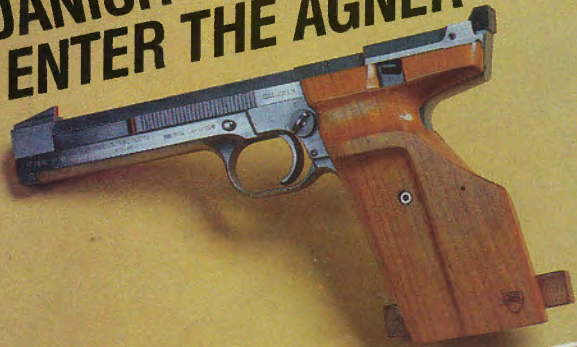
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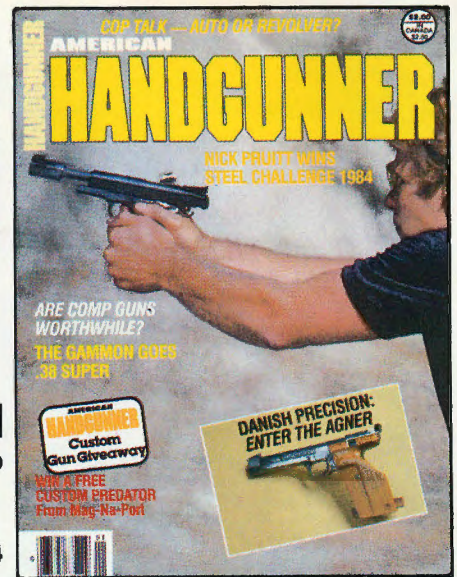


# AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 1984 Vol. 9, No. 48

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The Cover: Nick Pruitt, overall winner of the 1984 Steel Challenge match. Photo by Nyle Leatham.

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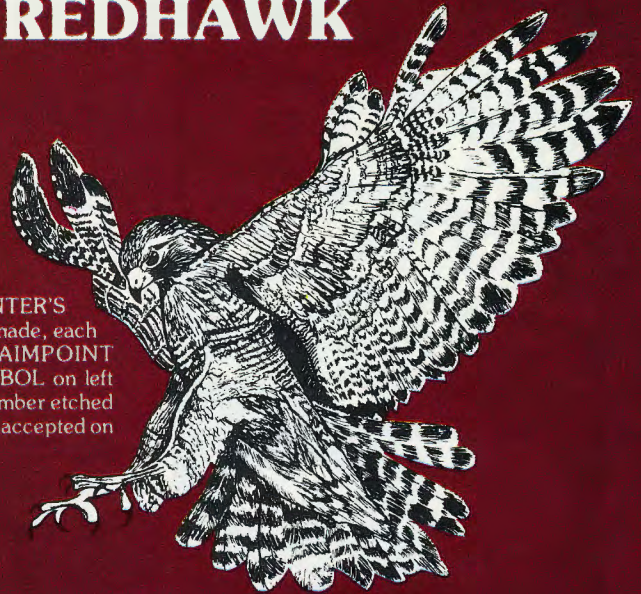
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# HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

## MAN STOPPER LOADS — LIGHT BULLETS OR HEAVY? NEW LYMAN MOULDS

I've stated the case for heavy bullets as manstoppers on a number of occasions, and my contentions favoring such bullets have substantial backing from numerous sources. However, since this is an open forum, it's fair sport to present an argument for light bullets. It comes from Martin Boxer, 1 Chelmsford Ct., Monsey, NY 10952. Boxer prefers to use light bullets in large calibers, although he says he has long used a 68-grain half-jacketed, type-metal-core bullet in his .38 Special Model 60. This one, he says, will shoot through an automobile bumper, but he refers a 90-grainer for both the Model 60 and his 9mm parabellum.

He goes on to say, "Many years ago I conducted some experiments with high-velocity pistol bullets impacting large lumps of putty. As expected, the heavy, slow bullets didn't nearly compare to the same caliber lightweights at much higher velocities when it came to making large holes in the putty mass. Higher velocity caused the putty around the point of impact to develop an outward velocity radiating away from the center of impact. This effect also occurs when a soft piece of flesh is hit. Try a fresh veal roast and then dissect it. You'll be convinced as to the effectiveness of large caliber, lighter-weight bullets for personal defense at close range. They are absolutely devastating at 1500 fps, plus.

"A large-caliber handgun can accelerate a bullet more easily than any smaller caliber. If the bullet's weight is the same and the barrel length is the same, the larger caliber will easily out-accelerate the smaller, while operating at identical pressure.

"High-velocity handgun bullets in the larger calibers require no expansion to be effective. They accelerate the mass of the flesh impacted in an outward direction without the need to expand. The hydraulic shock wave traveling through the bloodstream should cause any adversary to collapse, unconscious.

"For personal defense, there is nothing better than a large caliber, the larger the better, coupled with high velocity, the higher the better. The bullet weight is almost immaterial as long as it gets to the target without losing too much velocity. I have fired 45-grain, .44-caliber bullets through a 1/4th-inch steel plate. Now, that's power! The velocity must have been well over 2000 fps—probably closer to 2500. I didn't have a chronograph then. Figure it out on the Powley Computer, with 23 grains of Unique through a 10-inch barrel.

"If the Charter Arms people would build a

.50-caliber revolver like the .44 Bulldog, it would be a perfect self-defense weapon. A 165-grain bullet from a case similar to the .44 Special would be ideal. However, a 105-grain .44 bullet traveling at 1735 fps isn't bad, either!"

Boxer's conclusions run contrary to those of military committees assigned to determining the effectiveness of light versus heavy handgun bullets. He does, however, bring up an interesting point in that regard: "The 75-year-old tests with cattle (Thompson-La Garde) were absolutely conclusive. However, cattle and mankind are not similar. Mankind is soft and easily penetrated; animals are not. Also animals are much thicker front to back, or side to side than are men. There is simply much more mass to absorb bullet impact, so heavier bullets in any caliber would be required."

I received a shipment of Manstopper bullets (Manstopper Products Corp., RD 3, Box 401, Warwick, NY 10990) a couple of years back, and have continued to use them in expansion experiments. Most recently, a 190-grain Manstopper bullet was loaded ahead of 5.9 grains of W-W 231, ignited by a CCI 300 primer, and shot through the 3-inch tube of a Charter Arms .44 Bulldog. Velocity was a mere 757 fps as the Manstopper traversed the pages of a water-soaked phone book, the cost of a veal roast being what it is. The result was a picture-perfect example of bullet expansion: the Manstopper expanded fully and roundly to a diameter of .83-inch! In doing so, it retained almost all of its weight, losing only two grains.

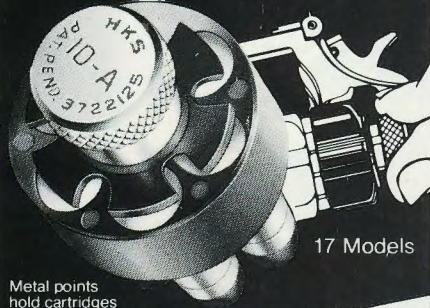
The phenomenon of hydrostatic shock was invoked by virtue of having soaked the experimental medium. This being the case, the rapidly expanding bullet, even at low velocity, created secondary energy sufficient to causing a "wound channel" that was over two inches in diameter.

George V. Lane, who resides at 21655 23-Mile Rd., Mt. Clemens, MI 48044, writes, "Having picked up a lightweight two-inch Colt Agent, I found myself wondering what I could do with it. Using it for close defense, I did not want to shoot through walls, shake my gun apart, or even shoot metallic silhouettes. Power-plus loading didn't seem like a good idea for the Agent.

"Using 3.0 grains of Unique, Federal #100 small pistol primers, and 200-grain Remington round-nosed bullets gives me a load that is accurate for my proposed (3 inches at 12 yards, with my eyesight and a 2-inch barrel),

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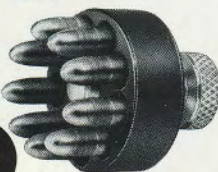
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and a 200-grain bullet that tumbles in 3 gallons of water, or 900 pages of Ma Bell. I am thinking of buying a Lyman composite mould and using the lower base to make 210-grain wadcutters, and see what happens.

"Have you or your readers any ideas on loads that can be effective in a civilian light-weight alloy snub-nose .38 Special? Maybe nosier, flashier, lighter, and faster ammo is not the answer for this type of handgun."

We can go back to Boxer's 90-grainer, or we can recommend in favor of continuing to seek a good load for the 210-grainer you're considering, George. Let us know what you learn, and what other handloaders who read this column suggest. Meanwhile, if I were to seek a good load with a 210 in a 2-inch .38, I'd probably start with 3.0 grains of Unique and proceed to slightly heavier charges with caution.

One of the best things to happen to handloaders in some time is Outer's new spray can of Crud Cutter. I received a sample for testing and immediately put it to work on a particularly cruddy 10-inch .44-caliber T/C barrel. A shot of Crud Cutter and a couple of passes with clean patches did the trick. The crud-laden barrel was rendered free of unburned powder residue and lead smearing.

Lyman Products Corporation, of Middlefield, Connecticut, now offers moulds for seven bullets that are ideally suited to those of us who involve ourselves in handgun silhouette shooting.

Contrary to thinking in some quarters, bullets cast with an intermediate alloy offer definite advantages, say the Lyman folk. Such bullets are easier on a gun's bore, offer ample lubrication, and are considerably less costly.

Linotype metal, expensive and increasingly difficult to find, is neither necessary nor particularly desirable for silhouette shooting. It is brittle and it tends to shatter on impact. An intermediate alloy such as Lyman's #2 (BHN 15), doesn't shatter. It maintains its form, transferring almost all of its energy to the target. What's more, an intermediate alloy is inexpensive and easy to formulate from ingredients that are easy to find. Think about it, handloaders. When was the last time you saw a genuine, fire-breathing linotype machine in operation?

Lyman has seven flat-nosed moulds that're ideal for casting good silhouette bullets. For specifics, drop a note to Ken Ramage, Lyman Products Corporation, Dept. AH, Route 147, Middlefield, CT 06455.

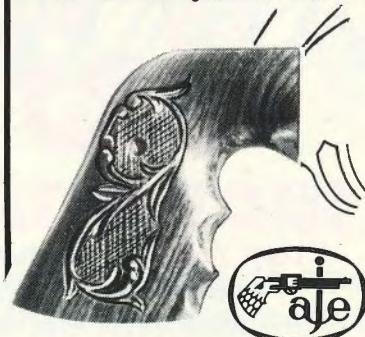
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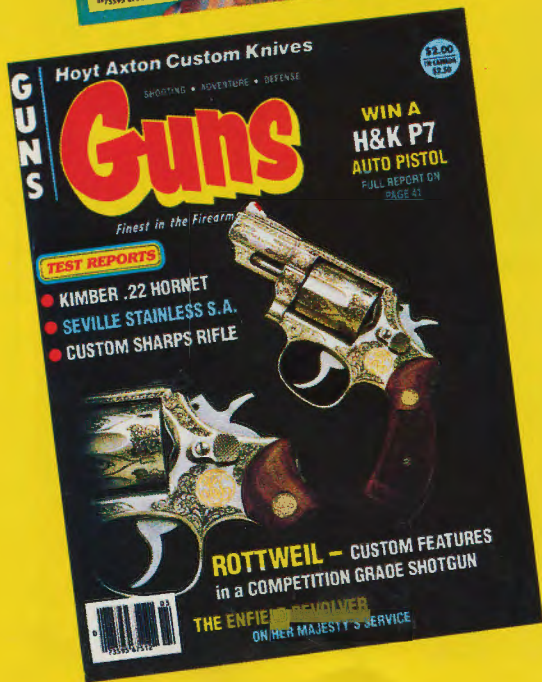
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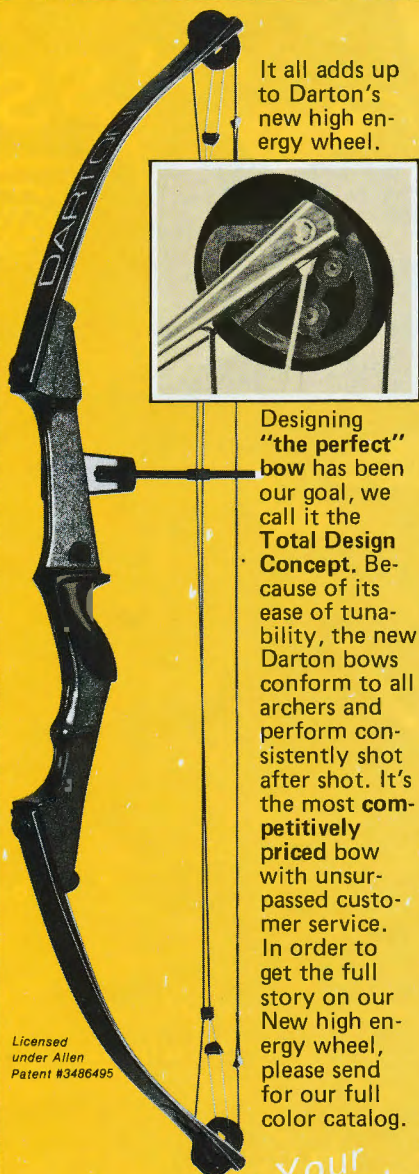
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# COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

## REVOLVERS OR AUTOS FOR POLICE? HERE IS PART 1 OF A DISCUSSION

A few years ago, Bill Jordan and I did back to back articles in a book in which he said the revolver was the only suitable police weapon; I took the side of the auto. Since that time, I've been identified as a booster of the auto.

Actually, I take a more balanced view. I feel the autoloader has certain definite advantages in a gunfight, but because of its relatively complex manner of operation and the fact that it will often be held cocked on a suspect, I recommend it only for cool, veteran officers who qualify at least Expert if not Master. There are two sides to the revolver-auto service gun argument, and this month, we'll look at the former.

**The revolver offers more reliability.** Gun experts tell you that their autos are every bit as reliable as autos. That's true . . . for their autoloaders. The average cop doesn't clean his gun except at inspection time, nor does he realize that the most effective hollowpoint street loads often won't feed reliably from an "out of the box" auto.

**The revolver is safer to handle.** Many less-motivated officers are dangerously under-familiar with their service weapons. The axiom is that you have to be extremely stupid to have an accidental discharge with a double action revolver, but only a little stupid to have one with an auto. A study in one of the police professional journals not long ago showed a disproportionately high number of autoloaders represented in statistics on police weapons accidents.

**The D.A. revolver is less likely to be inadvertently discharged during a tense gunpoint situation.** The Colt and Browning-pattern autos are normally carried cocked and locked, and despite safety training lectures, the officer is likely to thumb off the safety as soon as he feels threatened. This leaves him holding a cocked pistol. The same is true if he has fired one or more shots from his double-action auto before "covering" the suspect, thus self-cocking the pistol. If his finger is on the trigger, a sudden sound can easily cause a startled convulsion of the finger. BANG! Dead suspect.

**The D.A. revolver is less likely to discharge in a struggle.** When a perpetrator grapples for the officer's weapon, it is second nature to hang on tight. Revolvers tend to be much more forgiving. In New York City, where there are numerous episodes of suspects rassing with officers holding guns,

there are only about six such accidental discharges a year. I daresay it would be much more if NYPD officers packed autoloaders.

By contrast, in the past year I documented two cases 3,000 miles apart that resulted in the departments involved banning the Colt .45 auto for use by their officers. In Vancouver, Washington a narcotics officer was making an arrest at the point of his cocked .45 when a suspect began to wrestle for the gun. The narc yelled for help, and a traffic officer ran to his aid. The pistol discharged, fatally striking the second cop in the face.

In Hampton, New Hampshire, a police sergeant approached a motorist with his Gold Cup in hand after a wild Code Three chase. As he attempted to remove the suspect from the car, the latter grabbed the officer's gun and tried to pull it out of his hand. It appears that, reflexively tightening his hand to keep hold of the gun, the sergeant's thumb wiped off the Swenson safety and his finger unintentionally tightened on the trigger. The 200-grain Speer hollowpoint literally tore the suspect's jaw off. The court ruled that the officer had acted appropriately, but the department still banned automatics.

**Effective service revolvers are available in stainless.** S&W's 600-series L-frame guns, and their stainless .38 Specials function well, as does Ruger's stainless revolver line. Though several autoloaders have been introduced in stainless steel, none has yet achieved a track record of sufficient reliability for the police service, in my opinion. While I have mixed feelings about stainless, I recognize its good properties in humid areas, or when issued to officers whose weapons are infrequently inspected.

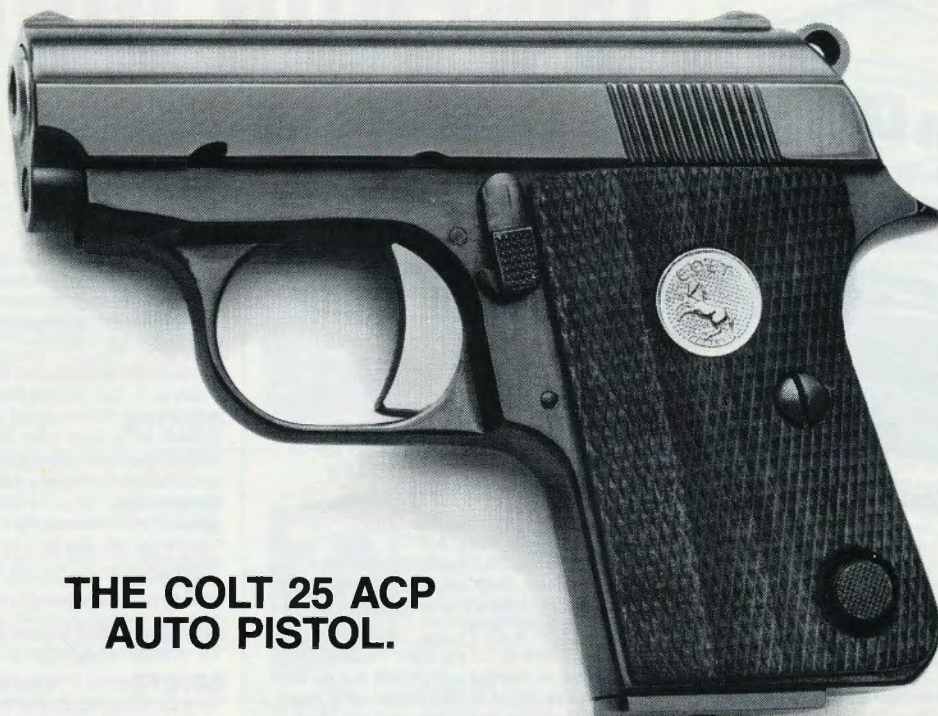
**Effective snatch-resistant holsters are readily available.** Holsters such as the fine Bianchi 27 and Hurricane, Rogers Boss and Trooper, and S&W Security Plus can help overcome a snatch attempt by securing the gun behind the trigger guard and at the back of the cylinder. Neither is possible with autos. The only true snatch-resistant holster for autoloaders is the Bianchi AutoDraw, which takes a serious time commitment to learn to use swiftly, and is available only for the Colt Government-style pistol.

Yet, for a cool and well-trained officer, the properly selected autoloader offers many advantages in a pure gunfighting pistol. We'll discuss them next issue.





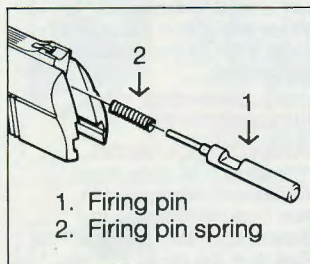
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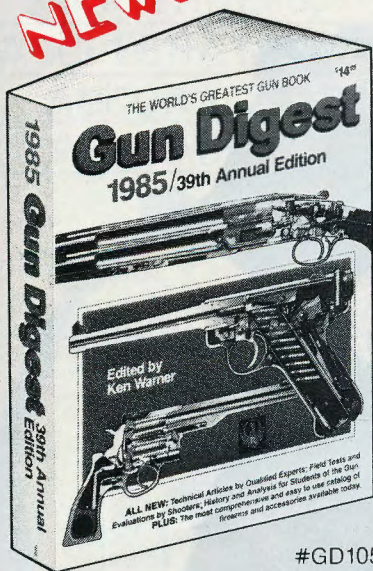
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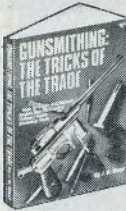


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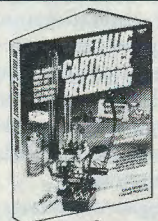
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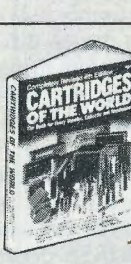
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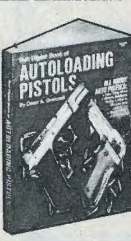
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## CONVERSION UNITS AND INSERTS ADD VERSATILITY TO PISTOLS

All of us at one time or another have looked through our battery and wished for something different. Perhaps a less powerful pistol to use in training one's spouse or kid, or a surrogate pistol that duplicated your main gun, but chambered for something cheaper to shoot. Or maybe a little of both so you could tune up for that fall deer hunt with your unlimited on rabbits.

What stopped you from dashing out and buying an alternative pistol then was cost. Colt Aces are neat, but not cheap. Convertible revolvers are the answer—but not if you've already bought the magnum version. Extra barrels for your Merrill or T/C cost less than a new pistol, but still aren't cheap. And nobody makes a .30 carbine version of your .308 unlimited gun.

But there is an inexpensive alternative—your existing pistol and an adapter cartridge or conversion unit. The idea's not new of course, but variety hasn't been large.

Not until Harry Owen of Sport Specialties (Box 5337, Hacienda Heights, California 91745) got into the act. Harry offers a large selection of both adapters and conversion units. Adapters look like the parent cartridge, with a chamber inside for a smaller cartridge, which is generally of the same caliber. Conversions are what shotgunner's call tubes—short pieces of a smaller caliber barrel shaped to fit the parent chamber and slip down the barrel, carrying its own rifling.

Although Harry has a large assortment of adapters and conversion units, he's concentrated on but a few sub-caliber cartridges, namely the .22 LR, .22 WMR, .22 Hornet, .32 ACP, .30 M1 and 9mm. There are a couple that use the .25 ACP, and a few shotgun units that use bigger rifle and pistol cartridges.

The .22 rimfires come in two versions, so that they can be used in centerfire guns, or in the convertible fire T/C. The former uses a rimfire/centerfire conversion device that's loaded in behind the cartridge before firing. The other versions just rely on the T/C's switchable hammer to fire the little round—and thus are easier to use.

Most of the conversion units are intended for pistols, and most of those are designed to fire a rimfire in the T/C. At \$35 (the last time I checked), the unit is an attractively priced alternative to a new barrel.

The adapters will of course fit any rifle or pistol chamber, and are economical at about \$15.

With the wide selection of rimfire or centerfire versions most anybody should be able to find a sub-caliber conversion for something in their battery, and have their Colt and shoot it too.

Awhile back I acquired a couple of Harry's adapters; one in .25 ACP/.256 Mag., the other in .32 ACP/.30-30. Just so happened I had two .256's, and a .30-30 on hand, so I rounded up some ammo from Frontier and Federal and took the whole works to the range.

It didn't take but a few shots to decide that tiny cartridges in big pistols are definitely friendly.

But do they shoot? To find out, I fired three five-shot groups at 25 yards with the .25 ACP adapter in the .256 T/C and started to do the same in an original Hawkeye. Frontier 50 grain FMJ loads for the little round averaged 948 fps for five shots from the T/C, and the bullets tumbled into the target from the Hawkeye. Control groups firing 87 grain Sierra/17.5 gr. RL-7 from the T/C average 1.6 inches (and 2133 fps). The T/C doesn't normally shoot real well then, but better than 4-5 inches. The problem, and the reason I can't recommend this adapter to anyone for serious plinking, is that the .25 ACP bullet measures .251 inches, or .005 inches too small. Apparently the puny powder charge doesn't upset the bullet sufficiently to engage the lands of the larger barrel enough to produce usable accuracy—at least not at 25 yards. Mice or rats in the basement or privy would be a different matter though.

The .32 ACP did better, averaging 2.8 inches for the first three groups with the Federal 71 grain FMJ load; velocity averaged 880 fps (must have slowed down in the 15 inch barrel). Federal 150 grain flatpoint .30-30 loads averaged 1.2 inches (iron sights for all of these by the way), and 2066 fps. You could take small game with this adapter at modest distances, and I suppose it's possible that handloads with softpoint or cast bullets might improve on this performance.

These diminutive cartridges are interesting, but I don't think either is practical for use outdoors, whether for training, hunting or for cheap shooting; just too small, too hard to load and the brass is too hard to find. A .22 rimfire would be best if you wanted to go small (Harry makes .22 RF adapters with very short rifled barrels—length of a loaded round—for use in the .30-30, .308 and several more cartridges).


A few months later I had a .308 Ultimate unlimited gun from M-S Safari Arms for testing and decided I'd try a .30M1 version in the big pistol. The Carbine round is big enough to get hold of, brass is available and as it will handle a wider variety of bullets while providing usable but not intimidating power I figured it would be the hot setup. But just to be safe I ordered a 32 ACP/308 version too.

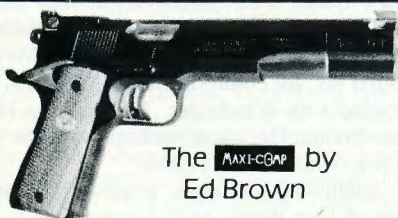


Starting out with the 32 ACP adapter I repeated the previous tests. At 25 yards, with open sights, the Ultimate averaged 1.3 inches for three five-shot groups delivering an average velocity of 924 fps with the same Federal factory ammo used in the earlier tests. Switching to the .30 Carbine adapter I fired several groups with Federal's 110 grain soft point ammo; although velocity was up to 1805 fps none of the groups were worth talking about, with the smallest being 5.5 inches across. So much for the hot setup. Later testing with full snort 308 loads surprisingly showed that the 32 ACP adapter shot as well or better than the serious stuff with few loads getting under 1.5 inches.

And then just recently I spent some time on the range with two ways to tame the terrible .357 Herrett; a 9mm adapter and a 22LR conversion. At 25 yards again, I fired both devices through a Super 14 equipped with a Thompson/Center 3X RP scope. Starting with the adapter and CCI's 115 grain FMJ Blazer ammo, three five-shot groups averaged 2.0 inches. Frontier's 124 grain FMJ shot into 1.0 inches and two Lee Loader reloads (110 grain Hornady HP/3.7 grains 700X and 125 grain Hornady FP/7.5 grains 630) shot into 1.2 and .9 inches, respectively. Average velocities were 1284, 1224, 1093, and 1056 fps for the 9mm's. Switching to the 22LR conversion (it's a full fourteen inches long) I fired groups with Federal's Pistol Match and Remington's HVHP. Velocities were 1114 and 1249 fps. Group size averages were 1.2 and 1.8 inches, respectively. Surprising accuracy really, and the devices would be practical on the range or in the field. I can see the conversion taming the big Herrett for IHMSA's unlimited 22LR game and the adapter would certainly mute the big boomer for small game hunting.

Although not extensive, these tests do show that this approach to acquiring light, low powered loads for your main battery is viable for some applications. Results will vary between guns and cartridges—but that's not unusual even with full powered ammo.

Send for Harry's catalog and look it over. I'd be surprised if you couldn't find a combination for your needs.  It's a slick idea.



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# HANDGUN LEATHER

BOB ARGANBRIGHT

## ONE ANSWER TO CARRYING CONCEALED WEAPONS FROM SOUTHWIND SANCTIONS

The city near which I live is the second largest in the state. The crime rate, like that of most cities, is depressing. Just several blocks from downtown there is what might be called a "hospital row" with two large and two medium sized hospitals within a few blocks of each other. Because of the shift work involved in hospital employment, a large number of female nurses find themselves in the streets at the same time rapists, muggers, and worse, prowl in their search for prey. Just recently, in addition to the expected statistical number of rapes, our city was plagued by a particularly brutal rapist who worked the area of hospital row. Two attractive young nurses completely disappeared between the hospital and one of the parking lots—never to be seen again.

Unbelievably, the administrator of the major hospital involved forbade any of his staff, particularly nurses, to carry any firearm upon the grounds of his facility. At the same time he resisted all requests to hire a security force with the simple statement that protection of the public was the responsibility of the city police. All this was occurring when the police were suffering budget cuts and staff reductions. Normal calls for assistance and reports of suspicious persons were backing up or going unanswered.

Under such circumstances, what recourse does a woman have in the face of the statistical horror indicating that sometime during her lifetime one out of every three will be raped? What is the increased probability that these nurses, turned out on the street late at night, will be the next victims? What recourse do they have if they can't walk from job to parking lot armed and there is no policeman in sight? What would you have your wife or daughter do?

My research indicates that many nurses are carrying concealed handguns in spite of their employer's arbitrary regulations which, while they have no force of law, could cost a person his job. Our police department reports a thirty percent increase in applications for concealed weapons permits, mostly from women.

One difficulty in carrying a concealed handgun, especially for women, is actually concealing it. Most of the gals I have talked to are carrying small autoloaders, usually .25 ACPs, in their purse. Yes, they admit that is a poor place since the first thing they might lose is their purse. Yes, they would like a bigger gun but that only compounds the concealment problem.

A few are wearing ankle or thigh holster rigs and none of them really feels comfortable with these modes of carry. Most would

prefer a shoulder rig but find concealment impossible, especially in a nurse's uniform. It is truly a dilemma and I am forced to admit that in spite of all its drawbacks, the ankle rig is probably the best choice under this set of circumstances. Thigh rigs work OK under dresses but very few women are wearing dresses anymore.

Since lightness is the most important factor in wearing an ankle holster we are probably best advised to examine man made materials rather than leather. Security is another important factor and this includes security of the weapon from loss and security in holster



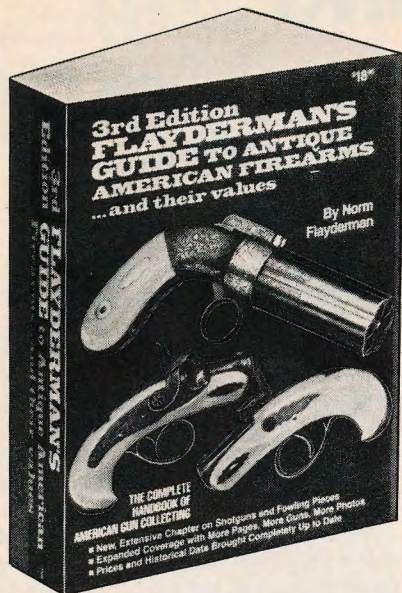
attachment to the leg. The gun/holster should ride firmly attached and never flop around. Probably the biggest gun that can be carried by a female in this fashion is the small frame .38 Special—like the Charter Arms Off-Duty or the Smith & Wesson Chief Special. Maybe better yet, for comfort, is the AMT Back-Up loaded with Winchester .380 Silvertip Hollow Points. The whole package would be just a few ounces over a pound.

Southwind Sanctions, a holster company out of Fort Worth, would seem to have the answer with its Model DFB ankle holster system. It is a "new" product only in the sense that it has gone through three generations of modifications and improvements and is presently just about as good as an ankle holster rig can get.

The basic ankle rig simply straps around your leg just above the ankle bone. It is padded and a holster is attached. Its chief faults are a "floppy" feeling and a tendency to

*Continued on page 18*





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Hailed as the most comprehensive guide to antique gun collecting ever produced when it first appeared in 1977, Norm Flayderman's compendium has become the indispensable aid to both newcomers and professionals in the growing world of collecting firearms. There are now over 200,000 copies of Flayderman's Guide in print.

#### State of the Firearms Market

While inflation, recession and wildly fluctuating interest rates created confusion and collapse in some collectibles markets over the past several years (coins, stamps, silver, gems and oriental rugs, for example), antique firearms have remained relatively stable, as Norm explains in his new introduction. Some prices have increased as much as 40 percent, but these are usually tied to rarity and demand. "There continues to be a healthy, strong — even brisk — market for antique American guns," he says. And this edition reflects the very latest pricing information available.

#### New Section on American Shotguns

Totally new in this edition is a section on shotguns and fowling pieces, an area of collecting just beginning to take off. This is the first time the American shotgun has been discussed from the perspective of collectors. Coverage includes muzzle-loading flintlock and percussion shotguns as well as black powder Damascus barrel, breech-loading double-barrel shotguns (hammer and hammerless types). "With few relatively inexpensive firearms remaining for the collector with a minimal budget, this field offers many opportunities to assemble an interesting collection," Flayderman explains. This new section is presented with the same orderliness, expertise and clarity that have made Flayderman's Guide "the most authoritative reference on American firearms ever made available for collectors." (*Antiques And Arts Weekly*)

#### Other Outstanding Features

- Flayderman's standardized numerical reference system for all antique American guns. An efficient shorthand method to identify and describe the firearms listed in this book.

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- 1,475 large detailed photos accompanying model descriptions. No need to hunt through photoplates for details.
- A full index and extensive cross-referencing to aid the reader in quick identification or classification.

Flayderman devotes entire sections to each major American manufacturer from Allen to Winchester. Every one of their guns is shown in detail. Lesser makers are listed by gun type: American percussion pistols (subdivided into revolvers, pepperboxes, single shots, derringers, under-hammers, dueling, etc.). Separate sections on cartridge pistols, automatics, Confederate arms, single shot rifles, repeating rifles, Kentucky rifles, sporting and target rifles, revolving rifles. The section on U.S. military longarms alone is worth the price of the book; a fantastic wealth of data never previously published on flintlocks, the famed "Trapdoor" Springfield .45-70's (with serial ranges), Krags and even all the famed '03 Springfields.

#### Praise from the Experts

The prediction that John Amber, Editor Emeritus of Gun Digest, made in his introduction to the first edition that Flayderman's Guide "... will do much to shape the course of collecting for years to come, and is a milestone in Americana" has already come about. The first two editions were deservedly best sellers.

In his forward to the third edition, current Gun Digest Editor Ken Warner calls the Guide "A new pillar for the house of the collector. Flayderman has compiled the most significant collection of background, lore, and historical fact on firearms yet printed... There are two-copy owners aplenty who have one in the office or library and one for the road."

#### Acclaim from the Critics

"A most valuable book for the person interested in truly old guns made in this country is Norm Flayderman's Guide to Antique American Firearms..." *Sunday New York Times*  
"Encyclopedic... thorough... as valuable a general reference as any listed in its extensive Bibliography." *American Rifleman*

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loosen and drop lower on your leg. Southwind Sanctions have solved this problem by designing an adjustable and removable strap which wraps around the leg just below the knee and above the calf. If you need it, as most ladies will, you can wear it; if you are a man with football player's legs, you can leave it at home.

My test sample was for a snubby .38 Special revolver and my test subject was a nurse who felt it was better to have a gun and not need it than to need a gun and not have it. Her only complaint was significant on two counts. First, the Velcro closures put runs in her stockings. Second, this was her only complaint and that is very significant indeed.

The Southwind Sanctions Model DFB is made of black moisture resistant nylon parapak with condensed foam base pad lining. The total weight of the rig is about two ounces!

The DFB can be ordered in a variety of sizes to fit such guns as the Charter line including the .44 Bulldog, S&W Model 13 with 3 inch barrel, H&K P7 and other medium frame autoloaders as well as small frame, derringers, mini-revolvers, and special order on others. The current price is only \$27.50.

Southwind Sanctions can be contacted at P.O. Box 33041, Fort Worth, Texas 76133. You should enclose a few bucks for their literature as they have much more to offer than the holster I have described.



# PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN G. LAWSON

## THE PISTOLSMITH AS A FIREARMS INSTRUCTOR — IT WORKS FOR JOHN

Nearly every pistolsmithing shop in America offers some kind of class in basic marksmanship or combat shooting. These often provide income that makes the difference between the shop's failure or survival in an increasingly competitive market. The classes offered cover a broad spectrum from classroom instruction only to both lecture and actual range firing, and from a sound, factual basic instruction imparted by knowledgeable instructors to peripheral ramblings by those better suited to the technical aspects of firearms repair than to marksmanship and survival training. The reason for the latter, I feel, is a total lack of a comprehensive outline for classes at the entry level.

Civilians who buy a handgun, obtain a license to carry concealed weapons then look around for instructions in what to do and how to react in a threatening situation are at a total loss. Some will attend nationally recognized academies and spend upward of \$1000 for instruction, board and room, special fire-

arms, etc. This is fine for those who can afford the money and time, but what about the ordinary citizen who has to save for months to buy his handgun and has a hard time buying a box of cartridges once a week to practice? What he wants is a comprehensive basic foundation in street survival and use of his handgun. Who could be more qualified to provide this training than his local pistolsmith?

We are talking about very basic instruction at the entry level that does not conflict with future instruction, but will act as a firm foundation and provide the student with interim knowledge that may well keep him alive to attend advanced instruction later.

It's still a free country, and you don't need sanction or approval from anybody to give basic instruction in the mechanics of marksmanship and street survival. You will need to have every student sign a disclaimer, releasing you, your shop and employees, range personnel, etc. from liability in case of an

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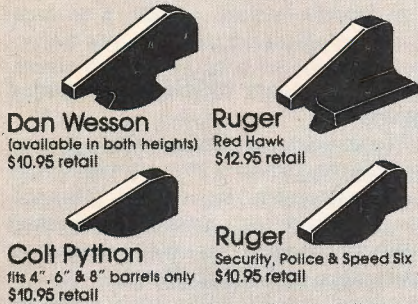
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accident. Your attorney can draft a simple form for you. He may also advise you not to give legal advice during your classes or to express political opinions. I have found that it also is good practice not to evaluate weapons or calibers during classes. The lack of adequate ballistics will become apparent to each student attending your class, as will the inadequacy of some classes of handgun without embarrassing any individual or questioning his choice in front of others. I have seen students get up and walk out of a class when their wisdom was questioned. Instead of the desired result, they usually rationalize the complete adequacy of an inadequate component under these conditions.

One of my associates in our local Response to Lethal Threat classes has worked with me on these classes for the past thirty years, back to the time we organized the first Police Combat and Survival courses for the local police department. Both Jerry and I have been accused of being "experts" by those who have not attended one of our classes. Over half a lifetime ago we both decided that the definition of expert was someone who took his material, but not himself, seriously. Nobody in any of our local classes is billed as an "expert", but rather, as competent instructors who are able to teach students to shoot under stress conditions. I have never allowed instructors to show off on the range or to intimidate students. Their job is to teach the class members to shoot well and to give them instructions in tactics. This they have done superbly to date. There is no reason, following the outline I am going to present, that you can't set up the same kind of course in your locality with the same results that we have had.

If you don't already have a copy, obtain "An Introduction to Modern Police Firearms" by Roberts and Bristow, Glencoe Press 1967. This book is now out of print, but still available from Ray Riling Arms Books, 114 Greenwood Ave., Wyncote, PA 19095. (215) 438-2456. You will use this book to draft your basic class outline and to establish range layouts and practices.

In every one of our classes we advise students to obtain a copy of "In the Gravest Extreme" by Massad Ayoob, obtainable from book sellers or Gravest Extreme, P.O. Box 122, Concord, NH 03301.

In any local advertising for your classes, be sure to mention that ladies are welcome to attend. This will usually double the size of the class, but the ladies who come are often concerned that they have entered a traditionally male sanctuary and are unsure of what they are expected to do. We usually begin with a total explanation of where the exit door, the bathroom, the pop machine and the coffee pot are. Then we gently but firmly remind the male students that there are ladies present and to conduct themselves accordingly. To date, even in classes with only one lady in attendance, we have had no problems. If you demonstrate close unarmed combat techniques . . . as you should . . . be careful to run through them in slow motion first so that the lady being instructed will not be

*Continued on page 21*

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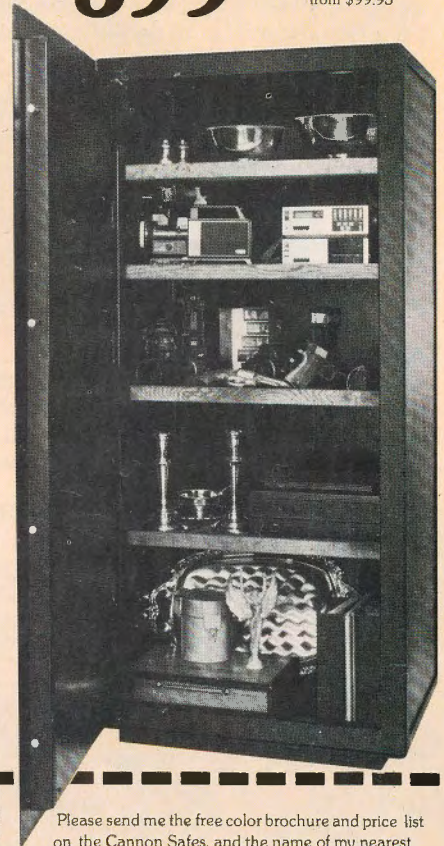
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# SPEED SHOOTING GOES NATIONAL!

By Michael Bane

There is, says top IPSC competitor and holstermaker Bill Rogers, a little bit of the juvenile delinquent in everyone. There is a certain satisfaction in plinking, shooting the tin can and watching the can *jump*. And, California's Steel Challenge, featuring the modern equivalent of a tin can, the round metal plate, has proven that a major league shooting match can be built around that concept.

Now Rogers and Southwest Pistol League veteran Mike Fichman are taking the steel plate speed match national with the World Speed Shoot Association (WSSA).

WSSA plate matches are a synthesis of several handgun sports. All the courses are shot against metal plates, with the gun beginning in the holster. The winner of the match is the person who knocks all the plates over in the shortest time.

"We're basing everything around five hits," Rogers says. "The plates are calibrated so a center hit from a 158 grain .38 Special will drop them, so a revolver can be competitive. Thirty-eight caliber or above will be allowed, but if you're going to shoot super light loads, you'd better hit the top of the plate."

Here's the way the WSSA concept will work:

Clubs interested in participating can either build, buy or borrow a standard set of targets, which include 8, 10 and 12-inch round plates and an 18 x 24-inch rectangular plate, all painted white. The WSSA will publish 12 matches a year, three of which will be "regis-

*World Speed Shooting Association forms to promote and conduct steel plate matches throughout the country.*

tered," essentially officially sanctioned matches.

"These registered matches will be shot on regulation equipment with regulation timers on a specific match," Rogers says. "This will allow us to work out a national classification system for shooters, plus qualify shooters to participate in the Steel Challenge."

Rogers and Fichman also envision regional contests, qualifying shooters for an expanded Steel Challenge.

The germ of an idea for the World Speed Shoot Association has been knocking around for several years. A number of clubs across the country have constructed their own falling plates set-up, duplicating courses used in the Steel Challenge or the plate segment of the Bianchi Cup.

"Reactive targets like plates are a real crowd pleaser," Rogers says. "Shooters like them because the courses are fast and easy to score—fast time wins. Spectators like them because they can tell what's going on, because there isn't any complicated scoring or factors."

A third group of people seem to like plate shooting—people with money interested in supporting the shooting sports. "We have been," Rogers says candidly, "looking for a sport we can sell."

While such shooting sports as handgun metallic silhouette shooting and black powder shooting in general have been able to draw major national supporters for their

*Continued on page 28*





caught unaware. Also, try to avoid embarrassing her if she is slow to pick up instructions. She may be nearly terrified of all those male eyes on her in front of the class. Further, remember that she will tell her friends about what happened in the class and this word of mouth is one of your best advertisements. So, be patient, run through the basics over and over until each student has mastered the techniques being demonstrated. Never call a student on a mistake, but run through it the proper way and make certain he or she understands the reasons of everything you teach them.

Jerry is involved with a ladies only self-defense class given by the police department in the next county, and at those sessions husbands are not allowed to sit with wives. They are, in fact, discouraged from attending. The feeling is that the man's presence will inhibit the lady from asking questions such as "what do you do when the gun stops shooting because it's out of bullets?" Obviously in the early stages of a very elementary course, it must be answered tactfully and without groans or sarcasm. The lady is asking what to her is a straightforward question that has been bothering her. Instructors are there to instruct, not to show their superiority or to shame or embarrass anyone. These little tips may make the difference between success and failure in your classes.

We begin our basic marksmanship class with a lexicon of firearms and ballistic terms. It is important that every student learns to communicate in the proper terms. If you have one hangfire on the range or one failure to uncock a piece, a tragedy could be avoided through basic communication.

Next, we demonstrate the basic stances, holds and control of the breath and trigger. We do not teach the older methods of marksmanship, but lean heavily toward techniques that will lend themselves naturally to combat shooting in later classes. We have some excellent training aids that show graphically, to the entire class, whether the "shooter" is heeling, jerking, holding, etc. properly.

One of the training aids we use is the firing simulator sold by Advanced .45 Technology, Inc. of 1031 Elder St., Oxnard, California 93030. (805) 485-0113. The simulator cycles the slide of the GM or Commander as fast as you can pull the trigger, using the potential of a carbon dioxide tank to activate a cylinder that replaces the barrel. I have added some refinements to the one we use in our classes. I have mounted a light beam tracer that shows exactly how the recoil of firing effects sight alignment, and the projected bullseye had better cover the 5 area of the silhouette target on the wall when the simulator cycles the piece in rapid fire, or everyone in the class is aware that the sight picture was wrong. The simulator costs \$236.00 complete with a full carbon dioxide tank, and it has proved to be the ideal way to dry fire, to demonstrate recovery from recoil and to familiarize students with the big Colt automatic.

On the range, we use a standard bullseye target for our basic marksmanship course and a B28 silhouette for the first round of our

*Continued on page 23*

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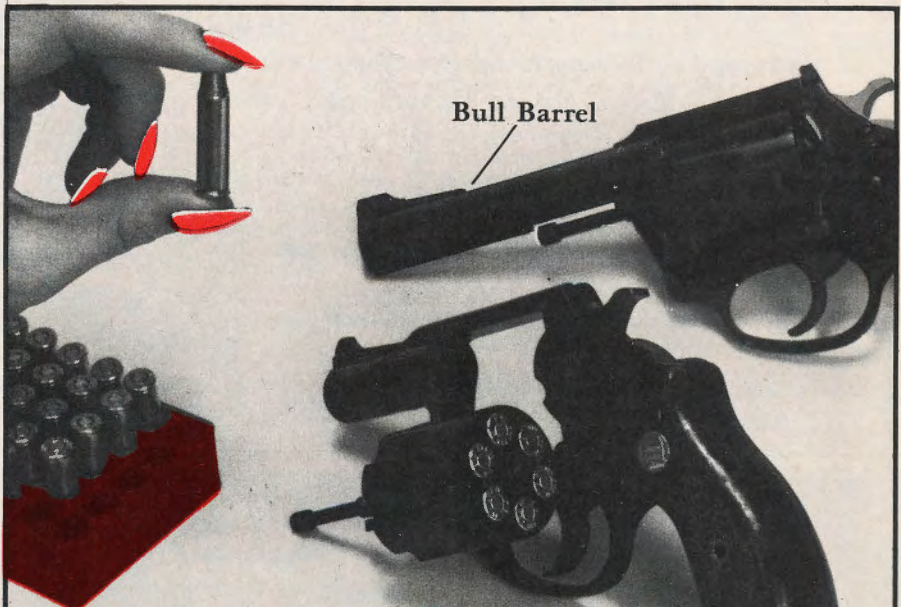
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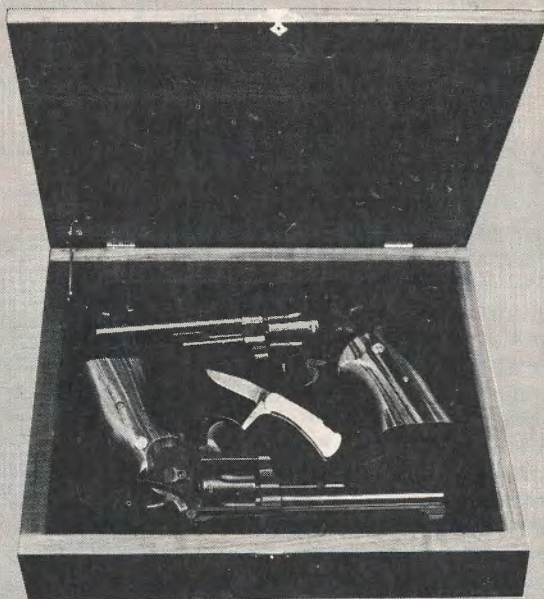
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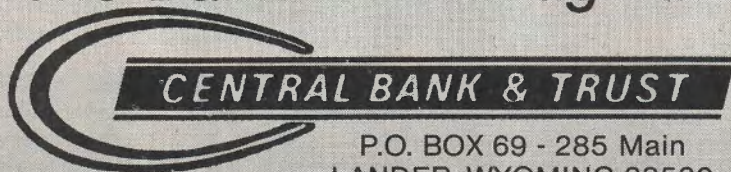
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Street Survival classes. The final rounds are fired on Situation Targets that are available from Prime Targets, 8935 N 2nd Way, Suite 124-A, Phoenix, Arizona 85020. Cost of each set of six 23" x 34" targets is \$2.00 plus \$1.50 postage. These are tricky situations, such as hostage, crowds, shooting in darkness, etc. and they have never failed to draw favorable comment from experienced combat shooters.

In the Level II course, titled Response to Lethal Force: Basic Encounter Tactics, we talk about: Tactics for home or street encounter; awareness; use of the sights; point shooting from the hip; triple taps; use of the flashlight; dealing with police; aftermath of a shooting incident—what to expect; misdirection; pre-forming judgments and justifications; psychological aspects of an encounter, and preparation by use of scenarios and training aids. The range session covers point shooting and aimed fire for familiarization, then the use of situation targets that require the use of judgment on the part of the shooter. There is class and individual instruction.

We have had local police instructors and military instructors give classes as guest instructors. To date, all comments have been favorable. Following our guidelines, there is no reason why you can't give similar classes out of your shop with gratifying results. If you have any questions about these courses, feel free to write me, and I'll send you a class outline.



### Cooper receives first Bren Ten Auto Combat

In a presentation in Dallas on Jan. 13, Michael Dixon presented a "Bren Ten Initial Issue Commemorative" to Jeff Cooper.

The pistol honors Jeff Cooper for his contributions to practical pistol shooting and marks the initial production of the Bren Ten 10mm Auto Combat Pistol.

On display at the presentation was the new Bren Ten Special Forces Model and the full line of Bren Ten 10mm pistols.

A Bren Ten Owner's Manual is available for \$2.00; from Dornaus & Dixon, 15896 Manufacture Lane, Dept. AH, Huntington Beach, CA 92649.

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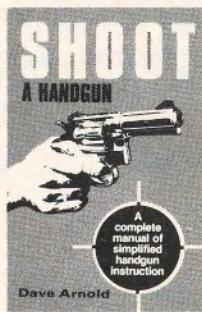
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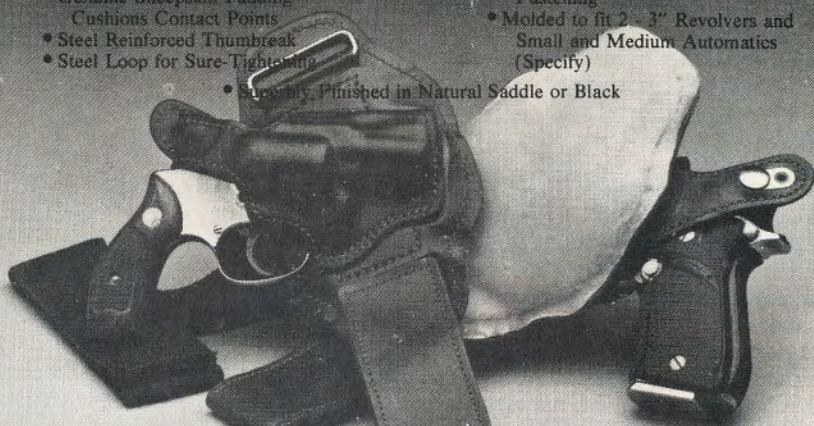
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# WILSON GROUP GRIPPER

*Offering a tight lock-up in any .45 auto this device is a poor man's accuracy job.*

**By Ken Hackathorn**

The need for a high degree of accuracy in a combat .45 is usually overstressed. While many custom pistolsmiths will offer a super accuracy job as part of his work, the truth is that most shooters can't shoot well enough to tell the difference between a stock Colt Government Model and a match accurized version. In IPSC shooting the size of the 'A' scoring zone is such that a pistol that will reliably group 3 to 4 inches at 25 meters is certainly acceptable. If the individual pistol will not provide a degree of accuracy to this point, then modification may be necessary.

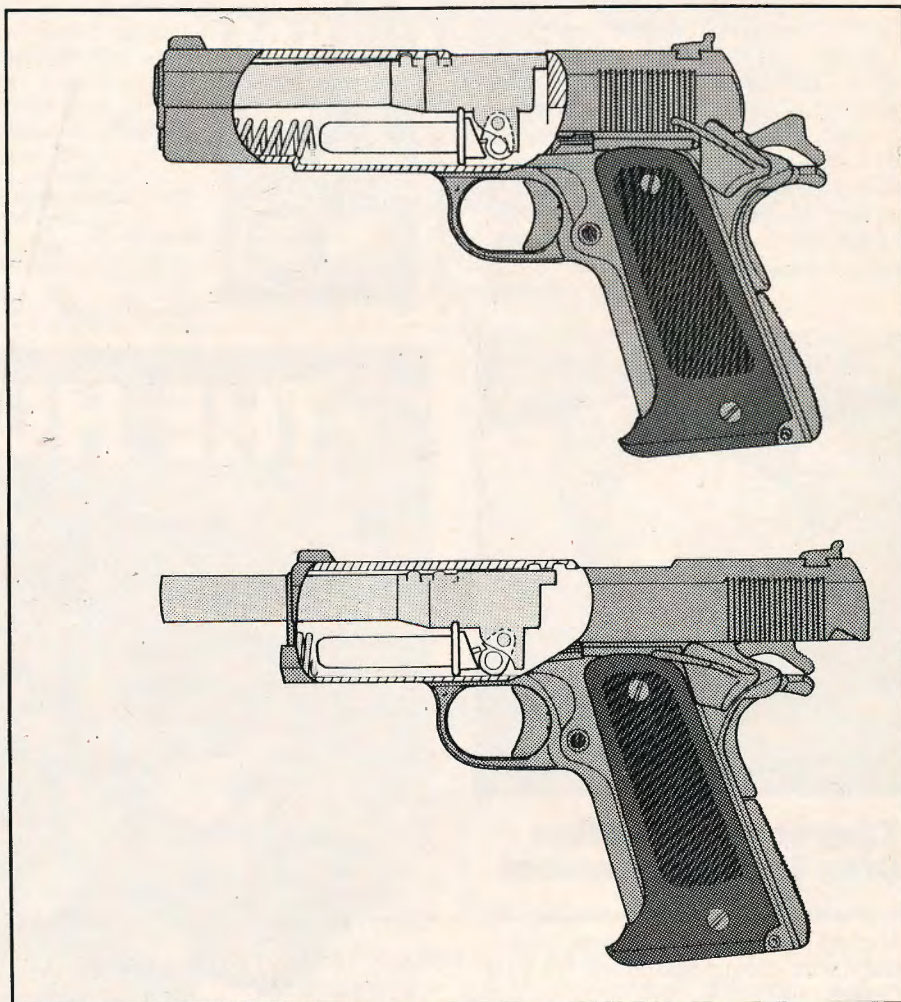
Those pistols most often needing accurizing are the old well used GI .45 autos, many of which are more abused than used. Also needing accurizing are well-shot Commercial 45s. The choice is usually left to sending your blaster off to a gunsmith for a hard fit of the parts to provide a solid and uniform lockup. The results are impressive and few could argue with the results of such skillful fitting of the pistol. The negative aspects are serious enough to make many shooters blanch. First the idea of spending an extra \$100.00 to \$150.00 on the pistol that they have already invested nearly \$400.00 on is pretty hard to handle. Add to that the fact that the pistol will be out of their hands for 6 months to a year depending upon who the pistolsmith is, then the whole concept seems impossible.

For years there has been a simple device on the market called the Dwyer Group Gripper. It is not well known, and has seen only limited use. The reason for this is that the 'Group Gripper' is not a full house accuracy job, thus the target shooters were not interested unless they got one hole accuracy at 25 meters. For the casual shooter, plinker, and combat shooter, the 'Group Gripper' has certain merit. Now marketed by Wilson's Gunshop, Dept. AH, Box 211D, Berryville, Arkansas 72616, the group gripper has gained in use at the hands of the practical pistol crowd.

The key to accuracy in the .45 Colt pistol is



**Smaller group (right) is evidence of effect of Group Gripper on army .45.**



**Top: Group Gripper in battery shows engaging of spur on barrel link to bias spring in recoil spring guide. Below: unit relaxed with pistol unlocked.**

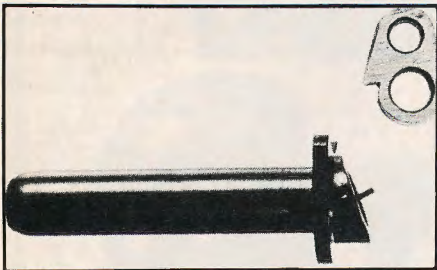
uniform and solid barrel lockup. The methods used by the various pistolsmiths are nearly standard by now, and few secrets remain in the art of accurizing the .45 auto. A simple test for barrel lockup is easy to do. With your pistol unloaded and safe, press down on the barrel hood (the portion of the barrel visible through the ejection port in the slide) with your thumb. If movement is

noticeable, then top notch accuracy is very likely a difficult goal. This barrel position must be solid and uniform from shot to shot.

The beauty of the Wilson "Group Gripper" is the ease at which it can be installed. All that is required is to take a few minutes and field strip your 1911. Replace the stock recoil spring guide with the one supplied by Wilson's Gunshop. Next drive the barrel link



pin out, remove the original link, and replace it with the new barrel link. The new "Group Gripper" link has a spur on it that will engage the bias spring in the new recoil spring guide. When the barrel rotates up into battery, the bias spring is depressed by the spur of the barrel link. The result is a strong positive pressure up against the barrel and a solid lockup is achieved. Each time the weapon cycles, the barrel is forced back into the same position. The Wilson "Group Gripper" is a simple and inexpensive device to improve the accuracy of the 1911 pistol without affecting



the reliability of the pistol. At a cost of \$22.95 it ranks as a real bargain in today's market. If you decide that the "Group Gripper" is not your answer, then simply remove it and replace the original parts. The amount you are out is less than \$25.00. After a number of inquiries about the Group Gripper, I decided to give one a test and evaluation.

For the test of the Group Gripper I selected two .45 auto pistols. The first was a .45 Colt Combat Commander. The steel frame Com-

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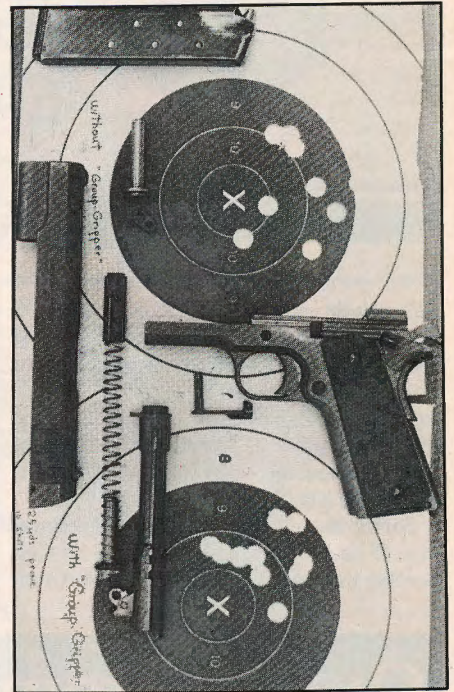
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manders do not have much of a reputation for fine accuracy and overall performance of these pistols is rather spartan at the best. Installing the Group Gripper in the test did indeed improve the accuracy potential. The test Combat Commander was borrowed from a shooting friend and already had high fixed sights and a trigger job. The groups fired with the "Group Gripper" were an improvement, but only slightly. Next I chose my oldest clanky .45 auto. It happens to be an old (1914 production) 1911 GI issue pistol sold by the DCM years ago.



After installing the Group Gripper, you should fire at least 75 to 100 rounds through your pistol to allow for the parts to seat and mate surfaces. Once the shoot-in period is complete, then serious testing for accuracy can begin. I fired a couple boxes of hardball ammo for the seating period, then settled down to my favorite IPSC practice load of a 200 grain H&G No. 68 bullet on top of 5.7 grains of WW 231 ball powder. A series of ten shot groups were fired and the results proved that an increase in accuracy performance was noticeable. I have continued to shoot this old 1911 pistol with the Group Gripper installed and regardless of the ammo used, overall group size is reduced. Reliability has not been affected. I was concerned about the effect of dirt and the presence of crud in the locking recesses of the slide. If these areas were fouled enough to cause the Group Gripper to fail in the realignment of the barrel to the lockup each time, then accuracy in group size may result. After using over 600 rounds of various reloads, no affect on the group size or barrel lockup seems evident. Overall, the Wilson Group Gripper offers an excellent and inexpensive alternative to the full house accuracy job. For the combat or practical shooters, the Group Gripper is a very good choice in today's heavily promoted .45 auto accessory market.



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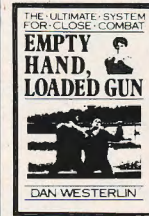


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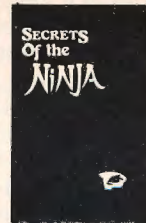
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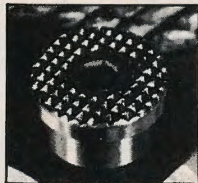
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**SPEED SHOOTING**

Continued from page 20

matches, practical shooters have been left in the cold. Even many of the major gun manufacturers have shied away from supporting IPSC, mainly objecting to IPSC's use of the humanoid "Milpark" target. The Bianchi Cup, in fact, uses a tombstone-shaped target, more or less affectionately dubbed "R2-D2," to get around that barrier.

"Here we're shooting either round or rectangular plates, neither people nor animals," Rogers says. "It's more like trap shooting."

Already several of the major gun manufacturers have shown an interest in this newest target game, and Rogers anticipates even more interest once the WSSA becomes solidly established.

He is also emphatic that the WSSA was not meant to either replace or compete with IPSC—"We think it should be a good marriage"—but that the new courses had the advantages of being slightly easier to administer, score and classify shooters.

A national classification system has been an elusive goal for practical shooting.

"When my Florida club first went out to shoot with the Southwest Pistol League," Rogers remembers, "Their 'C' shooters could eat up our 'A' shooters. They'd been doing it a lot longer and had a lot more practice."

The inaugural match for this newest handgun sport was held early in March in Jacksonville, Florida, the home of Rogers' Holsters. There were two matches—Five To Go, with five plates at a maximum distance of 18 yards, and Outer Limits, featuring 12-inch plates at 25 yards and 18 by 24-inch metal rectangles at 40 yards. The first match was run five times, the second four, with the worst time tossed out. Perhaps not surprisingly, Rogers won with his compensated .45 auto, but hot on his heels was Florida shooter Cooper White with a revolver.

In fact, some shooters were already watching the new sport with an eye toward a whole new category of "gadget guns." Since the only "power factor" is whether the plate falls, and the holster rule is fairly liberal—the holster must retain the gun safely during a five-yard run and a jump over an 18-inch obstacle, among other rules—a whole new "plate gun" might just grow up.

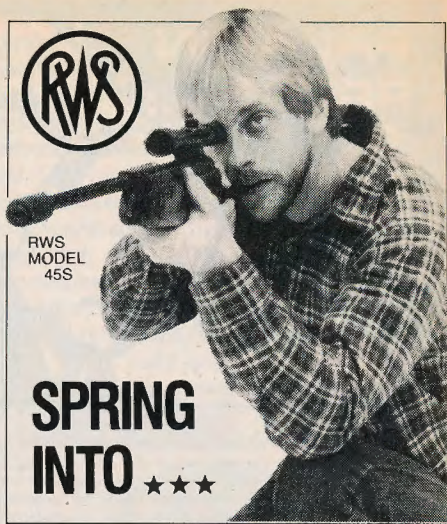
"If the rules ever change so all you have to do is hit a plate, sure you'll see a new breed of trick guns," Rogers says. "But as long as you've got to knock that plate down, I don't think so. I think you'll see mostly the same guns you see in IPSC competition.

"Besides," he adds, "what we're still talking about here is teaching the basics."

Clubs interested in getting started with the WSSA should send \$1.00 for full details to: WSSA, P.O. Box 8251, La Crescenta, CA 91214.



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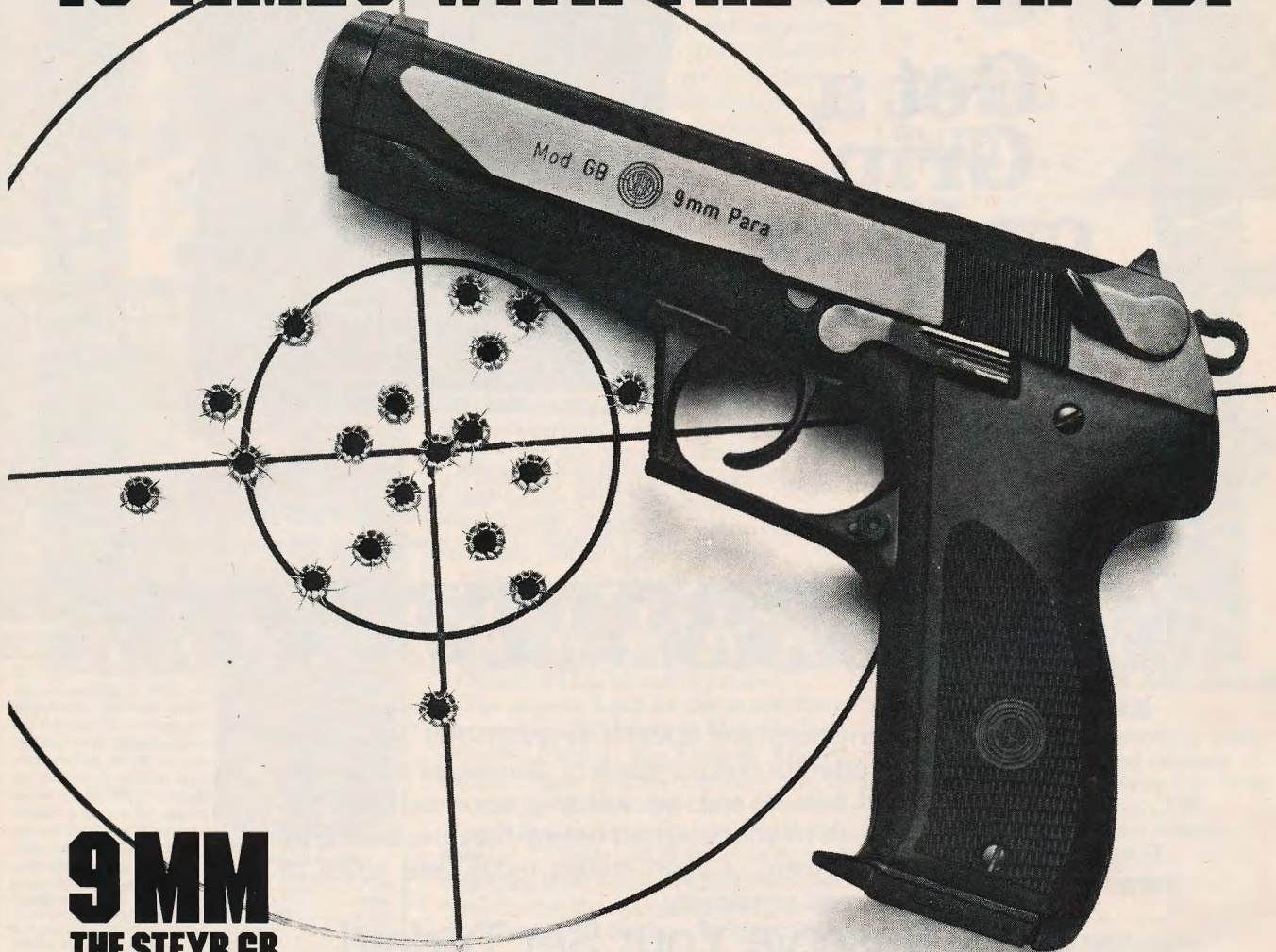
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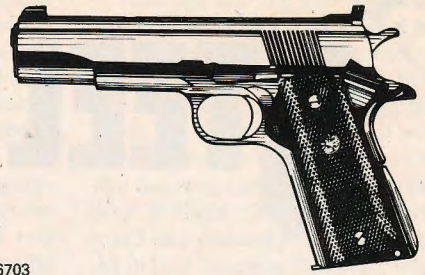


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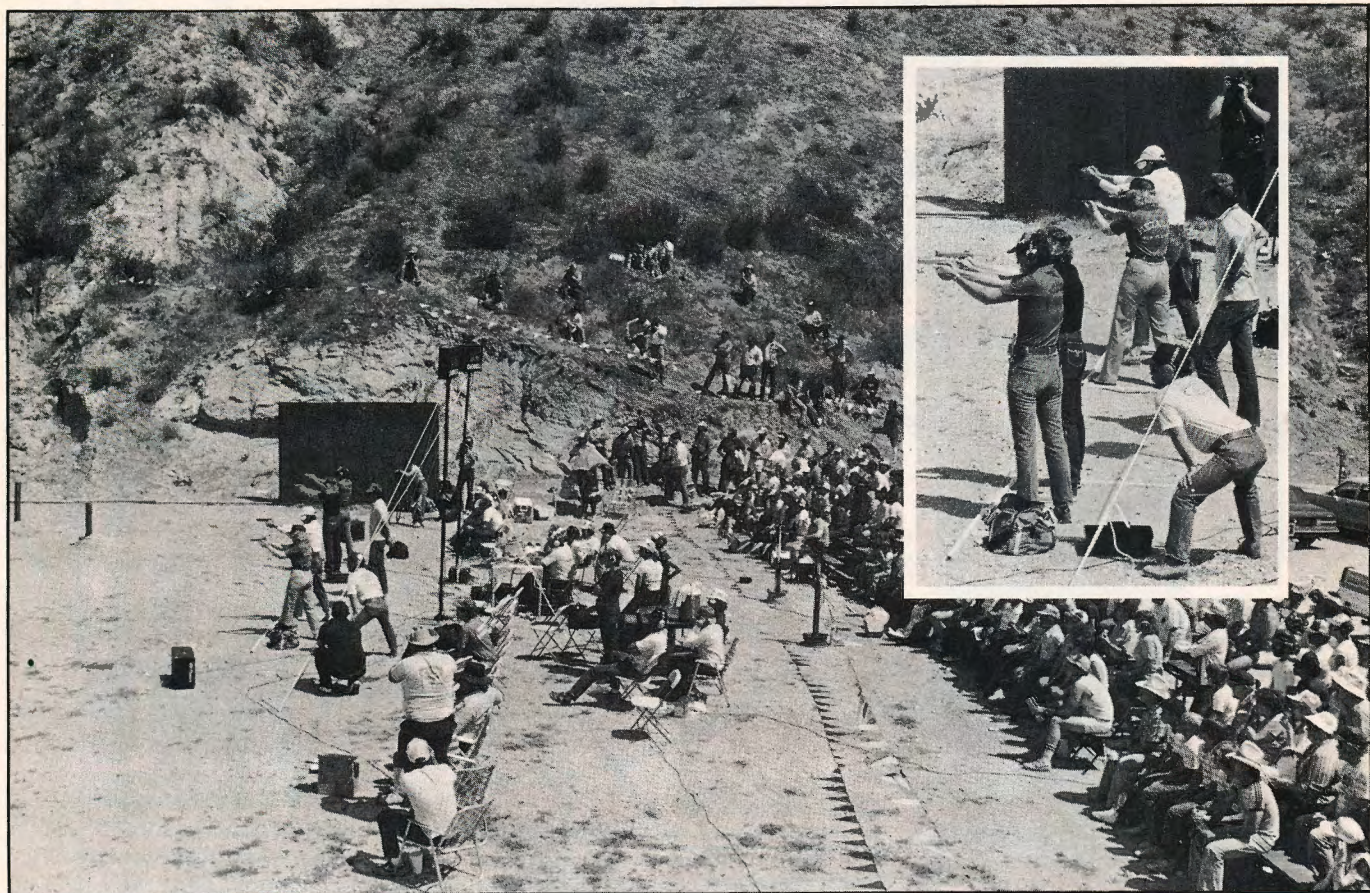


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# STEEL CHALLENGE 1984



The gals did some amazing shooting. Inset shows Christie Rogers, Jo Ann Hall, Lee Cole and Linda Zubiena in shoot-off.

By Fred Romero

To aficionados of handgunning, the name Ed McGivern should ring a bell. In his day, Ed was the fastest man alive with a gun. With incredible regularity he could fire six shots faster and more accurately than anyone ever thought possible. When McGivern passed away, many felt that the world has seen the last of the "fast and fancy" shooters. That was, of course, before the Steel Challenge came onto the scene.

The Steel Challenge, also known as the World Speed Shooting Championships, was started four years ago by Mike Fichman and Mike Dalton, two well known shooters from the Southwest Pistol League. The idea behind the match, according to Fichman,

*The wind blew and the dust flew, and Nick Pruitt emerged the winner in this classic speed shooting championship.*

was to offer the serious combat shooter a challenging format that would appeal to shooters from other disciplines as well.

Taking the example established by the popular Falling Plate Event of the Bianchi Cup, metal targets were selected for the Steel Challenge over the more traditional and sometimes controversial "humanoid" type targets generally associated with combat matches. What came out was a course of fire that utilized all metal targets and emphasized speed as well as accuracy; a winning combination with professional shooters and spectators.

In mid-April 1984, two hundred and fifty-three of the fastest shooters in the country gathered at Wes Thompson's Juniper Tree Rifle Range in Canyon Country, California for the fourth annual World Speed Shooting





NYLLE LEATHAM PHOTO

**Rob Leatham on Double Trouble.**

Championships. Every participant paid \$150 in advance to fire five separate courses, each one geared to test the human limits of speed. As if the pressure of the match wasn't enough, competitors at this year's event also had to cope with severe conditions of sun, heat and blowing dust. Even Mother Nature was doing her best to make sure that nobody got any "gimmies" on the firing line.

In spite of the grueling weather, magnificent scores were fired by many shooters who jockeyed for position during the first two days of competition. Each event became more important to the leaders as the race for number one narrowed down to a small handful of familiar names. Nick Pruitt and Rob Leatham left each other no room for error throughout the five events. Knowing full well that any small miscalculation would result in disaster (mere hundredths of a second can mean the difference between winning and losing), they went into their final events neck and neck.

Leatham was the dominant shooter in both the Flying M and the Speed Option. In Double Trouble and Five To Go the gap was almost too close to call, but Pruitt made up some ground. The deciding factor was the

infamous Outer Limits; Pruitt finished a full four and half seconds in front of Leatham.

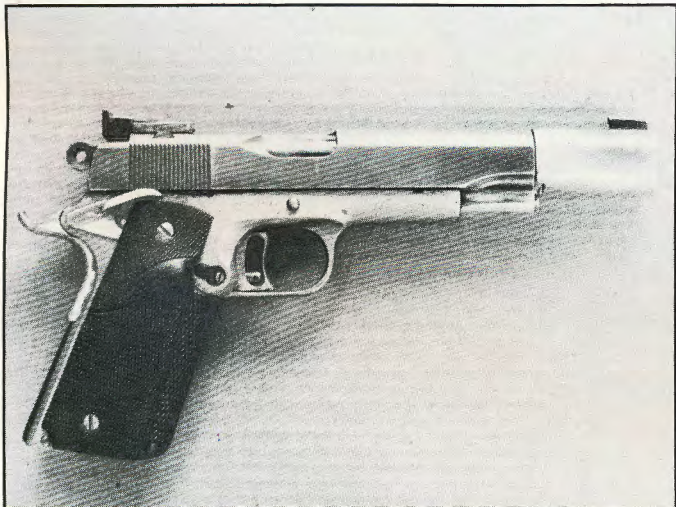
Although the "big guns" all had their ups and downs, there were a lot of small success stories and heart-breakers going on throughout the match. If you stopped long enough to listen, many shooters were more than willing to tell you about the "almost, if and maybes" they suffered through. The Steel Challenge is like that, you can be on top one minute, and after a slight hitch in your performance, you'll find yourself on the bottom looking up. As in past matches, the spoils went to those who maintained their composure under pressure and fired with *consistency*.

Considering what the match represents, and the caliber of the shooters involved, Ed McGivern would no doubt give his nod of approval to the Steel Challenge.

Next year, the match will be moved to a different location. Fichman told us that because of the encroachment of civilization on the present shooting site, steps have been taken to find a more suitable range for 1985. Anyone interested in obtaining more information about the match can write to: The Steel Challenge, Dept AH, P.O. Box 8521, La Crescenta, CA 91214.

*Continued next page*

## WINNING GUNS



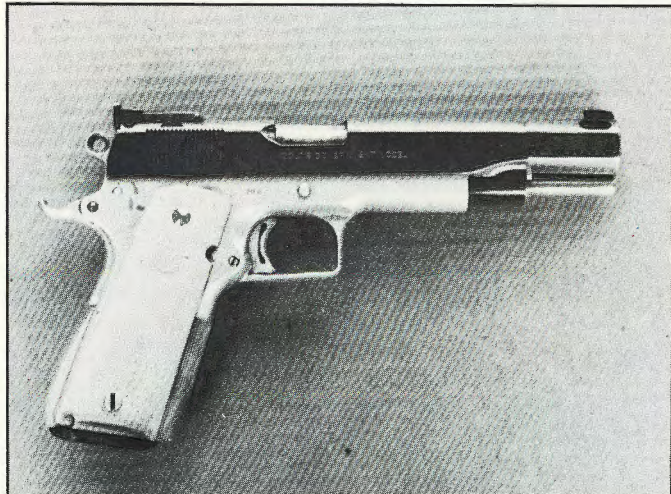
**Nick Pruitt's .45 built by Bill Donovan on Gold Cup.**



**J. Bartell's .45; by Jim Boland with Wilson comp.**

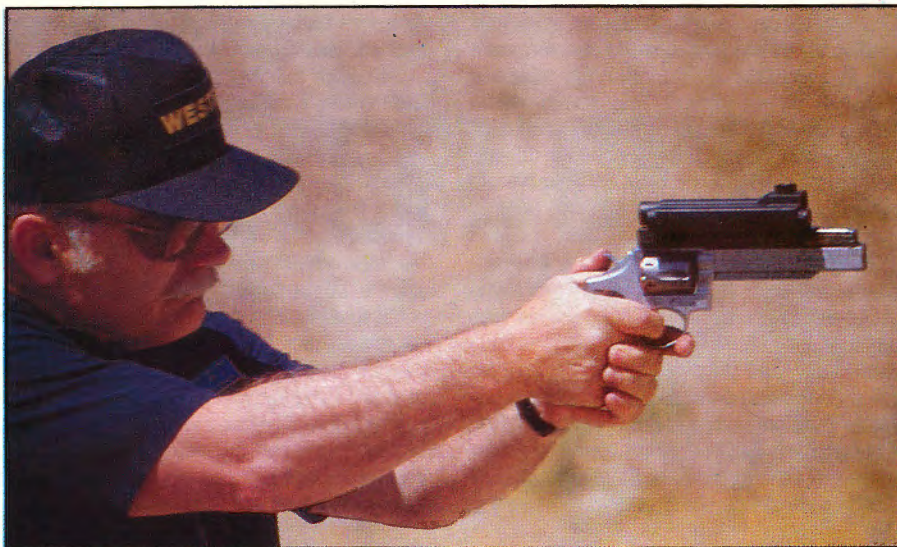


**Rob Leatham's .38 Super put together by Bill Wilson.**



**Lee Cole, top woman, used this Watson .45 with comp.**





Usher used a J. Williams M-10 to win Top Revolver.

NYLE LEATHAM PHOTO



Match winner, Nick Pruitt, right, with Rob Leatham.

NYLE LEATHAM PHOTO

## NICK PRUITT — PROFILE OF A CHAMPION

If you had to pick someone who looks like a winner, Nick Pruitt fits the bill. A resident of Carlsbad, California, Nick is a quiet individual who rarely seems to make his presence known, except, of course, when he's on the firing range.

During the Steel Challenge, we had a chance to talk to Nick about his equipment and his thoughts on shooting. Here are some of his comments:

**Q:** Nick, what kind of gun did you bring for this match?

**A:** I'm using a .45 Auto built on a Gold Cup frame by Bill Donovan. It has a Safari grip safety, a Wilson combat hammer, an extended magazine release, a Swenson ambidextrous safety, a flat main-spring housing, Pachmayr grips and Bo-Mar sights. It also has a threaded barrel weight on the six-inch Bar-Sto barrel.

**Q:** What about your ammo?

**A:** For this match I'm using a 200 gr.

*bullet made from a H&G #68 mould loaded on top of 4.0 grs. of Red Dot powder. I like to use once fired military brass and either Federal or Winchester primers.*

**Q:** What kind of leather do you use?

**A:** All my leather is made by Gordon Davis, I wouldn't use anything else.

**Q:** Can you tell us a little about your practice schedule?

**A:** I like to practice a little bit here and there throughout the year, but I really get hot just before a match. If a big match is coming up, I'll shoot maybe three times a week, about a thousands rounds a week total.

**Q:** What do you think about when you shoot?

**A:** I generally try and think about the basics, being in control is what's important to me. I know that if I don't go any faster than what I can control I'll be all right.



## THE WINNERS ARE . . .

### Individual

Match Winner: Nick Pruitt (CA) 60.45 secs

Second Place

Overall: Rob Leatham (AZ) 6.44 secs

Third Place

Overall: Brian Enos (AZ) 65.27 secs

Fourth Place: Rick Castelow (TN) 67.84 secs

Fifth Place: J. Michael Plaxco (AR) 67.85

Sixth Place: Tom Campbell (MA) 67.94

Seventh Place: John Shaw (TN) 68.15 secs

Eighth Place: John Dixon (TX) 68.43 secs

Ninth Place: Ilan Fersht (CA) 69.06 secs

Tenth Place: J. Bartell (CA) 70.02 secs

### Colt Flying M

First: Rob Leatham (AZ) 9.70 secs

Second: Dave Gentzvein (CA) 9.72 secs

Third: Joe Gaines (CA) 10.09 secs

### Detonics Speed Option

First: Stewart Wilson (CA) 7.26 secs

Second: John Shaw (TN) 7.36 secs

Third: Rick Castelow (TN) 7.56 secs

### Randall Double Trouble

First: Eugene Burgher (CO) 10.04 secs

Second: Nick Pruitt (CA) 10.08 secs

Third: John Dixon (TX) 10.26 secs

### Rogers Five To Go

First: Brian Enos (AZ) 13.37 secs

Second: J. Bartell (CA) 13.85 secs

Third: John Sayle (OH) 14.37 secs

### Aimpoint Outer Limits

First: Rick Castelow (TN) 16.77 secs

Second: Nick Pruitt (CA) 17.33 secs

Third: Lee Souter (AZ) 18.34 secs

### Top Woman

First: Lee Cole (AR) 89.98 secs

Second: Linda Zubiena (CA) 91.73 secs

Third: Jo Ann Hall (TX) 99.40 secs

### Top Cop

Mark Moore (GA) 78.73 secs

### Top Revolver

First: Jerry Usher (CA) 71.70 secs

Second: Alan Jenkins (CA) 79.43 secs

Third: John Pride (CA) 94.74 secs

### Top International

First: Joe Mitchell (Canada) 88.50 secs

Second: Nick Alexakos (Canada) 110.67 secs

Third: Alain Joly (France) 150.73

### Four-Man Team

First: Davis Leather — Pruitt, Bartell, Neal and Liebenberg (CA) 283.31 secs

Second: Arkansas Combat — Plaxco, Wilson, Carter and Cole (AR) 285.82 secs

Third: Arizona Hosemasters — Leatham, Enos, Souter and Henry (AZ) 288.30 sec

### Two-Woman Team

Winner: Linda Zubiena and Joanna Fichman

### Team vs Team

First: Mickey Fowler and Bill Wilson

Second: Brian Enos and Rick Castelow

Third: Jim Zubiena and Ross Carter

### Woman's Team vs Team

Winner: Linda Zubiena and Lee Cole



# SCI 1984

Each year the Safari Club International hosts a convention of hunters. There are exhibits, presentations, speeches, and all of the activities associated with a meeting of hunters from around the world.

As an added attraction, SCI auctions off a wealth of items to raise funds for its many educational and conservation efforts. Jewelry, furs, hunts and custom guns are offered; they are usually of the highest quality, and bring prices from several hundred dollars to many thousands of dollars.

The handgun, SCI 1984 shown here, is a highly customized Thompson Contender; the result of the combined resources of Thompson Center, SSK Industries and

*One of a kind handgun brings \$4,400 in auction to benefit Safari Club International's many educational and conservation activities.*

engraver Jim Riggs. The hammer fell at \$4,400 for SCI 1984.

The frame is serial numbered SCI 1984. The sides of the frame do not have the usual T/C etching; selection of a frame of this type is a difficult task at T/C and is rarely done—usually only for some worthy cause.

The barrel is a custom job by SSK Industries (Rt. 1, Della Drive, Bloomingdale, OH 43910) in .375 JDJ caliber; an Arrestor provides recoil and muzzle climb reduction.

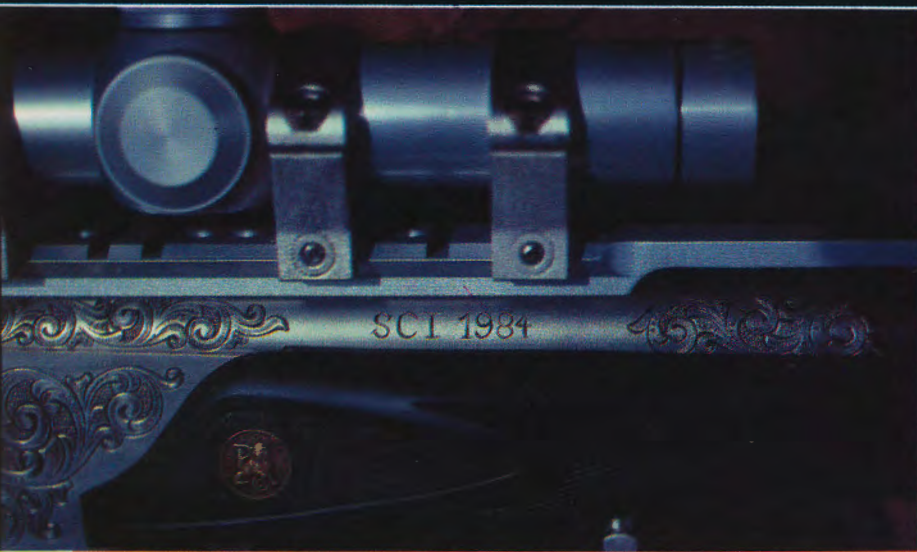
The full length vent rib scope base is a T'SOB by SSK which securely and elegantly holds a Leupold M-8 2X Silver Scope.

Grips and forend are from Pachmayr, with stainless studs and plated sling swivels by SSK.

Of great importance to a gun of this type are cosmetics. Master engraver Jim Riggs (206 Azalea Trail, Boerne, TX 78006) was selected to provide the attractive engraving and his unique antique finish to add the glamor to this unique handgun.

SCI 1984 is now owned by Derril Lamb. As a one-of-a-kind work of art, its value should increase at a high rate.

SCI 1983 was also a custom T/C and is owned by rock star Ted Nugent, who is an avid handgunner. SCI 1985 is now under construction, and its custom features, construction and adornment should once again make it a highlight of the Safari Club International convention in Las Vegas—a fitting tribute to the handgun as a popular tool of the hunter.





# Enter The AGNER

*This Danish competition .22 is all stainless, sleek, safe, and innovative in design*

*By Bruce Thorstad*

Ask just about any firearms fancier to name the top gun-making nations and he'll probably first mention the U.S.A. Our magic names of Colt, Remington, Smith & Wesson, Winchester and now Ruger read like a Who's Who of great gun labels. Germany, with its Mauser, Luger and Walther marques, easily comes second. After these come Great Britain, then probably Italy and Spain, followed by a gaggle of other European countries. Denmark, that snug kingdom by the Baltic, appears very late on this list—if at all. Little Denmark is known more for its exports of dairy products and good beer than for its firearms.

That fact didn't stop designer Bent Agner and the Danish firm Saxhøj Products from designing and bringing to market a remarkable .22 match autopistol with features that are sure to have an impact on future designs of other companies. Though the Saxhøj firm works primarily on contract to the Danish government and they're not known for sporting guns, the Agner M80 has made a hit in Europe; three European shooters' magazines have already featured the gun on their covers. Now, through an exclusive arrangement with Beeman Precision Arms Company, of San Rafael, California, the pistol—as the Beeman/Agner M80—is coming to our shores.

The first thing you notice about the Beeman/Agner, even before picking it up, is that this is one attractive firearm. In magazine articles, a firearm's looks are seldom given more than a quick once-over. Yet, I suspect looks are more responsible for the success or failure of a new gun than most of us think. The Colt Single Action Army, the lever action Winchesters, the Luger, certain big game rifles like the Ruger M-77 Classic—you can pick your



**Muzzle flip is reduced with shallow receiver and low bore line.**

own favorites, but each of these handsome arms has a "rightness" to its looks, a feeling of all parts in harmony, that makes it, even without embellishment, an object of beauty. Full-blown target arms seldom have that sort of esthetic balance. Since everything serves one aim—accuracy—the match arm's lines are inevitably cluttered with butthooks, palm rests, orthopedic grips, muzzle weights and other gadgetry designed to allow the shooter to wring the last *nth* of accuracy from the weapon.

The Beeman/Agner, though, has "rightness" of design to burn. Besides elegance of line, exterior finish here is first-rate, with a pleasing contrast between polished and matte parts. The adjustable target-style grips are of a light-colored French Walnut with a clear oil finish that enhances both the shape and grain of the wood. To American eyes, the 70-degree grip angle,

an echo of the familiar Colt .45 auto, is also just right. The result, despite having no engraving, precious metal inlays or other ornamentation, is simply one of the best looking arms you've ever laid eyes on.

Construction of the Beeman/Agner is stainless steel throughout. Stainless makes sense in a service or hunting arm, but what good is it, we wondered, in a gun likely to be toted in a Pachmayr pistol box? To answer that, we must revise our ideas about the utility of stainless steel. Building a highly civilized and indoorsy match pistol like the Beeman/Agner in stainless is merely a sign that the material has *arrived* as a gunmaker's medium. The technology of working in stainless has progressed to the point where anything that can be done in carbon steel can be done in stainless. Whatever his other reasons, designer Bent Agner apparently saw stainless





SAVION A100

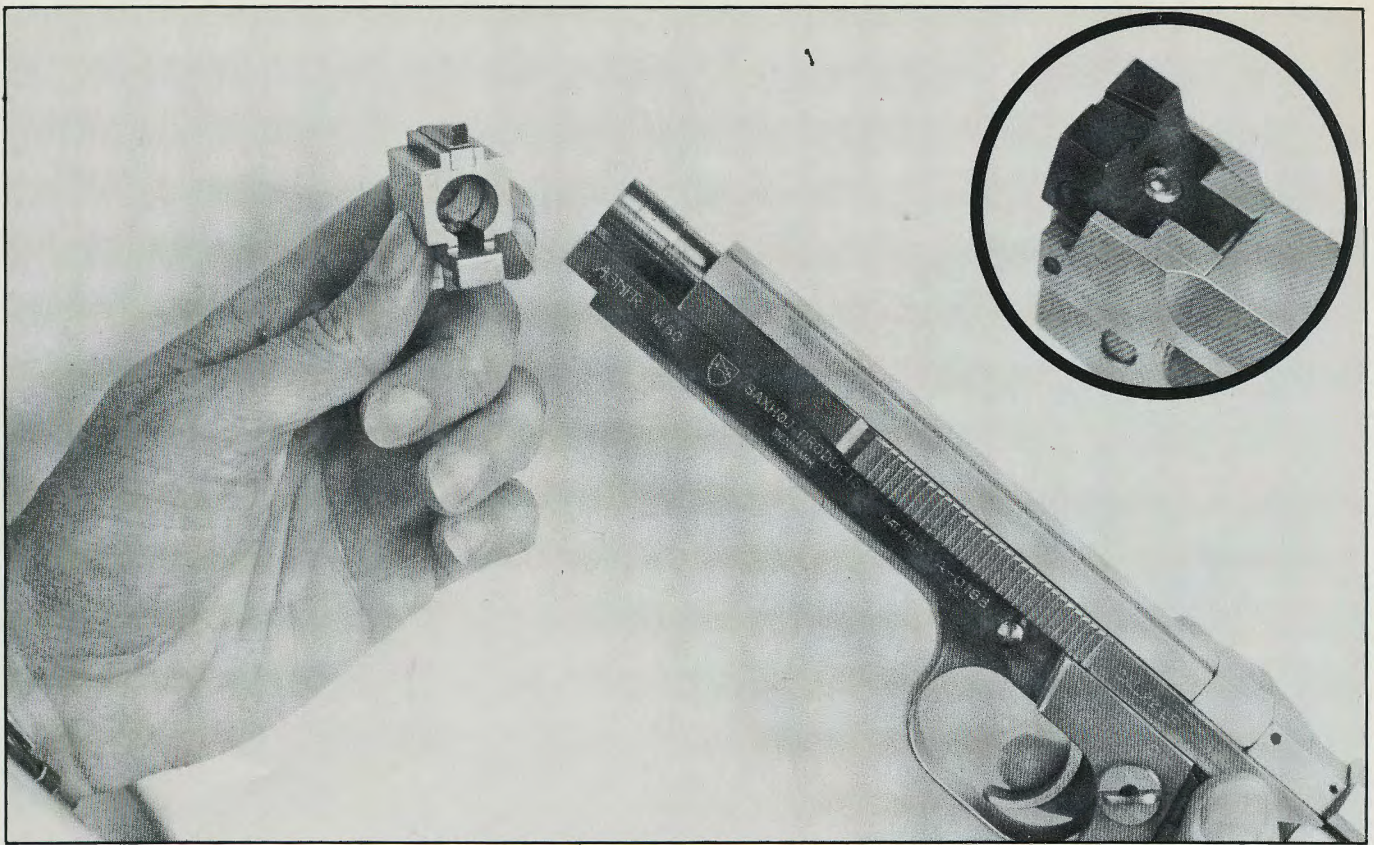
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CAL. 22 LR







**Front sight/muzzle weight unit is easily removed. Inset shows the rear sight, adjustable for windage and elevation. Author found the clicks all but inaudible.**

as the steel of the future and elected to go with it. The sheer beauty of the material certainly helps make this Scandinavian blonde even more attractive.

Besides being a handsome number, what sort of pistol is the Beeman/Agner? It's a five-shot, target semi-auto with a barrel length of just a hair under six inches. Weight with the factory stocks is 38.4 ounces and the gun measures 9½ inches overall. In operation, it's a straight blow-back design—but with a difference. On most autos, the slide wraps over the barrel, enclosing it on both sides and the top. Here, the slide is trough-shaped, sliding *under* the barrel so that its cycling won't add to the recoil sensation upon firing. Thus, in important rapid fire stages, muzzle rise is kept to a minimum.

To minimize tremors in one-handed shooting, the bullseye shooter wants the boreline and line of sight to be as close over his hand as possible. Grip the Beeman/Agner and extend your trigger finger forward along the frame. You'll see that your finger lies parallel to the bore axis and less than an inch below it. This is a function of a very shallow receiver, which contributes both to low muzzle flip and to the gun's slim good looks.

Most match shooters dryfire more than they fire live ammunition. High on the left side of the Beeman/Agner's frame, about where you'll find the slide safety on a conventional autopistol, is a handy dryfire feature. Cock this lever without cycling the action and you can dryfire with the same trigger action and letoff as you'll feel in

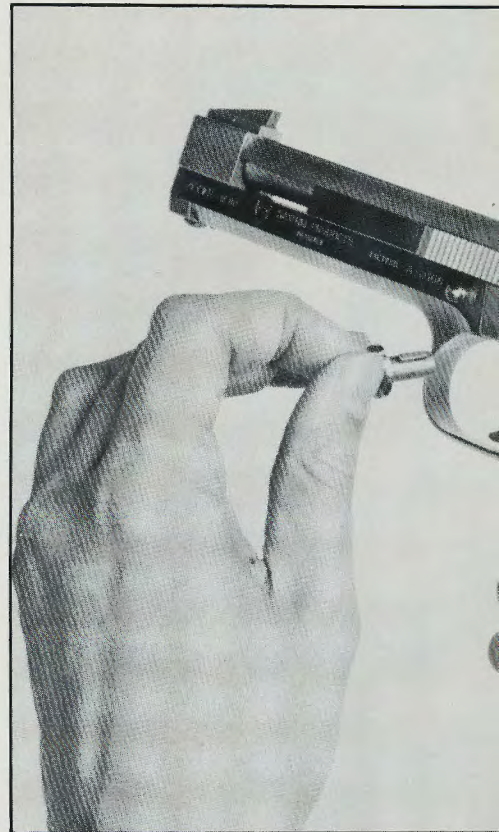
normal shooting. Further, the dryfire lever doubles as a cocking indicator.

The multi-function safety is roughly where the magazine release would be on a .45 auto and similar pistols—but again, there's a difference. Press this button to release the magazine, *or* rotate it to "F" for fire, to "S" for safety, *or* to the twelve o'clock "O" and the gun is completely locked up and cannot be either fired or cycled. Best of all, once turned to the lock position, the safety button itself pops out into your hand and reveals its second identity as a detachable locking key. Drop this key into your pocket or lock it away in a drawer with the confidence that without it no one can operate the Beeman/Agner M80 but you.

With manufacturers increasingly targeted for liability suits, this locking key feature makes sense. Virtually every shooter I showed the gun to seemed to recognize instinctively that here is a sound idea likely to be much imitated. The safety key from one Beeman/Agner will fit all others, of course, but what are the chances that your over-inquisitive kids will have access to a spare Beeman/Agner?

More revolutionary features? Remove the left grip panel with one of three furnished allen wrenches and the trigger sear, mainspring and a range of trigger adjustments are exposed. The trigger pull weight may be quickly adjusted by rotating a knurled adjusting wheel to its maximum or minimum position or to any point between. In addition, the *range* of trigger weights over which this adjusting wheel

can be operated may itself be reset lighter and heavier to conform variously with trigger pull requirements of NRA or International Shooting Union (ISU) matches. With the grip panel removed, the polished bearing surfaces of the sear are also fully





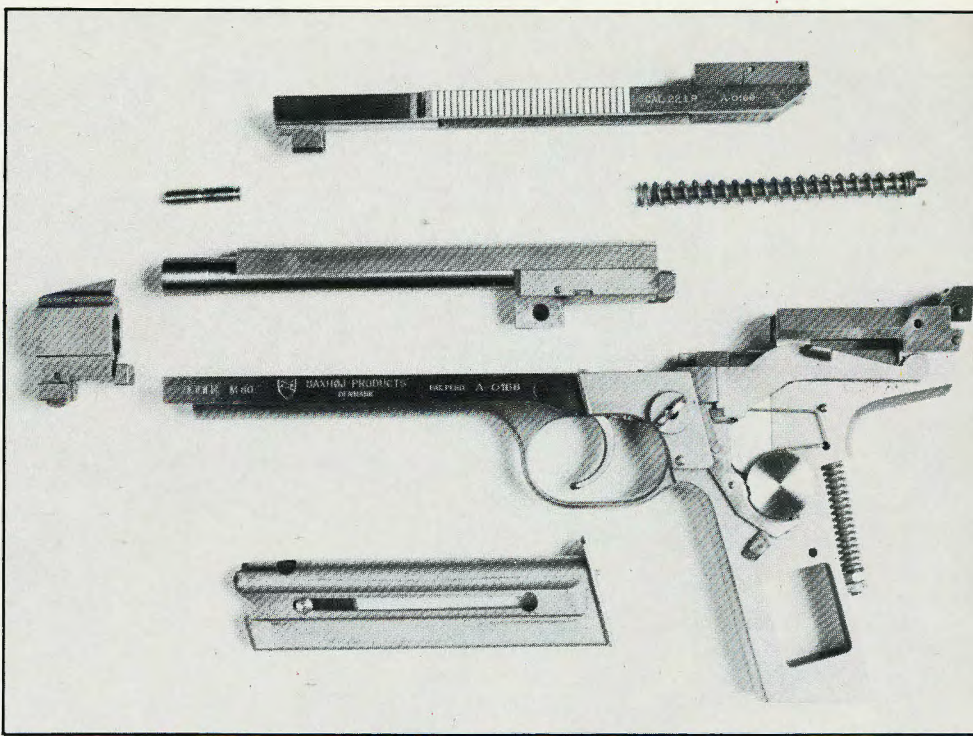
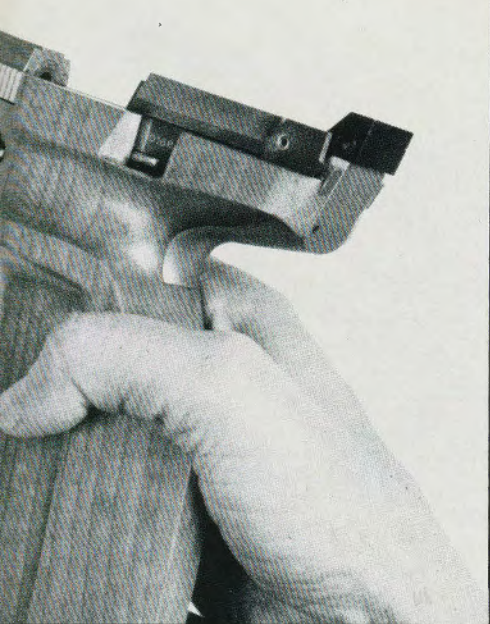
visible. The trigger pull itself is of the two-stage variety common to European match pistols. At the beginning of the pull some trigger takeup is felt, followed by an ultracrisp "surprise break" final let-off. An adjustment is provided on the trigger guard for limiting overtravel.

Takedown is also unconventional. Start by removing a pair of tiny allen screws on the bottom of the muzzle weight/front sight unit that surrounds the muzzle. Then, while pressing on the knurled release button located between these screws, loosen and slide forward the muzzle weight until it comes free. Actually, simply drawing back the slide and letting it spring forward a time or two while you press the button does the work for you. Now, push out the through-pin located above and forward of the trigger and the entire barrel/slide and slide spring assembly slips out of the frame. Tolerances here are close, so go easy and don't force anything. Finally, the slide spring and guide rod is removed from its retaining lug and the assembly can be separated into component parts of slide, barrel assembly and the spring and its guide rod.

This is as far as takedown needs to go for normal upkeep, since the bore may now be cleaned from the chamber end and virtually all parts are accessible. While the gun is disassembled, look into the receiver frame and note the adjustment provided for moving the trigger fore and aft within the trigger guard to compensate for varying tastes and needs in trigger reach. A nice touch.

At the range, the Beeman/Agner performed well with a variety of .22 LR

**The unique safety key is built into the Agner; it prevents unauthorized persons from firing or cycling the gun.**



**Field stripped, the action shows simplicity of parts and accessibility of sear and mainspring. Wheel in upper portion of frame is adjustment for trigger weight.**

ammo. I would have liked to have set a pistol of this quality into a Ransom machine rest to test its real potential, but machine rest grip blanks were unavailable and would have required custom work. Second best was shooting the Agner off sandbags; this I did at 50 yards with the trigger tuned down to perhaps half a pound. For this kind of shooting, the factory-furnished splotch of red enamel on the front sight was of no help whatsoever, and smoking the sight with a carbide sight blacker would have risked scorching the paint.

Surprisingly, the high velocity ammo, Federal Hi-Power solids, turned in the best performance, with five-shot groups averaging 2.23" at 50 yards. CCI Mini-Group came in only slightly worse at 2.27". For Remington Target, the average was 3" even, while Federal Silhouette spread out to a 4.39" average. As with any .22, it will pay you to carefully benchrest each gun to determine its ammo preferences.

European shooters, or anyone familiar with ISU target events, will recognize the Beeman/Agner as conforming to the requirements for "standard pistol." For those who aren't international match shooters—and most of us aren't—the ISU Standard Pistol match is similar to the NRA's National Match Course, including slow, timed and rapid fire stages. The ISU event, however, is more demanding, with smaller scoring rings and distances up to 50 meters. Also, in the timed and rapid fire stages, shooters are required to start each stage with the gun arm held no higher than a 45-degree angle to the target.

In short, the ISU Standard Pistol match is tougher than our National Match Course, and throwing the Beeman/Agner

M80 into standard pistol competition is to put it up against some pretty sophisticated arms, including the Walther GSP, the FAS 602, the Hammerli Standard and the Hi-Standard 10-X. Since I'm not as familiar with this level of match hardware as I'd like, I brought the Beeman/Agner to a friend, Georg Teepe, a bullseye shooter who now concentrates exclusively on the International-style events. In a few minutes, Georg had the innards of various Hammerlis, Walthers and the Beeman/Agner spread out on his kitchen table where we could compare features side by side. In most respects, the new pistol stands up well against these more mature designs. In two areas, though, the most demanding match shooters may have reservations.

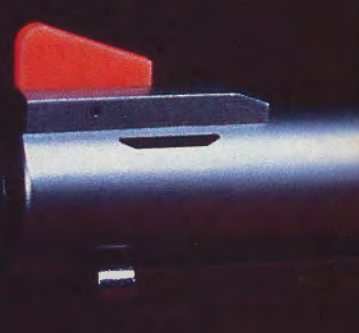
Sights on the Beeman/Agner are well integrated into the pistol's sleek lines. The front blade is pinned in place and undercut to eliminate glare, but instead of being blued, it's of the same matte stainless as many other parts. Even odder (for a match pistol) is the spot of red enamel on the front sight's business plane. While red or other colored front sights are well-accepted by field shooters, bullseye marksmen will prefer a coal-black sight picture.

The rear sight is black anodized alloy and is adjustable for windage and elevation using an allen wrench supplied with the gun. Elevation clicks, however, were not only inaudible, they were totally undetectable, indicating that the sight's internal ball/detent arrangement is not doing its job. Without index marks or some other means, a shooter is thus left with no quick, sure means of going from, say, a zero for a 50-foot indoor match to a zero for a 50-meter outdoor one. Nor can two shooters

*Continued on page 51*



# WIN THIS CUSTOM from Magnum Sales Ltd.



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**SAMPLE**



# 'PREDATOR'





# GAMMON I & GAMMON II

## AND LOOKING AHEAD AT A NEW SUPER .38 CARTRIDGE

*The development of the Gammon line of competition pistols has led Charlie Kelsey to a hot new .38.*

By David M. Armstrong

The first prototype Devel Gammon made its public press debut in the Jan./Feb. 1982 issue of the *American Handgunner* after Mickey Fowler used it to win the 1981 Bianchi Cup Invitational Pistol Tournament. At that time, Devel Corporation was still heavily involved in the custom conversions of the S&W 39 and 59 auto loading pistols, and the Gammon project was just an ongoing test-bed project to see what Devel could do with the Colt .45 auto pistol.

The "Fowler Gammon" as Charlie Kelsey calls his first prototype Gammon was a radical departure from the typical IPSC competition pistol. Catching the attention of gunsmiths and shooters worldwide, this highly sophisticated customized version of the Colt Mk.IV .45 auto pistol has influenced the aesthetic appearance of many of today's match pistols. To date there have been many attempts to emulate some of the basic features of the Gammon system, but there is a fine line that separates Devel's Gammons from many of the "Gadget Guns." Not only is the Gammon functional, it is a precision tool that was engineered to win matches. The original "Fowler Gammon," (or Gammon I as I refer to Devel's prototype throughout this article) featured several innovations that set the course for Devel's new Colt .45 conversions, and ultimately the second generation Gammon II.

When considering the design of the Gammon I, Charlie Kelsey's first concern was to reduce the felt recoil and typical muzzle flip encountered when firing the .45 Colt automatic pistol. The slide was shortened and extensively lightened inside. Extra weight was added at the muzzle by attaching a stationary extension to the end of the barrel. The combination of reducing the momentum of the slide traveling back after ignition and counter-balancing the muzzle flip and recoil

with the muzzle weight was very successful. These features would be incorporated in future Devel conversion packages.

The function and reliability of the Gammon I design was tested and proven by Mickey Fowler, but Kelsey wasn't content to stop there. The Gammon I proved to be a very easy pistol to control, and Kelsey knew he could make additional improvements to the system. Shortly after the Gammon I made its debut, Kelsey stated that he did not plan to build any more pistols of this configuration. However, due to public demand and his own innovative drive, the new Gammon II project was well into production by spring of 1982.

The merits and preliminary success of the Gammon I with its lightened short slide and muzzle weight influenced the design parameters of the new Gammon II. Feeling that the felt recoil and muzzle flip could be further reduced, Charlie Kelsey, Jr. and Wilfred A. Haupthoff began work on a new recoil reducing system and compensator.

The recoil reducing system designed for Gammon II incorporates two unique devices that diminish the felt recoil. The recoil is reduced in two phases: at time of the primary ignition, and when the projectile clears the barrel. Because these two functions take place in such a short span of time, the shooter would feel this recoil as a single impulse and probably cannot distinguish one from another. By controlling and reducing the felt recoil, a quicker sight recovery is possible thus permitting the shooter to shoot "double taps" (two quick shots) with better control.

The two-piece recoil spring guide rod assembly screws together to make the guide rod for the new Gammon II. The front half of the guide rod is made from solid tungsten carbide which provides more weight than standard tool steel. A special Wolff varicoil spring is guided by the rod at the other end.



Photo sequence (top to bottom) is graphic demonstration of effect of Abater recoil device on Gammon II.



The tungsten carbide weight serves two functions: one static and the other dynamic. The additional weight was needed to replace the weight lost when the compensator was added. Theoretically, because the compensator has the same dimensions as the old muzzle weight, there was a weight loss when the vent holes were bored. The new weight reposition also places the weight at the muzzle below the centerline of the barrel giving the shooter greater stability when aiming the pistol. At the same time the cartridge is discharged, the weight, being spring loaded, tends to remain in position as the pistol moves rearward under recoil. The weight dampens the primary recoil impulse as a function of inertia to the extent of the weight of the recoil spring guide rod assembly.

The momentum of the slide traveling rearward had been reduced by reducing the weight of the slide mass; however, the shock that occurs when the slide impacts against the frame at the end of the stroke attributes to much of the recoil felt by the hand. During the early stages of the Gammon II project, several commercial shock buffers were tried, but they couldn't meet Kelsey's tough standards for reliability. With the assistance of Walt Wolff a new varicoil spring was tried with a spring steel disc washer. This unique disc spring dampens recoil, prolongs the life of the slide and frame, and has an infinite service life. Devel Corporation uses the Varicoil System in all their Colt conversions, and they offer a drop-in kit for those who are building their own match gun.

The secondary recoil damping function is a direct result of the compensator called an "Abater." This "Abater" replaced the muzzle weight on the Gammon I. Designed in similar fashion to the German MG.42 muzzle brake, the Gammon II "Abater" has proved to be functionally effective in reducing muzzle flip and recoil. Because a pistol cartridge generates relatively low pressures at time of ignition (as compared to a rifle cartridge), it was necessary to have a compensator design that reacts to the gasses over a large area; although the size of the compensator had to be small enough to not render the pistol unwieldy.

The "Abater" for the Gammon II has eight gas vent ports: four vertical angular vent ports projecting from the top and two ports on each side. The two top vertical ports at the rear have a slightly smaller diameter than the front ports. In theory, this helps compensate for the higher gas pressure created at the rear ports. The top gas vent ports reduce muzzle flip stabilizing both the twist and the rise of the muzzle. The four side vents (two on each side) redirect the gas pressure at compound angles creating counterforces that compensate for much of the rearward recoil and muzzle rise.

Having shot the new Gammon II prototype pistol many times, I knew that the designs of the "Abater" and new recoil reducing additions attributed much to making this pistol very easy to manage. However, I didn't know how much better it was over some of the



**Top to bottom: Super Gammon II in .38 Super caliber; long barrel Gammon II; short barrel II and the original Gammon I which began process of development in 1981.**

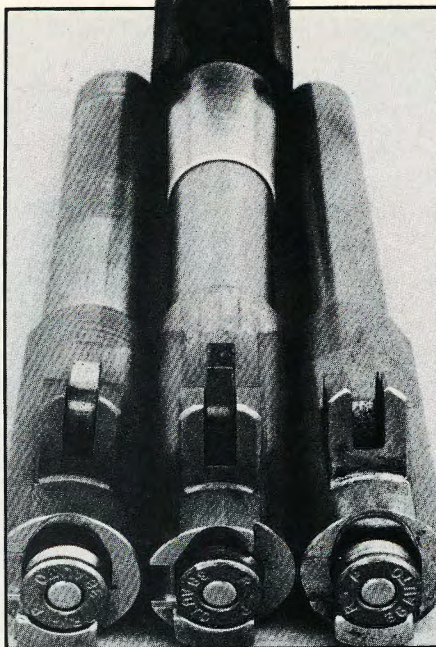


competition. Ken Hackathorn was photographed shooting Gammon II and another .45 Colt conversion with a compensator. A simple comparison of the photograph sequence shows how much more effective Devel's Gammon system is in reducing muzzle rise.

The conventional Colt-Browning barrel bushing system could not be used on the Gammon II because of the "Abater" attached at the muzzle end of the barrel. Kelsey, using a system pioneered by Jim Clark, used a tapered sleeve that is press-fitted to the barrel at the rear of the "Abater." A corresponding taper is machined into the front of the slide, then honed to mate perfectly to the barrel sleeve. The new tapered barrel bushing provides more surface area, thus improving the accuracy of the Gammon II.

Another of Charlie Kelsey's inventions that resulted from the ongoing Gammon II test and development program was the introduction of the Devel's "magazine release speed bar." Although over-size magazine releases are not new to combat shooting, Kelsey's design is unique in that it does not extend outward where it could accidentally release a magazine by snagging on the holster or the shooter's clothing. Its long horizontal design makes it easily accessible to any hand size. The magazine can be released with slight pressure from the thumb without the shooter having to change his or her grip.

All Devel designs are thoroughly field tested before being offered to the commercial market. Although some of the preliminary testing was done by Ken Hackathorn and



**L to R: std. .38 Super barrel; a prototype Gammon II; and std. .45 auto barrel. Note case is fully surrounded in the center barrel.**

Ross Seyfried, the Gammon II made its appearances throughout the IPSC circuit in the skillful hands of Chip McCormick and Mark Duncan. Having the experience of using some of the best IPSC equipment available, it wasn't any mystery to these two what they needed in a pistol to gain a competitive edge.

After they had shot at least 20,000 rounds through their Gammon II pistols, I questioned them on the guns' performance. They both rated their Gammon II test guns high in all categories: function and reliability, accuracy, balance, handling ability and overall design. For testing purposes, Devel made two different barrel length Gammons: The standard competition pistol with a 6.25" barrel, and a shortened version with a 5.5" barrel. Both Duncan and McCormick preferred the short barreled Gammon II both as an IPSC pistol and for defensive combat use.

For those who aren't in the market for a new competition pistol, Devel is marketing some of the accessories that helped make the Gammon II system successful. The Varicoil Recoil System is a drop-in kit designed to provide a softer shooting pistol that will increase its service life while dampening the "felt recoil." The kit consists of a full-length guide rod and a unique tempered steel disc spring buffer to dampen the impact of the slide against the frame. This system is almost identical in every way to that used on the prestigious Gammon II except it has a single guide rod without the additional tungsten carbide weight. The Varicoil Recoil System kit is priced at \$26.95.

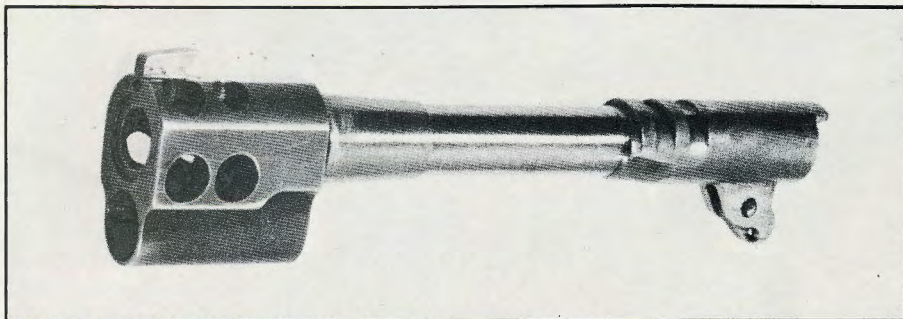
The Magazine Speed Release Package, priced at \$35.00, includes a modified grip set, speed release bar and retaining screw plus a modified magazine catch, spring and lock.

The Devel 8-Round Magazine was originally developed for the Gammon I; however, for shooters wishing to convert their existing magazines to the 8-round capacity, Devel now offers a conversion kit. The specially designed follower-spring package replaces the standard Colt components. Although less expensive than the standard \$18.95 Devel 8-Round magazine, the \$6.90 kit must be used in a Colt magazine housing that was produced to correct tolerances.

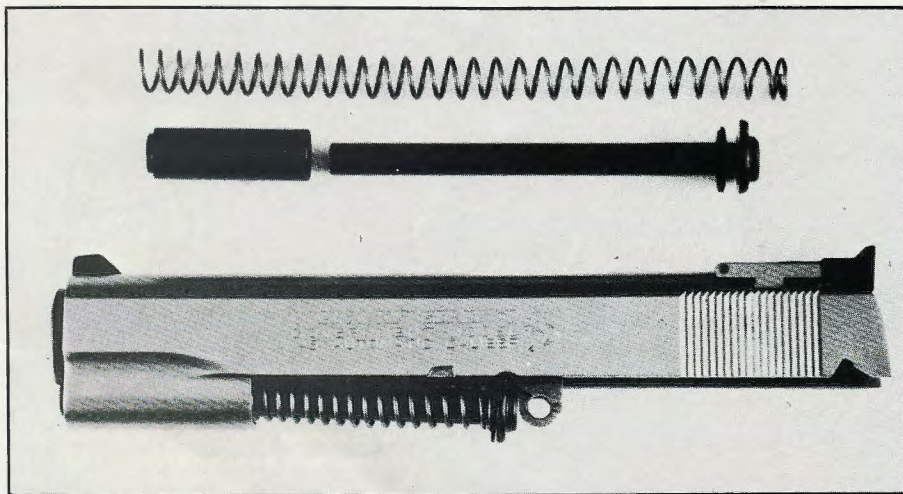
To complement competition shooting, the Gammon II 8-round magazine features a combination steel magazine weight and slam pad. The heavier steel bottom pads facilitate rapid ejection of the spent magazine. The competition magazines are furnished with an electroless nickel finish, providing smooth insertion and extraction of the magazine. The retail price of the Competition 8-Round Magazine is \$26.95.

The Gammon II in .45 ACP, the various Colt conversion services that resulted from this on-going development program and the add-on accessories have not been the end of the Gammon program. When Devel began converting Smith & Wesson's 9mm semi-auto pistols, Kelsey would defiantly defend the merits of a well-aimed 9mm bullet. However, in the years to follow, the majority of the IPSC contenders would favor the more powerful .45 ACP cartridge. Although convinced that he could not influence shooters to give up handicap points, Kelsey started on his own system that would fire a smaller projectile at a velocity that would make the IPSC major power-factor minimums.

*Continued on page 69*



**One piece Gammon II barrel with Abater installed on muzzle. Note large expansion chamber and the many angular gas deflection holes.**



**Devel Varicoil recoil system made for standard .45 Colt auto pistol.**



# Parts-Built .45— Will it Work?

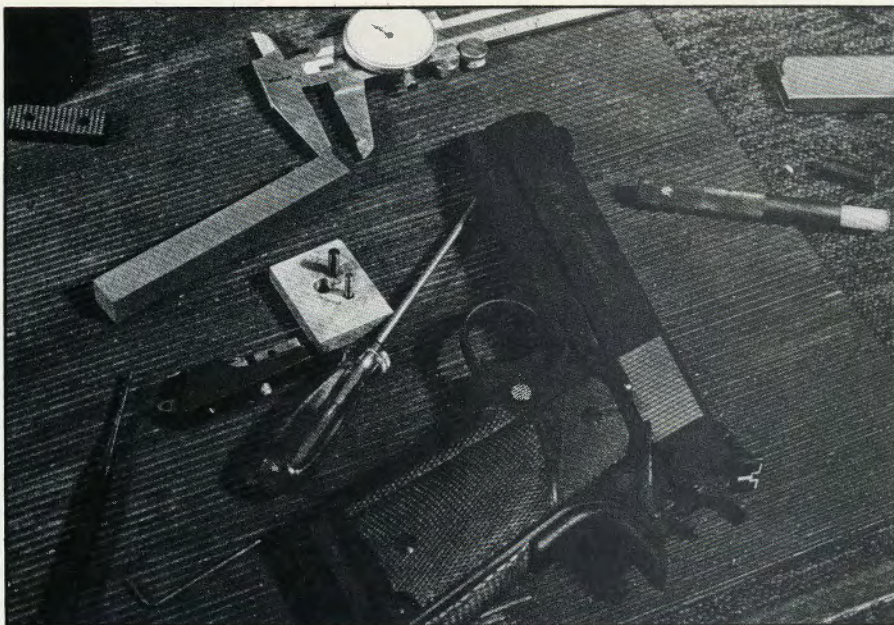
*Can a novice build a workable .45 auto from parts? Terry Hudson of Crown City Arms said yes, and asked the author to prove it.*

*By Charles E. Petty*

Nothing is as easy as it seems, and when the question of just how difficult it is to put together a workable .45 with parts came from the editor, I went to Terry Hudson of Crown City Arms with the question. His answer was direct and to the point, "Try it yourself." I wanted to find out first if I could do it, and second, what problems a beginner might have in "building" a .45 auto pistol.

Terry Hudson sent me one of their catalogs, and told me to order whatever I wanted. He assured me that there would be no special selection or treatment of my order.

Sitting down with Crown City's catalog was almost as good as Christmas, and I prepared my list to build a classy Commander-style .45. It wasn't until I began picking pieces that I remembered just how many parts there are in the gun; and this leads me to my first caution. Although I consider myself to be intimately acquainted with the .45, I managed to forget to order a grip safety. Remember too, that many of the pieces we take for granted as units are actually assemblies of several parts. The mainspring housing, for example, is actually made up of five parts and each of these must be ordered separately. When my order was finished it contained 38 items including two magazines—but minus the grip safety.



**The parts did go together, and what emerged was a working .45 auto.**

The order took about ten days, from the day I mailed it, to arrive and I was first impressed with the packaging of the many parts. Each of the small pieces was individually sealed in a plastic pouch, so that there was no way any of the little critters could get lost. It also provided easy checking against the packing list, and it was then I noticed the absence of the grip safety.

My first step, and one I strongly suggest for everyone, was to check each part for leftover manufacturing burrs, etc., that might interfere with smooth operation. Since the major parts are now made from investment castings, this is a must step, and I found a couple of little spots that needed attention. The rivets for the plunger tube protruded into the magazine well and would have interfered with the magazine.

*Continued on page 49*



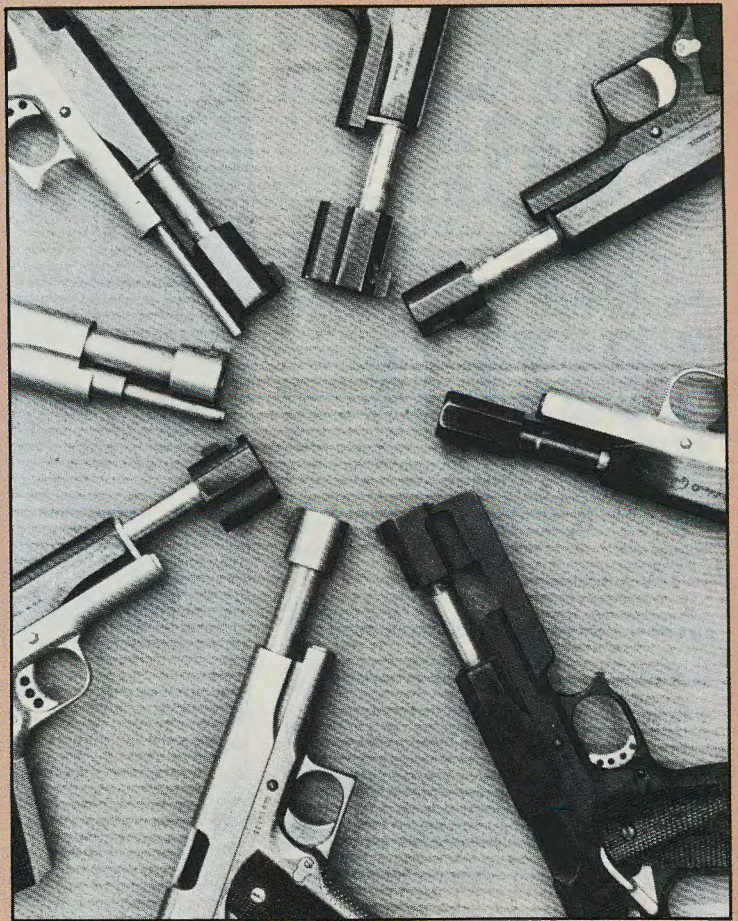
**Crown City frame and slide went together with a satisfying snugness.**



**Proof of the assembly was in the shooting, and the Crown City .45 performed flawlessly, eating up the 10 ring of a B27 police target.**



# TO COMP OR NOT TO COMP



**A selection of comps, clockwise from top; Eddie Brown Maxi-Comp; Plaxco system; Edd Clifford's; Behlert's; Clark Pin Gun; Steve Nastoff's; the Wilson Accu-Comp; Richard Watson's compensator.**

*Compensated .45s may or may not be practical, according to your point of view, but no one can deny that they're cleaning up in matches.*

**By Greg Moats**

You 'gamesmen' will do anything you can to win, won't you," he said, pointing at my compensated .45 Auto; the antagonist further insinuated that my pistol was not "street-worthy" and outside the spirit of "practical" competition. I can only stomach small amounts of sanctimonious rhetoric at one time before I reach the "fight or flight" syndrome. In this case, discretion was the better part of friendship so I walked away.

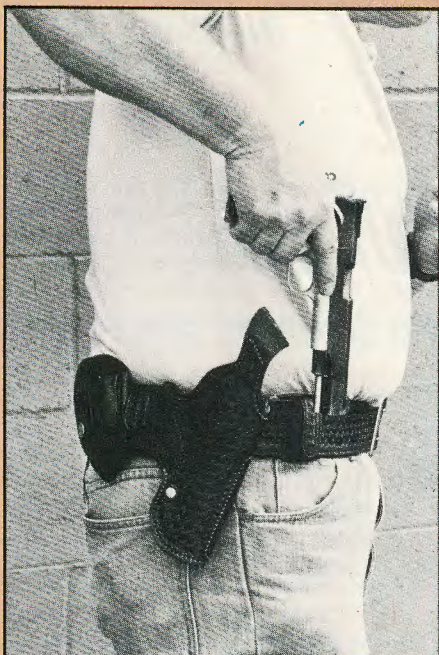
There have been times though when I've been assailed with a religious fervor, as if by "Martial-Artist-Moonies" condemning the so called "gimmick-guns" as decadent manifestations of sinful gamesmanship. Certain IPSC functionaries (ascetics at heart) have even tried to excommunicate the apostate apparatus by setting arbitrary standards as to size (the piece must fit into a box sized 225mm x 150mm x 45mm for autos, 230mm x 120mm x 45mm for revolvers); pontificating that these demonic devices in the hands of numerous competitive infidels will be a terrible witness for the sport of "practical" shooting. Trying to convert these old line zealots is, at best, frustrating; they take themselves very seriously.

Well, a "conclusion" is what you come to when you decide to stop thinking. At least



**The men behind the comp guns, left to right: Steve Nastoff; Mike Plaxco; Richard Watson; Frank Behlert; Edd Clifford; Eddie Brown.**





**Are compensated guns impractical? Not according to police officer Al Allen who carries this Watson .45.**

that's what these anti-compensator advocates, and a couple of famous gunwriters, seem to have proven. They have concluded that these devices are impractical and suitable only for punching holes in paper. They apparently have lost sight of the fact that "practical" shooting does not seek to prejudice what gear and tactics are "practical." It sets up a problem and allows the shooter the opportunity to imaginatively figure out what works best. They fear that IPSC will follow the path of PPC, ignoring the fact that the difference between IPSC and PPC is not one of gear but one of doctrine. PPC has one course of fire that is static, challenging, but attainable. IPSC events are constantly changed and very few have a maximum performance attainable (no matter how accurate you are you can always go faster). IPSC seeks to equally reward power, speed and accuracy; PPC only accuracy.

Whether the "Martial-Artist-Moonies" like it or not, compensators are here to stay. At the 1983 IPSC Nationals, over half of all 332 entrants used some type of recoil reducing device and all but two of the top sixteen shooters used compensated .45 Autos. While there is a virtual quagmire of gizmos to stick on the .45 Auto, in the sport of practical shooting there are no alibis, second chances or excuses, and only the most efficient and helpful devices remain on the competitor's pistol. If a top competitor uses something more than once, it's because it works!

Why do compensators work and what types are available? Let's take a brief look at some of the various designs that are on the market.

The first compensator to really catch on with practical shooters was built by the infamous Jimmy Clark. Originally designed for shooting bowling pins (à la the Second Chance Match), Clark's creation was christened the "Pin Gun." The Pin Gun became so



**This .45 with National Match slide sports Steve Nastoff's compensator.**

popular that the name soon became generic, representing the entire breed; the term "Pin Gun" is still frequently mis-applied to describe any number of compensating systems. In Jimmy's own words:

"In 1952 I found that the weight of the barrel affected the functioning of a .38 conversion. Making the barrel lighter helped functioning drastically. Just an ounce or two made a great difference. Putting this knowledge in reverse, we added weight to the Bowling Pin Barrel and this is the best recoil reducer we know of. The heavier barrel delays the lock time of the barrel and this in turn reduces the recoil by absorbing energy while the barrel is still locked to the slide. The slide then recoils with less speed and the felt recoil is thereby reduced."

This "added weight" takes the form of a barrel shroud that is threaded over a 6" barrel. This shroud is fitted up against the inside of the slide utilizing no barrel bushing and the

extra inch that sticks out front is fitted up against the front of the slide and esthetically given the same outside dimensions. While Jimmy will port Pin Guns, it is done only at the customer's request, his recoil reducing system is based strictly on the use of stationary weight to delay the unlocking process. Some of the top names in practical shooting use Pin Guns; John Shaw won the 1980 and 1981 IPSC Nationals using one and in this last IPSC National Match, Mickey Fowler and Mike Dalton joined Shaw in using Jimmy Clark's Compensator System.

Closely akin to the Pin Gun is Bill Wilson's Accu-Comp. In the 1983 IPSC Nationals, #1 finisher, Rob Leatham, #2 Brian Enos, #4 Bill Wilson and #7 Bill Rogers (of Rogers Holsters) all used Wilson Accu-Comps. Bill, like Jimmy, uses a barrel shroud fitted up against the inside and front of the slide, replacing the barrel bushing. But where Clark uses a long 6" barrel, Wilson uses the standard length 5" barrel and uses the extra

*Continued on page 66*



**Eddie Brown's Maxi-Comp is machined from solid 4140 tool steel.**

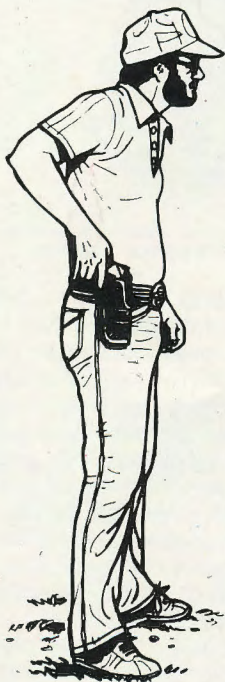


# MASTER TIPS

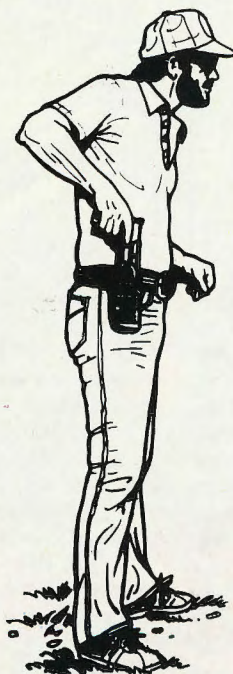
Collected by Jon Winokur

## The Strong Side Draw

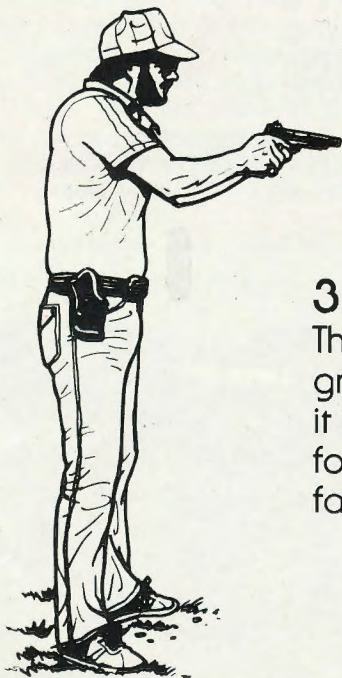
The holster is positioned slightly forward of the hip, with the gun riding straight up.



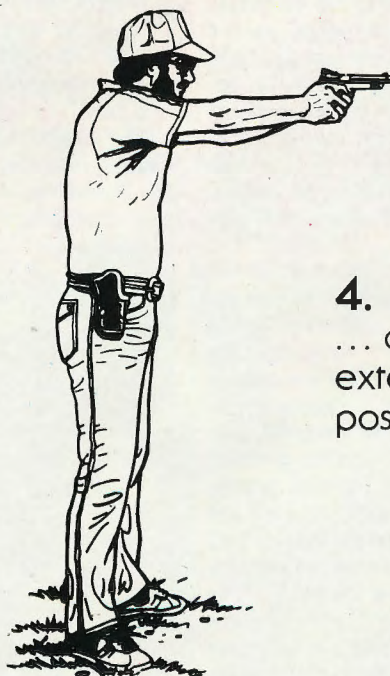
1. From the ready position, the strong hand moves to just above the gun...



2. ... as soon as the hand closes around the stock, the gun is withdrawn from the holster.



3. The weak hand grasps the gun when it is slightly farther forward than the face...



4. ... and the arms extend to shooting position.

ROB LEATHAM, Combat Master, 1983 IPSC World Champion, 1983 IPSC National Champion.

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I see a lot of people really attack the gun in the holster, but I don't feel that's necessary. Just make sure the whole process is as relaxed as possible.



# HOME BUILT .45

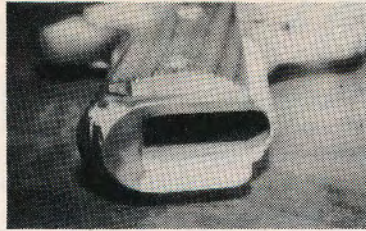
Continued from page 45

A few strokes with a file took care of that. There was also a little burr inside the slide that would have hit the ejector—again no problem. The biggest problem came when I tried to get the firing pin to seat. It simply wouldn't go in. It took a few minutes of heavy pondering to discover that the firing pin spring was too long. When I pointed this out to Terry he sent me another right away, and promised to have a word with the manufacturer.

I was pleasantly surprised by the fit of slide and frame. I'm used to the slop of GI parts, but Crown City's went together with satisfying snugness. Not tight enough to require lapping, but far closer than GI. Since I wasn't trying to accurize the gun, I put these aside as ready to go. My decision had been to simply put the gun together and see what happened. The Colt Commander barrel did get a ramp job, but my only other concession was going to be a trigger job. That done, I put everything together for a first check. There are always a few little adjustments needed, but for the most part, it was simply a matter of assembly. The beginner would be well advised to go slowly here. If something doesn't fall together easily *don't* reach for the hammer. Examine the part closely, but remember that almost all of them work in relation to other pieces and the problem may be elsewhere. It is, for me, instinctive to reach for a file if something won't fit, but that can really cause problems. Once removed, metal is tough to put back!

Another word of caution concerns the trigger. Simply putting the pieces together will usually yield a functional, but unbelievably heavy, trigger pull. It is easy to whack away with stone or file, in search of the perfect four-pound pull and also unbelievably easy to end up with something totally unsafe. The safeties depend upon contact with the sear in relationships John Browning didn't intend for anyone to fool with. This is one area where I strongly recommend professional help or at least, great care.

Installing the sights is another area for caution. Depending upon the type chosen, this may not be a job for a beginner. Rear sights always require a little, or a lot, of filing to get them into the dovetail on the slide and there is a delicate balance between taking off enough metal to get the sight in, and taking off too much. I always work on the sight, since it is cheaper to replace in case of a monumental goof, than the slide. Front sights can really be a pain, and since Crown City's slide came nicely finished, I was reluctant to use a torch on it. I had chosen a slide with a small rib that Crown City calls "ribbed and ported," and the front sight I picked didn't have a long enough tail to allow for staking. This was



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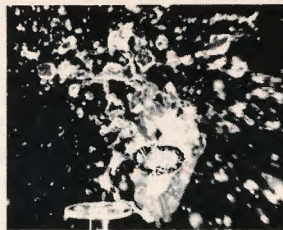
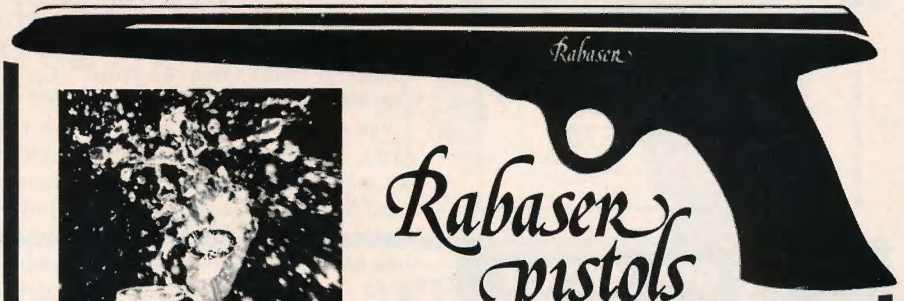
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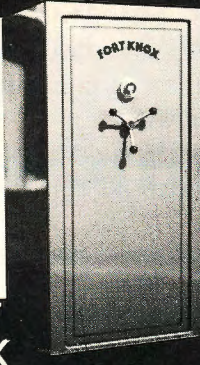
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something I had no way of knowing, and a place where the company might have saved a little trouble. The problem, from their side, is that they must assume the customer knows what he's doing. Still, I believe a few words of caution, "this won't work with that," is in order. Again, all it took was a word to Terry and he set off to come up with a solution to a problem they hadn't encountered before.

When all was done, I rushed out to a nearby dirt bank for a function test. The gun functioned well with GI ball ammunition, but the recoil spring was just a little strong for my preferred reloads. Before whacking on the recoil spring I just ran some more ball through it. With any new automatic, things may be a little tight, and have a tendency to wear in and loosen a little in time, but 100 rounds of GI ball proved that I still had a small problem. A couple of coils off the recoil spring gave me a gun that will function with anything from wadcutter to ball. I wasn't trying to build an X-ring capable gun so I didn't go through a lot of sophisticated testing. Instead, I took it to the range and banged away. I had no trouble eating up the ten ring of a standard B-27 police target at 25 yards and gave some beer cans a merry chase in the bargain. Most important though, was the functioning—flawless.

Assembling your own gun gives a certain satisfaction that just isn't available with one that's store bought. Another caution might help here though. There *IS* a difference between being able to detail strip a .45 and putting one together from parts that have never met before. If there wasn't a little fitting needed, all those assemblers at Colt, and elsewhere, would be out of a job. It can easily turn into a project that takes several evenings—even for someone experienced. For a beginner, there is no better way to really learn how the gun works but I would suggest a \$2.00 investment in a booklet called, "How to Assemble Your Own .45 Auto." Crown City sells it along with the parts.

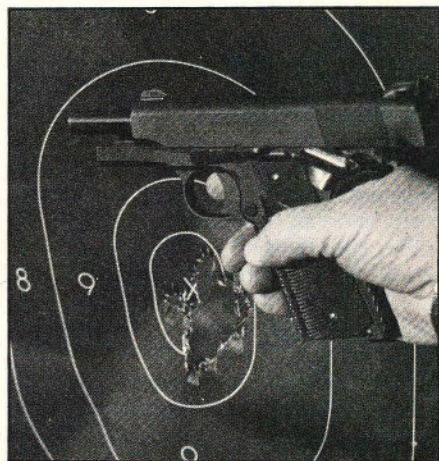
For those who don't know, Crown City Arms, (P.O. Box 1126, Cortland, NY 13045) is a major vendor of parts for the Government Model .45. Terry and Marcy Hudson developed a hobby into this successful full time business. They began, in 1970, with a small shop in Cortland; the name comes from the fact that Cortland is known as, "The Crown City."

For a short time they offered complete guns, but later decided to specialize in parts only. Their product line has gradually expanded to offer a broad range of other items with emphasis on accessories for the popular survivalist type weapons such as the Mini-14, AR-15 and Uzi, but over 60% of their sales are in .45 parts. Crown City is also a major distributor of Colt factory parts as well as a Colt warranty repair station.

Crown City Arms actively merchandises their products by offering specials, quick service and technical advice. The Hudsons

also came up with an idea that has proven quite popular with customers. Since most of the telephone work is handled by three women: Marcy, Carol Poole and Tish Polcano, and all three had encountered examples of male chauvinist piggery from guys who mistakenly believed that they didn't know anything about guns, they invented the "Good Ol' Gals" from Crown City. The theme is carried out in their catalogs and customers were quick to accept the idea of dealing with Good Ol' Gals when they weren't content to deal with mere women.

Telephones are scattered throughout the warehouse and offices so a customer won't have to wait for the phone to be answered. When an order is taken over the phone it goes next to one of Crown City's Apple computers which keep track of such things. The order is entered and an invoice is printed. One copy goes across to the warehouse area, where Chuck Hudson (no relation) takes the parts from stock and packs them for shipping. Each order is personally checked by Terry or Marcy before it leaves, and they are justly proud of their quick service. Most orders are shipped within 24 hours.



Terry expressed the opinion that some customers are a little reluctant to buy something through the mail from someone they don't know, so Crown City is heavily involved in attending gun shows. Chuck Hudson and Jack Gosse handle most of these duties and attend a couple of shows a month. Terry and Marcy regularly attend the Ohio Gun Collectors shows in Columbus. They feel that the personal contact with customers is well worth the extra effort it takes to pack hundreds of parts for a show. Terry explained that many of their gun show customers then become regular mail order buyers, for they have developed confidence in Crown City through personal contact and examination of the products.

During my visit with the Hudsons I was impressed with their desire to provide the shooter with the best product they could while retaining an attractive price. They have shopped carefully for products that fit their marketing strategy and try out a product themselves before it reaches the catalog.



## ENTER THE AGNER

Continued from page 39

handily use the same gun without re-zeroing. Windage clicks could be felt but not heard. The only conclusion is that the rear sight, at least on this sample, is not up to the rest of the gun.

I've mentioned the dryfire feature and the easily accessible sear. In reality, this is a set sear or striker sear, which when released moves to trip in turn the hammer sear. As on the Thompson-Center Contender pistol, this is a beautiful arrangement for dryfiring, as the shooter feels the same trigger letoff as with live ammo. It means, however, that the release time of these double sears is cumulative, resulting in a necessarily slowed lock time. In fact, the lighter you set the trigger pull (and it can be set to mere ounces) the slower lock time is going to be, due to decreased tension on the set sear spring. However, this maybe theoretical disadvantage is the price of the superb range of trigger adjustments and dryfire features the Beeman/Agner offers.

Surprisingly, in this country, match shooters are not likely to be the principal customers for the Beeman/Agner, despite its \$1195 price tag. Importer Robert Beeman explains: "The Beeman/Agner, although designed for the match market, is going to appeal primarily to those who appreciate fine guns for their own sake, just as we found with our Feinwerkbau match air rifles that go 95 per cent in the United States to non-match shooters. Europeans simple cannot comprehend this, but for U.S. customers, apparently the pride of ownership and the delight in a fine mechanism is enough that they have to have one."

In sum, this is a cunningly designed, beautifully executed pistol. It's available from Beeman Precision Arms and through dealers handling Beeman's products. As mentioned, the current price is \$1195. A left-handed version is available at \$100 more. Soon to come: .32 S&W and .30 Luger conversion units enabling the match shooter to use the same gun in NRA and ISU centerfire events. And who knows—now that Saxhøj Products has launched the Agner M80, we might see the start of a full-fledged Danish sporting arms industry, so that Denmark might someday be known for guns and butter.



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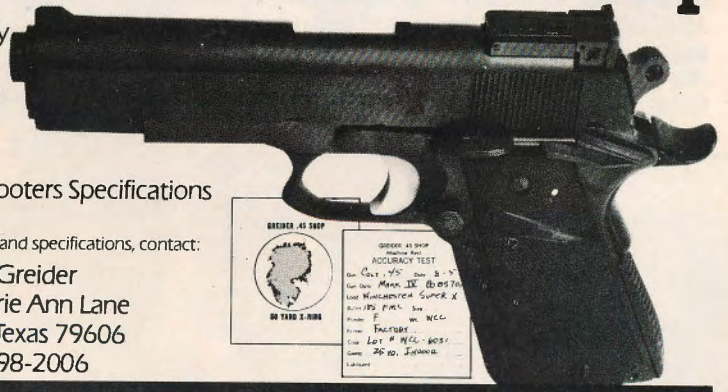
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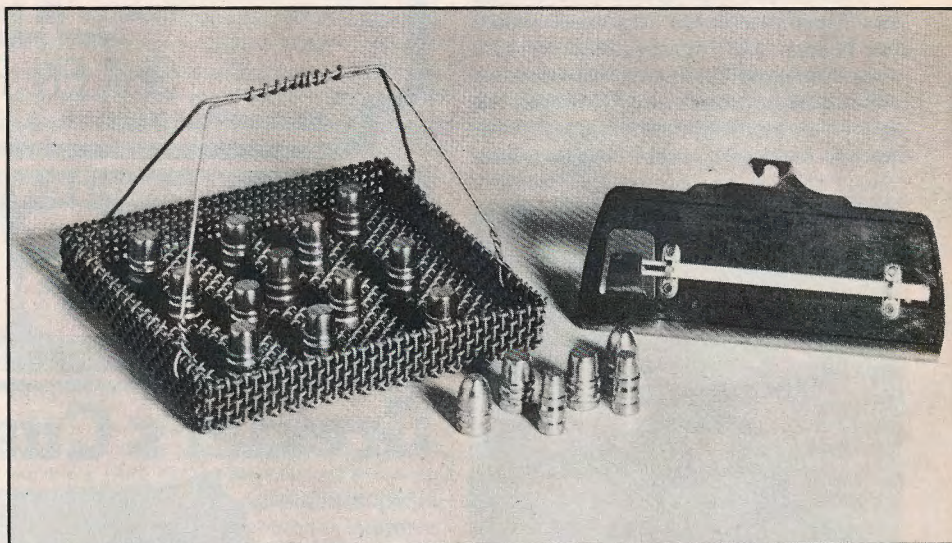
*By E.J. Henderson*

Handgunners who would like to mix the economy of cast bullets with the power of magnum cartridges haven't had it easy. While moderate velocity target loads can give good results with a wide range of lead alloys, only the very hardest bullets deliver reliable accuracy with the full-power loads common to steel shooters and hunters.

Linotype, an alloy hard enough to take the strain, can be both difficult and expensive to obtain—local print shops no longer use hot type around here, and buying a few hundred pounds from a supplier half-way across the country leads to a staggering freight bill. Also, some reports state that linotype tends to shatter upon hard impact—not a desirable characteristic; it would be better to have the bullet hold together to 'push' over a steel



**A demonstration of comparative hardness by nose-to-nose crushing of (L to R) wheel weight, heat-treated, and linotype. The heat treated bullet easily punches well into the nose of the others.**



**Author's set up includes home-made wire basket and thermometer.**



**All of these lead sources can be improved with heat treatment.**

cutout, or to reach deep after shoulder impact on big game.

So, what we want is a bullet metal that is cheap, easily obtained in good supply, and tough enough to drop the big ones. A tall order, yes? Happily, such a metal is available to us, and with just a few extra steps, can do everything the costly type metal will do, and better.

Several recent articles have been published on the excellent results obtained by heat-treating lead alloys—most notably, common wheelweights—but these have dealt primarily with bullets used in rifles. The same metallurgy applies to handgun bullets, too; why shouldn't we reap the same benefits? The truth is that a short spell in the oven can do wonders for the hardness and toughness of bullets cast from wheelweight metal, and the extra steps involved cost little time or money.

So, what does it take to work these wonders? Well, the kitchen oven, a wire basket to hold the bullets, and a pan of tap water will do the trick, but it is also a help to have a reasonably accurate oven thermometer. If you have a choice of types, I've found that the mercury-bulb style works very well; those with dials may require a few light taps to get a



true reading. This means opening the door, which means temperature variations you can do without. The procedure requires little set-up other than pre-heating the oven, and runs through like this:

After inspecting a batch of bullets, they should receive any operations you would normally give them, except lubrication. After the bullets have been heat-treated, any cold working will result in localized soft spots; therefore, sizing, if any, should be done first. Be sure to remove any lube that may have ended up on the bullets, as the smell of burning Alox will turn the wife's amusement at your baking efforts into icy stares posthaste. That she can use your thermometer will not be enough to allow you back into the kitchen; best you see that the bullets are wiped dry!

Some culled bullets should be used as test samples first. Start them cooking at about 450°F; if you see no change in them after 15 minutes or so, bump the temperature up a little at a time until they start to 'slump' over a bit. Note this temperature, on the oven dial or the thermometer, write it down, then back off 15-20°F. The batch of good bullets can now be slid into the oven and left alone for 45 minutes to an hour.

At the end of this time, they should be removed and immediately plunged (not dropped) into tap water at room temperature. This is where it helps to have made a basket

of wire mesh—fine steel screen works great—with a wire bail for carrying. The mesh allows the water to quench all bullets quickly and evenly. The treated bullets are allowed to dry, or can be blotted with paper towels. Do not use heat to drive the water off of them. They are now ready to lube, load, and shoot, but a few other points should be considered first.

First, your micrometer will tell you that the bullets are slightly smaller in diameter than they were before treatment. It isn't a large amount—about .0002 for a .357 bullet or .0003 for a .45—and I expect this will vary with the composition of the metal you're using. This can be used to your benefit. An example? My two S&W .357 revolvers have chamber mouths that measure .3573 to .3577. By sizing bullets .358 before baking, the small amount of shrinkage makes them a near-perfect fit at this critical point. Also, because they are now smaller than .358, they can be carefully lubed in the same sizer die without touching the sides—no soft spots on the driving bands, where you want them least.

However, those using gas-check style bullets may find that the checks are no longer fully tight on the bases; crimp-on checks will rotate, but as long as they stay put during loading (make certain), the rifling will key them back on securely. The culprit here is the difference in expansion and hardness

between the two metals—the lead; softened by the high temperature tends to 'flow' away from the constricting check cup as the two expand. It may be better to seat the gas checks after hardening; be careful not to over-stress your lubricizer with these hard bullets.

Second, these bullets are not only harder, they are tougher than linotype bullets. The photos help explain what I mean by this; note the extensive fracturing at the nose of the linotype bullets, compared to the minor cracks showed by the heat-treated rounds. The nose crush-up of the two types readily illustrates the superior hardness of the treated bullets. This is the real merit of the heat-treatment; it gives a bullet hard enough to really steam downrange, yet ductile enough that it doesn't grenade when it hits steel or heavy bone. Actually, that "work-softening" becomes an asset; it may just allow the bullet to 'stick' to a silhouette for an extra fraction of a second, or punch through heavy bone with good weight retention.

So, magnum shooters, don't despair; you can easily prepare cast bullet loads that will deliver the performance you demand. The money you save by casting your own can be put toward powder and primers—and more shooting for less money is a fine tradeoff for a little extra labor.

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## PISTOLSMITH PROFILE

### ONE OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE SOUTHWEST PISTOL LEAGUE, HE HAS BUILT GUNS FOR THE BEST

By Jon Winokur

*Jim Hoag is widely recognized as one of the best custom gunsmiths in the country. He began his career twenty years ago with an extensive apprenticeship in general gunsmithing. When he began to shoot in competition, he gravitated toward "practical" work on the .45 automatic. I recently had the opportunity to talk with him in his Canoga Park, California shop:*

**J.W.:** *You were an active competitor in the Southwest Pistol League back in the early 'sixties. Can you tell me a little about that period?*

**HOAG:** It was an incredible experience. I was one of the founding members of the SWPL and I shot in competition for about twelve years. Before that I was part of a group of about 20 people shooting with Jeff Cooper. We had to write the book as we went along. Each time we shot we would discover new things we wanted to do with the guns and the leather. It was a pioneering effort. It was great.

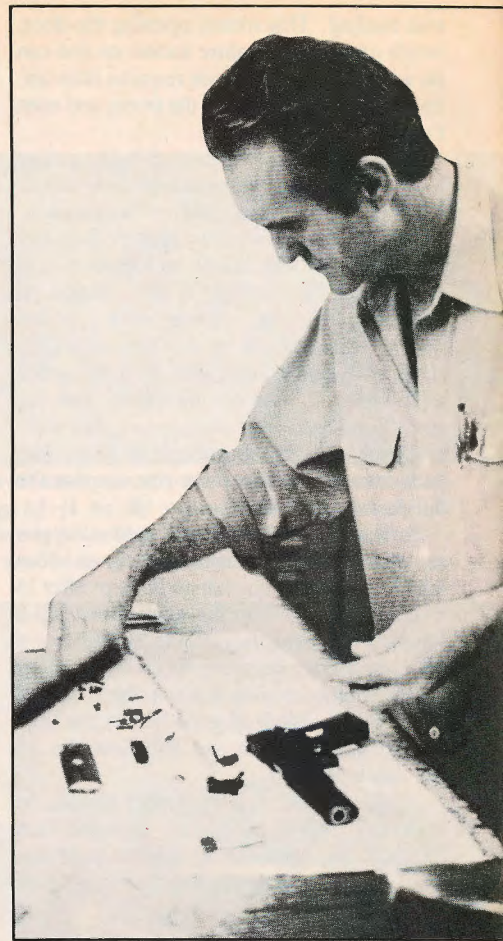
**J.W.:** *You won the SWPL "B" Class Championship in 1968.*

**HOAG:** Right. I was doing a lot of shooting in those days, but I've been in retirement for a number of years.

**J.W.:** *What's the biggest difference between shooters of that era and those currently active?*

**HOAG:** The skill level has increased tremendously since I was a competitor. We were doing the basic research and development that's taken for granted now. It's the same in other sports. In tennis, for example, the equipment and training programs they have now are far superior to what they were in the 1940's and '50's. It's the same in auto racing, motorcycle racing. The skill level increases year after year because you discover what *doesn't* work. Nowadays you can become a proficient competitor in a much shorter time.

**J.W.:** *What competition modifications do you recommend for the inexperienced shooter?*



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**HOAG:** Do the basics. The fundamentals of pistol shooting are sight alignment and trigger control, so I suggest taking care of those two problems immediately with a set of high visibility sights and a trigger that breaks clean at about four pounds. And, of course, the gun must work every time. To that end I recommend ramping the barrel and beveling the magazine well. That's it. Take the gun out, shoot it for a while, and see what other modifications, if any, the shooter decides he wants.

Usually, on the first gun, the customer will have the basic work done and then come back three or four weeks later and have something else done, and then come back again and again until finally he asks, "Why didn't you tell me I needed all this in the first place?" My answer is, "I didn't know you needed all this because you're the only one who can determine what you need?"

**J.W.:** What if the customer still isn't sure of what he wants?

**HOAG:** If we feel the customer is unsure or is apprehensive because it's his first custom job, we'll spend an hour or so with him to determine what he wants the gun to do for him. Sometimes we have to draw it out of him. Then we make specific recommendations in response to what he tells us.

**J.W.:** Speaking of your customers, you've made guns for some of the top shooters in the world.

**HOAG:** Jeff Cooper, Thell Reed, Elden Carl, John Plahn, Ray Chapman, Mickey Fowler.

**J.W.:** What are the pros and cons of modifying a Gold Cup versus a Gov't Model?

**HOAG:** It depends on what the customer happens to have in his hands at that particular moment. Usually, though, you're better off with a Gov't Model if you plan to do extensive modifications. That way you're not paying extra for features on the Gold Cup that won't be used on the finished gun.

**J.W.:** What's the approximate shop time for your various conversions?

**HOAG:** About four to six months for the "B" Grade Police Special, about eight months for the "A" Grade. A Master Grade competition gun takes about a year, a longslide a year and a half. It depends on the complexity of the work and the availability of parts at the time the gun is ready to be worked on. For example, on the six inch longslide we do a lot of preliminary work before we order parts for it, mainly because it takes a lot of machining time just to get the slide prepped. Then there might be a delay in getting the six inch stainless barrels or other parts. Or we might have a hot-project come in that requires immediate attention. And we give police officers priority, especially if we know it's going to be their duty gun.

**J.W.:** What's your philosophy regarding modifications to duty guns?

**HOAG:** Chances are, a duty gun is going to be used at close range, so we keep it simple: hardball sights, a four to four and a half pound trigger pull—it shouldn't be any lighter because the adrenalin is really pumping in an armed self defense situation. In that

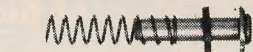
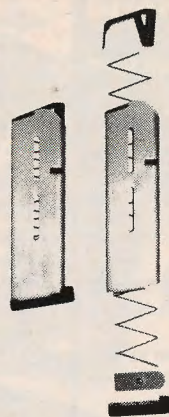
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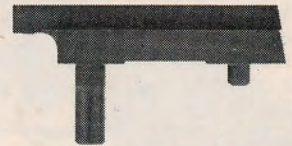


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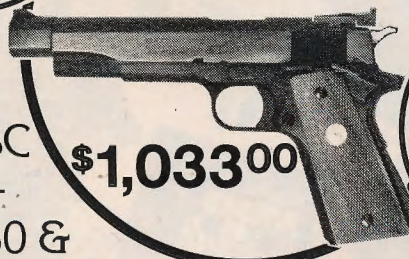
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**J.W.:** Why no ambidextrous safety or adjustable sights?

**HOAG:** No ambi safety unless the man is left-handed, in which case it's mandatory. Otherwise, it's much too likely to catch on something and be de-activated. As to adjustable sights, a duty gun leads a hard life. It's invariably getting banged on car doors, dropped, etc. Adjustable sights just aren't rugged enough for that kind of abuse. Of course, the advantage of adjustable sights is that they allow you to shoot a variety of loads, but that's not a consideration for the average officer on the street because most departments have ammunition regulations that mandate one particular load. With fixed sights, all the officer has to do is sight-in so that the gun shoots point-of-aim at 25 yards and he'll be well within the limits of what he'll need on the street. And there's no guesswork: "Let's see, did I move the sights when I took it to the range or didn't I?" Your equipment is the last thing you should have to worry about when you're involved in an armed confrontation.

**J.W.:** Your guns have the reputation of being very tight when they're new. Do you recommend a particular break-in procedure, like using heavy loads for the first few hundred rounds?

**HOAG:** No, just shoot the same ammuni-

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tion you would normally use in the gun. Any machine that's built to exacting tolerances requires an initial break-in period. The bluing is still fresh on a new gun, which causes a slight stickiness between the mating surfaces. And freshly machined steel, when it's left tight, will form a work-hardened "skin" on the mating surfaces which allows the gun to loosen up only to a certain point. That's what we try to achieve, a gun that will last 100,000 rounds and still maintain its basic accuracy.

**J.W.:** *Can you give Handgunner readers any maintenance tips?*

**HOAG:** Probably the most common mistake we see is not putting enough oil on the gun. And a lot of shooters will fire a thousand rounds or more without cleaning the gun. That's fine if you keep enough oil on the barrel and slide rails to keep the fouling in solution, but when it's allowed to dry out it's almost like putting a semi-soft shimstock in the gun. Keep a light coating of oil on the gun at all times, I can't emphasize that enough. Any good oil will do: Break Free, Triflow, Hoppe's, Outer's, Browning. Most malfunctions in automatics occur because the gun is too dry.

**J.W.:** *Would you classify yourself a gamesman or a martial artist?*

**HOAG:** I'd call myself a craftsman. I perform the work required by the individual who seeks my services. A gun is a tool for a specific job.

The problem a lot of people have with the IPSC program is failing to separate apples from oranges. While the skills you learn in competition are applicable to defensive situations, the equipment is necessarily different. So, whether you're a gamesman or a martial artist, you still have to use the right tool for the right job.



## For The Record

**American Handgunner:**

The purpose of this letter is to clarify the discrepancy regarding my sponsorship at the 1983 World IPSC Shoot.

I have been and will be sponsored at shooting events by Southwind Sanctions, Inc. I was not asked at the World Shoot to give the name of my sponsor. I used a holster in the World Match that was manufactured by Southwind Sanctions. Someone mistakenly assumed that El Paso Saddlery was my holster maker when indeed they were not. I would like this matter corrected.

Southwind Sanctions, Inc. (President Larry Byars) has supported several shooting events with prizes and money, including the recent Steel Challenge Match held in Los Angeles.

Southwind Sanctions supports the shooting industry and should be given appropriate credit.

John Shaw  
Memphis, TN

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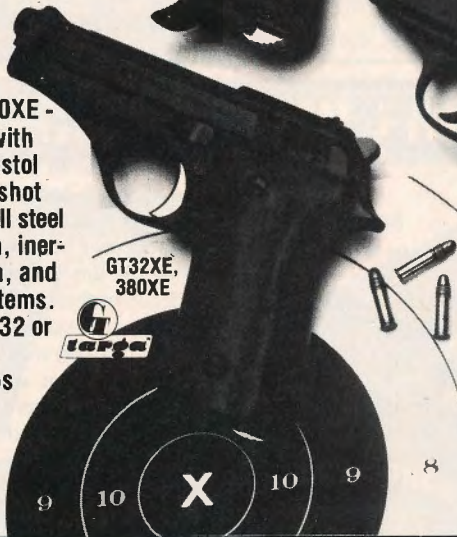
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**AMERICAN HANDGUNNER WELCOMES** letters to the editor of no more than 350 words. They must include the writer's full name and address and be typewritten. Letters may be edited for purposes of clarity or space. Editor.

## Praise for a Professional

Please be advised that a member of your editorial staff, Massad Ayoob, was recently retained as an expert witness in the matter of *State v. Luis Alvarez*, Case No. 83-3972. Mr. Ayoob testified as an expert in the area of defensive shooting and officer survival. His clear, concise explanations of officer survival techniques were, I believe, a material factor in enabling the jury to understand the complex evidence in this case and acquit Officer Alvarez. As you probably know, Officer Alvarez was charged with manslaughter as a result of an incident which occurred on December 28, 1982, where, while on duty, he reacted to a violent confrontation by a young felon armed with a stolen, concealed handgun.

Please accept my congratulations on having a professional such as Mr. Ayoob as a member of your editorial staff.

Mark Seiden  
Miami, FL

## Hunter's Viewpoint

In response to Mr. George J. Foster's letter "Cop Dislikes J.D. Jones and Hunting With a Handgun"

Why is it some Anti-Hunter thinks nothing of killing a human being, but feels it's terrible to shoot a poor defenseless animal. Being an avid handgun hunter I have received many threatening letter from anti-hunters. One letter was unsigned from a New Jersey cop who threatened my life for killing a zebra. Another from a Seattle cop who also threatened my life, but this man had the nerve to sign the letter.

Anti-hunters just don't realize our hunting fees raise millions of dollars for conservation projects. According to a 1982 US Fish & Wildlife survey an estimated 16 million hunters '82 license fees paid for conservation projects across North America totaled \$258 million dollars.

Also, during the drought in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Zambia, Botswana and Mozambique more animals died than were hunted in the last (20) years. During that period there were so many dead carcass's it was impossible to hunt leopard, because they had so much to feed on they wouldn't touch leopard bait.

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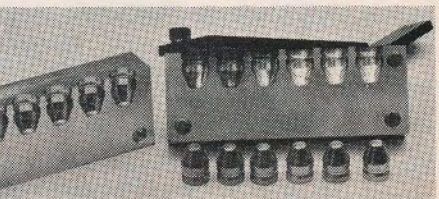
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National Park the Zimbabwe Government had to cull over 6,000 elephant.

My question is, what has Mr. Foster or every other anti-hunter ever given to conserve wildlife, besides their two cents.

Larry Kelly  
Mt. Clemens, MI

## Let 'em Eat Meat

I'm not sure letters such as the one from George Foster in the May/June issue of *American Handgunner* even deserve to be published. People like him rarely change their opinions and get their kicks out of stirring up a dispute. Anyway, here's my reply to his letter.

Mr. George J. Foster's rash statement about hanging J.D. Jones upside down, etc. indicates that he isn't a reasonable man and arguing with an unreasonable man is usually a waste of time. Mr. Foster does say he can understand if there are mitigating circumstances so I'll give him one—MAN.

In the so-called undeveloped nations the human populations have increased to the point where more agricultural land is needed all the time just to feed the masses of people. This reduces the amount of land available for the wildlife to live on (habitat). So the numbers of animals have to be reduced so that what land is left for them will support them. In addition, man will not put up with wildlife destroying his crops so any animals that interfere with man's food supply also have to go.

In the developed nations wildlife has been eliminated or greatly reduced in numbers because of the needs of man. This also began with the development of agriculture and has continued as the human population has increased requiring more land for farms, cities, highways, industry, etc. Today man needs coal mines to supply coal to power electrical plants, oil and gas to power our vehicles, heat our homes and cities. The economy isn't in good shape unless we are producing so many automobiles, building so many houses, producing so much oil, gas, steel, lumber, etc., each year.

All of these things may be the legitimate needs of man. But they have led to the loss of vast areas of wildlife habitat. Left on their own the wildlife populations would increase until animals would be dying of starvation and disease. Well regulated hunting, as it is carried out in most countries of the world today, is the best method anyone has been able to come up with to keep the wildlife from literally eating themselves out of house and home. In addition, hunters have provided the money through license fees which has paid for management of the wildlife and improvement in the remaining habitat so that in some areas there are now more wild animals than there have been for decades.

The important question is not whether we hunt but what things are really the legitimate needs of man? What things can man get by without or do differently so that more wildlife habitat isn't lost?

I'm sure Mr. Foster doesn't eat meat. Perhaps he can take comfort in knowing that the vegetables he eats are grown where wildlife

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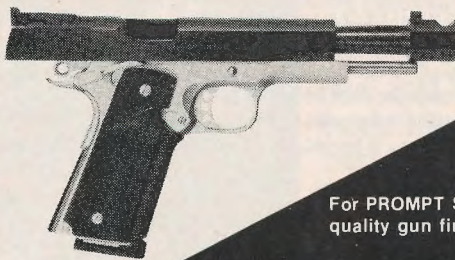
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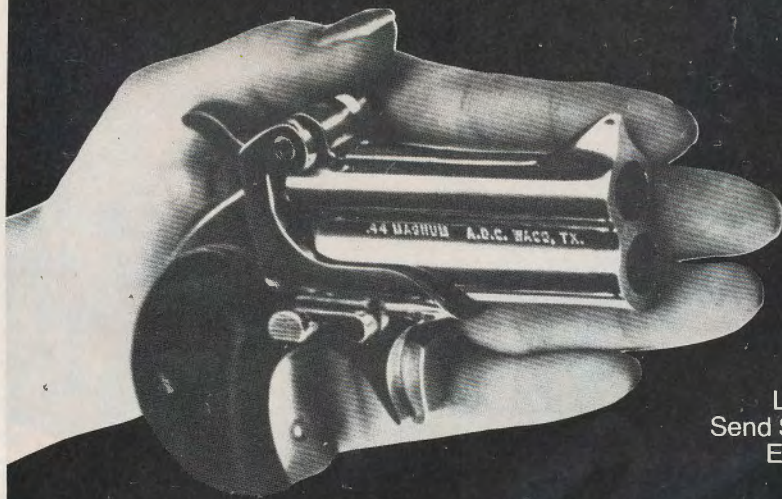
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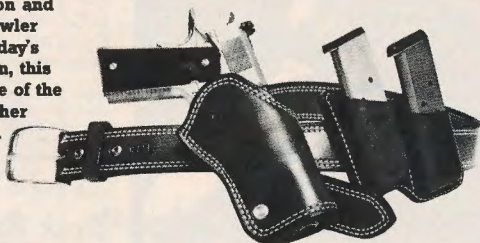




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once lived. The wildlife had to go because they couldn't eat vegetables—or perhaps because they did.

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**Luger Safeties**

Referring to Richard Savine's article on Human Engineering in the May/June issue, I found it very interesting and informative, but it is evident that he did not completely research the Luger Pistol, with regard to the safety positions.

Taken from Kenyon's "Lugers at Random", here is how it works out:

Up to 1908 models, practically all Lugers had the safe position upward. This includes Swiss, Bulgarian and Russian Contracts, Carbines, Navys, American Eagles, Commercials, and Lugers made by Vickers and Waffenfabrik, Bern.

From 1908 on, practically all Lugers had the safe position downward, which includes the many thousands made for the German Military by DWM, Mauser, Krieghoff and various arsenals.

Exceptions to the latter were the 1920 and 1929 Swiss and 1920 Commercials, the latter having the safety in either position.

One final point; many Navy's were reworked to have the safety in the down

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position, rather than in the original up position.

I write this, not to criticize Mr. Savine's fine article, but to satisfy the many Luger fans who may be reading the article.

Fred H. Junker  
Gardnerville, NV

## Hooray for Roy!

There is one fact about the shooting sports industry that I would like the world to know. They care!

I wrote Roy's Custom Leather for instructions for ordering replacement screw post fasteners. They did not send the instructions; instead, they sent those fasteners at no charge.

In the same month, Interarms of Alexandria, Va., provided a second example of caring. I wrote them about a pistol magazine malfunction I experienced. I received immediate authorization for a replacement magazine.

I consider these examples of customer service as hallmarks, high hallmarks, of a fine industry.

Patrick Hilton  
Jonesborough, TN

## Credit Where Credit Is Due

It is with more than casual interest that I perused your May/June issue. The article by Phil Briggs concerning new guns at the IHMSA Internationals was very enlightening. Especially the part about the .375 Super Mag.

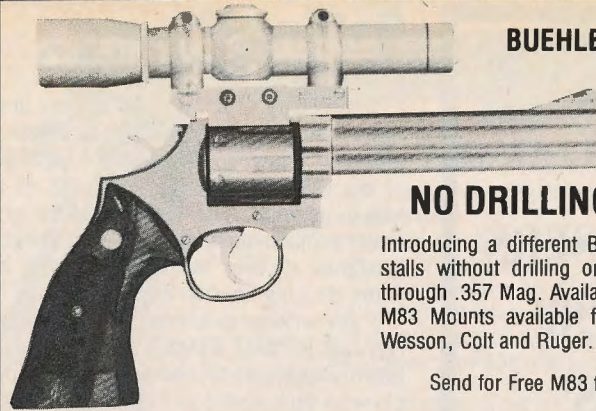
You see, if you turn to page 42 of the Sept/Oct, 1981 *American Handgunner*, you will find a feature article by J.D. Jones on just such a cartridge. The .375 Super Mag is just a slightly lengthened variation brought about by the introduction of Maximum cylinders.

The idea of a .375 caliber cartridge based on the .30-30 or .375 Winchester cases first came to me in 1978. After three years of trial and error with all the necessary components, the .375 DAK was born.

The inventive ingenuity, time and cost of boring barrels, designing and fabricating chamber reamers . . . dies and moulds were all absorbed by none other than yours truly. Dies, by the way, are still available from RCBS and will work on both the .375 DAK and the .375 Super Mag.

Before you get all excited about the .375 Super Mag, I think a moment of silence is in order in remembrance of the originator of the .375 Caliber revolver and to J.D. Jones who developed the loads and introduced it to the shooting world.

Dale A. Kelling  
Glendale, AZ



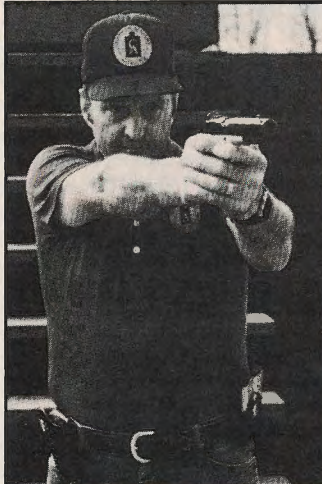
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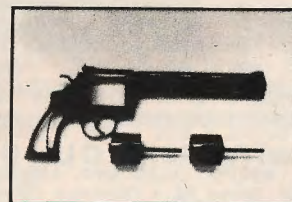
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## Getting The Record Straight

I always enjoy your "Siluetas" articles in the *American Handgunner* publications. I especially enjoyed reading all the highlights of the 1983 IHMSA Internationals in the May/June issue. The exposure of the great sport of Silhouette is improving the image of handguns all over the U.S. Columns like yours are a big boost to the sport.

I am writing to correct a fact that you reported in "1983 IHMSA Internationals." I heartily apologize for being one of those people who don't write just to praise but only to complain. Actually, I welcome the chance just to thank you for your column's support of our sport. On page 65 of your article you state that, "Lon Pennington set a record for competition at the Internationals, shooting the first Revolver 80x80. I am afraid this is incorrect as the first Revolver 80x80 was shot at the 1982 Internationals in Indiana. It was shot in AAA class by Claude Kinard of Pullyallup, Washington. I know this because I thought I had AAA Revolver all wrapped up with my 74x80 until Claude came along and put me in for a second place trophy. Being a silhouette shooter yourself, you probably know that Claude had come back to the Internationals after having been in a terrible fiery car crash and losing both feet. I would hate to take any acclaim away from someone with that kind of intestinal fortitude.

Just setting the record straight. Please keep writing those great articles! Maybe I'll have the good fortune of meeting you at one of our International matches soon.

Annie Crawford  
Costa Mesa, CA



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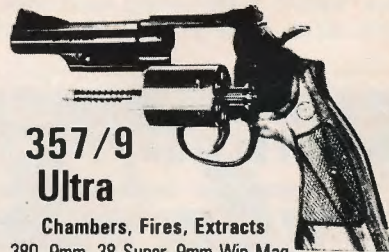
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# HOLSTERS AND MORE HOLSTERS

By Al Pickles

Have you ever heard of signing a product liability release in order that you may be permitted to purchase a shoulder holster? It's not a joke, and I can assure you it's not an advertising gimmick.

The holster, called the Fast Concealable Shoulder Rig (FCSR), is billed by its distributor as the "fastest, most concealable shoulder holster available anywhere."

It can best be described as a plastic clip that wraps around your gun from the top of the frame (or slide) to the bottom, and snaps shut through the trigger guard; this enables the gun to hang by the front of the guard. The actual snap is offset to the outer side of the holster, allowing the weight of the gun to settle it into the "U" from which the snap extends. Maybe the word "extends" is somewhat misleading because the holster and snap are neat and compact; so compact that I believe it to be the most concealable rig available (it's distributed by Personal Protection Systems, Ltd.).

The harness is more or less conventional and made of narrow strips of leather with three adjustment points to handle almost any body shape or size. Generally, I do not favor a narrow harness system, because I carry big guns which present weight distribution problems. Nonetheless, the harness on the FCSR seemed to work well, even with my M-S Safari Matchmaster .45 autoloader.

To draw the pistol, grasp the grip and make sure not to let your fingers enter the trigger guard—good advice even with the more conventional holsters—and push upward along the line of the bore enough to lift the front end of the trigger guard out of the "U"; then twist away from the body; this action breaks the retaining snap open. With practice, this becomes almost one motion and is very fast.

## CONDITION ONE

Cautions accompanying the FCSR warn against carrying an autoloader in Condition One (loaded, cocked and locked) mode; or even a revolver with a light double-action trigger pull. It is possible to trip a light trigger and blow your arm off at the pit, hence the product liability waiver.

Is it safe with a double-action autoloader, or a double-action revolver with a normal double-action pull? The manufacturer seems to think so, and my limited experiments with a double-action autoloader did not produce any accidents during some deliberate attempts with an unloaded gun.



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American Handgunner Magazine

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Although the rig is certainly fast, I do not think it qualifies as "the fastest." That title goes, without question, to the *Cobra Comvest*. This is even more true considering that I carry a .45 in Condition One, which is taboo with the FCSR.

A cool man or woman, devoted to intelligent practice, might prefer the FCSR over conventional rigs because of its superior concealability and speed; but don't expect it to beat the bulkier, but faster, *Cobra Comvest*.

Personal Protection Systems also offers a novel and really nice magazine holder that is, to a degree, adjustable by magazine size. It's dubbed *Magnetic Double Clip Scabbard*.

The magazine scabbard functions well; its magnetic retaining principle allows for reasonably fast extraction of the magazines, while holding them secure when not in use.

### CATALOG OFFERED

Personal Protection Systems may have just the answer for you. The company's address is 101 Pittston Ave. (Dept. AH), Scranton, PA 18505, and it offers an interesting catalog of speciality guns, ammo, leather, and more. Catalogs are expensive to mail, so send a few bucks to help defray costs.

While pursuing the routine aspects of city life, I still carry a weapon concealed at all times; but, being retired from active law enforcement, the roll of this leather is strictly defensive. My working leather, on the other hand, now carries handguns of the hunting type, such as the big-frame magnums. There are times when I prefer a large belt/holster rig over the shoulder rigs, which work so well on horseback.

I live in the Inland Pacific Northwest, where the first snows often coincide with the hunting season. Having spent much of my life outdoors, I suspect the designers of finger-tip-length mackinaws really knew what they were about when it came to dressing for cold weather. The question, therefore, is where to wear the belt/holster rig: inside or outside? Although fast draw is not an issue in a hunting handgun, reasonable accessibility and gun protection are truly important considerations.

While a belt holster worn under the jacket does provide a good degree of protection for the gun, I personally would like a little more accessibility, since drawing from under the jacket is awkward, unless you unbutton the coat first.

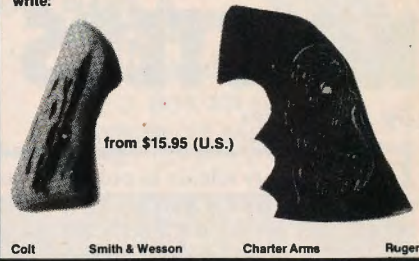
Long ago, I elected to wear my gunbelt strapped around the outside of my mackinaw. This presents two considerations, for which you should plan. First, you will need a flapped holster—preferably one with a removable flap, so you can enjoy certain field options; second, you must order the belt at least a few sizes larger than your waist, in order to accommodate the coat's thickness.

The best such rig I have found is *The Legend Holster* and its matching *Deluxe*

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Regardless of what you may see in the movies, ankle holsters have never enjoyed any significant degree of popularity with true-to-life law enforcement people. During most of my career, only one small holster company was making them, yet today everybody seems to be offering ankle holsters.

#### LIGHTWEIGHT ANKLE HOSLTER

Could it be that policemen are being taken in by the cinema? Why would anyone want to carry a gun on his ankle when there are so many better ways? Try it, and see if you can stand it for more than a few hours. I'll bet that most are relegated to the back of the middle dresser drawer, or bottom of a police locker. Should you have your heart set on owning an ankle holster, however, let me steer you in the right direction for one of the best available.

Walter "Blackie" Collins, best known for his knife designs, teamed up with the Cobra Gunskin people to design a super-lightweight ankle holster. It is made of cordura, a nylon-like synthetic, and has enough new design features to warrant three patents.

The rig features a "floating holster" effect, due to the holster being double-anchored to the harness, which keeps the gun from pressing against the ankle. The hammer safety strap is a Velcro tab and does a good job of securing the gun during heavy activity, if applied tightly.

A neat feature is a special pocket for a folding knife; it has its own Velcro tab, a pull on which will cause the knife to pop free. Options include ammo loops on the center side of the sight track.

Cobra also offers a leather ankle rig called the *Hugger*, plus a large line of civilian and police leather. Quality is superb and prices are competitive. To order one of its catalogs, send a couple of bucks to Cobra Gunskin, (Dept. AH), 1865 New Highway, Farmingdale, NY 11735.



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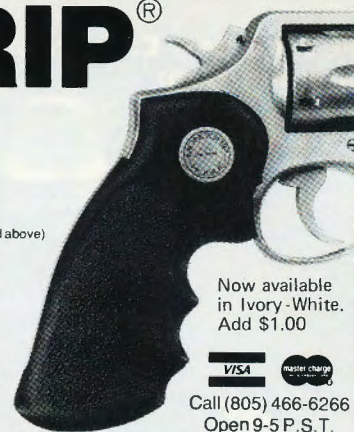
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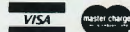
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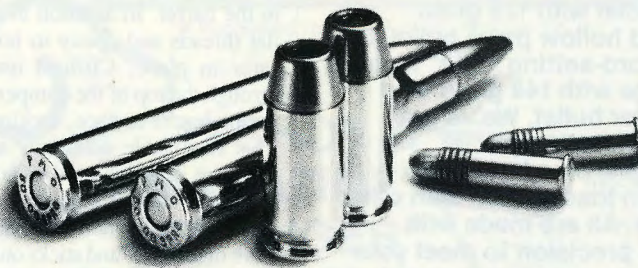
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## COMPENSATORS

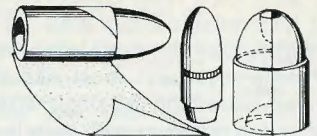
Continued from page 47

inch out front as an oversized expansion chamber. This expansion chamber, being somewhat larger than the outside diameter of the pistol barrel, allows the gases to partially expand before the bullet exits the front of the compensator. By having two gas ports cut in the top of the expansion chamber, some of the gas escapes upward thus helping keep the muzzle rise down. Where Clark threads the inside of the slide to accept a special recoil spring cap, Wilson uses a special two piece, long recoil spring guide made of 416 stainless, heat-treated steel and an exterior shroud to hold the spring in. The Accu-Comp System, according to Bill, also works on the delayed unlocking procedure by adding enough weight to eat up some of the recoil energy on unlocking, thus combining weight with venting to make his system effective.

A third pistolsmith that uses the barrel-shroud system of compensator is Ed Clifford of Rockton, Illinois. While Clifford also does away with the barrel bushing by fitting his barrel shroud up against the inside of the slide, his system is significantly different from either Clark's or Wilson's. First, Clifford shortens the slide to approximately Commander dimensions. Then, two vector ports are put through the standard 5" barrel just to the rear of the muzzle. Using a specially designed slot cutter, ports are cut through his barrel shroud to match the ports in the barrel. In addition to using 5x56x.05 flat threads and epoxy to hold his compensator in place, Clifford uses a set screw through the top of the compensator that bears on the barrel surface, locking it in position. This removable set screw serves a double purpose, it is also used to hold on a removable front sight. Clifford has patented a special recoil spring housing that threads into the front of the slide and sticks out underneath the compensator. This housing allows the weapon to utilize a standard length Government Model recoil spring while maintaining the same general appearance of a standard five inch .45 Auto. By shortening the slide and not using an expansion chamber, Clifford claims that his system allows for a shorter cycle time and increased concealability over a full length compensated automatic. One unique feature of Clifford's system is that it can be field stripped without tools.

The second major category of Compensators incorporates the use of the standard barrel bushing and a weight threaded onto a long barrel vise utilizing a barrel shroud sans bushing.

Probably the most prolific specimen of this type of system is the Plaxco Compensator System, designed and titled by J. Michael Plaxco of Roland, Arkansas. Michael forms his compensator from cold rolled tool steel and attaches it to a 6" NABCO barrel (shortened to 5 1/2") threaded 48 tpi. The use of a special adhesive and a set screw insure that the compensator will stay in place. The compensator is fitted up against the front of the



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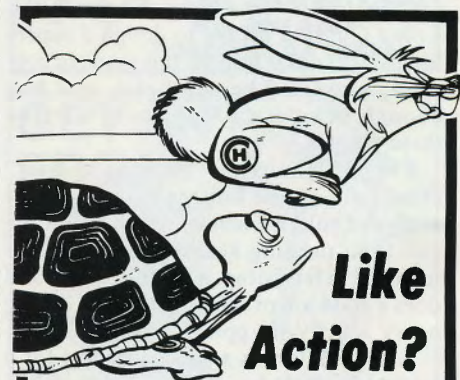
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barrel bushing, leaving a gap of approximately 1/10th of an inch between it and the slide of the pistol. Michael silver solders the front sight blade onto the compensator which results in approximately 8 3/4" of sight radius! The distinguishing characteristic of the Plaxco Compensator System is the use of relatively cavernous gas vents, measuring almost 1/2" long and 1/4" wide. While it would not seem necessary to have ports of this magnitude to redirect the comparatively modest gas produced by the .45 ACP cartridge, one cannot argue with the obvious success his system has enjoyed. Many of the top shooters in the sport of practical shooting own and have used Plaxco-Comp guns, Michael himself being the 1982 U.S. Region IPSC National Champion. Michael is also the only major gunsmith that has sold his compensator system as a "drop in" package.

A gunsmith that has really made a name for himself in the past year is Eddie Brown of Perry, Missouri. As a veteran tool and die maker and interminable gun enthusiast, Eddie experimented, trying to find the right combination of weight and gas control to give him the effect and appearance that he was after. His effort has resulted in a compensator that he calls the Maxi-Comp. The Maxi-Comp is completely machined from a solid block of 4140 tool steel and tapped to fit on lathe-threaded barrels. Special metal adhesive is used along with a hidden set screw placed at a 45 degree angle to avoid dimpling the inside of the barrel. Eddie normally uses Jimmy Clark stainless 6" barrels but will also use Bar-Sto and Kart barrels at the customer's request. The compensator itself is 1 1/2" long which allows for 1" of barrel and 1/2" of open expansion chamber. The downrange aperture of the expansion chamber is constricted allowing 8 thousandths of an inch bullet clearance per side. Two oval shaped ports are milled in the top of the compensator that vent the resultant gas of a fired round. The compensator covers the barrel bushing and fits up against the front of the slide giving the Maxi-Comp a sleek "long slide" appearance. A gunsmith's credibility is frequently measured by how well top shooters do with their equipment; in Eddie's case, he is the best shooter utilizing his equipment. Eddie placed 13th at the 1983 Bianchi Cup and 9th at the 1983 IPSC U.S. Nationals thus establishing his credibility in the pistol shooters marketplace.

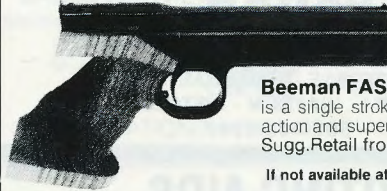
A compensator that is closely akin to Brown's Maxi-Comp is produced by Steve Nastoff of Youngstown, Ohio. Unlike Brown, Nastoff uses 6" Bar-Sto barrels and shortens them to 5 1/2". His compensator is machined out of bar stock in the configuration of a .45 Auto slide and attached to the barrel using 40 tpi. Steve explains how his compensator works as follows:

"When the weapon is discharged, the bullet exits the barrel and enters the comp. At this point the gases pushing the projectile attempt to pass it and are trapped within the comp chamber. The exit hole is kept very tight, .465, so that as much gas as possible is trapped.

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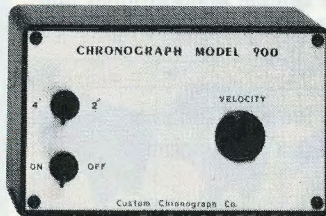
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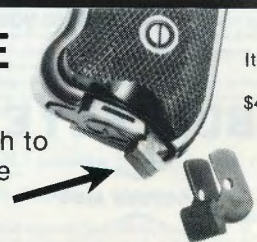


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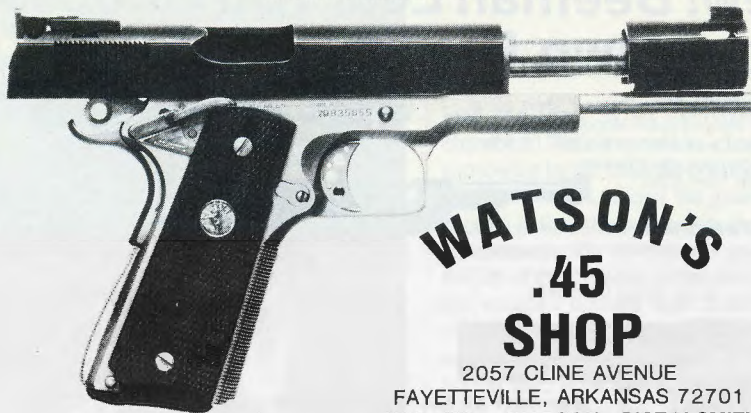


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Esthetically, Steve's finish work is especially well done. Like Brown's Maxi-Comp, Steve's compensator covers the barrel bushing and fits up against the slide giving a somewhat abbreviated "long slide" look.

Richard Watson of Fayetteville, Arkansas, is perhaps the quintessential practical pistolsmith. He understands the requirements necessary for a competition pistol due to his long history as a competitive shooter; he further understands the requirements necessary to keep the same piece "practical" due to his long history as a full time police officer. Like Ed Clifford, Watson shortens the Government length slide to Commander dimensions. However, where Clifford shrouds the barrel to fit inside the slide, Watson cuts a new recess inside the slide to accept a new barrel bushing. By using standard 5" Bar-Sto barrels and bushings there is almost  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of protruding barrel which can be threaded for his compensator which is a little over  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " long. The result, a compensated .45 Auto that is approximately 1" longer than a Government Model with almost  $\frac{3}{4}$ " of expansion chamber. Watson's compensator works on the same principle as Wilson's, Plaxco's, Brown's and Nastoff's; an expansion chamber collects and re-directs the gas, venting it upward thus retarding muzzle rise. Although Watson's system allows the use of a standard Commander spring, Watson uses a special two piece stainless rod guide similar to Wilson's, partially to act as a spring guide and partially to help support the weight of the compensator.

All of the compensators mentioned so far have at least one thing in common: they're attached to the barrel of the pistol. Due to the pivoting barrel link locking system of the .45 Auto, adding weight to the barrel can be a tricky, trial and error process to find just that right combination of weight and balance to allow the pistol to function. Behlert's system is attached to the frame in front of the trigger guard protruding straight downrange and then up in front of the muzzle of the pistol. This appendage is tunneled out, providing a built in expansion chamber and gas ports (à la Wilson, Plaxco, Brown, Nastoff and Watson) without being permanently attached to the barrel. While resulting in a compensator of considerable corpulence, Behlert's system is undoubtedly effective, due in part to the great mass that it adds to the pistol.

This listing is a typical cross section of the genre produced by some of the major



gunsmiths in the arena of practical shooting; it should by no means be considered an exhaustive list.

Whether or not compensators are "practical" is an issue that you'll have to decide for yourself. If concealability is your criteria for determining what's practical, then obviously you should limit yourself to utilizing Commanders; but if you're serious about it why not be *really* practical and use only Star PDs or Detonics? If, on the other hand, function dictates practicality for you, then compensators are more practical than adjustable sights, ambidextrous safeties and checkered mainspring housings. It is important to remember that no gunsmith, match administrator, gunwriter or anyone else can dictate what is practical for you.

The old cliché, "try it, you'll like it," seems to hold true to compensated .45's. I've never known a shooter who had one that went back to a standard length .45.



## THE GAMMON

Continued from page 44

Kelsey toyed around with several ideas: first the development of a new pistol that would handle the higher pressures of a more powerful cartridge, and the development of a cartridge that would exceed the IPSC major power-factor minimums (power factor is determined by multiplying the weight of the bullet in grains times the velocity). Realizing that the cost of designing and producing a totally new pistol that didn't use the old Browning locking system would not be practical, Kelsey decided to use the Gammon II system, and the .38 Super automatic cartridge. The average power factor for this cartridge is only 158,000, falling far short of the minimum major power factor; however, Kelsey's plan was to use a load that would not only bring the cartridge up to the minimum, but exceed the power factor.

Using his new Gammon II system, Kelsey was confronted with several major problems. By nature of design of the Colt Automatic pistol, there is an area at the rear of the chamber where the cartridge case is not fully supported. It is in this area that cartridges loaded beyond their safe limits will either swell or rupture. To convert the Gammon II, a new barrel was built to Kelsey's specifications by Irv Stone of Bar-Sto Precision Machine Company. The new barrel was designed to completely support that area of the case where it was most likely to rupture. Due to the angle of the feed ramp on the Colt Mk.IV pistol and the design of the new barrel chamber, the breech face had to be moved forward. This was an expensive modification to an already costly gun.

The new .38 Super Gammon II pistol design was successful, with loads that developed average power factors in excess of 190,000 with a 130 grain bullets. Although the new design was successful, in that it would handle "hot" loads, it still presented



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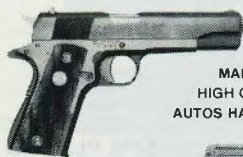
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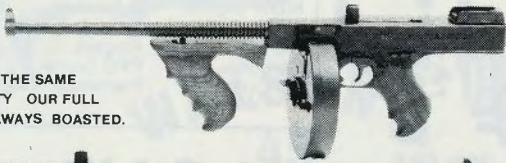
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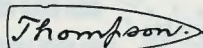
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additional problems: The cost to produce the elaborate Super Gammon II for the over-loaded .38 Super automatic cartridge, and the product liability. The latter was his greatest concern. It was these two influencing factors that convinced Kelsey to approach the problems from a different direction.

Producing the pistol isn't the problem. The liability comes when "hot" load data is published, and some fool tries to shoot these cartridges in an un-modified gun. As I said, Kelsey reversed his approach and went back to the drawing table.


With the idea of trying to make an affordable competition pistol based on the performance of the "hot" .38 Super cartridge, Kelsey redesigned the barrel. Using the same design that he had perfected for the Super Gammon II, Kelsey moved the chamber area back instead of moving the breech face forward. To compensate for the original feed-ramp angle, Kelsey made a modification that moves the feed-ramp back where it is in-line with the new barrel throat. The modifications are simple and should be inexpensive.

The preliminary tests of the new concept have been very successful. Kelsey has decided to produce his own cartridge for this new gun. Called the Devel 9mm, the cartridge will be slightly larger than the .38 Super Automatic cartridge. This will prevent the cartridge from accidentally being loaded in a gun that wasn't designed to handle the higher pressures. The conversion will consist of a new Bar-Sto barrel and original feed-ramp being machined off at Devel's plant. A new two-stage feed ramp block will be installed by cross-pinning it to the frame. Modifications will be done on both the Government Model and Commander with a variety of options being offered. The basic conversion will consist of a new barrel and frame alteration. For those who want that additional accuracy, Devel Corporation will also add their tapered barrel bushing and fit it to the slide. The ultimate conversion will include a barrel with the "Abater" and tapered barrel bushing. With the addition of the Varicoil package, Magazine Speed Release and Devel's Competition 8-round magazine, one isn't too far away from owning their own Gammon II.

I have only touched lightly on the subject of the .38 Super cartridge and the Devel conversion that will safely handle a cartridge loaded to exceed the IPSC major power factor. The pros and cons of this cartridge for competition, defensive or combat shooting is a story in itself. For the past year, Ken Hackathorn and myself have been involved with Charles Kelsey, Jr. in various stages of the Devel Gammon development programs. The opportunity to shoot all of the Gammon developments has given me an appreciation for the technical advancements of each successive model.

Devel Corporation has moved into a larger production facility. Although still within the greater Cleveland area, their new address is: Devel Corporation, 7100 Wilson Mills Road, Chesterland, Ohio 44026 USA.





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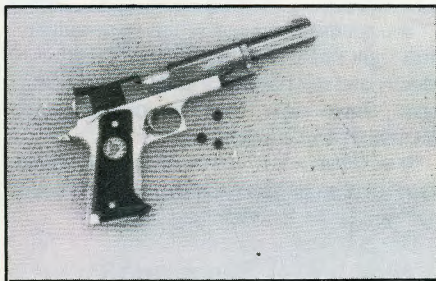
## PIVOTING TRIGGER FOR THE .45

By Michael Bane

Even on its best days, the trigger in Colt's 1911 Government Model could use some improvement. The straight-back pull of the 1911 has been the bane of competition shooters since the 1911 was introduced almost 75 years ago.

A competent—with emphasis on the word *competent*—gunsmith can lower the trigger pull to a couple of pounds, but most combat gunsmiths balk when the customer asks for anything less than four. A superlight trigger pull, with its minimal hammer/sear engagement, is potentially dangerous in the hands of anyone but an expert shooter.

So when combat pistolsmith Ben Jones of Ruskin, Florida, announced that he was going to build a .45 Colt with a one-pound *safe* trigger pull, veteran shooters didn't exactly line up to wait for it.



"I don't believe in changing a gun around if there's no reason for it," he says, "but that one-pound trigger intrigued me. It's intrigued me since I first began working on .45s for the military in 1954."

The results, however, surpassed even his own expectations.

Working with veteran police firearms instructor and PPC champion Ray Haas, his partner in Gun Craft, Inc., Jones developed the Matchmaster, a Colt Combat Commander with a unique compensating system and a flawless, ultra-smooth *pivoting* trigger.

Although the idea of a pivoting trigger is hardly new—the Browning Hi-Power and several of the Star autos use them—Jones' execution brings the idea to a new level. The stock trigger is replaced with a custom serrated trigger modeled after the familiar S&W revolver triggers. A special insert is machined and fitted behind the new trigger.

When the pivoting trigger is pulled, it pushes against a machined pin fitted into the insert. The pin pushes against the stock trigger stirrup, similar to the system used in a Seecamp double action conversion.

The closest comparison to the Matchmaster's trigger pull is a *tuned* S&W single action pull! And that's with no work at all on the Commander's hammer and sear.

"Originally, the trigger pull out of the box was six, six and a half pounds," Haas says. "With no hammer/sear alteration, it came down to three and a half. It *feels* like two and a

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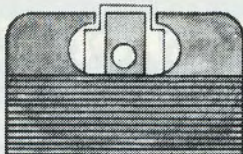


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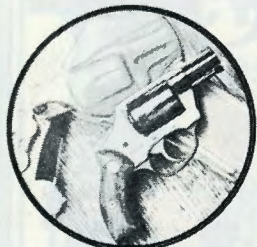
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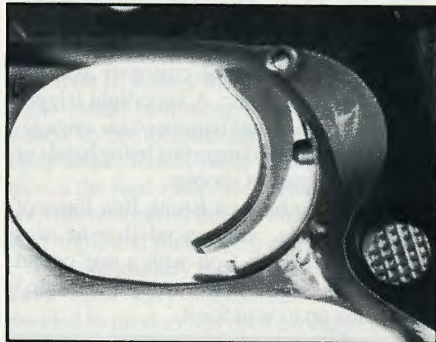
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half, because of the added leverage of the pivoting trigger."

With the design of the pivoting trigger in place, Jones and Haas turned their expertise to the rest of the Commander. Jones began designing a compensating system for a seven-inch barrel. For those of you who think .45 compensators are the newest things under the sun, Jones' compensator was based on research he did in the military in the mid-1950s. Instead of the usual heavy weight hung on the barrel, the Gun Craft compensator is basically a heavy barrel bushing, with ports milled on each side to match ports in the seven-inch Nap-Co barrel.



"You get the advantage of the extra weight, extra sight radius and extra barrel length for velocity and still have lock up at the end of the barrel," Jones says. "Plus the gun disassembles exactly like a stock Commander."

"It is," Haas adds, "a way of getting around some of the reliability and wear problems that crop up with compensated guns."

The Matchmaster also features a full-length rib with an Eliason rear sight and a S&W partridge front sight, a Detonics recoil spring system, and a custom designed and machined solid backstrap replacing the main-spring housing and grip safety.

The two and a half year-old Gun Craft shop itself is almost a throwback to older days. The work, mostly on .45s for police carry and practical competition, although some revolvers sneak in, is meticulously done by hand. Neither Haas nor Jones will allow shortcuts, and that precision shows in their work. Although Jones' primary job remains the production of fine farm machinery, his conversation is spiced with stories of wars most people haven't even heard of, fighting with three armies. His favorite place for a vacation is still El Salvador. "You'd love it," he says.

What about the one pound trigger pull?

"Well," he says with his Florida drawl, "I got it. Even with a tough return spring, though, you've got to have mighty quick fingers to keep from firing that second shot!"

In addition to .45 combat and revolver gunsmithing, Gun Craft offers complete range facilities and firearms instruction, including special IPSC classes.

Cost of pivoting trigger, installed, is \$300-325. The compensator bushing is \$150, less barrel.

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# INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

## A NEW POWDER — SOME NEWS FROM RUGER, COLT AND MATCH INFO

The August issue of our other firearms publication, GUNS Magazine, broke the story of the Golden Powder Company of Las Vegas, Nevada. At the moment they are preparing to offer a black powder substitute. Nothing startling about that, you say? Right, but, watch out for this outfit. The propellant has great possibilities for use in a caseless cartridge (it has been fired successfully in a Luger) and it is many times safer to produce than either black or smokeless powders. We will report on this as soon as an application for cartridge handguns is ready.

### What's New

Colt's shorter-than-Commander auto should be formally announced before you read this, and dealers should have the little jewel in stock shortly.

There is a rumble that the Iver Johnson

.380 will soon grow up into a full blown 9mm. That will make quite a pocket pistol.

The NRA Show (which is still a month away as this is written) is removed to be the stage for the premier showing of Ruger's little single six revolver all grown up into a center-fire—the .32 H&R Magnum? Also the return of the .357 Maximum?

The big time money shoots are not all on the west coast. Smith & Wesson will run a major match in October—by invitation—with a \$10,000 check for the winner and prizes going back to 15th place. This will be a three-gun match; rifle, shotgun and handgun.

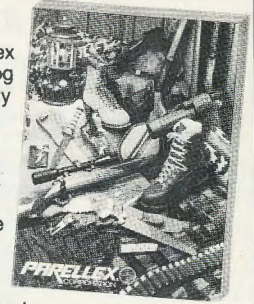
United Sporting Arms, Inc., makers of the Seville single action revolvers, is under new management. Jeff Munnell, Secretary and General Consul, tells us that a new company has been formed and all assets of the former United Sporting Arms of Arizona have been

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purchased. Munnell said that the new company is going to make available all of the popular center fire chamberings, including the .357 Maximum, the new .375 U.S.A. Super Mag and the .454 Magnum. The address is 2021 East 14th St., Tucson, AZ 85719.

### Lets You and Him Fight

The swords have been drawn, and the great Walther PPK/S war has begun. On one hand we have Manurhin of France saying that they have been building the Walther PP line of pistols since 1952, selling them on their own and to Carl Walther.

On the other hand, we have Interarms proclaiming, "... this is THE Walther PPK/S! It's the genuine article, not a look-alike copy made by others."

Both claim that their Walther is the best, with Manurhin stating, "One might logically question whether the PP series pistols manufactured in Alabama only since 1979 incorporate the same quality standards and craftsmanship expertise which Manurhin has attained by over 33 years of production..." In their advertisement, Interarms states, "If it doesn't carry the (Walther Banner) it's just not a Walther and it's not the best."

So ended Round One in this fight for the Walther Championship of the World. No real punches have been landed as yet. Round One was a war of words. We'll report on Round Two in the next issue.

### Join the Club

First there was IPSC, now, we have USPSA. For those who don't know, USPSA is the United States Practical Shooting Association. If you are an IPSC shooter you already belong to a local club. However, this is a national organization which is attempting to get all IPSC shooters together. Dues are \$20 a year. For more information contact Dave Arnold, USPSA, P.O. Box 1990, Dept. AH, Grafton, VA 23692.



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