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# AMERICAN HANDGUNNER



Cover: A dashing duo of Wilson Accu-Comps. Photo: Nick Karras.

JULY/AUGUST 1985 Vol. 10, No. 53

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# HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

## BALLISTIC STUDY SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON OLD DEBATE OVER STOPPING POWER

Conservatively speaking, you share the reading of this column with well over 150,000 other handgun shooters and reloaders around the world. Among them is Bruce D. Ragsdale, M.D., a U.S. Army staff pathologist and an associate professor of pathology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. Dr. Ragsdale has offered to share the results of his research on the subject of gunshot wounds.

The information he has gathered is extensively founded on previous testing and observation (the bibliography cites 91 sources of reference), and reveals much about the temporary cavitation effects of various bullets in living human tissue. For this reason, excerpts from his paper, "Wound Management: A Historical Perspective," are applicable to predictions of the Relative Incapacitation Indexes (Stopping Power) of all handgun bullets.

"The severity of a wound," Ragsdale reports, "is directly related to the amount of

kinetic energy lost by the bullet in the body, because the kinetic energy of a missile is dissipated in bullet deformation and tissue damage. The three recognized mechanisms of bullet injury are (1) laceration and crushing of tissues forced apart (the principal effect of low-velocity missiles); (2) shock waves due to compression of the medium in front of the missile, moving out at approximately the speed of sound in water (4,800 fps), that instantaneously raises pressure up to 100 atmospheres, or 1,500 foot-pounds per square-inch; and (3) temporary cavitation.

"Retardant forces of tissue decrease the velocity of the missile during penetration and kinetic energy is expended on tissue damage. Retardant forces (e.g. energy absorption) correlate with the specific gravity of the tissue. Thus, more energy can be deposited by a given missile in muscle and bone than in low-density lung . . .

"The size and configuration of the maxi-

mum temporary cavity depend on missile velocity, mass, caliber, shape, construction, and deformation as well as target substance. Temporary cavitation becomes substantial only with impact velocities above 1,000 feet per second."

Elsewhere in his report, Ragsdale notes that "for a given aim point, the bullet producing the largest temporary cavity at the proper depth, defined by the location of vital organs, should have the greater likelihood of producing incapacitation.

"An index of relative incapacitation has been defined by a program sponsored by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) . . . The relative incapacitation index goes beyond Hatcher's concept of relative stopping power, striking energy, and ranking by kinetic energy loss in gelatin. It also takes into account the characteristics of the bullet/weapon combination, range, marksmanship, point of aim, impact point, human anatomy, and the size and configuration of the maximum temporary cavity as determined by simulation . . . It's quantitative, multifactorial, scientific approach is an appealing alternative to emotional opinions and anecdotal or subjective studies. However, since its conclusions are based on simulation, spokesman for those with practical experience have questioned its relevance to real-life gunfights."

Indeed, many handgunners are inclined to observe that laboratory simulations involving gelatin blocks and a "computer man," to whose putative innards have been assigned various degrees of vulnerability, can never be more than remotely indicative of what will happen when a determined miscreant is shot with this or that bullet.

Considering the foregoing, note that Ragsdale said that the largest temporary cavities *should* (not would) have the greater likelihood of producing incapacitation, and that the *severity* (not necessarily the effectiveness), of a wound is directly related to the amount of kinetic energy lost by the bullet in the body.

Government studies aimed at rating the terminal effectiveness of handgun bullets in use (or being considered for adoption) by police agencies began in 1973. The initial summary, published in 1975, has since been augmented by other summaries to establish a set of RII tables. The one we'll be referring to first, NIJ 100-83, includes commercially available handgun ammunition only. Conspicuous objections challenging the relevance of the ratings on this table have arisen because the 230-grain "hardball" bullet from the .45 Auto stands somewhat below smaller bullets from lesser factory rounds, such as the .38 Special, 9MM Auto, and even the little .380 Auto. There are exceptions, notably with the 185-grain Silvertip jacketed hollow-point, wherein the grand old .45 Auto fares better, but the rest of the .45s, including the vaunted 255-grain Long Colt bullet, are drastically downgraded.

Handloaded ammunition, in calibers .355" through .452", was tested in a later study, a summary of which can be reviewed

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in NIJ Report 101-83. In this study, Mann test barrels (not service weapons), were used, because, according to the experimenters, "chamber pressures can exceed those permissible in standard handguns." The caution is justified. Consider, for example, the level of pressure associated with launching a 115-grain 9MM bullet to over 1500 fps from a four-inch autoloader. This, by the way, was but one of many "blue pill" loads fired during the tests. It gleaned an RII rating of 34.5, compared to a meager 9.4 for a bullet of the same weight and shape fired at 1272 fps in the tests involving factory loads.

Although many of the bullet-weight/velocity-RII combinations shown in 101-83 evoke suspicions of high chamber pressures (no powder-charge or pressure numbers are included), others might be considered by the handloader.

Big-bore boosters will be pleased to learn that the highest RII in the handloading category went to a bullet loaded for the .45 Long Colt cartridge. A 200-grain Speer jacketed hollow-point, at 1509 fps, caused an enormous, gourd-shaped hollow and earned an impressive 94.4. As noted earlier, 101-83 does not provide information regarding powder charges; however, we are aware that such 200-grain velocities are within easy reach of the handloader with a .45 Colt barrel from Thompson/Contender.

I realize that the extensive testing herein briefly reviewed is centered on ammunition



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.38 SPL 125-GR. SPEER JHP (+ P)	4"	1006	21.9	.357 SPEER 125-GR. JHP	1066	27.1	HS-6 7.5
.357 MAG. 140-GR. SPEER JHP	4"	1221	41.8	.357 SPEER 140-GR. JHP	1240	46.4	BLUE DOT 12.5
.41 REM. MAGNUM 210-GR. JSP	4"	1260	51.6	.41 REM. 210-GR. JSP	1276	55.6	BLUE DOT 14.0
.44 MAG. 200-GR. SPEER JHP	4"	1277	67.3*	.44 SPEER 200-GR. JHP	1332	80.5	WW 231 11.5
.45 AUTO REMINGTON 230-GR. FMJ	5"	864	4.3	.45 SPEER 200-GR. JHP	928	24.8	HS-6 8.2
.45 COLT WINCHESTER 255-GR. LEAD RN	7.5"	821	3.7	.45 SPEER 250-GR. SWC	1384	78.4	WW 296 23.3**

\* Highest RII rating with factory loads tested.  
 \*\* Magnum primer. (.45 Colt Load for Ruger and T/C Contender only.)

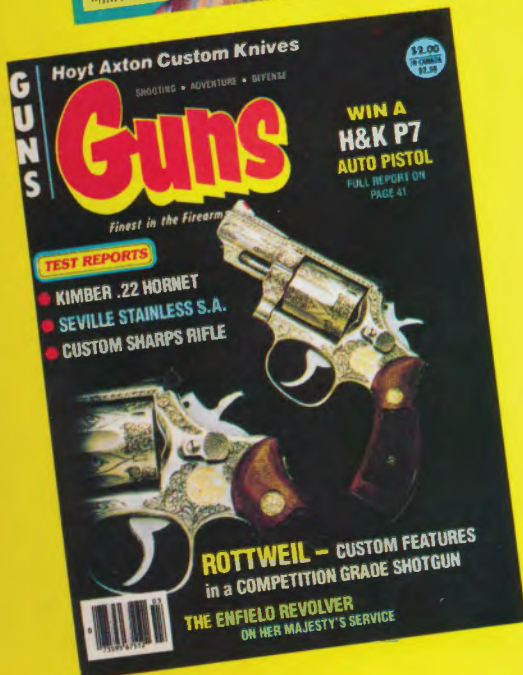
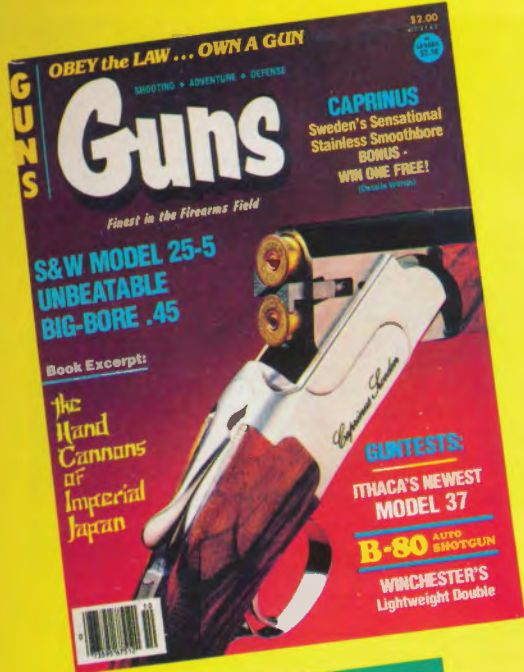
for police use, and that police are somewhat restricted in their choice of weapons, and especially of bullets. The foregoing does not, however, stem my frustration at not having seen test results reflecting the use of cavity-nosed bullets, and double or triple wadcutter loads, especially in .38 and .44 calibers. Furthermore, cavity-nosed bullets, such as the .38 Hydra-Shock and the .44 Manstopper, are capable of tremendous expansion—and at velocities well under the presumed expansion threshold of 1,000 feet per second.

I am grateful to Dr. Ragsdale for his valuable contribution to this column and its readers, and at once compelled to defer to the authority of another U.S. Army medical researcher, Col. Frank T. Chamberlin, who rather loosely philosophized: "It is one thing for the 'slide-rule genius' to sit down at a desk or feed information into a computer or gaze on photos of bullets taken in flight and then state with authority that this bullet will do this or that every time . . . However, some of these buzzards can run you off your stool and give you all the 'ballistic' answers . . . I'm dead 'agin' these characters who can *always* tell why or how because the slide rule said so or the 'moon was in the third quarter' when they started to figure."

The RII ratings, however, are substantially infrastructured by a thorough system of laboratory testing. After reviewing the results obtained with various handloads, I'm inclined to believe that the researchers are at last onto something worthwhile.







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# COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

## HAVE YOU MADE "THE DECISION?" IF NOT, DON'T KEEP A GUN FOR SELF-DEFENSE

*Editor's note: This is the second part of a three-part series Ayooob prepared on the mental aspects of gun fights.*

The instant of truth has arrived. You hoped never to use your gun for this, but you carried it because you feared this very moment might come to pass.

The mugger is bearing down on you, upraised knife in hand, and when you said, "Stop or I'll shoot!" he sneered and kept coming. You know if you try to run you'll never make it.

The gun is in your hand now, levelled at your attacker's kill zone.

Your finger is on the trigger.

And now, for the first time, the enormity of it hits you: "If I press this trigger, I will take the life of another human being, a man with a father and mother, perhaps children. *Can I do this awful thing?*"

If you have to think it through, you'll never come to an answer because the knife will pierce your heart far quicker than you can resolve that deep, philosophical question.

This is why any man or woman who carries a gun for protection is a fool unless they have *already* asked themselves that terrible question, and come to the answer, "Yes, I can extinguish another human being's life *if* that human being is immediately and otherwise unavoidably endangering the life and limb of me or another innocent person I have the right to protect."

Any other answer, and you should put the gun away.

If you reply, "I couldn't possibly shoot a felon; I just want a gun to scare him away," your gun will get you into more trouble than it will ever get you out of.

Criminals are predators, and any predator can sense whether or not the prey is truly going to resist.

If you just try to scare him, he'll take the gun away and do something hideous to you with it.

If your answer is, "I'm not sure if I could kill a violent criminal in self-defense," put the gun away until you *are* sure.

The defensive handgun carries with it awesome and final power, and that degree of power does not belong in the hands of dilantantes who have not fully understood its meaning and committed themselves to what they are doing. A person unprepared to exercise a power he has assumed, in my experience, also lacks the responsibility that must always accompany such a high degree of power.

In Lethal Force Institute's LFI-1 courses, where law-abiding private citizens with

police references come to me to learn the discipline police call "judicious use of deadly physical force," I make them re-evaluate the reasons why they have come to me with a gun, and ask themselves if they have truly made "The Decision."

I do this in several ways. Most of them have never seen violent death by gunfire. I'll show them a series of autopsy pictures to bring them to reality, and to make them fully understand the awesome and ultimate power they hold when they pick up the defensive firearm.

It was this phase of the training that the book "Shooting Schools: An Analysis" was referring to when it said, "Ayooob's pictures will revolt you." They will indeed, and if you can't face it on a two-dimensional screen, you're not ready to stand over a dead mugger in a blood-splattered alley where you just found out that only one person was going to walk away from the violent arena of this particular "contest."

I will show you pictures beyond the gun. I want you to know what you or your loved ones will look like if you *don't* stop the knife-wielder, the rapist with the bludgeon, or the thug who's going to stomp on your neck while you're down on that gritty alley floor.

That's because, like every coin, deadly force has two sides: I want you to know the potential results of the power you wield as an armed, law-abiding adult. And I want you to know the depth and the breadth of the horrors that defensive firearm is there to prevent.

You should know the horrors that may one day befall an innocent person who counted on you for protection, only to find in their last, betrayed second on Earth that you wielded a power you did not fully command, and had extended to them a mantle of protection you were not in fact prepared to shield them beneath, "in the gravest extreme."

I teach my first time students, too, the horrors of "post shooting trauma," the psycho-emotional aftermath of having taken a life, even the life of a malignantly evil criminal.

Most decent people have some idea that killing is not going to be fun. They do not, however, grasp the full depths of the sociological nightmare that follows.

They don't begin to understand the terrible impact upon their lives and the lives of their families when the next morning's paper reads, not "Good Guy Turns Tables on Mugger," but "Local Man Slays Teen in Alley."

I've been accused, as a result of this training, of "trying to create a generation of conscientious objector policemen." In fact, I'm creating students who know to the fullest

  
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extent what it means to take a human life in self defense, have learned what the deepest ramifications of that are *and how to come to terms with them.*

What this creates is not a conscientious objector, but an armed man or woman who has found the answer to the hardest question. A man or woman who will *never* drop the hammer on a man unless there is absolutely no alternative. A man or woman who will never hesitate on their gun and watch an innocent person be savaged by a criminal just because he or she could not come to terms with the one awful way of preventing it.

The key to learning to use deadly force appropriately in self-defense is to avoid becoming "a killer." Don't believe these ersatz gunfighting books that tell you, "To survive a gunfight, you must be ruthless."

Dear God, have you ever looked up the definition of "ruthless" in a dictionary? "Cruel; predisposed to causing pain."

Leave that crap for the Marquis de Sade. To use the ultimate violence, you should not be cruel, you should be dispassionate. You did not put the trigger because you were predisposed to causing pain, you pulled the trigger to avert greater pain to the innocent.

Do not destroy the village in order to save it. Just because there are soulless man-things out there that prey upon the innocent, you do not sacrifice your own humanity to be able to fight them off.

Do not become a wolf so you can protect the innocent from wolves.

Be, instead, the protective sheepdog. He does not kill the wolf for bloodlust, he kills the wolf, if he must, to protect the lambs.

And if the wolf is smart enough to flee from his bared fangs, the sheepdog will let him go, and let him live.

And, quite frankly, if you're not a cop who has worn an oath to protect the public at risk of your own life, you may not even need to be a sheepdog.

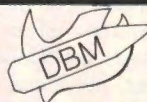
It may suffice to be a lamb with a ready .38.

When you have achieved this mindset—the ability to use deadly force, but only if you absolutely must—you are actually less likely to have to kill in self-defense, or in the defense of other innocents. We shall discuss this happy coincidence next issue.



*Massad Ayoob's advice for coming to terms with criminal violence is covered in more detail in his modern classic books, "In the Gravest Extreme" (\$7.95) and "The Truth About Self Protection" (\$4.95). Both are available from Police Bookshelf, P.O. Box 122; Concord, NH 03301. Add \$2.00 for postage and handling.*

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## CONGRATULATIONS!

The *American Handgunner* congratulates *Cop Talk* columnist Massad Ayoob and his wife Dorothy on the birth of a bouncing baby girl.

Justine (for justice) Lauren Ayoob was delivered by Mas personally on Jan. 17, 1985. She tipped the scales at 9 pounds, 12 ounces and measured 22 inches.

Justine joins Mas and Dorothy's first-born daughter Cathy in their home in New Hampshire. Cathy Ayoob, 7, has already won her first marksmanship award, and her eighth birthday present will be a Beretta Minx .22LR pistol.

Mas believes in teachin' em young!

Mas had been out when the call came that his wife was going into labor. Mas dashed to the hospital and was ordered to don hospital gowns to attend the delivery. He locked his sidearm, a Colt .45 auto, in the narcotics chest at the hospital and pulled the greens over his back-up Model 60 in an ankle holster.

He didn't have time to remove his body armor. A nurse noticed the body armor and inquired.

"Oh, that's a bullet proof vest," Mas answered after the happy delivery.

"But why did you wear it in the delivery room?" asked the puzzled nurse.

"Hey, it was a little Ayoob. She might have come out shooting!" Mas said.

## DATES SET FOR '85 PIN BUSTERS

The *Pin Busters World Championship* bowling pin match will be Oct. 12 and 13 at Wes Thompson's Range near Los Angeles, Calif.

This exciting pin busting match is restricted to handguns only with classes established for different action types (single-action wheelgun, 9mm auto, unlimited auto, etc).

Last year's match was a roaring success under the expert organizational guidance of *Gun Owners of America*.

Shooters are classified according to ability, and prizes are extremely generous. For more information write, Pin Busters '85, P.O. Box 11027, Burbank, CA, 91510-10-27.



# A little peace of mind from Beretta.

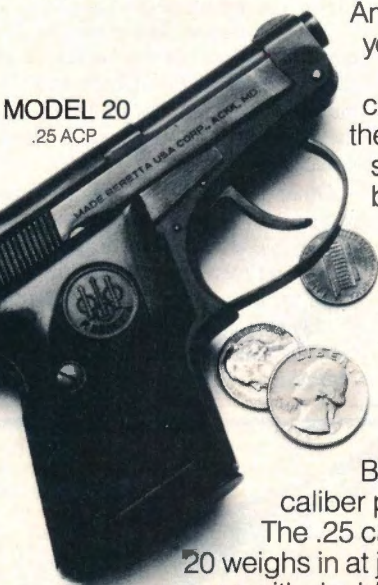
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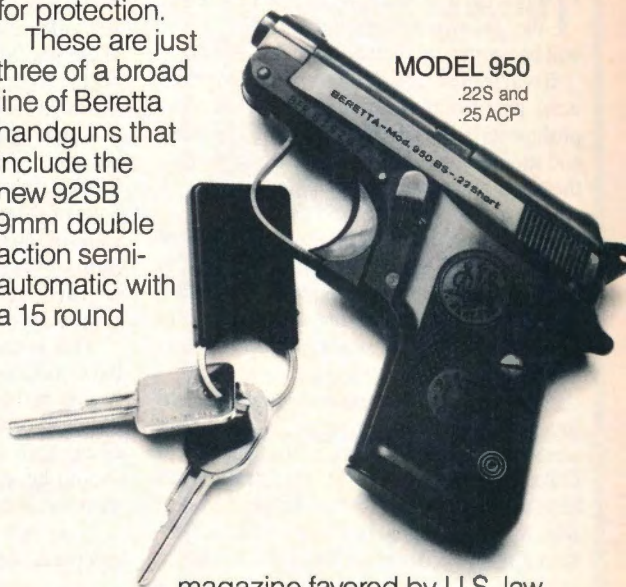
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# THE GUILD SPEAKS

GEORGE WESSINGER

## NEW COLUMN TO FEATURE MATERIAL FROM PISTOLSMITHS GUILD MEMBERS

This is the first of a new column devoted to the *American Pistolsmiths Guild*, and it will be written by members of the *Guild*.

It will feature new developments and products, pistolsmith profiles, special accomplishments by members and many interesting and useful topics. By way of introduction to the *Guild*, its purpose and its goals, a bit of current events and history is necessary.

The annual business meeting for 1985 of the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* was held in Atlanta, Ga., in conjunction with the SHOT Show. This meeting was one of the largest in *Guild* history and much business was conducted.

Eight new voting members were inducted into the *Guild*: Bill Wilson of Wilson's Gun Shop Inc., Berryville, Ark.; Jim Clark Jr. of Clark's Custom, Keithville, La.; Jerry Kraft of Mag-na-Port Arms, Mt. Clemens, Mich.; John Spillbourn of J. S. Custom, Santa Barbara, Calif.; Ed Brown of Brown's Gun Shop,

Perry, Mo.; Ray Wilson of Gun Specialties, Ashville, N.C.; Jim Rose of Carsat Gun Shop, Jacksonville, Fla.; and Terry Kopp of Terry Kopp Gunsmithing Services, Lexington, Mo.

Three new associate members were also inducted: Bob Arganbright of Northwoods, Mo., a freelance gunwriter; Gordon Neddow of Manchester, Conn., retired supervisor of the Colt Custom Shop; and Rose (S. Sam) Wessinger of Chapin, S.C., the engraver at Wessinger Custom Guns and Engraving.

This is the largest number of new members inducted since the charter members began the *Guild* and shows how much the *Guild* is growing. There are still many talented and well qualified pistolsmiths that should be with us, and we cordially invite them to contact the secretary for information.

New officers, for the coming year, were elected at the Atlanta meeting. They are: Lou

Ciamillo, President; Al Marvel, Treasurer; and George Wessinger, Secretary.

In recent years, the tremendous popularity of handguns, handgun hunting, and handgun competition of all types and descriptions has created a large market for custom pistolsmithing. More gunsmiths are pursuing this work and many are excellent craftsmen who produce fine quality work.

However, there are many more who advertise and attempt quality workmanship but achieve little more than a good try.

With this in mind, Lou Ciamillo of Maryland Gun Works and Joe Kassay of Joe K's Inc. polled a number of the top pistolsmiths in the country and the idea of the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* was formed.

In 1977 the first meeting was held in conjunction with the NRA National Police Revolver Championships in Jackson, Miss. Eleven charter members began the *Guild*.

Their common desire was to promote a standard of quality, honesty, and workmanship in the pistolsmithing trade, by ascertaining the competency of individuals before they are recognized and admitted to the *Guild*.

Other goals include: To provide a free exchange of technical data between members of the *Guild*. To foster a fraternal feeling among its members. To do the things that stand for the benefit of the organization and the advancement of the pistolsmithing profession. To provide the shooter with information regarding some particular type of work

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desired and advise if a quality pistolsmith was available near him.

With these goals and ideals in mind, the requirements for membership to the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* are naturally very strict. Only experienced and talented pistolsmiths are considered. This insures the shooter who chooses a *Guild* member that the workmanship produced by this smith is recognized by the best pistolsmiths in the country as being of excellent quality.

The *Guild* was organized by gunsmiths who specialized in custom pistolsmithing and has essentially been limited to this type of person, since the gunsmith that is not involved in pistolsmithing to this extent, generally, would not meet the requirements.

Pistolsmiths who apply to the *Guild* for membership are screened by the current members as to reputation, quality of workmanship, experience and manner in which the applicant conducts business. Each member is required by *Guild* by-laws to give an unconditional guarantee on all of his work.

Failure to comply with this or any other *Guild* by-law could result in a vote by the membership to expel the member from the organization.


Since we realize that there are many reputable gunsmiths who are not members of the *Guild*, it should be pointed out that nothing in this article should be construed to imply that because a person is not a *Guild* member his work is not satisfactory.

Over the past eight years, the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* has been supported and encouraged by many people in the shooting industry and has prospered and grown due to the dedication and work of the elected officers and several other members, most notably, Jim Clark, the *Guild's* past president.

Growth in recent years has been rapid and all indications are that this growth will continue.

Future plans include the printing of a membership directory that will detail each member and list his specialties. This directory will be available to the public, upon request, to aid in the selection of a top pistolsmith to do a specific job in a specific area.

There are also plans, in the near future, to recognize the most outstanding pistolsmith in the country each year.

The future looks bright. Applications for membership to the *Guild* may be obtained by writing to the *American Pistolsmiths Guild*, c/o George Wessinger—Secretary, Route 1, Box 40, Chapin, South Carolina, 29036. 

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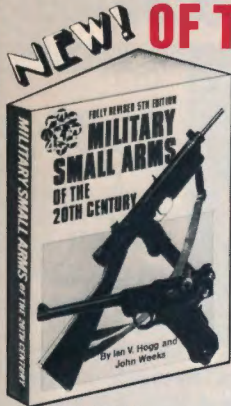
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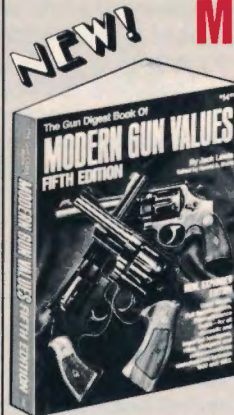


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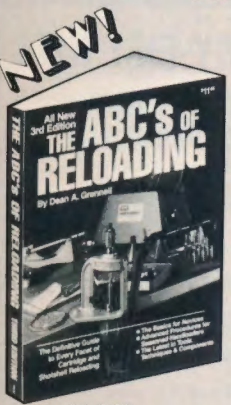


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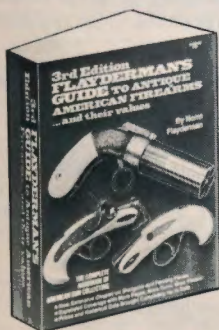


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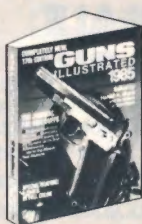
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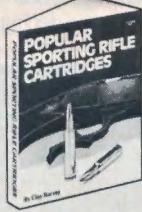
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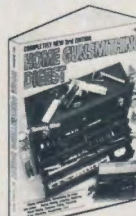
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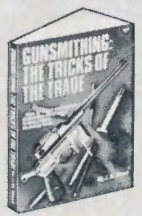
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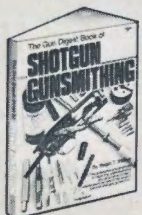
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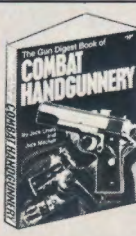
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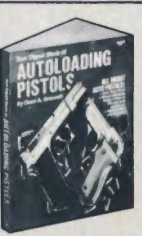
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# HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

## HUNTING HALL OF FAMER NIGHTINGALE TAKES LION, LEOPARD, JUMBO AND BUFF

Lucky Nightingale is the winner of the 1985 *Handgun Hunters Hall of Fame Award*.

A little over two years ago Lucky attended a seminar I gave at the *Safari Club* convention. He took possession of a 375 JDJ a week later and since then has taken a greater variety of big game with a handgun in a similar time period than anyone in history.

He has hunted several continents successfully and his list of record book trophy animals is almost unbelievable. He owns the Number One Bontebuck and has taken brown bear, Cape buffalo, lion, leopard and elephant on the dangerous game end of his hunting.

He enjoys it and isn't about to quit.

Bob Good was the 1984 winner of this award and also shoots a 375 JDJ.

In theory, anyone can win this award. You could walk out your back door and get a crack at an outstanding whitetail and win the award. For information on the particulars write *Handgun Hunters Hall of Fame*, 41302 Executive Drive, Mt. Clemens, MI 48045.

Handgun hunters have been busy in 1984. More and more of them have been running off to Africa to try dangerous game. I know of 12 elephant taken with the 375 JDJ, one with a 45-70 and one with a .44 Mag Stalker loaded with the 320 JDJ cast bullet. About two dozen Cape buffalo, several lion, several leopard, and several rhino have been taken by handgunners.

### WHAT'S NEW

Well, for one thing Marty Liggins of Accurate Arms Co. Inc. (Box 167, McEwen, TN 37101) tells me that sales of Data powders is growing by leaps and bounds. In fact they have a new manual for their powders that's available for a buck.

Marty also asked to help correct a typo in some of their older loading sheets. Seems the gremlins go to the 6.5 TCU data. The correct charge weight of MR-5744 under a 120 grain bullet is 19 grains. Use of greater amounts is definitely an overload and using over 19 grains can have disastrous results.

Nothing is the 309 JDJ chambering in SSK Contenders. The 309 is simply the 444 Marlin case necked to 30 caliber in a full length 308 die properly adjusted. The case is then fireformed to a 40 degree shoulder. It's best with 150-165 grain bullets at 23-2400 fps from 14 inch barrels. It shoots flat and accurately. Most T/C 30 caliber barrels can be rechambered or new barrels are available from SSK.

A 270 and 340 grain SSK mold for the 454 Casull revolver is now available. A 340 at 1600 fps is quite a bit of power in a revolver.

Jim Kelly of Metaloy Industries (Rt. 3,

Box 211-D, Berryville, AR 72616) is a likeable, reliable, high quality plater of guns. Unlike many platers, Jim knows guns and that's what's needed. Metaloy is essentially a hard chrome of the non-glare variety. Almost 100 percent of the SSK Contender barrels are finished in Metaloy. If you're considering a

finish for looks, wear and rust resistance give ole Jim a shot at it; I'll bet you will be satisfied.

Got the itch to go on a big game hunt? Don't know where to go? Don't have the bucks for an expensive guided hunt?

Handgun Hunters International (POB 357 Mag, Bloomingdale, OH 43910) may be able to help you. Members are invited to participate in any of the several low cost hunts held throughout the US and in foreign countries annually.

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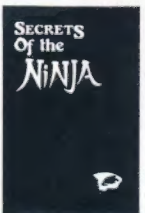


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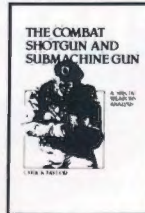


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# INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

CAMERON HOPKINS

## COMPETITORS TO BE CLASSIFIED; BARNHART WINS FLORIDA MATCH

Dave Stanford, IPSC Regional Director, and the USPSA Board of Directors have finalized a plan to classify America's IPSC shooters according to ability. This classification system eliminates the jigsaw pattern of local classifications done *ad hoc* by local IPSC clubs.

There are two ways in which you can be classified: by shooting Official Classification Courses at your local club, or by competing in national matches designated as Qualification Matches. These national matches include shoots like the IPSC Indoor Championship, Inter-Regional Matches like the recent F.I.P.T. or the IPSC National Championship.

A competitor must post scores in at least four classification contests. A maximum of seven scores are considered if the competitor exceeds the four match minimum. There are provisions for re-classification when a shooter improves.

Four courses of fire for classification at your local club will be sent to all affiliated clubs requesting them. The first three courses of fire have been authorized by RD Stanford, and they consist of a standard exercise, a speed shoot and a short assault. The fourth course will be approved soon.

Stanford said the short assault will involve "little or no" special props such as barricades and walls. Any affiliated club should be able to host these three matches without building or buying special equipment.

The first three courses of fire must be shot between April 1 and June 30. The next series of four matches must be shot between July 1 and September 30. These matches are open to everyone, but you must be a member of USPSA to receive a classification.

The break-down on the classification—based on percentage of the top shooter's score—is as follows:

Master . . . . .	85 to 100%
A . . . . .	84.9 to 75%
B . . . . .	74.9 to 60%
C . . . . .	59.9 to 40%
D . . . . .	39.9 and below

The "gamesmen" in the crowd are sure to think of the obvious—sandbagging. Stanford thought of it too. "Generally we don't find too many sandbaggers. If there's indication that somebody's sandbagging, they might get away with it once, but not twice," Stanford said. He did not elaborate on specific sanctions to prevent sandbagging, but he said each case would be dealt with on an individual basis.

Regarding the 1985 IPSC National Championship this November, Stanford said, "I intend to run it as a classified match." Assuming the local clubs host classification matches, there is every reason to anticipate a classified Nationals.

As I said in the previous issue's column, the National Champion will be the individual who wins the match, regardless of class. There will also be class champions so even if you're not a Master Blaster you still have a chance at being, say, C Class IPSC National Champion.

Before leaving the topic of classification, allow me to congratulate Dave Stanford and the USPSA Board of Directors for taking this initiative. He's in the process of incorporating USPSA as a non-profit organization, he

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instituted a Board of Directors and, of course, he's master-minded a National Classification system.

IPSC/USPSA is off and running. Under Stanford's astute leadership, we can all look forward to many more improvements and refinements in the sport.

### F.I.P.T. '85

Jerry Barnhart won the first of the new Inter-Regional Championships in February at the Florida Invitational Pistol Tournament (F.I.P.T.).



PHOTO BY BUDDY WILLIAMS

Barnhart shot magnificently, and held off a field of Master Blasters, including former two-time National Champion John Shaw, Tommy Campbell and IPSC's quintessential gentleman, John Sayle. Let's don't forget a couple of other nationally ranked shooters who looked up only to see Barnhart disappear in a cloud of smoke (was it 231 or Bullseye?). Bill Rogers, Rick Castelow and Brad Butler all shot unbelievably well, but not enough to challenge Barnhart.

Barnhart shot a Nastoff compensated Colt Gov't. in .45 ACP.

The F.I.P.T. attracted shooters from across the country as well as Ecuador, Venezuela and Austria. The field numbered 130 competitors.

Christie Rogers shot her Devel Gammon in .38 Super into first place, allowing her to claim her third F.I.P.T. Ladies Title. That's a clean sweep; there's only been three. National Champ Jo Anne Hall suffered from the ol' match jitters in her first major match as the National Champion, and did not fare well.

Shooters were classed in the first major match testing the new classification system. The class winners were:

First Master: John Sayle

First A: Barney Beasley

First B: Terry Phelps

First C: Terry White

First D: Armando Valdez

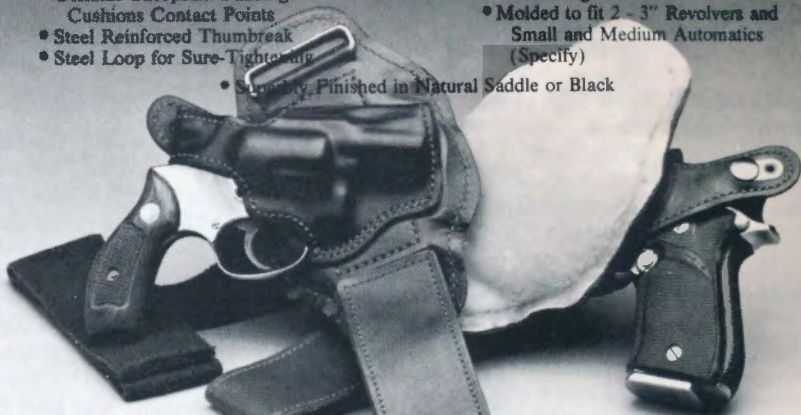
Slots to the 1985 Nationals were awarded

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by RD Dave Stanford to the class winners who reside in the Region. Barnhart, from Pennsylvania, won a slot for being Match Winner.

Terry White did not win a slot to Nationals even though he won C Class because he was not a member of USPSA prior to the match.

Let that be a lesson to you—join USPSA! (USPSA, P.O. Box 811, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284).

The first 60 shooters to sign-up competed in a man-on-man after the match. Barnhart won the man-on-man in the final bout against Tommy Campbell.

The F.I.P.T. stands as one of the smoothest run matches I have ever had the pleasure to attend. The shooters were squaded into details, eight per detail, and assigned shooting times. If your detail was scheduled to shoot at noon, then you shot at noon. Not five after noon, nor five till—at High Noon.

The man responsible for the professionally run match was John Isley. Stanford presented John with the first of a new USPSA Service Award given to individuals who have contributed significantly to the growth and support of IPSC.

On behalf of the *American Handgunner*, I tip my hat to John and his superb staff of Range Officers. Great match, guys.

### WHERE TO WRITE

In the March/April '85 *Insights Into IPSC* I advised new shooters interested in participating in IPSC to contact Dave Arnold of USPSA at an address in Virginia.

Disregard that address. Now that Dave Stanford is the new Regional Director, he receives all IPSC and USPSA mail.

Dave will answer any questions promptly and assist new shooters in joining the Big Brother Program described in March/April's column. Dave's address is: Dave Stanford, President USPSA, Box 811, Sedro Woolley, WA, 98284.

### GO NORTH, YOUNG MAN

The IPSC Canadian National Championship match will be held Aug. 2-6 near Regina, Saskatchewan. The entry fee is \$75 (US) and there is a hotel with reduced rates available for competitors.

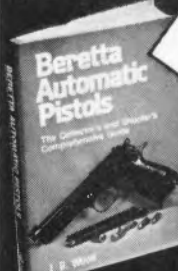
Details are available from Dave Anderson, SC, 1985 Canadian IPSC Nationals, P.O. Box 916, Regina, Saskatchewan, S4P 3B1, Canada, (306) 725-4535.

### READER'S QUESTION

Due to the production schedule of the magazine, it has become evident that we must publish answers to the Reader's Question every other issue. Look for answers to the May/June question in the Sept/Oct issue, and answers to the following question in the Nov/Dec issue.

What is your favorite practice drill, and why?

Send your answers to 'Insights Into IPSC', Suite 200, 591 Camino de la Reina, San Diego, CA 92108. Limit your response to 250 words. Answers must be either typewritten or clearly handwritten. The editor reserves the right to edit published answers for clarity or length.



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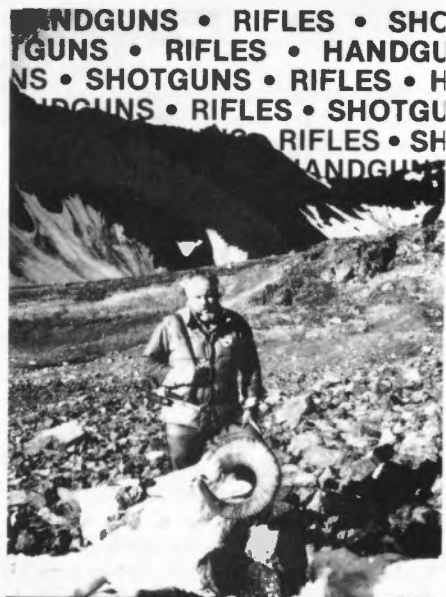
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# COMBAT SHOOTING

MIKE DALTON

## OPTICAL OR IRON? PROS AND CONS OF OPTICAL SIGHTS FOR COMBAT SHOOTING

Optical sighting devices have been used for quite some time now, but, until recently, have proven their worth only on rifles and handguns for hunting purposes. Seldom were they attached to a handgun for target shooting.

The Bianchi Cup provided the catalyst for handgun shooters to strive for any extra points available in this premiere tournament. There was a belief that optical sighting devices could not be made competitive. The only thing that really kept them from being competitive was the fact that the top shooters weren't using them and only certain matches were suited for their use.

As more scopes began appearing on the scene, a few Aimpoints were tried with different degrees of success until 1982. That's when Brian Enos took second place with an Aimpoint just behind Mickey Fowler using a .45 auto with iron sights. The "hand writing" was clearly on the wall as other Aimpoints and scopes made it into the Top Ten.

That's when the experimentation really started and the refinement of mounting systems started taking shape. Soon many custom mounts were showing up and the mounting difficulty was solved.

By the 1983 Bianchi Cup most of the field was using some type of optical sight with the Aimpoints leading the way. Brian Enos won the '84 contest using a Frank Glenn S&W revolver with an Aimpoint. Only two shooters in the Top Ten used iron sights. The others used Aimpoints. Bill Wilson was the highest finishing scope (12th place) showing that the scopes were not to be counted out.

1984 was the Year Of The Optics. Brian Enos again won with an Aimpoint and the entire Top Ten used optics with eight being Aimpoints and two scopes. John Shaw took second with a 1X Burris and Bill Wilson seventh with a Thompson Center 1.5 RP.

Why have optics done so well at the Bianchi Cup? Well, because the match format consists of fixed time limits that are comfortable, and the main emphasis is on accuracy. The competitors must keep their shots in the 10-ring, an 8-inch circle, and the top shooters strive to keep them in the 4-inch X-ring. The optics and the Aimpoints helped the shooters come closer to this goal.

The reason the Aimpoints have become the popular choice of most competitors is the fact that there is no parallax. The red dot doesn't need to be centered in the glass to be on "zero," and there is no "black out" that occurs in a scope without the proper eye relief.

The Aimpoints also have little (Mark III)

or no magnification (Mark II). This helps keep the optics from dancing around. Even the shooters that prefer scopes use low power units for this reason.

It took awhile for the shooters to get used to the small field of view. For example, at 10 yards you only see a little more than the ten ring. In other words, when you bring the gun on target all you see is "cardboard."

Another problem with optics, that takes some time to learn, is to look at the target and not at the sights. One of the first things a pistol shooter learns is to concentrate focus on the front sight. This is not a problem for the new shooter because he does what is natural—just look at the target.

Practical shooters spend years training themselves to look at the front sight which is a conditioned technique. It's a strange paradox to learn to look at the target.

When I say "look at the target," that's just what I mean; don't focus on the red dot. When you focus on the target, the red dot naturally centers itself on the spot you are focused on. After awhile this becomes quite natural and one becomes better and better at doing it.

The Aimpoints and scopes also allow you to concentrate on your trigger release because you don't have to align the front sight in the rear sight notch and then maintain perfect alignment as you operate the trigger. And, of course, the trigger pull is the most important fundamental of accurate shooting.

Over the past few years Mickey Fowler and I have experimented with different scopes trying to see if one would be better for the Bianchi Cup. We've tried different magnifications and reticles, including the dot reticle, to no rewarding end. We continually find the scopes fall short.

In fact, we don't shoot as well with an Aimpoint compared to iron sights.

In polling some other top shooters on this question, Brian Enos and Rob Leatham find exactly the same situation. It could be that we have used Aimpoints for so long that our own training has affected our ability to get the most out of a scope.

The scopes, however, have been used quite effectively by John Shaw and Bill Wilson who swear by them. It could be that some people are better suited for the scope. Right now there is insufficient data to determine which is better—Aimpoint or scope.

The evidence, however, shows a clear majority of the top spots are continually garnered by the Aimpoints. One thing we must also take into consideration is that none of the optical devices were made with Bianchi-style

pistol shooting in mind. If the manufacturers put their minds to it, great strides could be made toward better units for this type of shooting.

I think someday optical sights for handguns are going to be quite popular. Why, you ask? Because people like to hit what they're shooting at! It's more fun, and learning to be proficient with iron sights is a considerably more difficult process.

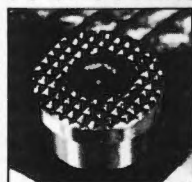
These optics have been a blessing to older shooters. As your eyes age, it becomes more and more difficult to shift your focal point. It also becomes very difficult to find and hold your aiming point on a target you can barely see when focused on the front sight. The optics eliminate these problems by letting the shooter concentrate his focus on the target.

For 1985, I predict the vast majority of the shooters at Bianchi Cup will be using some type of optical sight. We're also going to see more and more improvements to these units which will keep pushing the shooters to new heights.



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# CONVERSATION WITH A CHAMPION

By Jon Winokur

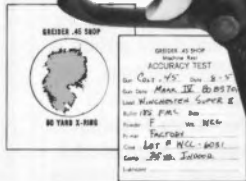
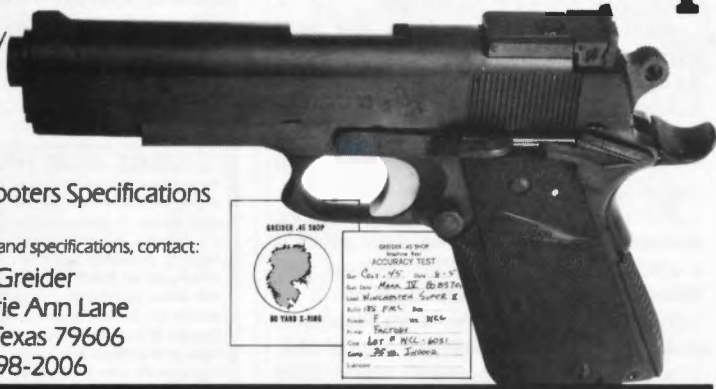
Jim Zubiena is a talented actor who brings the same intensity to pistol competition as he does to his television roles. He won this year's overall Southwest Pistol League Championship handily (four wins and two seconds out of ten matches) against a field that includes All-World shooters Mike Dalton, Mickey Fowler, Paul Liebenberg and Jerry Usher.

I recently visited Jim and his wife, Linda, (herself a top competitor) in their Los Angeles home for what turned out to be a 'workshop' on shooting, acting, and the common ground between.



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**JW:** Jim, you played a hit man in a recent episode of the NBC series, "Miami Vice." In one scene, you dispose of a drug dealer with several shotgun blasts, and are then held at gunpoint by your victim's bodyguard. With your hands in the classic 'surrender' position, you draw a concealed .45 from your waistband and pump three shots into him in a second and a half. You then clear the weapon, place it on his body and calmly walk away.

Have you considered the public relations repercussions of using practical shooting techniques while playing a 'heavy' on national television?

**JZ:** In this part, I'm not a representative of practical shooting. My priorities are thus: I'm an actor first, I'm a sportsman second.

I just happened to be in a part that utilized the techniques I learned in a sport for the development of a character who happened to be an assassin. The methods I employed were those of the character I was playing, a total professional who was a master of the tools of his trade. So if any member of the 'liberal press' tries to pin that tail on this donkey, they'll have a hard time making it stick. I don't feel I have to answer for anything.

**JW:** Did you provide technical advice for the show?

**JZ:** The week after the Bianchi Cup I worked with Don Johnson and Phillip Michael Thomas, the stars of the show, with pistols,



rifles and shotguns. We worked on the range for three days doing various types of shooting so they would be comfortable with the weapons and be able to simulate live fire.

**JW:** *How do you feel about the whole question of violence on television?*

**JZ:** I'm offended by shows that portray violence without showing its tragic end-product. A series like 'The A-Team' probably shoots a thousand rounds a show but not once does anyone get hurt or killed. I think that's bad because it gives younger, more impressionable viewers the idea that they can use guns without any consequences.

**JW:** *Are you saying the television industry has a responsibility to portray violence realistically?*

**JZ:** My own opinion is that television shouldn't be the conscience of society. What goes on the tube is what the mass audience is buying, not what's socially desirable. The people who run the industry are businessmen. Their allegiance is to ratings, pure and simple. They've determined that the public wants "action," so that's what they put on the tube.

**JW:** *Are there similarities between acting and competitive shooting?*

**JZ:** Acting and shooting are very similar. As an actor I've studied the 'method' as taught by Lee Strassberg—and I've applied a similar method to the mental aspects of shooting. It's a question of being flexible. I use a little bit of this and a little bit of that in both shooting and acting. I use whatever works for me for the moment.

**JW:** *How do you discover what works?*

**JZ:** By accident. You'll be on the range practicing a given technique and you'll do something "wrong"—something that isn't part of that technique—either because you lost your concentration or you were going too fast, and it works. You ask yourself, "How did I do that?" Then you test out your "discovery" and it develops into a new technique.

**JW:** *Are there any other acting techniques you've applied to shooting?*

**JZ:** When I work as an actor I verbalize things. If you have a fear within yourself it keeps eating at you unless you verbalize it. But once you verbalize it, you confront it and get it over with and you can go on to something else. It's called "speaking out."

The year I came in fifth in the Steel Challenge, my first run on Outer Limits was a complete hoser—it must've been a nine-second run. After that disaster, I said out loud, "Time is irrelevant." The gallery laughed and applauded, and I settled down and shot a good, solid four runs.

I didn't set the world on fire, but I recovered from that first run because I verbalized the problem, which is this: In speed shooting, the faster you try to go, the slower you are.

**JW:** *What kind of reactions do you get from people in the entertainment industry when they find out you're a shooter?*

**JZ:** Prior to the point where I became proud of my shooting, which means prior to the point where I started doing well, I had a tendency not to bring it up. And when some-



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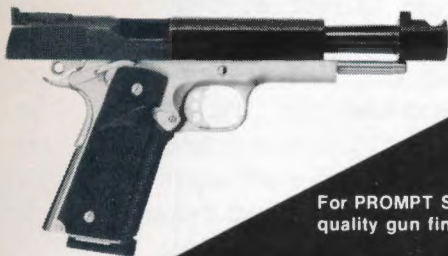
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one else would bring it up in mixed company, I had a tendency to cool it. The truth of the matter is, there are people in the industry who wouldn't hire you just because you're a "gun nut." But now I've reached the point where I'm proud of my shooting and I feel I can talk about it with anyone.

In fact, I misjudged a person, and he turned out to be one of my dearest friends. He's a director I had worked for in commercials. I saw him at a Steel Challenge three years ago. Up to that time I thought he was an anti-gunner. I walked up to him and asked whether he was there collecting propaganda. He said no, opened his jacket and revealed two .45's in his belt. He's now a member of the League and we're good friends.

**JW:** *When did you begin shooting in organized competition and what was your shooting experience before that?*

**JZ:** I started shooting in the Southwest Pistol League in July of 1976. Before that I'd shot various handguns—a Ruger .44 Magnum, a Browning Hi-Power and snub nose .38 at bullseyes three or four times a year. I'd also shot some trap.

**JW:** *You've had to overcome adversity in your shooting career, having suffered a severe injury in an SWPL league match. How did it affect you? How did you overcome the setback?*

**JZ:** In September of '77 I was in tight race with Steve Blankenbiller for the "B" Class Championship. I ran the Cooper Assault and tore my knee to pieces going over the wall. It took a year out of my life and set my acting career back about two years. There were times when I didn't think I'd be able to walk right again.

**JW:** *But you shot matches from a wheelchair and on crutches, didn't you?*

**JZ:** Yes, and won first "B" in the Advanced Military from a wheelchair, and shot the Flying M on crutches, but I was effectively out of competition for about three years. We continued shooting the whole time I was "down," but we didn't compete. In 1981 we came back and started shooting the full program—one match a month. That year Linda won the SWPL Women's Championship and I won "B" Class.

**JW:** *As I recall, the season came down to one match—ironically—the Cooper Assault.*

**JZ:** Right. Going in, it appeared that I'd have to place well in the Cooper Assault in order to win the title. As it turned out I could have stayed home and still won, because the person who was second blew out. I ended up second overall behind Craig Gifford. I was scared to death.

**JW:** *If you had to single out one thing that helped you win the SWPL Championship, what would it be?*

**JZ:** One thing has improved my shooting more than anything else I've ever done. In the six months following the day I quit smoking, I shot six matches. I won three of them, came in second in two and finished fifth in the other. The only variable was not smoking. I hadn't developed any new techniques or lightning speed, hadn't improved my hand-

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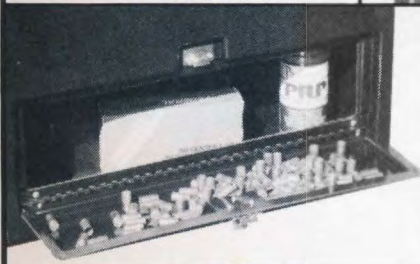


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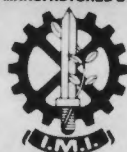
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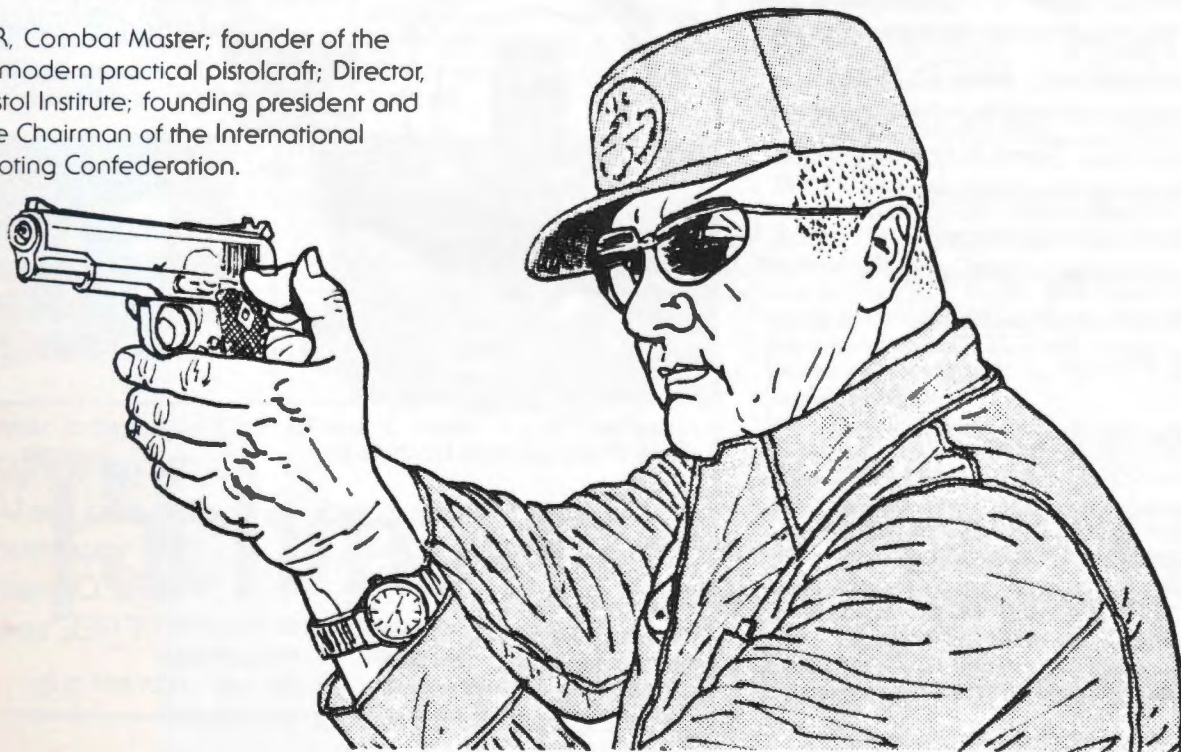
# MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

## Basics of Practical Shooting

1. Organized shooting is termed **practical** if it involves the three equivalent elements of accuracy, power, and speed — symbolized by the monogram DVC (*Diligentia, Vis, Celeritas*).
2. A defensive pistol must be capable of being brought into action from a safe carrying condition with maximum speed.
3. The practical shot delivers a decisive hit in the shortest time his skill permits, but minute time differentials between contestants are less important than the solution of varied target problems.
4. A quick, accurate hit is meaningless unless it is a powerful hit. In competition, therefore, a power minimum is stipulated and power increases above that minimum are encouraged.
5. In practical competition the target is of a size representing the area on an adversary in which a single hit with a powerful weapon may be expected to stop the action.
6. The pistol is a defensive arm, and practical pistol competition is conducted mainly at ranges typical of defensive encounters.
7. Practical problems are constantly varied, within parameters consistent with defensive combat, so that the unexpected challenge is taken for granted.
8. Practical weapons and accessory equipment are not technically restricted except as to insure safe and sensible approximation of defensive confrontations. Weapons or equipment not suitable for continuous indefinite wear are not recognized, but innovation is encouraged.
9. Continuity of fire may occasionally be necessary in defensive combat, and is tested in practical competition. (It is not the whole measure of practical marksmanship, however, and must not be overemphasized.)
10. Practical shooting is primarily a research tool by which to discover what instruments and systems are best suited to the primary purpose of the arm. That it is also entertaining is fortunate but not vital.

JEFF COOPER, Combat Master; founder of the discipline of modern practical pistolcraft; Director, American Pistol Institute; founding president and Honorary Life Chairman of the International Practical Shooting Confederation.





# THE COMBAT MIND-SET

## BY JEFF COOPER

**M**an fights with his mind. His hands and his weapons are simply extensions of his will, and one of the fallacies of our era is the notion that equipment is the equivalent of force.

For nearly 20 years I have been teaching weaponcraft—which may be defined as the aggregate of dexterity, marksmanship and tactical understanding—and perhaps 50 of my graduates have now had occasion to use these skills in mortal confrontations. (I say “perhaps” because I must assume that not every client sends me a report.)

Of the 30-odd who have reported, not one has said that his life was saved by his dexterity nor by his marksmanship, but rather by his “mind-set.”

What, then, is the “combat mind-set?”

It is that state of mind which insures victory in a gunfight. It is composed of awareness, anticipation, concentration and coolness. Above all, its essence is self-control. Dexterity and marksmanship are prerequisite to confidence, and confidence is prerequisite to self-control.

Any state of mind is entirely subjective, varying infinitely among individuals. We do not feel the same about our experiences, and anyone who tells you how you *will* feel in a fight has not studied the matter thoroughly.

On the other hand, we can talk to many who have “seen the elephant,” and we can add to this our own experiences, and thus explore the subject—in a tentative way.

In such exploration we should bear in mind that while times change quickly, people change slowly. Abraham would be astonished at electricity, but not at Chernenko. Lifestyles in Elizabethan England were very different from ours, but Shakespeare's characters viewed life just as we do.

We may dismiss the notion that a twentieth century man reacts differently to violence from the way his grandfather did. He may be told that he will—for specious reasons—but when he looks into the lion's mouth his response will be the same. Sometimes it will be good and sometimes bad, but this will depend upon his character rather than the popularly held mood of the moment.

Combat is an unusual experience for most of us, but then emergencies of any kind always are. However combat *does* occur, and

any fully educated person knows this and prepares for it.

Despite what we may hear, combat is not characteristic of any particular occupation or

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“What, then, is the ‘combat mind-set?’ It is that state of mind which insures victory in a gunfight.”

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situation. It may come to a policeman, but it may just as probably come to a barber, a broker or a biologist. Accepting this is the first step in physical security. No one can solve any problem of which he is not aware.

In what follows we will consider the combat mind-set in three aspects—before, during and after action. I can tell you how I have felt, but that is by no means my principal research tool. On the contrary, I will draw on scores of individual, informal interviews with men who were speaking with complete frankness and with no concern whatever about what their supervisors, their attorneys, their wives or the press might think.

I cannot tell you how *you* will feel when the red flag flies, but I can indeed tell you how a great many others have felt.

The pistol is a conceptually defensive arm, intended to stop lethal aggression. Thus when used as intended it will be required with almost no warning. The man who shoots to save his life, or that of his wife or child, will rarely have any time in which to consider the situation, steel himself, say a prayer, sing a war song or go into a dance. His mental reaction will probably be astonishment rather than fear, for fear takes time to build up. Since he cannot anticipate *specifically* he must anticipate *generally*. Anyone who carries a pistol on his person is presumably aware that he may have to use it, but there is a large difference between the hypothetical possibility and the actual event.

To anticipate generally, the shooter must train himself into a state of mind in which the sudden awareness of peril does not surprise him. It is essential for the man who wears a

gun to react to a sudden threat with the knowledge and confidence that he can handle it. His response should be not “Oh my God, I'm in a fight!” but rather “I thought this might happen and I know what to do about it.”

Instead of feeling that the situation is unheard-of, he must feel that the situation is distinctly heard-of, and that he is in charge of it rather than his aggressor. He must regard the quick and precise use of his sidearm as “Plan B,” and be fully ready to implement it when confronted with a deadly human adversary. In this situation there can be no build-up of emotion and the shooter's exercise will be entirely intellectual. He will not have time to get excited until after the fight is over.

Sometimes, however, there will be warning, and on these occasions emotion will indeed bear upon action. When another human being manifests both the intention and capacity of killing *you*, personally, and there is time enough between his declaration of intent and the actual engagement, your response will probably be one of intense alarm. (I do not like to use the word “fear” but you are at liberty to do so if you wish.)

When you suddenly realize that those men, right there, are armed and prepared to kill you, there will probably be a sudden sinking sensation into the pit of the stomach.

The antidote for this hollow feeling is anger.

The emotions of fear and anger are very similar biologically and it is not very difficult for a subject to convert one into the other. I have experienced this personally several times and I have talked to a great many people about it. It occurs in military situations, in police situations, and in totally “civil” situations. When a man demonstrates, in effect, that he is ready and willing to kill you, your response should not be fearful but wrathful.

I remember one episode involving a car pursuit in moderately heavy traffic and, after the initial understanding that this was indeed a life-and-death encounter, the principal emotional state of the subject was one of cold, concentrated rage. And it worked. The eye remained clear and the hand steady.

We may conclude that while there will usually be no time for fear to develop, on

*Continued on page 56*

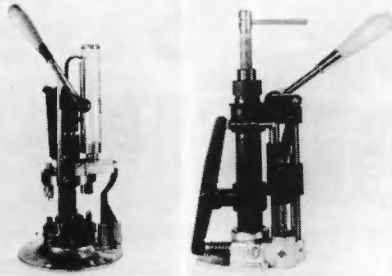


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# TEST REPORT

# TAURUS

MODEL 66 .357 MAGNUM

*Superb quality and great accuracy characterize this wheelgun.*

By B. F. Attenborough

The search for an excellent quality revolver, at a moderate price, has ended. The answer comes in the Taurus Model 66 .357 Magnum revolver.

This revolver is nearly a carbon copy of the S&W Model 19, with the exception of the firing pin system. The fitting of parts and the finish of the metal is very well done. This revolver with four-inch barrel has a nice balance to it and is very good for quick point-shooting.

The revolver's features include adjustable sights, full barrel rib, ramp front sight, wide-grooved trigger and wide-grooved hammer. The stocks are wide, well-checked and very comfortable, even for a large hand. They will, however, need to be trimmed slightly for use with speed loaders. Another solution would be Pachmayr grips from a "K" frame S&W, which with a minor interior alteration, give an excellent fit and have fine speed loader clearance.

One great concern in selecting a handgun is endurance, so over 1,200 round of varied .38 and .357 Mag ammunition were fired. The first 860 were fired in less than three hours with no maintenance and no problems. The bulk of the shooting was double action at 5 to 15 yards.

The gun was comfortable to shoot, pointed very well and had an extremely crisp double action let off. In rapid fire, double

action six-shot groups of two inches were very common.

The wide wooden grips interfered somewhat with rapid extraction of spent cases, which made it necessary to look at the gun before reloading. Again, modest grip trimming would eliminate this problem.

The next 350 rounds were fired in following days for accuracy groups and to get other shooters' opinions. All five shooters involved were pleased and impressed with the quality, functioning, and handling of this weapon.

Accuracy was also excellent. In 85 shots fired from 50 ft., hand held on a bench, 5-shot groups of 1 1/4" to 2 1/2" were common. In fact, only two shots of the entire 85-shot composite slipped out from under a 3" x 5" index card. At 25 yards group size spread a little but generally stayed under 3 1/4 inches.

The 50 yard groups held very well at between 4 and 5 inches. Magnum groups at 25 yards were usually strings 1" high and 2" to 3" long.

This is good performance for an out of the box four-inch barrel revolver.

In summary, the Taurus Model 66 revolver proved itself to be a high quality firearm which is both reliable and accurate. It is comfortable to handle, points very well and should give years of trouble free service.



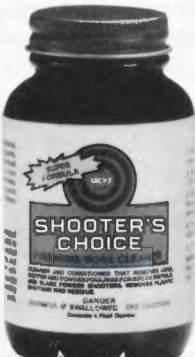
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## KNOCKDOWN POWER: MYTH OR REALITY?

### PRO

Can a handgun make a one-shot stop?

Yes!

Not only can a handgun stop an assailant with one hit, but *any* handgun can.

Now that's a radical statement to

make under any circumstances, but if my Magnum and big bore friends will come down off the wall for a moment, I will explain how I can write this with a clear conscience.

Let us first set up a worst case scenario: Standing before you is a fellow who makes the incredible *Hulk* look like a 97 pound weakling. Recently graduated from the motorcycle gang's 'Stomp and Maim' course, he has stuffed an ounce of PCP (Angel Dust) up his nose, and decided you need to see the next three counties all at the same time.

You have only your regular 'nightstand shooter' between yourself, your family, and a very ugly time.

Properly placed, your first shot can do it! But the operative phrase is *properly placed*.

My research with forensic investigators for several law enforcement agencies, as well as the Government report dealing with this area, has led me to form a strong opinion on this highly charged question.

I believe that there is a target in the body which, if disrupted, causes the immediate cessation of all action.

In our discussion I use the term "one shot stop," where some people use the term "knockdown power." In order to clarify things, let me expand on my phrase.

If someone succeeds in striking this "target" with sufficient energy, all motor function ceases, and the attacker drops like a sack of cement. In the words of one law enforcement agency's use of force policy, he "ceases those actions requiring the use of deadly force, and is no longer a threat." The punk may not be "thrown off his feet" in the classical sense, but his ability to continue his assault on you is stopped — immediately!

As a point of order, in those cases where an attacker has been knocked off his feet, or thrown through a window, or otherwise reacted violently to a hit, it is a physical reaction to the knowledge that they have been hit, or the result of shock, and not the direct result of the energy delivered by the bullet. His muscles do the work, not the bullet.

But if you hit his 'target' then his nervous system collapses, he falls to the ground, you are saved, and you have *won*.

Let us consider what we are doing. In the above scenario our

*Continued on page 63*



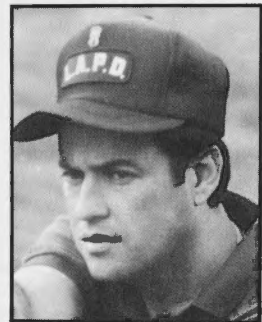
By Seth R. Nadel

"Men are not blocks of clay, water soaked newspapers or piles of ductseal."

VS.

"As interesting as the concept of knockdown power is, it just doesn't exist."

### CON



By Fred Romero

Imagine if you will, the classic Hollywood movie scene: Dirty Dan starts to reach for his gun, but before he can yank it out of his low-slung holster,

the stern-faced Sheriff draws his own Colt .45 Peacemaker and 'fans' one dead-center of Dan's 'ten-ring.' The expected reaction is achieved, the luckless villain (i.e., stuntman) is violently thrown back clean off his feet and into the air as if hit by a ton of bricks.

All this action may make for exciting movies, but it has absolutely nothing to do with what goes on in the real world.

For a variety of reasons, big-bore guns have had the reputation of being able to literally "pick 'um up and throw 'um back." Many people seem to *want* to believe that their .357, .45 auto, or .44 Mag will *knock* a person down. Granted, many war-stories abound where eye-witnesses testify that they saw amazing ballistic effects on various 'targets.'

The truth of the matter is that the laws of physics and mathematics prove otherwise.

For those of us who must use our sidearms for self-defense, the results of these scientific calculations can be depressing. On the other hand, if you realize the limitations of your weapon, perhaps you can better understand why things turn out the way they do in the streets.

General misconceptions about what a certain bullet can or cannot do usually start with the old standby measurement used for comparison: the striking power of a bullet expressed in foot-pounds of energy. Because of the mathematics involved (using standard formulas in physics to compute the effects of bodies in motion), the striking energy of even a relatively small bullet comes out sounding impressive. As an example, a 95 grain bullet traveling at 1000 fps delivers a force of about 211 ft-lbs of energy. Doubling the weight of the bullet produces twice as much energy downrange.

Now, the thought of being hit with 211 pounds of energy is intriguing. And if 211 pounds sounds heavy, then 422 pounds is downright awesome.

Obviously, this is a simplistic approach. Ballistic principles are not so cut and dry in actual application.

In order to fully appreciate what happens when a bullet strikes an object, many variables must be taken into account: the size and weight of the bullet, its velocity at the muzzle as well as the velocity at time of impact, the weight of the object (body) being struck, the duration and depth of penetration, the density and structure of the

*Continued on page 65*



# The Choice of Champions

The PACT™ Championship Timer™ is the finest shooting timer in the world. That's why the top shooters in the world choose it over other shooting timers to train with. People like **Rob Leatham, Brian Enos, Mike Plaxco, Mickey Fowler, and Ross Seyfried** as well as the U.S. Shooting team, who represented us at the '84 Olympics.

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*"If you combined every other shooting timer on the market into one it would still not contain all the features of the PACT Championship Timer. Working with the PACT timer has measurably improved my basic shooting skills." ...Brian Enos*

## WHAT DOES THE CHAMPIONSHIP TIMER DO?

In addition to providing you with an instant or delayed start signal (the length of delay is adjustable), the Championship Timer records the time of each shot fired, "par times" and up to two "stop" plates. When you fire, the sound of your pistol triggers the unit which will simultaneously display the number of the last shot fired, the time since your previous shot or "par time", if you are using one, and your total time.

## EASY TO USE

The Championship Timer is as easy to use as your pocket calculator. For example, to enter a time limit of 1.5 seconds, you would push "limit", "1.5", "set". Want to change it to 2.56? Push "limit", "2.56", "set"...it's that simple.

## GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE:

Let's say you fire six shots, reload and fire six more shots. Here is an example of what the Timer will display:

```
#012 .27 6.67
FIND SHOT: 7
```

- You have fired 12 shots
- Your twelfth shot came .27 seconds after your eleventh shot.
- Your total time was 6.67 seconds



\*Patent Pending

Now you are curious about how long your reload took, so you tell the Timer to "FIND SHOT #7" and you see that your reload took you 1.54 seconds. (The time between your sixth and seventh shot.)

```
#007 1.54 4.07
FIND SHOT:
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*"The PACT Championship Timer adds a whole new dimension to practice sessions. It's like having your own shooting coach. I recommend it without hesitation."*

*...Mickey Fowler*

*"The PACT Championship Timer is the most versatile timer on the market. Not only is it an excellent training tool, it's also extremely useful for running matches. I think it's an excellent value for the money."*

*...Mike Plaxco*

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*mark and stop signals allow it to time all kinds of shooting events from I.P.S.C. to N.R.A. "action" shooting. These features combine to eliminate human timing error and allow the convenience of practicing alone for any conceivable match situation. I never go to the range without it and neither should you."*

*...Rob Leatham I.P.S.C. World Champion*

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## CONVERSATION

Continued from page 24


eye coordination. Everything was the same except for the fact that I had quit smoking. Not having the nicotine jitters allowed me to gain control over my body and enabled me to perform up to my potential as a shooter.

**JW:** What are your remaining goals in shooting?

**JZ:** I want to shoot the best I can without putting undue pressure on myself. In truth, there are 20 guys each of whom can beat any one of the other 19 on a given day, and for me to have the idea that I've got to win a match is counterproductive. My goal is to go to a match and apply myself to the highest degree possible. If I do that, I know that the final result will take care of itself.

**JW:** You and Linda have been shooting together throughout your respective shooting careers. What makes for a successful husband/wife shooting team?

**JZ:** Patience and understanding. The wife



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should avoid competing with the husband and should just shoot at her own pace. The husband should avoid becoming too involved with the wife's performance. When she shoots I tend to get more nervous than when I shoot.

**JW:** What do you think about when you're "in the hole" waiting to shoot?

**JZ:** I'm thinking about the danger points in the match—the places where it would be real easy to fall off the balance beam. I'm thinking about how I've got to attack those points. Once I get in the box I visualize all the things I've told myself I've got to do.

**JW:** How many rounds do you fire a year?

**JZ:** I used to fire somewhere in the neighborhood of 2,000 rounds a month. Now I shoot 100 to 150 rounds every time I go out to practice, and I go out once or twice a week. I used to have to shoot a lot to maintain my edge, but now I can maintain my edge without shooting nearly as much. But to reach that point I had to shoot 50,000 rounds a year for two or three years. It's not the quantity of practice, it's the quality. I've learned to get the maximum quality out of a minimum of rounds. Now, 150 rounds twice a week maintains my proficiency.

**JW:** Do you prefer the Weaver or Isosceles stance?

**JZ:** I don't care whether you use the Weaver or the Isosceles; the object is to have the most control over the weapon at the point when you pull the trigger. If you determine that the Weaver gives you more control and allows you to move from target to target more quickly than the Isosceles, use it.

I prefer the modified Weaver because you don't have to have your body facing the target. And if you watch people who shoot Isosceles at a moving target match or any match where they have to traverse an area, you'll see that they aren't in an Isosceles except when they're shooting at the target directly in front of them. As soon as they move over to another target, it's no longer a perfect triangle.

The modified Weaver allows me to get to a target that might be a few degrees off my centerline more quickly than if I had to turn my whole body to it. Also, I've been partial to it because it's the stance I started with. I've tried the Isosceles and it didn't work as well for me.

**JW:** What do you foresee in the future for practical shooting?

**JZ:** I'd like to see all forms of practical shooting thrive. But I'd like to see IPSC stop stressing "practicality" and start looking at themselves as a sport. It is a sport, and if it's treated as such, more people will be drawn to it and it will grow much faster. If people insist on trying to base it on "reality," which is impossible anyway, it's going to hurt the development. If you emphasize the "martial arts," you're going to alienate so many people that the whole program is going to suffer.

**JW:** Do you have any advice for the "average" shooter?

**JZ:** When you watch other people shoot, you're going to see different techniques. Don't be confused. Try everything you see. Just because Rob Leatham shoots well from the Isosceles, just because John Shaw shoots with his finger off the trigger guard, those techniques may not be right for you. Try everything, and when you find something that's comfortable and works for you, go with it.

You have to think about what you're doing in order to succeed, not about how badly you want to succeed. You have to concentrate on what you're doing at the moment you're doing it. If you get ahead of yourself, you're in trouble.

"Pace" is a word I rely on when I teach. I don't tell my students to go fast. I don't tell them concentrate on speed. I tell them to set their own pace. It's the same thing as saying you're competing against yourself. Maintain a pace that's at the upper level of your ability, and you'll get the most out of your talent, technique and ability.



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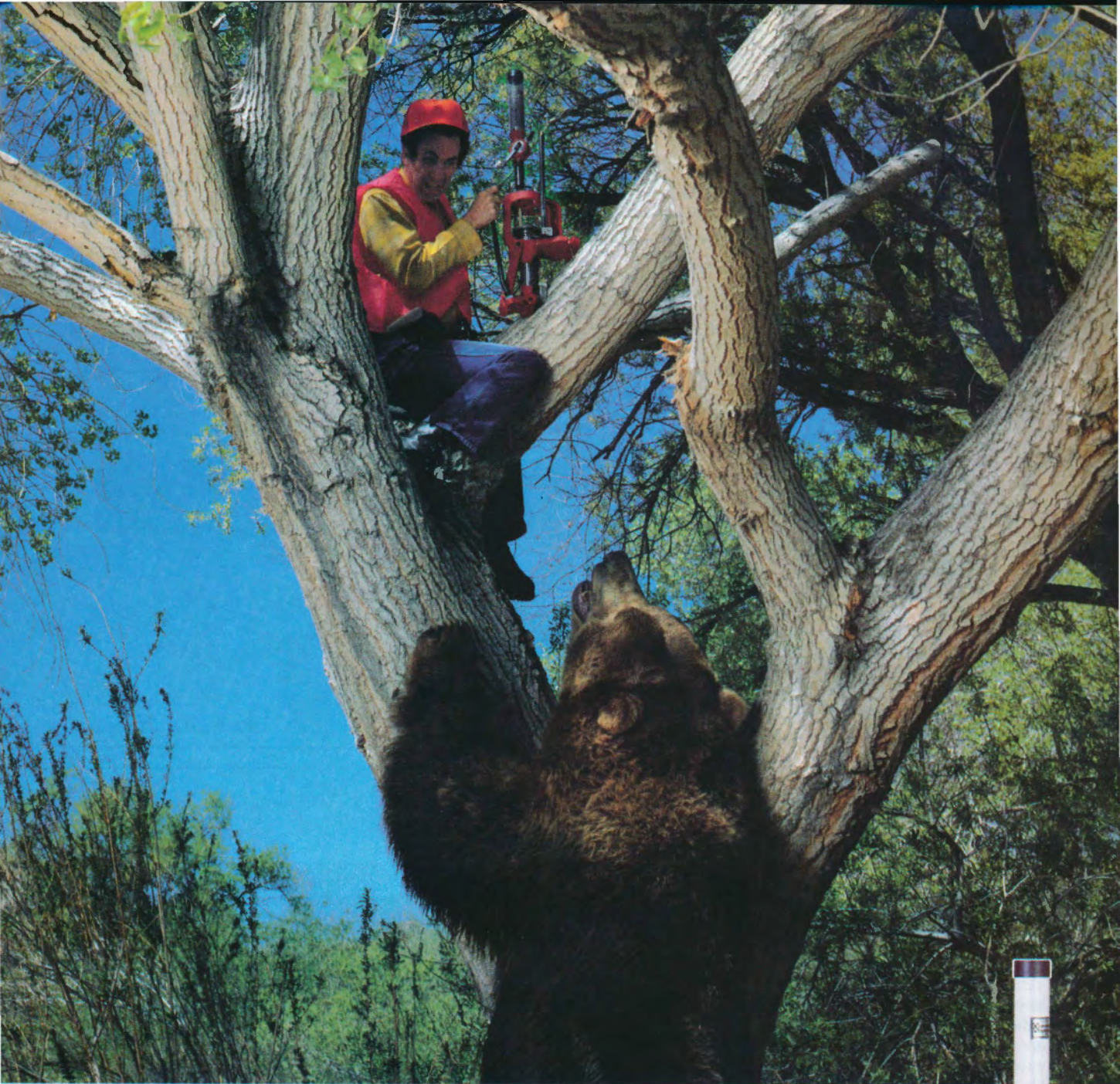
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# Pardini Fiocchi Target Pistols

*These three new Italian competition tack drivers will soon be available in the United States.*

*By Sam A. Biaocco*

The Italian firm of Pardini Fiocchi has announced a new addition to their fine line of target pistols.

These new pistols are: a standard pistol in .22 LR, a rapid fire pistol in .22 short and a centerfire pistol in .32 S&W Long wadcuter. In an effort to provide the finest target pistols available, the Italian shooting federation cooperated fully with Pardini Fiocchi in providing an input of what features are desired in excellent target pistols. The end result is that Pardini Fiocchi designed, and is now producing, three new pistols that cover the disciplines of international competition.

The original idea of these pistols was to have a pistol with a single frame and to have interchangeable top units for each caliber (similar to the Walther GSP). Although prototypes were built, this idea apparently lost favor, and the idea of building three separate and complete pistols soon became a reality.

The three pistols bear a great deal of resemblance to one another. Such components as the trigger design, rear sight, and frames are virtually identical in style.

One excellent idea I like is the feature of being able to interchange grips between the standard pistol and the centerfire pistol. To keep recoil at an absolute minimum, the pistols are designed to sit very low in the hand. In fact, the barrel line is just about the lower limit as prescribed by international rules. The design of all three pistols takes into account the proper grip angle and also the proper angle of the pistol in relation to the wrist and arm.

To provide a better balance, all three pistols feature a magazine loaded from the bottom, and located in front of the trigger guard. The trigger systems for the .22 LR and .32 are very similar in design in that they are completely adjustable fore and aft and sideways. Three screws in front of the trigger are used for adjusting the trigger for first and second stage let-off, and also sear engagement. Weight adjustment is a separate screw.

The trigger for the rapid fire pistol is entirely different. It features a new patented

*Continued on page 53*



**Model MP .32 caliber**



**Model SPE .22 Long Rifle**



**Model GPO .22 Short**



# THE WILSON ACCU-COMP

Ever wonder why so many champions shoot Accu-Comps in IPSC? Because they want the very best pistol a custom pistolsmith can make—the Wilson Accu-Comp.

*By Cameron Hopkins*





More champions have won more major IPSC matches with Wilson *Accu-Comps* than any other custom .45 auto.

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Bill incorporates his extensive match experience into each and every *Accu-Comp* that comes from Wilson's Gun Shop (Rt. 3, Box 211-D, Berryville, AR, 72616, (501) 545-3618).

In fact, Bill has accumulated so much wisdom about IPSC shooting and IPSC equipment through his years of gunsmithing and competing, that he has written a book on the subject, *The Combat .45 Automatic*.

"Written the book" may be a trite hyperbole in reference to any other pistolsmith, but the phrase fits Bill and his *Accu-Comp*.

The *Handgunner* was privileged to receive two *Accu-Comps* for testing. Both are LE models (named for Rob Leatham and Brian Enos who have been tremendously successful with *Accu-Comps*).

#### TESTING PROCEDURE

The two test guns are a Wilson *Accu-Comp* on a Colt Combat Commander and a Wilson *Accu-Comp* on a Colt Government Model. Both custom pistols are designed specifically for IPSC competition, and that is the overwhelming focal point of this test report.

The test is conducted with the *raison d'être*, the reason for being, of the *Accu-Comps* as the central theme. The tests show you how well the *Accu-Comps* perform such basic tasks of an IPSC pistol as the double-tap. The tests show you how well the *Accu-Comps* meet an IPSC pistol's criteria of accuracy, reliability and muzzle flip reduction.

The acid test is how the *Accu-Comps* fare in competition itself. Only in the crucible of competition can the real qualities of an IPSC pistol be displayed.

We all know that the corollary of Murphy's Law is "whatever can go wrong, will—especially during a match." The testing of the *Accu-Comps* bears this in mind.

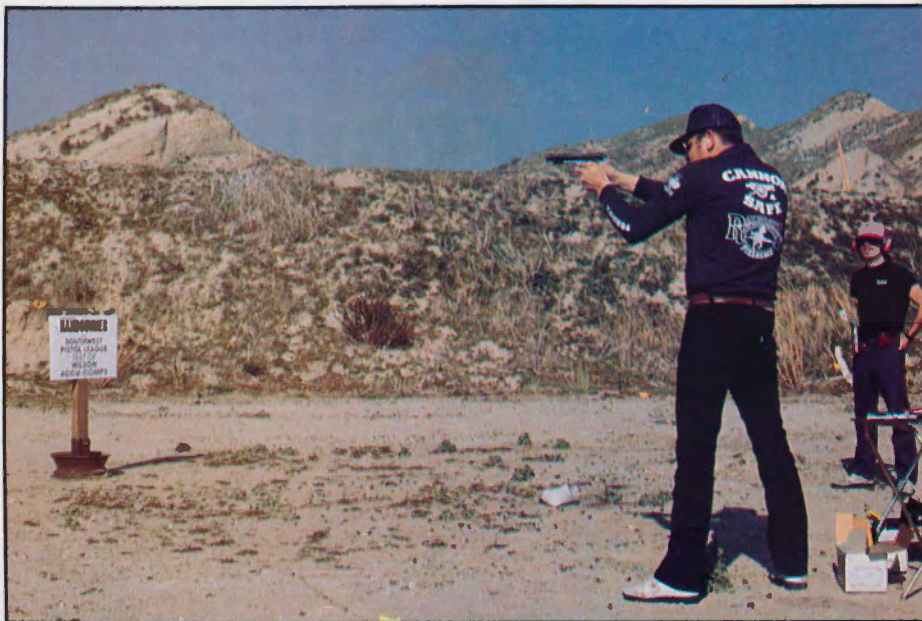
Along with this 'custom test' of these two fine custom pistols, there is also data on standard test procedures—accuracy off the sandbags, chronograph results (do comp guns lose velocity?) and a word or two about field stripping. There is also a discussion of all the custom modifications performed on the *Accu-Comps*.

#### ANATOMY OF AN ACCU-COMP

Wise men tell me that I shouldn't judge on appearances; never judge a book by its cover. Be that as it may, the *Accu-Comps* have beautiful covers. They meet the eye with aesthetic good looks—great appearances.

The Commander sports a Star Burst Metal finish on both the slide and frame while the Government has a two-tone finish of blued slide and Metaloyed frame. Both are pleasing to the eye.

A Star Burst Metaloy is more highly pol-



Combat Master Mike Dalton was impressed after firing *Accu-Comp*.

ished than a regular Metaloy finish.

The internal working parts in the frames of both *Accu-Comps* are Metaloyed to reduce wear and inhibit rust and corrosion. Metaloy is a tough and durable plating, and is available only from Metaloy Industries. (Rt. 3, Box 211-D, Berryville, AR, 72616).

The Commander measures 7 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches overall, a mere  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch longer than a stock five-inch Gov't Model. The Government *Accu-Comp* measures 8 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches, one inch longer than a stock version.

The slight radii are 7 inches on the Commander, and 7 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches on the Government.

Looking inside the *Accu-Comps*, one finds an extended, Commander-style ejector in both models. Both feature superbly ramped, throated and polished barrels from Irv Stone of Bar-Sto.

Between the time Bill handcrafted the two test *Accu-Comps* and now, he has begun manufacturing his own Match Grade barrels, Wilson barrels, which will replace Bar-Sto

barrels on all current *Accu-Comps*.

The barrels are four and five inches long (rifling, not compensator).

The feed ramps on both pistols are polished mirror smooth.

The triggers are both acceptable competition triggers measuring three pounds on the Commander (Series 70) and four pounds on the Government (Series 80). The smooth, crisp trigger on the Commander is marvellous, but the Series 80 Government is squishy and feels as though there is grunge or dirt along the trigger rails. No grunge, just Series 80 parts.

But what can you expect from a Series 80 trigger? Those little gizmos in there add six additional bearing surfaces and one additional spring for the trigger to fight.

Upon removing the Series 80 parts, I found the trigger to improve tremendously, down to three pounds, and very crisp. The trigger is nice and smooth without those Series 80 thingamajigs.



The *Accu-Comp* field strips normally except for guide rod assembly.



Some people remove the firing pin safety doodads permanently. Bill said his personal competition *Accu-Comp* is a Series 80—without the superfluous parts.

By the way, for liability reasons, Wilson's Gun Shop refuses to deactivate any safety mechanism, including the grip safety. He advises it, but he is unable to practice what he preaches on *your* gun for obvious liability reasons.

Back to the anatomy of the *Accu-Comps*.

Both *Accu-Comps* feature the unsurpassed Bo-Mar adjustable combat sight with the sharp edges tastefully dehorned. What more can I say about the sights? They're Bo-Mars; they're the best.

The front sights have interesting configurations unlike any I have witnessed. Take a look at one of the accompanying photos showing the front sight before I explain the reason for such a shape.

Have you looked at a picture? Good. The reason for the sight's shape is to prevent the accumulation of lead grunge from the escaping gases billowing out of the compensator just in front of the sight post. This is indicative of the attention to minute detail that characterizes the superb craftsmanship of the *Accu-Comps*. The sight shape is indeed useful as extensive range testing without cleaning the guns revealed that dirt would have built up on the front sight without such an ingenious shape.

The front sight is .125 of an inch wide which yields enough 'air' on either side of it when centered in the rear sight. Some front sights are too wide, and some are too narrow—the *Accu-Comp* front sights are perfect.

#### ACCU-COMP ACCURACY

	Commander Accu-Comp	Government Accu-Comp
Wilson's 200 gr. H&G #68, 5.0 grs. Bullseye, Federal primer, WCC once-fired	2 1/16	1 1/16
200 gr. H&G #68, 5.8 grs. WW 231, WW primer, WW virgin cases	1 7/8	1
230 gr. Hardcast, 5.0 grs. WW 231, WW primer, WCC once-fired	2 3/4	1 5/16
230 gr. FMJ, Nevins	1 7/8	1 1/8
230 gr. FMJ, Winchester	2 1/8	2 1/32
230 gr. FMJ, PMC	4 1/8	2 3/4
230 gr. FMJ, Federal	1 1/2	1 5/16
230 gr. FMJ, Remington	2 1/4	2 3/4

\*Note: All group sizes reflect five-shot groups from a sandbag rest at 25 yards. Called flyers were not recorded. Groups were measured center to center of outside holes.

## SOUTHWEST PISTOL LEAGUE TESTS ACCU-COMPS



Members of the Southwest Pistol League were invited to test fire both the Wilson *Accu-Comps* in an attempt to remove the inherent personal bias of a gun test report.

The Southwest Pistol League was formed in 1963 making it the oldest combat pistol shooting club in the United States. Founding members include such well-known handgunners

participated including the 1984 League Champion, Jim Zubiena (see *Conversation With A Champion*).

The purpose of the League test—to eliminate subjective opinion—proved to be valid. Evaluations of the *Accu-Comps* in the category of "Overall Impression" ranged from a low of a *three* rating (on a scale of one to ten) to a high of *ten*.

Some League members preferred the Commander, some preferred the Government Model.

*Continued on page 69*

#### SWPL TEST AMMO

600 rounds of author's reloads:  
5.8 grs. WW 231, H&G #68 200 gr.  
SWC, WW virgin cases, WW primers.  
± 300 rounds of various SWPL testers' reloads: (unknown).  
50 military surplus hardball (230 gr. FMJ)  
50 Winchester hardball (230 gr. FMJ)  
50 Remington hardball (230 gr. FMJ)  
50 Federal hardball (230 gr. FMJ)  
50 PMC hardball (230 gr. FMJ)  
50 Federal hollowpoints (185 gr. JHP)  
50 Remington hollowpoints (185 gr. JHP)  
50 Nevins hollowpoints (185 gr. JHP)  
50 Winchester Silvertips (185 gr.)  
25 CCI Lawman hollowpoints (200 gr. JHC)

± 1,375 rounds TOTAL

as Col. Jeff Cooper, Jack Weaver and James Hoag.

The Wilson *Accu-Comps* were available to league members in January in conjunction with a monthly League Match.

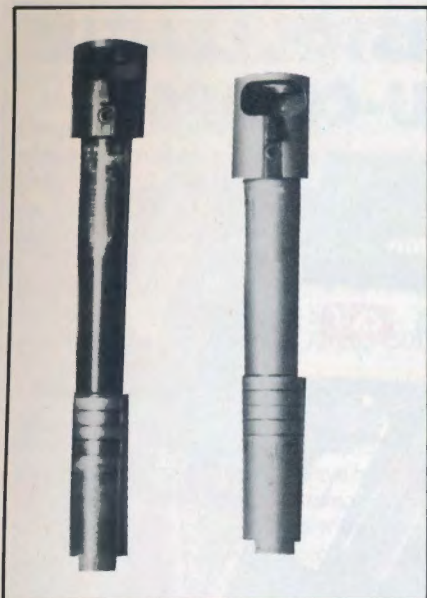
Throughout the day League members dropped by the test site to shoot the Wilson *Accu-Comps* and then fill out a test report form. The results are shown in the table. In all, 49 league members

#### SWPL TEST RESULTS

	Government Accu-Comp	Commander Accu-Comp
Trigger	7.49	7.28
Sights	8.86	8.86
Compensator (compared to standard five-inch Colts)	8.79	8.36
Compensator (compared to other compensated Colts)	7.60	7.18
Overall Impression	8.40	7.84
AVERAGE	8.23	7.90

\*\*Figures shown are the averages from the ratings the SWPL testers gave. Testers rated the *Accu-Comps* on a scale of one to ten with ten being the best. The average is provided for the readers' convenience, and was not a category on the test evaluation form. Forty-nine League members participated.





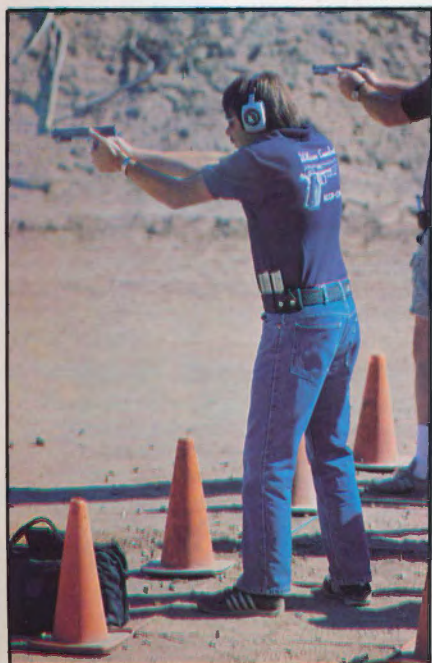
**Government Accu-Comp barrel (left).**

Both *Accu-Comps* are fitted with extended beavertail grip safeties, and both safeties are active. I prefer a deactivated grip safety on competition .45s, but, as I said earlier, Bill does not perform this modification for liability reasons. I experienced no problems with the active grip safety (problem here being when you fumble the grip and the gun won't fire due to an improper grip).

The Wilson beavertail grip safeties distribute recoil over a larger area of the web of one's hand, and therefore aid in the perception of reduced recoil. They work.

The Commander features an extended thumb safety. The Government *Accu-Comp* has the excellent Swenson ambidextrous thumb safety. Both aid in a quick release of the safety, and both give greater support to the strong-hand thumb if you lock your thumb onto the safety in the firing grip like I do.

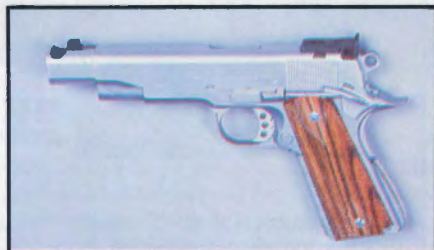
*Continued on page 69*



**Bill Wilson shoots his Accu-Comp.**



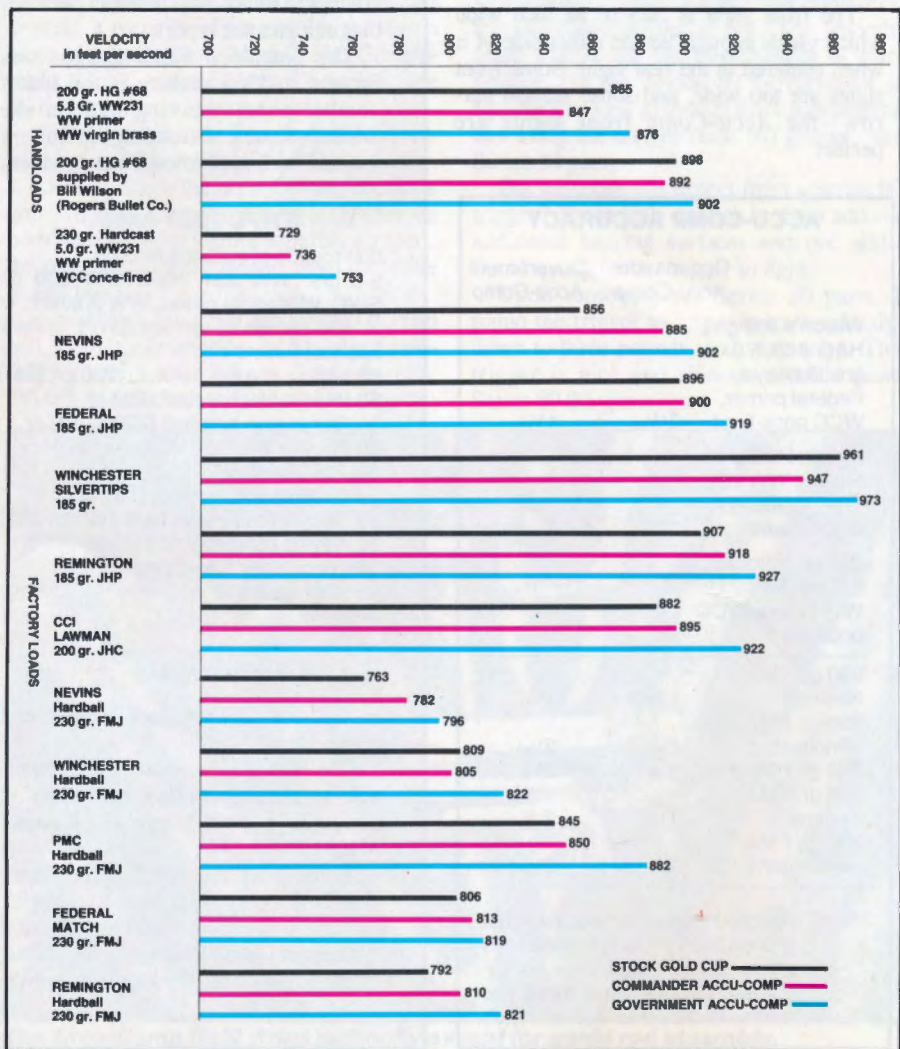
**Commander Accu-Comp slide is 3/8" longer than stock five-incher.**



**Colt Commander Accu-Comp.**



**Colt Government Accu-Comp.**



STOCK GOLD CUP  
COMMANDER ACCU-COMP  
GOVERNMENT ACCU-COMP



## Les Baer MASTER PISTOLSMITH

By Bob Prins

It's called the Baer Custom Guns Compensator II System.

Fitted to a Colt .45 autoloader pistol, it virtually eliminates muzzle flip during recoil. Its accuracy is guaranteed to within 2½ inches at 50 yards for 10 shots. It offers total feeding reliability with all types of ammunition.

And with any luck, it's going to make Les Baer famous.

Baer is a custom gunsmith, operating Baer Custom Guns in Allentown, Pa. Les believes in the importance of close-tolerance machine work.

He explains, "You take a thousandth of an inch; that's what most machinists work to. But, you take that thousandth and you divide it into ten more parts, and then you work to two or three of those parts—now you're working to close tolerances!"

Les studied basic machine work in trade school, then learned close-tolerance machining while working as a cryo-machinist.

"I was with Air Products and Chemicals for five years. We made all sorts of expander parts; that's equipment used to make liquid gases, like helium and oxygen. All of this cryogenic (low temperature) equipment had to be machined to very close tolerances, so I got used to working that way. It doesn't scare me like it does some guys because I'm used to

it," Les explains.

That same job also gave Les the chance to work with all types of metals.

He says, "Yeah, we worked with all kinds of steels, including some really exotic stuff too: Titanium, 17-4, all of the stainless steels, the 4140 steels, the hardened steels . . . you name it, we worked with it."

That background obviously provided a solid foundation for Les Baer's skills as a gunsmith. The rest he taught himself, by doing and by reading.

Now, after eight years of study and practice, he's confident and secure in his craft.

Les works on rifles as well as handguns. He offers custom packages for all shooting interests: IPSC, PPC, IHMSA, NRA bulls-eye, varmint shooting, and hunting.

Although much of his work is done on silhouette guns and revolvers, Les admits to a special fondness for the Colt .45 pistol.

"The .45 is where my talent has really come out, as far as getting them to shoot right, that is," Les says with a smile.

The first compensator that Les designed was not too different from other systems on the market.

"I've always worked with the .45s," he explains. "I used to see these different ads for compensators, and one day I decided to design one of my own. After a couple of



A full-house Baer Custom with new Compensator II system.

prototypes, I came up with the Comp I. It's similar to the Plaxco and the Watson comps."

But Les wasn't completely satisfied with that first design.

"There's too much drag on the slide," he says. "And too much weight hangs out there at the end of the barrel."

Designing and testing the Comp I had merely taught Les what he wanted from his next design. With his new objectives in mind, Les set about the task.

It turned out to be a tall order. He spent eight months developing the new system. He constructed four complete prototypes before he arrived at the fifth—and final—design.

At last, Les believes he has achieved his original design objectives.

The unique Baer Custom Guns Compensator II System is built around a five inch Kart match barrel. Les has tried other barrels, but he has had the best success with Kart. The Baer system uses no barrel bushing. Instead, Les machines a tapered cone and compensator assembly as a single piece from 4140 bar stock.

The cone/compensator assembly is then attached to the barrel in two ways. First, Les threads the barrel and the compensator so

Continued on page 55



# YOU CAN WIN THIS SCHMIDT PPC WHEELGUN!

Master pistolsmith Fred Schmidt's "Short Cylinder Conversion" is renowned for its accuracy—but don't copy it, it's patented.



"Old World craftsmanship" is not a cliché, but a way of life for master pistolsmith Friedrich Schmidt.

A distinguished member of the prestigious *American Pistolsmiths Guild*, Fred is the creator of the patented short-cylinder conversion for target revolvers. This issue's *Custom Gun Giveaway* offers a *Schmidt Short-Cylinder Conversion* to the lucky winner.

Fred, who hails from Hamburg, Germany, started with a Smith and Wesson Model 64 for his custom conversion. He replaced the barrel with a premium grade Douglas 1-10 twist barrel slabbed to one inch.

The Douglas barrel carries a heavy underlug to add to the muzzle-heavy feel of this immaculate custom handgun. The underlug aids in steadying the hold for precise target shooting.

Atop the barrel sits a Wichita PPC rib with four precise click adjustments for elevation required in the demanding PPC discipline.

The hammer is bobbed and jeweled. The trigger is also jeweled.

Fred selected the highly regarded Hogue *Monogrips* for his conversion.

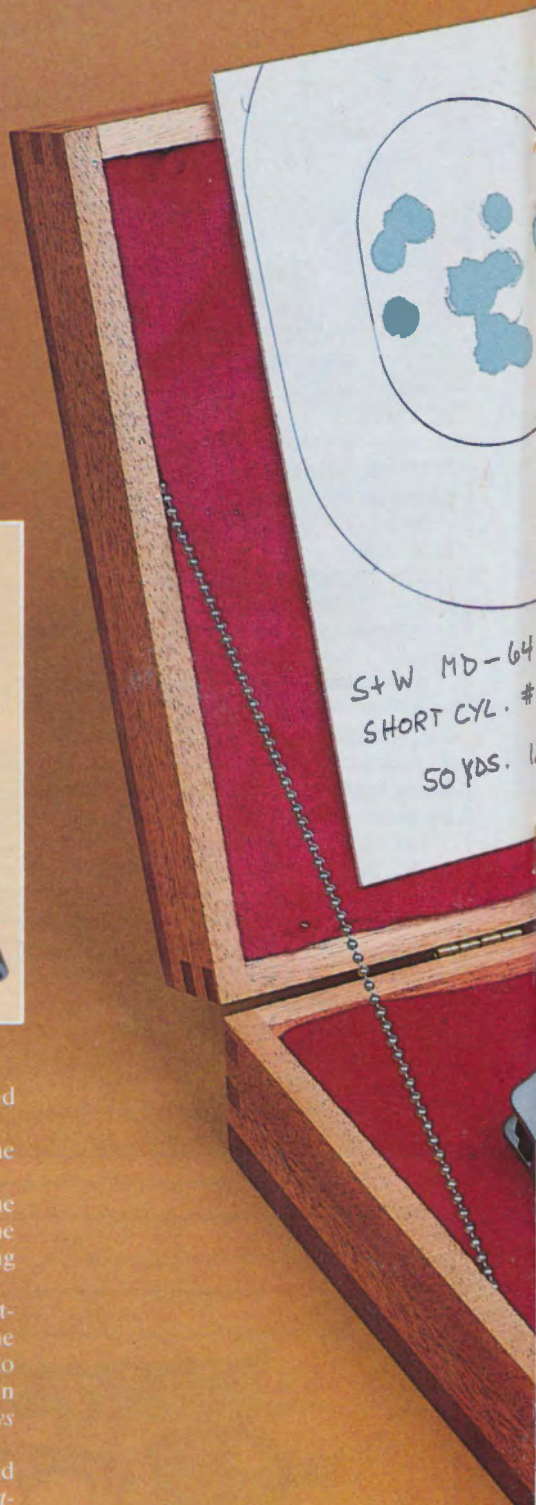
The serrations are ground from the back strap of the frame.

The revolver has a rock-solid crane lock, and a cylinder open lock to keep the cylinder open while rapidly reloading with speed loaders.

The double-action trigger pull is outstanding, superlative. The trigger is one of the smoothest, cleanest triggers ever to pass through the *Handgunner's* offices in all the years we've offered *Giveaways* (yes, we dry-fired it).

This master craftsman from the Old Country incorporated his unique *Short-Cylinder Conversion* on this custom revolver. The short cylinder serves to narrow the distance the bullet must travel between the cartridge case and the forcing cone.

The precise short cylinder is designed so that the bullet is actually in the cartridge case and the barrel at the same time at the moment of firing. This makes for an extremely accurate combination, as the test targets pictured attest.



The *Schmidt Short Cylinder Conversion*, for the Giveaway, comes with a custom holster from Lou Reno (P.O. Box 253, Okeechobee, FL, 33472).

For more information, and current prices on Fred's work, write Fred's Gun Shop, 5904 Signal Hill Rd., Mechanicsville, VA, 23111 (804) 746-9269.

Fred will be happy to make a *Short Cylinder Conversion* for you if you're not the lucky winner.







SER.# D798142  
78  
ROUNDS, REMINGTON.

S+W MD-64 SER.# D798142  
SHORT CYL. # 178 RELOADS  
50 YDS. 12 ROUNDS PRECISION

**TO ENTER CONTEST:** Use a postcard, follow sample, include name, address, HOM J/A, local dealer name and address. Mail before August 1, 1985. Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Box 16025, San Diego, 92116.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City & State \_\_\_\_\_

**HOM-JULY/AUG. 1985** Phone \_\_\_\_\_

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

Dealer \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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



# .32 MAGNUM COMES OF AGE

*The author dabbled with hot .32 loads in 1962. Now 'his' baby is the .32 H&R Magnum.*

*By Dan Cotterman*

A year and a half ago the newest attraction in the handgun showcase was the .32 H&R Magnum, a co-op effort involving Harrington & Richardson and Federal Cartridge.

Quite predictably, we were exposed to a flurry of routine reports, none of which was devoted to revealing the new mid-sized magnum's considerable adaptability to handloading.

That's understandable, though, the big-bore craze being what it is.

Besides, developing loads for a new cartridge requires a lot of time and effort. We decided to wait, holding to the idea that working up a thorough report was more important than being first.

What's more, although H&R, then Charter Arms, had brought out a number of revolvers that were chambered for the .32 Magnum, Ruger's entry, a revamped Single-Six, was still on the horizon.

Meanwhile, the .32 Magnum remained a hot item, and right now it's on the verge of getting hotter. It's no slouch as a factory load; handloaded, it can be made to out-power all but the larger factory-loaded handgun magnums, and without the penalty of hand-pounding recoil. All this will be revealed as we progress.

First, just to put our story in order, let's take a brief look at what happened along the way. I began testing way back in 1962 using a Smith & Wesson K-32 chambered for the .32 S&W Long. Even then, a small group of enthusiasts were aware that the round was drastically down-loaded because of the thousands of weak revolvers that had been chambered for it. Handloading for a stronger gun would open the way to increased power. All I had to do was find out how much.

The payoff somewhat exceeded my expectations. The factory load pushed a 98-grain round-nosed bullet to an honest (albeit unrewarding) 630 fps from the K-32's six-inch tube. It was easy to double that reading with loads that were well within the gun's capabilities.

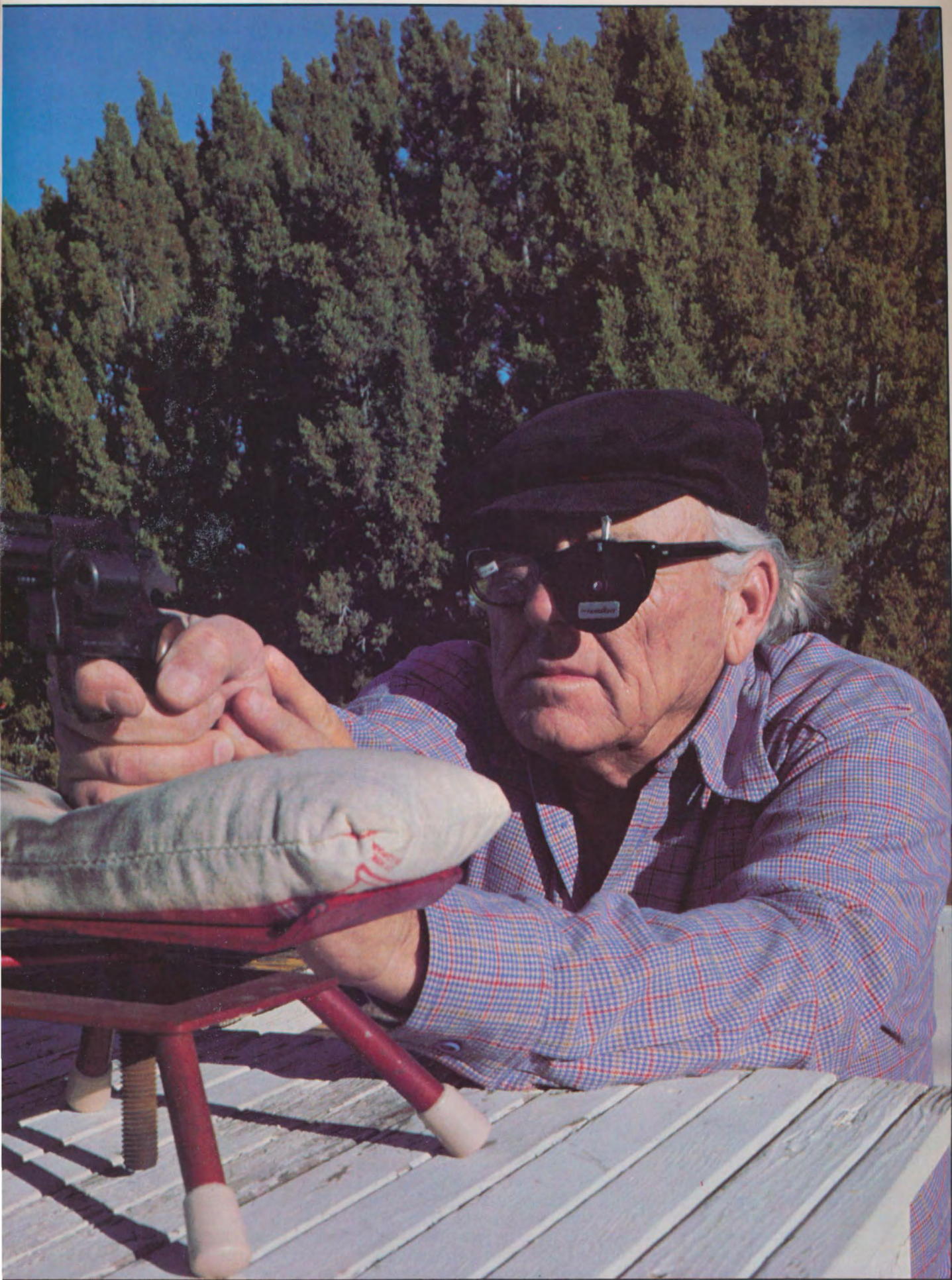
A load representative of the many tested was 8.7 grains of 2400 behind a 98-grain Markell semi-wadcutter, which yielded almost 1200 fps. Another, with 5.1 grains of Unique behind the 98, clocked over 1275 fps, racking up 360 foot-pounds of energy. Accuracy was essentially undiminished with full-power loads, perhaps because recoil and muzzle flash remained moderate.

New hope led to the writing of an article

*Continued on page 58*









# THE .256 SUPER-MAG WILDCAT



Rechambered Contender in .256 Super-Mag with 4x EER Leupold.

By Doug Goodman

Several years ago when IHMSA was in its infancy we were all learning and experimenting with each trip to a match or practice range. It was during these early days that I first became interested in the .256 Winchester-Magnum. Before the seven millimeters became popular in pistols the .256 was one of the more accurate cartridges available.

Introduced in 1961 for the Ruger Hawkeye pistol, the .256 Win-Mag is a high velocity, longrange, varmint round. The case is a .357 Magnum necked down to .25 caliber with a 25° shoulder angle. This bottlenecked cartridge is capable of pushing an 87 grain bullet from a ten-inch Contender barrel at 1800 fps. With its impressive ballistics, flat trajectory and mild recoil, the .256 seemed to be a natural for metallic silhouette shooting. Sadly, the round suffered in the power category. At 200 meters, it left almost as many rams as it downed.

After its poor showing on the silhouette range, one of my .256 barrels was traded off and the other mounted with a scope and relegated to squirrel hunting. This barrel may have died a slow death in the back of my pistol cabinet had it not been for the recent interest in "maximizing."

*What do ya do if ya want a .25 caliber silhouette round and the .256 Win-Mag ain't enough? Roll your own!*

Early in 1983 when Ruger and Remington jointly introduced the .357 Maximum, I saw the potential to create an improved .256 using this new case. The Maximum is a lengthened version of the .357 Magnum, greater in length by .315". Internally, the Maximum's web area is beefed up to withstand the higher pressures it generates. Using this case a new .256 could be formed that should have ballistics superior to the original.

Two goals were set for the new .256 "Super-Mag." First and foremost, it had to maintain the high accuracy standard of the .256 Win-Mag. As a standard for any load it would have to shoot 50 meter, five-shot groups one-inch or under.

The second goal would be to improve the down range silhouette performance. An 87 grain bullet fired with a muzzle velocity of 1800 fps from a .256 Win-Mag retains only

333 ft./lbs. of energy at 200 yards. To be considered successful, the .256 Super-Mag would have to show a significant improvement in this figure.

A few prototype cases were formed from Federal .357 Maximum brass. They were first resized in a Lyman 38/357 carbide die. Next they were lubed and run through a .256 Win-Mag full-length sizing die. The resulting cases proved to have a 35 percent greater case capacity than the .256 Win-Mag. The only problem that remained was the lack of a gun to shoot them in.

A phone call to my favorite gun shop and I discovered the project's first real obstacle, rechambering. Since it's a rimmed case my original plan to run a .256 reamer in an extra .315" wouldn't work. I either had to modify a standard reamer by grinding the rim area or have one custom made.

A second call was made, this time to Clymer Manufacturing in Oak Park, Mich., and the custom reamer was in the works. Less than two weeks later, with reamer in hand, I arrived at Creekside Gunshop in Holcomb, New York. It took only a few minutes for Paul Martin, the general manager, to convert my Thompson/Center barrel to .256 Super-Mag.



Now that I had cases and a gun it was time to load and shoot. Normal .256 silhouette loads would serve as a starting point for the new cartridge. With the new case's increased capacity, these loads should present no problem. Five rounds were taken to the range to try. With the first shot my excitement dampened. The case split. Since the remaining four were okay the project proceeded.

The next evening was spent forming 100 new cases. It was at this point that the dies were readjusted to make the round headspace off the shoulder. This would eliminate much of the stress in the web area that occurs when the case headspaces off the rim. Once formed, the cases were trimmed to 1.595". At this time the .357 Maximum was new and brass was hard to come by. It was for this reason that all early testing was carried out with used cases, all having many firings with heavy silhouette loads.

These first 100 cases were loaded with 20 different loads in lots of five. Bullets ranged from 60 to 100 grains. Powders had a moderate burning rate, the fastest being Hercules 2400 and the slowest IMR 3031. All powder charges were carefully weighed. In the early stages all loads used CCI 400 primers.

To get the best results on the range the 2x Leupold EER scope was replaced with a 4x by the same manufacturer. Also, to eliminate as much error as possible, I decided to do all of the shooting with the gun held firmly in sandbags.

Since these were starting loads I hadn't expected to get outstanding accuracy, and didn't. Some of this was due to light loads but most of the problem was due to the method of case forming. Case loss was a full 30 percent. Of the first 100, 30 split in the neck and shoulder area.

*Continued on page 67*

**256 SUPER-MAG LOADING DATA**

**80 gr. HORNADY FP**

POWDER	CHARGE (grains)	VELOCITY ft./sec.	EXTREME SPREAD	STANDARD DEVIATION	REMARKS
2400	18.0	2560	83	24	
2400	18.5	2597	104	42	
2400	19.0	2675	35	14	(1)
2400	19.5	2702	51	22	(2)
IMR 4227	18.0	2323	93	39	
IMR 4227	18.5	2396	94	35	
IMR 4227	19.0	2436	196	81	(1)
IMR 4227	19.5	2502	106	40	(2)

**75 gr. SIERRA HP**

2400	16.5	2260	82	83	
2400	17.0	2309	58	22	(1)
2400	17.5	2424	146	65	(2)
IMR 4227	19.0	2340	153	58	
IMR 4227	19.5	2344	89	32	(1)
IMR 4227	20.0	2385	49	19	(2)

**87 gr. SIERRA SP**

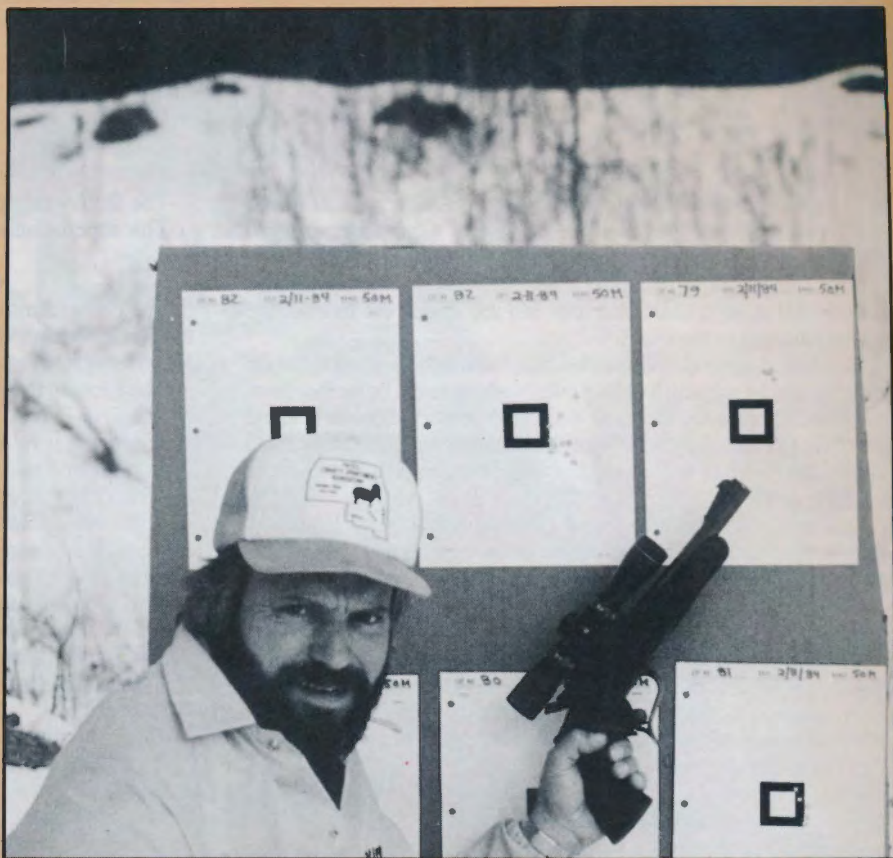
2400	14.0	1919	69	28	(3)
2400	14.5	1989	40	60	
2400	15.0	2029	42	16	
2400	15.5	2070	46	17	(2)
IMR 4227	17.0	1970	132	62	
IMR 4227	18.0	2118	90	32	(2)
IMR 4198	17.0	1683	52	21	
IMR 4198	18.0	1769	54	20	
IMR 4198	18.5	1788	115	49	

NOTES: (1) ACCURACY LOAD  
(2) MAXIMUM LOAD  
(3) BEST GROUP SHOT, 5 SHOTS AT 50 METERS .330"

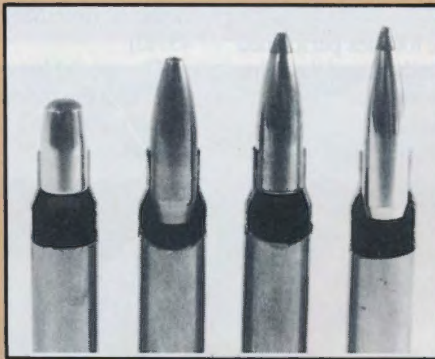
**BALLISTICS COMPARISON**  
87 gr. Sierra bullet

	MUZZLE VELOCITY ft./sec.	MUZZLE ENERGY ft./sec.	200 yd. RETAINED VELOCITY ft./sec.	200 yd. RETAINED ENERGY ft./lb.
SUPER-MAG	2070	826.5	1534	456
WIN-MAG	1800	625.5	1313	333
DIFFERENCE	270	201	221	125
% IMPROVEMENT	15%	33%	16.8%	37.5%

NOTE: These figures were compiled using the tables in the Hornady, Sierra, and Speer reloading manuals along with actual chronograph readings taken by the author.



**Tight groups came with Sierra's 87 gr. bullet and 2400 powder.**



**Bullets affect case capacity.**



**Case splitting was a problem.**



**Modified .300 Win-Mag size die solved case splitting problem.**



# SAFARI CLUB INTERNATIONAL'S HANDGUNS

**B**ig game hunters from across the globe gathered in Las Vegas early this year for the annual *Safari Club International* convention.

The trophy hunters of *Safari Club International* along with the professional hunters associated with *SCI* are among the most active conservationists in the world.

A common misconception exists that hunters take away from the environment by robbing it of its game. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Hunters are the most dedicated preservationists because they have a vested interest in the proliferation of wildlife. (How much money did *you* send to feed the starving pronghorn in Wyoming in 1983?)

Evidence of both hunters' and professional hunters' loyalty to conservation causes is found in the amount of money donated to *SCI's* educational and conservation programs at the convention.

Much of this money was raised through the auction of donated hunts and firearms—very special firearms like the handguns shown.

The funds raised from the sale of the three custom handguns shown here went to *SCI's* coffers.

A custom rifle, the *Lion Rifle*, brought a staggering \$140,000 and this masterpiece of the gunmaker's art can be seen in a future issue of *GUNS* magazine.

## SCI STALKER (MAG-NA-PORT ARMS)

The revolver shown is a Ruger Super Blackhawk customized by Larry Kelly of Mag-Na-Port Arms.

The revolver is beautifully engraved by Ken Hurst in the motif of a lion in celebration of this magnificent predator.

A velvet honed finish is but one of many fine touches performed by Kelly's master pistolsmiths. The action is smoothed, and the grips are custom made along with the special presentation case.

A Leupold 2x EER scope sits in TSOB mounts.

The *Stalker* is chambered in .44 Magnum.

The *Stalker* raised \$4,200 in auction for *SCI's* funds.

This superlative revolver was bought by "Lucky" Nightingale.

## SCI LIONESSES COMMEMORATIVE .22

The ornate Ruger Mk.II shown is another fine custom gun from the work benches of Mag-Na-Port Arms (41302 Executive Drive, Mt. Clemens, MI 48045).

The *Lioness* Ruger is the first in a limited edition of 500 produced by Mag-Na-Port Arms.

Engraving is by Ken Hurst (Rt. 501, P.O. Box 249, Rustburg, VA 24588) under a special commission from Larry Kelly, who donated this Ruger Mk. II *Lioness Commemorative* and the *Stalker*.

This very special, first-in-the-series *Lioness* brought \$4,000 in auction, but you can obtain an identical one for \$750 from *SCI Lionesses*, P.O. Box 3334, Livonia, MI 48151.

This *Lioness* Ruger was bought by Peter Horn.

## JDJ HANDCANNON

The *Handgunner* readers are familiar with J. D. Jones, who writes the *Handgun Hunting* column, and his penchant for big bore "handcannons."

J.D. donated one of his justly famous handcannons in the awesome .375 JDJ chambering to *Safari Club International*.

The handcannon features a custom barrel attached to the unsurpassed Thompson Center receiver. A Leupold 2x EER scope sits atop the handcannon.

The engraving is by Jim Riggs (206 Azalea, Boerne, TX 78006).

The scope mount is J.D.'s TSOB mount available, like the handcannons, from SSK Industries (Rt. 1, Della Dr., Bloomingdale, OH 43910).

The special handcannon has the serial number SCI-1985 stamped by T/C at the factory.

Herb Bobchin bought the handcannon, but the price is withheld by request.



*Handcannon from SSK Industries in .375 JDJ.*





Mag-Na-Port Arms' Stalker in .44 Magnu



Mag-Na-Port Arms' Lioness Ruger Mk. II in .22



International or Olympic style pistol shooting is relatively unknown in the United States. Although there are a few shooters who practice this sport with even fewer ranges set up to accommodate this demanding discipline, most Americans look on this sport as foreign and having no place in our native shooting programs. Plus our firearms fraternity has given it a bad name saying for instance, "The rapid fire and free pistol courses have no application or reality in the American way of shooting, it's a false premise."

Well, they are totally wrong.

Actually, our participation in the sport is more deeply rooted than any other competition, except for the Palma Rifle match (circa 1872). The Palma Rifle match was the first true international firearms competition set up to celebrate the 1876 Centennial and the founding force for the NRA.

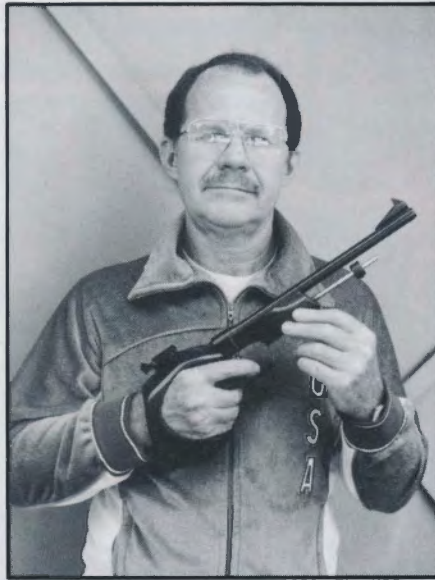
In fact, the first gold medal to be awarded in the 1896 Olympic revival was for Free Pistol and it was won by an American, Sumner Paine, with a score of 442.

These competitions were the beginnings of all our competitive pistol shooting. During this period target pistols were developed, such as the Colt flat-top Frontier and Bisley models, then later single-shot and double-action revolvers. Our early American competitive courses of fire were designed around the International or Olympic match concept.

We as a nation of pistol shooters, the major developers of the handgun as we know it, have mainly rejected the International style

## AN OLYMPIAN ON OLYMPIC BULLSEYE SHOOTING

By Walter Rickell



Nygord with free-pistol (top) and selection of bullseye gear.

handgun competition for the more popular fast draw courses of fire.

So the average pistolero looks the other way when Olympic style pistol is mentioned for it forms a cloud of mystery over him. It shouldn't, for it's as American as apple pie.

It's a very difficult discipline that involves many lonely years of hard work, practice and dedication with too few shooters willing to put that amount of effort into it. It's a wonder that every four years we are able to put together an Olympic team, but we do, although we are not too successful in the Gold Medal department.

International pistol competition is extremely difficult but those who delve into it find they gain marked improvement of their overall scores, no matter what other course they shoot.

With practice in the International courses of fire you will improve your NRA score and greatly improve your performance in the various combat courses.

But there is a small nucleus of International pistol shooters in the USA, a minority if there ever was one, who follow their sport with a dedication that rivals some of our more fervent church-going Bible pounders.

One such person is Don Nygord of La Crescenta, Calif., who heads up Nygord Precision Products. His small company services the needs of the International shooter with custom pistols and accessories, plus he backs his work with firsthand experience in competition. He holds many national records in International pistol competition.





Before we go any further let's review the five International pistol courses of fire:

FREE PISTOL which is shot with a single shot weapon chambered in .22 long rifle at 50 meters; RAPID-FIRE PISTOL uses a .22 short caliber, semi-auto pistol at the distance of 25 meters; CENTER-FIRE PISTOL also fired at 25 meters but using a .32 or .38 semi-auto; STANDARD PISTOL, fired at 25 meters but with a .22 long rifle cartridge; and AIR PISTOL which is similar to free pistol course but fired at 10 meters.

The pistols used in rapid, center-fire and standard pistol courses are controlled by regulations as to weight, type of grips, sight radius, etc., and must fit into a predetermined size box to qualify. Free and air pistol more or less are unrestricted but all shooting is done off-hand only.

The Olympic shooting events for pistols only include the free pistol and the rapid-fire pistol. The whole array of shooting events in the Olympics includes programs for both men and women, plus sport pistol has been added for women in 1984.

These courses of fire can be entered by all the shooters but the best competitors tend to specialize, hence some will concentrate on free or air pistol rather than the rapid fire events. Don Nygord's strong points have been free pistol rather than the rapid fire events, although he holds master rating in them all. Last spring he set the USA free pistol record with a score of 574, breaking a 16 year old former mark of 571. He also made the 1984 USA Olympic shooting team in the free pistol event.

Don began his competitive pistol career while still in the Air Force in the 1960s. Shooting on the base pistol team, he earned his master's rating in the conventional NRA three gun aggregate. After being discharged, he continued as a civilian and in 1966 won the National Civilian title at Camp Perry with a score of 2597.

Pursuing his job in the aerospace industry, his pistol shooting had to take second place for a few years. Then in the mid 1970s he took up International pistol competition and soon was setting records again. He made the Pan American Games team in 1979 taking a Gold Medal in air pistol competition.

Prior to this Don had to make a choice between a steady job that bored him or competitive pistol competition with his talents as a pistolsmith being applied to supplement his income.

International shooting required weeks at a time off from the job and few, if any, employers are that understanding. So he did what he had to do: cancel out on the steady employment and do pistolsmithing full time, pursuing the International competitive game.

Today Don works in his La Crescenta gun shop, primarily on custom competition hand-guns and in his spare time practices for the Olympic team, hopefully for the 1988 games in Seoul, Korea.

Don is an unassuming person, short in stature, but a very stocky build. He is not what the general public would think of as an athletic pistol shooter—he is 46-years-old.



**Don's .22LR/.38 Special Kart conversions on Colt Gold Cup frame.**

These are all the characteristics of the competitive pistol shooter, especially the ISU types.

Don not only shoots the TOZ 35 but he is also its prime source in the Western hemisphere for guns and their maintenance or modifications. The worldwide market price of this Russian piece is about \$350 but in the USA with all of the extra taxes and tariffs it's around \$1,000.

It might sound like Don specializes in the Russian-made iron but he can service and repair all models and makes of free pistols. Unlike some 'smiths he has had practical, in-the-field experience, putting shots down range with the piece.

Aside from the free pistols he works on the full range of international shooting irons from rapid fire pistol to the most sophisticated air arms. He handles full supplies and accessories for them.

One of the unique products that comes out of his shop is a small-die sizer for the .17 caliber pellet. This uniformly sizes each match pellet by simply pushing it through the die. An indispensable item for the serious air pistol shooter.

Don says that age mellows the individual



**Don handfits his pistol grips.**

*Continued from page 52*



# THE CENTIMETER BORE

*The American Handgunner is proud to offer you the most in-depth, detailed report of the 10mm/.40 calibers ever published.*

*The first part of a two-part series shows you the historical development of the 10mm caliber. Next issue the series will culminate in an exhaustive look at the latest 10mm, the 10mm Norma in the BREN TEN semiauto pistol.*

**By Whit Collins**

Shown in this article is a representative sampling of early smokeless-powder auto pistol cartridges in the one-centimeter bracket. These are the best known from military and police trials of the period 1900-1913. Although once potential winners in these trials, most of these rounds are now collector's items.

## **10mm MARS/GABBETT-FAIRFAX**

Some confusion exists over this round because other makes of handguns were also termed "Mars" during the late 1890s-early 1900s. The pistol generally accepted as the Mars is the Gabbett-Fairfax recoil-operated rotary-bolt gun manufactured in several versions from 1901 through 1909. Ahead of its time in concept, it had the ballistic potential of mid-magnum power.

These pistols were chambered in calibers ranging from 8.5mm to .472. The 10mm cartridge was a very early chambering, probably built in 1901 through 1905. The loading was a 160-grain round-nose jacketed ball which had MV of 1300 fps. The foot-long pistol in this caliber developed roughly one point of RSP per ounce, at about 60 of each.

## **10mm BERGMANN**

Also sometimes called "Mars" in sales catalogs, the Bergmann pistols were sturdy, beautifully finished handguns with their magazine located in front of the trigger guard. Supplied for British Army trials in 1904, the Number 6 pistol in 10mm was moderately powerful (140-grs. at 900 fps), and very reliable but somewhat clumsier and complicated in use compared to the big Webley revolvers. This .395-bore auto lost out to the big revolvers once again.

**PART I: The 10mm (CENTI-meter) bore has seen a lot of chamberings in its time. Here's a look at some of the 10mm cartridges that have come and gone.**

## **.41 COLT EXPERIMENTAL: 1903**

A "mystery" Colt cartridge, no loaded examples are known, although cases, chambered barrels and case gauges exist. This was very close to the European guidelines of one centimeter, 12 grams at 300 meters/sec. It is .390 diameter, although designated .41 Experimental. This was because the cases found are made from the .41 Long Colt's revolver shell shortened to .905 max from the original 1.13. Its rim was turned from

.488 to a semi-rimmed auto dimension of .431.

Since the .41 Long Colt was also a transitional black-to-smokeless round, its bullet diameter had undergone change by them from an outside-lubricated ball dimension of .410, to an inside-lube diameter of .387. Therefore, the .41 Experimental actually had to be slightly expanded to seat what was probably a 135 or 140-gr. .390 jacketed roundnose.

Designed in response to the British Ordnance Board's request for calibers of .40 or more for the 1904 trials, the .41 Colt Experimental was respectably powerful, with its approximate velocity of 1100 fps (RSP is 40-plus). It was so powerful, in fact, that it battered the older Browning-design links and linkpins. Earlier .38 Colt Auto loads were evidently the limit, with their 24,000 pressure unit loadings. The .41 must have topped 30,000 and development was therefore stopped. This failure was one of the causes of the gradual redesign of Colt's big-bore autos to the 1911 pattern, with its ability to handle as much as 35,000 psi.

## **.38 COLT EXPERIMENTAL: 1910**

By 1910, the 9mm and .45 ACP were already nearing preeminence. However, Colt still received requests for bids on bores in the centimeter range. In 1909, efforts were made to build another 10mm on the .41 Experimental pattern. By 1910, some examples of a 1911-type pistol were chambered for this round.

The cartridge is apparently a new brass punching, rather than a refabricated revolver





case. Those few examples in collections show no case markings. Dimensions are slightly smaller than those of the .41 Experimental, with a .384-diameter 130-grain bullet. Like the .41, it remains a semi-rimmed case, which headspaces on that rim.

#### 10.3mm ROTH

An interesting fact about the Roth is that it could be made today by cutting off a 10mm Norma case and seating a 200-grain .41 Magnum cast lead bullet sized slightly under-dimension at .408. But you might not have any pistol to shoot it in, as authorities cannot isolate the exact model of Roth chambered in 10.3mm. This may have been a limited run for U.S. and European trials of 1910-14. This little-known but practical short .40 sent a 201-gr. bullet at 800 fps. It shares the .422 case head with current 10mms.

#### 9.8mm COLT: 1910

A fully rimless version of the earlier .41 and .38 Experimentals, the 9.8mm was made in some quantity by Winchester in 1910. In fact, it was probably a limited run by them that produced the semi-rimmed, unmarked .38 Experimental.

Pistols made up for the .38 Experimental were re-marked and re-used for military trials in Rumania, Bulgaria and Serbia, 1911-14. The cartridge used a 130-gr. .384 bullet, at 1300 fps. With World War I looming, many countries chose to stay with arms of national origin. In many cases, the cavalry .45 school of thought still prevailed. Lack of sales laid the 9.8mm and the centimeter bore, to rest.

#### 9.65mm BROWNING

John M. Browning's connections with FN in Belgium led to one more version of the centimeter bore, and one which ultimately led this writer to attempt a new .40/10mm. Browning's 9.65 cartridge was actually termed "High Power" and the first version of the pistol we now call the Browning High Power was drawn up around the cartridge.

This round was almost identical with the 9.8mm Colt, but with a more pointed bullet of perhaps 5 grains less weight. Its velocity would have been slightly over 1100 fps, giving more penetration and a flatter trajectory. What buyer Browning had in mind is not known. All development was ceased soon after World War I broke out in 1914. After The War, the 9mm and .45 were here to stay, along with thousands of surplus guns to fire them.

#### .39 BSA BELTED: 1921

A few samples exist of the .39 Birmingham Small Arms belted-case pistol round. Developed in 1921, this was one of at least two belted BSAs, the other a .33 bore called the .34 BSA Auto. While the .34 was little different from a belted .32 ACP, the .39 BSA is a true .40 of respectable ballistics: 140 grs. at 1100 or more fps.

BSA and Kynoch records were badly bombed during WW II, so only a few drawings and some cartridges exist. No certain record exists of the gun planned for use.

#### .401 EIMER/BOSER: 1924

Two outdoorsmen, Gordon Boser and "Pop" Eimer, saw the potential benefit in

*Continued on page 74*

## 10 MILLIMETER BLACK POWDER CARTRIDGES

In the 1830s, Colt's Patent Revolver brought the .40 caliber very much into the public eye—but not from Colt directly. Research on the so-called .40-caliber Colt Patersons, often called "Texas pistols," brings out the fact that Colt never quoted the bore as .40. "Holster" guns, long-barreled Colts of nominal .36 caliber, were actually all .380 bore. Colt never advertised a .40-caliber Paterson holster gun, yet many examples exist with bores measuring true .40 caliber.

Authorities propose two possibilities for this: first, that wear on the .36s caused them to be "freshened"—re-bored to a new dimension still safe in the original barrel and chambers. Given the metallurgy of the day, and the geometry of the five-chamber cylinder, .40 may have been the prudent limit for easy expansion. Easy, too, to re-cherry the existing Colt molds supplied with the gun.

The second possibility stems from the first. The re-bored .40s may have been sufficiently more effective to cause new buyers to order .40s as special purchases from Colt's. It was the factory policy to serve custom orders wherever possible in those days, and the conversion was already well-proven. To this writer's knowledge, no exact information exists on this interesting question—which came first, the re-bore or the custom .40 order?

Be that as it may, the ballistics of the .40 Patersons were an improvement over the .36s. A .40 soft lead ball weighs about 96 grains, getting about 1050 fps from a full load in a 9-inch "Holster" barrel. This gave 245 ft.-lbs. of energy and a Hatcher RSP of 25, quite close to a standard round-nose .38/9mm. The .36s ran much closer to the stopping power of today's standard .380 auto, with an 80-grain ball travelling at about 950 fps from the Paterson. RSP was about 20.

The .40-caliber cap and ball handguns might have stayed in general use after this, but other qualities of the Paterson Colt caused re-design to occur. In hard use on the frontier, the Paterson proved fragile, and its medium-sized frame was made ungainly by the addition of a loading ram, an accessory desirable in the field. Also, the "control loop"—the trigger, hammer and other

manipulated areas of the gun—was incomplete, because of the lack of a trigger guard. On horseback, a full trigger guard was an aid to steady handling, especially on the re-cock.

So, the next "Holster" Colt, as specified by Texas Ranger Captain Walker, was a true horse pistol. It was easier to handle in a mounted fight, and it had power enough to stop a charging Mexican lancer by the simplest method: foundering his horse with one shot. This was accomplished by the Walker's load of 125-gr. .430 ball fired at about 1100 fps. Its 350 ft.-lbs. of energy made an RSP package of about 46.

The further success of the .44s overshadowed the .40, but many lesser-known cap and ball repeaters were made with .40 chamberings in "belt" or "pocket"-sized revolvers. It was in the field of derringers that the .40 was a staple caliber, during the percussion period.

A great many .40-caliber derringers pistols were made from 1840 through 1870. These were mainly short-barreled single-shots. Unlike smaller bores which were feared most for their threat of lingering death from an infected wound, the .40s were known to be the most compact gun and load that could be expected to actually stop an opponent with the single shot available. .44 derringers of the period had to be so much larger that they were harder to hide, and much stiffer to shoot.

Transitional era cartridges of 1870 to 1900 offer a wealth of black-powder, bulk smokeless and modern smokeless ballistic information. In addition, we have good accounts of their effectiveness in the field. The .45-70, .44-40, .45 Colt, and especially for this article, .38-40 are well-documented rounds which are still in use.

The .38-40 Winchester Center Fire is simply a .44-40 round necked down to .40 caliber. In the process, the bullet is lightened and acquires an improved ballistic coefficient. Currently, the .44 and .38 WCF are loaded to roughly the same low levels, to avoid blowing up older handguns chambered for them. However, in the past, many pistol and rifle loadings were available for both, with those for the .38 WCF being regarded as "express" versions of the heavier and

*Continued on page 63*



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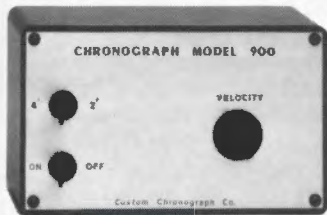
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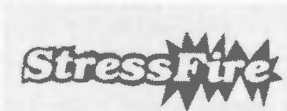
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## DON NYGORD

Continued from page 49

and sharpens his or her senses. He keeps in top physical shape with exercise and diet. The shooting game is a mental exercise and equipment is second. Only when your body and mind are in top working order can you survive the stress of free pistol match or the quick tempo of the rapid fire course. Hence maturity is a key ingredient in this shooting game.

Here in America we seem to be obsessed with equipment and international style shooting won't disappoint you if that's your inclination. The game seems to thrive on odd looking semi-autos and single shot pistols—all imported, very few are manufactured in the USA. In fact the only American-made one I know of is the electronic trigger, free pistol designed by Major Frank Greene, himself a silver medalist in the Tokyo Olympics.

One of the top manufacturers of free pistols that comes to everyone's mind is Hammerli and they took the top three spots in the '84 Olympics with the Swedes and Chinese using their weapons, but one of the most popular models of the free pistol is the Russian TOZ with over 60 percent of the market, and this is the pistol that Don chooses to use. In fact, he set the USA free pistol record with it.

The TOZ model 35 is manufactured in Vostok, Russia, and is of relatively simple construction built around the old Hammerli design and incorporates a set trigger much like the antique muzzle loading, dueling pistols.

Don not only shoots the TOZ 35 but he is also its prime source in the Western hemisphere for guns and the maintenance or modifications. The worldwide market price of this Russian piece is about \$350 but in the USA with all of the extra taxes and tariffs it's around \$1,000.

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Aside from the free pistols he works on the full range of international shooting irons from rapid fire pistol to the most sophisticated air arms. He handles full supplies and accessories for them.


One of the unique products that comes out of his shop is a small-die sizer for the .17 caliber pellet. This uniformly sizes each match pellet by simply pushing it through the die. Quite an indispensable item for the serious air pistol shooter.

Aside from custom work on the .45 auto for both combat and the NRA bullseye course, he specializes in the Government Model .38 Special conversions for the International center-fire course in long and standard slide lengths. Another specialty of the shop is the Ruger .22 auto and the High-Standard conversions.



For the Ruger he takes a standard field model and adds a custom built barrel that fits flush with the diameter of the receiver affording clean, pleasing lines. Next he alters the web of the frame to set the axis of the bore lower in the hand. Bo-Mar sights are added, a Clark steel trigger, total fitting and accuracy job with two magazines. The front and backstraps are stippled and custom, fitted stocks are available if desired.

The High-Standard is built from any of the Supermatic lines from the Plinker to the Trophy models. First the slide is milled flat, a new bull barrel is added and flattened on the sides, then a Bo-Mar rib with adjustable sights is attached to the new barrel. From here fine tuning and fitting put this pistol into the upper echelons of the accuracy department. Both are qualified for the NRA, Silueta and International Standard pistol courses.

Don Nygard is a unique individual in that he not only can produce world class scores on the firing line but also he is a master pistolsmith on the weapons he uses. Hence he is always experimenting and making changes, especially in grip design. In the next few years I think we will be hearing a lot more from Don, not only in record breaking scores but from  the gunsmith's bench.

## FIocchi PISTOLS

Continued from page 34

design that will prevent the pistol from going fully automatic when used with very light trigger pulls. The system is designed so that the hammer can't fall until the disconnecter comes back (by releasing the trigger). When the disconnecter is released, there is a manual bar positioned in front of the hammer, that goes up and out of the way, thereby allowing the hammer to fall.

It sounds complicated but it works just fine. The adjustment for this trigger features two screws on the trigger mechanism, one for weight and the other for sear engagement. In front of the trigger is another screw for slack or take-up adjustment.

The standard pistol and the centerfire pistol both weigh in at close to three pounds also. All three pistols are easily dismantled by using one screw under the barrel and then the pistol can be broken down into four basic parts for maintenance and cleaning. Finally, all three pistols feature handsome and functionally designed grips. The rapid fire pistol has an optional wrap-around grip if desired.

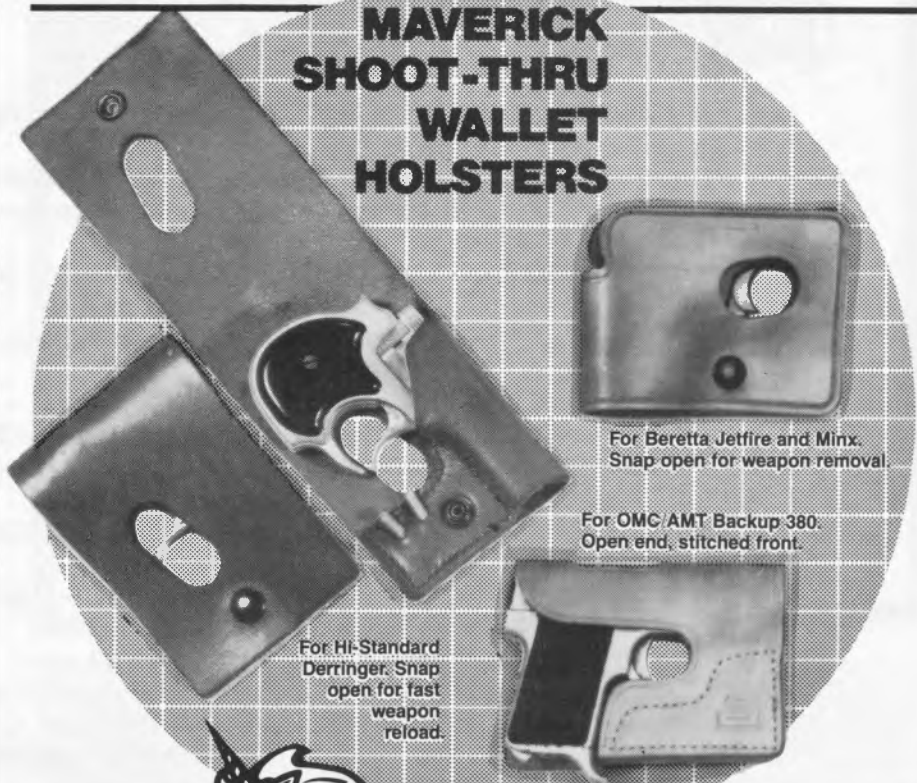
I had a chance to fire the rapid fire and centerfire pistols at the showing of these pistols at the Milan Shooting Club in Milan, Italy. I found the pistols were very comfortable in the hand and easy to shoot. Recoil was very pleasant in that it was straight back and at low levels. Although I didn't check for accuracy, all the design features of these pistols should contribute to an excellent match grade pistol capable of excellent

# Maverick Holsters

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
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accuracy.

I was unable to perform accuracy tests in Italy, but I will report in-depth on these pistols in a future issue of the *American Handgunner*.

The pistols themselves will start being available in Italy this spring and hopefully will be available in the States later in the year. Since Pardini Fiocchi now has a subsidiary in the USA, (Fiocchi of America is located in Springfield, Missouri) a determined effort will probably be made to have these fine pistols made available to American shooters as soon as production permits. I know they will welcome  their arrival.

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## LES BAER

Continued from page 39

that the two can be screwed together.

He says, "I do that mainly so that I can position the comp before I attach it permanently."

The second step is to silver-braze the two pieces. During this step, the threads contribute to a good bond by providing channels for the silver to flow.

Each barrel-cone-compensator assembly must then be hand-fitted to the individual gun. Les sells no drop-in units.

He explains, "I mike out the slide first, to get an inside dimension. Then I machine the tapered cone about five thousandths over-size. At the largest part of the cone, just behind the compensator, I machine a flat bank about a quarter of an inch wide. Then I lap the whole thing in, right to the slide."

Later, when the gun can be assembled, Les completes the fitting process by shooting it in. A few hundred rounds are usually enough to get the precise fit he demands.

Another step Les uses to improve slide lock-up consistency is to fit the bottom lug of the barrel precisely to the slide stop. He uses a carbide cutter of his own design to cut the bottom lug about .003" under-size. Then he laps in the slide stop for a perfect fit. In this way, the barrel is held tightly in battery, not by the link and pin, but by the bottom surface of the barrel lug and the slide stop. In a gun modified this way, the link serves only to pull the barrel out of battery as the slide moves back.

Like most pistolsmiths, Les also tightens the slide-to-frame fit.

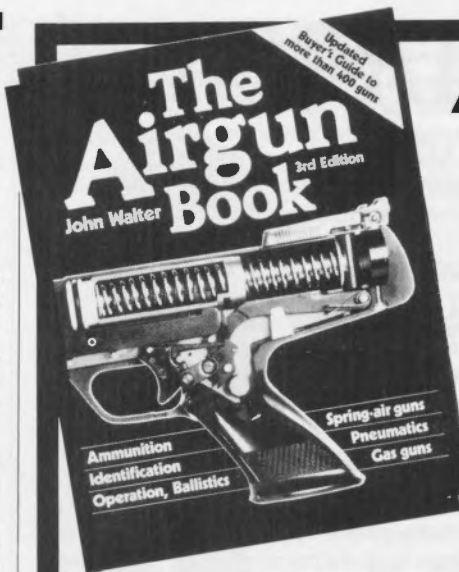
"I leave about .0015 of an inch horizontal and vertical movement in there, with the barrel out. I mike every one out to make sure they're all the same. I put the gun in a vise and run a dial indicator along the slide. If it's not moving a thousandth-and-a-half, I lap it in or file it 'til it does," he says.

All of this preparation works. Les has tested the prototype in the laboratory. Using precision measuring devices, he has shown that the system can repeat slide position to within .0001 of an inch every time.

Baer's compensator has six round ports—three on each side. Asked why he chose six round ports, Les admits that there is nothing magic about the configuration—he simply likes the looks of it. He stresses, however, that the total area of the ports is critical, and that he determined the correct size of the ports only after much experimentation.

He also says that the angle of the ports is important.

"A lot of the comps I see have the holes coming up toward the front sight. I don't understand that, because that way all the smoke goes up around the sight when you shoot. Mine are angled 30 degrees away from the centerline of the sight radius so that



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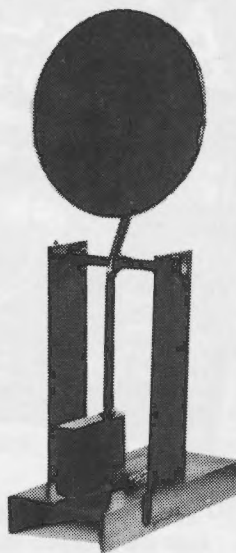


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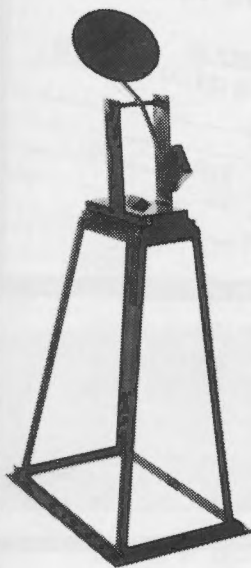
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the smoke blows away from the front sight," he explains.

The compensator is also an expansion chamber. That is, its internal diameter is slightly larger than the bore of the barrel. In addition to nearly eliminating muzzle flip, this design contributes to effective cycling.

"It delays unlocking of the barrel just long enough," says Les. "I found that if I didn't have the expansion chamber, the action was hesitant; the cycling had a gluk-gluk feeling to it. But with the expansion chamber, and with the low-drag design of the tapered cone, it really cycles well. In fact, my system cycles faster than a stock .45 does."

Baer's system uses a standard full-length recoil spring guide, to which Les adds an extension at the front. The extension supports the compensator at all times, and also adds a little weight. Like the other parts of the Baer system, the extension is machined from 4140 bar stock. It's constructed so that the slide, barrel and compensator, spring, and spring guide can be removed from the frame as a single piece simply by removing the slide stop. That permits the shooter a quick, convenient way to clean the gun between stages, without risking a change in the point of impact. Of course, the system can also be completely disassembled with relative ease.

Les explains that the extension on the spring guide is extremely important. It permits the slide to cycle almost without drag, and it contributes to reliable feeding.

"Without support for the compensator," Les says, "the weight causes the barrel to tip forward slightly when the barrel unlocks. That allows a small gap to form between the bottom of the barrel throat and the top of the feedramp on the frame. Obviously, that isn't what you want for reliable feeding."

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## COMBAT MIND-SET

Continued from page 27

those occasions when there is time, that fear should be deliberately overcome by anger in order to maintain control for the action to come.

A pistol action is usually commenced by firing on the part of the aggressor. On other occasions it can be initiated by an unmistakable movement on the part of the aggressor



which indicates that he is about to fire. This triggers the combat response of the properly conditioned defender, and that response should be one of completely business-like attention to detail.

Once you have decided that you must shoot, it is necessary for you to employ techniques which will enable you to shoot well. Defensive gunfights do not usually require a high degree of marksmanship, but proper technique must still be used if disaster is to be forestalled.

We have known several cases in which a highly qualified marksman fired a series of atrocious short-range misses, not because he couldn't shoot but because he did not pay attention to his shooting. In these cases he seems to have been thinking about the wrong things—such as the danger in which his life was placed, the anticipation of shock, concern about official policy or other irrelevancies.

*When you are being shot at there is only one proper thing for you to think about, and that is your own shooting.* All other thoughts must be blanked out.

In bold red letters across your "heads-up-display" should appear "Front sight. Press. Front sight. Press." If you concentrate upon a smooth, steady, surprise break, you will almost certainly survive the encounter. If you forget these things, you very probably will not.

I have heard it claimed that many police officers interviewed after shootings admitted that they did not see the front sight. Certainly we should not deny this possibility, but neither should we use it as an example of how things ought to be done.

In one major police department over the past two years there have been 32 pistol engagements involving SWAT members. Twenty-four remembered concentrating on their front sights, and they hit. Eight remembered not seeing their front sights, and they missed. That is a 100 percent tally. It certainly corroborates my teachings, but I did not make it up. It was given to me by the training officer of that department.

I once asked a very prominent and experienced police marksman what he remembered about his initial lethal contact. He said, loud and clear for all to hear, "I was looking at my front sight so hard that I could see the striations across it." He got three stops for three shots on that occasion.

In my most recent field case study, just last year, the subject told me in his letter that as soon as he saw the muzzle of his adversary's gun swing toward him, he blanked out everything but concentration on his front sight and on a smooth, steady pressure on his trigger. He came out fine.

This would indeed seem to be the formula for success.

The critical point is the creation of a "mental trigger" in the mind which is decided upon in advance of the action. This mental trigger may be any one of a number of things, but it should always be sufficient in the mind of the shooter to justify his taking lethal action. Usually it will be a shot fired at him, but it can

be a weapon pointed at him or a weapon pointed with lethal intent at someone else. In any case, it should be fixed upon in advance so that there is no need to hold a conference with oneself at the moment of truth. It cannot be delayed and it cannot be equivocal.

No person who has any moral reservations about the propriety of self-defense should carry a weapon in the first place.

If you accept the fact that you may have to fight to save your life, if you train yourself to use your weapons with skill and rapidity, and if you reserve your fighting stroke for conditions in which it is justified, it is not likely that you will experience any psychological difficulties in defending yourself. At least up to now I have never run across anyone who did.

Now, however, we come to a very curious and very new series of observations about how one is likely to feel *after* a successful engagement. The popular term is "post operational trauma," or P.O.T. for short. (The acronym seems appropriate.)

We are told from all sides that if one wins a lethal encounter he will feel dreadful. It is odd that no one seems to have felt dreadful about this until very recently.

Throughout recorded history the winning of a fight has generally been considered a subject for congratulation. It is only just now that it has become presumably tainted.

In reading our history, from the Pharaohs to the Falklands, one gets the impression that the principal feeling of the victor in mortal combat is satisfaction. Simply stated, the

word we get from time immemorial down to the present is, "I would not have killed him if it had not been necessary, but it was necessary and I am glad I did."

When David slew Goliath no one records that he went into shock; nor did Theseus when he slew the Minotaur; nor did Andy Jackson when he killed Dr. Dickinson in a duel; nor did Teddy Roosevelt when he was set upon in a frontier bar; nor did Eduardo Grijalva when he shot down two assassins in front of his office in San Salvador. Nor, we may assume, did the great majority of those police officers and private citizens who have had to shoot to defend themselves on the streets of the United States in the past few months.

It may be proposed that the military situation is emotionally different from the civilian, and in a sense it may be, but upon reflection it is obvious that any resulting P.O.T. ought to be far more of a problem for the soldier. One can hardly condemn an enemy soldier for answering his country's call to arms—rather to the contrary. The enemy one kills in war may be a splendid fellow; brave, clean, reverent, truthful, and so on. But a predatory felon who victimizes innocent non-combatants on the street is a proven goblin, sentenced by his own initiative. Some men may be upset by killing him, but not anyone I have met.

But there must be something to this matter of P.O.T. It could not be so well described if there had not been a couple of police officers who experienced it. It is my belief, however,

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that it is primarily a public relations innovation designed to parry various sorts of preposterous litigation which have become common in our courts.

Policemen are now instructed by their supervisors that, should they become involved in a fight, their attitude upon its conclusion should be one of shock, dismay, horror and hysteria. This is to present a proper picture for the press.

In actuality what they usually feel is pleased and proud. I repeat that I do not presume to use my own experience as a guide, but I do remember after action a definite feeling of elation. After looking right up the muzzle of one's opponent's gun there is a tendency to swagger. Jokes seem funnier, sky bluer, beer colder and bed warmer. Not for everyone, perhaps, but for those most characteristic of my investigations.

Throughout our history winning in a just cause has been deemed admirable and losing a disgrace. This sudden notion that there is something disreputable about winning in mortal conflict is peculiar and, I think, aberrant. This whole subject of P.O.T. may be largely an invention of the shrinks.

The combat mind-set, therefore, should be:

A. Before the fact—alert, prepared, and aware. If there is time for fear to build up it should be overcome by a conscious effort toward anger.

B. During action—total concentration upon the technical matter of placing the shot properly.

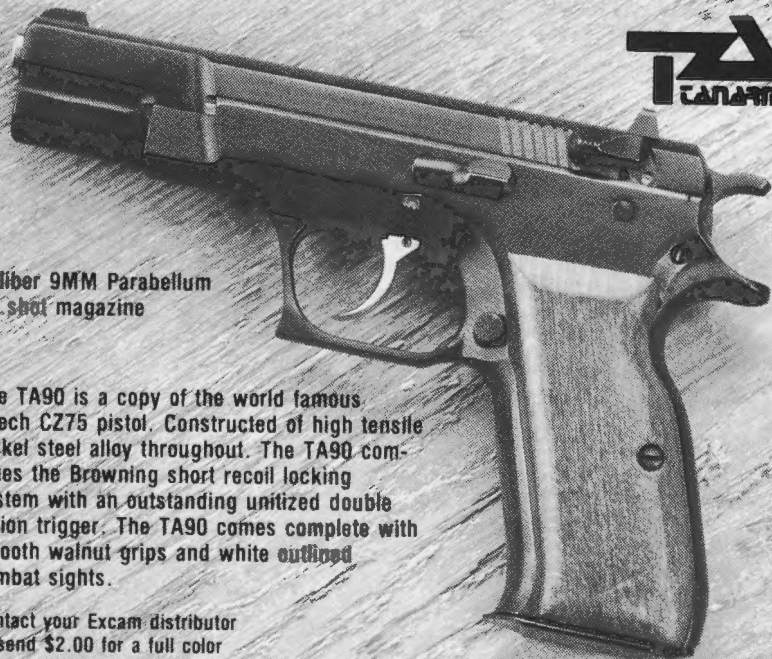
C. After the conflict—probably relief, gratification, and pride—approximately in that order. If it is advisable for the shooter to display distress, for various ulterior reasons, that is an administrative matter.

There is nothing wrong with winning. There is a great deal wrong with losing. Those who bear arms should bear that in mind.



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## .32 H&R MAGNUM

*Continued from page 43*

that boosted the idea of a lengthened .32 round, to be called the .32 Magnum, and revolvers to handle it. Handloaders everywhere expressed their interest, but that was not enough to nudge the industry into action.

Recommendations continued in the form of further writing, much of which appeared in the *American Handgunner*. Almost miraculously, nothing happened until Ted Rowe of Harrington & Richardson got in touch with the powers at Federal Cartridge to suggest the advent of a .32 Magnum. H&R would make the revolvers while the folks at Foshay Tower loaded ammo.

The result, which was announced in the latter months of 1983, materialized as two new Federal loads: a 95-grain lead semi-wadcutter at an advertised velocity of 1030 fps, and an 85-grain jacketed hollow-point at 1100 fps.



In a remarkable example of promotional underkill, both speeds were recorded from a 4<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch revolver barrel. That level of honesty has to be appreciated. Simultaneously, H&R unveiled a host of revolvers, with styles ranging from solid-frame to western in barrel lengths from two to 10 inches.

The case length of the revised round is 1.075, .155 of an inch longer than the old .32 S&W Long, which is enough to prevent its chambering in old revolvers, a boon to safety since the factory .32 Magnum, I'm told, operates in the neighbourhood of 20,000 psi.

The first gun to arrive for testing was the H&R Model 504, with six-inch barrel. The 504 has a swing-out cylinder that, like all the H&R .32 Magnums, is chambered for five-round capacity. H&R's idea was to provide more metal between chambers in order to achieve greater strength.

The 504's trigger pull is smooth, in both single and double action, with S.A. pull registering about seven pounds. The gun weighs 33 ounces, with six-inch barrel, which makes it the heaviest of the three guns tested.

On hand next was the four-inch Charter Arms Police Bulldog. It's CA's well-known .38 Special six-shooter, chambered and bored for the .32 Magnum. This one is, by far, the handiest of the three. At 23 ounces, it's easy to carry, and I like its high gloss black finish. Also on the plus side are a smooth trigger pull and an adjustable rear sight, which, by the way, all three guns have.

My only complaint about the Charter is that it now and then locks up. This has happened in both single and double action, not predictably, but when least expected. At such times the trigger will lock and can't be squeezed back until finger pressure is released and re-applied. As noted, this is a difficulty that is encountered only now and then.

I've long made a practice of getting in touch with any manufacturer before I fault a product in print, so I wrote to Larry Ference, product service manager at CA, to determine whether the gun I'd been sent for testing was representative of the entire product line.

Graciously, he sent another gun, which also locked up, although not as frequently.

Another letter was written. This time, Mr. Ference replied, "My only thought is that possibly you are not allowing the trigger to travel forward fully after each shot. I checked the other .32 Magnum sent you before it went out and could find nothing wrong... Please let me know if you have further problems."

This manufacturer's attitude stands in the best tradition of good customer relations, and it is possible that all CA revolvers do not malfunction in the manner I have described. It is, however, significant that I have lately communicated with several owners of CA revolvers (in calibers other than .32 Magnum), who attest to having similar problems involving trigger lock. Meanwhile, I've been careful to allow the trigger on my .32 Magnum CA to travel fully forward after each shot. Unfortunately, this lone fault in an otherwise highly-recommendable revolver is

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not so easily corrected.

Last to arrive for testing was the Ruger. It's been dubbed the New Model .32 Magnum Single-Six, a bored-out version of Ruger's .22 rimfire Single-Six that's been adapted to centerfire. At 30 ounces, it weighs midway between the four-inch CA and the six-inch H&R. Barrel length is 5½ inches. The Ruger's cylinder, which is chambered to hold six rounds, is the largest in diameter of the three guns used in these tests. It's single-action only, with a trigger pull of six pounds. Like the H&R, the Ruger has performed without a hitch.

The Ruger did, however, exhibit one minor flaw. A single hairline scratch could be seen on the cylinder about a quarter of an inch aft of its forward surface. The scratch, which ran circumferentially across the full-diameter areas between the flutes, wasn't being caused by anything that would affect cylinder rotation, but it shouldn't have been there.

Fortunately, the remedy was simple, for it was only necessary to mask the lower inside surface of the frame, leaving the offending area exposed, and carefully smooth away the tiny striations. Finally, the scratch was touched away with a few smears of cold bluing.

Cylinder lengths for the three revolvers are as follows: H&R, 1⅜-inch; Ruger, 1⅓/32-inch; CA, 1½-inch. The latter, of course, is longer because it's a converted .38 Special. I mention this because cylinder length limits the overall length of the handloaded cartridge. If, as I did, you try loading bullets of greater length (such as 110-grainers), you'll find the CA's long cylinder quite accommodating. But if, as I did, you find that the reduced velocities attainable with 110s in the .32 Magnum are not conducive to good effect, it won't make much difference.

Throughout the course of extensive handloading and chronographing, I've discovered the .32 Magnum to be a critter with a distinctively individual constitution; therefore, the revelations that follow will set it apart from any other handgun.

I requested a six-inch barrel on the H&R because I thought I could simply pick up on what I'd done with the six-inch K-32 back in 1962 and go on from there. Not so.

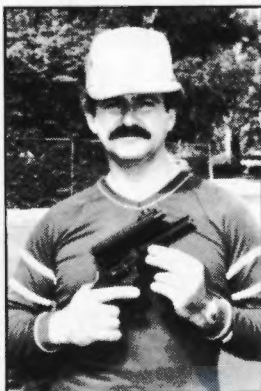
Powders, the likes of 2400 and Unique, although good in the old .32 S&W Long load tests, did not offer the results I'd hoped for with the new magnum. Unique seemed to work well enough with midrange loads, but when it came to pushing for higher velocities it raised apparent pressures too rapidly, and 2400 was too slow for optimal use with all but the heaviest bullets.

So, the search for ideal propellants continued throughout the testing of a dozen or so types before I settled on a few that would work satisfactorily.

Aside from having to start from scratch with a whole new set of rules for bullet weights and powder types, getting into handloading the .32 Magnum was easy. RCBS came through with the dies, and bullets were available from Hornady in the form of their

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These bullets, especially the 85, have performed well in the categories of accuracy and expansion. However, as in the 1962 experiments, the selection of bullet weights and shapes was limited. The problem was solved through the use of Corbin Manufacturing Company's (P.O. Box 2171, White City, OR 97502), new kit for swaging jacketed .32 Magnum bullets. Corbin's swaging dies, which can be used in most standard reloading presses, are offered with nose-forming punches that will turn out a variety of shapes, from wadcutter to cavity-nose, in an infinite selection of weights.

While I was busy swaging bullets with the Corbin set-up, J&J Custom Bullet (P.O. Box 2029A, El Cajon, CA 92021), came along with a whole new line of .32 Magnum swaged bullets. These, like bullets of other calibers in the J&J line, are available either plain-swaged or swaged with soldered cores. (Core-soldering is an aid to preventing jacket separation in swaged bullets fired at higher velocities.)

With a good selection of bullets at hand, the next step was to set up Custom Chronograph's (Box 1061, Brewster, WA 98812), Model 1000 and clock Federal's factory loads. As noted earlier, these "stock" .32 Magnum loads are quite respectable, in terms of power, when compared to the old .32 S&W Long.

Even so, the chronographing done here does not support advertised velocity claims. The 85 grainer, for example, advertised at 1100 fps, averaged 1065 fps from the four-inch CA, and only 970 fps from the six-inch H&R. (Subsequent checks established the 85 at an average 985 fps from the Ruger.) The 95 grainer, advertised at 1030 fps, rated 990 fps from the CA, 940 fps from the Ruger, and 925 fps from the H&R.

You probably noticed something of a contradiction in the velocities just cited; to wit, that higher readings were recorded from the shorter-barreled CA. Apart from the fact that the CA's chamber is a little longer and, in the case of my test sample, a little tighter, further explanation may be found in the fact that Federal's 85 and 90-grain loads each contain relatively small charges of some fast-burning flake-type powder.

This, by inference, amounts to a compromise that is aimed at accommodating loads to a wide assortment of barrel lengths, such as is being offered by H&R. Certainly, if a load is to work well in barrels ranging down to two inches in length, it must employ a fast-burning powder. But fast-burning powders do not perform optimally in long barrels, at least not when you're seeking magnum punch.

The way to realize the .32 Magnum's full potential would be to begin tailoring handloads to the individual guns, especially those with longer barrels. Moreover, it would be necessary to consider the length of the case, its capacity, and the depths to which bullets of varying lengths and designs had to be seated and crimped. Regardless of which revolver you choose, you'll probably discover that cer-

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tain loads perform better than others, which emphasizes the value of custom loading.

A 70-grain jacketed hollow-point was tried first. Although several powders were tested, only two provided good results. A charge of 6.5 grains of Hodgdon's HP-38 resulted in 1450 fps/325 foot-pounds from the CA; 1240/240 from the H&R; 1230/235 from the Ruger. A charge of 6.7 grains of Winchester's WW-231 behind the 70 brought 1530/365 from the CA; 1410/310 from the H&R; 1390/300 from the Ruger.

The shortest of the three barrels was still giving the highest bullet speeds, but this was with fast powders and light bullets. Having topped the published velocity/energy figures without difficulty, I was encouraged to go for more by testing different loads.

The paradox apparent in attaining higher speeds from the short barrel did a complete turnabout with slower-burning powders and 85 to 87-grain bullets from Hornady and J&J.

I'd gone with 5.1 grains of Unique, behind the Markell 98, in the .32 S&W Long, so I tried 5.5 grains with the 85s and 87s in the Magnum. The charge was over-max in the CA, and near-max in both the H&R and Ruger. In fact, top velocity resulted from this charge in the H&R, but it amounted to a mere 1150 fps/250 foot-pounds. In the same string of test firings, 9.0 grains of 2400 gave 1165/255 from the CA, and a maximum of 1290/315 from the H&R and Ruger.

Something worthwhile was in the offing, to be sure. The pre-.32 Magnum ballyhoo had established the round as being superior to .38 Special factory loads, but handloading within tolerable limits of chamber pressures had advanced it even further. And had done so with powders that were less than ideal for the .32 Magnum.

Bullets of 90, 95, 100, 105, and 110-grain weights were tested with, as I said, at least a dozen different powders and many different charge weights. At last, Accurate Arms' No. 7, a spherical that meters easily, was put to work behind the 85s and 87s. At this point, because of No. 7's relatively slow-burning rate, the shorter barrels are found wanting, while both the H&R and the Ruger move into the spotlight.

Beginning with 8.5 grains of No. 7, the 85s and 87s were pushed to 1415/375, average, from the H&R and Ruger. At 9.0 grains, the average was 1465/405. Then, with 9.5 grains, I recorded an average 1535/445. Finally, with 10.0, the 85 hit an average (in the Ruger and H&R) of 1601 fps and harvested a kinetic energy of 484 foot-pounds. The 10-grain charge is absolute max in the guns I tested, so by all means don't try it in your gun until you've worked up, ever so cautiously, from the 8.5-grain starting point. Max or near-max charges are for carry-loads and all-out hunting; the better choice being something less committed to attaining ultimate power.

You'll find a scattering of partially-burned powder particles in the barrel of a .32 Magnum revolver when you load Accurate Arms' No. 7. I haven't found such deposits to be a



deterrent to accuracy, and it's certain that they don't mean much when compared to the big power payoff.

Nor has accuracy been appreciably affected by high-power loading. I've shot more than a few 1-1/2-inch five-shot groups at 25 yards. The Farsight, a pinhole device that clamps onto shooting glasses has helped. It has a dozen different dial-in apertures that can bring a target into clearer focus. The Farsight is available, for \$8.95, from Farr Studio, 1231 Robinhood Rd., Greeneville, TN 37743.

You may or may not be overwhelmed by thoughts of owning a .32 Magnum. On the other hand, if you'd like to own and handload a round that can top anything from 9MM to .45 ACP in factory loads, and without punishing recoil, give this long-awaited newcomer a try.



## 10mm BLACKPOWDER

Continued from page 51

slower .44.

Introduced in 1875, the .38-40 was the second Winchester-Colt dual caliber, useable in either single action or lever gun. Unlike the .44 WCF, which was often used as a military rifle, the .38 achieved a reputation for eastern deer hunting. But, its effectiveness in combat was well known. Colt chambered both DA and SA revolvers for .38 WCF until just before WW II.

Handloads can drive the .40-caliber 180-gr. jacketed softpoint from a six-inch barrel at 1100 fps. This is best done in a Colt New Service heavy-frame double action. Lever-action carbine loads go as high as 2000 fps with the same bullet. When my inquiry into .40/10mms began, I took the .38-40 as a benchmark, and made my auto pistol's design mission to get full black-powder chamber revolver power from the 9mm cartridge length and pistol size.



## CROSSFIRE PRO

Continued from page 29

intention is to instantly stop the aggressive action. The manner of doing so, the mechanism, is to deliver energy to the subject by means of a projectile launched from a handgun. We are generally familiar with the internal and external ballistics, but most of us interested in self-defense have only a hazy idea of terminal (at the target) ballistics.

Indeed, the subject is confusing and inexact because of all of the variables of the target, including but not limited to the attacker's build, distance from you, his mental state, his clothing, his chemical status (high on drugs), even his aspect, that is, how he is facing. Yet I still maintain that any

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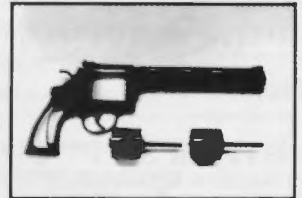
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the cases I am aware of, none of the rounds impacted near this target. The result is expanded sales of magnums to people, and police, who can't hit their targets with what they have.

But now they can miss with a more powerful round—which is really self defeating.

Where does the answer lie?

The upper limit of control for the average adult, with an interest in self-defense, but not a dedication to it, lies in the .38/9mm range. Those with somewhat greater desire can master the .45 ACP, but for ease of control, a short learning curve, and a reasonable probability of hitting the 'target', most people including the police, are in this range. Few people, male or female, can truly master the .41 and .44 Magnums, and even the .357 takes extra work if multiple targets are involved.

But the traditional ammunition in the .38/9mm class calibers does not deliver enough energy to sufficiently enlarge the target area because of the round nose design. Thus increasing numbers of people and police agencies have adopted a controlled expansion plus-P round combining an expanded target with a high hit probability.

If we could be certain of increasing the odds of hitting the 'target', we could decrease the power of the gun/ammo system. If we could control more power 100 percent of the time, we could use a more powerful gun/ammo system. We are faced with a triangle of gun/ammo ability, and apparent 'target' size. But the long leg of the triangle is ability.

Thus we return to my opening thesis: Any handgun round, *properly placed*, can stop any assailant. And the person who invents a method to guarantee proper placement will save a lot of lives.

Men are not blocks of clay, water soaked newspapers or piles of ductseal. They have a variety of densities, and depend upon the brain to send electrical impulses to the body. Interfere with the process, and you stop all activity instantly. A knockdown. A properly placed bullet can do that.

For the present, I accept the responsibility for my own protection, and practice, practice, practice to try to insure that when that monster I described earlier attacks me, I will be able to protect myself.

Survival is the only victory. And bullet placement is the key to survival.



## CROSSFIRE CON

Continued from page 29

object being struck, and the placement of the bullet with relation to the center of mass.

For purposes of calculation, some of the variables can be considered 'constants' while, naturally, others are not. Which is to say, that for every absolute set of figures and calculations that are dictated for a given circumstance, the next shot fired may encounter totally different numbers.



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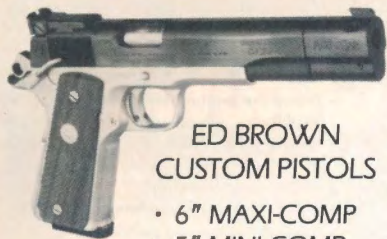
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In spite of this slippery interpretation of ballistics, general calculations can be made which will allow us to closely determine the physical effects of a bullet on a known mass. The physiological effects on a living subject produce even more variables than already mentioned.

To keep things simple, we will discuss the effects of tangible ballistic quantities on a solid mass to better understand the capabilities of a given load.

For purposes of this example, let's take a common bullet weight often used in police work, the 150 grain bullet. In keeping with this law enforcement overtone, let's assume that the bullet is being propelled out at about 1,500 fps; definitely a 'hot' .357 or + P + .38 cal load. For the majority of officers in the street, this would be an optimum—albeit hard to achieve—set of numbers.

Now, let's say that the intended target weighs 170 pounds and is close enough to the muzzle so we don't have to compute for distance and loss of velocity. Let's also assume the bullet strikes the target dead-center in the middle of mass to produce clean physical results.

Our bullet (150 grs/1,500 fps) has a mathematical energy of 753 ft-lbs. That is, it has the potential of lifting one pound 753 feet or lifting 753 pounds one foot. If it travels one foot into the body before stopping, it will impart a force of 753 pounds for approximately .00133 second. If the bullet stops within three inches, it will deliver a force of 3,030 lbs for approximately .00033 second (.33 milliseconds).

Amazing figures, to be sure, but because of the very short durations of time that the force is actually felt, the physical effect to the body being struck is far less than the numbers would lead you to believe. What all these astronomical-sounding numbers boil down to is a recoil velocity of .188 ft/sec, or 2.3 in/sec for the 170 lb mass in both examples!

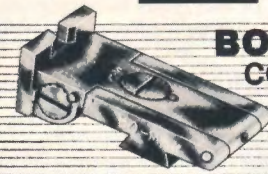
Taking these figures at face value, the calculations show that if the 170 lb weight were placed on a frictionless surface, it would recoil away from the impact at only 2.3 inches a second. Conversely, if the shooter and his gun also had a combined weight of 170 lbs, he would recoil away from the shot at the same identical speed (Newton's Third Law of Motion).

Hardly enough force to cause someone to be thrown 'violently' back.

Why the obvious lack of physical 'reaction' in these equations? Simple. The Laws of Physics state that energy is never lost on impact. But because of intense friction, the bullet's energy is given up—or converted—to heat. All the potential energy that looms in those high numbered figures that look so good on paper, really only amounts to a lot of heat on impact. Maybe this is where the term 'hot lead' comes from.

Enough theory and math. Let's take a look at some real-life examples that prove my point.

Shooting at live targets—be they animal or otherwise—is very much like a roll of the dice; sometime you can roll a seven or



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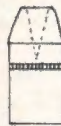
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eleven, and sometimes you roll craps.

The following shooting incidents were taken directly from police records. No doubt, there are many more such incidents out there that serve to prove the point being made—that handgun loads do not always knockdown an assailant.

**Case #1:** In an attempt to catch a skillful cat-burglar, officers of a big city PD staked out several high-rise apartment buildings. After one or two nights of vigilance, the well-built and highly athletic burglar was seen crawling up the face of a 15-story condo. Officers at the scene waited until he worked his way back to the ground and then confronted the punk with drawn weapons. The burglar decided to run and many shots were fired at him over a period of time as he played cat-and-mouse between buildings. As he jumped over seven-foot walls and out-ran his pursuers, the burglar took a total of *seven hits with +P .38 cal police loads*. Even though he was hit in the neck, chest and kidney, he still tried to make good his escape. What finally brought the man down was a lucky shot to his heel. Not being able to run anymore, the burglar fell and was captured.

**Case #2:** A police officer carrying a 9mm semi-auto approached a robbery suspect sitting in a vehicle and ordered the man to freeze. The suspect responded by producing a weapon and the officer fired hitting the man at least three times, point-blank. The suspect was able to shoot back and killed the officer where he stood.

**Case #3:** A family argument escalated to the point where one of the parties drew a .45 auto and fired three shots into a male victim while he was standing inside a house. With his mortal wounds, the victim was able to run out the door and down the street for approximately 200 yards before he fell. In spite of being hit square in the torso, at no time was the victim knocked off his feet.

**Case #4:** A police officer working alone responded to a family dispute and was met by a man and his wife inside their apartment. After determining that the situation was in control, the officer counseled both parties and turned to walk out. The man retrieved a .45 auto and planted two shots in the back of the officer at a distance of less than 10 feet. One of the rounds was a full-jacket ball slug, and the other was a hollow-point *Silvertip*. The officer was not wearing a vest and although severely injured, was never knocked off his feet. Reacting to the shock of his wounds, the officer drew his service revolver and sat down with his back against a wall until help came. The officer eventually survived the incident but was pensioned off the job.

As you can see by all these examples, if you're counting on your sidearm to do more than Mother Nature intended for it to do, you could be a long time waiting for the results. Instead of hoping for some physically impossible results from your gun, you would be better off to accept your gun's limitations and learn to work with what you have. As interesting as the concept of knockdown power is, it just doesn't exist in the calibers generally associated with handguns.

So, the next time you watch a movie and see the amazing antics of a staged shooting in slow-motion, remember what you've learned about the laws of physics. Good marksmanship is still your best defense in a one-on-one situation. Don't count on big guns or

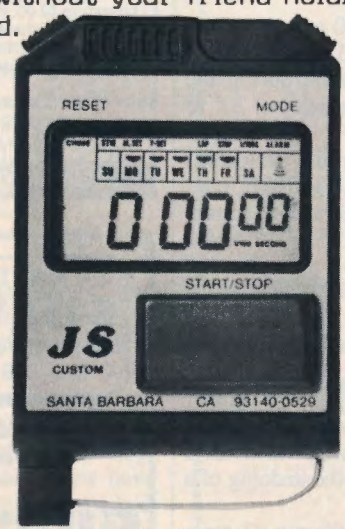
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## .256 SUPER-MAG

Continued from page 45

Several of the loads extracted hard, to the point of having to be removed with a screw-driver. The cases in question showed the telltale rings caused by a rough chamber. Polishing with 400 grit wet/dry paper eliminated the problem of light loads sticking.

It was obvious that if the project were to continue, the case splitting had to be stopped. I called Hornady Manufacturing in an attempt to order a set of forming dies. I felt this would solve the problem. I ended up explaining my project to Steve Hornady. He said they would make the dies, but it would take six to eight weeks and cost \$140. Then, to my surprise, he added, "There is a faster and cheaper way". He thought I could make an intermediate forming die by shortening a 300 Winchester Magnum sizing die. This, used with an extended shell holder might work. He was right, case loss due to forming was all but eliminated.

During all phases of testing a close eye was kept on the cases for any sign of excessive pressures. After firing each new load all case heads were measured for expansion and notes taken on the condition of the primers. Each load was increased a half a grain at a time. As they became progressively heavier the standard primers began to show slight cratering. At this point a change was made to Remington 7½ Benchrest primers. These have the advantage of a thicker cup to withstand higher pressures. Maximum loads were determined by pressure signs and chronograph readings. When the addition of more powder failed to produce a significant increase in velocity, or the cases indicated high pressure levels, the load was reduced by half a grain.

All testing was done at 50 meters, shooting over an Oehler Model 33 chronograph. Most of the testing was done during the winter months in temperatures from 20° to 45° F

Hornady's 60 grain flat point performed well with a wide range of loads. Most loads would keep five shots in a 1½" to 1¾" group. Many groups were one inch or less. A bullet this light is of little use on the silhouette range, however, it is an excellent choice for small game. I used it in the .256 Super-Mag last fall to harvest a good many gray squirrels at ranges out to 60 meters.

Sierra's 75 grain hollowpoint is another that is a little on the light side for silhouettes, but should prove first rate on varmints. I expect the 75 grainer to be the undoing of a good many woodchucks.

For silhouette shooters, Sierra's 87 grain spire point holds the greatest promise. This bullet shot more sub-one inch groups than any of the others tested. The best results were

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with 14.0 gr. of 2400 powder. One five shot group measured, outside to outside, .330". Loading up 1½ grains still placed five shots in the paper in just under one-inch, and with a muzzle velocity of 2070 fps. When compared to the maximum load for this bullet in the .256 Win-Mag this is an increase of 15 percent in muzzle velocity and a 33 percent increase in muzzle energy. Using the tables in the available loading manuals along with actual chronograph readings the retained energy at 200 yards was calculated to be 458 ft./lbs. This is an increase of 37 percent over the .256 Win-Mag.

It is a generally accepted fact that with this small of a case the .25 caliber will not group with a bullet heavier than 90 grains. Knowing this, I still attempted to work up a load using Nosler's 100 grain spitzer. While able to keep the group around 1¼ inches at 50 meters, it opened up to 10 inches at 200 meters.

At the present time the selection of .25 caliber pistols suitable for silhouette shooting and hunting is limited. Thompson/Center is the only major manufacturer offering the shooter the 256 Win-Mag and the 25/30. I believe there exists a need and a market for a high-velocity .25 caliber silhouette/hunting cartridge. Maybe in the near future a major ammo manufacturer and gun maker will agree with me and look to fill that need, and just maybe it will be filled with something like the .256 Super-Mag.

## SWPL & ACCU-COMPS

Continued from page 37

The skill levels of the League participants ranged from the coveted title of Combat Master to the beginner rating of "E" class.

The League members had the choice of shooting their own ammunition, reloads or a selection of factory ammunition. The types of ammo that were provided are listed.

A total of approximately 1,375 rounds went through both the Wilson *Accu-Comps* with eight malfunctions. Two of the malfunctions were caused by light loads. Two failures to extract occurred in the Commander. Four failures to feed hampered the Government Model. Remember, the *Accu-Comps* were not cleaned during the testing.

This works out to a 99.4 percent reliability rating.

This portion of the test of the *Accu-Comps* belongs to the Southwest Pistol League, so without further ado let's hand things over to some League members.

Three-time Bianchi Cup champion and Combat Master Mickey Fowler said, "It's a good piece of equipment for IPSC shooting. It's fast handling. The *Accu-Comps* have good balance for engaging multiple targets at maximum speed."

Randy Torbick shot the *Accu-Comps* and said, "The recoil is similar to the Clark Pin Gun, but overall the gun is lighter. I would think seriously about owning one."

Mike Card also saw a similarity to the Clark Pin Gun when he said, "The felt recoil is softer than on my Clark Pin Gun."

Not all the comments were entirely positive.

Larry Ravlin said, "The extended mag release on the Government rates a 'zero.' It's too easily released when shooting."

Lee Mellinger commented, "The checkering is very sharp; for my hands it's too sharp. But it's very easy to double-tap."

Kelly Kuehl experienced several of the few malfunctions encountered in the test. She said, "Seems picky on ammo. I used reloads that feed consistently in the four guns my husband and I shoot. Your's wouldn't."

Lee W. Smith liked the *Accu-Comps*. He commented, "I have a Wilson gun but without a compensator. Now I can't wait to get an *Accu-Comp*."

Finally, Dennis Lau said, "Clearly one of the best compensated guns available. Shot to shot recovery time is dramatically improved over a non-compensated gun."



## WILSON ACCU-COMPS

Continued from page 38

The magazine wells on both pistols are beveled for aiding the quick insertion of a magazine.

Both *Accu-Comps* have Wilson Match triggers (skeletonized). The Government is fitted with an extended mag release button, but the Commander is not.

The checkering on both pistols is 20 lpi, and is extremely sharp, which I very much like. Some shooters to whom I showed the guns didn't like the sharpness of the checkering, but the lion's share of the IPSC shooters who examined the *Accu-Comps* were ecstatic in their praise of this sharply handcut checkering.

The front straps and the arched main-spring housings are both checkered. The fronts of the trigger guards are also checkered at 20 lpi.

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Also, gunsmithing for High Standard firearms is available from 40-year-veteran High Standard pistolsmith, Bob Sher, at 381 Quinipiac, North Haven, CT, 06473, (203) 239-1012.

The rear of the slides are serrated at 30 lpi to reduce glare.

Both *Accu-Comps* have full-length guide rods to hold the recoil spring in line and position it correctly each time the gun cycles. Both, of course, have the Wilson Shok-Buff as part of the recoil guide rod assembly.

Both *Accu-Comps* feature barrels with cone-shaped sleeves to replace the bushing and serve as the lockup at the nose end of the pistol. Both are fitted precisely.

Speaking of precise fitting, the slide to frame mating is nothing short of exceptional. Tight!

As you can see, the *Accu-Comps* feature a myriad of options. For a price list of Wilson's various custom work send a SASE or, for a complete illustrated catalog, send \$2.50 to Wilson's Gun Shop at the address given at the beginning of this report.

### FIELD STRIPPING THE ACCU-COMP

To field strip the *Accu-Comp*, first lock the slide back. Then reach for the highly sophisticated, specialized tool that comes with each *Accu-Comp*—a nipped-off piece of nail.

There is a small hole in the recoil guide rod for the piece of nail. If you lose your bit of nail, a piece of a paper clip works just as well. I know, I lost my bit of nail.

Insert the nail into the hole. Then release the slide stop, remove it, and tear down the pistol in the same manner as a standard 1911 model.

The nail serves to "capture" the recoil spring guide rod assembly.

Reassemble in reverse. (If you don't know how to field strip 1911 model, read J.B. Wood's excellent manual, *Firearms Assembly/Disassembly* available at any well-stocked gun shop).

### THE LE COMPENSATOR

The heart of a Wilson *Accu-Comp* is the compensator, and with his LE compensator, Bill Wilson has mastered the concept of the expansion chamber.

Compensators fall into three categories—expansion chambers, weighted barrel extensions (Clark Pin Gun) and ported barrels (Mag-Na-Port or similar).

For reducing muzzle flip and *felt* recoil in a .45 autoloader, the expansion chamber is by far the most efficient. An expansion chamber works by trapping escaping gases and channeling them upwards through a port to thwart muzzle rise.

The LE is a masterpiece of expansion chamber design because of the large chamber and the vast bearing surface of steel at the front of the compensator which directs gases back into the chamber. It is this frontal portion of the compensator that makes the LE design stand head and shoulders above most other compensators.

The bullet has only a .468 inch diameter hole through which it passes, a scant .016 inch over bore diameter. Surrounding the opening for the bullet is a large bearing surface of steel which acts as a baffle to redirect gases back into the expansion chamber.

Obviously, the more gases that are forced back into the compensator, the more effective

the compensator. The LE design achieves this objective in spades.

How well does the LE compensator work? Very well. How much does it dampen felt recoil and muzzle flip? Tremendously.

Perhaps I should be more specific. The difference between a Wilson *Accu-Comp* and a stock Government Model is the difference between Mama Cass and Bo Derek. Night and day.

Even with reduced target loads in a stock Government Model and full-house loads in an *Accu-Comp*, the *Accu-Comp* still kicks noticeably less. Comparing apples with apples, hardball with hardball, the difference between either of the test *Accu-Comps* and a stock five-incher is astounding.

It's the difference between light .38 Special wadcutters and maximum .357 Magnum loads. In other words, the *Accu-Comps* reduce muzzle flip one hell of a lot!

How does the *Accu-Comp* duo compare with other comp guns? How effective is the LE compensator compared to other compensators? Well, this is a touchy area because the conclusion must be highly subjective. In my opinion, the *Accu-Comp* is far more effective at dampening recoil and muzzle jump than any of the popular comp guns I have shot. It kicks *much less* than my Clark Pin Gun, and *marginally less* than my Plaxco (old model).

I have neither the space here nor the inclination to compare the *Accu-Comps* to each and every comp gun out there. I suppose I've shot about 15 or 20 different comp guns from different custom pistolsmiths. Out of all of those, I can only think of two that reduce recoil as effectively or more effectively than the Wilson *Accu-Comps*.

### FUNCTIONING AND RELIABILITY

Neither of the Wilson *Accu-Comps* functioned flawlessly. But they came as close to perfection as one can reasonably expect.

To be precise, the *Accu-Comps* functioned 99.4 percent during the Southwest Pistol League tests (see accompanying story). This is based on eight reported malfunctions in approximately 1,375 rounds.

No malfunctions occurred with a wide variety of factory ammo. Surprisingly, the Government *Accu-Comp* failed to digest six reloads which leads me to suspect the ammo was at fault, and not the *Accu-Comp*.

Despite short, stubby, hollowpoint factory loads like the CCI Lawman 200 grainer, the *Accu-Comps* gleefully devoured all that was fed them.

The Commander *Accu-Comp* failed to extract twice during the League test. In both jams, the extractor slipped past the case's extractor groove.

Subsequent investigation revealed the hook on the extractor was a little on the shallow side and the tension had loosened during the exhaustive testing. I sent the slide back to Bill, and he replaced the extractor. Since then, the Commander has extracted magnificently.

I lost track of the number of rounds I put through the *Accu-Comps*. I kept tabs on the number until about the 2,000-mark, and then



I forgot to record a range session. However, I can make an educated guess, based on my reloading records and notes at the range, that I put roughly 3,000 reloads through the two *Accu-Comps*.

The Commander received about 60 percent of the testing, and the Government the other 40 percent. I tried to be fair, but I was greatly impressed with the Commander. So let's say the Government took 1,200 reloads, and the Commander 1,800.

I did, however, keep track of the number of malfunctions I experienced with my reloads. I cleared jams (all failures to go into battery) with the Government Model on seven occasions. With the Commander, I went through clearing drills five times, all of them failures to extract (prior to the new extractor).

So, here we have a total of 12 jams in 3,000 rounds which works out to 99.6 percent reliability. This is based on the testing with reloads only.

I also put factory ammo through the *Accu-Comps*. With a diverse diet of factory fodder, the *Accu-Comps* performed perfectly, 100 percent.

The factory ammo included hard-to-digest hollowpoints, hardball and Federal Match 230 grainers. In all, I fired 600 rounds of hardball and 400 rounds of various hollowpoints.

So, let's take an average of the three functioning/reliability figures we have available: 99.4 percent in League tests; 99.6 percent in reload tests; and 100 percent in factory ammo tests.

Verdict: the two Wilson *Accu-Comps* function flawlessly 99.66 percent of the time. That, friends, is as close to perfection as any honest test will reveal.

### ACCURACY, ACCURACY, ACCURACY

When asked what the three most important aspects of journalism are, Joseph Pulitzer said, "Accuracy, accuracy, accuracy." The same may be said of a custom pistol.

Let's take a look at how accurate the *Accu-Comps* are. To avoid confusing you by jumping back and forth, I discuss the Commander *Accu-Comp* first, and then the Government *Accu-Comp*.

But first, a couple of general comments. The Government *Accu-Comp* with its longer barrel (five inches plus an inch of compensator) is more accurate than the Commander *Accu-Comp*. Out of eight different brands of ammo used in the accuracy test, the Commander out-shoots the Government with only two types of ammo. Even then it is close (see accompanying chart).

All in all, both the *Accu-Comps* are extremely accurate. The Government shoots one-inch groups all day with the proper fodder. The Commander can't quite muster that same degree of accuracy, but it holds its own with inch-and-a-half groups. That ain't shabby for such a short barrel (four inches plus an inch of compensator).

In keeping with the thrust of this test report to evaluate the *Accu-Comps* in terms of their *raison d'être*, I do not deem it appropriate to

include accuracy data on the various hollow-point loadings used in the reliability testing. What for? No IPSC shooter fires factory hollowpoints in a match, and for good reason—they can't make "major" (except the *Silvertips* from Winchester which are hot enough to make a factor of 175).

Now for a closer look at the Commander after those preliminary words.

Much to my surprise, the Commander displays a definite affinity for factory ammo over reloads. The tightest group from the Commander is a nice cluster measuring 1½ inches with Federal Match hardball, 230 grainers.

However, the Commander doesn't hate reloads. It groups my normal IPSC load into 1½ inches, only ⅜ of an inch larger than with that exceptional Federal Match ammo.

Over to the Government *Accu-Comp*.

If the test sample Government *Accu-Comp* is representative, then I can safely tell you that *Accu-Comps* deserve their name—ACCU-rate.

With both factory and reloaded ammo, the Government groups cling tightly together.

The best group from the Government is one-inch with my IPSC reload. Bill's reload, of which he sent a sample, groups just ⅙ of an inch larger. The 230 grain reload goes out to 1½ inches.

All in all, you would be hard pressed to find a reload that *doesn't* shoot well in this *Accu-Comp*.

With factory ammo, accuracy falls off a bit except for Nevins hardball. The Nevins fodder goes into a 1½ inches group.

The other factory ammo fired in the Government *Accu-Comp* does not deserve mention except to note that again the Federal match is the preferred brand.

No question about it, Joseph Pulitzer would approve of the *Accu-Comps*. They are accurate, accurate, accurate.

### IPSC-STYLE TESTING

I have never, with any pistol, been able to double-tap accurately much beyond 10 yards. Oh sure, I can double-tap at 100 yards, but I won't hit anything. So I've always reserved the 'hammer' for under 10 yards for a reasonable expectation of A-zone hits.

That's all history now that I've shot an *Accu-Comp*. The incredible muzzle rise dampening effect of the *Accu-Comp* has extended the range of my double-taps to 15 yards. And that's with A-zone hits.

This alone, as all you IPSC shooters realize, is worth the price of an *Accu-Comp*. With speed of shooting at a premium with the Comstock scoring system, the ability to save a precious second with a double-tap is priceless.

The first series of double-taps I fired with the Government *Accu-Comp* at 10 yards were too close together. They were averaging about three inches apart, center of the A-zone. Not a few were 'snake eyes.'

So I moved back to 15 yards. The double-taps then opened up to about six inches apart. Still in the A-zone of a Milpark. The groups seemed to stay about six to eight inches apart at 17 yards, but opened up beyond the A-zone

at 20 yards.

How 'bout that? The *Accu-Comps* add five, perhaps seven additional yards to my double-taps. No other compensated .45 has demonstrated this in my hands.

I wanted to test the *Accu-Comps* for their all-around suitability for IPSC shooting. Most would have a problem devising a standard course of fire, and then shooting it for several years to obtain a reliable average. Fortunately, I've been shooting just such a standard drill for the past two years.

Let's see how the *Accu-Comps* stack up against my average over the past two years. The course of fire is an exhaustive standard exercise invented by timer wizard Ronin Coleman of Dallas, Tex. The drill consists of 125 rounds, and 625 possible points. It tests everything from weak-hand shooting to rapid reloading to going prone.

Ronin, by the way, invented the PACT timer for IPSC competition.

I used the PACT timer throughout the course of this test, and found it to be an excellent IPSC timer (PACT, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 35682 Dallas, TX, 75235).

I also used the superb Pro Timer II during the testing (Competition Electronics, P.O. Box 239, Roscoe, IL, 61073).

Surprise, surprise! My score with the Commander *Accu-Comp* was 565 of a possible 625. My two-year average is 545 established with my two pet IPSC competition pistols with which I am thoroughly familiar.

A week later, in another range session, I again fired Ronin's course of fire, but this time with the Government *Accu-Comp*. My score was 554, nine points over my two-year average.

*Continued on page 74*

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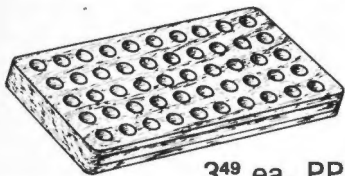


## WILSON ACCU-COMPS

Continued from page 71

All in all, the *Accu-Comps* fared well in this test of IPSC shooting skills against an established course of fire and average score. With both *Accu-Comps* I beat my two-year average. I doubt I can pick up too many new,

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### THE CRUCIBLE OF COMPETITION

In my experience, all the practice and formal range sessions mean nothing in evaluating a custom .45 auto destined for IPSC competition. Only in the arena of actual competition do IPSC pistols show their stuff—rather like the operators of those pistols.

With this in mind, I competed in several IPSC matches with both of the *Accu-Comps*, to see how they fared in the heat of real competition

The *Accu-Comps* didn't suddenly propel me into the winner's circle. Shooters win matches, not *Accu-Comps*.

There you have it, short and sweet. The *Accu-Comp* both stood the pressure of the crucible of competition. Both performed with flying colors. There were no jams.

### CONCLUSION

The sad day finally arrived when it was time to quit firing the *Accu-Comps* and start pounding the typewriter. I'd put about 4,000 rounds through the two *Accu-Comps*, including 380 over the chronograph, and I enjoyed every last round.

Bill sent me two *Accu-Comps* for testing, but he's only getting one back. I just can't part with that sweet-shooting Commander *Accu-Comp*.

Like the guy on the Norelco commercials, I like the product so much I'm buying it. Higher praise I cannot give to the Wilson *Accu-Comps*.



### 10mm BORE

Continued from page 51

getting .38-40 rifle power out of a handgun. Rather than overstress the chambers of the Colt's SA, with its bottleneck shape, they designed a straight-wall case wildcat. Both men arrived at a version of this cartridge about 1924/25. The case that they used was the old .401 Winchester Self-Loading, a semi-rimmed shell that functioned like a rimmed revolver round in the single-action Colt. Ejection, of course, was with the manual rod on the gun. This case was trimmed to 1.270" from its rifle length of 1.50", and loaded with .401-diameter .38-40 soft-points, as well as cast bullets like the 170 thru 240-grain Lyman-Ideal series #40 and #41 molds, sized to .402/3. Feeding was no problem in the Colt's revolver, and loads of the day, such as 18 grains of 2400 powder, with the Winchester 180-grain bullet, put the .401 Eimer-Boser right up there with a mid-power .41 Magnum at approximately 1200 fps, ME 600 ft.-lbs. plus. These men carried their .401s as backups while guiding on hunts. Case-head diameter was .429", not far from the final .41 Magnums.

### .401 HERTER MAGNUM: 1960

In the early 1960s, heyday of the Herter

outdoors mail-order catalog, this firm listed their own version of a .422-head .40-caliber round, for revolvers. It was evidently a .30-30 WCF case, with rim only slightly turned down. Overall length was 1.550, or approximately .45 Colt's chamber size. For a time, Herter's listed their version of a Sauer & Sons single-action in this cartridge loading, but apparently very few of these were ever sold. Published handloads for the .401 Herter were stout, also equivalent to .41 Mag. This rather short-lived factory wildcat could be said to have been a little ahead of its time, and chambered in a lesser-known make of handgun. The magnum revolver shooters were already having a honeymoon with the .44, and the .41 was on the horizon.

### .40 G&A: 1972

I undertook, initially as a personal research, to see if a current Browning High Power could be converted to some practical .40/10mm round. A search of SAAMI spec sheets soon showed that the existing family of .420/.422 casehead brass was about the only choice, given the dimensions of cartridge feed-cycle, frame sizes and breech faces.

These were all rifle shells, with the exception of the 8mm Nambu which—for some reason—also shares the basic case diameter. The punching actually stems from the Winchester 1885 .38-55 family (which itself is a slight variation of the .38-50 Ballard of 1876). The rimmed .422s are: .38-55; .32-40; .30-30; .25-35; .32 Special; .22 Savage High-Power and the .219 Zipper. More useful for auto pistol research are the rimless Remington versions of 1906: .25; .30 and .32.

All of these cases can be processed into any of the .422 casehead straightwall rounds, from .40 G&A through to 10mm Norma Auto, by expanding, trimming to length and reaming the thick rifle brass to seat the bullet. In the case of the rimmed shells, a lathe tool must be used to turn down to rimless dimension and enlarge an extraction groove.

Loads in a test fixture were very successful: 5.5 grains of Unique gave 1050 fps, with the .38-40 jacketed softpoint bullet. Six grains of Unique broke 1100 fps, but showed signs of pressure in our improvised setup. Later, with the help of several people, including Irv Stone of Bar-Sto Precision, a Browning High Power was in fact converted to .40/10mm. At one time, Irv had the only .40-caliber auto barrel broach and 9mm-cycle length chamber reamer in existence.

Several other experimenters attempted conversions to the 9mm-cycle .40 Auto. I personally found that it was difficult to get perfect feeding along the original Browning ramp. More work was needed to increase the width of the ramp, and this resulted in relieving frames at the left side of the receiver. Then, more material could be added to the integral feed ramp of the High Power. This, of course, led to a need for asymmetrical feed lips and a radically re-shaped magazine follower. After publication, I found that others had better luck with unaltered ACP frames and .45 magazines. Ejector blocks were made from .38 Super units, as were extractor



hooks. The Super recoil springs worked well.

#### .40 G&A BELTED CASE: 1975

Not too long after designing the .40 9mm-cycle straightwall cartridge in 1972, I went on to other things. It was with some surprise that I noted another G&A .40 development in 1975. This round was based on the belted version of the .422 casehead, the .224 Weatherby Magnum. In my original search, I had turned up its dimensions, but set it aside as being unsuitable for tactical handguns, and too expensive for the average tinkerer to experiment with at home.

Tests in a cutaway magazine, using a variety of follower shapes had convinced me that a belted shell would not feed with the necessary reliability. Also, cycling through a semi-auto action caused unacceptable battering of the belt's headspacing surface. This may be part of the reason that semi-rimmed rounds like .38 Super seem less accurate when spacing on the rim, and immediately more accurate when converted to mouth headspacing as in the Bar-Sto barrels.

#### .40 MAX/SURVIVALIST: 1980

In 1979, at the suggestion of a potential backer, I laid out a longer .45-cycle cartridge, based on the .422 belted brass. It was envisioned as a combination sporting and "survivalist" round. A handgun design was also laid out, combining elements of the frame of the Browning High Power, and top-end features reminiscent of a pre-war Colt's National Match ACP. At the time, I conferred with Louis Seecamp regarding a possible Browning DA conversion, but learned from him that he did not consider it practical.

By early 1980, the tentative designs had been submitted to an arms manufacturer better known for rifles than handguns. In the process of exploring potential product lines, I drew up a light rifle load based on a longer belted case, same .422 head size. We called it the .40 Survivalist. This was a sort of carbine load having the baseline power of the old .401 Winchester Self Loading, but with improved ballistics from modern powders and spitzer bullets.

Estimating base ballistics for these longer cases was much easier than working out the original short-case G&A round. There is sufficient case capacity as well as other data to allow safe interpolations based on the Powley computations and calculators. I suspect that Norma referred to these useful public domain sources, too, in building the 10mm.

The reason for using a belted case instead of straightwall for the Survivalist lies in the fact that the round headspaces on its belt in this design. The rifle case could theoretically be fired until weakened and then trimmed again for pistol use. Again in theory, the case could be loaded moderately and trimmed successively until a useful charge could no longer be crimped into the abbreviated brass.

#### CENTIMETER COMBAT: 1980

The Max/Survivalist was never acted upon, as the firm in question changed its marketing orientations during the time the project was under consideration.

Thereafter, taking into account everything

I had learned about .40/10mm cartridges, I laid out and built the Centimeter Combat (tm) trademarking the designation. Its concepts were assembled into a property for assignment to a Research & Development limited partnership, set up to continue research into 9mm-cycle .40/10s, and methods of converting firearms to use them.

The Centimeter Combat (tm) is a straight-wall round with case length between that of the old G&A .40 and the 10mm Norma. George Nonte had kindly provided information on European developments in truncated-cone bullets, and this allowed me to fine-tune bullet-seating and other dimensions of the Centimeter round.

Ballistically, it is a tactical round designed to deliver RSP of 50-plus from handguns in the 9mm category of weight and control-loop dimensions. The availability of Norma .422 headweb cases plus both 200 and 165-grain bullets allows assembly by simply trimming to .869. Any of my earlier rifle-brass conversions will produce the same case with thicker walls. Like the original short .40, the Centimeter load should be worked up from five grains of Unique—very carefully.

Since all handloads, especially conversions like this, are individual situations, the author and this magazine must disclaim any responsibility for loading these rounds.

#### .41 AUTO WILDCATS AND CONVERSIONS: 1980 TO DATE

As soon as I had made the first .40 Auto public, other auto pistol wildcatters turned

up. Among the most interesting was a .45-cycle conversions made by the late, great George Nonte.

He sent me samples of his shortened and turned-down .41 Magnum revolver cases. One was a true .41, the other sized through a .38-40 die to make it a very efficient .40 caliber round with a very slight taper. Its .433 base diameter adapts it well to the .476 area of the .45 ACP breech face, but it is a tad too big to go into the 9mm cycle. Nevertheless, it's one of the more ballistically efficient ways to get flatter trajectory and better ballistic coefficient into the .45 frame without losing any punch.

Several people have contacted me over the years about bottle-necked conversions of .45 ACP brass to .40 or .41 bores. Of these, the best-developed that I have seen are the .41 Avenger, by arms authority J. D. Jones, and a similar conversion worked out by noted experimenter Don "Doc" Thomas. J.D.'s can be had in kit form, with barrel, springs and dies. He can also supply reamers and trimmers for converting rifle brass. Any of several .466/.470-diameter casehead shells can be used, ranging from .45 ACP thru .308/.30-06 to .451 Detonics or .45 Winchester Magnum. This writer recommends using rifle brass, as the Colt pattern chamber is somewhat unsupported at the bottom. Probably the simplest improvement on the .45 for sport, and reportedly gaining success in both silhouette and IPSC matches.



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# INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

## SMITH ANNOUNCES ITS FIRST .45 AUTO; HI-POWER AVAILABLE IN DOUBLE-ACTION

The first American-made .45 caliber double-action auto pistol is finally on its way. **Smith & Wesson** announced that the Model 645 is expected to be available in mid-1985.

The lineage of this model began in 1962 when company designers took a Model 52 target auto, split the slide and frame lengthwise, fitted spacers and welded it back together. The resultant single-action .45 was fired successfully at Camp Perry in 1962, but the .45 project went no farther at the time because S&W management didn't want a gun in the line that Colt

made famous.

In 1974, S&W drew up long range plans for a .45 double-action auto to complement their line of 9mm autos. In recent years Tom Campbell, a product engineer for S&W, has been using a prototype Model 645 in matches throughout the country.

Now that Smith & Wesson is committed to handguns only, look for a stainless version of the Model 24, a Model 469 compact in stainless, and the Bodyguard in the no-rust metal.

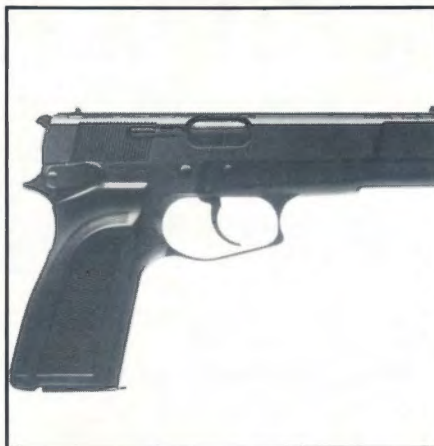
\* \* \*



Speaking of a double-action autos, **Browning** expects to have their first shipment of double-action Hi-Power 9mms in from Belgium some time in July. No official word yet on whether this will be the last year of production for the single action Hi-Power, but since much of the military seems to be going the double-action route, this may be true.

Whatever the case with the single-action, the current Browning catalog shows the single-action available in two variations; the polished blue model with either fixed or adjustable sights; and the "new" single action with a matte blue finish.

\* \* \*



It appears that the problems **Dornaus and Dixon** have had with the magazines for the **Bren Ten** auto pistol are solved, and, according to Michael Dixon, guns are being shipped weekly. In the meantime, we have been getting many complaints from people who have been waiting a long time for their pistols. If the potentials of this pistol and its unique cartridge live up to their expectations, perhaps the wait will be worthwhile—we'll know that only when a significant number of the guns reach the shooters.

Almost every new auto pistol seems to have magazine problems before its introduction. It is strange that we can produce intricate auto pistol mechanisms, but not simple sheet metal holders for the cartridges.

\* \* \*

In an upcoming movie, Charles Bronson's *Death Wish III*, a new gun will premier. According to our sources, this will be the second generation **Wildley** auto, all fancied up in a presentation case. Word from Hollywood, too, on the new Sylvester Stallone movie, *Rambo: First Blood Part II*. In this movie Stallone will have a variety of machine guns plus a **Sig-Sauer P-226**. Could it be that the producers were banking on the P-226 getting the U.S. military nod?

\* \* \*

Speaking of the military pistol (mid-March), at this writing it is our understanding that the contract with **Beretta** is still not signed, pending the outcome of actions taken by two manufacturers who are trying to reverse the military decision.

Beretta is just about ready to release the Model 92-SBF to the civilian market, and it's interesting to see that pistolsmiths are not about to let the gun alone; many are already getting on the "let's make it better" bandwagon.



### CORRECTION

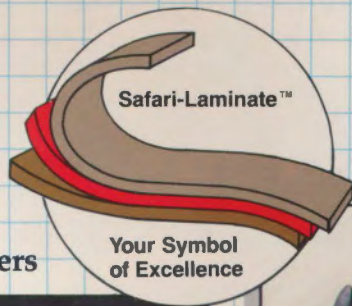
Two identical photographs of Angelo Spagnoli's custom .45 ACP appeared in the May/June issue in the Pin Busters and IPSC Nationals stories. The captions read that Bruce Gray did the custom work. This is an error. Jim Boland, (818) 893-8972, did the custom work. Also, Angelo shot a Gray custom .38 Super in the IPSC Nationals, not the Boland gun as indicated in the caption. The editor regrets the error.



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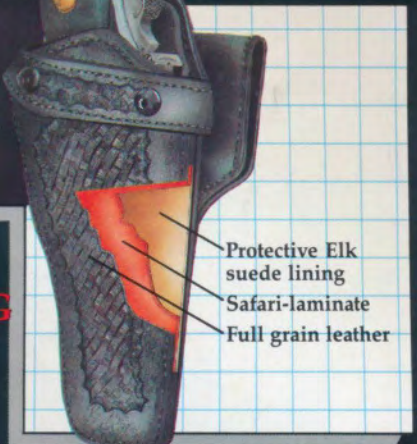
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- **Exactness and Quality.** The Safariland Way. Thermo-laminated between a layer of choice, full grain leather and a smooth protective Elk Suede lining, Safari-Laminate provides a lifetime, permanent fit and form.
- **For Safety's Sake.** Safari-Laminate is your absolute assurance in secure holstering. Once holstered, your pistol is firmly held in place (everytime), due to Safari-Laminate's incredible retention.
- **Lighter Than Ever.** Some holster manufacturers design around weight distribution. Safariland's Safari-Laminate process is designed on *weight elimination*. In fact, Safari-Laminate holsters and accessories weigh 1/3 less than any comparable sized holster and accessory now on the market.
- **Strength and Structural Performance.** As a result of this extraordinary breakthrough, moisture and heat damage as well as spring, or leather fatigue, are not possible.
- **Lasting Durability.** Developing a process that endures is important to Safariland. The Safari-Laminate process will provide you with dependable, lasting performance for years to come. That's *real* value for the money.

"What we have here is the future in holster technology... an exciting evolution which captures the very essence of Safariland's 'Dedication to Excellence'... and remember, *It was developed for you.*"



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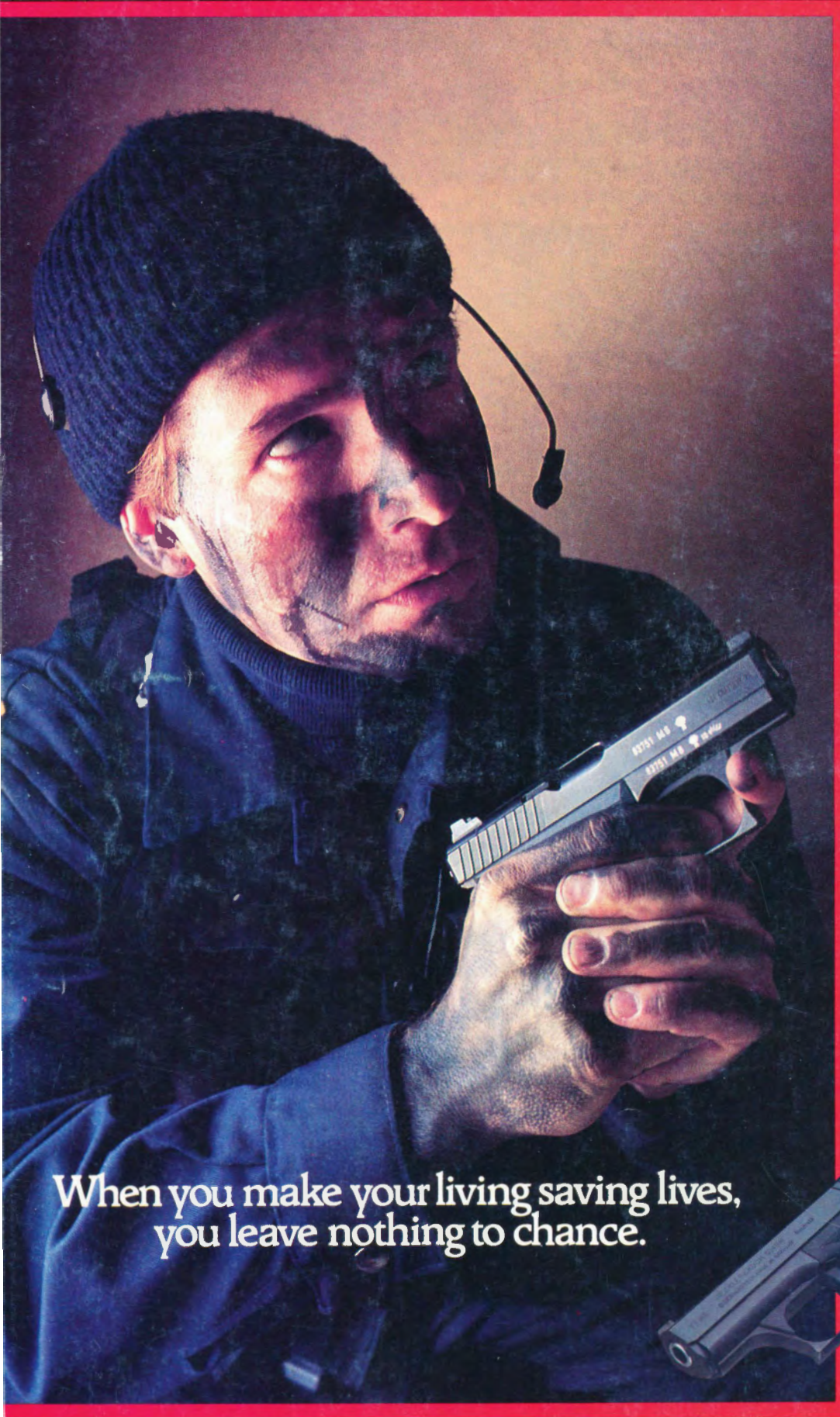


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