

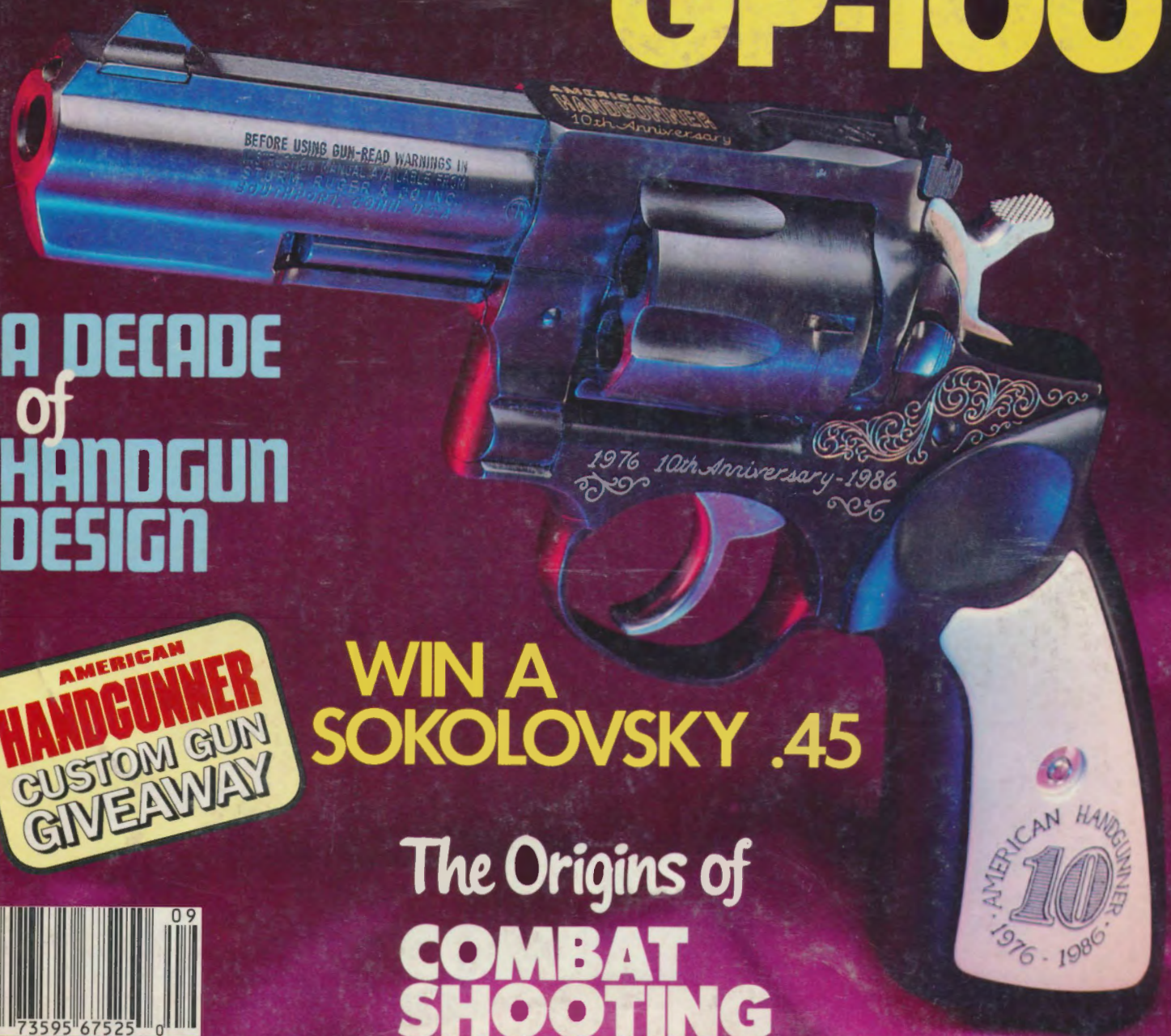
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Tenth Anniversary Issue SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1986

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Cover: The prototype GP-100 limited edition gun made for American Handgunner by Ruger. Photo by Nick Karras.



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THE GUILD SPEAKS

GEORGE WESSINGER



HANDGUNNER'S COVERAGE PLAYS ROLE IN PROSPERITY OF THE GUILD

This issue marks the *American Handgunner's* celebration of ten years of outstanding service to the handgunners of America. The title of this publication is very appropriate. The quality and attention to detail has been tremendous, right from the beginning, and the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* pays tribute to the *American Handgunner* for a job well done.

We say a heartfelt "Thanks" for so many fine contributions to the industry, the pistolsmithing profession, and the handgunning public in general.

The *American Pistolsmiths Guild* is in the very unique position of being able to identify with the last ten years of handgunning and with the *American Handgunner*. In 1977, just one year after the first issue of the *Handgunner* hit the newsstand with a bang, the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* was formed. This organization could not have begun had it not been for the help and strong encouragement of Jerry Rakusan, Editorial

Director of the *American Handgunner*.

Jerry was there from the very beginning. He attended the first Guild meeting, where the organization was put together, and he has been to every meeting since. His strong influence and assistance have been an inspiration to the members and have helped the Guild become the fine organization it is today.

During the early 1970s, the tremendous popularity of handguns was growing by leaps and bounds. Handgun hunting, home defense, collecting, police revolver matches, IPSC matches, handgun silhouette matches, both long range and short, and many other types of handgun competition created a large market for custom pistolsmithing.

The shooting industry as a whole was in the midst of sweeping change and the handgun was rapidly becoming the dominant firearm. Handgun competitions were growing at an unbelievable rate. New types of pistol matches were taking hold and changing the handgun competition picture.

This boom caused many "gunsmiths" to suddenly become "pistolsmiths." It also created such a need for custom modifications to handguns that many people hung out shingles, began to advertise, and overnight became "Custom Pistolsmiths." Unfortunately, many were not qualified and a lot of handguns were butchered.

At the same time there were many excellent, well trained and well qualified, craftsmen who were producing fine quality work and began to turn out some of the most advanced handguns ever seen. Accuracy, dependability and quality workmanship became the watchword.

With these facts in mind, and with the encouragement of Jerry Rakusan, Lou Ciamillo of Maryland Gun Works and Joe Kassay of Joe K's Inc. felt that some sort of organization promoting quality work and honest dealings was needed. They polled a number of the top pistolsmiths in the country and the idea of the *American Pistolsmiths Guild* was born.

The first official meeting in 1977 was held at the National Police Revolver Championships in Jackson, Miss. Eleven of the nation's top pistolsmiths met. After much discussion a set of By-Laws was written, a charter drawn up, officers elected, and the Guild began. The charter members' common desire was to promote a standard of quality, honesty, and workmanship in the pistolsmithing trade. This would be accomplished by ascertaining the competency of

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individuals before they could be recognized and admitted to the Guild.

The charter membership list reads like a *Who's Who* in the pistolsmithing trade: Lou Ciamillo, Joe Kassay, Jim Clark, Ron Power, Jerry Moran, Ken Eversall, Travis Strahan, Greg Roberts, Walt Sherman, Royce Weddle, and Bill Davis.

Other goals included: 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 desired and to advise if a quality pistolsmith was available near a prospective customer.

With these goals and ideals in mind, the requirements for membership to the Guild were, naturally, very strict. Only experienced and talented pistolsmiths were considered. This insured the shooter who chose a Guild member to build a custom gun that the workmanship produced by that smith was recognized by the best pistolsmiths in the country as being of excellent quality.

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

Pistolsmiths who applied to the Guild for membership were screened by the current membership as to reputation, quality of workmanship, experience and manner in which they conducted their business. Each prospective member was required to attend a business meeting and display representative examples of his custom pistol work for the members to judge, before accepting him for membership.

Each member was, and still is, required to give an *unconditional guarantee* with 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.

In the beginning, most of the Guild members specialized to a great extent in the building of custom bull-barreled handguns for PPC competition since that was one of the strongest shooting disciplines at that time. Over the years this of course has changed and many members have been added to the Guild roster. The membership is now made up of pistolsmiths who specialize in every handgun shooting discipline known. The members are extremely diversified and are building some of the most advanced handguns that can be imagined. There is continually a great deal of experimenting going on and each new day brings more new ideas. These guys are building state-of-the-art handguns suitable for the many types of hunting and competitive sport shooting events in vogue today.

Over the past nine years, the Guild has been supported and encouraged by many people and organizations in the shooting industry. We have prospered and grown due to the dedication and work of the elected officers and many of the members.

During the past decade the shooting industry has grown and prospered with us, especially the handgun related portion of the industry. Much of this growth and prosperity has been directly due to the *American Handgunner* magazine which has been such a vital part of the industry and has contributed so much to it.

The exposure given the Guild by the *Handgunner* has been instrumental in the growth of the Guild. The *American Handgunner's* wide-spread readership has helped

the Guild inform the public of reliable, reputable craftsmen in their area. This column, which has been a feature in the magazine for over a year now, has introduced new members, new ideas, new products, and innovations of Guild members. It has made the public, as well as the industry, aware of the Guild and what it stands for.

Again, the Guild salutes the *American Handgunner* for having done such a tremendous job. We thank the *Handgunner* and its very talented and dedicated staff for all it has meant to us and the handgunning public.

We wish for you another ten years of growth and prosperity and we hope to continue, hand in hand, to promote quality, honesty, and good workmanship in the pistolsmithing profession.



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HANDGUN HUNTING

J.D. JONES

TEN YEARS OF HANDGUN HUNTING— J.D. REFLECTS ON ITS EVOLUTION

Eleven years ago the *Handgunner* was a gleam in the eye of Editorial Director Jerry Rakusan. Several of us had talked of starting a magazine covering strictly handgun sports, but Jerry is the guy that made it happen. He deserves the credit—or blame—for the *American Handgunner*.

Personally, I think it is credit. The *Handgunner* is obviously successful or it wouldn't have stayed in business for ten years. Together, the *Handgunner* and the sport of handgunning have flourished. I seriously doubt if either would have progressed as far, in the last ten years, without the other as they have together.

The boss says this column should be a progress report of the last ten years of handgun hunting. I've given the column some thought over the past few days and really don't think the last ten years make much sense without including some key discoveries important to the sport that took place in the preceding 10-15 years.

Since I was involved in much of it, I'm speaking from being there; not hearsay.

Many of you probably aren't aware that high performance jacketed handgun ammunition is a rather recent invention. If you aren't aware of these facts, Lee Jurras was the man who did a great deal of the development of it in the early Sixties. I know it to be fact because I did some of it myself.

When Lee fired up Super Vel in 1966 and began producing high velocity, factory loaded ammunition the Biggies scoffed at the upstart company. A few years later, after Super Vel sales dug its way into a significant market share, the Biggies decided it was time to get into the high performance handgun ammo business. They didn't innovate—they were forced to keep up. This is a significant discovery, an influence on handgun ammo that will be felt as long as handguns are made and used.

Warren Center developed the Contender single shot pistol and found a way to effec-

tively manufacture and market it at a very reasonable price. The single shot Contender was the first pistol marketed successfully that was intended for hunting use.

The XP-100 came along in the early Sixties but its sales were very low. The Contender has outsold it since its inception. Contender's introduction of rifle cartridges for pistol use is another significant step as is the development of the 30 and 357 Herrett cartridges by Steve Herrett.

Harry Sanford introduced the Auto Mag pistols that combined high performance in a very strong semi-automatic design. The realization of this significant step is still to be seen in effective hunting guns. But it will be.

Pure nostalgia—I remember shooting a nine-inch, 300 yard, ten-shot group with an iron sighted 357 Auto Mag in a moderately heavy crosswind. Will the more modern designs keep up with that?

Right now we are living the "good old days." In 1976 I was working harder and having a hell of a lot less fun. Bought a 1976 Buick—the last of the bathtubs with an EPAed-to-death V-8 that barely ran. Don't even think about the mileage. I got in a lot more shooting and a lot less hunting. Did a fair amount of experimenting with everything I could get my hands on that made loud noises.

The progress of handgun hunting since 1976 has been enormous and can be attributed to a few individuals and firms that developed the hardware and promoted the



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sport. Several years ago government figures indicated 1.6 million handgun hunters. In 1976, I doubt if there were 150,000. On more than one occasion the *Handgunner* seemed about ready to discontinue articles on hunting due to having printed several hunting articles and receiving a few complaint letters from antis.

The general progress in guns, calibers, and ammunition by major companies over the past ten years is startlingly lacking. Hunters probably outnumber silhouette shooters by 100-to-one and the major companies know it—and go crazy over silhouette models. Doesn't make good sense to me, but it did lead to the development of the Redhawk, Dan Wesson 44 and the 357 Maximum, which was introduced by Ruger and now survives in the T/C, Dan Wesson, Wichita and Merrill. And maybe a new one called the Competitor.

Accuracy has improved in the T/C due primarily to competition influences. I don't really see anything to brag about in the way of improvements in revolver accuracy. Anything that has a wheel to hold the ammo and that will consistently group less than five-inches at 100 yards is a rare one. Auto pistol accuracy is adequate for only short range hunting.

As far as guns are concerned, the LAR Grizzly fires the 45 Win Mag cartridge which is the only auto pistol cartridge worth using for any serious hunting and it suffers from the drawback of not having better-than-revolver-accuracy. Powerwise, it isn't far

behind the 44 Mag.

The only significant development in new revolver cartridges is the introduction of the 454 Casull cartridge in the Freedom Arms revolver. The 454 is very powerful and the Freedom Arms revolver is, in my opinion, the highest quality revolver you can buy. It is a five shooter and has a wide array of models and barrel lengths. It will also be available in 44 Mag.

My development of the 320 grain cast bullet for the 44 Mag is important in that it gives the 44 Mag the penetration to take any animal. I don't recommend it for elephant, but it has taken several. The 454 has to be loaded right to match or exceed its penetration. One of the better ways to do it is to use the same design in 340 grain 45 caliber.

The 320-44 should be given consideration when animal size reaches elk, and it kills smaller animals as well or better than any other cast bullet.

New is the 320 JDJ cast bullet with two crimp grooves. One for short cylindered guns such as the S&W or Super Blackhawk, and the other for long cylinders found on the Redhawk and Dan Wesson. Seating the bullet long in the long cylinders leaves more room for powder and increasing velocities 100 fps is easy.

The development of the JDJ line of cartridges for T/Cs—particularly the 375 JDJ which has the capability of taking any animal that walks, crawls and probably swims, if you can get the right shot—has been tremen-

dous. This cartridge in the custom SSK barrels for Contenders has become the world standard for handgun hunters and all others must be judged in relation to it because at this point none come close to equalling it as an all around cartridge suitable for use on any animal.

To give an idea of its popularity—in 1984 hunters harvested 12-14 elephant that I know of with it. The first three winners of the *Handgun Hunters Hall of Fame Award* have all used it, as have thousands of others.

The rest of the JDJ cartridges all have their place providing as much power, range and accuracy as can be gotten from a T/C.

Larry Kelly has had a tremendous impact on handgun hunting. His Mag-Na-Port ads have featured hunting for years. His achievements and publicity have interested thousands of individuals in hunting. His Stalker custom hunting revolvers are indicative of the man's thinking—as is his founding of the *Handgun Hunters Hall of Fame and Museum*. No one has as yet equaled the variety of game taken with a handgun that Larry's taken.

The *Handgun Hunters Hall of Fame*, in its three years of existence, has awarded its Hunter of the year award each year. The first winner was Bob Good, second—Lucky Nightengale (who may well catch up with Kelly) and third—Tom Hammond. The achievements of these men are noteworthy as are the achievements of many, many others who have not sought or been given the recognition of others.

Six years ago I founded *Handgun Hunters International* which is a self-explanatory organization. Just what its impact has been I'm not sure, but I'm enjoying it with a lot of other people.

Gunwriters writing of handgun hunting played a big part in increasing the popularity of the sport. I suppose it's now reaching a plateau with more and more highly respected writers picking up the handgun when it comes time to go hunting for their own enjoyment and not just part of the job.

Handgun hunting of big game is now legal in all but a few states. Ohio, and possibly Indiana, legalized it for 1986. A few states are holdouts for one reason or another. The entire combination of events has led to a lot more people enjoying a rapidly growing sport. Many hunters are ranging world-wide with handguns, hunting any and everything possible. Certainly there are legal problems in some countries—but they are becoming fewer—and many countries considered off limits for handgunners are now allowing handgun hunting.

The big question now is, "What does the future hold?" Well, I can't tell any better than you, but the hardware is adequate and the general future of handgun hunting depends on the general future of hunting itself. Deer hunting in the U.S. is better than it ever has been thanks to skillful game management. I think our biggest problems in the next decade will be legal ones—as well as the one that has plagued mankind since its existence. Where do I get the money and time to do it?



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*From "Farewell Old .45"
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INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

CAMERON HOPKINS



I AM JOE'S FRONT SIGHT, AND I'VE WATCHED IPSC CHANGE IN TEN YEARS

I am Joe's front sight. I've sat on Joe's Colt slide for the past ten years, and I've seen many changes in IPSC since 1976.

When Joe first started practical shooting after the founding of IPSC at the Columbia Conference, I was mounted on a lightweight Commander. Ahhhh, those were the days! Joe took me with him everywhere as I was the front sight for both his "carry gun" and his competition gun.

You see, back then a carry gun and a competition gun were one and the same. Joe believed in me—I was silver soldered in place. I was, and still am, a ramp with serrations. And Joe trusted me with his life on that Commander. He also relied on me to acquire targets quickly in a match. Yes, those were the days.

I've stayed centered in Joe's rear sight for a decade, and I've seen more than my fair share of pepper poppers clang as they collapse to hardball. Let me tell you what's happened to the guns of IPSC.

I get no respect! Today I'm dovetailed into

the compensator of a .38 Super "full-house game gun" and I never get to go out with Joe anymore.

His once-trusted companion, I now play second-fiddle to some electronic gizmo with a little red dot. I get no respect!

Twas a day I sat in a Milt Spark's Summer Special and went with Joe everywhere. Now Joe carries some space-age contraption from Austria made of plastic. It even shoots little-bitty bullets! My Austrian cousin, Herr Front Sight, has funny white dots painted on his face. He must be a Punk Rocker.

Joe's lightweight Commander, my first home, saw a lot of action back in the mid-Seventies. But then Joe saw the writing on the wall when the early gamesmen started hanging six-inch barrels out of five-inch guns. They Mag-Na-Ported the last inch in what is looked at today as a primitive type of compensator.

Joe liked to win matches, so he staked me onto a Government Model just behind that Mag-Na-Ported six-inch tube. My partner

back then was a Bo-Mar rear sight. Me and Bo go back a long ways as Joe still keeps Bo on his current .38 Super gizmo gun.

Come to think of it, me and Bo are about the only things that haven't changed in ten years. Except my ambidextrous buddy, Swenny. But even he has large "gas pedals" welded onto his once-graceful levers.

But I digress. Joe and I competed together with his six-inch barreled Gov't until the next advance came along, the Clark Pin Gun.

Joe learned that John Shaw won the 1980 IPSC Nationals with a Bowling Pin Model, and he just had to have one. Joe sent me to Jim Clark, and Jim dovetailed me into the Pin Gun and made sure I stayed in place with a little set screw.

Joe loved me on that Pin Gun. He said I kept still and didn't jump around like I'd just eaten a jalapeño. Joe figured that Pin Gun would really turn him into another John Shaw by the time of the 1981 Nationals. Joe hadn't quite yet figured out that talent wins matches, not gimmick guns.

Joe showed me off to all his friends and bragged that I was mounted on a state-of-the-art pistol. But then along came this friendly guy from Arkansas who won the 1982 Nationals with something called a compensator.

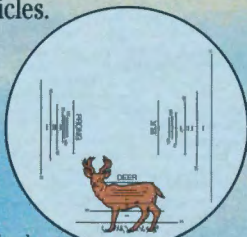
Mike Plaxco figured out that an "expansion chamber" would help keep me from jumping up and down if part of the gases pushing the bullet down the barrel were channeled to go out the top of this gizmo, the compensator.

Joe immediately ordered a Plaxco Com-

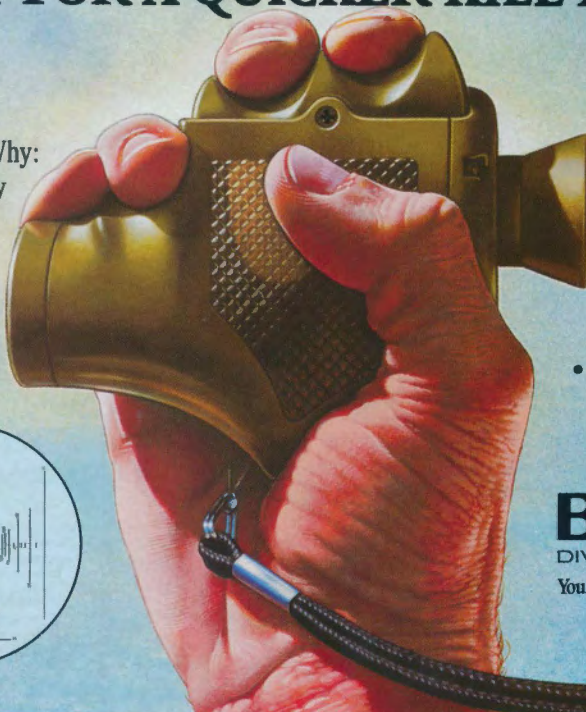
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sensator and sent me and Bo to be installed. Mike fastened me on the compensator just behind the muzzle. I was used to being traded back and forth from gun to gun by now, and didn't think much about it. Until Mike test fired me. What a shock!

Ouch! Those gases are hot! And they scorch me as they erupt from the twin ports in the expansion chamber. To add insult to injury, the gases made me all dirty and then Joe had to scrape me clean with a pocket knife. Ouch!

But that new compensator really shined. Joe said I stayed still much more than when I sat on the Pin Gun. Joe was confident he would win the 1983 Nationals with me and his new Plaxco comp.

Of course Joe had never heard of a dude named Rob Leatham or a pistolsmith named Bill Wilson. Joe shot well in the '83 Nationals, actually as well as I've ever seen him shoot. He held me steady and watched me relentlessly.

Funny thing, people are always saying they should watch me closely. I don't know what it is—do I have warts, or what?

Anyway, Joe lost the match to Rob Leatham and something called an Accu-Comp. During a lull in the action, I hollered over at my cousin on the Accu-Comp.

"Hey cuz, how come you're beating the sight-black off me?"

"Not too hard when Joe's watching you wiggle."

"Very funny. Joe can't be blamed for all of it, he's practiced hard. What's your secret?"

"Well, I'm sittin' here on top of Old Smokey. This here A-Q-Comp really spits the flames out! My boss, Rob, says that I sit still like a well behaved kid in church. Says I hardly move at all thanks to this A-Q-Comp."

"Isn't that Accu-Comp?"

"Not down-south, pardna."

And, as you may have guessed, Joe had to have one of my cousin's A-Q-Comps. He sent me and Bo to Wilson's shop and had us installed on an Accu-Comp.

My ride on the Wilson Combat gun was my last buckin' bronco thrill on a .45 caliber pistol. Joe fell in love with that sweetheart of a gun, and he said I hardly moved at all during recoil.

Joe figured he was in Nirvana, that never-never land IPSC shooters dream about where all guns make major with zero muzzle jump.

Much to my pleasant surprise, I found the Accu-Comp design with a single large port—as opposed to twin ports on the Plaxco—prevented those hot gases from burning me. No more pocket knives up my tender places! Joe muttered something about the Accu-Comp design being more efficient and channeling the volcano straight up.

Home at last! After moving from gun to gun more times than an Army Brat changes schools, I figured Joe had finally found "It." It being the Ultimate IPSC Pistol.

Wrong, Union Carbide Breath! Just a year later this Leatham dude has to go and win another Nationals, 1984 this time, with yet another Star Wars gun. This time it was again a Wilson Accu-Comp, but in .38 Super.

Hold everything, stop right there. What's this .38 Super nonsense? I thought I was a part of a pistol designed as a fight-stopper. I thought I was part of Joe's weapon, not part of Joe's toy.

Joe sent me back to Wilson and Bill put me on a .38 Super Accu-Comp with one of those fancy new "fully supported chamber" barrels. Joe said this prevents blown cases from hot loads in the Super.

Joe shot that Super better than he'd ever shot before. I glanced down and saw these teeny-weeny, itty-bitty bullets screaming out the muzzle. Joe said they were 158 grain bullets, .357 in diameter, travelling at 1,100 fps.

I couldn't help wondering whatever happened to the "V" in DVC. I've had literally thousands upon thousands of .45 caliber bullets zip beneath me, and I've concluded that those big bore bullets are indeed fighting bullets. They cut big holes and carry a lot of stopping power. Now here come these mini-bullets (bullettes?) that calculate, on paper, as equal to the .45's major caliber rating.

I think the egg-heads have pulled one over on us by passing the Super off as "major" caliber. Oh well, the egg-heads also said that, on paper, the roundnose .38 Special has a much higher RII (Relative Incapacitation Index) than the .45 ACP.

So much for egg-heads.

But I digress. Joe finally broke the Magic Mark of five seconds on an *El Presidente* with his new .38 Super. He found the increased magazine capacity of the Super to be a tremendous advantage, especially when bubble-headed match directors design courses with a total of 11 rounds.

Joe was ready for the 1985 Nationals with his Super. He went to win. Much to Joe's chagrin, this Leatham character trashed one stage by hitting a hostage ("Got him now," thought Joe) but still won the match. Joe was impressed. So was I.

Yes, things have changed a lot in the past ten years. Now I sit in a Rogers Combat Assault holster. I think Joe's old Summer Special is in the attic somewhere with his tattered copy of Cooper's *Principles of Personal Defense*.

Cooper's philosophy has gone the way of the tie-down holster.

I saw Tom Campbell's chest holster come in, and go out.

I saw Ross Seyfried win with real-live practical equipment.

I remember when Mickey Fowler was a force to be reckoned with, rather than a legend.

I recall a colorful Regional Director named Jake Jatras who really was fun, and injected vivaciousness into IPSC while he steered it through its formative years.

I remember when a practical pistol and a competition pistol were the same. Now I sit home in a cozy gun rug while Joe trusts his life to some squeezer-teaser plastic pistol.

They've been good years, and progress is progress. They say I'm still the most important part of an IPSC pistol.

I am Joe's front sight.



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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN LAWSON

A HISTORY OF PISTOLSMITHING WITH SOME THOUGHTS ON WHAT'S IN STORE

Prior to the 1960's, only a few gunsmiths limited their work to handguns. Men like Berdon, Chow, Clark, Shockey and a small group of factory and military Advanced Marksmanship Unit Armorers were the Founding Fathers of our profession. The call for their services was steady, but extremely limited.

The Vietnam war demonstrated the need for reliable, accurate handguns, to be carried by Special Forces and others who had to be ready to meet an armed challenge night or day. This sudden urgency was responsible for generating a "second wave" of handgun specialists.

Unlike the delicate and often unreliable pistols formerly produced for bullseye matches, the new breed of combat autoloader had to stand up to the rigors of hard use in a humid and hostile climate. A small number of gunsmiths took up this challenge by departing from earlier "bullseye accurizing" practice to make rugged, combat-reliable, accurate pistols modified for special needs.

There were no aftermarket or "drop in" parts available. Each modification was accomplished by welding and shaping a stock part. This era saw the birth of the now-commonplace wide grip safeties, extended thumb safeties and slide stops and the first funneled magazine wells.

Clearly, the combat pistol was changing. It had lost its undeserved reputation as only a moderately accurate, semi-reliable short range expedient. The modern combat pistol had seen the light of day.

It was during this early Vietnam era that the term "pistolsmith" was popularized, to denote a gunsmith who specialized in reliability/accuracy work on combat autoloaders. The title caught on, and was soon adopted by

'smiths working with bullseye, PPC, silhouette and IPSC handguns. Thus, the term "pistolsmith" became a generic title for those gunsmiths who modified autoloaders, single shot pistols and wheelguns alike. Though times were obviously changing and their services were increasingly in demand, these specializing pistolsmiths remained relatively obscure, except for the few who were interviewed for occasional articles in general gun journals.

Then, in 1976, pistolsmithing was raised to national prominence through public exposure in the pages of the fledgling *American Handgunner* magazine. Articles on individual pistolsmiths and graphic examples of their best workmanship began to set trends and raise standards that have changed the face of serious handgun practice.

The full time coverage of handgun trends and personalities in *American Handgunner*, more than any other contributing factor, has raised pistolsmithing to the dignity of a profession.

Other furtherances to a decade of growth for pistolsmiths were new factory offerings, like the Series 70 Colt, for IPSC, the renewed popularity of wheelguns, like the K-frame Smith, for PPC conversions and a series of new chamberings for single shot pistols like the Thompson Contender for silhouette. Police, service and street carry modifications also reached new heights of popularity.

Record numbers of pistolsmiths were occupied full time to fill the needs of competitors in the new shooting sports.

As they steadily gained membership, the popular leagues, clubs and teams kindled interest in a new generation of shooters. Popularity of the new competitions expanded handgun sales to the point where many shops

were selling ten times the number of handguns that they had sold in the previous decade.

Demand for new pistols and revolvers exceeded the manufacturing capabilities. And, every new weapon sold was a logical candidate for a pistolsmith's talent. It was a banner decade for growth among the handgun shooting sports.

Machine shops were rapidly changing over to automated tooling, so good, used machine tools often reached the used machinery sales floors at reasonable prices. Meanwhile, a flood of excellent quality imports from Japan, Taiwan and mainland China began to appear at very low prices. These low priced machine tools were the deciding factor for many pistolsmiths who started their own shops.

A new trade was busy organizing. The NRA contributed by sponsoring gunsmithing seminars. A number of new gunsmithing schools, full and part time, established themselves and were busy training aspiring pistolsmiths.

The *American Pistolsmiths Guild*, the Professional Gunsmiths Association and the Combat Pistolsmiths Association were founded to promote excellence and to establish quality guidelines for their expanding ranks.

Modern pistolcraft, only dreamed of by its pioneers, was finally becoming a reality beyond their wildest dreams. Who could have predicted, ten years ago, that ESPN would televise a pistol match like the Bianchi Cup? This decade has seen pistolcraft move from the back range to a place of national prime time prominence with as much dignity as any other legitimate sport.

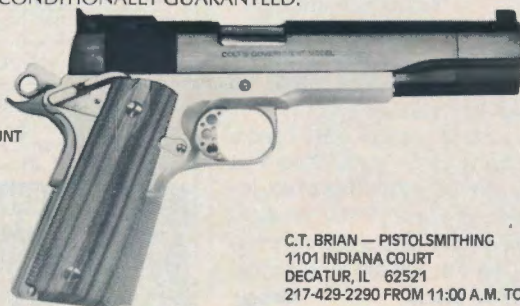
Do we have another decade of change in store? Very probably. And, since everyone wants a glimpse into the crystal ball, let's try to delineate some possible changes during the next ten years.

Rapid changes in politics, business, science and technology may require some mental preparation to avoid traumatic future shock. Almost any change brings with it opportunities to improve one's understanding of the technology and a chance to deal with the necessary improvements and maintenance. It remains only to seek out the avail-



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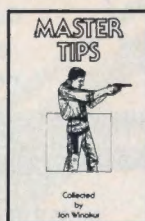
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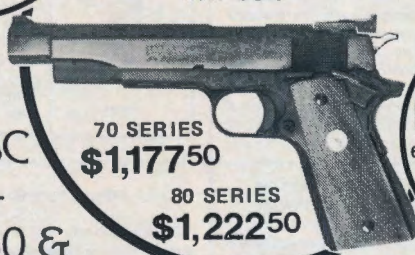


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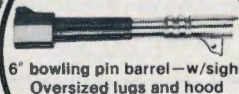
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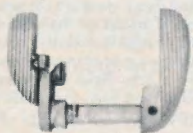
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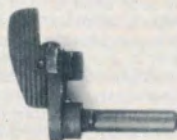


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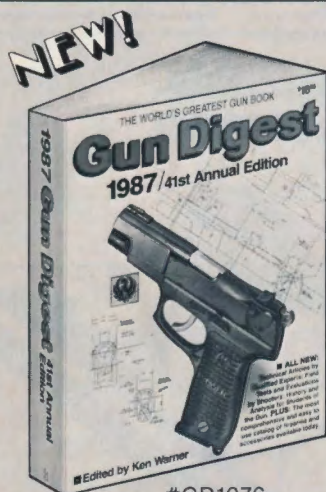
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John T. Amber Tribute by Ken Warner. Dozens of comments from his peers and colleagues shape a final picture of a complex man in a complex world he made peculiarly his own. Irascible to some, gentle to others, impressive to all, GUN DIGEST's late Editor Emeritus is clearly remembered.

50-Caliber Super Snipers by Konrad F. Schreier, Jr. Sniping in warfare has a long history. One facet of that history of special interest to Americans is the occasional use of special shoulder arms for the 50 Browning machine gun cartridge in battle during and since Korea. Schreier details most of that history and updates the reader on current events and hardware in 50-caliber sniping.

The First Gun Law by Stephen Halbrook. Asked to investigate where legislation to restrict gun ownership began in the United States, attorney Halbrook was able to pinpoint Kentucky in 1913, and found that this was the first attempt in all of Anglo-Saxon law to try to clarify concealed weapons as criminal.

In Defense Of The Magnificent BB by Edward A. Matunas. The BB shot, as loaded in shotshells, has long been considered an oddball. It's too big for

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Edited by Ken Warner

little birds, too small for small deer. It is commonly favored for large birds. Matunas' extensive testing reveals that it's near perfect for some large birds, much less so for others, and the best choice of all, sometimes.

The Essence Of The Duellers by Wilfrid Ward. One aspect of the 18th and 19th century duelling phenomenon was the development and sale of specialized duelling pistols. The particular characteristics which distinguished duellers from other handguns are examined.

Firepower by M. L. Brown. The machine gun began to rule the field of battle during World War I, but it had a considerable history before that, beginning in our own Civil War with a gun that Mr. Lincoln named "The Coffee Mill Gun".

Hunting Help . . . Is Not Always What It Should Be by Sidney duBroff. It's not true that inept and lazy guides and outfitters are in the majority in the world, but they seem to have been for this writer, who hunted from Cuba to Poland and Bulgaria with many a dull moment and few rewards, except the laughs.

The World's Best-Kept Gun Secret by John A. Masters. Western game laws used to specify almost universally that only "cartridges larger than 22 caliber" might be used on large game. The next largest common caliber then was 25, but since a 23 was possible, more than a few were made. John Masters has come across several, shot them all and gives his appraisal of them.

Revolvers For The 45 ACP by John Malloy. In 1917, the U.S. Army furnished the AEF with many thousands of revolvers which shot the standard automatic pistol rimless ammunition because there simply were not enough automatics. This wartime expedient turned out to be a good idea and there have been 45 ACP revolvers ever since, all of which are examined here.

Early Days Of The Pistol by Fielding Greaves. From the battlefields of the 16th century to our own War-Between-The-States, the pistol proved decisive many times. Greaves describes the tactics and the guns that worked.

Making Mr. Sharps' Rifles Today by Bill Bigelow. The Sharps rifles were high on the list of glamour guns of the 19th century. Their manufacture, more than 100 years later, is interesting because the process remains not so very different from Christian Sharps' process. It's the tools and their techniques which differ.

The Gunmakers Of Austria by Stuart M. Williams. Austria is one place where the small gunmaker still lives. He doesn't thrive, though, these days and must sell ever more expensive guns to ever fewer well-heeled clients. Williams examines the current state of the Austrian gunmaker's art in the production of peculiarly Austrian designs like the three-barreled guns called *drillings*, the four-barreled guns called *vierlings*.

The Radom by Jim Thompson.

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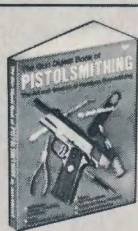
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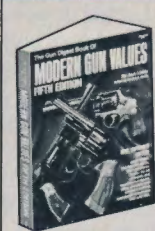
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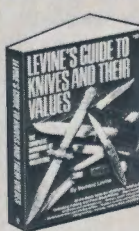
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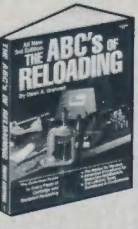
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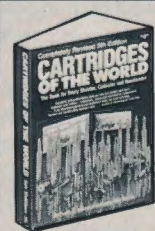
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HANDGUN LEATHER

AL PICKLES



HANDGUN SPORTS GROWTH IN 10 YEARS AFFECTS HOLSTER DESIGN, MATERIALS

The handgun leather industry is in absolutely no danger of extinction. As a matter of fact it is not only alive, but doing very well thank you. Virtually every major leather holster manufacturer that was doing business a decade ago—when our *American Handgunner* magazine was born—is still in business today. A few have merged, some have reorganized, and many have expanded their facilities. More important, however, is that the industry seems to have increased its membership considerably.

To the casual observer, holster industry growth may seem somewhat strange, especially since the related firearms industry is suffering a business slump that several great corporations have been unable to survive. Witness, to name just a few, the passing of High Standard, Sterling, Security, Indian, Randall, and M-S Safari.

How could the gun leather industry experience growth amidst such depression? Well, there are reasons.

One reason is an expansion of handgun

sports wherein the handgun owner has put his battery to multiple uses, necessitating the purchase of sophisticated special purpose leather. The average gun owner, who previously kept a handgun in the bedroom dresser and maintained one belt holster for an occasional foray to the gravel pit, or in which to carry his side-arm as a back-up piece to his hunting rifle, now also engages in IPSC or PPC competition. Many the bullseye shooter has expanded his interests to include metallic silhouette or pin shooting. And, of course, there has been a phenomenal growth in the number of handgun hunters as well as locations that permit the sport.

Almost all these recreations demand special leather designs while few require really special handguns—unless you are a hardcore devotee. As a “for instance,” the commercial Colt .45 autoloader makes a near perfect bedside gun in a simple Lawrence belt holster attached to the rear of your headboard. It also makes the best carry gun available when concealed in a Cobra ComVest. It is the gun

of choice for combat pistolcraft, nestled in a Gordon Davis competition rig. In open PPC matches, the big .45 rides in and out of many Bianchi and Safariland police duty holsters. The same Colt can be, in the hands of many, equally at home in the game field riding in one of Buffalo Leather’s chest holsters.

It has been said many times by myself in this column—and I admit that I first read it in some old tome—that for every handgun a person owns, he should own up to a half-dozen different holster designs to fully appreciate the versatility of that gun. The axiom is becoming self-evident with the increased interest in handgun sports.

The past decade has likewise seen tremendous development in holster design to accommodate these many purposes for which a handgun is used. Of particular interest to me has been the development of truly efficient gun retention systems for uniformed law enforcement officers. Having one’s gun snatched from your duty holster by some felon or psycho has always been a great fear among law officers. In the Pre-Cambrian police period, before I retired, I lost my gun in a scuffle and it was all I could do to keep from eating the muzzle. I would have broken celibacy for a snatch-proof holster in those days. The fact that Bill Rogers, among others, introduced a truly great firearm retention holster after I tossed my badge into San Francisco Bay, so to speak, does not lessen my high appreciation for the advanced development in police duty leather.

It was also during this past ten year period that hunters, handgun or otherwise, have come to really appreciate the shoulder holster as the ideal scabbard for the big revolvers and autoloaders—guns like the Ruger Redhawk .44 Magnum and the LAR Grizzly .45 Magnum. The latest development in these rigs coincides with the realization that concealment is not an important factor while hunting and that a chest strap, or even a chest holster, provides much more stability and security for your handgun. While a few leather companies are supplying holsters that meet the hunter’s criteria, the majority who are not doing so would do well to consider modifying their shoulder holster line to include an optional chest cross-strap with snap fasteners.

One cannot contemplate the past decade of holster refinement without acknowledging the response to the introduction of the nylon holster. The general idea of making holsters from material other than leather is not new by any means. During the big wars of the early 20th Century, several nations utilized heavy cotton canvas holsters for reasons of both economics and supply. Wooden holsters that doubled as shoulder stocks were not uncommon. As a matter of fact, while serving overseas, I had occasion to examine a fine holster woven from bamboo strips and reeds.

One of the first companies I heard of during the past decade to introduce a holster fashioned from nylon was A&B Top-Line. They sent me several samples and I believe I penned the first article on the modern nylon holster.

The Top-Line holster was a very light

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affair made from 2-ply ballistic nylon. It allowed the user to secure his handgun with the bare minimum of added width and weight. It came in several versions, including inside-the-belt and shoulder rigs. Because it afforded some interesting applications, I wrote a favorable but qualified assessment. I must admit, however, that never in my wildest expectations did I believe it would become popular enough for the company to prosper.

Since the initial introduction of nylon holsters, state-of-the-art has passed from company to company with Michaels of Oregon assuming the lead at least twice with their Side-Kick line. Many new companies entered the scene offering *only* nylon holsters, while most old line leather holster makers picked up nylon as a sideline.

My own experiments and tests of the several materials used to make nylon holsters confirm those of the fabric industry in reporting that DuPont's Cordura® wears better than other nylon fabrics such as ballistic nylon. Some, however, claim ballistic nylon is as tough as Cordura.

Nylon holsters, much to the surprise of all, have proved to be far more than a fad. I suspect this arises from their being less expensive than leather, more versatile in that one rig can house a number of different model guns, and capable of being dyed almost any color including camouflage. They also require less care and maintenance.

Does the success of nylon mean that it will eventually replace leather as the favored material for holster manufacture? I think not. Quality leather holsters are far and away superior for *most* applications.

Probably one of the newest developments (I hesitate to call it a fad) within the holster market is the increasing interest in British made holsters. For instance, Andy Arratoonian's Horseshoe Leather Products out of England sells 60 percent of its production to the American market. While you might speculate that the reason lies in the belief that Britons are not allowed to own handguns, that is not entirely correct. While handguns are much regulated, ownership is possible for those who belong to a shooting club and are willing to tackle the horrendous paperwork involved. As a matter of fact, combat handgun games are a rapidly growing sport in Great Britain.

The answer more probably lies in a belief that British leather and leather craftsmanship is superior to American. My own examinations show that while, in some cases, it may be equal, it is not superior. Many countries are world famous for their leather products, i.e.: Italy, France, Mexico, Brazil, and Argentina to name but a few. I own some fine leather products, including holsters, made in all these countries. While some may indeed be as good as an American rig, they are not better.

Ironically, many of the leather holster makers in England and elsewhere are complaining that *their* potential customers are buying American, which many are in fact doing. Obviously there is some prestige in owning a holster made in a country that is

world famous for leather products. Let us not lose sight of the fact that *America* is also world famous for gun leather products—and the leader in holster design.

This overview of the past ten years in handgun leather leads, most appropriately, to a final question. Where are we going from here? Are radically new designs in the offing over the next decade? Are there new materials to be tried? Will a new concealment concept be introduced? Is a "universal holster" fit for all modes of carry possible?

Frankly, I haven't the foggiest idea. I do know there are some truly brilliant minds within the industry. I also know you will always find the latest on "Handgun Leather" within this column and the pages of *American Handgunner*.



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HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN



A DECADE OF HANDGUN HANDLOADING HAS MEANT PROGRESS FOR EVERYONE

In days of yore, like way back in 1975, it was not improbable that a shooter would have to paw through several gun magazines before he'd find a couple of meaty yarns about handgunning. Those days of dearth didn't end, nor did the feast begin, until *American Handgunner*, the first national magazine devoted exclusively to handgunning, became available.

Now, don't get me wrong, long-gun reading is great and I'm as fervently interested in it as the next guy, but living and working with handguns is different, especially for those who hope to cook up good ammo.

So, we were proud to introduce a magazine that was all about handgunning, and it boasted not a few good articles about handloading. But then the need expanded so as to justify a regular feature aimed strictly at handloading for handguns.

And so we began this column, just nine years ago, in the September/October 1977 issue. My subject then was form-to-function ammo for the .45 auto and, talk about inno-

cent remarks, I simply noted that "in years past, there were strong admonitions against introducing a crimp of any description when seating .45 auto bullets" and went on to mention taper crimping. That tore it! Letters began hailing in for and against (but mostly against) a taper crimp for the .45. Today, the controversy continues to gurgle and, although die makers have pretty well switched over to the taper crimp, one who is well-known among us told me he was simply going along with popular demand and would remain convinced that the roll crimp was better. He's right, but only if all cases to be roll-crimped are of the same length. If, however, you're setting a crimp on cases of various lengths—and that's how it is with the .45—it's better to taper crimp.

Changes have come about during the past decade, too—not only in the nationwide popularity of handgun competition at all levels, due mainly to promotion assiduously set forth in these pages—but also in handloading methods. The "progressive" press, for exam-

ple, has advanced in terms of mechanical development and convenience. Best of all, though, improved manufacturing techniques have reduced the price of such machines enough to make them available to the mainstream handloader. That's progress if you happen to count yourself among the thousands of competition handgunners who need to reload great quantities of ammo.

If, on the other hand, you're a serious experimenter, if you put your ammo together in 50-round lots for the purpose of specific testing, your needs haven't been neglected. Sure, there's been a lot of emphasis on mass-production reloading, but that hasn't meant that the single-stage press market hasn't cut a neat swath into the future: almost every manufacturer has continued to refine such presses. Mercifully, those of us who get off on lavishing a heap of TLC on each handloaded round need not be numbered among the unremembered.

It hit the fan again when, in the September/October 1981 issue, I had the cheek to question the time-honored and traditional practice of tweedling 2.7 grains of Bullseye into the relatively enormous incinerating space within the .38 Special hull. Blow-ups had occurred, not regularly but rarely and without explanation; they'd been described in detail in these pages by no less an authority than Jeff Cooper. I'd witnessed the results of a similar event, so I said, in effect, "Quo 2.7, handloader?"

Theories, ideas, pure speculation, and outright rationalization virtually fumed out

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of the woodwork. Hercules demanded "equal time" and got it, which was only fair. Still, it's a story whose final chapter has yet to be written. What's important here and now is that the majority of handloaders and manufacturers seem to be paying close attention to what's being said.

They also listened (finally) a couple of years ago when the .32 Magnum was allowed to fight its way out of the womb. The industry became "inspired" to foster the round and a gun to shoot it, but with apparent suddenness, some five years after it had been advocated here. Regardless of its foregatherings, though, the .32 Magnum has received widespread welcoming, and many are grateful that Industry, with overwhelming munificence, made it a reality.

As long as we're counting coup, we may as well mention the popularity of loading Winchester-Western's shotgun mix, 452AA, in handgun ammo. The idea is fairly new to a lot of handloaders but, believe it, the whole thing came to life on page 74 of the July/August 1982 issue of *American Handgunner*. Derk von Huls, Waffen Munition, Frankfurter St., 8, 6110, Dieburg (and isn't Dieburg just where a devout handloader would live!), Germany, had checked in to inform us that he was loading 5.6 grains of said fodder behind a linotype-cast H&G 68 that weighed 189 grains. Velocities from his .45 auto averaged 992 fps, with an extreme spread of 23 fps. "This load makes major on anybody's pendulum, gives good penetration, extreme accuracy, and is extremely mild to shoot," he concluded.

And that, "mild to shoot," was what was significant. The competition gang, already sold on recoil-reducing "comp" guns, logically cottoned to the idea of using a propellant that would reduce recoil even further.

We'd benefitted by a landmark contribution from a reader; only God and the demographics people had the least concept of how many had something in the way of valuable information to share, and so it was that the policy of encouraging readers to chip in—or chip their teeth about anything to do with components or tools—was sustained. It's paid off, because we've been able to share information and thereby expand our knowledge of handloading infinitely beyond any individual's sphere of concept and experience.

Which statement provides a cue for me to stop reminiscing over a prideful decade and get to the business at hand. We get letters, wow do we get letters! The large wooden mailbox here at Route 1, Box 7, Llano, CA, 93544 (a three-mile strip of rutted lithosphere that slices through wilderness country), is daily stuffed with letters that contain valuable information about handloading. By and by, we get them all into print—often with appropriate comments—as space permits. So, if you've contributed to this burgeoning wellspring of information and haven't seen your ideas in print, don't think we don't care; it'll show up.

J.R. Schroeder, a Bracketville, Texas, predator control officer, writes: "I've had a chance to try many handguns, and have set-

tled on a Smith & Wesson Model 24 with a four-inch barrel. Shot loads in this gun for snakes are about like a .410 shotgun: very effective. My pet handload for sick skunks, raccoons, and so on, is 6.5 grains of Unique and a hardcast 205-grain full-wadcutter bullet. With a shoulder or chest shot, it anchors them pronto. I can't shoot them in the head, because the head has to be sent to the lab in Austin, to be checked for rabies. This is a great load that you might want to pass along."

Officer Schroeder concludes with: "My all-around favorite load is the 225-grain bullet, mentioned above, ahead of 8.2 grains of Unique. Recoil is reasonable, there are no problems with pressure, and it's plenty potent!"

And then there's a note from Jim Weller, of Erie, Pennsylvania, who says it'd be a good idea to get in a plug for S&S bullets. "I've been in matches for two years now," he writes, "and their quality is above reproach. The bullets are always uniform and cast very clean and shiny. S&S uses the blue-colored lube and therefore are not messy like some brands I could name. I've fired over 4,000 of them in various weights and, weighing them at random, I've never had one vary more than about a grain from advertised weight, and they're very accurate."

"S&S offers various calibers in handgun bullets, and they've begun offering a modified H&G 68 in 185-grain weight that I've been using with 5.6 grains of 452AA to make major in IPSC matches with less jump than the standard 200-grain, although the actual felt recoil is a bit sharper."

Weller adds that S&S bullets are available from Steve Nastoff, 1057 Laverne Avenue, Dept. AH, Youngstown, OH 44511, and says that Nastoff's prices for S&S bullets are on a par with what other makers charge.

We have gone to testing and reporting on the merits of tools and components, too, as well as announcing the availability of new products. For instance, during our publication of the test report on the Dillon press (see March/April 1986 *American Handgunner*), I mentioned the inconvenience of having to set powder charges with a spanner wrench. Along the way, I'd altered my Dillon measure's charge bar so I could dial in different charges by finger-twirling a knurled nut.

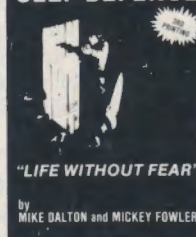
Now, Hayden B. Oliver, whose business card proclaims him as a maker of shooting supplies and hardcast bullets, has sent a sample of a powder-adjustment knob set that's made especially for the Dillon powder measure. They sell for \$11.95 per pair and, had I known they were available that inexpensively when I was doing my testing, I'd've ordered them rather than involve myself in all that drilling and tapping. Oliver's ordering address is 716 N. Hughes, Dept. AH, Little Rock, AR 72205.

That's not all. This thing is busting at the seams and deserves book-length attention. Meanwhile, if you've a tip or a product, or a beef or bouquet to offer, look back and pick up the *Handloading* address. It's always good to hear from you!



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SILUETAS

BERT STRINGFELLOW

IHMSA CELEBRATES TENTH BIRTHDAY ALONG WITH AMERICAN HANDGUNNER



Organized pistol silhouette competition was born at El Paso, Texas in October of 1976, one month after the *American Handgunner* hit the newsstands with its first issue. Pistol silhouette is the first, and still the only, competition that allows the magnum pistol shooter to receive the full benefit of his pistol's power and long range accuracy.

Silhouette competition originated in Mexico, where it was an entertainment at fiestas. In the beginning, live farm animals were tied at different ranges for rifle targets. Usually a chicken at 200 meters, a pig at 300 meters, a turkey at 385 meters and a sheep or goat at 500 meters.

The competitors would pay their fee, then fire a shot at the animal. If the competitor hit the animal, it was his to keep and eat. If he missed, the next competitor would take his turn at the firing line.

A couple of problems are presented by the use of live targets. One, a big bore bullet makes a real mess out of a chicken and doesn't leave much for the pot. Secondly, the animal had to be skinned and dressed after being shot. Consequently, the game was revised to use steel silhouettes of the same farm animals for targets with the prize being an animal which had been skinned and dressed by the local butcher.

To simplify scoring and to make the competition entertaining for the spectators, the steel targets had to be knocked over.

During the '60s, a number of American clubs picked up the sport in its rifle version. They kept the same target configuration used

in Mexico with one exception, the ram was "Americanized" by adding horns to make it look like a desert big horn.

In September of 1975, the first big bore pistol match was held in Tucson, Arizona. The match was promoted by Lee Juras and directed by Dale Miller and Ken Holford. Dale and Ken determined through experimentation that standard rifle targets should be set at 50, 100, 150 and 200 meters to present the pistol challenge they desired. I had the privilege of shooting that match, and I can verify that it was indeed challenging.

Later in June of 1976, John Adams, a number of Southwest Pistol League members and I hosted a pistol silhouette match in Los Angeles. Both of these matches, Arizona and California, had a course that required the competitor to run as though chasing an animal and then shoot at targets at different ranges. The pistol rules were "SHOOT WHAT YOU BRUNG."

The 1976 El Paso match (later to be known as IHMSA's founding match) did not have a running course, but there were still no pistol rules. Any pistol that met the BATF definition of a pistol was acceptable.

One evening during the match a meeting was held in Elgin Gates motel room, and the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association was formed. The word "international" being used as there were competitors from outside the United States at the match. In fact, the match was won by Jose Poras of Mexico with a pistol that would be in the Unlimited category today.

The founders of IHMSA set the guidelines for a pistol competition that was to sweep the country and spread to Belgium, Canada and across the Pacific to Australia.

In the beginning there were two categories of competition, Production and Unlimited, and the competitors were broken into four classes according to skill. Now, IHMSA has four categories of competition, Production pistol, Production revolver, Standing and Unlimited, combined with six classes in each category. IHMSA also sponsors a duplicate shorter range competition for .22 pistols.

During the first four years of IHMSA's existence, a number of milestone decisions were made. In 1978 we introduced long range pistol silhouette to the NRA. The Utah IHMSA members held a match during the 1978 NRA Salt Lake convention to demonstrate the potential of this new sport to the NRA silhouette committee. Later that same year John Adams and I directed the first NRA Long Range Pistol Silhouette Championship at the Angeles Range outside Los Angeles.

We solidified the organization's rules in 1979. This solidification began when the membership voted by a 92% landslide to disallow any gunsmithing or modifications to a Production pistol. This unprecedented move eliminated any possibility of it becoming an equipment race, rather than a test of skill. Later that year the Revolver was split out of the Production pistol category into a separate category for Revolvers.

IHMSA, like all the responsible shooting organizations, is very safety conscious and the delegates voted unanimously to make eye and ear protection mandatory at all IHMSA sanctioned matches, along with the normal safety considerations.

The last rule passed in 1979 was a rule requiring that the organization remain an organization for amateur competition. This rule was referred to during the debates as the "No shoot for loot rule." The membership expressed its desire to shoot for honors, rather than make its championships commercial events.

The sport of pistol silhouette has grown and prospered for 10 years. The *American Handgunner* has assisted in that growth by supporting the competitions and reporting the latest in silhouette pistols, cartridge development and techniques.

Ruger released the first revolver chambered for the 357 Rem Max (known as the 357 Super Mag during its development by IHMSA). Dan Wesson followed suit by releasing their .357 Super Mag. The combination of the Dan Wesson revolver and the 357 Super Mag cartridge has taken the IHMSA Revolver Championship for the last three years running.

Yes, they have been 10 good years. The silhouette game ranges throughout our nation and around the world. An organization which was started in a smoke filled motel room in El Paso, Texas by a dozen enthusiasts has grown to 35,000 members who own their own 100 acre home range. I feel honored to have had the privilege of being part of pistol silhouette.



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LEATHAM'S COLUMN

ROB LEATHAM

FIVE STEP BY STEP LESSONS ON HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR DRAW FROM A HOLSTER

The American Handgunner is pleased to announce the inaugural column by Combat Master Rob Leatham. Our thinking is that Rob's unparalleled shooting accomplishments defy a pithy title, so we're calling this regular feature simply Leatham's Column.

Rob Leatham holds the distinction of being the only shooter to ever win both premiere matches on the professional shooting circuit

in the same year. Rob won the 1985 Steel Challenge (prize purse, \$200,000) and the 1985 Bianchi Cup (prize purse, \$160,000).

More impressive yet, in 1985 Rob became the only shooter to ever complete Combat Shooting's Triple Crown by winning the 1985 IPSC National Championships in addition to the two professional matches mentioned. (Mickey Fowler is the only other shooter to win all three, but he accomplished this in separate years as opposed to one year for Rob.)

Rob has won an unprecedented three IPSC National Titles: 1983, 1984 and 1985.

In addition, Rob reigns as the current IPSC World Champion. He is considered the odds-on favorite to win again this year.

Simply put, Rob Leatham is the most talented handgunner to ever shoot a pistol in competition. Some might think this could lead to a "prima donna" attitude, but nothing of the sort has affected Rob's outgoing personality and friendly disposition.

Rob's pretty wife, Char, is expecting their first child. The Leathams are currently purchasing their first home with money earned by shooting a handgun in competition. Remember Rob's success story the next time an anti-gunner tells you handguns have no legitimate value.

This column marks the beginning of a series of articles devoted to equipment and techniques I have learned and used in my career as a competitive shooter.

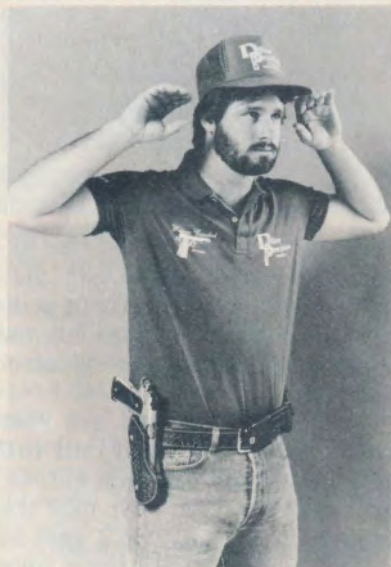
I have acquired quite a few ideas which I have incorporated into my shooting that may be of interest to you, whether an aspiring national champion or a grizzled old veteran of countless events.

Many of the thoughts and techniques, along with the assorted equipment, may be very familiar to many of you. I hope I can shed some new light which just may open your mind up to finding new and better ways of doing things.

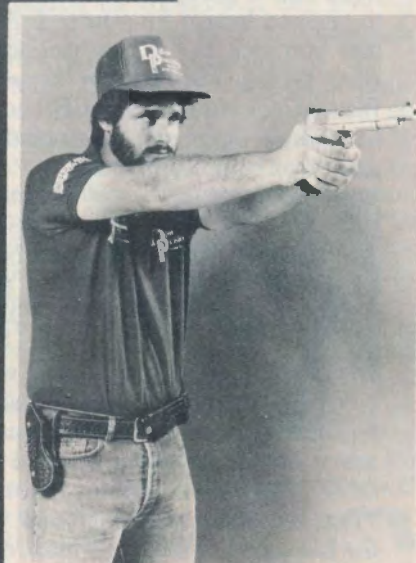
To those new in the game, I hope to accelerate your learning curve—skipping the mistakes we all make on the road to knowledge and concentrating on those items which will be of lasting benefit.

I may ramble on about a certain item at times such as mental discipline or correct practice, but try to see what I am driving at and we may both learn something.

From time to time I will address what I refer to as the "Soft Science" of shooting. This will not be hard and fast study of facts,



Rob shows the start position (top left) and final shooting stance (lower right). He explains the five step draw (center) in detail in the accompanying text.



but an observation of important subjects which have become of major importance to me in my competitive career. This will deal with things like mental attitude, relaxation while shooting, and why we do what we do under the strain of match conditions. These topics have been dealt with by others on various occasions, but possibly not explained the way I will.

I have been successful in shooting competition. By those who require a definition for everything, I am what many would commonly refer to as a gamesman. On the other hand—to define the other side of the coin—I consider myself a martial artist. Of all this I am not overly concerned because I am a shooter first and do this for enjoyment as priority one.

If I seem opinionated, please forgive me. I am not always right, but I am not always wrong.

In this issue I will be discussing the draw and the equipment which pertains to the draw. It is one of the fundamentals to combat shooting, whether competition oriented or defensive in nature.

The draw we will use as an example will start with the weapon loaded and safe in a holster worn on the strong side, hanging from a belt worn through the pant's belt loops. The hands begin in the familiar "surrender position," which means hands are above the shoulders. You will start facing the target. See photo for various positions designated by numbers.

In today's competition, shooting against the best the country has to offer, I see excellent shooting done routinely. You as a rookie at your first match or experienced club level shooter may never have the opportunity to see or question a national level competitor and therefore may not know what is possible. The technique I will discuss here is used by many of the finest and has proven very effective.

From the first position, at the command to begin, the shooter moves both his gun hand and support hand down as straight as possible to the second position. The strong hand is on the gun and the support hand in front of the stomach slightly above belt level. The strong hand then "pops" the pistol from the holster up and forward to the fourth position. Now the support hand is on the gun and beginning to lock in the grip. The thumb on the strong hand knocks the safety off and in my case remains there while firing the weapon. The gun is then pushed forward and up into the fully extended position. Now you are ready to shoot.

Now you have the basic movements down, let us go over a few details and explain their importance. When moving from position one to two, move quickly but smoothly. If you feel your body bounce around or continually miss your grip on the gun—slow down. Consistency is what we are after. Speed will come with practice and experience.

When the strong hand stops at position two, it should not rest there but immediately snatch the gun from its resting place in the holster.

Moving from two to three, notice the gun

moves as much up as forward. Avoid drawing the gun then pushing down and forward in a long dipping motion. Remember the gun should never go lower than it previously was.

Between positions three and four, get your support hand on the gun as soon as possible. This will speed the pushing movement and give you time to adjust your hold on the gun. Take the safety off between three and four. No gain in speed will be noticed from doing it earlier and will preclude any danger of an accidental discharge doing damage should you be on the trigger too soon.

Between positions four and five "push" the gun forward as though you were punching someone with hands clasped. Smoothly put your finger on the trigger and when your arms are fully extended you will be ready to fire. When reaching that all important fifth position, reach it smoothly. Once again, you do not want the gun bouncing around as you will only be able to fire an accurate shot when everything becomes steady.

Many people will shoot with either one or both arms bent. Although I prefer the extended arm position for strings of fire requiring more than two close shots, good shooting is being done either way and the draw remains unchanged.

Understand that these five steps are an extremely simplified version of how I normally teach this technique. It does cover the major points and when executed properly will give you a smooth, quick, consistent draw, placing you in a stable position from which to shoot. You may need to adapt some aspects of each detail to yourself. We are not all built the same and therefore cannot expect to move and be comfortable in an exact predetermined form. Obviously, this does not work for a cross draw holster which is used by many competitors. It is very close and only a few changes are necessary to adopt it.

I did not invent or discover this technique, nor feel it is better or worse than another. I use it and have had excellent results with it.

The equipment you choose can become a major consideration to the style or techniques you employ. Always remember they are for your use and are to help you perform a given task. Never become a slave to your equipment.

I see no sense in using inferior equipment for any reason other than nothing else is at hand. If you use a poor fitting holster and complain about how your gun seems to shift its position from draw to draw, why not get another? I am not suggesting you go out and buy a multitude of different models, but ask someone whose opinion you respect and borrow their equipment for comparison.

I have a small trunk full of leather goods accumulated over the years and have found a select few that I am able to use effectively. There are several important factors to consider when purchasing a new holster. First, will it fit your needs? Do you want an ankle holster for competition use? Do you want a low slung belt rig suitable for the sport of fast draw for undercover duty as a law enforcement officer? No! You will find sometimes the best you can do is a compromise. So it is with holster design.

I have found a strong side design with the weapon held straight up and down to be very versatile, and in my experience very practical. A proper design will hold the gun as securely as desired and still enable a quick draw. It should also protect the weapon, although from a purely competition oriented standpoint, this may be of no significance. It should be made from quality materials and so assembled as to last a lifetime and remain aesthetically pleasing.

An excellent example will be a joy to own and never fail you. A poor example will only save you a few dollars initially and could cost you dearly in either competition or, regretfully, in other ways much more serious and lasting than a match or championship. You get what you pay for.

I am currently using a holster I helped design and of course find very suitable. It is available from Ernie Hill Speedleather (3128 S. Extension Rd., Mesa, AZ 85202) and with matching belt and magazine carriers are the finest I have seen or used. I recommend them highly.

Others who make quality leather goods I have had good use from are Davis Leather Co. (3930 Valley Blvd., Suite F, Walnut, CA 91789) and Rogers Holsters, (1941 S. Walker Ave., Monrovia CA 91016), now a part of Safariland. Still more is available, but I have only used the above mentioned.


Next issue I will discuss a few tips on practicing for IPSC and show you a few tips that will help your score and mental attitude. If you have any questions about this article or about the shooting sport, send them to my attention at Leatham's Column, 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA 92108.



MIDWEST PIN BUSTING CHAMPIONSHIP

The Second Annual Midwest Pin Busting Championship will be October 11 and 12 at Bullet Hole Shooting Range in Kansas City, MO. All shooting of bowling pins based on Second Chance rules and classifications of shooters. For more information write Dave Brown, 6201 Robinson St., Overland Park, KS, 66202.

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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB



AYOOB REFLECTS ON HANDGUNNER'S ROLE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT MATTERS

In autumn of 1976, the debut of *American Handgunner* magazine did not go unnoticed in law enforcement circles. Six years before, the deaths of four California Highway Patrolmen in the "Newhall Massacre" had been the catalytic slap in the face that awoke American police to the fact that they were undertrained and sometimes undergunned in the face of growingly professional and skillful armed criminals. NYPD had completely revamped its training, and FBI was emphasizing its close combat and Tactical Reaction Course (TRC) over its old PPC format. A growing number of police agencies were realizing that something beyond quirky fad-ism had motivated the transsetting Illinois State Police to switch to the 9mm service automatic.

The birth of *American Handgunner* came within months of that of IPSC, and this most exciting game would get heavy play in the magazine. The cops were listening. By the early mid-80s, forward thinking police instructors like Frank Repass of the Orlando, Florida, PD would incorporate IPSC-style courses as standard police qualification, and for years before, other instructors had used "practical shooting" and "Comstock Count" drills to augment their conventional in-service police shooting programs.

In the *Combat Course* column in that historic first issue, Mason Williams had predicted this would happen.

The *American Handgunner* would become the first "consumerist" firearms journal. The early "theme issues" that would revolve around a particular gun—Combat Magnum, Dan Wesson, .45 auto, Browning Hi-Power—would show the featured handgun parts and all. For every line of copy that extolled the virtues of the gun of the month, it seemed there was another pointing up a shortcoming of design and showing how to fix or compensate for it.

The magazine also commissioned the controversial *Industry Insider* column, which remains a fixture to this day. For the first time, the gun buying public—including the police armorers—had a pipeline into the executive suites in Gun Valley, where firearms design and marketing decisions were made.

The cops were appreciative . . . and some handgun industry honchos were outraged.

An early *Handgunner* became the first national publication to break the story that S&W's model 66 stainless Combat Magnum was overheating and jamming with Magnum loads. Smith & Wesson subsequently went through design revisions to cure the problem, and ultimately succeeded with the introduc-

tion of the L-frame 686 series, a heavier-built weapon designed for a constant .357 diet.

It was also in the *Industry Insider* column that the world first learned that Ruger was planning a military and police 9mm autoloader. The same column was also the first to describe Ruger's Redhawk, the first truly heavy-duty .44 Magnum double action, the gun that would be a test-bed for design features of the new-generation Ruger GP-100 police service revolver that would be introduced in 1986.

Gunmakers' reactions to this no-holds-barred reporting became intense. At one point, the *Industry Insider* columnist had been exiled from several gun factories and at least one holster company. Rakusan took the heat himself by taking over the *Industry Insider* column, which he writes to this day.

The printed documentation of the *Handgunner* articles gave many police armorers ammunition to go to their chiefs and suppliers and demand newer and better handguns. Similarly, the pages of *Handgunner* would become documentation for other changes in police equipment and policy.

Jon Winokur became perhaps the first true "sports writer" of the handgun game with his dual *Handgunner* columns, *Conversation with a Champion* and *MasterTips*. The latter would have an unforeseen impact on law enforcement training. Around the nation, police firearms instructors would clip and photocopy the one-page *MasterTips* as training guidelines for their officers. In 1985, the extensive pilot project for new methods in combat shooting developed for LAPD by Larry Mudgett and John Helms would be replete with several pictures taken directly from *MasterTips*, including Ray Chapman demonstrating his rollover prone position, and several famed shooters showing their versions of the Weaver Stance. While LAPD would ultimately semi-reject the Weaver, making it optional rather than mandatory, the Helms-Mudgett study convinced the Los Angeles Police to adopt the double-tap (two shot burst), the flash sight picture and eye level shooting at all distances, and the Harries method of coordinating the flashlight with the handgun—all techniques that had been shown and widely popularized by *Handgunner*.

As other trends burgeoned, *Handgunner* readers were already well informed enough to read between the lines. The magazine had made it clear many times that women in particular shot better from two-handed stances, and when the landmark lawsuit *Christine Hansen, et. al. v. FBI* was heard in

Washington, DC in 1980, it was a *Handgunner* writer who testified for Hansen and the other fired female agents that modern, two-handed techniques and enlightened gun selection would have allowed them to qualify instead of flunking out of the FBI Academy at Quantico. The court agreed, ordering the agents rehired and decreeing that the Bureau "revise and update its obsolete and sexist firearms training."

As the Bureau's weaponmasters faced this order of the court, a man well known to *Handgunner* readers came to their rescue. He was Bill Rogers, the ex-FBI agent who had become famous as a topflight competitive shooter and brilliant holster maker. Virtually single-handed, Rogers convinced the Quantico instructors that the Weaver stance and related techniques were the way to go. These became the basis of the "FBI New Method," incorporated by the Bureau in 1981. FBI, the leader in American police firearms training, had finally entered the modern age of pistolcraft, carrying a multitude of smaller agencies with it.

A landmark issue was the 1978 *Handgunner* that featured the S&W 9mm autoloaders. In its sister publication *GUNS* a few years earlier, Jan Stevenson had published "The Saga of Smith's Parabellums," and this nearly book-length work was updated in AH with an article by S&W's Roy Jinks on the history of the firm's 9mm autos, and a trio of investigative reports by a writer who had debriefed numerous police departments and individual officers actually using the guns on the street.

The series would win the author the first George Nonte Memorial Award for Excellence in Firearms Journalism (and would be plagiarized word for word, comma for comma, by an eastern freelancer in a police professional journal). Fans of the gun were angered because they thought their favorite pistol was slapped by the article detailing jamming and breakdowns and accidental discharges; opponents of the gun were angered at what they saw as a general endorsement of the concept of DA 9mms in law enforcement.

Yet, the industry was listening. Within three years, Smith & Wesson had introduced their third generation 9mm autoloaders with design improvements that virtually solved the breakdown and jamming problems that had plagued the earlier weapons. *Handgunner* had again fulfilled its role as a watchdog of handgun quality.

Year to year, *Handgunner* showed the advantages of auto pistols in the police service (though not without publishing the arguments in favor of the revolver, for balance). Many of those articles were to be included in police research projects to justify the adoption or optional approval of semiautomatics for duty and/or off duty use. The decade would see the stronger trend to autos than at any previous point in the history of US law enforcement. In '76, Illinois had stood alone as the only state police agency equipped with autoloaders, but by *Handgunner's* tenth anniversary, they had been joined by the state police departments of New Jersey (HK P7), and of Connecticut and Wyoming (both

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"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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The MKII is about as easy to use as your pocket calculator. For example, to enter a stop beep or "par time" at 4 seconds, simply push "PAR". The timer will tell you "ENTER PAR TIME AND PUSH SET" so you push "4", "SET". Want to change it to 6 seconds? Just push "PAR", "6", "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:

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FIND SHOT 7

- You have fired 12 shots.
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- Your total time was 6.67 seconds.

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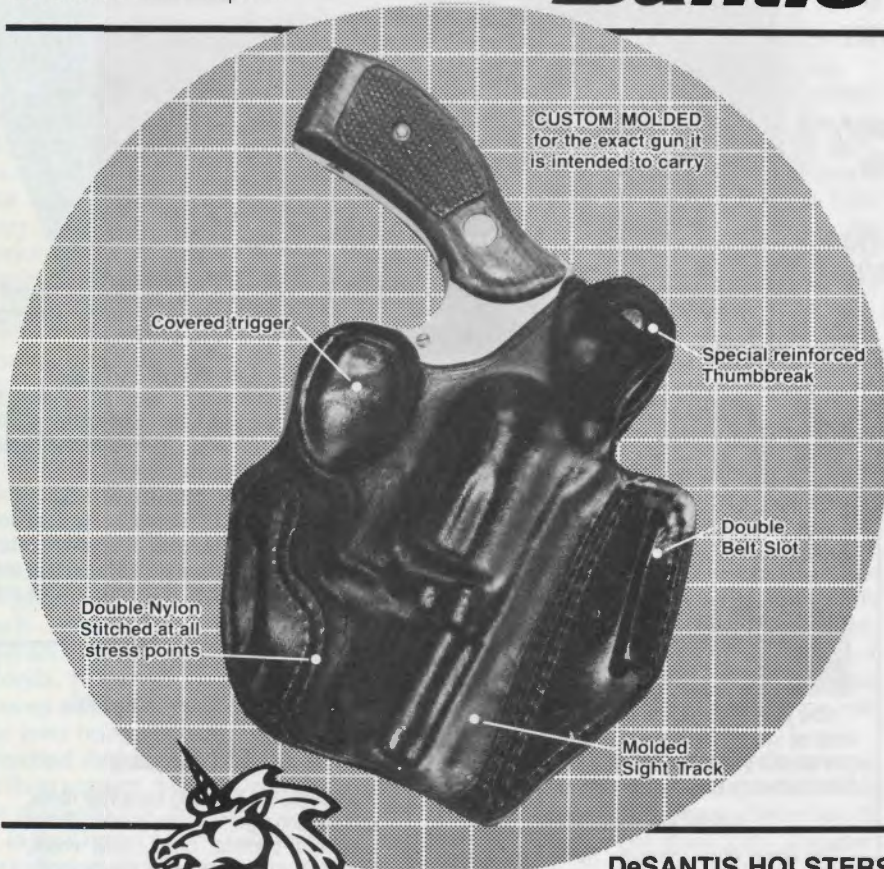
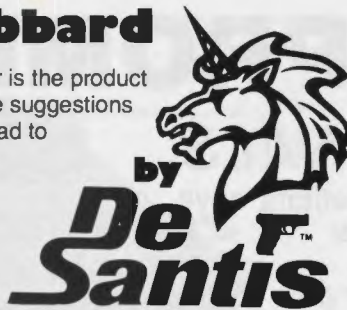
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Beretta 92). Numerous municipal and county police, even in the super-traditionalist Northeast, had likewise switched to the flat 9mm. Other trend-setting state police departments from New Hampshire to the West Coast were actively evaluating 9mm and .45 automatics. Even LAPD, long a bastion of revolver-only police policy, appeared on the verge of approving the Beretta 92 and/or Smith & Wesson model 459 for uniform duty use, and Chief Daryl Gates was publicly defending the concept of the police service automatic.

LAPD had previously been touched by the pages of *Handgunner*. The Protective League's union chiefs had begged for ammo superior to the issue 158-grain lead round nose, but the pleas had fallen on deaf ears. An article in *American Handgunner* extolled the virtues of LAPD training and bemoaned the curious fact that such an advanced department clung to such dangerously outmoded cartridges. The *Handgunner* article was reprinted in the union newsletter, and two weeks later, the long-time advice of the street cops and of the department's own ordnance staff was answered when Chief Gates approved a softnose Federal "controlled expansion round" as the issue load.

Handgunner became the first public sector journal to publish the results of NYPD's "SOP-9 reports." Standard Operating Procedure #9 was an in-depth study of thousands of armed encounters that had occurred in that city. The magazine had, for the first time, placed that vital information in the hands of law officers nationwide.

For a decade, the magazine supported the use of high-performance handguns for plainclothes and off-duty police wear, beginning with the first issue's review of the now-defunct Security Industries 5-shot .357 on a .32 frame. Many of the publication's 130,000 readers were cops who became convinced that Magnums, 9mms, and .45s made more sense for concealed carry than the classic "snubnose .38." Police gun buying trends would confirm that the magazine and the average, thinking policeman were going in the same direction.

AH would also follow the police handgun sports. Second Chance in its early days was a cops-only tournament, and sponsor Richard Davis would later credit much of his match's success to glowing reviews by J. D. Jones and other participant/writers in *Handgunner*. Dr. Robert Burgess' "Shoot for Loot" in Laramie, Wyoming was covered in *Handgunner*, and such prestigious agencies as the Texas Department of Safety under instructor Reeves Jungkind would adopt the running course as a test of advanced proficiency. And, while other journals would send reporters to cover the Police Combat National Championships, *Handgunner* would have a first-person report from a participant like Seth Nadel or Fred Romero. The same tradition would continue for most of the seven Bianchi Cups, a tradition that reached its zenith in 1985 when five *Handgunner* writers including editor Cameron Hopkins, Mike Dalton, John Pride, and Fred Romero competed in Cup VII — more than representa-

Continued on page 75

MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

Weak Hand Shooting



Weak hand shooting is a problem for some shooters but it needn't be. Here's the simple technique I use:

1. RELAX: A lot of shooters create problems for themselves by using uncomfortable, unnatural stances. For example, standing sideways to the target with a straight back and a bent arm just doesn't give you control over recoil. And shooting with a straight arm creates a pendulum effect which actually worsens the effects of recoil. But standing in a relaxed, comfortable position allows you to control the pistol so that it **recoils** consistently, which in turn allows you to **shoot** consistently.

2. LEAN INTO IT: Get your body weight behind the gun.

3. STAND AT AN ANGLE TO THE TARGET: Don't stand square to the target, but rather at a slight angle. Keep your shoulders in line so that you can see the sights with your master eye.

4. KEEP IT SIMPLE: I don't recommend tilting or canting the gun because it isn't natural. You're not accustomed to looking at the sights at an angle. And when you change the angle, you change the point of impact, so you have to remember to compensate by changing your point of aim. Too complicated.

Follow these few guidelines and avoid contorted or rigid positions. Do what's natural for you, and keep it simple.

Shooting arm is almost straight, shoulders are in line with the pistol. The forward knee is bent and the weight is forward.

ROB LEATHAM, Combat Master; 1983 IPSC World Champion; 1983 and '84 IPSC National Champion.

© Jon Winokur 1985

OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER AWARDS—1986

The 14th Annual Outstanding American Handgunner Awards Dinner was held at the New Orleans Hilton on April 25, 1986. Growing in stature each year, this affair has become the "Oscars" of handgunning, with many side-events, all connected with the handgunning sports.

The 1986 nominees included Harry Reeves, holder of six National All-Around Pistol Championships; Lon Pennington, winner of the IHMSA revolver internationals in 1983, 1984 and 1985; Dean Grennell, Managing Editor of *Gun World* magazine; Elgin Gates, founder and president of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association; Ray Chapman, winner of the 1975 IPSC World Championship and designer of the Bianchi Cup Tournament; John Bianchi, Chairman of the Board of Bianchi International; Rob Leatham, winner of the IPSC Nationals three times and the IPSC World Match in 1983; and Bob Milek, Field Editor of *Guns & Ammo* and Peterson's *Hunting*, and a renowned handgun hunter.

From this prestigious list, the 1986 OAHAF Awards Committee selected John Bianchi as the recipient of the 1986 award.

Jerry Wilson, Ruger collector and premier silversmith, presented the 3rd Annual Hand-



gun Hunter of the Year Award, sponsored by Handgun Hunters Hall of Fame, to Tom Hammond, whose 83-lb. elephant must certainly top the handgun hunters record book.

The 2nd Annual Sierra Bullet Elmer Keith Handgun Writer of the Year Award went to Dean Grennell.

The 2nd Annual American Pistolsmiths Guild Award of Excellence went to Ron Power, pistolsmith of Independence, Missouri. The presentation was made by Jim Clark, the 1985 recipient.

A special presentation was made to Marty Huber for 50 years of service to Colt collectors and historians. Under Marty's direction, the Colt Historical Section tracks down and researches over 2,500 inquiries a year from Colt collectors.

With the growing interest in all phases of handgunning, the importance of the Outstanding American Handgunner Awards Foundation as a vital outlet for pro-handgun publicity and information cannot be underestimated. For more information on how you can become involved with this fast-growing movement, contact Larry Kelly, Chairman, OAHA, 41302 Executive Drive, Mt. Clemens, MI 48045.



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KING'S COMP



THE AFFORDABLE COMPENSATOR

By Trip Neisler

King's Recoil Compensator is actually a national match solid barrel bushing with an inch-and-a-half slotted extension. It is machined from one piece of 416 stainless steel, RC 30-35. Fitting the barrel is accomplished by precise machine turning and polishing of the barrel until the correct fit is obtained. Properly installed there is absolutely no movement in the barrel bushing and when the gun is in battery the barrel locks up solidly in the same place every time.

Instructions were included for fitting the unit to the slide. All that was needed was a bit of polishing on the inside of the slide, first with #220 sandpaper, then a final polish with #600. I easily obtained a tight fit with almost no metal removed from the slide.

The unit works to reduce recoil in two ways: the four slots cut into the top of the compensator direct gases upward, exerting a

downward force on the gun; and the added weight of the stainless extension helps to reduce muzzle lift. I found that the extra weight at the muzzle was a great aid in pointing the gun. Instead of having to search for a sight picture after the draw, with King's Recoil Compensator installed the sights seem to align themselves. The additional inch-and-a-half of length made drawing the gun somewhat cumbersome until I adjusted my draw to allow for the difference.

When compared in appearance to what everyone has come to recognize as a "compensator," King's unit is decidedly different. I have had competitors ask me if the unit was a long, ported barrel. Although King's Recoil Compensator may not be as pretty as some, it gets the job done. Recoil reduction isn't in the same league with the custom fitted barrel units available at much greater cost. But felt

recoil and muzzle lift is reduced substantially from that of a stock, five-inch gun.

Along with its recoil reduction, the installation of King's compensator produces the desirable side-effect of improved accuracy. When I first shot my .45 with the unit installed I discovered that my 25 yard, slow-fire groups, that had been in the neighborhood of four inches, shrunk to two inches.

There are, however, some drawbacks. The use of lead bullets will leave some lead residue in the ports of the compensator and inside, near the muzzle. This residue builds up quickly and must be removed. I use a small knife blade to scrape out the accumulation whenever I clean the gun.

The exterior of the barrel becomes dirty rapidly, too. This is because when the gun is fired and the slide moves to the rear, the barrel is mostly encompassed by the compensator, which retains some of the gases and drifting lead residue. The lubricant on the barrel picks up some of this unattached residue and the return to battery will be inhibited after 100-200 shots. In other words, if you don't keep the gun clean it will fail to function properly. I've experimented with various lubricants and have found nothing to totally remedy this problem.

For me, and perhaps for you, King's Recoil Compensator offers affordable compensation coupled with quick-pointing and improved accuracy. I think that having to clean my gun fairly often is a small price to pay for these advantages.



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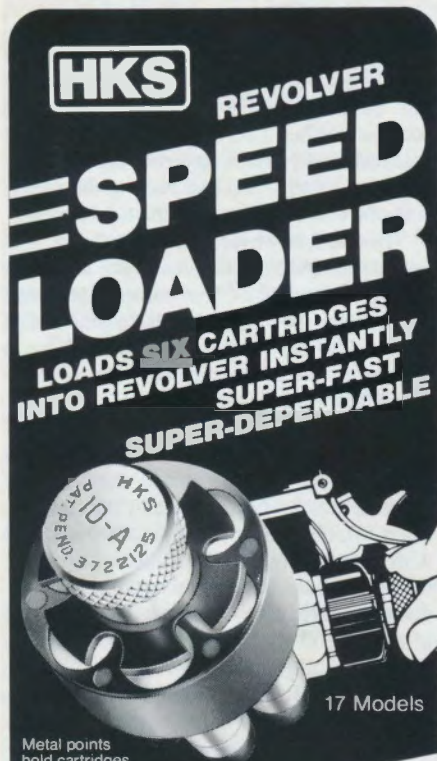
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CONVERSATION WITH A CHAMPION

By Jon Winokur

Ray Chapman is a distinguished member of the handgunning community. He is one of the five original Combat Masters (along with Jeff Cooper, Jack Weaver, Elden Carl and Thell Reed) and was the first IPSC [International Practical Shooting Confederation] World Champion. His Chapman Academy is widely acclaimed as one of the top shooting schools in the country, and under his stewardship the Bianchi Cup Tournament has become the premier event on the combat shooting circuit. I spoke with him recently on a variety of practical shooting subjects:



JW: Ray, you were a practical shooting pioneer. How did your shooting career begin?

RC: When I moved to Southern California from Oregon in 1953, sport shooting was beginning to take off with "Fast-Draw" and "Quick-Draw" shooting. Fast-Draw was with live ammunition and Quick-Draw was with blanks, but the guns and leather were the same: single-action pistols and tied-down holsters.

JW: What did the matches consist of?

RC: You simply stood on the line and tried to beat your opponent to the draw and pop a balloon or hit an impact target at close range. Almost all of it was from the hip because it was extremely fast shooting. They were the only games in town at that time, but they evolved into what we now call practical shooting. The more we shot, the more complicated we made it; the more complicated it got, the more we developed the equipment. Finally, around 1958 or '59, I started shooting a semi-automatic pistol.

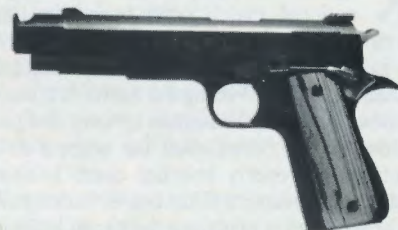
JW: You were the first gamesman, weren't you?

RC: Gamesman?

JW: Yeah, weren't you the first to sit down and analyze the courses of fire beforehand and approach them scientifically?

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RC: I don't call that being a gamesman, I call it being *practical*. If you're going to compete in a practical shooting operation you'd better know as much about it as you possibly can. A guy would be an absolute fool to just run out and say, "Here I am—shoot me!" I wanted to know where the targets were, where the cover was, where the shots were going to come from. The more you know about the situation the more "practical" you are. I tried to figure out every possible angle in order to win. If you call that being a gamesman, okay, but I call it being practical.

JW: Then you must prefer published matches over surprise matches?

RC: Surprise matches are excellent for training, but they're not very good for competition because it's very difficult to keep a match a surprise even for the first guy who shoots it. In almost every surprise match that I've ever competed in, the ones who shoot last usually win. When I went to a surprise match I never showed up until about three or four in the afternoon because by that time everybody knows what's going on.

JW: You won the first IPSC World Championship, in 1975. What do you recall about the match?

RC: It was in Zurich, Switzerland. There were two other Americans in the field, Ron Lerch and a fellow who was in the Air Force over there who's name escapes me at the moment. Ron Lerch came in second—I only beat him by about two or three points.

I used a Colt .45 auto with custom work by Jim Hoag. Most of the Europeans used the Colt—some in 9mm but most in .45 caliber, and some the Sig 210.

It was a two-day event with about a hundred contestants from all over the world. It was pretty hectic because the match officials didn't speak English—we had to learn the German range commands.

It was a different style of shooting. There were a lot of odd targets. I remember one stage had four small circles in the center of a piece of cardboard and you had to draw and fire one shot at each of those small circles in something like three seconds. From ten yards, you couldn't see the circles—you just had to shoot for the center of the cardboard and hope that you hit them. Fortunately, after other competitors shot at the targets for a while and they started taping up the holes, you could see the tape patterns. So when I shot I used the tape as a guide and cleaned that particular stage. In fact, that's where I won the match.

JW: Do you consider winning the World Championship your greatest competitive achievement?

RC: No. It was very rewarding, but I really looked upon it as just another match. The thing that really left me satisfied with myself was the first time I "cleaned" the Mexican Defense Course. It was a greater personal triumph than winning the World Championship.

And one of the toughest things for any shooter to do in that era was to win the Southwest Pistol League Championship because the League had, without a doubt, the best pistol shooters in the world. That's

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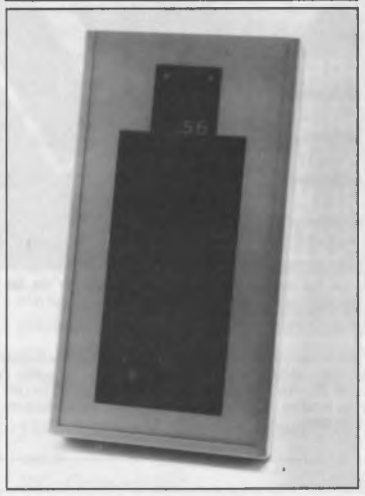
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where the sport started and where we developed techniques and courses and rules. There were more good shooters in the League at that time than there were in the '75 World Championship match.

JW: And you won three SWPL Championships, in 1964, '67 and '70. Do you still compete in local matches?

RC: No, just the big ones. I went to Austria last year for the European Championships. I like to keep up with the latest equipment and techniques. When someone comes up with a better way to do something, I want to know about it. I come home and try it, and if it works, I include it in my training program. For example, in the last few years I've seen several good ways to go into the prone position quickly.

JW: What gun do you shoot in competition these days?

RC: My favorite competition gun right now is a Brown Maxi-Comp. It has a 5⁹/₁₆-inch barrel with a compensator built on a Gold Cup frame. It has Wichita sights, a Bar-Sto barrel, and a two-pound trigger.

JW: As one of the founding fathers of practical shooting competition, how do you feel about the state of the sport? For instance, has the merger of IPSC and USPSA [United States Practical Shooting Association] been a benefit to the development of practical shooting in the United States?

RC: Absolutely. I have the #1 membership card in USPSA and I support it all the way. I also support metallic silhouette shooting, PPC, and the Action Shooting organization of the NRA.

JW: Speaking of "action shooting," the Bianchi Cup has undergone some changes in its course of fire recently, most notably the inclusion of the International Rapid Fire. Will it be retained for the '86 Cup?

RC: Unfortunately, the IRF wasn't at all well received by the shooters, so we've taken it out and we've gone back to the original format for the '86 match.

JW: The original format was designed so that automatic and revolver shooters could compete on an equal basis, is that right?

RC: There were several criteria involved in designing the course of fire. It could not be an IPSC match because IPSC had become so sophisticated that police officers or anyone else who shot a revolver were not competitive. So all the firing strings in the Bianchi Cup match are six rounds, and there are no reloading stages.

Another criterion was that there be nothing athletically demanding that would prevent older or obese or handicapped people from competing, so all the stages are shot from a stationary position. And there's no discrimination by caliber; most police officers shoot .38 Special in competition because that's what they carry on duty, so we set a power floor. As long as your ammunition meets it, no matter what caliber you're shooting, you're legal.

JW: You run one of the best training programs in the country. What kind of courses do you offer at Chapman Academy?

RC: We have a basic handgun familiarization

Continued on page 102

The AYOOB Files

By Massad Ayoob

NO ONE EVER RAPED A .44 MAGNUM: THE HELEN WEATHERS INCIDENT

Situation: Dragged into darkness by a vicious rapist, a woman's worst nightmare comes true.

Lesson: Instinctive reactions and an advance plan spell disaster for a lady's attacker.

Electrologist Helen Weathers, 33, locked up her office on Miami's Brickell Street, paused in the lobby to check her mail, and then stepped outside. It was 8 p.m. on New Year's Eve, 1981, and the dark streets were deserted, many of the normal pedestrians having been drawn to the parade twelve blocks away. She strode toward the parking lot, her shoulder bag and a paper sack of magazines under her arm as she passed a hedgerow of shrubbery.

Then came the voice, masculine, menacing. "Hey, girl! Look over here!"

She looked. A black man emerged from the bushes, six feet tall, slim at about 160 pounds. He wore dark jeans and was barechested beneath a dark windbreaker. In his right hand was a newspaper. Then his left hand reached over and pulled the paper away, dropping it to the pavement, revealing a small, blue-steel semi-automatic pistol. He pointed it at her head.

His left hand closed hard on her right elbow. "I'll give you the money," the tall blonde said quickly. "Just shut up and keep walking," the gunman answered.

Now there was no doubt in Helen Weathers' mind that money was not the motive. She felt herself being half-led, half-dragged into the deeper, dimmer recesses of the parking lot. She saw no signs of life. If someone did walk past on Brickell, she knew, they would see only a man and woman who appeared to be walking arm in arm. If they could see anything at all through the shrubbery.

She thought about running. She couldn't; the hand was like iron. Her captor seemed to be concentrating on two things: her keeping up with him, and looking over his shoulder for witnesses.

Things went into slow motion in the mind of Helen Weathers, and at the same time, she became two people. One, the intellectual Helen, could only think, "Well, here it is, but I've got the equipment to handle it." The other part was acting on feeling instead of words, and the feeling was, "Oh, shit!"

That other Helen took over, and she felt herself going "on automatic." Like every other woman in crime-ridden Miami, she had thought about the danger of being raped and perhaps murdered, but unlike most of them, she had filed a plan in the back of her mind to deal with such a contingency.

The next time the captor looked nervously over his shoulder for bystanders, she managed to twist her left hand awkwardly into her

shoulder bag. Her long, slender fingers closed over the rosewood stocks of her Smith & Wesson .44 Magnum.

Six years before, the electrologist had come to terms with living in a city of violence. The revolver she had inherited from a cherished relative, a nicked S&W Model 29 with 6½" barrel, had become more than an heirloom. She'd learned to shoot it—standing an athletic five-foot-nine barefoot, she had not found it intimidating—and a shoulder bag carried it well enough. Still, after four years, she had downscaled to a Smith & Wesson Model 13, nickel plated with a four-inch barrel and factory stocks, chambered for .357 Magnum. It had been lighter in the purse.

At her last monthly practice session, however, she'd noticed that the trigger didn't seem right. The .357 was in the shop now, having a faulty sear repaired. Before leaving the office, she glanced down at the .44 Magnum which she now kept in her desk, since there had been stickups in the building. It was going to be a long weekend, she realized, and there had been a lot of burglaries in the neighborhood. Almost as an afterthought, she slipped the loaded .44 into her shoulder bag, not knowing that in minutes it would save her life.

Weathers' hand took a firm grip on the big revolver. She froze when her assailant turned his attention back toward her, and she kept walking. He shot another nervous glance over his shoulder, and this time she twisted the gun smoothly out and hid it down beside her left leg. Her thumb flicked the hammer back to full cock. The gunman didn't hear the sound. His pistol was still six inches from her head.

They were deeper into the parking lot now. When he turned his head furtively searching for witnesses the third time, Helen made her move.

She jerked violently away from him, forward and down, throwing herself toward the ground as she simultaneously swung the Magnum up, aiming for his belly. But the assailant was quick. Catching her movement, he turned and saw the long barrelled revolver in time to instinctively fling his own right hand down and pull his trigger.

The crack of his .25 automatic came an instant before the deafening roar of the Magnum could drown it out. Helen knew he had fired first and felt an impact up her left arm. "He's shot me!" she thought, and immediately pulled the trigger a second time, double-

Continued on page 76

A Decade of DESIGN

By J. B. Wood

In 1976, when the first issue of *American Handgunner* appeared, a new wave of handgun design had just begun. Designers had discovered the use of space-age plastics and stainless steel. Safety mechanisms became more sophisticated, and the larger-capacity magazine was now a frequent feature, especially in 9mm Parabellum pistols. In a trend that began years before with the Colt Commander, several larger-frame guns were offered in smaller versions.

Double action trigger systems were now almost a rule, rather than an exception.

In the previous year, 1975, a cooperation between the Schweizerische

Industrie Gesellschaft and J.P. Sauer resulted in the SIG/Sauer P220 and P230 pistols, the beginning of a line of excellent guns that later included the 9mm P225 and P226. All of the SIG/Sauer pistols have increasingly been favored by law enforcement agencies that are switching from revolvers to automatics. Recently, I looked at an impressively long list of police departments and other official agencies that are now equipped with SIG/Sauer pistols.

Gas Locking Principle

Another interesting design feature that has seen its first real commercial use in the last ten years is the gas-locking principle. This was developed by Karl Barnitzke in Germany during World War Two, and finally used by two European manufacturers, in different ways. In Austria, Steyr used a pure Barnitzke system in their 9mm GB pistol, venting the powder gases from the barrel into a cylindrical space to keep the slide closed at the instant of high pressure. At



Auto-Mag, .44 Magnum

The author, an unabashed auto aficionado, reviews significant developments in handgun design over the past ten years.

S&W 645, .45 ACP

Beretta 92F, 9mm

SIG P-226, 9mm

Desert Eagle, .357 Magnum

nearly the same time, in Germany, Heckler & Koch used a piston attached to the slide and a chamber in the frame to achieve the same result in their P7, which also has a unique squeeze-cocking arrangement.

Annular Ring

On separate U.S. coasts, two companies used an annular ring in the chamber to lock the slide. In Connecticut, Larry Seecamp used this system in his tiny DA-only .32 automatic, which is exactly the same size as his earlier stainless steel .25 pistol. On the west coast, Washington-based Detonics used a chamber ring to lock their Pocket 9, a small selective-DA in 9mm Parabellum. The Pocket 9 is also notable in having an ambidextrous firing pin lock safety system and stainless steel construction.

Inclined Plane Lug

In pistols that use a classic Browning-style fall-ing-barrel locking system, there has been a trend away from the swinging link that was used in our old Government Model pistol. The inclined-plane lug, that first appeared in the Browning/FN Hi-Power in 1935, is still used by many modern designers.

This pattern is present in the SIG/Sauer pistols, Smith & Wesson automatics, and several others. Another variation is the enclosed track, a bent-oblong cut in the barrel underlug that allows the crosspiece of the slide latch to precisely control the barrel movement. This system was introduced in 1947 in the SIG SP47/8, and it is now used in the Star 30, CZ75, TZ75, Colt .380 GM and Mustang, and others.

Other Locking Systems

Along the way, in this decade, other locking systems were tried. A small DA-only .45 auto called the

Thomas used twin side lugs that were activated by a backstrap lever that resembled a grip safety. Ross Rudd designed a DA pistol that had a separate breechblock in the slide, moving vertically to unlock. Neither pistol attained quantity production, but the design elements were interesting.

There was one application of the separate breechblock that worked beautifully, in the 9mm Benelli B76. A lever at the rear of the breechblock keeps it cammed downward into locked position until the initial movement of the slide picks it up. This system allows a fixed barrel, and the Benelli is extremely accurate. A fine set of combat sights and a Lugerish slant of the grip frame also contribute to this. Another excellent feature of the Benelli is the best magazine release yet devised. In the usual location for a push-button catch, it is moved forward to expel the magazine.

The Auto Mag

Harry Sanford's beautiful monster, the Auto Mag, also came along in this time period. It was chambered for a special .44 Magnum cartridge that was briefly made in small lots by Norma in Sweden and CDM in Mexico. Mostly, the round was handloaded, made from cut-off .308 cases. With this cartridge handicap, it went out of production after about five years. The Auto Mag had a rotating bolt in the slide for locking, and a similar concept was later used by Magnum Research for their .357 Magnum Desert Eagle, produced by IMI in Israel.

The Wildey

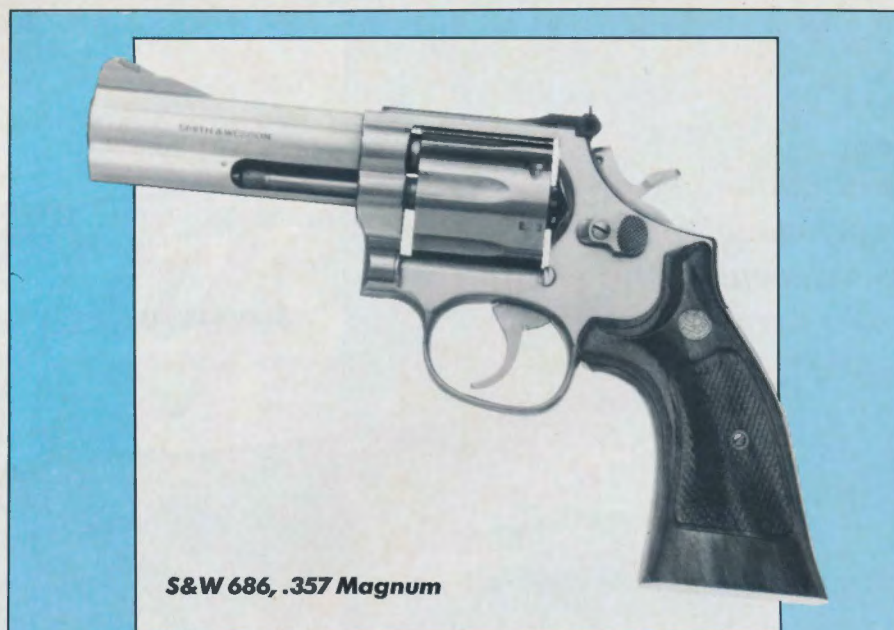
With the passing of the Auto Mag, the idea of large-caliber magnum-level auto pistols was not dead. Wildey Moore had developed a cartridge that became the .45 Winchester Magnum, and a gas-operated pistol to use it. For reasons too complicated to detail here, this gun has been a long time getting into full production. It is now slated for availability in the latter part of 1986, along with a new Wildey pistol called the Ringmaster. Also, there will be another new cartridge, the .475 Wildey Magnum.

The Grizzly

Meanwhile, the .45 Winchester Magnum round has been perfectly matched to a pistol called the L. A. R. Grizzly Win Mag. It has the look of a slightly larger version of the classic old government Model, but it has an ambidextrous safety system, a set of superb Millett sights, and a Pachmayr rubber grip as standard equipment. I have put more than three hundred rounds through mine, and it is the most accurate .45 caliber pistol I have ever fired. Without changing the slide, the Grizzly is convertible to regular .45 Auto, 9mm Winchester Magnum, and .357 Magnum.

The Trifire

Arminex, Ltd., of Scottsdale, Arizona, took the classic cosmetic configuration of the old Government Model, and made a few important changes to produce the Trifire, in .45 Auto, .38 Super, and 9mm Parabellum. Trifire has a slide-mounted firing-pin-block safety, a wide trigger, a solid backstrap, and fully adjustable sights. It also has a beau-



S&W 686, .357 Magnum

...AND THEN THERE ARE REVOLVERS

As regular readers will know, and the accompanying article will make obvious, I am not a revolver person. However, it would be unfair to ignore that in the years since the *American Handgunner* began, there have also been several milestones in revolver design.

Charter Arms added .357 Magnum chambering to their Bulldog versions early in this era, and more recently introduced their Bulldog Pug, along with several models in stainless steel.

Colt offered the Python in stainless, and re-designed the durable Trooper to create the Mark V. Just last year, the Mark V appeared in a new version, the Peacekeeper.

The Smith & Wesson Model 586 Distinguished Combat Magnum was introduced in this period, and was soon followed by a stainless version, the Model 686. Based on the new medium-sized L-frame, it has a full-length ejector rod shroud, a smooth target trigger, and other fine features. In this time, several of the more popular S & W models were offered in stainless steel versions.

At Sturm, Ruger & Company, the most notable additions were the Redhawk and the recently-introduced Model GP-100, which will likely replace the Security Six in the Ruger Line.

At home and abroad, other makers were also active. Dan Wesson produced new models in .44 Magnum, .41 Magnum, and .357 Maximum chamberings.

Harrington & Richardson bestowed a parting gift in the new .32 H & R Magnum round, and Charter and Ruger still make revolvers for it.

Imported by Stoeger, the Llama Super Comanche is one of the finest .44 Magnum revolvers.

From Brazil, the Rossi and Taurus guns show outstanding quality.

Allen Firearms imports the excellent Inspector, made in Italy by Aldo Uberti.

FN in Belgium has a new .357 Magnum revolver, the Barracuda.

And, in the semi-custom department, there is the Rolls-Royce of revolvers, the Korth from West Germany. Basic revolver design may be old, but there are still plenty of innovations.



tifully-engineered recoil spring unit, and the materials and workmanship are top quality.

Other Notable Designs

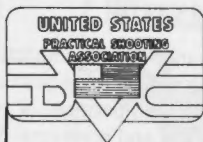
There have been other pistols in this era that had notable features: Gary Wilhelm's design that became the Llama Omni used ball bearings to smooth the hammer system and give a soft DA trigger pull. Walther developed the P5, the ultimate refinement of the old P-38 design. Browning turned out a double action version of the famed Hi-Power. Charter Arms began importing their stainless steel version of the Erma .380 DA from West Germany, and Dornaus & Dixon

designed the Bren Ten, chambered for a new 10mm cartridge.

The Big Three

The "Big Three" have not been idle during the last ten years. Colt has consistently improved on their basic GM design, adding a collet-type bushing in the Series 70, and an automatic firing-pin-block safety in the Series 80. Also offered were the reduced-size version of the big gun, the Officer's ACP, and both guns in stainless steel. The .380 GM and its little brother, the Mustang, were also added to the line. Smith & Wesson now

Continued on page 96



*The United States
Practical Shooting Association/IPSC
NROI*



Dear Handgunner,

I was pleased when I learned that 1986 was the 10th anniversary of your publication. You see 1986 is also the 10th anniversary of the International Practical Shooting Confederation, IPSC for short.

While researching our Sport I found that American Handgunner has covered every IPSC Nationals and World Match. In your second issue you featured a Personal Profile on Ray Chapman, one of our founders. He was the 1975 World Champion of Practical Shooting.

Many of the people that have made names for themselves in our sport, have also graced the pages of The American Handgunner. These include such people as Jeff Cooper, Ken Hackathorn, Mike Dalton, Mickey Fowler, and two National Champions of IPSC, John Shaw and Ross Seyfried. Ross also went on to win the World Champion title.

Practical shooting as practiced by our USPSA/IPSC members has produced the greatest handgun shooters in the World. Our shooters have won every Bianchi cup, and every World Speed Shooting Championship. The diversity and blend of speed and accuracy in our courses produce an athlete whose mental and physical abilities are second to none.

There are even several mini industries built up around our sport. Custom pistolsmiths, electronic timing companies, and several holster manufacturers make a living by catering to our shooters. Yes even Colt and S & W have developed or modified firearms to attract our members.

I find it impressive and fitting that we have grown from a few clubs in the United States, to a truly International Organization. Twenty Six countries are now in our Confederation. During the same period American Handgunner has also grown, from a new publication to over a Quarter of a Million subscribers. An Impressive achievement in itself. I can only come to one conclusion, we are good for each other, and truly exist in a symbiotic relationship.

I want to thank you for all the support that you have given The United States Practical Shooting Confederation, IPSC in the past and hope that we can continue to grow and work together for the next 10 years and more.

Sincerely yours,

David J. Stanford
David J. Stanford, U.S. RD. IPSC
President, USPSA/IPSC Inc.

Office of the President/RD • P.O. Box 811 • Sedro Woolley, WA 98284 • (206) 856-2061



Happy Birthday IHMSA!

Ten years ago Elgin Gates put the wheels in motion for the sport of silhouette shooting. Today silhouette is still rolling on!

By Elgin Gates

This year, 1986, is the 10th Anniversary year of the International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association. In ten years the sport of handgun metallic silhouette shooting has become the most participated in handgun game ever created.

Indeed, with over 38,000 members and nearly 4,000 sanctioned matches in 1985 alone, IHMSA has become the largest and most active handgun shooting sport of all time.

As part of an overall plan to establish two permanent ranges, one in the West and one in the East, the Western range in Idaho Falls, Idaho, was built in 1984 with the International Championships being held there in 1984 and 1985, and are scheduled for August 4-9, 1986.

For the past five years, entries in the IHMSA Internationals have averaged over 1,400 with the record of 1,608 being established in 1984 with the opening of the Western Permanent Range.

Membership in the ranks of IHMSA includes the entire spectrum of the American public. There are doctors, lawyers, business tycoons, celebrities as well as a vast array of blue collar and white collar workers participating in the sport. There are IHMSA members from every walk of life enjoying the game, even including members of the diplomatic corps.

There are, in fact, IHMSA members in virtually every country in the world. Within the past two years, Australia, France, Norway, Finland, West Germany and others have formally become full partners with IHMSA in this exciting handgun sport. Several teams

of overseas shooters will be in attendance at the 1986 Internationals.

The on-going appeal of the game is its simplicity. Anyone can compete in what is described as a family oriented sport. Some of the top shooters are women, and juniors starting as young as nine have become outstanding competitors.

Four basic categories of competition are involved. The backbone of the sport is the production category open to stock handguns as they come over the counter and out-of-the-box. No modifications are allowed other than a trigger smoothing job and replacement of the grips with standard catalog grips available to the public.

This means that all shooters are equal as regards equipment. Shooting skill is the determining criterion, not an equipment race where the guy with a bankroll can buy a mechanical edge over his fellow shooters.

And therein lies the outstanding success of the IHMSA handgun metallic silhouette game. It is a shooting sport for Mr. Average Man competing in his own class with other shooters of equal ability and equipment.

The Production Category encompasses mostly single-shot pistols such as the Thompson/Center Contender, the Merrill and others in calibers ranging from .25 to .44 Magnum. Freestyle shooting positions are allowed, usually a variety of reclining styles.

The second category of competition is with revolvers, also limited to production guns as they come from the factory. Among the brands represented are Dan Wesson, Ruger, Colt, United Sporting Arms, Interarms and others. Freestyle positions are allowed which usually are reclining. One of the favorites is the old Creedmoor style, used

long ago in International rifle competitions.

Third category is the standing position for production pistols. Competition is with a variety of single-shots and revolvers. Shooters must compete with both arms extended from the shoulder with the arms not touching each other above the wrist.

The fourth category is for Unlimited pistols. Yes, this category is for the tinkers who want to improve the factory product or build their own. Rules are simple, allowing barrels up to 15-inches in length with a maximum weight allowance of 4½ pounds. Some real precision, long-range pistols have been developed that are super accurate at 200 meters and beyond.

There is something about the game that appeals to whatever latent instinct there is inside a man who wants action whenever he pulls the trigger.

Action is the name of metallic silhouette shooting. As a spectator sport it has no equal in the shooting world. Punching holes in paper targets at short distances has heretofore been the accepted technique of handgun competition. Silhouette shooting has added a new dimension.

As practice for actual hunting in the field, it is a country mile ahead of anything else on the horizon. For the man who doesn't hunt, for whatever the reason, but likes the machismo of shooting big bore handguns, it is the perfect game.

In addition to the big bore calibers, IHMSA sponsors and sanctions a .22 caliber

Continued on page 83



Twenty banks of rams stretch into the distance. That's a lot of iron.



IHMSA, Incorporated

BOX 1609
IDAHO FALLS, IDAHO 83401



ELGIN T. GATES, President

American Handgunner
591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200
San Diego, CA 92108

Dear Jerry:

Let me express my sincere appreciation on behalf of IHMSA and its 38,000 silhouette shooting members.

The AMERICAN HANDGUNNER has had a profound effect on the success of the handgun metallic silhouette sport through your ongoing support of the association, and by reporting our major events.

Indeed, the entire handgun industry and all the handgun shooting sports are deeply in your debt for the outstanding editorial content to be found in the pages of AMERICAN HANDGUNNER.

Sincerely yours,

Elgin T. Gates
President, IHMSA, Inc.

ETG-cl

AMERICAN

HANDGUNNER

591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200
San Diego, California 92108



Adv. (619) 297-8520

Edit. (619) 297-5352

Telex 695-478

This is the third letter I have written to readers of the American Handgunner. The first was in our very first issue, September/October, 1976; sort of introducing myself and the magazine. The second letter was published in the November/December, 1977 issue, when the magazine was just a year old.

Now that we have reached our 10th Anniversary, about all I can say is a giant "Thank You" to all who had a part in the magazine's success. To the readers for their support and input; to the advertisers for their confidence in the format and concept; and to all the suppliers, editors, artists, writers and photographers whose dedication and professionalism made my job so much easier.

Now, I would like to make a prediction. Ten years from now, there will still be an American Handgunner magazine, and it will be better than it is today. I say that not because of any great and wonderful things we at the magazine will do, but because the handgun shooting sports, I predict, will grow and prosper and, if we at the magazine play our cards right, we will grow and prosper along with the sports.

As in the past 10 years, playing our cards right will include our continued support of all of the handgun shooting sports, integrity of purpose and the staunch defense of our right to own, keep and use handguns in the pursuit of sport and self-defense.

J. Rakusan
Editorial Director

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Ruger GP-100

Borrowing a bit from both the Redhawk and the Security Six, Ruger modified the best features into a new design, the .357 Magnum GP-100.

By Stanley W. Trzoniec

Bill Ruger and his design team down in Southport have really been pouring on the midnight oil lately. With rumors flying that Ruger is moving steadily closer to a 9mm semi-automatic pistol and the present reality of two improved double-action revolvers, it starts to get pretty obvious that Ruger is hot on the heels of a larger percentage of the sportsmen's market and perhaps law enforcement's share as well.

The two new revolvers are the Super Redhawk, a beefed up version of the Redhawk, and the GP-100, the subject of this report.

General impressions of the new GP-100 are extremely favorable. Fitted with a new barrel design, new grips and a slightly larger frame, it does draw immediate attention. My early numbered sample (170-004XX) is the four-inch version, but a six-inch model is in the planning—if not already in the production stage. Outside appearance shows detailed workmanship to both polishing and bluing as well as the final fitting. Priced at \$340, this Ruger does indeed show good value.

While the two major sub-assemblies (frame and barrel) may look somewhat similar to past Security-Six models, there are significant changes worth noting. The frame itself has gone through a few new and innovative design changes. This now makes it the third change (by my count) since the Security Six's inception with (1) the initial prototype and production run, (2) a redesign of the grip section to allow a better recoil distribution by raising the backstrap shoulder somewhat during the

'70s, and (3) the recent GP-100.

Frame width has been increased in the area that surrounds the barrel threads with the threads themselves brought up to a hefty $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch to allow for a heavier barrel. For additional rigidity and support to the whole assembly, the top strap is thicker from 0.225 inches to 0.255 inches. The inside frame aperture opens up some .025 allowing for a larger cylinder (now 1.550 versus the older 1.500). Overall frame design retains the famous Ruger "solid frame" configuration without the need for sideplates. All lockwork, as before, fits in the trigger group for easy access, removal and cleaning. This frame is made from heat



GP-100 frame (right) shows new grip profile design.

treated A.I.S.I. 4130 chrome-molybdenum alloy steel.

The rounded out recoil shield directly behind the cylinder is cast in a concave rather than a convex shape as previously made. This, I am sure, was



Photo by Stanley W. T.

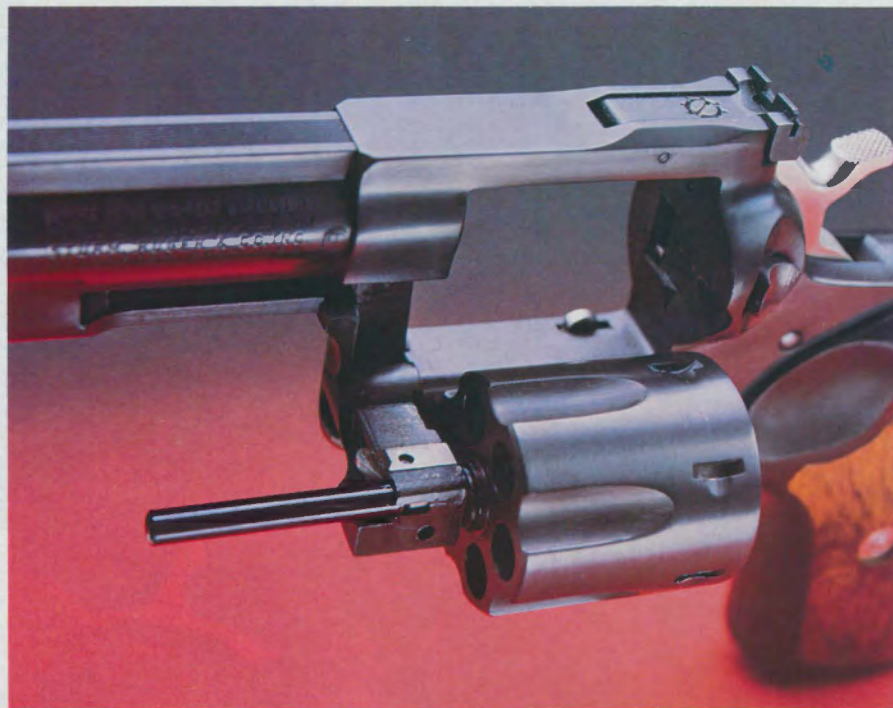
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1986

changed with looks in mind, but also for the balance of the piece. A throw back from single-action days, I have always felt this particular area is critical to the balance of a gun because it sits just forward of your hand thereby contributing to the pointability of the weapon.

The cylinder is a trifle larger in diameter, but not in length. While the outside wall thickness remains the same, the inside distance between charge holes is greater. The cylinder latch is off-center on the frame base, a design feature which allows it to mate with a locking notch in a non-critical area of the cylinder wall. Timing of the cylinder latch was off a bit, and by this I mean it came to bear against the cylinder before it reached the next locking notch. No serious consequence, only that it leaves a ring around the cylinder.

Inside surfaces of the chambers receive more work than I've seen on previous Security-Sixes. This can mean only one thing: a smoother extraction with heavier loads. Extractor "throw" is about $\frac{7}{16}$ of an inch. Not quite enough to clear a .357 case completely, but sufficient to clear six cases in a hurry by snapping the rod smartly. Cylinder gap measures .004" and is uniform around the cylinder.

The GP-100 incorporates a cylinder lockup system first seen on the Redhawk. Instead of lockup on the front of the ejector rod and the rear of the cylinder, the GP-100's improved system places a pilot bearing at the rear of the cylinder on the standing breech in concert with an innovative locking bolt at the



GP-cylinder locks up in two places—front of crane to frame, and rear of cylinder to recoil shield. This is a strong lock up.

front part of the crane. Since the twin lockups are closer together, the net result is a more secure, stable and stronger assembly.

The cylinder release is still on the left side: pushing it inward releases the cylinder to swing out to the left for loading or unloading. With this system, the ejector rod does not

turn, but merely does its intended job to shuck out spent cases.

Trigger pull registers 4.5 pounds single-action; 12 pounds double. On the former there is no creep before sear engagement, on the latter the usual stacking is in evidence just before hammer fall. The trigger itself is smooth to allow the finger to roll with the backward motion. The hammer is serrated, measures about $\frac{5}{16}$ th of an inch in width and, like the trigger and some internal parts, is made from stainless steel. As we've come to expect, Ruger's transfer bar safety system is part of the action.

Sights are fully adjustable. The rear leaf contains a white outline around its square notch. Click values are quoted by Ruger as one click equals about .56 mils which comes out to roughly one inch of movement at 50 yards. Since I can't hold that close at 50 yards, I'll have to take Ruger's word for it on this one. The only part of the sights I didn't like is that you need a very small (almost tiny) screwdriver to move the windage adjustment.

Another major improvement in the GP-100 is the grip area rearward of the frame proper. Like a few other makers, Ruger has gone the route of a more open-frame-grip idea which allows for a wider choice of after-market grips. Instead of the traditional skeletonized grip area which is either called a square or round butt depending upon the model, the GP-100 has more of an extension that measures out to about $1 \times \frac{3}{8} \times 3\frac{1}{4}$ inches that houses the mainspring and related parts including a bottom grip support.

The GP-100 comes with some really good looking and extremely functional rubber/wood grips. Falling into the "why didn't I think of that" category, they give a non-slip hold combined with the beauty of fine wood.

Continued on page 80



Full length barrel underlug lends muzzle heavy feel to GP-100.

BENEFIT AUCTION FOR HANDGUN HUNTERS' MUSEUM AND HALL OF FAME

The most prestigious set of handguns and accessories shown here will be auctioned to raise funds for the continuing work of the Handgun Hunters' Hall of Fame.

The gun set was put together with the cooperation of industry people. Sturm, Ruger donated a pair of stainless steel Super Blackhawk .44 Magnum revolvers; a 2X Silver scope was donated by Leupold & Stevens, Inc.; the presentation case and grip panels were donated by Ron Ptashkin of Freedom Arms Custom Shop.

While the cased gun set presents a vivid picture of artistry in gun and cabinet making, a description of each of the elements will enhance appreciation of the work involved in bringing all of the talents together.

The Guns

The two guns represent the state of the art in

hunting revolvers coming out of the shop of Mag-Na-Port International. The "Stalker," with 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch barrel, has a 2X Leupold Silver scope mounted on an SSK full-length rib. Included is a nylon web sling and stainless studs donated by Michaels of Oregon. The "Predator" sports a 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ -inch barrel and Omega sights. Both guns display the custom touches offered by Mag-Na-Port such as the inverted muzzle crown, tuned action and Mag-Na-Port venting system.

Case & Accessories

The presentation case is a thing of beauty. Made of solid gonzalo alves, it is of traditional style, with dustboard, locking hasps and a hand-rubbed finish. The guns and accessories are French fitted in genuine suede leather.

Included with the English-style accessories is a knife by D'Holder; the grip panels are, like the stocks of both guns, made of genuine black buffalo horn, and the blade is of forged-to-shape Damascus steel.

The two guns are engraved by Eric Gold of Flagstaff, Arizona. He selected English-style scroll engraving of the type usually found on high-quality double rifles and shotguns. Both the style and the quality of the engraving make this a truly one-of-a-kind set of guns.

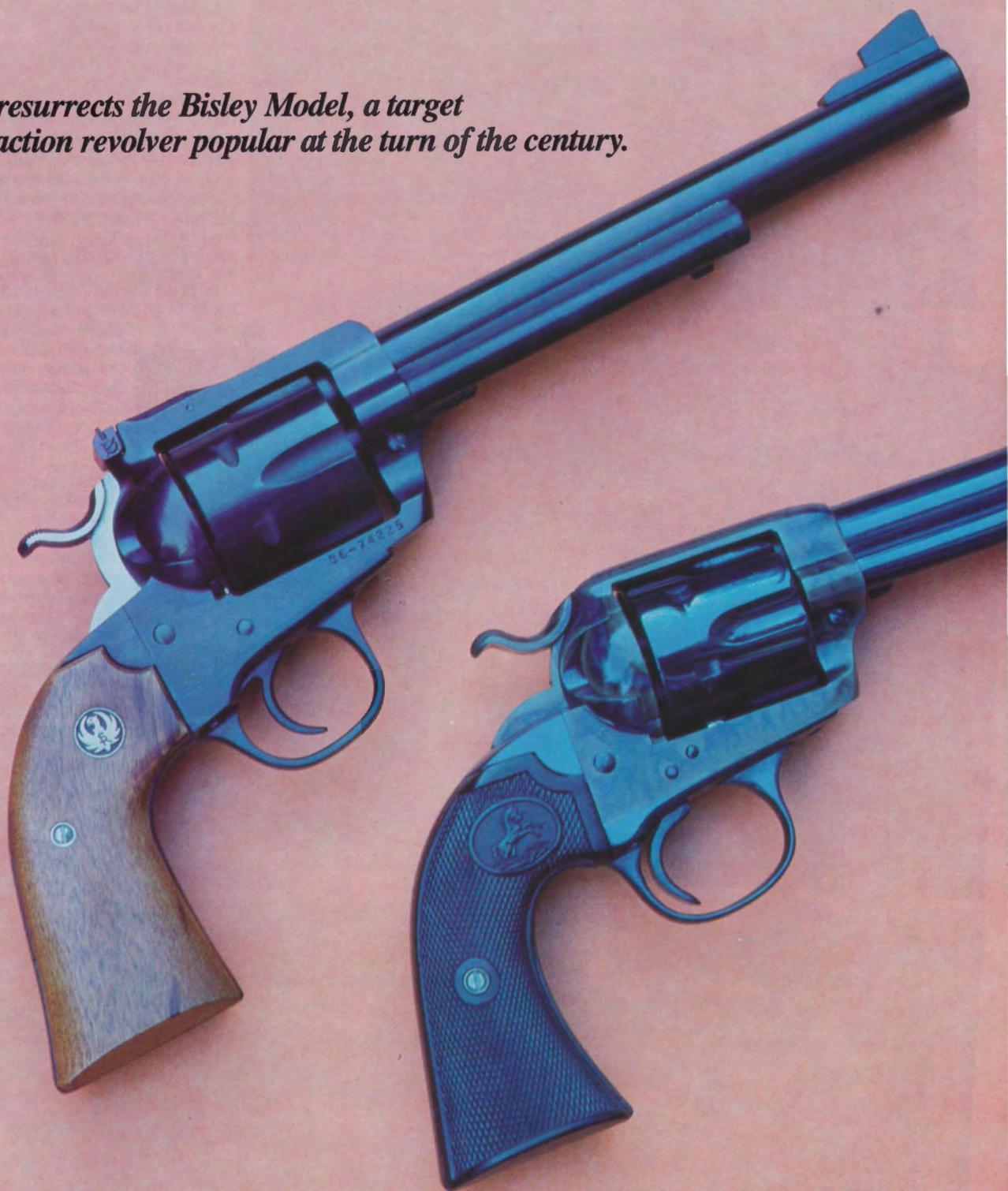
The Handgun Hunters' Hall of Fame is a non-profit organization, affiliated with Safari Club International, dedicated to promoting the sport of handgun hunting. Through its museum, it offers an opportunity to educate visitors on the sport and on the conservation of wildlife.

This magnificent two-gun set will be auctioned to benefit the programs of the Hall of Fame. Bids will be accepted until March 1, 1987, and the winning bid will be announced at the Outstanding American Handgunner Awards Dinner.

All bids should be sent to the Handgun Hunters' Museum and Hall of Fame, 41302 Executive Drive, Mt. Clemens, MI 48045. Only signed bids in excess of \$10,000 will be accepted.



Ruger resurrects the Bisley Model, a target single-action revolver popular at the turn of the century.



Ruger's BISLEY

By Dave Arnold

When it comes to single action revolvers, most handgunners immediately think of Colt and Ruger. Colt, because they started it all with their various percussion and cartridge models; and Ruger, because they refined and modernized the breed. In fact, it was these modernized single actions that established Ruger as a serious contender in the firearms business. Although the company now also makes double-action revolvers, shotguns and rifles, it has continued to expand its line of single-actions and has recently introduced a brand new Bisley version.

As most handgunners know, the original Bisleys were a target adaptation of Colt's Single Action Army revolver that were manufactured by that company from 1894 until 1912. At that time, the growing popularity of target pistol shooting motivated Colt and other firearms companies to offer target handguns for this new sport. Some of the premier matches of the day were held in the small English town of Bisley and it was from there that the Colt revolver took its name.

The Bisley differed from the standard Single Action Army in a number of respects. The most noticeable change was in the grip, which was longer and had a more pronounced curve to the backstrap. The hammer, too, was different, having a lower and wider spur. Finally, the trigger was wider and more curved.

The Ruger Bisleys are presently chambered in the popular calibers of .44, .41, .357, .32 Magnum and .22 Long Rifle. The first three are built around the large Blackhawk frame while the two smaller calibers are based on the smaller Single Six model. The large frame Bisleys have the usual fully adjustable rear sights and come with a 7½ inch barrel. The smaller frame models have a 6½ inch barrel and fixed sights although the rear blade is set in a dovetail that can be adjusted for windage.

Externally, these Rugers have a marked similarity to the original Bisleys. Their grips are similar and their hammers have the same wide, low set spur while their triggers are wide and curved. In most other respects, they conform to the basic designs of the standard Rugers. The internal lockwork is identical, employing the new transfer bar system that only permits firing when the trigger is pulled

fully to the rear. This allows the guns to be safely carried with all chambers loaded.

With its flat top, the large frame Magnums have a marked resemblance to the Target Bisley originals. The smaller frame models have round topped frames. However, in both cases, the frames differ from those of the



Note different sights, top straps on two Ruger Bisley Models.

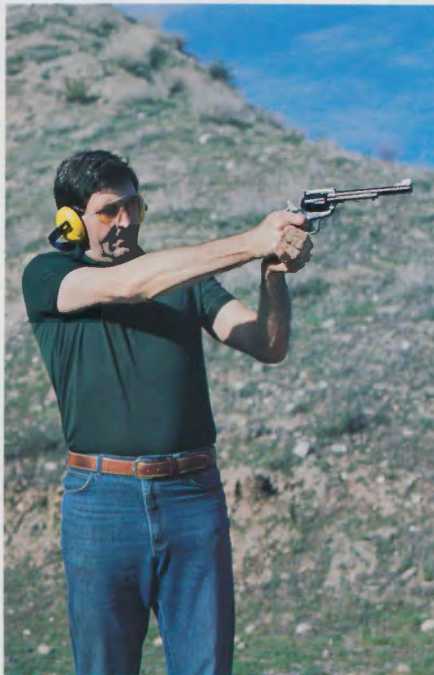
standard models at the rear where they mate with the trigger guard/back strap assembly.

Generally speaking, the fit and finish of the Ruger Bisleys that have recently passed through my hands have been good. The grips themselves are of hand rubbed, oil finished wood with nice markings. However, there were some minor blemishes, like evidence of mold marks from casting on the back of the hammers. All guns have reasonable trigger actions—not too heavy, although there was some evidence of creep.

Frankly, I was surprised when I heard that Ruger introduced a Bisley model of their own. I have an original Colt Bisley in my collection and I find the grips leave quite a bit to be desired. While they were intended to provide a better hold, their shape is such that my grip changes every time the hammer is cocked. Obviously, for slow fire this is not critical, but it does make fast single handed cocking difficult.

However, when I got to shoot Ruger's Bisleys, I was pleasantly surprised to find

Continued on page 81



Ruger Bisley Model (top) is based on Colt Bisley. Author (above) got good groups with Ruger Bisley.



You can win this

SOKOLOVSKY

The



Y .45 AUTO

Rolls Royce of Auto Pistols



When we were planning this 10th Anniversary issue, we wanted the *Custom Gun Giveaway* to be something special, and when Paul Sokolovsky offered to build one of his .45 Automaster guns for us, we knew we could do no better.

When Paul went into the design of a .45 auto pistol, he had several objectives. The first was to develop a pistol with no protruding devices. You'll note that the Automaster has no external levers, slide stops, pins or screws.

He also wanted a more accurate and dependable system for holding barrel and slide in battery during firing. The inherent accuracy of the Automaster proves his design.

Most unique is the trigger arrangement. The main trigger is flanked by a safety on the right and a magazine release on the left. Add to this the delayed blow-back action, and a pneumatic slide decelerator, and you have a .45 design on the leading edge of today's technology.

The Automaster is designed as an ultra-accurate target pistol. And it is, for all intents and purposes, a hand-made firearm. Sokolovsky is fast approaching the halfway mark in his limit of only 50 guns to be made in this series, and we are privileged to have one to offer to one of our lucky readers. Retail price is \$3,000—plus.

If you are interested in the ultimate .45, write to Sokolovsky Corp., Dept. AH, P.O. Box 70113, Sunnyvale, CA 94086.

TO ENTER CONTEST: Use a postcard (no envelopes), follow sample; include your name and address; your answers; dealer name, address and phone number. Mail before October 1, 1986. Send to: AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Dept. H9, POB 16025, San Diego, CA 92116. **Limit 1 entry per household.**

QUESTIONS OF THE MONTH:

1. What is your gender?
A. Male, B. Female.
2. What is your present age?
A. under 20, B. 20-24, C. 25-34,
D. 35-44, E. 45-54, F. over 54.
3. What is your marital status?
A. Single, B. Married, C. Divorced/
Separated/Widowed
4. How many people are in your household, including yourself?
A. One, B. Two, C. Three, D. Four,
E. Five, F. Over 5
5. What is your approximate household income?
A. Under 10,000, B. 10,000-19,999,
C. 20,000-29,999, D. 30,000-39,999,
E. 40,000-49,999, F. over 50,000
6. What type of guns do you own?
A. Target/Competition Pistols,
B. Self-defense Handguns,
C. Hunting Handguns, D. RF Rifles,
E. CF Rifles, F. Shotguns

CIRCLE ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS:
(TO PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY DO NOT
COPY QUESTIONS ONTO POSTCARD.
JUST INDICATE YOUR ANSWERS.)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS OF MONTH: (Appropriate answers are circled.)

- | | |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1. A B | 4. A B C D E F |
| 2. A B C D E F | 5. A B C D E F |
| 3. A B C | 6. A B C D E F |

If I win, please ship my gun through the following local gun dealer: (Local dealer must be a retail gun shop with day-time store hours.)

Dealer _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone # () _____ Store Hours _____ am- _____ pm

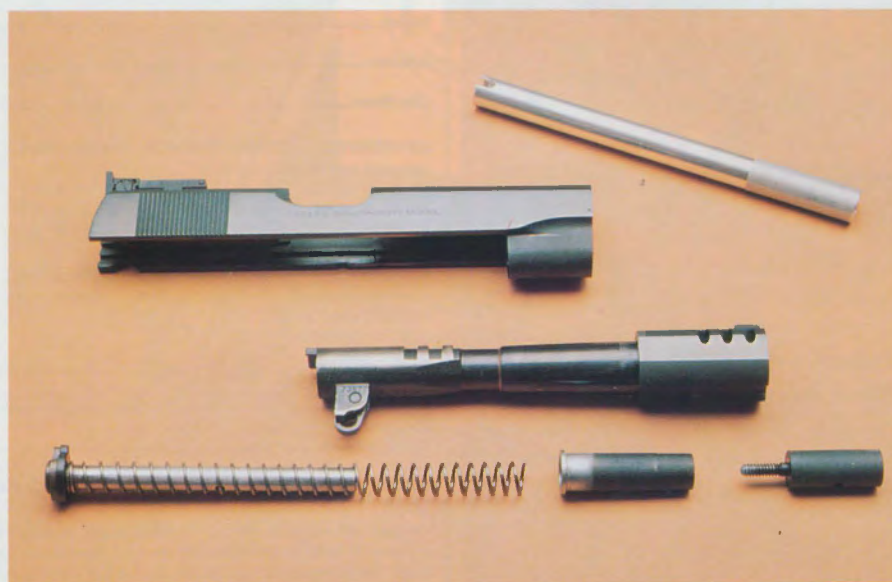
Contest void where taxed or prohibited by law. No purchase necessary. Winner must comply with all federal and local laws. Employees and agents of Publisher's Development Corp. not eligible.



LES BAER'S .45

By Stanley W. Trzoniec

Photo by Stanley W. Trzoniec



Special take-down tool (top right) is necessary to strip Comp II. Recoil spring guide rod (bottom) includes screw-in weight.

Colt's .45 leads a charmed life. From its acceptance as a military arm to its dominant position in competitive circles, this big autopistol lives on. Whereas the military version saw mass production of millions, the competition .45 sees a custom gun built on an individual basis.

For there is no other way. Guns differ in not only outside configurations but also in accessories, options and add-on's as well. Rounded or sunken rear sights, beveled or flared magazine wells, flat or arched main-spring housings are some of the choices in a combat gun and because of these specialized areas we have seen the growth of still yet another facet—the custom pistolsmith.

Les Baer (1725 Minesite Road, Dept. AH, Allentown, PA, 18103) is one of the new breed of men proud of the fact they build guns with extremely close tolerances that function perfectly. They have to. I've been in matches that were won or lost by one point! And while many have the misconception it's only the shooter who takes home the gold,

that prize .45 had better work, and work properly, or he goes home with nothing more than an empty pocket for his troubles.

The sample I recently received from Les is what he calls IPSC Combat Package #4. This package includes many items necessary to turn an ordinary Colt .45 into the ultimate combat instrument. But before we get into the specifics of this big ticket item, I think it's only fair to regress a bit and go into packages #1, #2 and #3 made up for the shooter on a budget, beginners and law enforcement personnel.

First on the list is your "Basic Street" offering. For a touch over \$200 Les will take your gun and polish the barrel throat and feed ramp, install high visibility fixed sights, tune the trigger to four pounds, add an extended combat safety, lower the ejection port, install a full length recoil guide system and even reblue the slide.

Basic #2 is all of the above with an ambidextrous safety, funneled magazine well complete with Pachmayr grips and mainspring housing, plus the rebluing of the entire weapon.

Package #3 is all of the above plus a host of goodies that include a Kart Match Grade Barrel, BoMar sights, special trigger, hammer, slide release and bluing of the slide contrasted against a brushed nickel frame. Workmanship and parts on your gun is now in the \$825 range.

Offering #4 is what I have in my hands now and relates to what Les Baer calls his "Ultimate Combat Package." Allow me to run it past you in detail.

For openers, as in package #3, Les starts by building your gun from the ground up. This includes tightening the frame and slide so groups can be counted on to be within 2½ inches or better at 50 yards. And, according to Les, no gun leaves the shop until it does just that. You have his word on that.

This particular model comes with a Baer Compensator II System. Because the Compensator is so unique, read how he installs it in his own words. From his brochures and

conversations on the phone, Les informs me that "his particular compensator starts out with a Kart 5-inch match barrel. The compensator and tapered cone are then machined out of 4140 bar stock as one piece which is then attached to the barrel by silver brazing. After this, port holes are milled into the comp (3 on each side) 30 degrees off-center. The sights go on next with the customer's choice of either having them mounted on the comp itself or on the slide.



Note large mag release button, ambi safety and beavertail.

Since this particular unit's installation is a critical factor in which accuracy is involved, it uses a full length spring guide with a weight that acts as a guide for the compensator. The guide not only supports the comp during cycling of the weapon, but it also keeps the comp centered to allow a non-binding operation of the two.

By the way, this Compensator II is not a drop-in or off-the-shelf unit. Each one is spe-

cifically made and installed. To aid in disassembly, the gun is returned to you with a special tool for easy stripdown as a unit only because the comp and guide stay in the slide when the slide is removed from the frame.

Close inspection on my sample showed attention to detail in overall workmanship and final finish. With the slide drawn back, there was play in both units but no more than usually associated in autopistols. With the slide released slowly, the slide came in square contact with the comp initially, followed by secondary contact with the recoil spring guide and weight thus assuring a complete and full lockup between all points. While the unit looked good, range testing would of course substantiate all this later.

The front sight, as mentioned, can be mounted on either the compensator or slide at the owner's request and is undercut for a good sight picture. Rear sight is the excellent BoMar adjustable for both windage and elevation.

To help 100% reliability, the ejection port is lowered and flared, the extractor is recut and set at the proper tension with a Commander style ejector installed. Other little goodies include a wide grip safety, a Videki match trigger installed, complete with an overtravel stop, to release at 3½ pounds.

Next, Les equips this gun with a Commander style hammer and your choice of a M/S, Swenson or Colt ambidextrous safety. Last, he bevels the magazine well, adds an extended magazine release, Pachmayr grips and mainspring housing. To complete the picture, final finish can be bright or bead blasted chrome or blue, nickel if desired with your choice on slide and frame two toned combinations. At this writing, all of this work ranges in the area of a thousand dollar bill.

Additional options are available and Les sent a gun with a few of these added features. One of these was a no-charge option listed as an interchangeable front sight that really fooled me because I couldn't get it off! Apparently it was torqued down at the shop not to fly off during testing, so fool with it I did not.

Other practical or additional options included a checkered trigger guard (\$35), checkered front strap (\$115), and a checkered flat mainspring housing (\$35). There were no runovers, diamonds were pointed sharply.

Other metal work included the serrating of both the top of the slide lengthwise (\$75) and rear of the slide (\$35). Finally, a Shaw mag well was installed (\$47) as was a flat main spring housing (\$26). Grand total here, on your gun, is \$1353 for a gun made your way.

The gun is decidedly muzzle heavy, because of the Comp II, which should equate to a lighter recoil sensation and the ability to keep the gun on target throughout rigorous sustained firing sequences. This sample checked in at 43 ounces empty.

Les also sent instructions with the gun stating it was set up for full-house combat loads. With this in mind, I set up my RCBS 4X4 progressive press to deliver 5.7 grains of Olin's #231 powder under both the Sierra and Hornady 200 grain jacketed bullets taper



Compensator II System attaches with barrel sleeve and features six ports. Weight at end of guide rod helps support barrel, comp.

BEEAMAN P-1

WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL AIR PISTOL

The P-1 pellet pistol gives you the feel of a Colt .45 with the accuracy you'd expect only in a custom target pistol.

By Fred Romero III

Most of us who enjoy the lure of firearms can remember back to a time when owning an airgun meant wandering around in an open field "hunting" for game, or knocking over tin cans in the backyard. The most sought after hardware then was either the ubiquitous Daisy Red Ryder lever-action BB rifle or the hard-hitting Benjamin pump pellet gun. Both were fine for their intended use, and although they were far from being match-grade weapons, they were still adequate enough to reinforce the basics of sight alignment and trigger control—sometimes—as is evidenced by the painful memory of a few broken windows. Ahh, those were the days!

But change is a fact of life, and while you were out learning to shoot the "real thing," the airgun industry was busy making a few improvements of its own. In place of your trusty backyard plinker came a new crop of

sophisticated airguns, the likes of which are simply amazing.

Compared to the toys of yesterday, today's airguns are precision shooting machines capable of unbelievable accuracy. In fact, some experts think they are the *most accurate* firearms in the world. They are also a whole lot more expensive than your old Red Ryder, but the trade-off is this: After the initial investment of a quality airgun, you can set up a range inside your house or garage and literally shoot all day for the price of a tin of pellets—usually about \$5-\$7 for 500 shots!

Now that we have your attention, let's clear up a few questions and common misconceptions about airguns:

Operation: Airguns operate on the principle that compressed gas (air) can generate enough energy (force) to send a projectile down range with sufficient velocity to be

Continued on page 87



Top of "slide" acts as charging lever to power pistol with air.





The GOOD OLD DAYS

Thirty-odd years ago a band of men competed in Leatherslap matches. These pioneers of handgunning gave us such radical notions as shooting a pistol with two hands. From this genesis of practical shooting came IPSC.

By Jon Winokur

In the beginning, Jeff Cooper created combat shooting. Jeff Cooper, in case you've just returned from interstellar travel, is a former Marine officer who gathered a group of talented handgunners around him in the mid-1950s and created a new form of pistol competition that's become the fastest-growing handgun sport in the world.

Although he's quick to acknowledge the contributions of others, Cooper conceived, developed and popularized the modern approach to the defensive use of the pistol. His pioneering work has influenced competitors, law enforcement agencies and military organizations worldwide.

Cooper remembers the genesis of the new discipline: "The doctrine began in 1956 at Big Bear (California) when I set up the first Leatherslap. As far as I know, it was the first match of its kind held anywhere in the world.

"It was unrestricted as to technique, as to weapon, as to caliber, as to holster, as to profession. It was a straight quick-draw match—just draw and hit a King Kong target at seven yards. It was all pretty primitive, but it was the beginning. We had so much fun, we didn't want to wait until next year to do it again, so we organized the Bear Valley Gunslingers and began to hold matches once a month."

There were really only five competitors in those days—the original Combat Masters: Cooper, Elden Carl, Ray Chapman, Thell Reed, and Jack Weaver. They were fierce competitors and consummate marksmen who pursued excellence for its own sake. They wanted to win for the sheer satisfaction. And they had fun in the process.

The matches were open to anyone, but if all five showed up they'd

The five original Combat Masters in the only known color photo of them together. (L to R) Ray Chapman, Elden Carl, Thell Reed, Jeff Cooper and Jack Weaver.

Photo courtesy of Elden Carl.

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invariably finish first through fifth. In a move he now regrets (but which probably has opened the sport to countless weekend shooters), Cooper established a classification system to encourage less talented competitors.

By 1958, Eisenhower was in the White House, "The Purple People Eater" topped

the Hit Parade, and Jack Weaver had revolutionized the infant discipline by *actually holding the gun with two hands!* Ray Chapman recalls the circumstances: "Everyone shot from the hip or one-handed from the shoulder. In the 1958 Leatherslap, the size of the targets had been reduced considerably

from the previous year, and they started running a qualification course to reduce the field to 16 shooters for a championship round. If you missed just one target in the qualification course, you couldn't recover and still make the top 16. That's when Jack first used his two-hand hold."

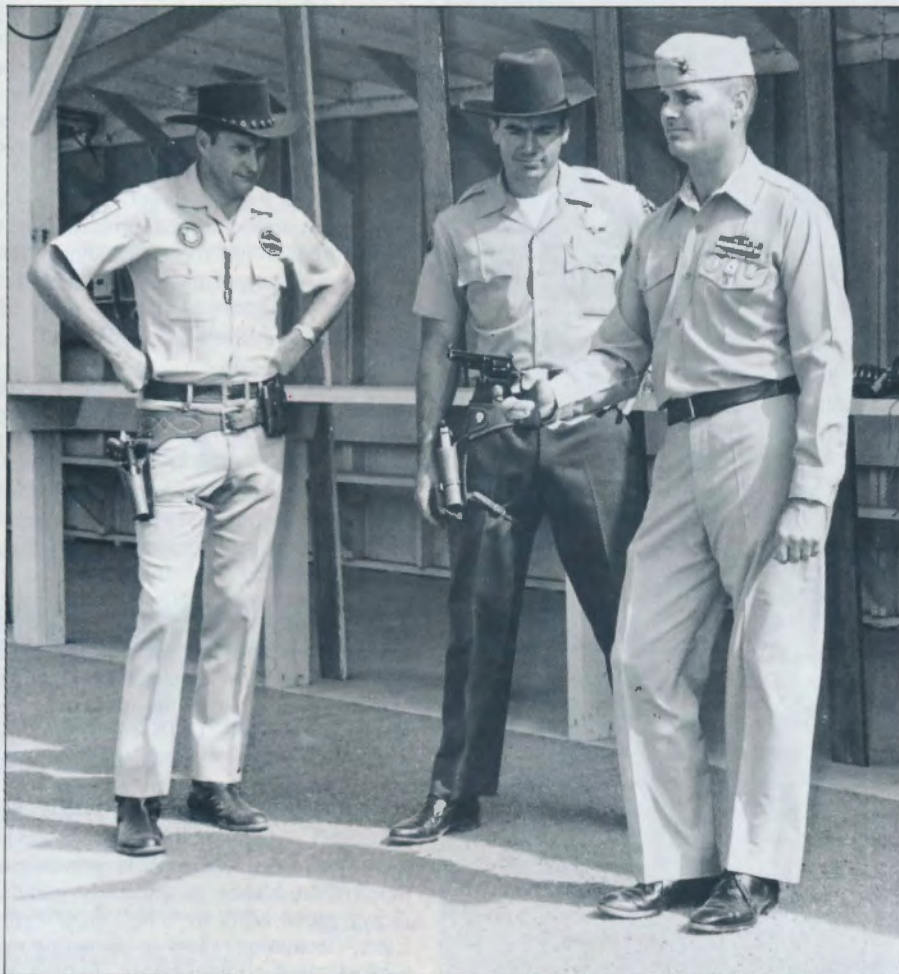
Weaver, now a retired sheriff's deputy living in Carson City, Nevada, describes his breakthrough matter-of-factly: "I figured a pretty quick hit was better than a lightning-fast miss, so I looked for a way to make my technique more consistent."

Cooper reacted with mild amusement: "When I first saw him shooting two-handed, it didn't seem sensible to me. My immediate reaction was, 'Hey, that's no way to shoot!'"

The rules for the early Big Bear matches were few and simple, as this excerpt from a newsletter circa 1960 attests:

All shoots on Saturday, All entries \$3. .38 caliber and up, serviceable leather, all contests from the leather, premature starts disqualified, varied ranges, varied hand clearance, varied targets. Annual points based on placement, number of entries and Hatcher rating (power factor).

Signed,
Jeff Cooper, Secretary,
Bear Valley Gunslingers.



Ray Chapman (left) and Elden Carl (center) look on as Olympic pistol champ Bill McMillan shoots at Lemon Grove Rod and Gun Club.



Look Ma, only one hand! Elden Carl point-shoots in 1966 Leatherslap match. Jack Weaver introduced two-hand shooting.

Most of the others laughed at him, but as Weaver began winning every match in sight, they weren't laughing anymore, they were imitating. And combat shooters, peace officers and Hollywood cops and robbers have been imitating ever since. In hindsight it's obvious. Hold the gun with both hands and you control recoil and muzzle jump and keep the sight picture steadier. Obvious now, after Weaver pioneered it in 1958."

What began at Big Bear continued all over Southern California in clubs with names like "The San Fernando Valley Peacemakers," "The Outlaws," and "The Avengers." They joined in a loose confederation originally called the "Southwest Combat Pistol League."

There was almost a carnival atmosphere at the League matches in those days, a spirit of exploration and discovery. Jim Hoag, one of the nation's most respected custom gunsmiths, was one of the founders of the SWPL and an active competitor in the early '60s: "It was an incredible experience. We wrote the book as we went along, and each time we got together we discovered new things we wanted to do with the guns and the leather. We were doing the basic research and development that everyone takes for granted now."



The early matches were fast-draw events shot from the hip at close ranges with single-action revolvers loaded with wax bullets and light powder charges. Eventually, Cooper mandated full-power ammunition and introduced the .45 semi-automatic. He wanted to test his theory that the large autoloader, with its superior stopping-power and potentially unlimited firepower, could be the ultimate defensive handgun, and the League matches were a perfect test-bed. The coincidence of Cooper's experimentation and Weaver's two-handed stance made the development of modern "practical pistol" doctrine possible.

A second generation of matches was designed to present tactical problems and to stimulate the evolution of new equipment and technique. Many of them became classics, including the Mexican Defense Course, FBI Duel, Cooper Assault, and John Plahn's Flying M.

The prize money was usually minimal, but Elden Carl remembers one exception: "I won \$500 for winning the 1960 Leatherslap. Looking back, I wish I'd kept it because it was in the form of silver dollars. But I bought a reloading machine and a hairpiece instead."

The Southwest Combat Pistol League dropped the "Combat" from its name and flourished through the '60s. By the early '70s clubs had formed all over the United States, Europe, South Africa, and Australia, and IPSC (International Practical Shooting Confederation) was created to administer competition worldwide. USPSA (United States Practical Shooting Association) was formed a decade later to govern the U.S. Region.

Much has changed in the thirty-odd years since Jeff Cooper assembled his little band of merry pistoleros. The modern sport bears as much resemblance to the early game as Heavy Metal bears to "The Purple People Eater." Technology plays an increasing role: sophisticated compensators, hybrid cartridges, specialized leather and programmable electronic timers are *de rigueur* for the modern competitor. Local and regional matches have proliferated and the Bianchi Cup and the Steel Challenge have become internationally acclaimed events with extensive media coverage and hundreds of shooters competing for tens of thousands of dollars.

The carnival atmosphere of the formative years has gone the way of tie-down holsters and carbide lamps. Modern competitors have to put up with a lot more politics and a lot more pressure.

But some things haven't changed. The spirit of innovation and the pursuit of excellence that characterized the early days has survived to produce succeeding generations of great champions like Ross Seyfried, Mickey Fowler and Rob Leatham. And the qualities necessary for success are still the same: a steady hand, a keen eye, and a ferocious will to win.



Elden Carl shoots S&W .357 Combat Magnum, circa 1962. Ray Chapman (left) keeps watch. He's packing twin Colt SAAs in .45 Long Colt.

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER INDEX OF ARTICLES

By AH Staff

Part One: Single Shot Pistols, Automatic Pistols, Cartridges and Reloading, Handgun Hunting, Holsters and Leather and Miscellaneous.

As a service to our readers who have saved their *Handgunners*, we present an index of every article that we've published in our ten year history. Due to the number of articles, we've split the index into two parts, the first presented here. Part Two covering Revolvers, Competition, Pistolsmithing, Optical and Iron Sights and Personality Profiles will appear in the next issue, November/December.

The index covers only feature articles, not our regular columns. Due to the popularity of *Handgunner*, virtually all our print run sells out on the newsstand or to subscribers. However, we have a very limited number of certain back-issues available for purchase. For information on availability, write Tara Hietpas, Handgunner Circulation, 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA, 92108.

Single Shot Pistols

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A stunning Contender customized by SSK brings \$4,400 at auction!	
THE HAR USRA PISTOL, Walter Rickell	Nov/Dec 1984
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.44 SPECIAL DOUBLE DERRINGER, Stephen Crudele	Jan/Feb 1985
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THE .256 SUPER-MAG, Doug Goodman	Jul/Aug 1985
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BUY YOUR KIDDO A CHIPMUNK, Timothy Johnson	Nov/Dec 1985
This could be the perfect first pistol for a youngster.	
HEGE SIBER BLACKPOWDER PISTOL, Mike Nesbitt	Nov/Dec 1985
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PACHMAYR'S DOMINATOR, J.D. Jones	Jul/Aug 1986
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PACHMAYR'S SIGNATURE MODEL .38 SUPER, J.D. Jones	Jan/Feb 1977
In-depth analysis of Pachmayr Signature .38 Super.	
THE THOMAS .45, Walter Rickell	Jan/Feb 1977
Test and evaluation of Thomas .45 auto.	
ORIGINS OF THE HI-POWER, Clair Rees	Mar/Apr 1977
A history, evolution of Browning Hi-Power.	
SHOOTING THE BROWNING HI-POWER, Clair Rees	Mar/Apr 1977
Wide ranging discussion of Hi-Power's handling characteristics.	
BROWNING CHALLENGER II, Herbert Gates	Mar/Apr 1977
Test and evaluation of Browning's Challenger II .22 auto.	
STOGER RIMFIRE LUGERS, George C. Nonte	Mar/Apr 1977
Overview of Steeger's toggle top .22s	
FI'S MODEL D .380, George C. Nonte	Mar/Apr 1977
Test of Firearms International's .380.	
THE LIGHTMAN .45—AN UPDATE, George C. Nonte	May/June 1977
Evaluation of Lightman pocket pistol.	
THE AMT HARBALLER, J.D. Jones	May/June 1977
A test of AMT's Harballer auto.	
THE HK P55 DOUBLE ACTION, George C. Nonte	May/June 1977
Complete rundown on exciting HK P55.	
FOUR GUNS IN ONE—THE HK P4, George C. Nonte	May/June 1977
Test of HK's P4 pocket auto.	
THE LITTLE KNOWN VP-70 PISTOL, George C. Nonte	May/June 1977
A look at HK's lesser known pistol.	
A LOOK AT COLT'S COMMANDER, Massad Ayoob	Sep/Oct 1977
A look at the Government Model's smaller brother.	
THE UBIQUITOUS .45 AUTO, George C. Nonte	Sep/Oct 1977
A roundup of .45 autos.	
COLT'S MARK IV/SERIES 70, James Mason	Sep/Oct 1977
An evaluation of this variation of the Government Model.	
WALTHER'S PPK-S RIMFIRE, Clair Rees	Sep/Oct 1977
Here's the rimfire version of Walther's .380.	
BROWNING BDA DOUBLE ACTION .45, George C. Nonte	Nov/Dec 1977
The SIG P220 is now imported under Browning's banner.	
THE MAUSER MILITARY PISTOL, Donald M. Simmons	Nov/Dec 1977
A short history of the 1896 self-loading Mauser.	
BERETTA'S NEW D.A. PISTOLS, J.B. Wood	Mar/Apr 1978
A test of the M-92 and M-84 models from Beretta.	
STERLING'S .45 D.A. AUTO, Terry Hudson	Mar/Apr 1978
This little pistol packs .45 caliber punch.	
SCHWARZLOSE MILITARY PISTOL, Gordon Bruce	Jul/Aug 1978
An interesting look at the German "blow-forward" auto.	
HISTORY OF THE S&W 39/59, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1978
The evolution of S&W's two nines.	
SHOOTING THE SMITH 9mms., Massad Ayoob	Jul/Aug 1978
Shooting and maintaining the S&W 39/59.	
S&W AUTOS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT, Massad Ayoob	Jul/Aug 1978
The applications of S&W's 39/59 for cops	
DISCOVERED—A RARE 9mm WEBLEY, Gordon Bruce	Sep/Oct 1978
A look at a rare 9mm auto from Webley and Scott	
CUSTOM 22 AUTO—THE DIECKMANN P-66, Dennis Riordan	Sep/Oct 1978
A unique design in a handmade custom pistol.	
ASTRA CONSTABLE: THE PPK LOOK-ALIKE, Clair Rees	Jan/Feb 1979
A test of the .22 rimfire Astra Constable semi-auto.	
THE DEVIL: NOT JUST A MINI-GUN, J.D. Jones	May/June 1979
A test of Devil's custom conversion of a S&W Model 39.	
THE M.A.B. PISTOLS, Michel Josseland	May/June 1979
A test of the MAB pistols from France.	
EXPLODING .45 MYTHS, Jeff Cooper	Jul/Aug 1979
Jeff Cooper debunks all those myths about the Colt .45.	
THE PSP, A SUBJECTIVE REPORT, Massad Ayoob	Jul/Aug 1979
Now it's called the HK P-7, but our first test piece was the HK PSP	
THE CLEANEST LITTLE .45, George C. Nonte	Jul/Aug 1979
A test of the Detonics Mk. IV, a mini version of a Gov't Model.	
THE ROGAK P-18, James D. Mason	Jul/Aug 1979
A test of the Rogak P-18 9mm semi-auto.	

Cartridges and Reloading

.357 MAGNUM BULLETS TESTS,
Mike Branch.....Sep/Oct 1976
Round-up of .357 bullets

CHUCKBUSTER SUPREME: .218 MASHBURN,
J.D. Jones Mike Barach.....Sep/Oct 1976
Comparing .218 Bee to .218 Mashburn in T/C for small game.

.44 BULLDOG MAXIMUM LOADS,
George C. Nante.....Sep/Oct 1976
Reloading article on .44 Special in CA's Bulldog.

THE WINNING .45 ACP COMBO,
Mason Williams.....Nov/Dec 1976
Look at .45 ACP cartridge in Colt 1911 and S&W Model 1917.

THE LOWDOWN ON LOADING DOWN,
George C. Nante.....Nov/Dec 1976
Medium and mild handloads for variety of handguns.

RELOADING FOR THE HI-POWER,
George C. Nante.....Mar/Apr 1977
How to get best results from reloading 9mm for Hi-Power

RELOADING FOR AUTO PISTOLS,
George C. Nante.....May/Jun 1977
How to reload for fussy self-stuffers.

LATEST WILDCAT: THE .22 FLDA,
Andy Barton.....Jul/Aug 1977
Interesting look at a .32 ACP necked down to .22 caliber.



THE L.A.R. GRIZZLY

At last, a production auto pistol to handle the long-touted .45 Winchester Magnum cartridge.



By Jim Miller

Some 90% have had a handgun that would not handle a .45 Winchester Magnum. That's why the long-touted .45 Winchester Magnum was considered a "wildcat" until now. It's not a wildcat any more, it's a production auto pistol to handle the long-touted .45 Winchester Magnum cartridge.

The .45 Winchester Magnum is a .45 ACP cartridge with a .45 inch diameter bullet. It was developed by Winchester in 1905. It was the first .45 caliber cartridge to be chambered in a semi-automatic pistol. It was also the first .45 caliber cartridge to be chambered in a revolver. It was a big success for Winchester. It was a big success for the .45 Winchester Magnum.

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HOW TO COMPENSATE FOR .38 SPECIAL,
Massad Ayoob.....Jul/Aug 1983
It may be a wimp, but there are ways to improve it.

SUPER VEL AMMUNITION,
Don Zutz.....May/Jun 1984
A super round for self-defense.

STAR RELOADER,
Fred Romero.....Jul/Aug 1984
The standard by which other presses are judged.

WHY THE .44 SPECIAL,
Al Pickles.....Jul/Aug 1984
The forerunner of the .44 Magnum shouldn't be overlooked.

SPECIAL PURPOSE AMMO,
Al Pickles.....Jul/Aug 1984
Special ammo for special purposes—self-defense.

HEAT TREAT YOUR BULLETS,
E.J. Henderson.....Sep/Oct 1984
How to heat treat cast bullets for greater hardness.

THE .38 SUPER TODAY,
Russ Goerner.....Nov/Dec 1984
Don't sell the old Super 38 short!

RELOADING THE .45 WIN. MAG.,
Joe Zambone.....Jan/Feb 1985
Roll your own .45 Magnum fodder for power and accuracy.

THE CENTIMETER BORE,
Whit Collins.....Jul/Aug 1983
Part One of a two-part series on the centimeter bore, 10mm.

THE CENTIMETER BORE,
Whit Collins.....Sep/Oct 1983
Part Two of the series continues on the wonderful 10mm bore.

HORNADY PRO 7 PRESS,
Mike Barach.....Sep/Oct 1983
A test of Hornady's progressive press.

UNIQUE IS UNIQUE,
Terry M. Boyer.....Sep/Oct 1983
A look at the versatile pistol powder that is unique.

LEE 1000 RELOADING PRESS,
Dan Catterman.....Nov/Dec 1983
Handloading columnist looks at Lee's press.

RCBS 4X4 RELOADING PRESS,
Dan Catterman.....Jan/Feb 1984
A test of the Good Ol' Boys progressive press.

MYSTERY RELOADING BENCH CONTEST,
AH Staff.....Jan/Feb 1984
Pictures of reloading benches from across America.

RELOADING 9MM LUGER,
Stanley W. Trzaniec.....Jan/Feb 1984
How to reload this popular auto pistol round.

DILLON RL-550 RELOADING PRESS,
Dan Catterman.....Mar/Apr 1984
A test of the press that revolutionized progressive presses.

GLASSER SAFETY SLUG,
Mark Hipes.....Mar/Apr 1984
Flawless functioning and 100% energy transfer.

PRO TACH CHRONOGRAPH,
Jim Weller.....Mar/Apr 1984
A test of the nifty Pro Tach, a self contained chronograph.

CAH 444-X,
Dan Catterman.....May/Jun 1984
A test of this reloading press.

AMT'S AUTOSCALE,
Dan Catterman.....Jul/Aug 1984
An electric powder dropper and scale in one.

Handgun Hunting

DOUBLE ACTION HANDGUN HUNT,
Massad Ayoob.....May/Jun 1977
Hunt Corsican sheep with Ayoob in Texas!

IN SEARCH OF THE IDEAL TRAIL GUN,
Steven Comer.....May/Jun 1977
What to look for in your field companion

HANDGUN BUFFALO HUNT,
J.D. Jones.....Jan/Feb 1978
Stalk the American bison with a .44 Auto Mag.

TROPHY KUDU,
Tony Weeks.....Jul/Aug 1978
Handgunning for the gorgeous spiral horned antelope of Africa.

SEARCH FOR THE HUMONGOUS BEAR,
J.D. Jones.....Jul/Aug 1978
Ruger Super Blackhawk tackles a five-foot blackbear.

.357 P&P IS NOT FOR HUNTING!,
J.D. Jones.....Jul/Aug 1979
There are better calibers for big game than the .357.

HANDGUNS FOR VARMINTS,
J.D. Jones.....Nov/Dec 1979
Accurate, flat-shooting calibers are the secret.

HANDGUN HUNTING AFRICAN STYLE,
Al Venter.....May/Jun 1980
Here's how the .44 Magnum fares on the Dark Continent.

SAFARI,
J.D. Jones.....Jul/Aug 1980
This special Ruger Blackhawk is ready for Africa.

HUNTING WILD HOGS,
Bill Davidson.....Jan/Feb 1981
Magnum medicine of big tuskers.

SIGHTING-IN HANDGUNS FOR HUNTING,
Bob McKinnin.....Mar/Apr 1983
Sighting-in requires a knowledge of ballistics.

CUSTOM HANDGUNS HUNT AFRICA,
Cameron Hopkins.....Jul/Aug 1984
On safari with custom .44 Magnums.

Holsters and Leather

SPEED RIGS FOR COMBAT SHOOTING,
Rick Miller.....Nov/Dec 1977
A round-up of the latest holsters for speed shooting.

BIANCHI'S PISTOLERO RIG, Michael Barach	May/Jun 1978
This fast draw rig for IPSC is a real winner.	
IN SEARCH OF THE PRACTICAL HOLSTER, Rick Miller	Nov/Dec 1978
What to consider in picking a holster for your carry gun.	
SELECTING .45 LEATHER, Massad Ayoob	Sep/Oct 1979
The author takes a look at the many holsters for .45 autos.	
COWBOY HOLSTERS, Mike Thill	May/Jun 1981
A round-up of yesteryore's holsters.	
SPECIAL LEATHERGOODS 1981 ROUNDUP, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1981
The latest in handgunning leather gear.	
SELDEIN D.A. HOLSTER, Don Shumar	Nov/Dec 1981
Cock and chamber a .45 in the holster!	
NEW SUBSTITUTE FOR LEATHER, AH Staff	Sep/Oct 1982
Porvair is where it's at in the latest material for holsters.	
UNIQUE SHOESTRING HOLSTER, Don Shumar	Sep/Oct 1982
Keep it Simple Stupid—a shoestring makes a working holster!	
BELT SLIDE HOLSTERS, Frank Kerr	Nov/Dec 1982
A round-up of handy, out of the way, belt slide holsters.	
POLICE DUTY HOLSTERS, Steven L. Campbell	Sep/Oct 1983
A round-up of different duty rigs.	
INSIDE-THE-BELT HOLSTERS, Don Shumar	Sep/Oct 1983
A round-up of these concealment rigs.	
HOLSTERS AND MORE HOLSTERS, Al Pickles	Sep/Oct 1984
A potpourri of leather.	
THE NEW WAVE OF HOLSTERS, Bob Arganbright	Mar/Apr 1985
A round-up of the new nylon and synthetic fabric holsters.	

Miscellaneous

RAY VIRAMONTE'S BICENTENNIAL .45, AH Staff	Sep/Oct 1976
Photo essay of Bi-Centennial Colt pistol.	
NOTE ON RUGER COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATION, AH Staff	Nov/Dec 1976
Introduction and how to join RCA.	
HANDGUN LIBRARY FOR FAST REFERENCE, AH Staff	Jan/Feb 1977
Review of current books for handgunners.	
SPEEDLOADERS: SIX MORE WHEN IT COUNTS, James D. Mason	Jan/Feb 1977
Discussion of advantages of speedloaders	
COLLECTING MAUSER PARABELLUMS, R.A. Lafferty	Jan/Feb 1977
Facets of collecting Mauser pistols.	
GUNSITE: JEFF COOPER'S COMBAT SCHOOL, AH Staff	Jan/Feb 1977
A visit to Col. Cooper's famed training center of combat shooting.	
LONG RANGE HANDGUNNING, James Mason	Mar/Apr 1977
Discussion of ballistics of long range handgun shooting.	
API'S NEW COMBAT RANGE, Mason Williams	Mar/Apr 1977
Look at improvements at Jeff Cooper's Gunsite school	
FIND THAT BRASSI, Gordon R. Stark	May/Jun 1977
A humorous essay on flying cases.	
THE HANDGUN COURSE AT GUNSITE, Mason Williams	May/Jun 1977
A tour of Gunsite's pistol training facilities.	
BOOKS FOR THE HANDGUNNER, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1977
A series of book reviews.	
THE COLLECTIBLE CONTENDER, Massad Ayoob	Nov/Dec 1977
Here are some of the more exotic TCs of interest to collectors.	
AIRGUN TEST—THE DAISY M-62, Ladd Fanta	Jan/Feb 1978
Strength and accuracy characterize this air pistol.	
FLYING BRASSI, Byron Boots	Mar/Apr 1978
A photo essay laughs at the strange things ejected cases do.	
THE KUBIK RELOADER, James Mason	Mar/Apr 1978
Here's a unique new design of a speedloader.	
COMPLETE GUIDE TO UNLOADING, Gordon Stark	May/Jun 1978
Some safety tips on how to make a gun safe.	
O.A.N.A. BANQUET AWARDS, AH Staff	Sep/Oct 1978
Skeeter Skelton wins the Outstanding American Handgunner Award.	
HANDGUN STOCKS, James D. Mason	Sep/Oct 1978
A round-up of some of the more popular handgun grips.	
STOCK MARKET, AH Staff	Sep/Oct 1978
More on the handgun stock situation from major manufacturers.	
AMERICAN HANDGUNS IN FRANCE, M.H. Josserson	Sep/Oct 1978
A letter from a French reader about the market.	
FROM CHIVALRY TO COMBAT, J. Scott Dugan	Nov/Dec 1978
An essay about the changing face of combat shooting.	
IS THIS THE FUTURE OF HANDGUNNING?, Mason Williams	Nov/Dec 1978
A look at indoor ranges and what they offer handgunners.	
COLORADO HANDGUN LAWS—GOOD OR BAD?, Hal Swiggert	Nov/Dec 1978
An essay considering Colorado's handgun laws.	
NEW MONOGRIPS BY HOGUE, James D. Mason	Jan/Feb 1979
The revolutionary Hogue Monogrip may be the best.	

CUSTOM XP-100 STOCKMAKERS, AH Staff	Jan/Feb 1979
A round-up of the various custom stocks for the XP-100	
HANDLING THE SINGLE ACTION SAFELY, James Triggs	Mar/Apr 1979
Thoughts on how to shoot your SAA safely.	
A DAY AT COLT'S, Donald Simmons	May/Jun 1979
A tour of the Colt factory.	
TOMORROW'S HANDGUN DESIGNS TODAY, James Mason	May/Jun 1979
A trip into the 21st Century too see handgun designs to come.	
TRAINING FOR PRIVATE POLICE, Massad Ayoob	May/Jun 1979
A look at the training program at CCSI.	
BOOK EXCERPT: BLUE STEEL & GUNLEATHER, John Bianchi	Jul/Aug 1979
The writings of John Bianchi taken from his first book.	
ACCESSORIES FOR THE .45 AUTO, AH Staff	Sep/Oct 1979
Listing of the many makers of .45 auto accessories.	
HERRETT'S SHOOTING MASTER, J.D. Jones	Nov/Dec 1979
A visit of Herrett's Shooting Master handgun stocks.	
SOUTH AFRICAN HANDGUN STORY, Dave Arnold	Nov/Dec 1979
A look at the handgunning in South Africa.	
SLING, SLANG, SLUNG, Phil Briggs	May/Jun 1980
How about a sling for carrying a handgun?	
THE DAISY 717 PELLET PISTOL, Ladd Fanta	Jul/Aug 1980
A look behind the scenes at this classy air pistol.	
HANDGUNNER COLOR PRINT, Karl Bosselmann	Jul/Aug 1980
A wallhanger for your gun room of an AMT Hardballer.	
POLY-CHOKE HANDGUN RIBS, Mike Barach	Jul/Aug 1980
Do ventilated sight ribs serve a function?	
1980 O.A.N.A. BANQUET, Jim Woods	Sep/Oct 1980
Warren Center is the Outstanding Handgunner of the Year.	
RECHARGING REVOLVERS, S.J. Malone	Sep/Oct 1980
From speedloaders to dump pouches, here's how to reload.	
HANDGUNNERS OF THE 30'S, Lee Echols	Nov/Dec 1980
A nostalgic look back at handgunning in the 1930s.	
CUSTOM PISTOLSMITH DIRECTORY, AH Staff	Jan/Feb 1981
The most complete list of custom pistolsmiths.	
CUSTOM PISTOLSMITH UPDATE, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1981
Some new listings for our famous list.	
S&W'S NEW GUNS AND AMMUNITION, Evan Marshall	Jul/Aug 1981
Smith is out with new models, new ammo.	
IN DAYS OF OLD—L.A. PISTOL TEAM, Lee Echols	Sep/Oct 1981
Slapstick comedy and bullseye shooting.	
SHOOTING GUIDELINES FOR POLICE, Bradley Steiner	Sep/Oct 1981
The in's and out's of When To Shoot.	
STATE TROOPER SIDEARMS, Massad Ayoob	Sep/Oct 1981
Guns, leather and loads across the country.	
TRAINING THE SECURITY OFFICER, Jerry Usher	Sep/Oct 1981
There's a right way and a wrong way.	
HARD FACTS ON HARD GUN FINISHES, Michael Bane	Nov/Dec 1981
The new chrome and nickel for handguns.	
FLYING WITH HANDGUNS, Walter Leonetti	Jan/Feb 1982
Airlines vary in their policies. Check before you fly!	
ELECTRO-FILM, Karl Bosselmann	May/Jun 1982
New and old combine for a new gun finish.	
GUNMAKING IN LLAMA LAND, J.D. Jones	May/Jun 1982
A tour of Llama's factory in Spain.	
NEW PRODUCT SHOWCASE, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1982
Spotlight on new holsters, handgun cases.	
SPEEDLOADING, Massad Ayoob	Jul/Aug 1982
Revolvers and autos require different techniques.	
IGNITION AIN'T ENOUGH, Massad Ayoob	Jul/Aug 1982
Good shooting involves lots of factors.	
I HAVE HELD THIS GUN BEFORE, Al Pickles	Sep/Oct 1982
The Abilene Frontier brings back memories of SAAs.	
LIVING ROOM MARKSMANSHIP, Dave Reynolds	Jan/Feb 1983
Sub-caliber devices for indoor shooting fun.	
RUBBER HANDGUN GRIPS, Mike Barach	Jan/Feb 1983
A round-up of synthetic grips of rubber.	
EIGHT-SHOT CLIP FOR COLT .45 AUTOS, David M. Armstrong	Mar/Apr 1983
It adds one more round!	
DON'T KNOCK AIR PISTOLS, Len Davis	Mar/Apr 1983
A fun alternative for practice.	
INDUSTRY INSIDER: SPECIAL EDITION, Al Pickles	Mar/Apr 1983
A look at some new entries in the market.	
THE SERVICE PISTOL CONTROVERSY, Patrick F. Rogers	May/Jun 1983
What's being tested by the military—guns or politics?	
THE SHOCK WATCH, George H. Gamble	May/Jun 1983
Filled with a special liquid, this helps soak up recoil.	
THE MEXICAN STAND-OFF, Dave Reynolds	May/Jun 1983
A fight between 9mm revolvers and 9mm autos.	
SEVEN STEPS TO SURVIVAL, Seth R. Nadel	May/Jun 1983
Watch out! Danger lurks in every dark corner.	

THE RANSOM REST, Stanley W. Trzaniec	Jul/Aug 1983
Eliminates shooter error in checking a gun's accuracy.	
POINT SHOOTING, David A. Wilson	Sep/Oct 1983
Point and shoot to survive!	
HOME DEFENSE COURSE, Linda Knob	Sep/Oct 1983
The name of the game is awareness.	
HANDGUN ACCESSORIES, Stanley W. Trzaniec	Sep/Oct 1983
Complete with a directory of where to buy!	
EXOTIC HANDGUN GRIPS, Len Davis	Nov/Dec 1983
A dazzling piece of wood adds sex appeal to a handgun.	
HANDGUN MARKET, DOWN BUT NOT OUT, Jerry Rakusan	Jan/Feb 1984
A thought provoking essay on the current handgun market.	
NEW SILHOUETTE TARGETS, Len Davis	Jan/Feb 1984
A variety of steel critter targets for silhouette.	
MARINE OFFICER BUILDS RANGE, Len Davis	Mar/Apr 1984
A new place to shoot!	
PAPER MOONS, Jerry Rakusan	Mar/Apr 1984
A provocative "think piece" about promoting handgunning.	
RUSSIAN TRAINING TECHNIQUES, Heinrich Horka	May/Jun 1984
A look at shooting behind the Iron Curtain.	
ERGONOMICS, Richard Savino	May/Jun 1984
Why do some handguns "feel" good? Ergonomics!	
EXOTIC HANDGUN STOCKS, Al Pickles	Jul/Aug 1984
Dazzling wood that takes your breath away!	
GOING FOR THE GOLD, Dave Reynolds	Jul/Aug 1984
Smith and Wesson supports our Olympic shooting team.	
WEAVER VS. ISOSCLES, Fred Romero	Jul/Aug 1984
Two-handed shooting we all agree on, but in what form?	
SHOOTING AT NIGHT, Robert S. McKay	Nov/Dec 1984
New methods for low light shooting.	
CUSTOM FITTING CUSTOM GRIPS, Larry Sterett	Jan/Feb 1985
How to shape custom handgun stocks to fit your hand.	
HANDGUNNER'S NIGHTMARE: MORTON GROVE, Andrew Kendzie	Mar/Apr 1985
The frightening events leading to the banning of guns.	
CROSSFIRE: IS PPC PRACTICAL, Marshall Romero	May/Jun 1985
A debate between two street wise cops.	
ORLANDO PD ADOPTS IPSC, Michael Bane	May/Jun 1985
The Orlando P.D. finds IPSC better than PPC for training.	
THE COMBAT MIND-SET, Jeff Cooper	Jul/Aug 1985
One's mental awareness is the key to surviving a lethal threat.	
CROSSFIRE, Nadel Romero	Jul/Aug 1985
Knockdown Power: does it exist?	
THE HANDGUNS OF SAFARI CLUB, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1985
Gorgeous custom guns auctioned to benefit Safari Club.	
CROSSFIRE: IS IPSC PRACTICAL, Fowler Hipes	Sep/Oct 1985
Is IPSC a sport or tactical training—a debate.	
CROSSFIRE: REVOLVER OR AUTO, Ayoob/Pride	Nov/Dec 1985
A debate over which is better for self-defense.	
A TOUR OF BERETTA'S FACTORY, Jan van Driel	Nov/Dec 1985
Inside the factory where our new military sidearm is made.	
UP IN SMOKE, S.A. Numbthumb	Nov/Dec 1985
Numbthumb's up to his old antics at a bullseye match.	
GET READY FOR RED-SET, Tony Lesca	Jan/Feb 1986
New steel targets offer hours of plinking fun.	
CROSSFIRE: SINGLE VS. DOUBLE ACTION, Ayoob/Jackathorn	Jan/Feb 1986
Which auto action is better for self-defense?	
THE AYOOB FILES, Massad Ayoob	Jan/Feb 1986
More from Ayoob on actual gunfights.	
KIDS AND GUNS, P.G. Proctor	Mar/Apr 1986
Thoughts on how to keep kids and guns together safely.	
ELMER KEITH'S MODEL 29: FOR SALE, AH Staff	Mar/Apr 1986
You have a chance to buy one of Elmer Keith's personal 29s.	
THE AYOOB FILES, Massad Ayoob	Mar/Apr 1986
An armed citizen survives almost certain death through tactics.	
THE DUTCH CONNECTION, Jan van Driel	Mar/Apr 1986
Some of the firearms and ammo problems of the Dutch police.	
THE AMAZING RECOILLESS PISTOL, Bill Pole	Mar/Apr 1986
A humorous look at recoil reducing devices.	
HOW (NOT) TO SHOOT SILHOUETTE, S.A. Numbthumb	Mar/Apr 1986
Numbthumb bumbles his way through a state championship.	
CROSSFIRE: DOES P&T EXIST?, Ayoob/Moritz	May/Jun 1986
A debate over the Post Shooting Trauma controversy.	
P&T MK II TIMER, Cameron Hopkins	May/Jun 1986
It's a timer, it's a chronograph, and much much more.	
THE AYOOB FILES, Massad Ayoob	Jul/Aug 1986
Do better guns win fights? Maybe.	
CROSSFIRE, C. Hopkins/C. Petty	Jul/Aug 1986
Are magnums better? A debate.	
WHAT'S NEW FROM REMINGTON, 1986, AH Staff	Jul/Aug 1986
A new XP-100 and new factory ammo.	

HAPPY BIRTHDAY IPSC!

By Dave Arnold

Photos courtesy of Jake Jatras

It is hard to believe that IPSC Shooting is now ten years old. Yet it was a decade ago that representatives of practical shooting organizations from all over the free world met in Columbia, Missouri at the first international conference of this fast growing shooting sport. The outcome of this gathering was the formation of the International Practical Shooting Confederation. Better known as IPSC, this body was responsible for administering the sport of practical shooting on an international basis.

The Columbia Conference also elected Jeff Cooper as the first President of IPSC. This was certainly fitting for he, more than any other person, was the creator and the

single driving force of what, up until then, had been called "combat pistol shooting."

The sport actually had its beginnings some years earlier when Cooper, together with a small band of dedicated shooters, used to gather over weekends at a rough and ready shooting range in Big Bear, just east of Los Angeles. (See the article by Jon Winokur, *The*

Good Old Days, elsewhere in this issue for a complete account of the early, formative days of practical shooting. Editor.)

Cooper was already well known in the gun writing world, having written several books. Largely due to his writing, both in books and firearms publications, word of these combat shooting techniques originating from Big

As a member of the Rhodesian Team, the author competed in the first international IPSC match. Now he reflects on ten years of IPSC shooting in celebration of IPSC's tenth birthday this year.



IN MEMORIAM TO GAVIN CARSON

Gavin Carson was Captain of the Springboks, the South African IPSC National Team. He led the Springboks to victory in the 1979 World Championships. Gavin was the quintessential sportsman and competitor always eager to offer advice to fellow shooters. He died in 1983 of cancer. Former U.S. Regional Director Jake Jatras knew Gavin well: "Gavin Carson is still remembered by all those who competed with him for his helpful attitude and competitive spirit. Knowing that he only had months to live, Gavin chose to come to the U.S. and shoot in his last major match, the 1983 Bianchi Cup. He wanted just once more to be with his pals and be a part of the shooting sport he loved. He was in constant pain and had to be helped to the range. He was an important part of the IPSC shooting on an international level."

Bear started to spread throughout the shooting world.

Ironically, combat pistol shooting gained favor overseas just as rapidly as in the United States. In Western Europe, Great Britain, Australia, South Africa and Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) shooters, having read about the activity at Big Bear through Jeff Cooper's writings, started similar groups themselves. At that time I was in law enforcement in Rhodesia and I lived through the birth and growth of combat pistol shooting in Southern Africa.

It all started with informal matches that later grew into more serious competitions. In those early days we shot courses like the Mexican Defense, the modified FBI Practical Pistol Course and Cooper's Modified Military Course that had been developed by Cooper and the Big Bear shooters. We also had a course of our own called the "Jungle Lane" which was a type of assault exercise in a bush setting.

Then, in the early 1970s, Cooper travelled to both Southern Africa and Europe where he gave numerous training sessions on combat shooting. Rhodesia was lucky enough to be one of the countries he visited, and many of us had the benefit of getting some personal instruction from Cooper himself. This generated even more interest in the sport. This was illustrated by the fact that, shortly after he left, officially selected teams from Rhodesia and South Africa competed in what was probably the first international combat pistol match.

Meanwhile, in Europe combat shooting was becoming so popular that, in 1975, shooters in Switzerland decided to hold the first World Combat Pistol Match. The event was staged just outside of Zurich and was attended by shooters from various European countries as well as the United States, Rhodesia and Australia.

When the shooting was over, Ray Chapman of the United States was the first World Combat Pistol Champion. Runner up was the

man behind the match, Paul Bakoks, a Hungarian residing in Switzerland while Rhodesian Lionel Smith took third position.

The following year saw the Second World Championships being staged in Berndorf, Austria. This event was held some months after the formation of the International Practical Shooting Confederation and was attended by an even larger number of competitors from throughout Europe, America and Southern Africa.

I was fortunate enough to make the Rhodesian Team that took part in the Austrian world event. This was one of the high points in my shooting career and one that I will remember for the rest of my days.

We all knew that Ray Chapman would probably retain his World Title in the individual event, but we stood a very good chance of taking the five-man team match. Consequently, we put in many hours of training preparing for the match. All this hard work paid off, for we did in fact take the team match, but it was a near thing. We thought our greatest threat would be from the United States and paid scant attention to the five-man team from Norway. All virtually unknown, the Norwegians took everyone by surprise with one of their members, Jan Foss, winning the individual title, edging Ray Chapman into second place with Rhodesian Lionel Smith once again taking third place.

In the team event, things really looked bad for us when the front sight on my Colt Government 9mm sheared off during a practice run prior to the actual match. What was even

more serious was the fact that I was sharing this pistol with fellow team member Peter Maunder, whose own pistol had developed problems before the match. We eventually went into the match sharing the pistol of our team captain, Dave Westerhout. In spite of these misfortunes, we still managed to take the team title, but it was close and the Norwegians certainly made us work for it.

The Austrian World match was one of the most enjoyable I have ever competed in, mainly because it was shot in the beautiful setting of the small village of Berndorf which is situated just outside Salzburg. All shooters were housed in various guest houses in this medieval village and every evening we gathered together at one of the many little restaurants. Here, sumptuous food was served and the evenings usually ended with much beer drinking and singing to the town brass band. Surprisingly, these nightly festivities had little adverse effect on the standard of shooting, which was very high for that time.

In those days, the course of fire was not as extensive as today's competitions. The Austrian World Championships consisted of two stages requiring some sixty rounds. Even so, the ability of each competitor was thoroughly tested. Shooters had to engage a moving target, shoot from various unusual positions, fire on some targets using the weak hand unsupported and negotiate a high wall as they moved through each course. Fast reloading was also required as one moved from one shooting position to another.

The guns we used in those early matches were also less sophisticated. The most elaborate were .45 Colt autos customized by gunsmiths like Swenson and Pachmayr with the usual trigger jobs and adjustable sights. Browning Hi-Powers were popular, especially among the Rhodesians, while a number of European Shooters used SIG 210 9mms and there were even a few revolvers.

All this changed dramatically the following year when Rhodesia staged the 1977 World Practical Pistol Championships in Salisbury. With much government support, this



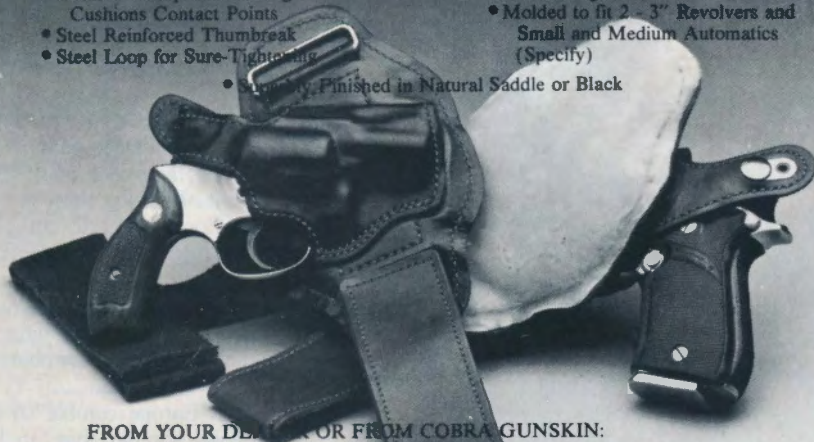
Ross Seyfried, 1981 World Champ, won with "practical" equipment.

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I.P.S.C. World Champions

Year	Champion	Nationality
1975	Ray Chapman	U.S.A.
1976	Jan Foss	Norway
1977	Dave Westerhout	Rhodesia
1979	Jimmy von Sorgenfrei	South Africa
1981	Ross Seyfried	U.S.A.
1983	Rob Leatham	U.S.A.
1986	?*	?

*The 1986 I.P.S.C. World Championship will be Sept. 15-21 in Orlando, Florida. The staff of the *American Handgunner* wishes the defending World Champion, Rob Leatham, the very best of luck in winning an unprecedented two titles in a row. We also extend our best wishes to our foreign guests competing in the World Shoot VII. May the best man win!

event turned out to be a gigantic match with numerous stages requiring in excess of 200 rounds. Quite a few of the stages were either "Jungle Lane" or "Assault Course" exercises where a fair amount of athletic ability was required. There were also numerous reloads required in virtually all stages with the result that auto pistols were used by all competitors.

What knocked the revolver out of the running was not so much the emphasis on fast reloading but rather the fact that the course designers thought in terms of the magazine capacity of the autos. In the Rhodesian match

they thought in terms of 14, or the capacity of the Browning Hi-Power, and designed many of the stages with several groups of four or six targets. No limit was placed on how many shots a competitor fired, but only the best two hits on each target would count for score.

Large capacity autos like the Browning had a decided advantage because less reloads were needed. For the revolver shooter, with only six rounds in the cylinder, the additional reloads were too much of a handicap and, as far as I can remember, not one was used in the match. This tendency has persisted in all subsequent World Matches, although course designers now think in terms of eight, the capacity of the Colt 1911.

In many ways I feel that this is a pity, because there are many fine revolver shooters who not only shoot well but can also reload almost as quickly as the auto shooters with speed loaders. If targets were grouped for six shots instead of eight, revolvers would have a chance.

The 1977 Championship was also the first time that the standardized IPSC targets and factoring was used. These were two outcomes of the 1976 Columbia Conference, the former being intended to standardize the type of targets to be used in international competition. Factoring was intended to place a minimum standard on the power of ammunition so that squib loads would be discouraged. The bullet factor was a mathematical formula that determined what would equate to standard factory loadings. Major calibers, like .45s and Magnums, scored higher values for anything outside the central scoring areas on the new targets.

This was also the year that saw the introduction of more sophisticated guns and equipment. Ray Chapman, for example, used a Colt .45 auto customized by Pachmayr Gun Works that sported a six-inch barrel that protruded one-inch out of the front of the slide. Several slots were cut into the top of the protruding muzzle to create a simple type of compensator.

It was also the first time that cross-draw holsters were used, mostly by the U.S. shooters. Up until then, this type of leather gear was considered unsafe in spite of the fact that many competitors were using fast draw holsters that barely held the gun and were totally impractical.

One of the reasons for the various assault stages was to force competitors away from the fast draw skimpy holsters that had started to appear in the earlier matches. It was reasoned that having competitors scale barricades on the run and negotiate other hernia-inducing obstacles would force them to use more practical holsters. As it turned out, the course designers did not anticipate the ingenuity of the holster makers who used tension screws and other devices to secure the gun with a minimum of leather.

The 1977 match was attended by a record number of competitors and teams from throughout the world and, when the final shot had been fired, the Rhodesians had taken top honors in both the individual and team

Continued on page 84

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Mr. Jerry Rakusan
American Handgunner

Dear Jerry:

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you and the staff of Publishers' Development Corporation on the American Handgunner's Tenth Anniversary Celebration. I would also like to extend, on behalf of the American Pistolsmiths Guild, the sincere appreciation, felt by myself and the membership, for your continuing support of the Guild and its ideals.

I am sure that most Guild members recognize you as one of our most distinguished Associate members. Few members, however, with the exception of some Charter members, realize the contributions you have made to the Guild. The spotlight placed on the Guild by the American Handgunner magazine has not only elevated the prestige of Guild membership, but has helped give recognition to the lesser-known craftsmen in our organization. Your attendance at the annual meetings since your election as an Associate member has been as encouraging as your continued enthusiasm about the Guild. Your advice and suggestions have been an invaluable asset to the Guild and an important factor in our increase in membership and support. Please continue the fine work you and your staff at American Handgunner have been doing these past ten years. You can all feel satisfaction in the fact that your efforts have promoted handgunning to its current unprecedented state of popularity.

The American Handgunner brings to its readers, articles about events that few people will experience, except through the pages of your magazine. It is the quality of these and other informative articles that help impart the excitement and enjoyment of handgunning. Again, thanks and congratulations to all of you, we appreciate your efforts.

Sincerely,

Louis P. Ciamillo, President
The American Pistolsmiths Guild

COP TALK

Continued from page 34

tives from all other magazines combined, and three of them active in law enforcement. Many Bianchi Cup staples—the moving target, the more rapid barricade stages, even the falling plates and the Colt Speed Event—would be extrapolated by police readers into advanced training techniques at the department level.

What does the next decade hold? Look for some police professional journals to pick up the "casefile" concept of analyzing actual shootouts that *Handgunner* pioneered in 1985. Expect the magazine to continue to be a forum for controversy in areas like the *CrossFire* pro-and-con feature that is now standard, and the constantly questioning approach to old doctrine that has become the trademark of current editor Cameron Hopkins, as well as the continuing, unbiased "warts and all" product reporting.

As competitive and sport riflery follows military trends, so it is that civilian sporting and particularly self-defense handgunning tends to follow the law enforcement model. With many of its staffers professionals in law enforcement and in police training, expect *American Handgunner* to be in the forefront of reporting in the world of lawmen's weaponry.



GLOSSARY OF HANDGUNNING TERMS

wadcutter: scissors guy at the Skool factory

maximum load: ten shots of bourbon

headspace: a problem prevalent among Punk Rockers on drugs

handgun hunting: what you do after your spouse re-organizes the gun room

Hatcher Rating: what an orderly chicken does to her eggs

grease groove: the part in a Mexican's hair

bull barrel: where a rodeo clown hides

ejector rod: the handle in James Bond's car next to the passenger seat

action job: guard duty at the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli, Libya

rebound spring: what Olympic gymnast Mary Lou Retton has in her legs

windage adjustment: when a politician moderates the tone of his voice

stopping power: two dozen Highway Patrolmen armed with bazookas

speedloader: a dock worker on cocaine

beavertail: what Ward Cleaver used to spank

crisp trigger: what would happen if Roy Rogers' horse and Colonel Sanders ever met

double-action: Rambo and Chuck Norris in the same movie

over-travel screw: a prostitute working on a cruise ship

sear engagement: when a famous department store founder fell in love

match pressure: when your folks insist you marry the rich girl next door

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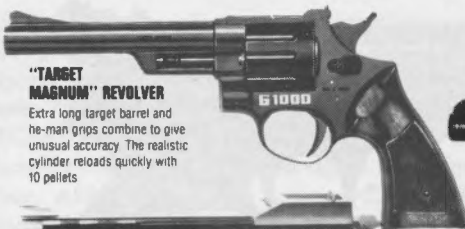
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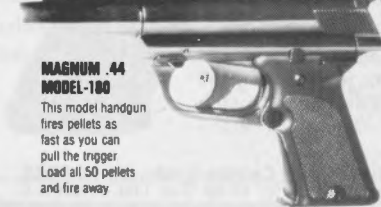
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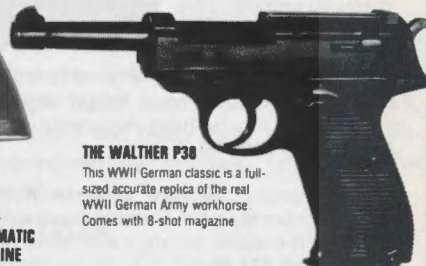
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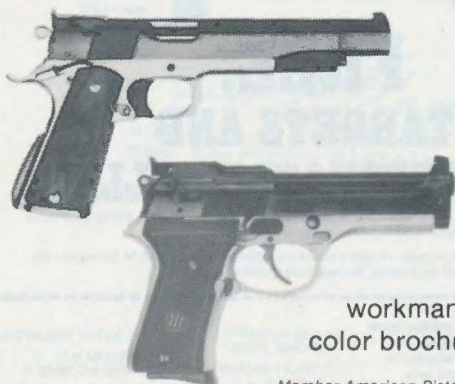
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THE AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 41

action.

She saw him fall over, hard. He landed on his left side, facing her, in the same instant she landed in a sitting position next to him. She instantly scrambled to her feet and stepped back away from him.

Her attacker lay motionless, his eyes closed, his right arm across his stomach. His arm and torso were soaked with blood, and more seemed to be pouring out of him. She saw that his pistol had fallen four feet away from him.

Time ceased to have meaning. She stood over him, stunned, still holding the .44 on him, for what seemed like minutes. Later she would learn it had been thirty seconds or less. Then, she whirled as she heard a male voice off to the side.

"I'm from New York," the young man across the parking lot screamed. "Get out of here! Now!" Then he jumped back in his car and peeled out, with a woman sitting next to him, staring. So, Weathers realized numbly, *there had been witnesses. The two of them must have seen the whole thing. And their first impulse was to flee. Don't get involved.* "I'm from New York," he had shouted. Well, perhaps that explained it.

She knew she had to do *something*. She walked across the deserted avenue to a motel. The door was locked, and she began pounding on it. No answer. It seemed strange until she realized she was still holding a huge, nickel-plated revolver in plain sight. She slipped it back into her bag, and almost immediately, she saw a little man raise his head timidly from behind the counter. "I've just shot someone," she yelled through the glass door. "Call the police!" The man's head nodded rapidly up and down, and Helen turned and walked back across the street.

Her attacker still lay in his growing puddle of blood, unmoving. Helen moved toward the front of the office building. She had the presence of mind to know that the officers would be there any second, and she didn't want to look like a madwoman with a giant revolver. She started to lay the gun on the sidewalk, then paused. She didn't want to scratch the gleaming nickel finish and the polished rosewood grips. She took her paper bag of magazines from her purse and slid the gun into it, laid it down and then stepped away.

(To a layman, this would seem, at first, irrational. In fact, it is a function of what psychologists call "cognitive dissonance." This includes confusion of sequence of events, but can also distort perspectives, making trivial things seem important and important things seem trivial in the immediate aftermath of a traumatic experience. Moments before, a man had tried to fire a bullet through her brain, and she had shot him down, yet now, keeping the gun unmarred seemed enormously important.)

Walking a few steps from the gun, Helen touched her left arm. There was no pain, no

wound. The .25 caliber bullet had missed her cleanly, and would never be recovered. What she had felt, in virtually the same instant she saw him fire, was the bone-jarring recoil of the .44 Magnum that she had never before fired with her weak hand only.

In moments, two uniformed officers arrived. They took one look at the blood-soaked body and called Homicide. Within minutes, both detectives and paramedics had arrived. As one of the medics bent over the fallen gunman he said, "He's still alive."

The rapist's instinctive reaction when he saw the gun coming up had been to swing his own gun arm down. It saved his life. His hand had struck hers at the moment his .25, and almost simultaneously her .44, had gone off. The first scallop-jacketed Remington 240-grain Magnum hollowpoint had caught his forearm just behind the wrist at contact distance, the gigantic fireball of muzzle blast directly entering the flesh as the bullet traveled up his arm parallel to the bone, exiting just before it reached the elbow. The second, from contact to no more than three inches muzzle-to-flesh distance, had entered just above the wrist and again gone parallel with the radius and ulna bones, again exiting before it could shatter the elbow.

As paramedics slit open the blood-soaked sleeve of the windbreaker, Helen could see the enormous damage that had been done. The muscles of both lower and upper forearm had been virtually disintegrated on the half of the limb toward the wrist, and peeled back like a banana on the end toward the elbow. White bone showed the entire length. The attacker's gun arm looked as if it had been filed.

They lifted him out of his two-foot-wide puddle of blood—Helen would remember that the liquid seemed thicker than she would have expected—and into the ambulance. He would survive the two close-range hits with the .44 Magnum. Though copper and lead fragments would be removed from the ruined arm, none of the three bullets fired in the encounter were ever recovered.

The officers seemed comforting and supportive. There was never even a hint of her being arrested. Perhaps because of this, she spoke freely. Again, the cognitive dissonance would hit: with four officers standing around her asking questions she heard, "Where was your gun?" Not realizing that the officer was asking where she'd been carrying it when the attack commenced, she answered, "In a paper bag," thinking he wanted to know where it was now. This would be recorded as her having said that she was carrying the gun in the paper bag, not the shoulder purse; during the attacker's trial, defense counsel would use this contradictory testimony to damage her credibility before the jury.

But that was of little importance now. What was important was that Helen Weathers, who minutes before had been in immediate and otherwise unavoidable danger of death or grave bodily harm, was safe and sound—and her legally-carried handgun had sent the rapist to an early retirement.

LESSONS

Helen Weathers had a plan: if an armed

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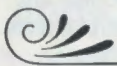
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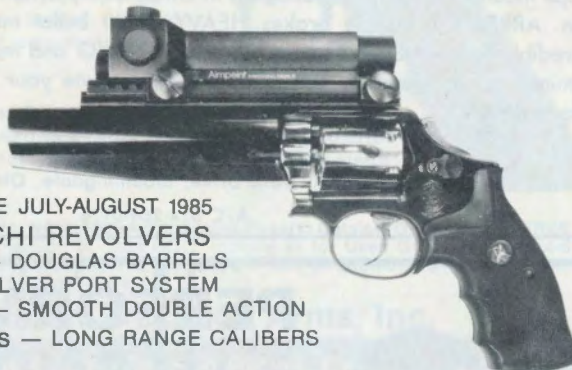


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man tried to rob her, she would give him her money. If she thought the armed man was going to rape or murder her, she would shoot him in self-defense. She offered the money and it was implicitly turned down. He could have taken the cash and been gone, but instead he was dragging her into the dark obscurity of the isolated parked cars. Her reaction was logical, reasonable, appropriate.

What she had not expected was a situation in which she would not be able to use her gun arm. She gave it no particular thought; it was instinctive to reach with her free hand.

Helen refers to going "on automatic." This is the perception of the person who is reacting as they've been trained or, as in her case, as she'd trained herself. The sensation is that of watching your body do something as if in a dream.

Helen's pulling away was what alerted the distracted assailant to react in time to deflect her gun barrel away from his abdomen. Perfect 20/20 hindsight tells us that had she simply drawn and fired, or fired through the purse, she would very likely have instantly (and fatally) neutralized the attacker before he could fire in her direction. Alas, that 20/20 hindsight ignores the fact that a cocked FIE .25 automatic was pointed at her head, and with anything less than a cerebral cortex hit, his finger could have convulsed on the trigger as he took the enormous impact of the first .44 slug. This would likely have resulted in a dying shot that took his intended victim with him. All things considered, Weathers was correct to throw herself down and out of the immediate line of his fire as she brought her own weapon into play.

Her recovery immediately after the shooting was excellent. Her experience with the cowardly witness was lamentable, but not atypical. The refusal of bystanders to help, or even come forth later to testify in safety, is to be expected. In this case there is no reflection on either Miami or New York; in both cities, there have been numerous cases of samaritans helping crime victims, sometimes at terrible risk to themselves.

Tachypsychia (distorted time perception), tunnel vision (in this case, focusing on the attacker and not noticing two bystanders until later), and cognitive dissonance were all classically present. Note in particular the sudden compulsion to prevent the gun from being damaged. A lay juror who has never been in a life-threatening encounter would see this as extremely cold-blooded ("taking care of a nasty gun while leaving a human being to hemorrhage to death"). The survivor of violence knows that there is a revulsion to approaching the thing that tried to snuff out your life, and a certain anthropomorphic affection for the instrument that you perceive as having saved your life.

Value judgments from Humanities 101 quite aside, this young woman, at that moment, owed considerably more to her .44 Magnum than she did to the comatose gunman who was bleeding all over the parking lot.

While Weathers practiced 50 rounds a month (about the same as a Los Angeles

Police Officer), her practice was not nearly as well-directed. She'd never fired one-hand/weak-hand, and much of her shooting was done single-action. As always, the body under stress does what practice has conditioned it to: she cocked the revolver before she was ready to fire, and thus risked tipping her hand. It is fortunate that the assailant was so absorbed in his rape attempt that he did not hear the sound.

By and large, Weathers handled herself coolly and effectively, particularly in the aftermath.

EPILOGUE

Helen Weathers' only post-shooting trauma was inability to sleep the first night after the shooting, a compulsive need (healthy in this case, since the response was supportive) to call friends from Florida to New York to discuss the incident that night, and loss of appetite for a day. These are predictable symptoms, rather mildly manifested.

Weathers today is an extremely well-adjusted professional woman, who still legally carries a gun. However, that pistol is now a Colt Government Series 70, cocked and locked and loaded with Remington 185-grain .45 ACP hollowpoints. She likes the firepower, the speed, and the hit potential.

Realizing that she needed more training, she joined Metro-Dade County's civilian volunteer unit of the police department, and was assigned to the firing range to assist in target scoring. There she met Lou Thomason, then head of firearm training, who got her interested in IPSC. She is now an avid competitor, reloader, and amateur pistolsmith. Her .44 Magnum is now a home protection gun. It is significant to note that in her last match, doing quite well overall, she made a point of keeping every shot in the center "5" ring during the weak-hand-only stage.

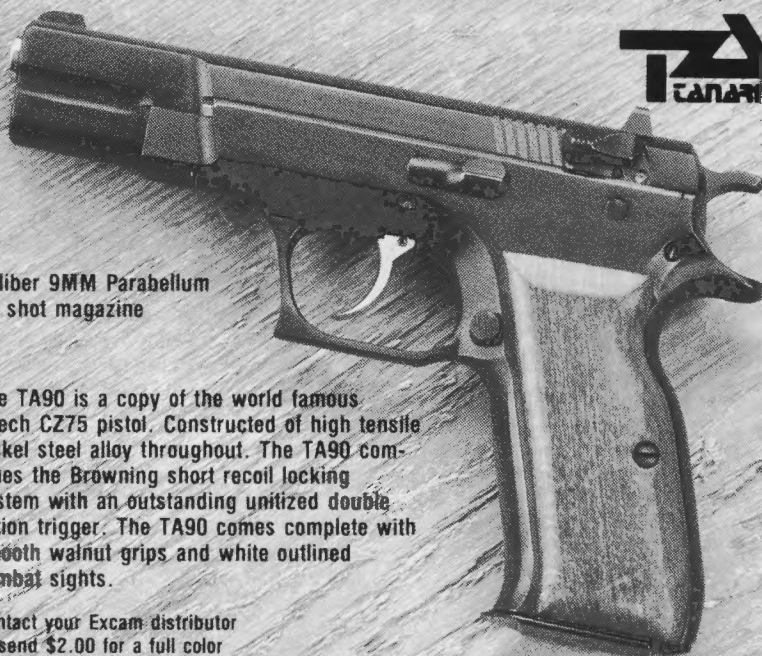
Weathers' revolver, held as evidence, was not returned to her until after the trial of the suspect. The only two witnesses had fled, and never came forward. The Dade County State Attorney's Office has some fine lawyers, as this writer can attest from having faced two of them, Abe Laeser and Mike Band in open court. However, it is also monstrously overburdened by the city's infamous crime rate. Weathers' attacker was prosecuted by a new member of the Office in her first jury trial, who'd had the case dumped on her on short notice.

The suspect's defense lawyer attacked the cognitive dissonance discrepancy, and other angles irrelevant here. Helen would sigh later, "It didn't help when the lawyer said, 'Why did you have such a gigantic gun if you didn't want to shoot somebody?' and I got mad and answered, 'Look, the way things are going in Miami lately, my next purchase is gonna be a tank.' In retrospect, I should have calmly told the truth: the gun had a sentimental attachment, and it was the only one available at the time."

The defendant's argument was that he was minding his own business and offering to help the lady carry her purse when she suddenly went berserk and shot him. Though he was fortuitously armed with an (illegal) FIE .25

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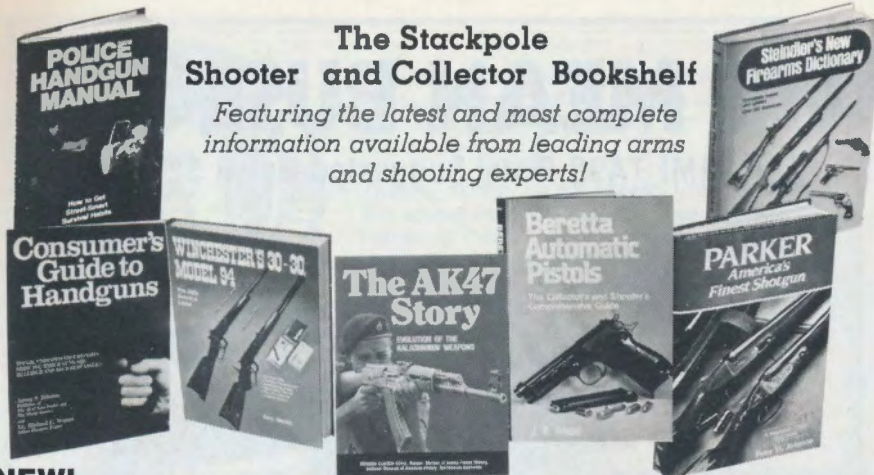
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and tried to protect himself, he did not succeed.

The jury decided that in a "word against word" situation, they could not find him guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. He was found not guilty, and walks among us today.

If he ever again attempts to drag a beautiful woman into a deserted parking lot with a gun to her head, he will need an assistant. This is because the two .44 slugs left his forearm resembling two bones with discolored, grafted skin stretched over them, at the end of which hangs an atrophied hand that no longer has any tendons to attach it.



The author wishes to thank for their cooperation Ms. Helen Weathers of Miami, and Captain Lou Thomason of Cutler Ridge Station, Metro-Dade Police Department.

RUGER GP-100

Continued from page 52

Another feature is that the grips offer a new, swept back angle allowing a more natural hold.

Last, but certainly not least, is the barrel. Compared to the Security-Six, this definitely is a heavy barrel. Ruger has taken the four-inch tube and added a full-length ejector rod housing running the underlug out to the muzzle. At the muzzle the underlug turns upward gracefully. The top strap is serrated and matte finished. Front sight blades are removable by a plunger type affair similar to that of the Redhawk. While I can't confirm it at this time, it looks like both guns will take the same sight blades.

A trip to the range was next. Taking a box chock-full of factory loadings from Hornady, Norma and Remington, I was prepared for an afternoon of serious shooting. Working on the 9th reload, to be more specific, round number 52, all testing came to a full stop. The hammer would not cock, the cylinder would not turn. With a little patience, I nudged the cylinder open, unloaded the piece carefully and went home for an examination.

Getting the piece home, my first clue into the problem came in the form of a large, deep scratch in the front of the recoil shield just about seven o'clock around the pilot bearing. Checking the ejector star, a noticeable bit of a machining burr had trapped itself between the star and the recoil shield. To make matters worse, the burr had actually bent itself over backwards to the point of doubling over causing a critical clearance problem leading to the stoppage.

Armed with my Dremel tool and an assortment of Cratex wheels, I deburred and polished both the star and recoil shield. A touch of lube here and there put me back into the shooting business.

The second time out proved more constructive. After firing a full box of Remington .357's to make sure the gun was up to form, I settled down for some initial sighting-in sequences. Using a brace rest at 25 yards, I grabbed one of my favorite sighting-in, target-small game loads consisting of a Hornady 158 grain wadcutter over 3.4 grains of

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Olin's #231 powder. Groups sprang up at the end of the GP-100's front sight in the two-inch range. I was on my way!

Factory loads came next with the Remington, Norma and Winchester averaging 2 to 2½ inches. Out of the group, the Hornady (Frontier) hit 1¾ inches proving once again every gun has a favorite load.

And while I was interested in accuracy potentials with the GP-100, torture was really the name of the game from now on. After group testing, I lined up 5½ boxes of factory and handloaded ammunition for a test that I kept running until the supply was exhausted. With heat waves dancing from the barrel rib, I kept firing away. Absolutely no mercy was shown towards the new Ruger.

If I had to make one comment on any one part of the new gun as far as improvements go, it would have to be in the grips. While the intent was to make the rubber grips as an aid to comfortable shooting, they do so only to a point. Because of Ruger's redesigned grip extension, the very top of the grip itself (referring now to the very uppermost part of the backstrap) butts up and under the rear-most part of the frame. Here, because of space limitations, the rubber has nowhere to go as it does around the frame extension where some "air" has been left between grip and grip extension adding to its liveliness or give properties. To further compound the problem, the memory characteristics of the rubber start to diminish after shooting the gun many, many times. The net result is that the grips start to separate and wind up splitting at the half joint allowing your hand to contact the sharp abutment. Using gloves in hyper .357 loads I had no problems, however shooting the gun bare handed soon tired me of all but the mild .38 Special loadings.

My suggestion to Ruger is to allow that rubber lip to ride over the shoulder a bit to compensate for this tendency of the grip to split and go under this buttress. Granted it can't be too big or else the hammer will not cock, but, on the other hand, some additional "meat" in the rubber would certainly be in order and aid in shooter comfort.

Sturm, Ruger has again grabbed the bull by the horns offering yet another marked improvement in wheelgun technology. The gun is accurate, well balanced, priced right and if Ruger can redesign those tiny sight screws as well as modify the grips, By George, they will have one heck of a gun.



RUGER BISLEY

Continued from page 55

that, even though they resemble the originals, they are much more pleasant to shoot. While the grips have the same rounded backstrap and look virtually the same as the originals, there are some subtle differences. Unlike grips on the Colts, which had a markedly curved front strap, the Rugers are straighter and wider where they mate with the frame. The difference becomes readily apparent when the guns are held in the hand. For me, the Ruger Bisleys are far more comfortable

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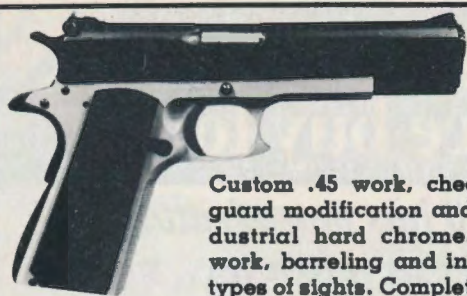
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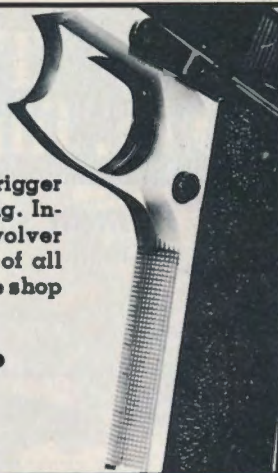
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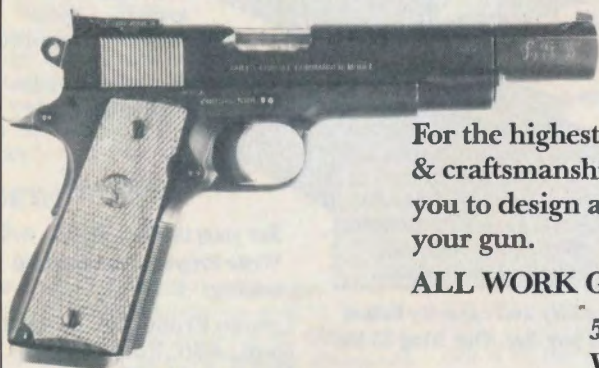
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to hold and do not change my grip when I thumb back the hammer.

The Bisleys are also good shooters. In the accuracy department, all the guns I tested were able to group within three inches from a bench rest at 25 yards. The large framed guns proved exceptionally accurate and I was able to shoot a 1/4 inch group with the .44 Magnum using Winchester 240 gr. ammunition. A 1/2 inch group was fired with the .357 using PMC 148 gr. target wadcutters. The grips of the smaller Bisleys were very comfortable.

Thanks to this new grip style, recoil with the .22 and .32 Bisleys was negligible, even with Magnum ammunition. The grips also pointed well and lined up the sights with the target when the guns were aimed quickly. With the large frame models, the grip did not ride up in my hand during firing like the standard single-action grips. Instead, the shape of the grip tended to direct recoil straight back into my hand. This was certainly a plus when .38, .357 and even .44 Special ammunition was fired, for I found grips together with the gun's weight and barrel length all helped in reducing felt recoil.

With the greater power generated by .44 Magnum ammunition, it was a little different. As far as the .44 Magnum Bisley was concerned, I cannot really say that I noted any difference in recoil when compared with a Super Blackhawk of the same caliber that

Bisleys are excellent single action revolvers

was used as a control. Muzzle lift was about the same, and felt recoil, if anything, was more noticeable with the Bisley. In spite of this, I did not find the .44 uncomfortable to shoot and the fact that the grip did not slide up in my hand was a definite plus.

However, two other seasoned shooters, one of whom has considerable experience with Ruger single-action Magnums, found the recoil uncomfortable. Admittedly, both are of smaller stature than I, which may well be the main reason why they had difficulty. Neither of them experienced any discomfort when shooting the milder .44 Special. Here, recoil was virtually nil and the gun was most pleasant to shoot. Finally, the lowered hammer spur made for fast, easy cocking, especially when a two handed grip was used.

Taking everything into consideration, these new Bisleys are excellent single-action revolvers. They are strong, well made and very accurate. In addition, the new grip is, for me at least, an improvement over that of the usual single-action. However, because of its greater recoil, some may experience difficulty with the .44 when shooting hot Magnum loads. With the reputation that Ruger single-actions have established over the years, these Bisleys should do well in the market place. Suggested retail price for the .44 Bisley is \$307 and \$258 for the two smaller frame models.



IHMSA

Continued from page 46

branch of the sport using smaller silhouette targets at distances of 25, 50, 75 and 100 yards. The big bore targets are shot at 50, 100, 150 and 200 meters.

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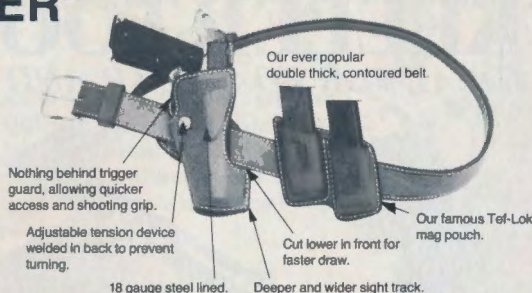
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IPSC

Continued from page 73

events. Dave Westerhout emerged as the 1977 World Champion while his team narrowly beat the Americans who took second place.

In many ways, the Rhodesian match set the stage for future IPSC World Championships for all such subsequent events have used a similar course of fire.

The 1979 match was staged in the Republic of South Africa, Rhodesia's neighbor. Here, the shooting fare offered was just as exciting with a variety of pop-up and moving targets being used in many of the stages. Once again there was a hard fought tussle for top honors, this time between the host team and the United States. South Africa managed to edge out the U.S. in the team event, and South African Jimmy von Sorgenfrei won the individual world title.

As far as the weaponry used, by now the Colt .45 auto virtually reigned supreme. Significantly, some of the most elaborate custom work on the guns used in this match came from a few South African gunsmiths who came out with features like long slides and even heavy compensators attached to the muzzles.

In many ways, this was a taste of things to come, for John Shaw won the 1980 U.S. title with a pin gun. Since then, an increasing number of competitors have opted for such pistols which were originally made for the Second Chance Bowling Pin Match. Most use heavy compensators attached to the muzzle to reduce recoil to a minimum.

Even so, U.S. shooter Ross Seyfried, who emerged as the 1981 World Champion, proved that it was still possible to win the title with practical equipment. In 1979, as a member of the U.S. Practical Shooting Team, he placed third in the World Championships using a Pachmayr customized Colt .45 that had few frills other than adjustable sights, a trigger job and the usual accurization. His holster was just a practical, being one carried high on the hip with the butt of the gun tilted forward for a strong side draw. With this equipment, he not only took third place but

also won the man against man shoot out.

South Africa was again host for the 1981 World Championships and Ross used exactly the same equipment to win the individual title and also help the U.S. Team take first place over South Africa.

The United States also took top honors in the next World Championships which they staged in 1983. On this occasion, the World Champion was Rob Leatham, an outstanding young shooter from Arizona. His taking of the 1983 title was all the more remarkable in that he seriously injured his leg during the match and had to finish the match with it heavily strapped up.

In taking the title, Leatham used a Wilson Accu-Comp .45 pin gun which was also used by many of the other top placed competitors. The man behind this gun, Bill Wilson, was also a member of the victorious American team. Leatham, who has since virtually dominated not only IPSC but also other action shooting activities like the Bianchi cup and the Steel Challenge, has continued to use Wilson guns. However, he has recently switched calibers from the .45 to the .38 Super.

The advantage of this cartridge is the fact that, when properly loaded, it can make the power factor with a little less recoil than the .45 ACP. When combined with a pin gun, muzzle flip is reduced even more. The success of this combination suggests that the .38 Super may replace the .45 in future IPSC competitions.

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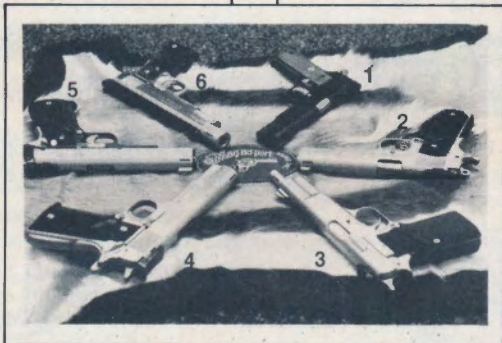
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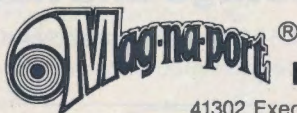
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RELOADING THE .38 SUPER FOR IPSC

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bered for, the extensively customized 1911 Government Model reigns supreme in IPSC shooting in this country. Elsewhere in the world, the Colt is equally popular, although there are a smattering of other pistols, like Browning P-35s and some H&K P-7 squeeze cockers in use. In respect of the latter gun, American pistolsmith Bruce Gray has turned several P-7s into pin guns with features like adjustable target sights, checkered backstraps and a heavy compensator attached to an extended barrel.

Ironically, the double-action auto, which is rapidly gaining favor with military and law enforcement agencies, has never gained acceptance in IPSC. While acceptable for practical defense, the change from the first long double-action stroke to the lighter single action trigger inhibits the accuracy needed to win matches.

Holsters are invariably either cross-draw or a strong-hip draw design. In the case of the latter, the butt of the gun usually has a marked backward rake and is worn just forward on the hip. One thing that has yet to gain favor in IPSC shooting is the scoped sighting system like the Aimpoint. No doubt this is due to their bulk and the fact that, with the emphasis on speed at close range, it is difficult to get on target fast with such devices.

Looking back over the last ten years, it is remarkable how this sport has grown. When I was in the game, it was just gaining international recognition and in those days you could do well with fairly basic equipment. In the 1976 Rhodesian World Combat team

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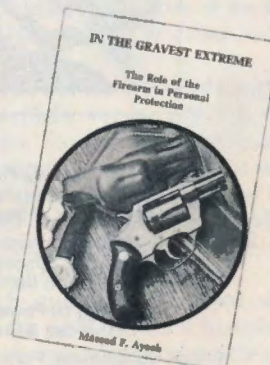
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trials I actually shot my way into the team with a Colt Official Police .38 Special, although I used an auto in the World Championships.

These days the guns and ancillary equipment, like holsters, are far more sophisticated and on a par with that used by the target shooters. Even so, I suspect, as 1981 World Champion Ross Seyfried has demonstrated, what counts in the end is the ability of the man or woman behind the gun rather than how much it has been customized.

This year IPSC competitors from throughout the world will again meet in the U.S. to compete in the 1986 World Championships. Normally, these events are staged every two years which means that this match should have been held in 1985. The reason it was postponed was so that it could be held in the year that IPSC celebrates its tenth birthday.

Based on present performance, the Americans will go into the championships as favorites to win both the team and individual titles. Even so, as I experienced in Austria way back in 1976, unknowns can upset the apple cart. All that is certain is that, on the tenth anniversary of IPSC Shooting, the competition will be keener and of a higher standard than ever before.



BEEMAN P-1

Continued from page 61

effective as both a target and hunting piece. Although muzzle velocities can vary from gun to gun, the better ones will usually chronograph out to about 600-900 fps for air rifles, and 300-550 fps for air pistols; in comparison, the average BB gun produces a shot in the 250-350 fps range.

Compression can come from either a self-contained source (CO2 cartridge), or by the activation of a compression piston operated by a built-in charging lever. Of these two types of systems, the *spring-air* (spring-loaded piston) is by far the preferred design for match accuracy and performance. The *pump pneumatic* style of airgun is another variation of the compression-type airgun and is probably the one you remember using as a kid; it requires multiple pumps or "strokes" of a lever to store air in a chamber for power. This differs greatly from the spring-air design which only needs one stroke of the charging lever to produce more power and accuracy than the pump pneumatic.

Projectile: Unlike the little copper balls normally associated with the classic smooth-bore BB gun, a top-of-the-line airgun has extremely fine rifling in the barrel and shoots a lead pellet. These pellets usually weigh about 7-13 grains each, depending on style and use, and they are almost always a hollow-base design to allow for better fit against the lands and grooves of the barrel. Pellet heads also come in a variety of shapes, including: hollow-point, wadcutter, and penetrating. These shapes give the modern airgun user an intelligent choice of ammunition for target shooting or hunting, and within the realm of their useful range (8-50 yards) they are very effective and enjoyable.

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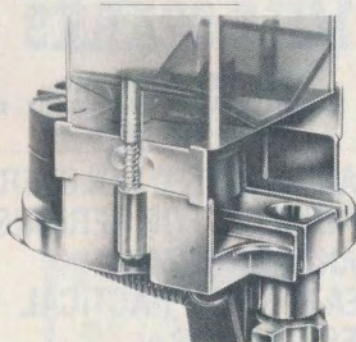
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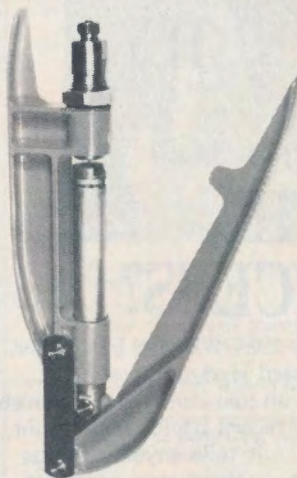
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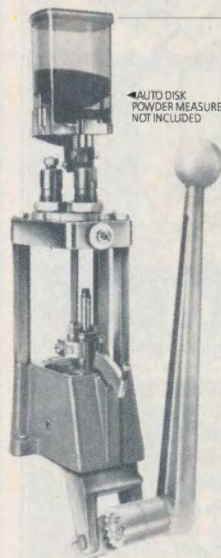


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The most common caliber for airgun pellets is .177 (4.5 mm). Although some guns are chambered for .22 caliber pellets, the virtues of the .177 pellet (accuracy, velocity, trajectory and penetration) far outweigh any imagined disadvantage. As so many shooters are finding out, even in powder-burner ballistics, bigger is not always better.

OK, so maybe modern airguns are accurate and flexible shooting tools, aren't they also famous for looking kind of funny, compared to "real" guns? The truth is, although many well made air rifles look and feel like a typical .22 rifle, air pistols have always looked like something out of a Buck Rogers movie; that was until Beeman Precision arms, of San Rafael, California, came up with their PI MAGNUM. Built around the classic and ever popular lines of the Colt .45 Auto, the PI is a natural for the handgun enthusiast who is looking for a low cost answer to field, target and training shooting.

The PI is built in West Germany where, not surprisingly, the world's best airguns come from. Under the direction of Beeman's designers, the German Connection has produced a state-of-the-art airgun that is uniquely suited to the American market. Even though the basic style of this air pistol is unlike anything else available today, the overall quality and features are such that the PI is turning heads everywhere it shows up.

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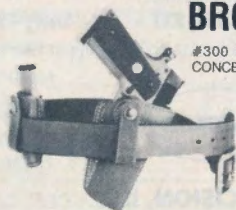
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favored by many combat shooters. That's because the angle and size of the PI's grip was made identical to that of "Ol' Slab-Side"; an important consideration for serious fans of the .45 auto who want to maintain the familiar feel of their favorite weapon even when they practice off the range. Another plus of the Beeman PI is the addition of a rearward expanding spring to gently simulate the effect of recoil. Obviously, it will not duplicate the raw action of a "full-house" IPSC load, but for training purposes, the slight jump is helpful.

Another key point that sets the PI apart from other air pistols is its DUAL POWER spring-piston: a two-stage cocking mechanism that allows for two distinct power settings. The low setting (350-400 fps) is for indoor accuracy training, while the high setting (500-600 fps) is ideal for field use and long range targets. It should be noted that the energy generated by the PI's upper setting makes it the *most powerful* air pistol on the market today. And because the PI is a technically efficient spring-air design, *one stroke* of the cocking lever (18 lbs) is all that is needed to achieve maximum power.

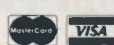
The folks at Beeman spared no effort in trying to make the PI attractive; every detail has been carefully thought out with the adult shooter in mind. For instance, even though the PI is an airgun in every case, the necessary prerequisites are incorporated in a design that is noticeably shorter and more pleasing to the eye than conventional air pistols. This breakthrough allows the PI to

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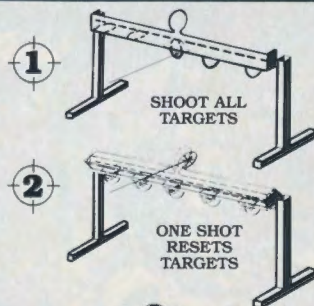
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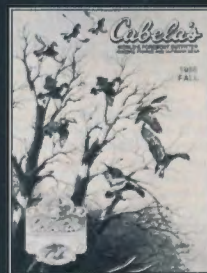
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the 10-ring a ridiculous 7/16-inch. The targets were tapped to a sturdy cardboard box stuffed with newspaper and set up on a family-room sofa. You certainly couldn't do this with your favorite rim-fire or center-fire!

It took a few shots to get used to the trigger and sights, but once zeroed in, the results were far better than could have been imagined; even a world-class shooter could have fun with the PI. In a very short time, 3/8-inch center-to-center five shot groups were emerging (two-hand hold, laying over a padded foot stool at 15-feet). This was clearly moot evidence that airguns are indeed accurate within their effective range.

The message that came through after about an hour of intense shooting (be forewarned that this kind of shooting is addicting) is that airguns are the answer to a plinker's dream. If you are just learning how to shoot, the PI is ideal for teaching the basics without having to worry about the shock of muzzle blast and noise. If you already know how to shoot, then the PI will help you fine-tune your technique right down to a gnat's butt. The gun is literally capable of shooting better than you can hold, and if you don't do everything exactly by the book, those tiny little pellets won't stay inside those tiny little bullseyes. It can certainly be aggravating sometimes, but you can learn quite a bit about precision marksmanship with a Beeman PI, and you can do it without having to pay an arm and a leg for ammo or range fees.

If you still have your doubts about the benefits—and fun—of using an airgun, do

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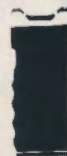
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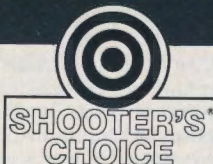
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LES BAER'S .45

Continued from page 59

crimped to 1.165 and 1.240 inches respectively. Velocities are in the vicinity of 800 fps from a standard 5-inch Gold Cup barrel. Hardball reloads would consist of the same charge under a Hornady 230 grain round-nose, again taper crimped to 1.270 inches. In all cases CCI's #300 primer was used in concert with once fired Winchester brass.

The above mentioned loads have performed perfectly in my combat tuned Gold Cup that I use in IPSC matches here in New England. They have been matched to this pistol in such a way that functioning and reliability have been faultless with accuracy taking out the "X" ring at 25 yards in a rest.

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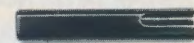
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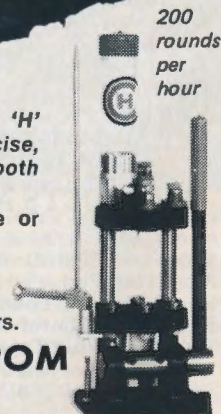
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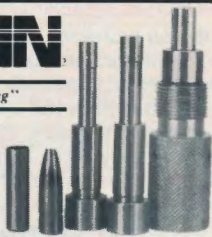
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shooting, I was anxious to see if my loads could turn in groups at 50 yards that Les Baer advertises (and promises) at 2 1/2 inches or less. Scooping up my Ransom Rest, some additional factory ammo, targets and my long underwear, I braved the near 30 degree weather.

After loading the gun into the grip inserts, I fired 10 rounds to clear the gun and settle her into the rest. With everything cinched down and lined up, five rounds of Remington's 230 grain hardball flew downrange to the 50 yard target. Looking through my Bushnell spotting scope, I couldn't believe my eyes. To my horror, five shots splattered into a group measuring 5 1/2 inches across. This just couldn't be for a gun so tuned, so refined! Yet there was the proof.

Checking the rest for movement against previously established witness marks, I saw no evidence of movement in the fixture. Although it wasn't a still day as a slight breeze was blowing from the west, however, surely not enough to blow a 230 grain bullet around at a mere 50 yards!

Chalking that series up to fickle fate, I again loaded the gun with another hardball offering, this time in that handloaded number over 5.7 grains of #231. Once again, 5-inch groups of worse. Next, another reload capped off with Sierra's 200 grain FPJ Match bullet. Bingo! I then hit paydirt with a five span measuring 2 1/4 inches center to center. Feeling much better about the whole situation, I popped in five more, again handloaded, but with Hornady's 200 grain FMJ-C/T bullet. This particular grouping went into a circle a mere 1 3/4 inches wide.

It was getting pretty obvious that the Baer gun did not like hardball.

Based on the assumption that particular bullet types and loads act differently in all guns, and to say that I was pleased with the gun and its accuracy potential once the proper combination was found, I can recommend Les Baer's work to those of you interested in such services.



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RALPH KENNEDY, GUN DESIGNER 1937-1986

Ralph Kennedy is dead at 48. By now most of you are wondering, "Who is Ralph Kennedy?" There is little chance that, outside the firearms industry, his name or accomplishments would be known. Not that they shouldn't be—that's just the way things work. Ralph was an engineer and firearms designer. His designs were the property of the companies that employed him, but some of the things he did are with many of us who shoot every day. When we see a new gun or feature, it is associated with the manufacturer.

But there is always a guy at a drawing board who thought it up. Ralph was one of those.

Perhaps the biggest engineering challenge in firearms manufacture is problem solving; know in the trade as, "firefighting." This was one of Ralph's best talents.

Firearms manufacturing is a rather small, closely knit, family and Ralph was something of a restless spirit. So, during his career he worked for Colt, Smith & Wesson, High Standard, Dan Wesson, and Mossberg but his loyalty always seemed strongest for Colt and it is there that he made some of his most important designs.

The collet barrel bushing of the Government Model and the safety of the .22 single-actions were his. At High Standard he participated in the design of the Crusader and steel frame Sentinel revolvers and at S&W he led a team involved in a major R&D project but, in this day of design-by-committee, it's just about impossible for anyone at one of the major companies to have a whole gun to call his own. Individual engineers often have responsibility for part of a design, but the whole package will represent the work of many men.

The temptation is strong to use the phrase, "unsung hero," but Ralph would have fussed at that. He would have said he was just doing his job.



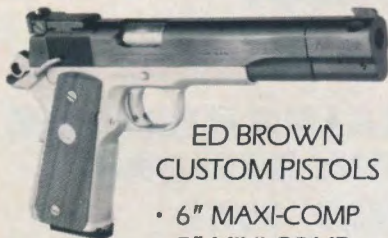
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DECADE OF DESIGN

Continued from page 44

makes a .45 Auto, the Model 645, and the little 9mm Model 669, both in DA and stainless steel. Sturm, Ruger & Company announced their P-85, a 9mm DA with all of the new-wave features, but it has been delayed by last-minute design changes.

Neat Nines and Such

In this time, Beretta began a progression that started with the Model 92, then went through the Model 92S, 92SB, and finally the Model 92SB-F, which became our new military sidearm for all services. Their newest is the Model 86, a .380 which combines the features of the Model 85BB with the tip-up barrel of their smaller .25 and .22 pistols. In Austria, the 9mm Glock 17 became the standard army weapon, and aroused much interest because of its plastic frame and semi-double-action trigger system.

Other intriguing new developments include the 9mm Walther P88 and the Berardelli PO18/9. Korriphila and Korth have new pistols that are in the custom-built class, and Paul Sokolovsky is still making his elegant .45 Automaster. In the serious target pistols, one Hämmerli now has an electronic trigger system. It has been a very interesting ten years.



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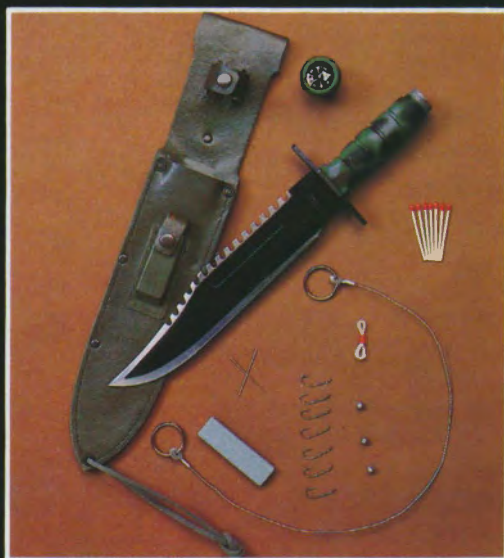
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GUNS

MUSTANG .380

By Dave Arnold



The newest foal in the Colt stables is a spry little Mustang destined to be a thoroughbred.



To celebrate its 150th anniversary, Colt has introduced a number of new handguns. One of these is the Mustang, a scaled down version of the .380 Government Model pocket pistol. Actually, the .380 Government Model is itself a new design, having been introduced only a few years ago. Like the Government Model, the new Mustang is presently available with either a blue or nickel finish.

The .380 Government Model is small enough, even for a pocket pistol. However, it is relatively large when compared with the new Mustang which is $\frac{1}{2}$ inch shorter in length and about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch smaller in height. So compact is the Mustang ($5\frac{1}{2}$ inches long, $18\frac{1}{2}$ ozs. heavy) that it virtually fits in the palm of the hand and the only smaller auto in .380 that I know of is the AMT Back-Up.

As far as appearances are concerned, the little auto is a handsome pistol. It is well proportioned and the polished flat sides contrast nicely with the dull, sand-blasted, rounded surfaces. The stocks are of tough checkered black plastic with a silver Colt medallion in the middle.

Obviously, in reducing its size, some sacrifices have had to be made, the most significant being magazine capacity which has been

reduced from 7 to 5 (or 8 to 6 if a round is carried in the chamber).

The close relationship between the Mustang and the .380 Government Model becomes apparent when they are viewed side by side. Both are single-action semi-automatic pistols that operate with a locked breech. Sights are fixed and the magazine release catch is located in the usual position on the left side of the frame just behind the trigger.

The manual safety is located on the left side at the rear of the frame. The pistol also has Colt's new firing pin safety (Series 80) which locks the firing pin until the trigger is pulled far enough back to release the hammer. After the last shot has been fired, the slide remains locked open. It can be released by depressing the slide stop which is placed on the left side of the frame, just above the trigger.

The internal lockwork is also the same except for the manner in which the barrel mates with the front of the slide. Instead of the removable barrel bushing employed by the .380 Government Model and the larger .45s, the barrel of the Mustang is mated directly to the slide. This makes the take down of the pistol for cleaning and maintenance a little different and simpler. After removing the magazine and pulling back the slide to ensure the chamber is empty, one simply removes the slide stop and pulls the entire slide/barrel/recoil spring assembly forward off the frame. The recoil spring

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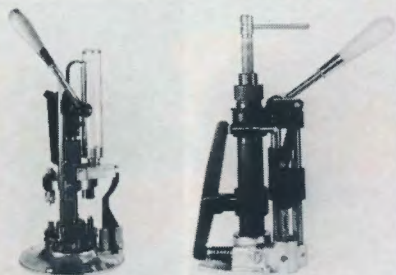
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guide assembly and finally the barrel can then be removed from the bottom of the slide.

Having a shorter grip makes the little Mustang a tad more difficult to get-a-hold-of. On the other hand, it has the generous tang, just like the .380 Government Model, that protects the web of the hand from hammer bite. The fixed sights are also well defined and easy to pick up—an important feature for a small pistol. The trigger pull on the pistol I had was quite good being relatively crisp and required around 7 lbs. of pressure to drop the hammer.

There are those who scorn small pistols like the Mustang, mainly because almost all are chambered for the .25 ACP cartridge. Being small and low powered, this round leaves a lot to be desired as a self-defense cartridge. However, the Mustang has an edge over similar pistols in that it is chambered for the bigger .380 cartridge. While not the greatest round for defense, this cartridge will do the job and ballistically compares favorably with the .38 Special when fired from two-inch snubby revolvers. In recent years, the potency of the .380 has been given a boost with the introduction of fast light weight expanding bullets like semi-jacketed hollow-points and Winchester Silvertips.

In spite of its diminutive size, I found the Mustang was surprisingly easy to shoot. The ammunition used in the test was Federal FMJ and JHP together with Winchester Silvertips and the pistol digested all of them without any trouble. Admittedly, I did initially experience

a few mis-feeds with the Federal JHPs with the slide not going completely into battery. However, after I had shot about 20 rounds, the pistol settled down and there were no further stoppages.

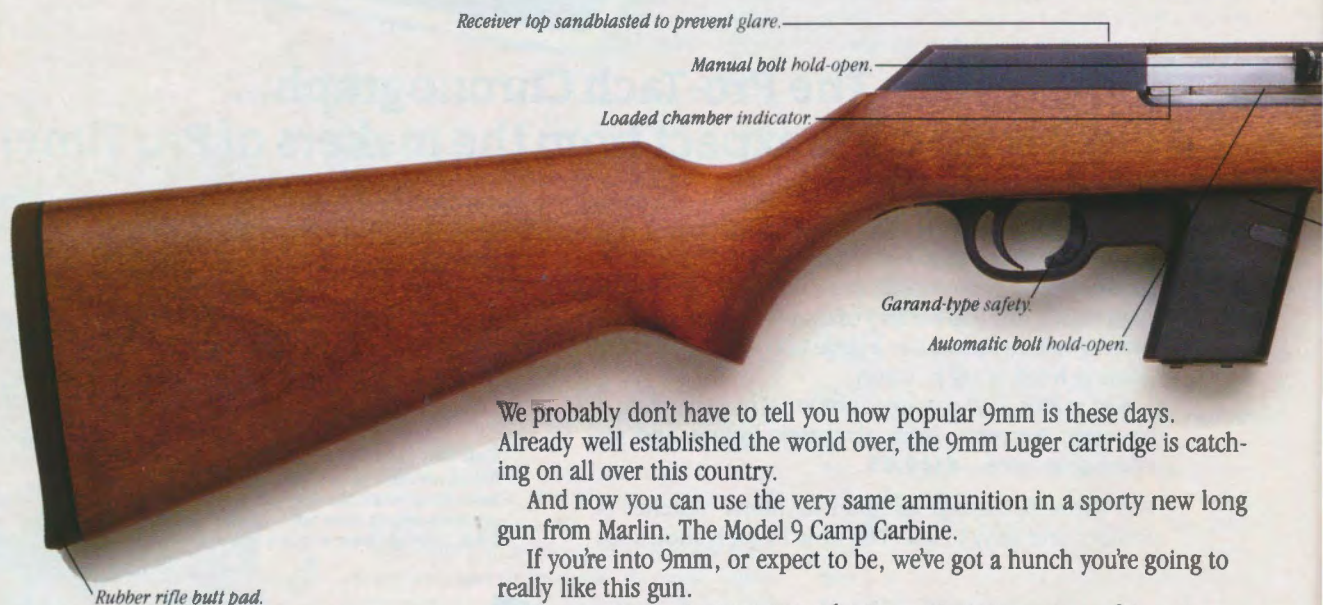
Only one other slight problem was encountered and that was with the manual safety. Fairly early during the test I found that my thumb inadvertently applied the safety during firing. This was rectified by changing the position of my grip so that my thumb rested on top of the safety instead of underneath it.

In spite of its small grip, the little auto had very little recoil. Recovery was quick during rapid fire strings and I had no difficulty in keeping my shots in a fairly respectable group on a man-size target at distances up to 15 yards. Accuracy was also good. From an improvised bench rest at this same distance, I managed to shoot a 2½ inch, five shot group using federal 95 grain JHPs.

All in all, the Mustang is an impressive little handgun. It is well made, accurate, reliable and very easy to shoot. It is also very compact, and is chambered for a fairly effective defense cartridge. With the revival in popularity of pocket autos, it should do as well as the larger .380 Government Model. Suggested retail price for the Mustang is just under \$350 and further information can be obtained from Colt Firearms, Dept. AH, 150 Huyshope Ave., Hartford, CT, 06102.



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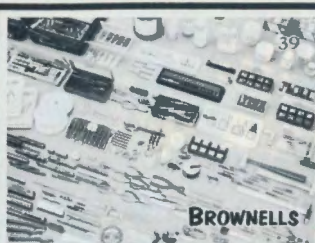
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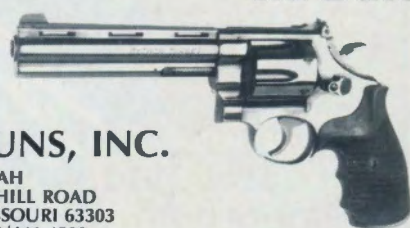
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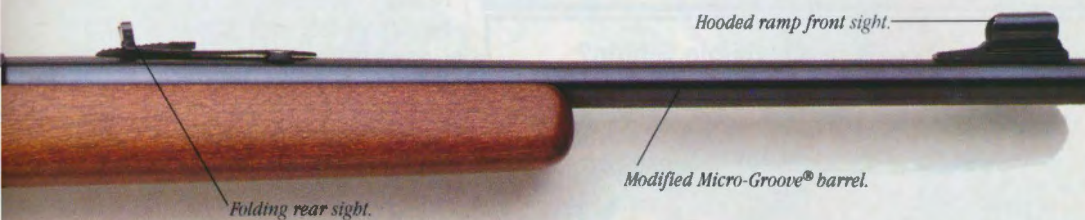
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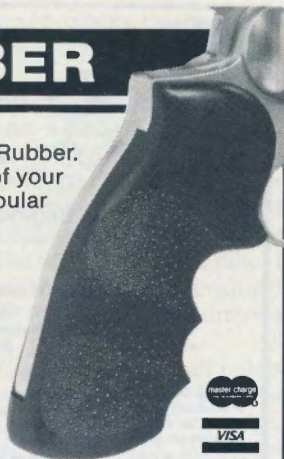
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CONVERSATION

Continued from page 40

course that we run on weekends, a five-day intermediate pistol course for people who are a little more serious about learning defensive tactics, and an advanced pistol course that goes very deeply into techniques and methods. We have a police survival course open only to police officers, and we do a lot of work with special military units.

JW: How much personal involvement do you have in teaching the classes?

RC: I teach all the intermediate and advanced police survival courses. Our instructors teach familiarization, shotgun and handgun courses. We have one morning of lecturing on the first day of each of the courses. From then on, I do all the demonstrations and additional lecturing right on the range.

JW: When you receive an inquiry from a prospective student who's just starting out and doesn't own a gun, what do you recommend he buy?

RC: It depends on what he wants to do with the gun and why he's taking the course. If the gun is for home protection or if he's entering a job in which he's going to carry a weapon, I'll recommend a good quality revolver. If he plans to get into competition, I'll suggest a .45 semi-automatic.

JW: Is there such an animal as an all-around choice for a carry gun?

RC: There are a lot of things to consider when you carry a gun for self-defense. For one thing, you're going to be excited when you're forced to use it, your adrenalin starts flowing, you lose fine motor coordination, so you can't have a light trigger. I recommend 3½ to 4 pounds. High-visibility sights are a must, and night sights are very important because most gunfights occur at night. My holster pistols—my Officer's Model, my Commanders, my five-inch Government models—all have night sights.

Every person has to be evaluated individually. Most women would not be comfortable carrying a .45. A woman needs something she can control, because three or four well placed shots are better than one or two fast, hot misses.

On the other hand, a big, strong guy who can handle a .45 should have one because I think the .45 is the best fighting handgun ever made. But it isn't for everybody. Some people are better off with a revolver because they can't master the techniques of shooting a semi-automatic pistol. Most beginners do much better with a revolver because they don't have to think about anything except picking the weapon up, putting the sight on the target and stroking the trigger. They don't have to worry about taking safeties off or keeping their finger off the trigger. They can concentrate on sight picture and stroke the trigger. But after they've practiced for a while and they've learned how to handle it, they'll always shoot better with the semi-automatic.



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IPSC WORLD CHAMPION

Interview by John Toppenberg



The 1981 IPSC World Champion speaks out on practical shooting, Jeff Cooper and IPSC shooting today.

AH: When did you first get serious about the .45?

RS: I was about 27 when I got a Swenson Commander. It was the gun I used to win the Rocky Mountain Championship and qualify for the U.S. Nationals in 1977. I still carry that gun.

AH: When you first entered IPSC competition, did you have the World Championship in mind?

RS: Not really. It was the great elusive butterfly; something to strive for. After the World Championship in 1979, when I was third and won the man-on-man competition, I thought I had shot well enough to win with one very glaring mistake. This made me pretty dangerous in 1981. I was prepared to win then, and did.

AH: Do you have any concerns for the future of IPSC?

RS: I think so. I owe it a great deal because it's done a lot for my life. I'm concerned that people now involved in IPSC are viewing it from too narrow a scope—taking it too personally. They seem to be afraid to look beyond where they are now and their own personal goals to what shooting could be.

AH: Where can shooting go?

RS: Because shooting carries a public stigma, it's not going to be easy. Given the right public relations, the right spokesman, the right image, and constant nurturing, it can become at least a minor athletic sport, as related to tennis or golf.

It has to be cultivated beyond shooting and shooters. It has to go to the man or woman who doesn't shoot, but does enjoy athletic endeavor of any kind. It has to be a good show with marketable spectator appeal.

AH: What kind of public relations should we strive for relative to practical shooting?

RS: It's two-fold. First, we must speak to the media that covers sports and let them know that practical shooting is a sport. Explain to them what we are doing and why.

Secondly, I think we need to enhance the visibility of the tournaments. We need to use electronic timers that are visible to the spectators and continue our efforts toward visual targets and create an atmosphere of suspense that a spectator can immediately appreciate without it having to be explained.

AH: The NRA, through Jeff Cooper, will be coming out with a new practical program for

The NRA has no idea of what the practical use of arms is. Jeff Cooper, on the other hand, has an idealized view of what it should be.

rifle, shotgun and handguns. What are your thoughts on that?

RS: I fear a battle between the two extremes in practical shooting. The NRA has no idea of what the practical use of arms is. Jeff Cooper, on the other hand, has an idealized view of what it should be. While the NRA would probably like to ignore power factoring and holster rules, Jeff would have rules to govern these, as well as the guns themselves. Most of these things are best left alone—or controlled through course design.

I do hope some of these things can be worked out and the sport allowed to advance as it should. The potential of practical shooting is tremendous.

AH: Jeff Cooper has been the guiding light behind many advances in small arms techniques. What are your observations on his accomplishments?

RS: I consider him a great friend—a good enough friend that I have the audacity to disagree with him. Jeff was a great supporter

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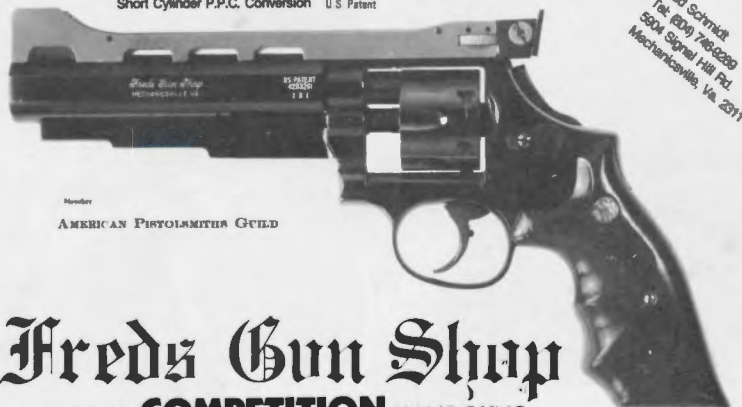
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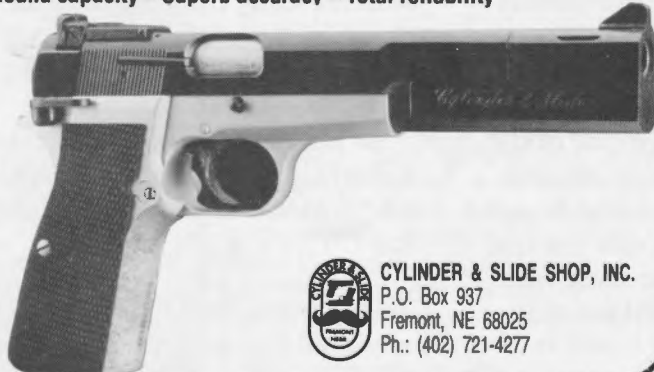
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of me in my competition. In order to preserve what Jeff set out to do, I feel he has made errors in being overly conservative in what he will publicly condone.

He still loves competition and it bothers him to see it go as far as it has toward the "gamesman" aspect of the sport—and he is right in many ways. A large misunderstanding has been directed toward Jeff by those that would have allowed movement away from the basics of accuracy, power and speed.

Jeff has found it necessary to counter-balance that by perhaps going too far toward the "martial artist" aspect. It is important for the world to know that he understands; it's just difficult for us to think on his level.

AH: Any chance of your re-entering competition?

RS: Not only no—but Hell No!

AH: What's your reason for that?

RS: Once I had satisfied my desires in competitive shooting, there wasn't much left. I still love the game, but I have too much pride to just come out and shoot at any level of preparation or skill.

AH: What are your thoughts on the current state of evolvement of competition handguns?

RS: There is a great injustice being done here. Guns are being given credit for winning—but guns are not winning, people are.

Guns can be modified to complement a shooter's skill, but compared to all the other factors that go into winning, the degree of advantage is minute.

A winning gun must be reliable, have a sophisticated trigger, a magazine that will allow rapid reloads and the best sights obtainable. Outwardly, the gun I won the World Championship with was fairly unsophisticated. Yet inwardly, it was among the best in the world.

The greatest loss in all of this is the new competitor who is threatened by all the ported, extended muzzle gimmick guns that he now believes are essential to win. In truth, he can win with much less gun, and a little more determination.

AH: Any recommendations for an aspiring practical competitor?

RS: Buy lots of primers, powder, brass and bullets. One thing is essential—if you get close to winning, don't try to buy the last step with equipment. Beat the problem mentally, not with equipment.

AH: Do you have any specific goals at this point in your life?

RS: First, I would like to someday look at myself as a professional hunter in Africa and say that I had enough skill to make myself happy. It's an incredible challenge.

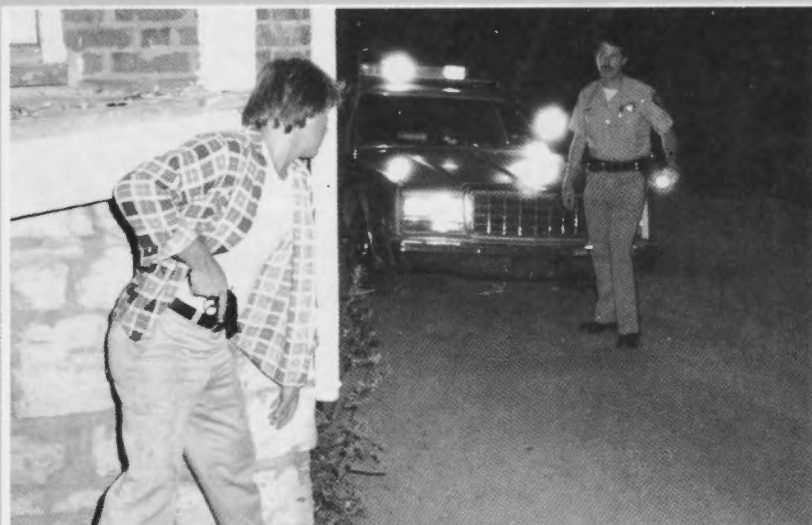
I would like, through my efforts as a writer, to be able to turn around shooting and advance it beyond what it has ever been, to where it's again publicly acceptable. Not only tournament shooting, but also hunting. I would like to try to ensure that that which we love—the shooting sports—not only continues to exist, but even grows.



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DO COMPENSATORS AFFECT ACCURACY?

By Charles E. Petty

As a novice to combat shooting I embarked upon the "Do It Yourself Comp Gun" (*American Handgunner* Nov./Dec., 1985) project with a great deal of enthusiasm. As I built the gun I used the same principles, although deliberately a little looser, that I have used for years in building bullseye guns. I was naturally curious about what effect, if any, hanging that compensator off the end of the barrel would have on accuracy.

To a bullseye purist, accuracy is determined by at least three 10-shot groups from a machine rest at 50 yards. A good gun should shoot groups no larger than the ten-ring of a bullseye target.

Before you scoff that such accuracy isn't required for combat, isn't it logical that the measure of accuracy should be at the longest range normally encountered? Some IPSC matches have shots at 50 yards and there seems to be a trend toward longer shots in some matches. A friend told me about a match with an 80 yard stop plate. If the gun is capable of only eight-inch groups and you have to try to hit an eight-inch "A" ring, the odds may be against you. In any case, every shooter needs all the help he can get. He's got enough to worry about with his own performance. He should not have to be afraid that his gun may launch one into the next county on its own. So, within the limits of price and reliability, IPSC guns need to be capable of reasonable accuracy. To paraphrase Townsend Whelen, "Only accurate pistols are interesting."

In the course of talking to other gunsmiths I got conflicting opinions about the effect of compensators. Some said there would be none, while others said the thing wouldn't shoot for beans. Obviously I had to find out for myself. One of the people who said there would be no effect was Bill Wilson and, since he sells two different compensator kits that use the same barrel, I asked him if he would furnish one of the comps from his Comp-II kit. That way I would be able to test the effect of two different comps (I had already bought the LE-K kit that I used for the article) on the same gun. If there was any effect on accuracy, this would show it for sure.

As I see it there are two possible adverse effects. In order for the compensator principle to be effective the outer hole of the expansion chamber must be as small as possible and I have seen some that were only a few thousandths over nominal bore diameter. That means that there must be a truly parallel relationship between the bore and comp. If it isn't, there is a chance that the bullet can hit the comp with the predictable result of sending the whole thing flying downrange.

A second cause for concern is that the muzzle of the barrel must be absolutely square and perpendicular to the bore. It would obviously be hard to measure, but if it weren't there would be a chance for gas to escape unevenly around the bullet as it leaves the barrel and a yaw effect could be produced. The recessed crowns seen on PPC guns and some automatics are an effort to insure this relationship. In either case, precise machining is required.

My test was really rather simple. I shot the gun, as built, with the LE-K comp in place; removed it and shot the gun again (without ever taking it out of the Ransom rest) and then went back to the bench, installed the Comp-II, and shot it again. Each series fired three 10-round groups with four different types of ammunition: Federal 230 gr. ball, Winchester 230 gr. ball, Federal 185 gr. wadcutter and Winchester 185 gr. wadcutter. For the purposes of the test I used only factory ammunition. I was trying to reduce variables to a minimum so, although reloads are a logical topic for further investigation, I chose not to use them this time. In other words, everything was done to keep the tests as simple and objective as possible. The weather was the same both days, and wind was not a factor.

Any difference in accuracy would be caused by the comp. As a further check, I fired several groups through a bullseye gun that has been repeatedly machine rested and whose accuracy potential is well known. It delivered consistent 2½" groups and convinced me that the ammo, and my machine rest technique, were up to par. As you can see from the accompanying table, there is no practical difference between the three sets of conditions. Obviously, based on testing only one manufacturer's comp, I can't conclude that all makes will shoot the same way, but it is encouraging to note the similarity of results here. Even though accuracy may not be a primary goal of practical shooting, I think this shows that it is possible to have a compensated gun capable of near bullseye accuracy that still functions flawlessly (as this one does). Shooter's egos are sometimes fragile things and some will need to be able to blame the gun, but the majority will be reassured to know that a major variable has been removed.

Average of three ten-shot groups (inches)

AMMO	NO COMP	LE-K	ACCU-COMP II
Federal W/C	3.5	3.2	3.6
Winchester W/C	3.75	3.4	2.8
Federal ball	3.5	3.75	3.75
Winchester ball	3.2	3.8	3.75

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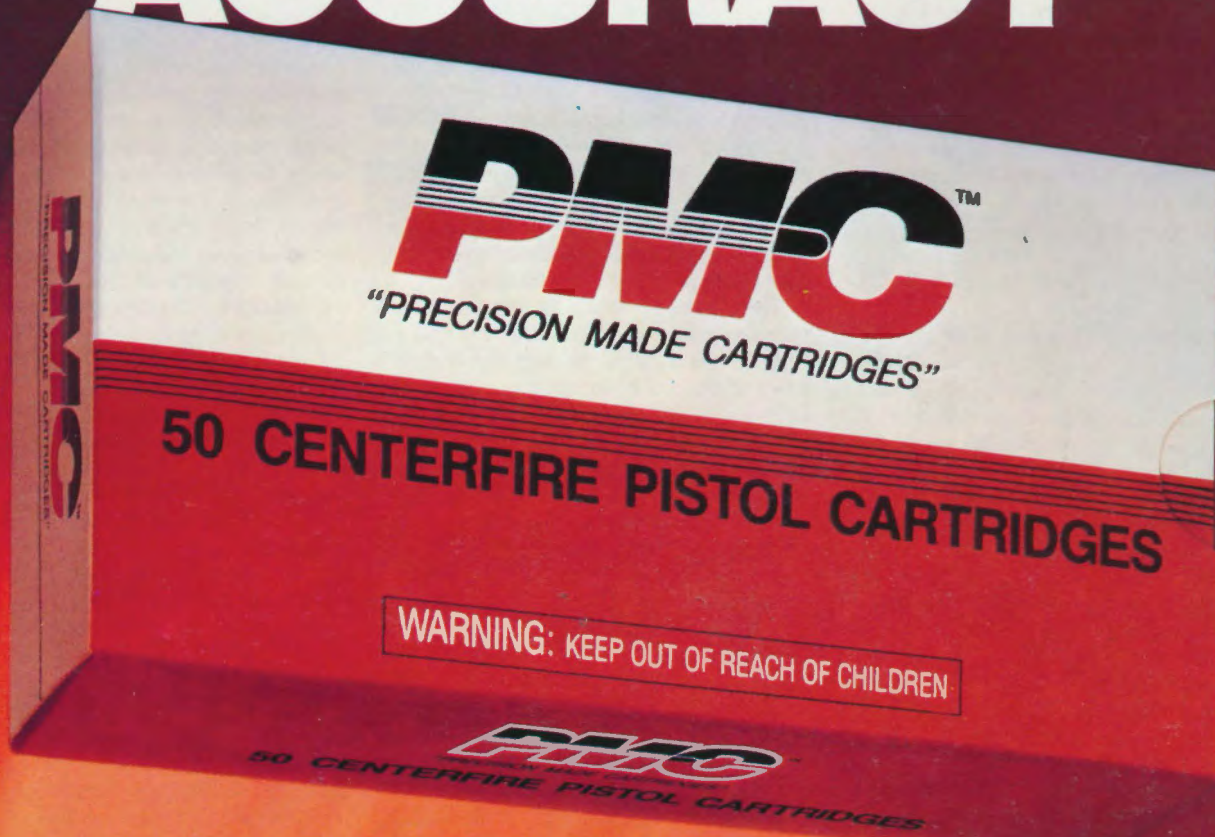
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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

WATCH OUT FOR BAD, BAD HANDGUNS; IPSC TURNS TO S&W AS SECOND CHOICE

I'm going to use this space to take a handgunner's look at the McClure-Volkmer Firearms Owners Protection Act recently passed by the House of Representatives. While the rest of the pro-gun people are claiming a victory, we handgunners got a slap in the face.

The bill provides, among other things, that rifles and shotguns can now be traded or purchased out of state in face-to-face situations. But not handguns!

This means that a guy who wants to buy an Uzi carbine can go to another state and purchase one, as long as the transaction is made face-to-face, and the purchase does not violate any of the laws of the seller's or purchaser's state.

But the guy who wants to purchase a .45 auto out of state—he has to go through all of the bureaucratic red tape fostered by the GCA 68.

In watching the political gyrations during the hearings on the McClure-Volkmer bill, I learned some "truths" from the anti-gunners who testified. I learned for instance that there are "good" guns and "bad" guns. Handguns, I was told, are "bad" guns, but there are also bad, "bad" guns.

The guns that turned the Shields and Brady

families into anti-gun advocates were bad guns, and because they were handguns, they were bad, bad guns.

If this kick in the butt of handgunners does nothing else, it should emphasize the need for all of us to separate the sporting use of handguns from the criminal use. We can do this by our words, by our deeds, by the image we project, and by our participation in local, state and federal legislative battles.

There were a hell of a lot of handgunners who donated time, skills and money into the fight for passage of the McClure-Volkmer bill, and attained the lifting of restrictions for riflemen and shotgunners. I hope long gunners don't forget this fact when the handgunners are faced with the fight to give us as much freedom as others.

In the meantime, because I learned that there are good guns and bad guns, I'm going to try to get some of those so-called experts to examine my gun collection. I want them to tell me which of my guns are good and which are bad. I sure as hell don't want one of my bad guns to go out and commit a crime while I'm not looking.

S&W's IPSC Model 647

The following letter was received regarding our report of the limited run of Smith &

Wesson pistols for the IPSC 10th Anniversary.

American Handgunner:

Re. Your issue of March-April, 1986—*Industry Insider.*

Regarding our agreement with Smith & Wesson, I would like to inform you that the number of 647 to be manufactured will be a first series of 5,000 which will be followed by a second series, also of 5,000.

In no case will more than 10,000 (be) manufactured for the IPSC Shooters all around the world.

As to the question of why did such a deal be concluded with Smith & Wesson and not with Colt, I would like to inform you that the deal was proposed to Colt in November 1984, where the general idea was to link our 10th Anniversary with the 150th Anniversary of Colt.

The general idea was accepted by Gary French, President, and Bob Platkin, Marketing Manager, but after several letters where details of the future guns were finalized, I received a letter from Keith McKenzie, Manager of the Custom Gun Shop of Colt, who unfortunately informed me that Colt had to withdraw from the proposed deal.

Immediately after receiving this letter, contact was made with Mr. Richard Mackney (of Smith and Wesson) who was extremely helpful in developing the 647 commemorative pistol to our specifications and arranging the whole deal.

I am sure that the above information will be helpful.

J. P. Denis, President
International Practical Shooting
Confederation
Brussels, Belgium

A Look Ahead

In writing this part of the column it is difficult if not impossible for me to separate the *American Handgunner* from handgunning, for where handgunning goes, that's where the magazine will follow. Hopefully, there may even be such times in the future when we will lead, not follow, the course of handgunning.

In my dreams of the future, I can see the 20th Anniversary issue of the *Handgunner*, wherein the president of the Coalition of Handgun Shooting Sports (comprising delegations from IPSC, NRA Action Shooting, IHMSA, PPC, Steel Challenge, Handgun Hunters International, yes, and even Western Fast Draw) sends us a letter of congratulations on our 20th year.

I see this coalition as a major force in the promotion and promulgation of handgunning. Even more, I see this coalition, with its million members, as a forceful educational and lobbying group.

I see it with its own cable TV show—hell, as long as we're dreaming, its own cable TV network.

Of course, this would mean that the practical shooters would have to stop sneering at the gamesmen, and the gamesmen would try a bit of handgun hunting before condemning it. This would also mean a commissioner with the wisdom of Solomon. But it sure sounds great to me.



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