

HANDGUNNER

Inside scoop! Army botched 9mm tests

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MARCH / APRIL 1988

AMERICAN

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67522 T&E

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- Colt 10mm Delta Elite
- Ruger "Big Red" .44 Magnum
- Texas Longhorn .44 Magnum

HANDGUNNER EXCLUSIVE!

S&W Olympic Rapid Fire Pistol, a .22 Short to bring home the gold!



You Are There!

Exciting action at the IPSC Nationals

THE TRUTH

about the .357 Maximum

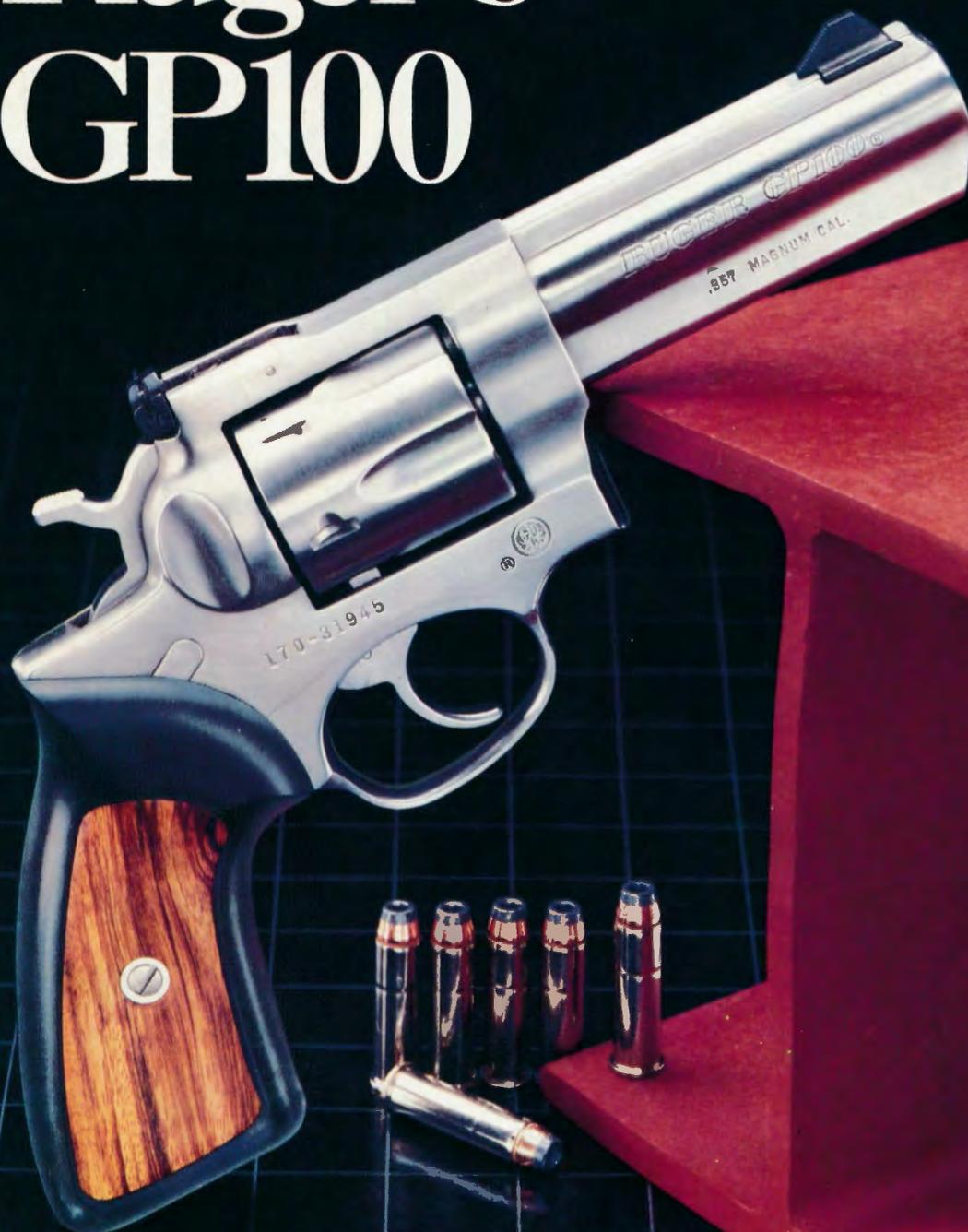
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Ruger's GP100



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**STURM, RUGER
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The first Commemorative .45 ever issued to honor the U.S. Army simultaneously marks the retirement of this beloved "Old Warhorse," the M1911A1 Pistol, after 75 years of stalwart service.



with the prefix "USA;" between 0001 and 1911, for U.S. Army.

This is the military-model .45 M1911A1, and all parts are interchangeable with GI-issued guns; it fires .45 ACP ammo. It is even fitted with a rare and desirable lanyard with gold-plated mounts.

Each pistol is built by the gunsmiths of Thompson/Auto-Ordnance, the company founded by General John T. Thompson, who developed the .45 auto-loading cartridge, helped develop the .45 pistol and who invented the Thompson Sub machine Gun. NRA test firings of their .45 show accuracy "significantly better than the average."

To proudly wall mount or desktop display this museum quality firearm, a velvet lined, furniture-finished walnut case, measuring 14" x 8" x 3" is available. The glass lid and the concealed lock protect your investment from dust and unauthorized handling.

Three other .45 commemoratives, honoring the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force, are also available. Each has different exotic wood grips, historical etchings, medallions, lanyard and case liner colors and serial number prefixes appropriate to each service branch, to make all four .45s

full refund.

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- in four monthly payments of \$225. in full.
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- Please personalize my .45, at \$25; send the Engraving Form.

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Address

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The world's most powerful military automatic pistol honors the world's most powerful army!

All the enemies of the Free World in this century have heard the mighty roar and felt the powerful blast of "Old Forty-Five," the most powerful military-issued pistol in history.

Three generations of Americans fought with it—first against the Kaiser, then against the Fuhrer and the Emperor, and twice against the Communists.

If you were born between the late 1800s and 1968, it is the symbol of your time, your day, your age. And future Americans will look back on our time, with reverence, as the ".45 Era."

But now "Old Slabslides" is retiring from the battlefields, replaced by the new 9mm pistol, so we can fire the same ammo as our NATO Allies who don't have the more powerful .45.

How much longer will the .45 be made? No one knows. But while it is, we're proud to salute the Americans of the ".45 Era" by issuing a separate, firing, commemorative .45 in honor of each of the four American armed forces that carried it.

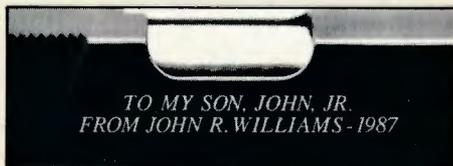
24-Karat Gold Plating

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The worldwide edition limit is only 1,911 guns, in honor of the year it was adopted for military use. This highly restricted limit guarantees rarity and collector value. Even the serial numbers are special,



TO MY SON, JOHN, JR.
FROM JOHN R. WILLIAMS - 1987

Personalized engraving available on right side of slide.

distinctive. Matching serial numbers for all four guns are available, as is a master case that holds and displays all four cases. The entire set of four is called "The Armed Forces Commemorative .45 Collection."

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This is available exclusively from The American Historical Foundation. When you reserve, you will be made a Member. If you do not have a Federal Firearms License, we will coordinate delivery through your local firearms dealer after your reservation is received here. If you have an FFL, send a signed copy with your reservation. Satisfaction is guaranteed or you may return it within 30 days for a

AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

MARCH/APRIL 1988

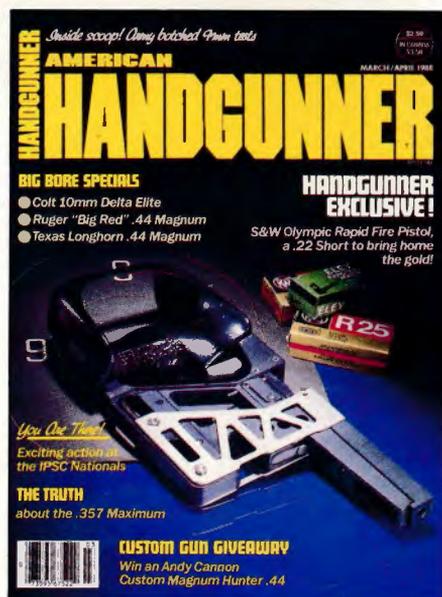
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Cover: S&W's radical new rapid fire pistol to bring home the gold. Photo by David Stansbury.

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PACT MKIII
\$279.00

TRAIN WITH THE BEST

The \$64.00 question

What do shooters like **Rob Letham, Jerry Barnhart, John Pride, Charles Grabbatin, Brian Enos and Chip McCormick** have in common, besides winning a pistol match or two? They all train with PACT Championship Timers. Now let's face it, these guys can have any timer they want. So maybe there's a reason why they choose PACT, over all others, for their vital practice sessions.

Why do I need a timer?

Whether you are training for competition or self defense; if you are going to improve you've got to keep track of the two elements of marksmanship that you are striving to master: **accuracy and speed**. Would you consider practicing without a target? Of course not, because without a target you have no measure of your accuracy. By the same token, without a timer, you have no accurate measurement of your speed and no way to tell if a given technique is helping or hindering your progress.

Of course shooting timers, like guns, are **not created equal**. A well designed shooting timer is an invaluable training aid which will dramatically improve your practice sessions. A poorly designed timer, with functions that are inconvenient or difficult to use, becomes nothing more than an expensive buzz box that distracts you from your shooting each time you use it.



Advanced display

The PACT MKIII features an **advanced 32 character display** instead of the four digit display commonly found on other timers and cheap alarm clocks (sorry guys, but facts are facts). This display allows the MKIII to display **all** of the information about a given shot (shot number, split time, total time) at a glance and eliminates the hassle of having to "toggle" back and forth between functions in order to review your shot string.

Full function keypad

Our 32 character display and 16 key keypad make the MKIII about as easy to use as your pocket calculator. For example to

enter a "PAR TIME" of four seconds, simply push "PAR." the **MKIII will ask you to "ENTER PAR TIME AND PRESS SET"** so you push "4," "SET." Want to change it to six seconds? Push "PAR," "6," "SET," it's that simple!

A few of our features

- A buzzer that's **loud** enough to hear with your earphones on
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- Instant GO or **adjustable** fixed or random delay
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- **Lap** function

- **9 Volt** battery
- Advanced training functions allow simulation of **complex courses of fire**
- Two stop plate inputs. **Man vs Man** mode gives both shooters total times, who won and margin of victory.
- **Auxiliary output** drives relay for horns, lights, moving targets, etc.
- Drives optional battery powered **printer**

\$49.00 Chronograph

"The finest Chronograph I have ever used"
... Ross Seyfried

By having the \$49 CHRONO-MOD (skyscreens included) installed in your MKIII, you enable it to double as the best portable chronograph on the market. When operated as a chronograph, the MKIII performs all of the functions of the PACT Precision Chronograph and includes our new Glint Guard™ pat. pend. detection circuitry. In addition the MKIII will automatically calculate the **power factor** of each round fired.

30 Day Money Back Guarantee

We designed the MKIII, we build it, and we sell it factory direct to you. We take full responsibility for your satisfaction. If you are not 100% satisfied with any PACT product, return it to us undamaged (no fair driving over it) within 30 days, and we will refund your money. That's our promise and you can depend on it.

Lifetime Warranty

The MKIII features a real **simple repair policy**. If it breaks due to a defective part or faulty workmanship we'll **fix it free**. If you break it (people really have driven over them, ask Mickey Fowler) we will fix it for cost. No hassles and no questions asked.

Shop Around & Call Us Last

Before you buy a shooting timer take the time to do a little research. Call the different manufacturers and get their literature. Compare each timer feature for feature and watch out for bizarre operational limitations, like the inability to review shots when using a PAR time or the requirement for two machines to run a Man vs Man event. You'll find that dollar for dollar and feature for feature the PACT MKIII gives you more honest "bang for the buck" than **any** other shooting timer on the market.

Order Today

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Brochure Available covering the PACT product line of shooting timers and chronographs, \$1.00.



P. O. Box 531525
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SPEAK OUT

Crude Comment

I've enjoyed your magazine for some time and, in fact, this month I'm sending a check for a subscription. However, your comment on Robertta Geer (Nov/Dec '87) is tacky in an otherwise classy publication. Enough said.

Ron Lind
Flandreau, S.D.

We sincerely apologize to Mrs. Geer and to our readers. *American Handgunner* regrets the remark.

Where's the Super?

I'm shooting a .38 Super auto now. I know awhile back you published loading data articles using Blue Dot and WW540 for this round. I've since given these issues to friends, how about copies of these articles?

Mike Riley
Decatur, Ill.

An update on handloading for the .38 Super is in this issue on page 71. Please note that we have never published anything on loading Blue Dot in .38 Super and we specifically caution you Super shooters to be aware of possible fluctuations in burning rate from lot to lot. We think that if you try the loads recommended by Charles Petty in this issue, you'll find one that will give you everything you want in your gun.

Reprint Ayoob Files?

I was recently introduced to your *Ayoob Files* by a fellow officer. It was very informative and seemed as though it would

make a good training aid. I was wondering if there has been a compilation made and, if so, how my department could obtain it.

Brint Perera
Corporal
Los Alamos PD, N.M.

The American Handgunner is delighted to grant your department, and any other police agency, permission to reprint *The Ayoob Files* for training purposes. The best source of a compilation of the popular and educational lessons from real-life gun-fights is a stack of back-issues of *American Handgunner*.

Horses and Jockeys

The price limit imposed by IHMSA for production guns goes against my grain. (Between you and me, the heavy slatherings of pro price limit propaganda in the IHMSA newsletter also stuck in my craw.)

Part of the game has been notable advances in guns and cartridges. An arbitrary limit has now been set which may stop some good ideas from going into development, ideas which sooner or later can be incorporated in lower priced hardware.

Strange as it seems, most matches and championships are won with Contenders and Wessons. So much for whatever horses and jockeys have to do with shooting anyway.

Paul McKey
Hamburg, NY

More on the Masters

I just received the Jan/Feb issue and I was most interested in the coverage of the 1987 Masters. I am particularly interested in a description of the course of fire. I would also like to get information on entering the competition.

I have been a subscriber from Issue One, and of all the magazines the *Handgunner* is right at the top.

Larry Gillham
Fair Grove, Mo.

To obtain a complete course of fire and full information on the entry requirements for both Professional and Sportsman classes, write to:

Roy Jinks, Esq.
Match Director
The 1988 Masters
P.O. Box 2208
Springfield, MA
01102-2208

Fabulous Files

A big thanks to your magazine and to Massad Ayoob for *Cop Talk* and *The Ayoob Files*. In the past year or so that *The Ayoob Files* has appeared, it has provided much insight as to the proper tactics that need to be applied in a lethal confrontation, be it a civilian or a police officer involved. Please forward my thanks to Ayoob and please keep up the good work.

Ronald R. King
Melbourne, Fla.

Great Photos

I have been a subscriber for several years since about 1979. When I first started taking your magazine, it was okay but nothing to write home about. In the years since, it has steadily improved. I now look forward to receiving each issue with bated breath. I take nearly all the gun magazines and yours is easily the best.

I think your best features would have to be those beautiful photos, particularly of the fancy custom guns. I have often heard it said that most people cannot afford guns like that, and that is no doubt true. However, I still like to look at them!

Secondly, I like your *Custom Gun Giveaway*. Realistically, I know the odds are greatly against my ever winning, but hope springs eternal.

I think you are doing a splendid job. I would like to see the magazine go monthly, but perhaps there are considerations that I am not aware of. At any rate, keep up the good work!

John D. Harris
Springfield, Mo.

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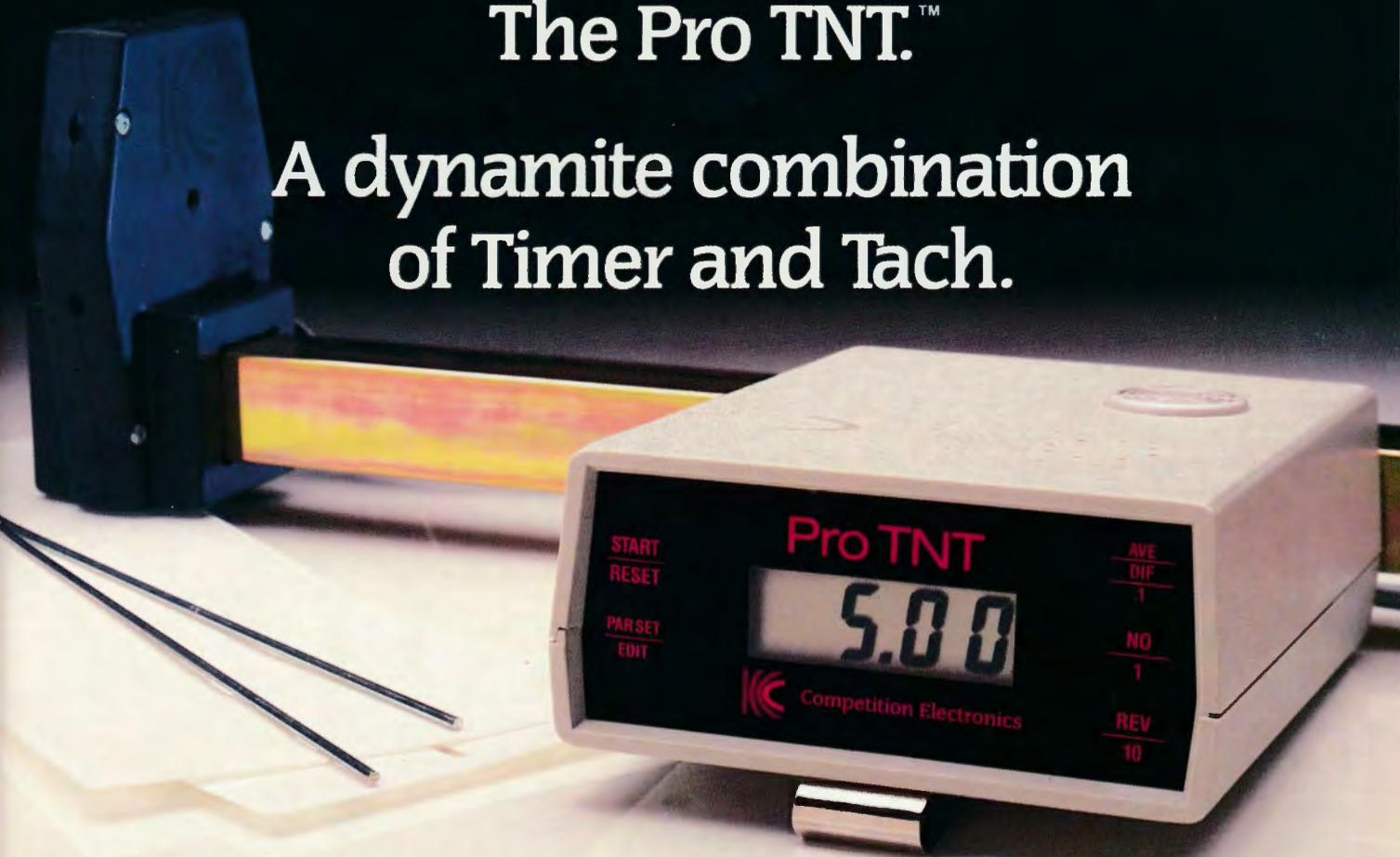
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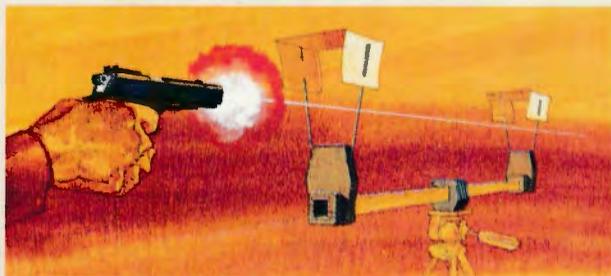
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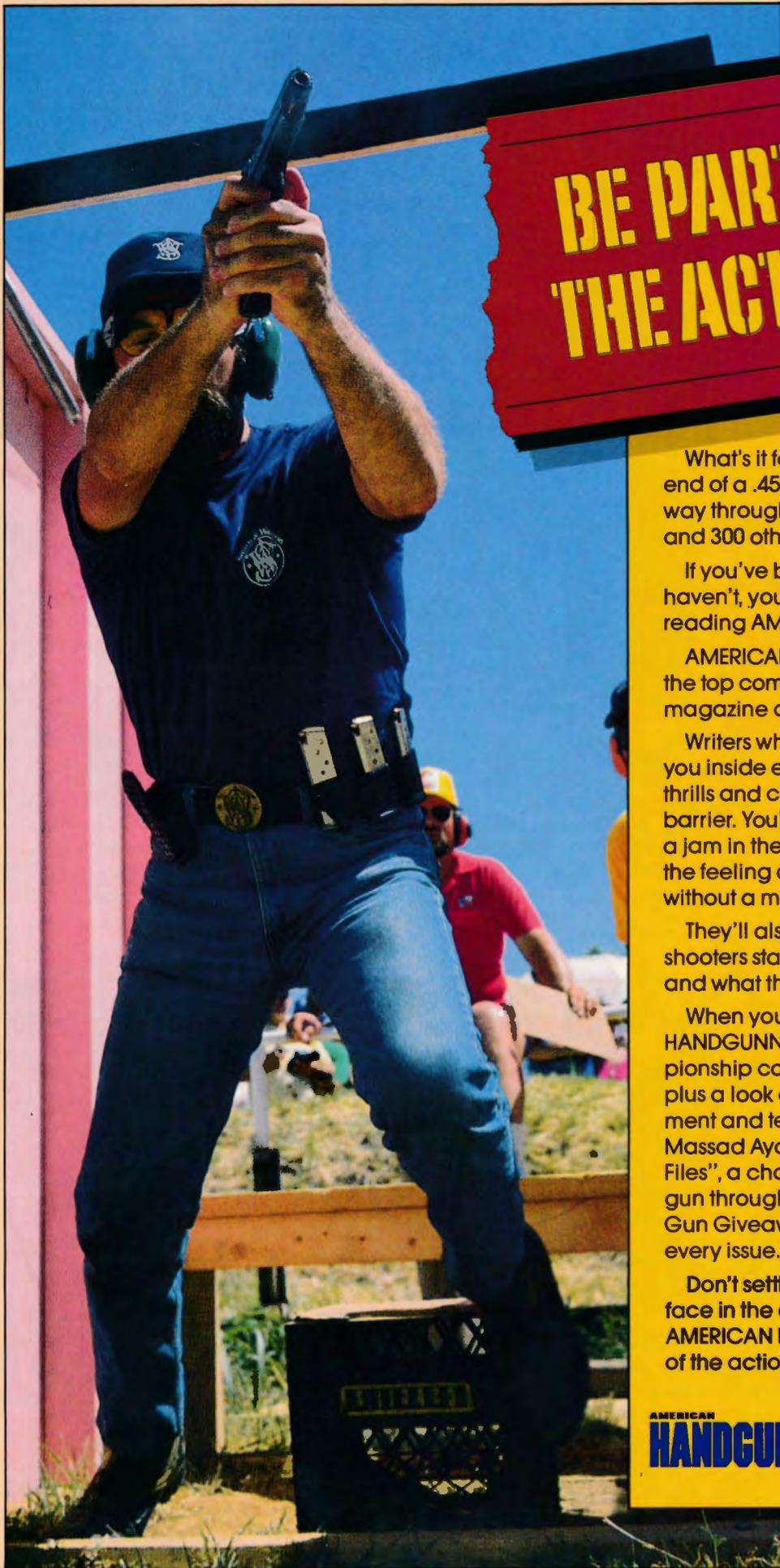
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Writers who actually compete take you inside each match giving you the thrills and chills of each stage and barrier. You'll find out what it's like to get a jam in the middle of a timed event or the feeling of blowing through a stage without a miss.

They'll also tell you how winning shooters stay sharp during a match and what they do to remain on top.

When you subscribe to **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER**, you'll get all the championship coverage you can handle plus a look at the latest shooting equipment and techniques. You'll also get Massad Ayoob's controversial "Ayoob Files", a chance to win a custom handgun through **HANDGUNNER**'s "Custom Gun Giveaway", and much more in every issue.

Don't settle for just being another face in the crowd . . . Subscribe to **AMERICAN HANDGUNNER** and be part of the action.

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Use the adjoining order card or write to P.O. Box 16439, San Diego, CA 92116 to start your subscription today!

Tom Campbell in action at the 1986 IPSC National Championships.

Chronograph Breakthrough

\$199



"Out performs the expensive chronographs at a fraction of the cost."

...Ross Seyfried, shooting editor; *Guns and Ammo* magazine

Until PACT introduced the PC last year, shooters for a chronograph were torn between two choices. To go with a full feature skyscreen based machine at a premium price, or purchase a low end "break screen" or "down range box" at a more reasonable price, but lacking the ease of use and superior performance of a microprocessor based skyscreen machine.

Each time you fire



Your shot number, velocity and current average velocity are displayed simultaneously on our state of the art, easy to read, 32 character display. Because this information is displayed and stored automatically, no button pushing required, you are free to concentrate on your shooting instead of having to fiddle with your chronograph every time you want to know what shot you are on or what your current average velocity is.

After you have completed your string, simply press the review button to display a complete statistical summary of your string. This summary consists of your highest and lowest shot velocities and their corresponding shot numbers, the extreme spread and Mean Absolute Deviation (MAD) of your shot string. MAD is, in our opinion, the best indication of ammunition consistency yet developed.

In addition, all shots (up to 200) can be individually reviewed after you have finished your string. Why is this important? When using other chronographs, with no or limited review capability, you must shoot, stop, put down your gun, pick up your pencil, write down your velocity, put down your pencil, pick up your gun and repeat. That stinks! With your PACT PC you get your shooting out of the way first, then make a permanent record of your string either by hand or with our optional printer.

- uses standard 9 volt alkaline battery (included, of course)
- Edit button allows you to remove any unwanted shot from a string, either after the shot is fired or during review.
- adjustable screen separation
- 4 mhz counter for better digital accuracy
- retractable tilt stand for easy viewing

PACT Skyscreens

The PACT PC uses inexpensive optical skyscreens to detect the bullet. Why didn't we set it up so that you can shoot over the box or use expensive skyscreens containing elaborate lenses to "enhance" performance? Because we think it's stupid to launch bullets over things that cost lots of money. Now we realize that you never miss, but rarely a day goes by that we don't get an order for a replacement skyscreen housing (\$2.50).

Glint Guard™ pat. pend.

Over the years chronographs have earned a well deserved reputation for **flaky performance** when operated on sunny days. Some

manufacturers deal with the problem by requiring you to put diffuser screens over their skyscreens. While this approach works, it makes set up more difficult and is prone to blow over in the wind. In addition if you fire too closely to them you may find that it has started raining bits of diffuser screen.

The PACT PC's Glint Guard™ circuitry allows us to dispense with this silliness. Glint Guard™ internally compensates for changes in light conditions in much the same manner as the automatic exposure feature in a modern camera. Now we won't try to tell you that you will never find yourself in a circumstance in which the PC has trouble seeing a given round. However, under normal conditions you need only set up your screens and fire a round over them to obtain a velocity reading.

Order Today

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(in Texas 214-641-0049)

By Phone: We are happy to answer your questions and take your order. We accept Visa, MC and COD orders.*

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(optional but nice)... \$ 24
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Skyscreen Housings... \$2.50 ea 4/\$9

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Brochure Available covering the PACT product line of shooting timers and chronographs, \$1.00.



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HANDGUN LEATHER

BOB ARGANBRIGHT

ERNIE HILL SPEED LEATHER FEATURES STEEL LINING FOR FAST, SAFE DRAW

Two years ago Ernie Hill Speed Leather was a small one-man-shop known mainly to the shooters in the sport of Western Fast Draw. Resident leather worker Ernie Hill is one of the fastest men in the world with a single-action revolver, having set many world speed shooting records using one of the custom gunbelts and holsters he produces.

Recognizing the demand for top quality leather in the IPSC handgun game, Ernie turned his design genius to producing the finest and fastest leather available. The recent emphasis on Comstock scoring, rather than par time events, has caused great interest in the speed obtainable from IPSC leather. Ernie's background in fast draw qualifies him to give us the best in speed leather.

Slightly over two years later, Chip McCormick has won the Steel Challenge using Hill leather. Former U.S. IPSC Ladies Champion Jo Ann Hall now uses a Hill rig. And Brian Enos and Rob Leatham use Ernie's leather exclusively. I personally witnessed Rob's record setting performance in

the Action Event of the first Masters Tournament and he was drawing from a beautiful basket weave version of Hill Speed Leather.

Let us take a close look at the rigs available from Ernie Hill Speed Leather and see what makes them different from his competition.

One of the features Hill has borrowed from the single-action fast draw rig is a steel reinforced hip portion of the gun belt. Ernie's 1 3/4 inch full contour belts include a piece of spring steel in the portion encircling the wearer's hip on the gun side. In addition to anchoring the belt from any fore and aft movement, this steel lined belt offers extra support for the heavy pin guns used by so many competitors. This offers increased shooter comfort in long practice sessions or matches.

Another design feature borrowed from his fast draw background is found in the "fender" single magazine pouch. The pocket for this pouch attaches to a separate belt loop (fender) by two screw posts. These posts may attach by any one of three sets of holes for a forward angle, back angle, or no angle. The

separate belt loop also projects the magazine further from the belt, allowing a more positive hand contact, for a faster, trouble free reload.

While the belt and fender magazine pouch offer an advantage over most others, it is the holster that is a real winner. I have been using one of Ernie's L/E rigs for my Wilson Accu-Comp .45 auto for a year, and it is the fastest competition rig I have ever used.

The first thing one notices is that there are two tension screws—one in the normal position at the front of the trigger guard, a second at the muzzle end of the holster. This second tension screw is very important, as it acts as a muzzle plug. The .45 auto seats in the holster with the muzzle and trigger guard resting on the plastic tubing covering the two screws. The double tension screw system is unique to the Ernie Hill L/E series of holsters and is protected by a patent-pending status.

When combined with the full-length, total-steel lining, this provides a perfect fit with the necessary security for an assault course, while the low cut speed front allows a maximum speed draw. This total steel lining is another unique feature of Hill's holster. While

A total steel lining is a unique feature of Hill's holster.

the first samples were laboriously hand formed, all L/E holsters are now formed on hydraulic machinery built to Ernie's specifications. This insures a precise fit for each and every holster.

This extra steel provides a rigidity that allows a shooter to go prone without worrying about bending the holster out of shape. The combination of the full steel lining and the double tension screw system provides a drawing sensation different from all other holsters. The gun is rock solid at initial hand contact, yet it releases immediately with the first gun movement with no drag as it clears the holster. This must be experienced to be fully understood. The L/E holsters are available in four different angles from straight up and down to extreme cross draw.

The latest from Ernie's shop is the L/E Fender model. While all of the L/E series include steel lining in the belt loop, the new fender version has a separate belt loop which places the holster pouch a bit lower and increases body clearance by two thicknesses of leather (3/8 inch on my sample). An important advantage offered by the fender model is the option of purchasing a single holster pouch with up to four fenders, with each fender set to position the holster at a different angle. Regardless of the version the steel lined belt loop combines with the steel reinforced belt to provide maximum support and to lock the belt and holster together such that they function as a single unit.

Ernie Hill Speed Leather has recently moved into new, larger quarters in order to meet the demand for their holsters. They may be reached at 4507 North 195th Avenue, Dept. AH, Litchfield Park, AZ 85340.



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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN LAWSON

SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO DIAGNOSING PISTOL PROBLEMS: EIGHT EASY STEPS

The ability to correctly diagnose a handgun problem and to make a satisfactory repair or modification within a reasonable time frame is a basic requirement of any competent pistolsmith. A systematic approach to acquiring this capability is delineated in the formula that follows.

The most successful pistolsmiths who specialize in repair or warranty work seem to have three things in common:

1. They are able to concentrate wholeheartedly on one problem at a time.
2. They have learned to keep an open mind during diagnosis and they do not leap rapidly to any conclusions.
3. They have adopted a systematic method of problem solving that begins with an accurate diagnosis, derived from a careful observation of the weapon's cyclic sequential progression.

If it could be said that there are any deep, dark secrets of diagnosis, this third point would have to qualify. Thrashing around, checking first this and then that, out of

sequence, will usually lead to frustration. Checking each part of the cyclic function, one point at a time, will quickly isolate the problem area. It is of the utmost importance to check each point in the same sequence it occurs during normal cyclic function. Begin with loading the ammunition and end with what results from firing the last round.

I've walked into gun shops all over the country and heard gunsmiths wondering out loud what they had done to deserve this problem being dumped into their laps. Others seem to blame the manufacturer for turning out substandard weapons that are subject to breakage and problems. I marvel at these attitudes, because, in the first instance, they have hung a shingle outside proclaiming to the public that they solicit this kind of work. In the second instance, they might consider what line of work they would enter if hand-guns didn't need repairs or modifications.

A level-headed and positive attitude is necessary to approach any problem without undue stress. I'll admit that a good disposition

is hard to maintain after you have just pounded your thumb instead of the end of a pin and said pin has just disappeared into the chips and scraps on the shop floor. It just seems more logical to resolve at this point that the next outlay of cash will include some magnetic pin punches and a magnetic parts tray, rather than to impune the ancestry of the weapon designer.

Mental anguish and hand-wringing actually shuts down part of the brain's functions; unfortunately, these are the precise functions you need active during troubleshooting and diagnosis. Take a break. Approach each new problem without useless and time-wasting cries of woe and travail. Use the time to reduce stress, rather than to let it build.

Go over the following 8 points in sequence:

1. Assure yourself that there is a solution to every problem.
2. Remain calm and think in positive terms. Think how pleased your customer will be when you return his repaired weapon. Look at every problem as a challenge and be grateful that you are allowed to put things right instead of the gunsmith down the street.
3. Write down the symptoms of the problem facing you as clearly and precisely as you are able.
4. List every possible cause of this problem. Don't choose one at first. List them all, then go back over your list and choose the one, or more, that define the exact problem. At this point, with the correct problem isolated, you have half the solution.

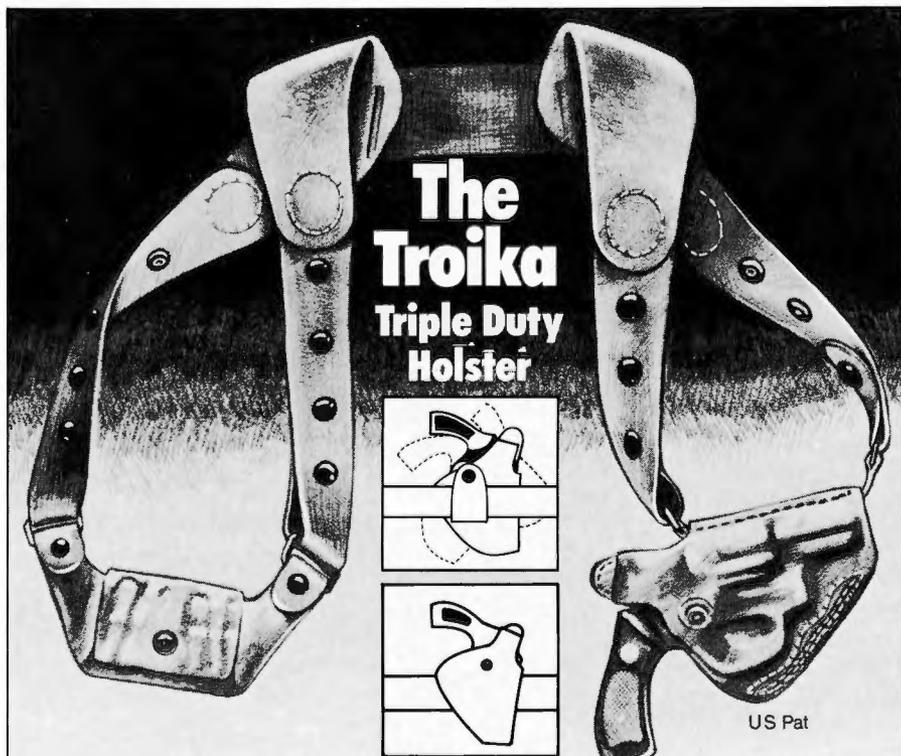
5. List every possible solution to the problem you have defined. List everything that comes to mind, then go back over your list and choose your solution. But, don't act just yet.

6. Think about the solution you have chosen. Make a list of every possible consequence of the corrective action you have chosen. When you are satisfied that the solution is the correct one, but not before, move on to the next point.

7. List every possible method you could use to implement the solution you have chosen. That is, will you file or mill the slot? Or will you silver solder the part or replace it with a new one?

8. Set a realistic deadline for accomplishing the work, make a list of the costs involved and file your notes for future reference.

A calm, systematic approach to diagnosis and repair is always more effective than a cursory inspection punctuated with invective and snap judgment. I don't know a pistolsmith who has been in the trade for very long who couldn't tell at least one story of a hasty snap diagnosis and rapid cure that resulted in hours of extra work. The adrenaline dump upon realizing that he has just collapsed a pistol slide, rather than tightened it, as a customer eagerly calls out "Is it ready yet?" has caused many pistolsmiths to adopt a more systematic approach to handgun problems. There seems to be a distinct advantage in adopting one before these complications occur.



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SILUETAS

JOHN TAFFIN

COMPARING IHMSA AND NRA PROGRAMS SHOWS EACH HAS ITS STRONG POINTS

As an IHMSA competitor for nearly 10 years and one who has just recently been introduced to NRA silhouetting in the past year, it seems only natural to compare the two organizations. There are some significant differences, but is it possible that each could learn from the other and thus benefit the great sport of silhouetting?

Promotion

IHMSA has been around the longest and certainly is promoted well. Each member annually receives 10 copies of the official IHMSA publication, *The Silhouette*, which contains monthly match scores, a schedule of upcoming matches, articles of interest to serious silhouetters, product reviews, plus the opportunity to purchase firearms and equipment at reduced prices. For some strange reason, it is not apparent that NRA does very much to promote NRA long range silhouetting. Even though one is an NRA member and receives either *The American Rifleman* or *The American Hunter*, information on silhouetting is virtually nil. One is required to subscribe to another publication, *Tournament News*, for silhouette information.

The results of the situation are predictable. Every state and many foreign countries have IHMSA sanctioned long range monthly matches and it would be difficult for anyone not to find an IHMSA match within driving distance. When I inquired of NRA long range shooters about the number of places to shoot long range silhouettes, I was given the number 25, that is only 25 ranges in the country catering to NRA long range silhouetters. Chalk up a big plus for IHMSA.

Championship Matches

The results of proper promotion can also be seen in the number of competitors at IHMSA's International Matches and NRA's National Championships. With the new eastern range in Tennessee and the permanent

range in Idaho, IHMSA rotates from east to west each year and draws more than 1000 entries for four categories. NRA holds their matches in Raton, New Mexico and this year had a total of 147 entries for six categories. Another plus for IHMSA.

At the IHMSA Internationals each competitor may shoot any category at the time he chooses, while NRA Championships are set up so that everyone shoots the same category at the same time. For example, all Revolver shooters shoot under the same conditions, and a Standing shooter is not shooting next to an Unlimited shooter. Give NRA a big plus for this one. Would it be possible for IHMSA to work it out to do the same with the number of competitors that they have? Would IHMSA shooters favor such a move?

The big push in NRA competition has been the short range course, or Hunter's Pistol. This year at the NRA Hunter's Pistol Championships, a total of 178 entries were received in Hunter's Pistol and 167 in Small Bore (.22RF) Hunter's Pistol. Give NRA a big plus for initiating Hunter's Pistol plus the first use of scopes, and also give IHMSA credit for following with the Field Pistol course of fire. Next year's IHMSA Internationals are scheduled to include Field Pistol competition. Will they draw more than the NRA Hunter's Pistol Championships?

Categories

IHMSA rules allow for four categories:

Production Revolver, Production Single Shot, Production Standing, and Unlimited. NRA has the same four categories, using the word Conventional instead of Production, and NRA has also added two more categories, Unlimited Standing which allows the use of scopes, and Unlimited Freestyle using half-size targets at 50-100-150-200 meters. Both of these last two categories give the Unlimited shooter a greater challenge than afforded by standard long range competition. Give NRA a plus here. However, both groups deserve a minus for not yet setting up scoped Revolver and Production categories.

Safety

Safety should be of prime consideration in any sport and especially where firearms are concerned. The anti-gun vultures are always waiting to pounce and we do not need to provide them with any fodder ourselves. IHMSA requires that all competitors and their spotters wear mandatory eye and ear protection, while NRA rules "urge" everyone to wear protection. Give IHMSA a big plus.

Alibis

Under IHMSA rules, there exists only one alibi, that is the occurrence of a target not being available for the shooter. NRA is much more liberal. A shooter can qualify for a re-shoot if his ammunition has a noticeable structural defect, if the primer dents but does not fire, and even if the bullet does not leave the barrel. The IHMSA rule is sweet and simple putting the responsibility on the shooter to see that his ammunition is loaded correctly. Under NRA rules, a shooter may also call a "Not Ready" when the signal is given for loading. No such rule exists under IHMSA again putting the responsibility on the shooter to be ready. Two plusses for IHMSA.

Miscellaneous Rules

IHMSA Field Pistol Rules allow a weight limit of 4½ lbs. for scoped guns while NRA requires scoped guns to come in at 4 lbs. or less. A plus for IHMSA as this allows most



scoped revolvers to qualify. NRA allows the use of any sights, any grips, either custom or hand-made, that do not provide artificial support, and competitors' handguns may be fancied up with embellishments such as engraving, inscriptions, or inlays which do not have anything to do with how the pistol functions.

Under IHMSA, sights must be production items, grips must be standard catalog items, and any change in the finish of a Production handgun is strictly forbidden. Mag-Na-Porting is allowed under NRA rules but not under IHMSA rules. IHMSA rules make it simple for gun certification, but I am one who likes to fancy up his handguns with custom grips and some engraving such as my name on the back strap or butt, so I would give a plus here to NRA for allowing changes that have nothing to do with how a handgun performs.

IHMSA rules allow the use of gloves for either short or long range courses, as long as the gloves are not padded so as to provide an artificial support. NRA allows gloves for long range shooting but they are allowed for Hunter's Pistol only "when required for warmth." Now that is a strange rule, especially since gloves are allowed for the NRA long range standing course of fire. Who determines how cold it has to be before gloves are needed for warmth? Give NRA a minus for this one.

The price ceiling rule has been adopted by IHMSA and no competitor may use a gun in Production classes if that gun retails for more than \$675. NRA has no such rule. I give the plus to NRA here, while more than 90% of IHMSA shooters, both in a ballot conducted by IHMSA and in a vote at The Internationals, give the plus to IHMSA.

IHMSA and NRA use the same classification system for Hunter/Field Pistol but not for the other four categories they have in common. For example here are the breakouts for IHMSA Production Revolver and NRA Conventional Revolver. It is possible to be in one class in NRA competition and a higher class under IHMSA rules.

	IHMSA	NRA
INTERNATIONAL	36-40	MASTER 37-40
AAA	30-35	31-36
AA	24-29	25-30
A	18-23	18-24
B	11-17	0-17
C	0-10	-

I have no intention of adding up the plusses and calling one organization better than the other. The differences are pointed out for one reason, and one reason only, and that being to stimulate both groups to learn from one another. Is it too much to ask both groups to come together in a spirit of cooperation? After all, even the AFL and NFL were able to unite. As a member of both IHMSA and NRA, I believe such cooperation would do much to promote silhouetting in general and continue to attract new shooters to a great sport and continue to give us great strength against the anti-gunners. We all need each other.



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LEATHAM'S COLUMN

ROB LEATHAM

HOW I LOST THE MASTERS AND WHY I NOW LIKE REMBRANDT AND VAN GOGH

What is good? I have been trying for years to figure out just what the hell *good* is. My Websters dictionary gives me no less than 10 examples of *good*. Having the proper qualities, honorable, enjoyable, pleasant, etc.

When we get down to the ninth example we find good described as "skilled." This is the one we pistoleros are interested in.

Websters defines skill as "great ability or proficiency." Now we are getting somewhere! Read on and we find skill described as an art, craft, especially one involving the use of the hands or body, and having ability in such an art as being "skilled."

If shooting is considered a skill, which it is, and requires the use of the hands and body, which it does, then one could be

considered a skilled artist if one is proficient. Or good. Damn, that's where I started!

If that is the case, we must assume a most important aspect of our art is the proficiency with which we do it. That being the case, is one who is more skilled considered the better artist?

Maybe, but here is where we run into a little snag. Does not art require an intangible to be applied, such as personal taste? Of course it does. One who looks upon the great works of the masters in any art will be amazed or completely unimpressed. Such is the case with painting, sculpture, music, literature or shooting. Then in each category you will find those who appreciate one style or form more than they do another. This is what makes the world go around. Different strokes for different folks.

Because one appreciates the works of Van Gogh over Rembrandt does not mean one is "better" than the other, it simply means one finds aesthetic appeal according to one's tastes. And so it is with pistol shooting.

I have recently returned from the Masters Invitational Pistol Tournament. If one were to try and describe the Masters tournament, it would be very much like a gathering of artists from different schools who come together under a common agenda to show the skills and methods they have developed on their own in their chosen field of expertise.

The camaraderie at an event like this is almost international in flavor due to the extreme differences in styles one is bound to see. And the collection of individuals who gathers to compete is just as varied. From NRA national bullseye champions to IHMSA silhouette winners to national and world IPSC title holders, they all gather in Barry for a shot at the title "THE MASTER."

The Masters has taken three perfectly good shooting disciplines (namely Action or IPSC; Long Range or silhouette; and Precision or bullseye), pulled out segments of each, added a few refinements and created a game that has done what none before has been able to accomplish—gather the best from each sport together to compete head-to-head on more or less even turf. Interesting idea, don't you think?

I know what you're thinking: another big money match for the IPSC crowd to dominate as they have done at the Steel Challenge and the Bianchi Cup, right? Not true! While those two matches are for the faster shooting crowd, the Masters is for everyone. While no match can hope to be truly equal to every conceivable type of shooter, the Masters comes close. And with a few simple changes I feel it could become a perfect mix.

History shows that if any one discipline has an edge here, it would have to be the precision shooter. The two years the match has been held found bullseye shooters winning top spot.

Makes me wonder for a minute. How

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can these guys even get close in the fast event to those who do it regularly? For the most part they can't, with a few exceptions!

Remember I told you this was a mix of several shooting disciplines and requires more than one good performance to win. You must put in respectable scores in each event to place well, and that is the key. You do not have to win all three events, nor even one, but you must put in high scores in your particular specialty and do the best you can in your weak spots. Unless you don't have a weak spot!

As a rule, action shooters are going to have just as rough a time with the precision and long range events as the precision guys will have in the action and long range events and the long range specialists will have with the action and precision events. This is what makes this such a challenging match.

As of yet, none has completely mastered the course of fire, but one man has come close. Alan Fulford of Georgia is the 1987 Master and he did it the old fashioned way—he earned it.

While the rest of us were out there struggling, Alan quietly shot three good solid scores. Not winning any single event, but placing well in each. Just what it takes to win.

Alan shot a 34 in the long range event with iron sights. The top score was only a 36 with a scoped weapon! This, more than any other place, is where Alan beat me. I needed a *scoped* XP-100 to equal his score in that event. In the action event, he fired a good solid tally that kept the whole picture very interesting.

Going into the precision event I knew I was in trouble. I could count on him shooting a 24 to 26 and knew I would need an 18 to 21 to get by him for the over-all. Well, he went out and shot that 26 and the best I was good for was a 16. I did the best I could and was beaten by the better man. Alan Fulford is a gracious and deserving champion and is very high on my list of nice guys. Even if he did beat me. Mercilessly!

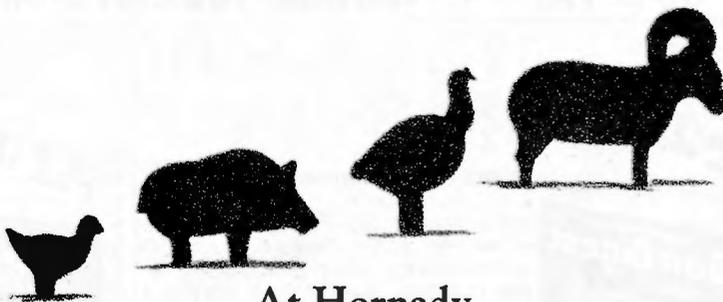
A match like the Masters just goes to prove that shooters are shooters no matter how you look at it. One comes away from the Masters much less of an action, bulls-eye or silhouette shooter, but more of just a shooter in general, learning from all he sees.

As art appeals to those who appreciate it, so must we learn to appreciate all art. Alan Fulford was the shining example of versatility and was rewarded handsomely for it. It is not something you can't also do. You may not beat Alan either, but the lessons learned are worth the trying.



Rob Leatham is founder of the Leatham Shooting Institute. LSI specializes in instruction for the competitive action shooter and also conducts classes in general skills for the new or less experienced shooter. For more info write:

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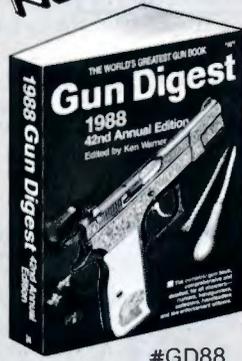


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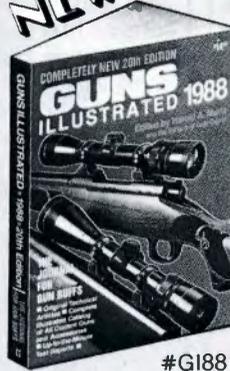
#GD88
\$16⁹⁵

1988 GUN DIGEST 42nd Edition

Edited by Ken Warner

Wilf E. Pyle provides an in-depth report on the first Newton rifle. Art Bevan shares his knowledge of the Colt Woodsman. Eric H. Archer looks at the military shot-guns of World War II. Clarence E. Ellis on "psyched shooting" — performing at peak when shooting game. Dave Brennan tells the story of a team of shooters trying to unseat the 6PPC champion with a new basic cartridge case, the 30 American. John W. Brunner reports on the Colt Model M, sharing how to distinguish each of its variations. The catalog section has been updated with the latest prices and specifications for all U.S. and imported firearms on the market today. Plus much more. 480 8½" x 11" pages.

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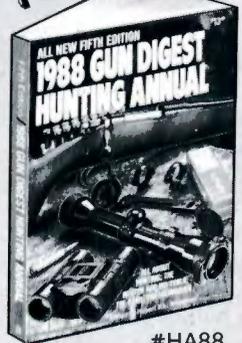
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\$14⁹⁵

1988 GUNS ILLUSTRATED 20th Edition

Edited by Harold A. Murtz

Jon Sundra's test report on the Sauer Model 200 whose interchangeable barrels and stocks, new action and racy styling combine to make it one of the most innovative bolt action rifles around. Robert Baer examines one of Europe's classiest revolvers for target shooting or plinking: the Manhurin MR 73 Sport. Author Dick Eades explores illuminated reticle scopes. With training costs escalating, G. N. Dentay looks at "electronic bullets" as a relatively low-cost yet realistic training alternative. Robert Shimek studies the German G-41 semi-auto, Nazi Germany's first autoloading battle rifle. Al Pickles presents a round-up of pistol packin' gear. Plus our extensive catalog section of all U.S. and imported firearms available on the market today. 320 8½" x 11" pages.

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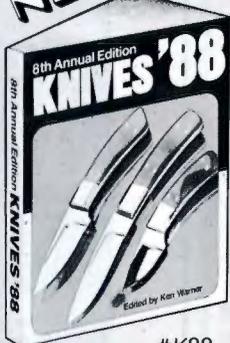
#HA88
\$13⁹⁵

1988 GUN DIGEST HUNTING ANNUAL, 5th Edition

Edited by Robert S. L. Anderson

World's best wingshot instructor, Bill Yeatts, shares his hunting expertise. Joe Byers takes a look at deer tracking. Rick Hacker discusses Winchester's models 86 and 71, America's most popular big bore lever action rifles. Jack Lott on African antelope ordnance. Bob Bell explores Pennsylvania bear hunting. Chuck Adams on elk hunting. Rick Jamison's overview of the camouflage world. Nick Sisley examines dove guns. Howard French reports on S&W's 422, while Don Zutz questions the need for the 10-gauge. Jon Sundra on slug gun accuracy. And of course Clay Harvey's "Gun Cabinet," Layne Simpson's "Duffel Bag" and Ed Matunas' complete hunting license directory. 256 8½" x 11" pages.

NEW!



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KNIVES '88 8th Edition

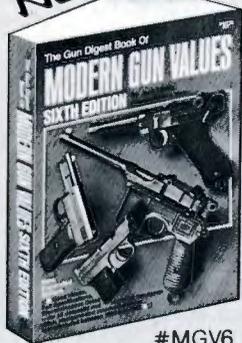
Edited by Ken Warner

This edition examines hot and trendy new knife designs, handmade and factory-made. A special look at the art and craft of the sword in today's marketplace. The continuing study of steel and sharp, including information on professional sharpening geometry. A review of gaucho knives, still a part of the great Argentine tradition. Deborah Warner provides a home cook's critique of fine kitchen cutlery. A look at knife leather. Plus world standard trends for handmade straight knives and folders — hunters, fighters, tontos and daggers. Detailed photo index plus best single directory of sources for fine knives nationwide. 256 8½" x 11" pages.

The Gun Digest Book Of MODERN GUN VALUES, 6th Edition

By Jack Lewis

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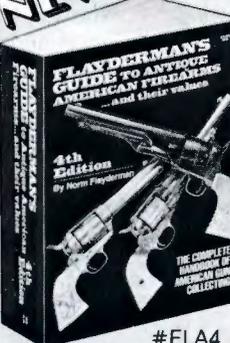
#MGV6
\$15⁹⁵

Updated and expanded edition of the book that's become the standard for valuing modern firearms. All-new edition covers the current values of all non-military guns introduced from 1900-1985. Nearly 2000 photos and drawings supplied — including data on hundreds of new guns introduced since the last issue. Gives complete specs, original manufacturing/importation/discontinuation dates, and detailed descriptions of thousands of domestic and imported firearms; handguns, rifles, shotguns and commemoratives alike. Guns are listed alphabetically by manufacturer within each section for easy reference. Highly accurate, hard-to-get information that can help determine the true value of your firearms today. 448 8½" x 11" pages.

FLAYDERMAN'S GUIDE TO ANTIQUE AMERICAN FIREARMS...And Their Values

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#FLA4
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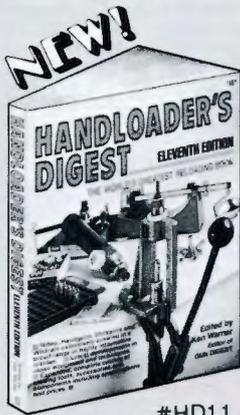
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11th Edition

Edited by Ken Warner

Exclusive report by Edward M. Yard on his newly developed method for measuring breech pressure. Don Zutz on shell trends — loading techniques, new components. Clay Harvey examines the resurrection of the 6.5 Swede. Kenneth L. Walters looks at Potter presses. Col. Jim Crossman, legal technical expert, explains how many handloaders get into gun trouble. R. H. Vandenburg, Jr. provides up-to-date instructions for producing big bore handgun shot loads, including wads, powder charge and cartridge case remodeling. Konrad F. Schreier on the 8mm Mauser and its relation to other rifle cartridges. Plus a greatly expanded catalog of all currently available loading tools, components, chronographs and accessories — in itself, well worth the price of the book. Plus much, much more. 352 8½" x 11" pages.

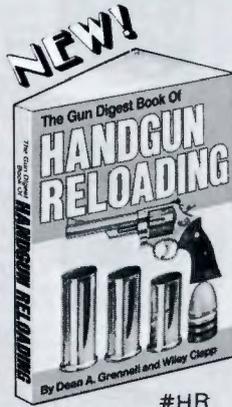


\$15⁹⁵ #HD11

The Gun Digest Book Of HANDGUN RELOADING

By Dean A. Grennell & Wiley M. Clapp

The reloading cycle from beginning to end. Instruction on how to select tools, discussing pros and cons of each. A look at progressive presses. Includes a detailed section examining interior, exterior and terminal ballistics of handgun cartridges. Testing the reload: info on bench and machine rest testing and the use of chronographs. Looks at organization of the reloading process, the reloading bench and record keeping. Examines commercial bullets, homemade bullets and powders. Covers the composition of primers, including all variations. A discussion of brass with details on forming into wildcats. Loading data for production handguns, the Contender pistol and a number of handgun wildcats plus reporting on a wide range of cartridges. 256 8½" x 11" pages.

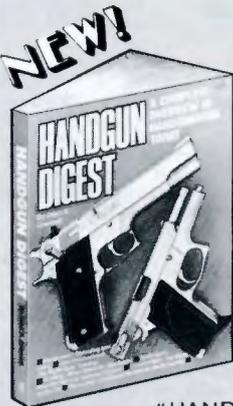


\$12⁹⁵ #HR

HANDGUN DIGEST

By Dean A. Grennell

A complete overview of handguns. Detailed review of operating principles and firing techniques, capabilities/limitations, special applications and future trends. Tom Ferguson examines handguns for law enforcement. A history of the Colt Detective Special. Claud Hamilton evaluates the Glaser in several different calibers and guns; he also discusses handgun cartridges, including his own 45 special cartridge. In-depth coverage of handgun bulletmaking and reloading. Joe Wright looks at the world's most successful single-shot pistol and its use in hunting, the T/C Contender. Roger Combs reviews holsters and gunleather. Techniques for instructing emerging shooters. Test-firing techniques and equipment. A look at handgun hunting. Homebrewed handgun ballistics, plus a comprehensive directory. Much more. 256 8½" x 11" pages.

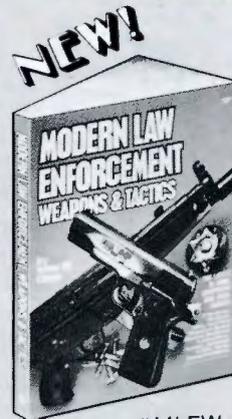


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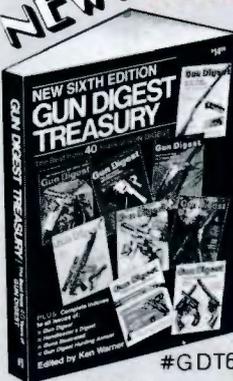
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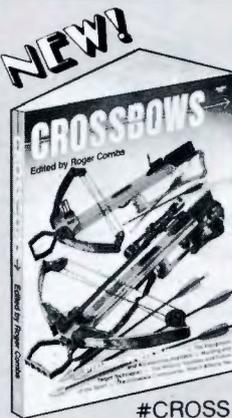


\$14⁹⁵ #GDT6

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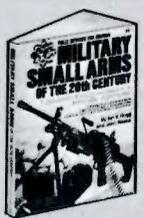
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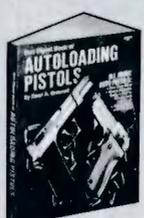
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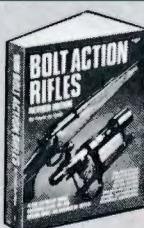
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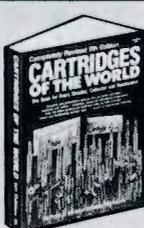
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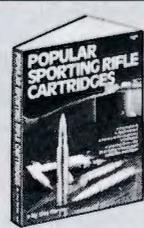
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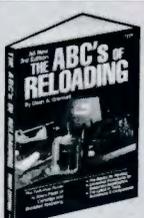
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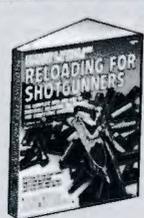
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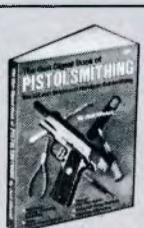
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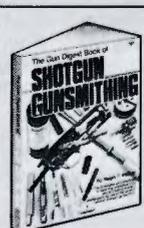
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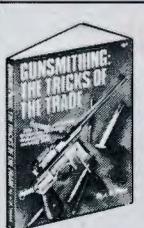
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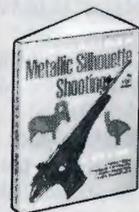


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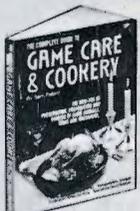
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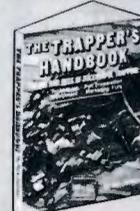
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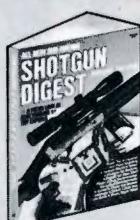
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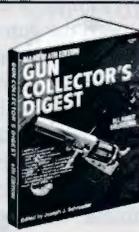
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HANDGUN HUNTING

J.D. JONES

SHEER POWER ROARS FROM .50 CALIBER HANDGUN ROUND WITH 550 GR. BULLETS

For the real power hungry guys, the 12.9 × 50.8 JDJ is a 460 Weatherby case shortened to two inches, necked to .50, with the rim rebated to work in an XP bolt. First time out with 550 grain cast bullets it clocked 1700 fps with good enough accuracy to nail 22 silhouette turkey targets set at 200 meters. At that power level I would consider the recoil to be substantial, but certainly not the maximum I can shoot. With a scoped gun weight of slightly over five and a half pounds, it's about average for a scoped XP. I'm looking forward to penetration tests and possibly using it in hunting.

My calls and correspondence in the last few months indicate a very active interest in the custom XP's for hunting with the emphasis on long range and max power guns. The 375/284 does well on both counts, very accurately driving a 270 grain Hornady bullet at 2400 fps.

Charter Handgun Hunters International member Bob Good killed the first legal Colorado elk with a handgun 14 minutes after it was legal to do so. It was a heavy five pointer and he took it with a single shot with a Freedom Arms .454 Casull delivered from 80 yards.

While speaking of Freedom Arms, I don't think it's a secret they make a great revolver, but it is a premium priced gun compared to most other over-the-counter revolvers. Frankly, that's an unfair comparison as the Freedom Arms gun is really a custom gun. It is just as unfair to compare Freedom's quality with a Super Blackhawk as it is to compare the Super's price to the Freedom's. A more reasonable comparison would be to compare quality and price of a top custom .45 competition pistol to the Freedom gun.

Freedom Arms recognizes a fact of life—\$1065 is a lot of cash to lay out. Accordingly, they will introduce an economy gun priced in the Python ballpark. Mechanically, this gun will not have the forcing cone bushing. Otherwise it will utilize the same materials and meticulous fitting as the premium priced gun. The major difference which allows the lower price will come in the substitution of Pachmayr grips and a bead blast finish instead of the very expensive hand finishing of the gun as it is now done. Less attention will be paid to the fine details, although the same mechanical tolerances will be in effect. It's highly possible a new adjustable sight and scope mount will also be introduced. So, if you've been wanting a .454 but not enough to drop a grand for one, this may be what you have been waiting for.

Federal's 180 grainers gave me a surprise a few days ago. While checking out a 7½ inch

Freedom Arms .44 Magnum with the forcing cone bushing insert, I casually whipped five of the Federal 180's over the Oehler and was rewarded with an average velocity of 1790 fps and an extreme spread of 15 fps. A 5" (6" with the Arrestor muzzle brake) S & W 629 averaged 1616 fps with the same ammo. Accuracy from both guns was outstanding.

I haven't recorded velocities like these since the days of the original Super Vel. Federal's 220 grain Silhouette load clocked 1440 fps with an extreme variation of only 20 fps from the 7½" gun. These small variations in velocity indicate very uniform ammunition and a very uniform gun with little or no cylinder end-shake.



Ulti-mate from Idaho Leather Co. is perfect for scoped XP-100.

If the bullet is tough enough, this round may be a good whitetail round. Last year I used the Remington 240 HP with sorry results on anything but broadside shots. The bullet expanded beautifully with the lead protruding back past the base of the bullet. This is great on broadside shots—and not worth a damn on raking shots as I was only able to get

8-10" of penetration out of the bullet. The original 180 grain load was a development of the original Super Vel company and featured high velocity with a tough 180 grain bullet that penetrated quite well.

I extracted the case, carefully examined it and found no signs of pressure."

Read anything like that lately? I have. Time after time and year after year. In fact it's getting really popular.

Anyone who writes that kind of erroneous information shouldn't be writing and the editor shouldn't be publishing.

If the round misfired and the primer is dented, that is a pressure sign. It took pressure for the firing pin to dent the primer. If the round fired, that is a sign of pressure. So is the expansion ring on the case and an expanded case neck—not to mention the bullet is gone and it took pressure to get the bullet out of the case. If the bullet made it out the barrel it took quite a bit of pressure to get it through the barrel!

What's the point? Simply this: If the writer doesn't know enough to look at a case and see it fired and recognize it as a sign of pressure, I feel you can't trust anything else he says.

There is a hell of a lot of difference between "no sign of pressure" and "no sign of excessive pressure." True, the guy probably meant excessive pressure, but if he can't say what he means how can he recognize excessive pressure? Does he know what "excessive pressure" is for the particular gun in question?

Consider this: I have factory proof loads that when fired in numerous guns show no visible signs of excessive pressure. They extract without the slightest hint of sticking in the chamber. Case head measurements before and after firing do not change. In the same gun I've found a few "recommended" loads that stick in the chamber tightly enough they must be knocked out with a rod. They obviously develop far higher pressures than the proof loads.

There are enough differences between different lots of powder, primers, cases, bullets and guns to cause major differences in pressure generated when the trigger is pulled. Most of the reloading manuals devote a lot of space to explaining how to load and how to interpret pressure signs. Almost no one reads this vital information. The new *Speer (#11) Manual* compiled by Dave Andrews contains clear, concise information regarding this subject and should be a required reading for every reloader. It also contains the usual reloading data.

Joe Wright made a statement I like. He said, "Every reloader should buy every reloading manual available. Tear out all of the load data and read the rest."

But how do you carry them? Simple, when you are actually hunting you need the gun in your hand most of the time. When you are walking or on horseback the best XP carrying rig I've seen is the Ulti-Mate produced by the Idaho Leather Co. (18 South Orchard St., Boise, ID, 83705 A/C 208-344-2602). This nylon rig is suede lined, padded in the right places and has enough adjustment it should fit anyone.



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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

.45 AUTO CONFRONTATION SUBTLETIES: HOW YOU WORK THE SAFETY IS THE KEY

The Colt .45 auto is my personal choice as a street duty handgun, and I've been allowed to carry one by five of the six administrations I've worked under in two police departments. During that time, I've learned to deeply appreciate its strong points, but have also learned to compensate for the instrument's relatively few weak points in the police service.

Chief among these is that, given the fact that "cocked and locked with a live round chambered" is the only job-safe way to carry this gun, the officer so equipped is now pointing a cocked pistol at every suspect he places at gunpoint. Having testified in two court cases in the past year involving suspects killed by people holding cocked guns on them, it's a subject that has occupied a good deal of my attention.

The general assumption is, "We'll just leave the thumb safety on, and wipe it into 'fire' position just before we shoot the man at gunpoint if he forces us to do so." I can't buy that. If this man threatened you sufficiently that you are pointing a loaded gun at him, you feel sufficiently threatened that it will violate your survival instinct to point at him a gun that will not go off. I can tell you to leave the safety on, and Jeff Cooper can tell you, and if necessary God can tell you, but baby, when

that sucker scared you enough to pull a piece on him, I'm betting he scared you enough that you wiped off the safety automatically.

A technique used by a brother officer I highly respect who carries a .45 Combat Commander in uniform, Major Winston Dill of the Athena, GA, Police Department, is to lock the thumb down *under* the thumb safety during a confrontation. This requires a deliberate, conscious movement to bring the thumb up and *then* release the safety.

This works for Winston, and will work for other highly trained and deeply practiced men, but not for the rank and file nor for the young rookie cop pulling his .45 on a man for the first time. The tendency under stress is for the muscles to lock tight, and that will make the thumb want to stay down while the officer helplessly pulls the now unshootable gun's trigger as the suspect comes at him with a hatchet. Winston has gone through two LFI courses and at least that many with John Farnam, shoots IPSC and practices religiously, and is a man I'd be delighted to have beside me in any danger situation. But men that good are few and far between, and a lesser man using the tactics of a master like Major Dill could cause more problems than it might solve.

A more alarming technique, one taught

from the midwest to Texas, is to hold the trigger back but keep the safety on. When the safety is released, the gun "automatically" fires. This one *really* gives me the willies, for several reasons.

First, I've seen three .45 autos with which, if the thumb safety were "on," you could press the trigger and the safety would fall to "off" as the hammer simultaneously dropped and fired the piece. One was a badly worn GI pistol; one was an early 1911 incompetently retrofitted with a current Gov't Model safety; one was an old Government that had fallen off a five-foot file cabinet to a hard floor. Any of the three would have killed a suspect who was surrendering to an officer who tried this technique.

Secondly, anyone trained with a gun is somewhat conditioned to have the gun out and ready with the safety on, and only release the safety catch when shooting is imminent; remember your Hunter Safety training as a kid? This programming, when crossed with the "new program" of holding the trigger back, can easily lead under stress to an officer wiping off the safety when a suspect begins to act hinky, forgetting that the trigger is already back, and . . . BANG! These same dynamics can occur with the squeeze-cocking P-7 series of Heckler and Koch pistols.

I would urge most strongly *against* holding the trigger back and using the safety catch as a firing mechanism. One of the good things about many double-action autos is that their slide-mounted safeties prevent this technique.

The technique I personally recommend is the *StressFire* "finger-off." The index finger is not alongside the frame or the front of the trigger guard, but rather, is bent with the fingertip behind the stud of the slide release on the right side of the frame or, for a south-paw, on the edge of the slide release lever on the left. Thus bent, it allows instantaneous access to the trigger, and because the finger is coming *across* the trigger instead of straight back into it the way it would if the finger had been held straight and taut against the trigger guard or alongside the frame, the chance of an unintentional discharge is greatly reduced. Speed of fire *when necessary* is great, and it ties in with a trained man's natural inclination to keep the finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.

When my current chief gave me carte blanche to write the weapons regs for my police department, I allowed cocked and locked automatics only for Master shooters, people who could quantifiably prove to me that they were on the kind of intimate terms with their guns that would prevent nasty surprises when arresting people. If the chief told me he wanted to issue automatics to all our officers, I would recommend a double-action. It takes the steady hand of a seasoned person who knows how he or she reacts to life-threatening stress, to safely put a suspect at gunpoint with a .45 Colt automatic.

Did my cocked and locked Colt .45 auto have the safety on or off when I took my last two or three suspects at gunpoint with it? I'll tell you something scary.

I don't remember . . .



Cocked and locked is the best way to carry the Colt fighting automatic.



INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

CAMERON HOPKINS

WOLF EARS ARE SAFETY PRECAUTION; NEW IPSC COMPETITION MAGS WORK

If you are a serious IPSC shooter, you hold a watch. The aspiring A class shooter progresses through the ranks at his local club and, eventually, holds a watch. This rite of passage (trial by fire?) bestows upon you the rank and privileges of a Range Officer.

When I started IPSC shooting there was no NROI (National Range Officers Institute) to train and certify ROs. There were no electronic shot timers and, at the risk of dating myself, we even had a ballistic pendulum to check major/minor. Back then we held stop watches and stared at the stop plate, thumb poised over the stop button on the watch.

Today's ROs are properly taught by the NROI to watch the shooter for safety reasons, and not glare at a steel disk. Today's timers take care of the last shot fired. And while the capable administration of NROI Director Steve Herberth has seen the spawning of thousands of accredited ROs, one thing hasn't changed.

Range Officers are still deaf.

Of course we must wear hearing protection, but to an RO his hearing is one of the vital senses necessary to maintain a complete awareness of his surroundings. And this is important so he can enforce proper range safety.

Imagine a toddler strays from its mother and scampers downrange, down to the assault course you're running. A frantic scream from the mother goes unheard through your ear muffs. You catch a glimpse of the youngster from the corner of your eye and immediately yell "Freeze!"

The shooter running the assault immediately halts and automatically flicks on his safety. He gets a re-shoot, the kid gets a spanking and you heave a sigh of relief.

Indeed, the sense of hearing is an essential element in perceiving our environment, but we no longer have to sacrifice this input just to protect our hearing from gunshot damage. I have been testing a selectively amplifying set of ear muffs called *Wolf Ears* for over a year now and I strongly recommend them for all ROs.

Wolf Ears are issued to every CRO at the Bianchi Cup tournament, a safety provision insisted upon by Match Director Ray Chapman who also uses the *Wolf Ears* at his Chapman Academy. Massad Ayoob teaches with *Wolf Ears* and swears by them. John Farnham is a fan of *Wolf Ears* for his classes and Detroit Homicide Sergeant Evan Marshall uses them during building searches and on the training range.

Wolf Ears amplify low decibel sounds—such as the distant scream of the mother—while at the same time muffling the report of

gunfire to the level heard, or rather not heard, with conventional ear muffs. They work and work well.

The *Wolf Ear* is "directional" in that you can discern the direction from which noise emanates. There are two microphones, one

in each earpiece, which allow for the "directional" capability. The unit functions on a small camera battery and is good for about 40 hours of use.

Wolf Ears retail for \$250 each plus \$5 shipping and come with an unconditional one-year guarantee from *Wolf Ears*, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 122, Concord, NH, 03301.

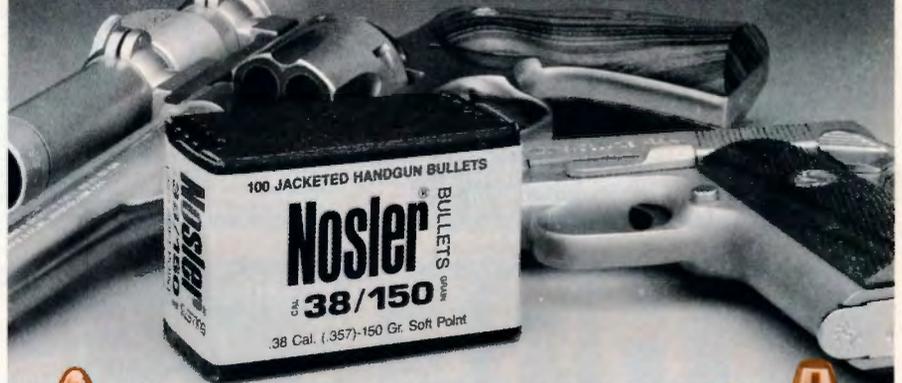
New IPSC Magazines

IPSC shooter extraordinaire and 1986 Steel Challenge champion Chip McCormick has bought the patent on the Devel 8-round magazine and is now offering a high-quality competition magazine for .45 shooters.

Shooting Star Industries, Chip's company, also offers 10-round magazines for .38 Super.

I have three of each for testing, but since I would sooner be caught in lace underwear

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than shooting a .38 Stupid, I asked my good friend and IPSC shooting buddy Dave Stevens to evaluate the Super magazines. Dave shoots a home-brewed custom Super.

I've shot with the 8-round .45 mags for a couple of weeks now, including two club matches, and I find them reliable. What more can you say about a magazine? It either works

or it doesn't.

The Shooting Star .45 magazines work.

Dave tested three Super magazines and two of them worked, and one sorta worked. Dave said he had to really fight to get the tenth round in one of the three, but the other two loaded up without a glitch. Dave tried the instruction's recommended method of load-

ing the last round in the one stubborn mag— shove it in base first and then leverage it down and in—but that wasn't much help. Dave opened the feed lips up just a hair and everything was hunky-dory again.

The Shooting Star magazines come with "Shaw" base pads, screwed onto the bottom. Replacement followers and springs are available as kits, and the mags are offered in both blue and stainless. I've found the .45 8-round follower works beautifully in Officer's mags bringing them up to seven round capacity.

The 10-round Super mag sells for \$28.95 and the 8-round .45 is \$23.45 while .45 conversion kits are \$10.50. Conversion kits for .38 Super 10-rounders will be available by the time you read this, but the price is unknown at press time. For more information write to Shooting Star, Dept. AH, 3002 Rivercrest, Austin, TX, 78746.



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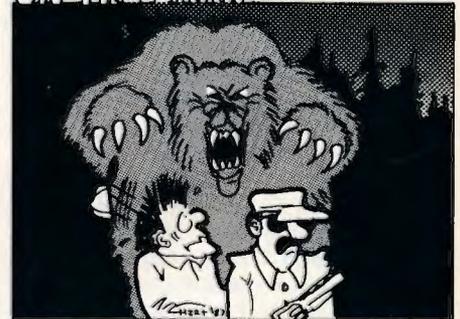
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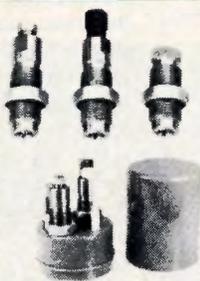
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Lee Dies reload cartridges better, easier, more accurately and have less problems. Purchase price includes a shell holder, powder measure, charge table, instructions, and a unique storage box. They feature unbreakable decapper, built-in stuck case remover, free floating bullet seater. No other dies have so many features regardless of the price. All Lee dies for pistol cartridges have carbide sizes.



Rifle Calibers (1st 3 columns below) .. \$15.25
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 Carbide Sizer only, pistol calibers 13.50
 Carbide Sizer only, 30 Carbine 19.85

22 Hornet	7x57	3006	32 S&W Long
*221 Fireball	*7mm TCU	*300 H & H	38 Super & 38 ACP
222 Rem	7mm Exp (280)	300 Win Mag	380 Auto
223 Rem	7mm Wea Mag	*300 Wea Mag	38 S&W
22/250	7mm/08	*77 Jap	9mm Luger
*220 Swift	7mm Rem Mag	8x57	38/357
243 Win	*7.62x39 Russian	338 Win Mag	357 Maximum
6mm Rem	*7.62x54 R Russian	35 Rem	10mm Bren Ten
250 Savage	30 Hornet	*375 Win	41 Magnum
257 Roberts	30/30 Win	*375 H & H	41 Action Exp
25/06 Rem	30/40 Krag	*4440 WCF	41 Action Exp
6.5 Jap	303 British	*444 Marlin	44 Spl/Mag
6.5x55 Mau	308 Win	*45/70 Govt	45 ACP
270 Win	300 Savage	25 ACP	45 Colt
*270 Wea.	*706 Arg. Mau	32 ACP	30 M1 Carbine

Challenger and Hand Press Kits choose from Above Dies.



CHALLENGER

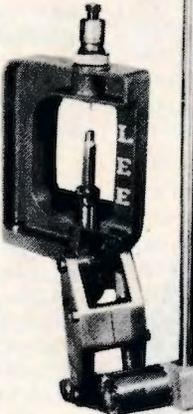
A very versatile "O" frame press. Larger than most, with a thirty degree offset frame for easy loading. Compound leverage makes sizing the largest cases a simple operation.

Challenger Press only \$24.25

Challenger Press Rifle Kit (with dies, Ram Prime, funnel and lube) . 39.50
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30 Carbine Challenger Press Kit \$52.15



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30 Carbine Hand Press Kit \$42.65



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1. Cashiers Check, Money Order, UPS/COD (COD orders are sent cash only), MasterCard or VISA. Personal and Company checks welcome; we reserve the right to hold the order until your check clears.
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5. Our business is mail order only. Sorry, no customer pickups.
6. No FFL Required.

Remington BULLETS

NOTE: This is not Loaded Ammunition
MIDWAY PAYS THE POSTAGE

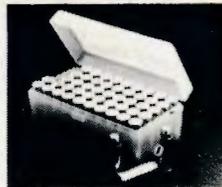
	Per 500	Per 1000	Case Price
25 Auto 50 GR FMJ (Rem)	\$21.50	\$38.25	N/A
32 Auto 71 GR FMJ (Rem)	24.50	43.95	N/A
380 Auto 88 GR JHP (Rem)	26.50	47.50	N/A
380 Auto 95 GR FMJ	20.95	37.75	\$148.75/4430
9mm Luger 115 GR JHP (Rem)	28.95	52.75	N/A
9mm Luger 115 GR FMJ	23.25	41.75	136.50/3660
9mm Luger 124 GR FMJ	24.25	44.25	133.25/3390
38/357 110 GR JHP	25.50	46.25	157.50/3820
38/357 125 GR JHP	23.95	43.25	129.95/3360
38/357 140 GR JHP (Rem)	29.50	53.50	N/A
38/357 158 GR JHP	28.25	51.50	123.50/2660
38 Super 130 GR FMJ (Rem)	27.25	48.95	N/A
41 Mag 200 GR JHP (Rem)	41.25	75.25	N/A
41 Mag 210 GR JSP (Rem)	42.25	77.50	N/A
44 Mag 180 GR JHP (Rem)	39.95	73.50	N/A
44 Mag 240 GR JHP (Rem)	43.85	80.95	N/A
45 Auto 185 GR JHP (Rem)	43.25	79.25	N/A
45 Auto 185 GR FMC (Rem)	43.25	79.25	N/A
45 Auto 230 GR FMJ	37.50	68.55	113.75/1830
223 55 GR FMJ (BTW/Cannelure)	15.95	28.50	126.25/5000
22 Cal 55 GR Pointed Soft Pt.	25.75	46.50	314.50/7640
30 Carbine 110 GR SP (Rem)	25.95	46.95	N/A
30 Carbine 100 GR FMJ (Rem)	25.95	46.95	N/A
308-30/06 147 GR FMJ (BTW/Cannelure)	37.25	67.95	173.95/2860

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NOTE: This is not Loaded Ammunition
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9mm Luger	34.25	62.50
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44 Special	48.50	88.95
44 Magnum	48.50	87.95
45 ACP	44.25	80.75
45 Long Colt	48.50	87.50
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50-450	\$34.75	\$34.75	\$39.95
500-950	29.75	29.75	33.75
1000-1950	27.85	27.85	31.75
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Minimum order 50 boxes of one size. Order in increments of 50 boxes.

Clark's Classy Classic

the .38 SPECIAL LONGSLIDE

By Massad Ayoob



Today's handgunners know Jim Clark as the pioneer of the Pin Gun, the muzzle-weighted .45 auto that now rules in the sister sports of IPSC combat handgunning and bowling pin shooting. Those who've been around a bit longer remember him as the man

A quarter of a century ago, Jim Clark set the bullseye world on its ear with his .38 Special Colt longslide. Today the record-setting Clark Longslide is still winning matches.

who created the longslide .38 Special wadcutter target auto.

Returning stateside after heavy combat in the Pacific theater, Jim turned his interest in guns to more peaceful directions. He soon roared to the head of the pack in NRA bullseye shooting, the only organized handgun game back then. He was the first civilian to win the national pistol championship, one of the first to break 2600 out of 2700 points in three-gun (.22, centerfire, and .45) shooting, and he also brought a fresh new eye to the mechanics of it, because gunsmithing had become his trade.

Jim wasn't entirely satisfied with the accuracy of the auto pistols of the period, at least in .38 and .45 caliber, nor was he thrilled with their reliability. Most of his many national records were set using a thumb-cocked Smith & Wesson target revolver, and it was his suggestions that turned the passable old Model 1950 target, simply a gussied-up 1917 .45 revolver, into the superb Model 1955 Target that is known today as the "25-2." He still favors the trusty revolver as a home defense gun, and his target-tuned PPC guns of that persuasion have won many police revolver championships. Clark sixguns are also regularly seen at Bianchi Cup in the hands of Champions like John Shaw and Jim's namesake son, who promises to follow in his dad's

record-setting footsteps.

Yet, the gun that *made* Jim as a pistolsmith was the .38 target auto. He wanted a centerfire gun with the feel and good trigger control of a target .45 auto, but with the light recoil of a .38 wadcutter in timed and rapid fire. While *he* could manipulate a .38 revolver's hammer fast enough to beat auto shooters in rapid fire, few other competitors could. The .38 Super was not known for accuracy, nor was the 9mm.

Jim set about redesigning the Colt .38 Super Government Model to feed the flat-nose .38 Special wadcutter revolver round. After much experimentation, he succeeded in what many firearms engineers thought impossible, to wit, converting the gun to feed the short, square-mouthed, thickly-rimmed target revolver cartridge. Ingeniously modified magazines were part of the key to his success.

But feeding was only the first hurdle. Next would come a barrel that would cut the tiny rings of the NRA Slow Fire bullseye target at 50 yards. Jim's work on the .38 conversion led ultimately to the famed Clark barrel line, which has since been adopted by many other big-name pistolsmiths.

Another problem was balance. Precision shooters want a handgun with heft *and* balance, that will hang with its sights in perfect alignment as they squeeze off a one-handed shot at their tiny mark. Because pinpoint accuracy was their game far more than speed, in this day before Aim-point sights, they also wanted a long sight radius. Jim's solution to both problems was to chop the front off a second Government Model's slide and graft it onto the front of the first. A slide now more than eight inches



The author says the Clark Longslide actually makes him shoot better scores because of its "arcane something."

Voted by his peers as the 1985 Outstanding American pistolsmith, Jim Clark is hailed as the grand old man of custom pistols.

long enshrouded the six-inch Clark barrel.

Even this wasn't enough weight for some heavy-duty gunners; for them, Jim would add a full-length Bo-Mar sight rib, creating the gun he called the "long heavyslide." Many shooters, myself included, preferred the balance of the regular longslide, mounted with the rear-of-slide-to-breechface "half-rib" with an accurizing stud to help hold the barrel in alignment.

The concept worked so well that Jim was soon inundated with orders for longslides, not only in .38 Special, but in .45 ACP. Like the .38, the .45 version was soon setting the standard by which other target pistols in their class would be judged. When this writer was active in bullseye shooting in the 1960s and early 70s, the Clark Longslide was the mark of the professional.

Jim's professionalism showed not only in the superb X-ring accuracy of the guns, not only in their glass-rod

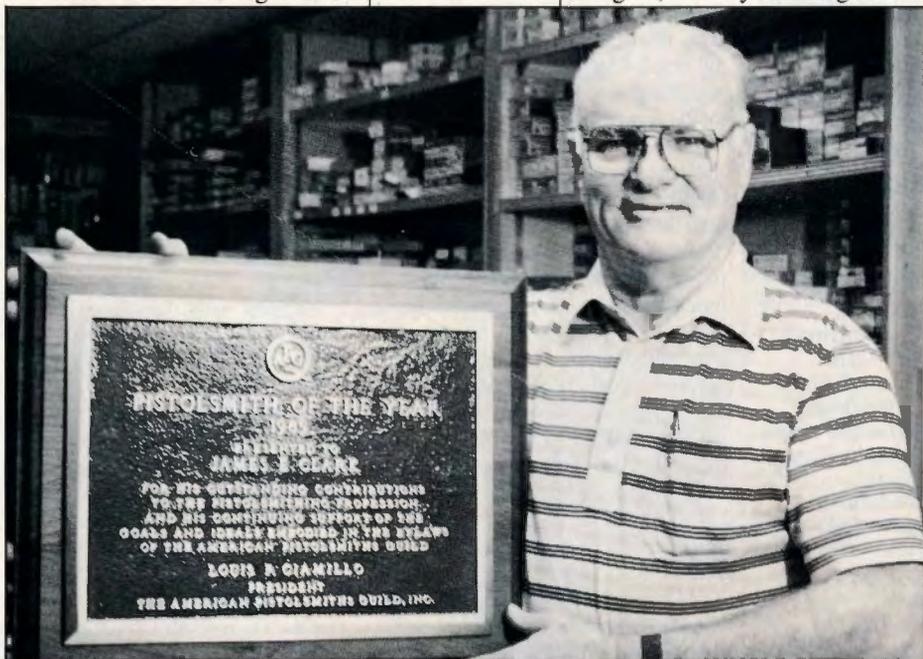
triggers, but in the workmanship as well. When other makers were content to merely roughen the front and backstraps of the Colt's grip and call it stippling, Jim laboriously fitted his with tiny blunt studs that the flesh of the hand would wrap around, making the pistol lie motionless and rock-steady in the shooter's fist. It remains a popular Clark option on target pistols.

I ordered a Clark Longslide .38 from Jim late in 1984. My bullseye days were long past, and I'd never been able to afford one then, but the Ordnance Expo professional shoot was coming up in Los Angeles the following January. This was to be the treacherous falling plate course of fire of the Bianchi Cup and NRA Action Shooting, but with a difference: you'd have to draw and shoot once at each of the 8" disks, from 25 yards, *one hand only*, in 9 seconds. At 10 yards you had only 6 seconds.

A .45 auto would kick too much to recover in time, at least for me. Only a handful of wheelgunners can control double action *or* single action that rapidly and precisely with only one hand, and I knew I was not among them. S&W's model 52 Master, the production .38 wadcutter target gun that the success of Jim's longslide inspired, didn't have a safety that would work quickly enough out of the leather, at least for me.

I discussed it with former IPSC national champ John Shaw, who had just taught a pistolcraft course for me at Lethal Force Institute. John was the one who had shot his way to glory with a Clark Pin Gun, and it shouldn't have surprised me when he said, "They're allowing .38 wadcutter ammo, so I'm using a Clark Longslide."

CLICK! The light went on. I immediately called Jim, and the longslide was soon in my hands.

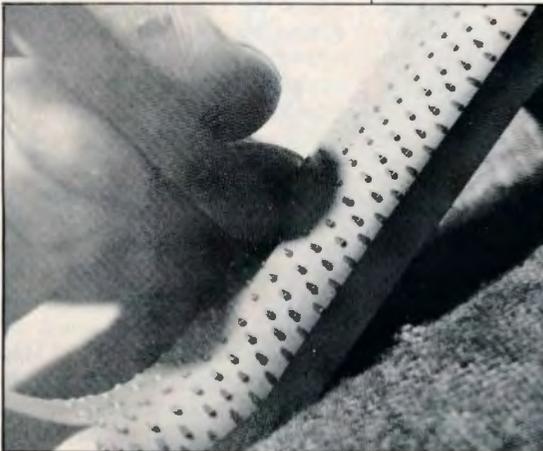


And it was beautiful. The two slides had been mated so seamlessly they might have been forged from the same piece of steel. The polish and bluing from Jim's shop was outstanding, on a par with the Royal Blue finish Colt puts only on their deluxe guns, and then only after laborious polishing with fine 400-grit emery.

The trigger was so good it scared me. It broke just an ounce above the legal NRA limit, with absolutely no aim-disturbing backlash, and no grating creep. Like the proverbial glass rod, it released by surprise, the better to keep a stressed marksman from anticipating his shot and jerking the gun.

Though it was December in New Hampshire, I hid myself hence to the falling plate range, and despite the cold, I found myself averaging 45 out of 48 plates one-handed. I was "shooting over my head," and this was my next indicator that the gun I held was something special. It's one thing to build a gun with extraordinary accuracy and superb workmanship. But the "feel" of a gun, its ability to make a shooter perform better, is a different quality altogether.

Owning a sword as fine as Musashi's would not have made you a master swordsman like that famed Samurai. But if you could buy a sword that made you a better swordsman, you would. So it is with the Clark Longslide: built by a



champion shooter to be sensitive and perfectly balanced in the hand, this classic pistol goes beyond workmanship and into performance. At its task, it reflects the science of human engineering. It makes you shoot better.

The pistol made me confident for the Los Angeles match, but it was not to be. The gun made the 6,000 mile round trip with me to LA, but when I arrived I learned the match had been cancelled. I took in the fine Ordnance Expo police show, gave my workshop, and left with the

COLT'S .38 SUPER CONVERSIONS TO .38 SPECIAL

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THE GUNSMITH

J. E. Clark, PO Box 4248, Shreveport, Louisiana

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Clark pistol unfired.

I wanted to test it in a competition arena, because I'd already understood that its feel, its arcane relationship to the hand of the user, was part of the magic its legend had been built upon. An outdoor bullseye match was the logical thing, but I had been too long from the bullseye target lanes to give the gun its due. Sure, I could lend it to a champion for his report, but hundreds of champions had *already* chosen this gun. I wanted to *feel* it win; participatory journalism as it were. I chose the next best arena, PPC for auto pistols.

The gun went with me twice to the Boston Gun and Rifle Club. Because 20% of a PPC course is fired with the weak hand, it is a good test of how the gun will work for a hand not totally familiar with it.

It worked flawlessly. In two hand fire, the muzzle would barely rise, usually bringing the sight no higher than the top of the 9-ring upon recoil. The superb trigger delivered its surprise breaks; the glass-smooth mechanism functioned perfectly. It was a little hard on the fingers getting the rounds into the strong-sprung, custom cut magazine, and since they were 5-shot mags in a game of six-shot strings I had some extra reloads, but I was satisfied with the gunsmithing miracle of making revolver rounds fit an auto at all, a Clark-delivered miracle now 30-years-old and much copied.

At the range, several PPC auto shooters who owned Model 52s tried the Clark. Without exception, they

rated the custom Colt's trigger pull superior to the famous one on their own .38 target autos. They would work the slide, feeling it glide effortlessly against its light recoil spring along the meticulously tightened and honed frame rails. And they would say things like "ooh" and "aaah" and "Je-sus, that's nice!"

Several tried the pistol live. Most shot better with it than their own. The loads ranged from factory Federal and Remington to the standard Bullseye charge behind Zero and American 148-grain bullets, to some scuzzy-sleazo stuff a couple of the new shooters had bought from a custom reloader who should be in the garbage business instead. Yet the Clark longslide perked on, shooting 10-ring groups and functioning even with reloads that burned so dirty they clogged revolver cylinders in less than 60 shots. This performance spoke of parts finely mated for accuracy, yet with sufficient working tolerances at critical points for utter reliability.

We were using the tiny B-29 target on a 50-foot range, the equivalent of 50 yard shooting on the standard silhouette. Because of the size of the target, the 24-round strings were run back-to-back in 12-round segments. When I shot six left-barricade and six right-barricade, dropping only a single point for 119 out of 120 possible points, faster than the usual PPC rate for that number of shots, I knew I was holding a gun that a master pistolsmith had built to force the best

Continued on page 79

75th Anniversary Commemorative

HONORING A TRUE AMERICAN LEGEND

The most famous sidearm in history, the Govt. 45 Auto, will soon be retired from our U.S. military forces honoring 75 years of tradition and memorialized with this commemorative edition "Actual Firing" 8mm Govt. 45 Automatic.



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Uses high power 8mm brass cased blanks available on order form.

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High power Brass Cased 8mm blanks feature center fire primer, extremely loud firing power with accompanying recoil.

11-Shot clip fed action allows successive shots to be fed into chamber; spent shells are ejected with automatic action.



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★NOTE: In special recognition and in honor of all those veterans that have served our country, we are offering \$10 (ten dollars) off the purchase price; for veterans only. (See order form) Phone Orders call # 1-702-456-3841



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High Power 8mm Blanks (box of 10 Blanks) @ \$6.00 per box	How Many _____	TOTAL \$ _____	ALL ITEMS
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Check here for two-payment plan (pistol orders only). Enclosed is \$75.00 per pistol for 1st payment. Final payment of \$75.00 per pistol will be billed in 30 days.

Please charge to my credit card Visa Mastercard American Express

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(Offer not available to residents of New York City and its five boroughs or Chicago)

CAUTION - Ear and eye protectors should be worn when using this pistol.
WARNING - Due to the style and appearance of this collectors edition, it should only be used for collecting, training purposes, or display and always under the supervision of a responsible adult. For your own safety, it should NEVER be carried on the street, hidden on your person, or left carelessly in your vehicle. It should NEVER be considered for use as a safe method of home protection. DO NOT USE for home defense.

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The AYOOB FILES

HIGH-VOLUME FIREFIGHT: THE KOLOWSKI-BURCHETTE INCIDENT

Situation: You're under fire and you hit your enemy 13 times with a 9mm. Uh-oh, he doesn't go down!

Lesson: Use enough gun. The feeble bite of a 9mm hits center-chest and still doesn't stop the felon.

Certain fans of the .45 automatic tell all who'll listen that the 9mm auto is a feeble manstopper, and that even with hollowpoint ammo it can't be expected to perform. When they're asked to cite cases, one that almost invariably rises to the top of the list is the Kolowski-Burchette incident that took place in LaSalle, Illinois on the night of October 8, 1980.

On the surface, it's enough to make you trade your 9mm for a .45 on the spot: a suspect *not* on drugs shoots it out with two Illinois State Troopers and takes 13 Silvertip hollowpoints before he goes down. Yet a study of the facts shows that the shooting is not necessarily an indictment of the 9mm pistol/115 grain jacketed hollowpoint combination. As always, one has to go to the heart of the story to learn the truth.

Approximately two months after the LaSalle incident, I travelled to Illinois and spent a day with the troopers involved in the shooting, and another half a day each with Cpl. Robert Cappelli, head of Ordnance for ISP and with Deputy Superintendent Bill Pierce, who took overall responsibility for investigation of the trooper-involved shooting. I was provided with a full set of the autopsy protocols on the deceased, including all autopsy pictures and the toxicology screen on the dead gunman. From those facts, and not from the wellspring of rumors that flooded from the incident, came the true story presented here.

Bob Kolowski, 32, is a veteran state trooper and a field training officer whose responsibility it is to break in new men. Lloyd Burchette, 25, has just completed ISP training after a couple of years as a municipal police officer with a medium-sized PD in Illinois. Kolowski's supervisors consider him one of the best road troopers in the district, and found in Burchette an extremely promising recruit.

Wayne O'Brien, 32, is a tall, strapping Caucasian about Kolowski's size. He is a member of the DC Eagles outlaw motorcycle club and belongs to the "Filthy Few," a clique that runs through the outlaw biker subculture and denotes a man who has murdered for money and is prepared to do it again. He is being sought by Florida authorities in connection with a murder investigation and has served considerable time in prison, with a record that includes multiple armed robberies, aggravated assault and battery, aggravated kidnapping and unlawful restraint, and possession of stolen property. He is presently free on \$150,000 bond awaiting trial for a string of crimes in the Sunshine State, and is also wanted for skipping a \$50,000 bond in relation to a robbery in Matteson, Illinois. Post-mortem blood analysis will show negative for narcotics, but he has been drinking and has a blood alcohol content of .18%, 180% of legally drunk.

O'Brien is armed with a Bauer .25 stainless steel auto pistol, stolen in a Chicago burglary, and with a Charter Arms Undercover blue-steel .38 Special revolver with two-inch barrel. Both are fully loaded, the .38 with jacketed Winchester ammo. The Bauer is in his right hip pocket, and it is believed that the Charter was nestled in the top of the saddlebag on his Harley Davidson motorcycle.

In the ISP cruiser is a 12-gauge shotgun loaded with single-0 buckshot, and each trooper has a Smith & Wesson model 39-2 pistol at his hip in a Safariland thumbbreak duty holster. At this time, ISP is ironically the only State Police in the US that issues the auto pistol, yet simultaneously the only one that does not provide for spare ammo to be carried on the person. Burchette, a new man on probation, is scrupulously wearing exactly what was issued, and his spare magazine is in the pristine ashtray of the "non-smoking" cruiser, a common practice among troopers who don't smoke. Kolowski has gently stretched the rules and is carrying a magazine pouch he paid for himself, forward of his left hip.

Before the night is over, it will save both their lives.

Each man's weapon contains seven rounds of the newly-issued Winchester 115 grain Silvertip jacketed hollowpoint ammo in the magazine, and an eighth in each firing chamber. Tonight will be the first actual use of this new cartridge in a gunfight by the Illinois State Police, who have carried S&W 9mm autos since 1967.

It will be the first . . . and the last.

Burchette is driving Kolowski's unmarked brown squad car on a familiarization tour of the Rt. 45 area near Interstate 57

Continued on page 72

HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

A GRIPPING REPORT ON 9MM LOADING PLUS A NEW LUBE TO PREVENT LEADING

Parabellum means *for war*. In a more political sense, it means to ward off armed conflict by being prepared, which is a crock of sauerkraut when it's applied to the 9mm Luger round. Anyone who's squared off in an attempt to reload the thing knows a real battle can take place before the first shot is fired. Correspondent Dudley S. Thomas, Jr., of Newburgh, Indiana, apparently a tenderfoot in these muddy trenches, reports on a particularly challenging confrontation.

"Your column on handloading has touched on a problem that has come to light in my own experience: Winchester cases in 9mm. I've been working with the 9mm for only a few months, but the distressing fact of the matter is that I've found Winchester cases far too soft to apply any reasonable grip to jacketed bullets. I use RCBS dies (carbide sizer) in a Dillon press. At first I thought the sizing die was at fault, or that it was the expander-powder funnel used in the Dillon. After some experimentation, sizing the case only, no case mouth expansion, I found that I could literally push a bullet into the case with my fingers. Even after taper crimping, a very moderate of finger and thumb pressure allowed me to jam the bullet down on top of the powder. (These were Hornady and Winchester 115 grain bullets.)

"At this time I have separated the Winchester cases from all others. Remington, Federal, IMI, S&W, Browning—none of these give me any problems. All are stiff enough to take a firm bite on the bullet. By contrast, the Winchester cases 'feel' as soft as butter as they go through the various stages of the Dillon. I can't feel any resistance during the bullet-seating stage, and I'll often find that the bullet has been pushed completely into the case no matter how gentle my touch.

"You spoke of using a Lee carbide sizer. I'm willing to try this if you think it will be of any help. As I say, my Winchester cases (W-W, Win., WRA) are packed away, and I won't be loading them again unless you can help. I would hate to throw away some 500 cases, but I don't see any other solution than to cut my losses and run. I've acquired my Winchester cases over several years against the time when I would be loading for a 9mm. Incidentally, WCC cases seem to be much stiffer, so I assume Winchester is using a different alloy in them."

Although this handloader's problem may be partially due to softness in earlier lots of Winchester 9mm cases, the lack of grip he describes is more likely due to thin case walls. If he switches to a sizing die with a smaller inside diameter, he'll be swaging "belts" onto his cases. Then, to make an ugly

situation uglier, his loads will bulge like a bowling ball in a bugle. Better to chuck the old stuff and harken to the good word, which is that current lots of Winchester 9mm brass have been made harder and have enough wall thickness to grip the bullet after resizing.

I've encountered lots from Eley and Arms Corporation of the Philippines' 9mm cases with flash holes that'll take a death grip on any decapping pin with a diameter of more than .070." This also may be true of certain other foreign-made cases. You can turn the diameter of the pin down to about .062," or you can ream all the flash holes out with a No. 48 drill, or you can leave your empties on the ground so they'll drive the brass scavengers nuts.

GUN	BULLET	GROUP SIZE	REMARKS
Colt Python	Hornady hollow-base wadcutter	39 in 1.74" one flyer	Mixed brass holes clean-cut
S&W Model 66	Hornady hollow-base wadcutter	26 in 1.74" 30 in 2.39"	W-W brass holes clean-cut
S&W Model 66	Lyman bevel-base wadcutter	10 in 3.88" 9 in 2.50"	W-W brass holes ragged
Ruger Service Six	Hornady hollow-base wadcutter	10 in 3.53"	Remington brass holes clean-cut
Ruger Service Six	Lyman bevel-base wadcutter	10 in 4.06"	Remington brass holes ragged

Pottstown, Pennsylvania handloader John Carter sends 10 sample targets and includes the following information: "These are the result of several months of experimentation in search of a 'unified' .38 wadcutter load. This particular handload has utilized two different makes of brass so far (sorted, of course) and has been successfully fired in three different makes of handgun: Colt Python, six-inch; S&W Model 66, four-inch; Ruger Service Six, four-inch. These targets were shot at the end of a practice session, so you may argue that my wife, Gail, and I were thoroughly warmed up, or that we were tired and ready to quit. The guns were either thoroughly 'bore-conditioned' or thoroughly filthy. . . . We fired from a measured 20 yards, indoors, from a Hoppe's pistol rest with stock iron sights. . . . we both enjoy shooting .44 Magnum, but when we practice on basics—proper breathing, sight picture, trigger control—we opt for this almost-recoilless load. We have a S&W Model 63

.22 LR that, I swear, has more felt recoil than this .38 Special load: 2.2 grains of W-W 231/CCI Small Pistol Magnum primer/.38 caliber, 148 grain Hornady hollow-base wadcutter/W-W or Remington cases. Use a medium taper-crimp onto a flush-seated bullet. What's a 'medium' taper-crimp? It's somewhere between enough to just be able to see that the brass has been worked and less than, 'Oh, my aching hernia!' used with powders like W-W 296. The load was assembled with RCBS .38 Special tungsten carbide dies, with a separate die to perform the taper crimp, on a Forster-Bonanza Co-Ax press. Priming was done with a Lee priming tool.

"The step which achieved significant group tightening was the substitution of Magnum CCI primers for Standard CCI primers. This was an experimental move on my part in hopes of eliminating unburned powder. . . well, it eliminated the unburned powder and prompted this letter.

"As you review the targets, you'll note flyers. Nobody's perfect. The Remington targets are looser; the brass has been in service for 10-plus years without annealing. I have included some identical-load targets with one key change: I used Lyman cast bevel-base 148 grain wadcutters—much looser groups, but it

would take out a tin can. The Ruger targets I must attribute to a creepy trigger and service-grade fixed sights."

I can't show you the targets that resulted from the Carters' accurate indoor load, so I'll offer a chart to show what happened when the lead started flying.

The big tease from Hartford, Wisconsin is that Lee Precision is marketing a new cast-bullet lube—one that has been concocted by C.E. Harris, of *Rifleman* and Ruger fame—that will coat with a golden hue and out-do any lube available to date. It's a liquid Alox lube that is simply sprayed onto bullets that have been dumped into an empty ice cream container. You shake the box, let the lube dry, and reap the benefits of *virtually leading-free shooting*. A test report will follow. Meantime, if you've a good handload to report, let us know by writing to Handloading, Rt. 1, Box 7, Llano, CA 93544. If you have a question and need an answer, please include postage. 

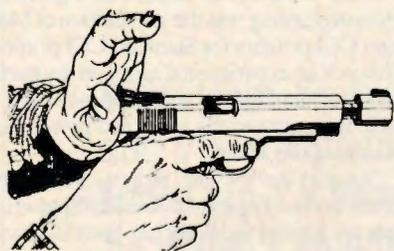
MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

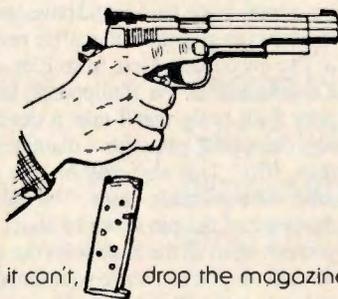
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Feeding and Extraction Jams

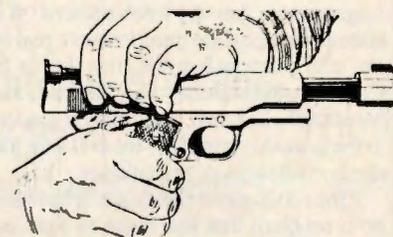
Failure to feed jams are the easiest to prevent. If you're going to be in a match, run every single round you plan to use through the gun, being extremely careful not to blow a hole in your floor. All safety precautions apply doubly here. You'll know in advance that every round will feed. But if you do get a feed jam:



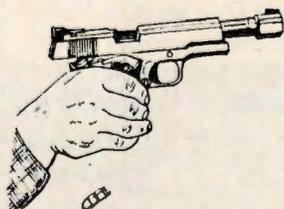
1. First see if the round can be forced into place with your hand striking the back of the slide.



2. If it can't, drop the magazine...



3. ... lock the slide back...



4. ... shake the round out of the mag well, letting it fall...



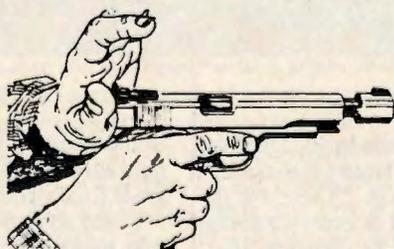
5. ... insert a new magazine...



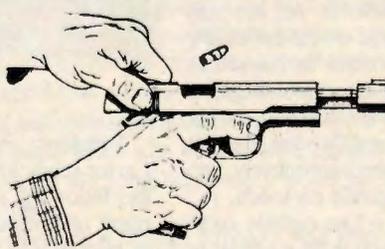
6. ... and release the slide.

Yes, as a matter of fact, it is slow, which is why you want to prevent this sort of thing from happening.

Another type of failure to feed is caused by a case that is slightly ballooned or oversized for the chamber. If the case enters the chamber of your gun but won't seat...



1. ... rap the rear of the slide and try to force it home.



2. If that doesn't work, pull back the slide and eject the round.

A **failure to extract**, which is not all that common, is the worst jam you can get. You've got an empty case in the chamber and a live round coming up behind it:

1. Lock the slide back...
2. ... drop the magazine to get rid of the live round...
3. ... slam the slide forward to pick up the lodged case...
4. ... insert a new magazine.
5. Pull back and release the slide once more, ideally ejecting the offending case and chambering a live round.

JOHN SHAW, Combat Master; 1980 and '81 IPSC National Champion; 1981 World Speed Shooting Champion; 1980 Soldier of Fortune Champion.

Reprinted with permission from *You Can't Miss — The Guide to Combat Pistol Shooting* by John Shaw and Michael Bane

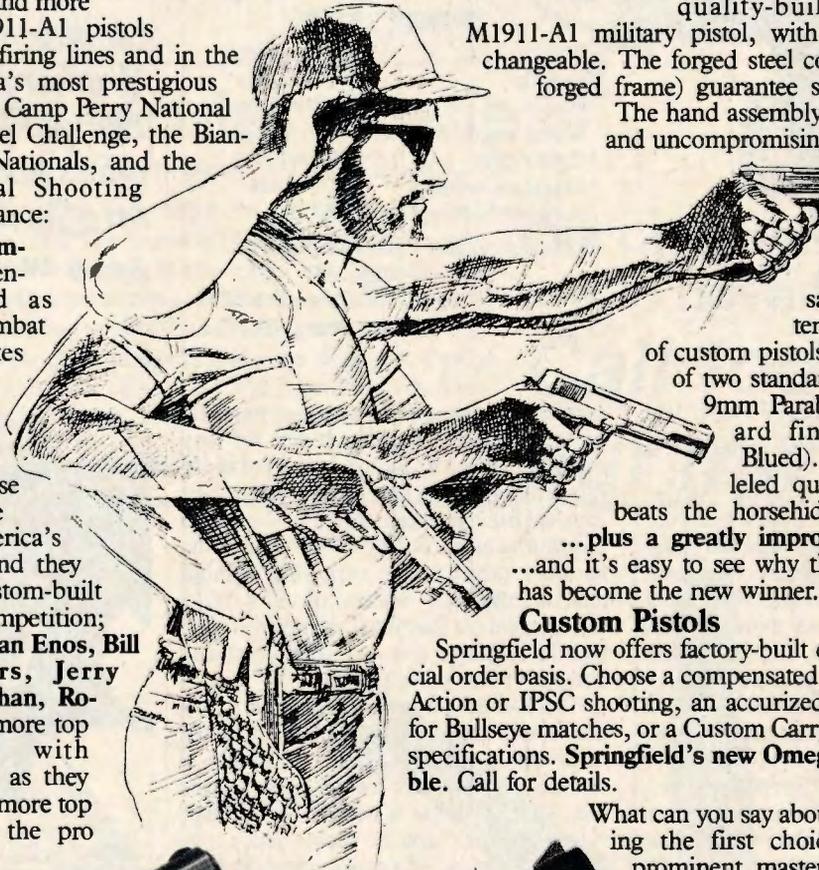
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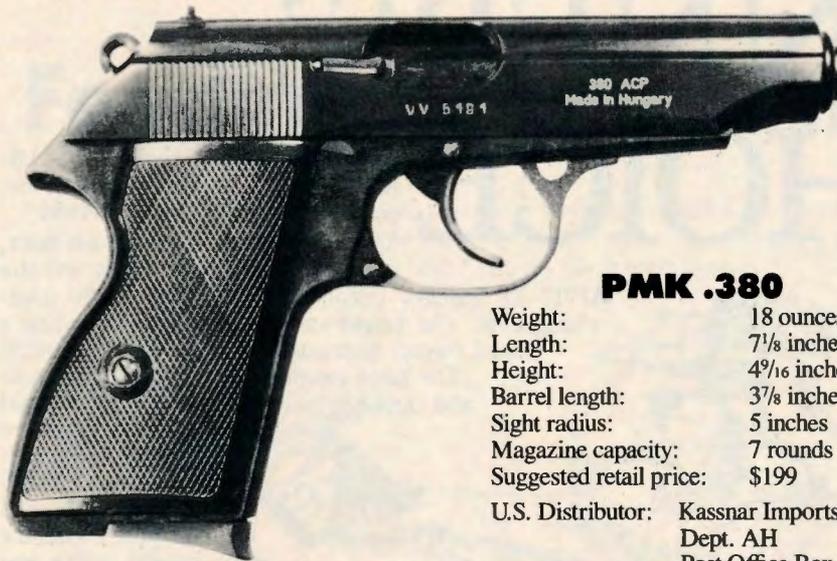


Always wear eye and ear protection when using any firearm. Safety and instruction manuals available from Springfield Armory.

PMK .380

Similar to the Walther PP, this Hungarian back-up pistol offers good quality at an affordable price.

By J.B. Wood



PMK .380

Weight:	18 ounces
Length:	7 ¹ / ₈ inches
Height:	4 ⁹ / ₁₆ inches
Barrel length:	3 ⁷ / ₈ inches
Sight radius:	5 inches
Magazine capacity:	7 rounds
Suggested retail price:	\$199

U.S. Distributor: Kassnar Imports
Dept. AH
Post Office Box 6097
Harrisburg, PA 17112

A few years after the end of World War Two, Fémáru és Szerszámgyár NV of Budapest, Hungary, began making a medium-frame pistol based on the Walther Model PP, but with several modifications. The initial production was a contract order for the Egyptian Police, but the contract was cancelled after production was well under way. The Hungarians sold most of these pistols to Hege (Hebsacker, GmbH) of West Germany, and they were sold as the Hege AP66. In Hungary, the pistol was called the Walam Model 48, and it was made in .380 and .32 chamberings.

Kassnar Imports of Harrisburg, Pa., recently made arrangements to offer an updated version of the Walam 48M in the U.S. as the PMK .380. Those who know the Walther will find its general appearance and features familiar, but there are definite differences. One of these is the shape of the grip frame, which has a deep upper incurve and a pronounced outcurve at lower rear. The left grip panel has a moderate thumb-rest, and this combination makes a very comfortable grip. I've always felt that thumb-rest grips are appropriate only on target pistols, but in this case the feature is unobtrusive.

The old Walam 48M had a magazine endpiece that was rather large, and this has been replaced in the PMK by a smaller and nicely-shaped endpiece that has a moderate finger-rest at the front. There's room on the frontstrap for all three fingers.

The magazine follower is unusual. Instead of just a shelf to operate the slide hold-open after the last round, it has a spring-tempered arm that makes even more positive contact. The frame of the PMK is alloy, anodized black, and all other parts are steel. The steel parts are darkly blued, and the fit and finish are excellent.

The manual safety lever has a flat side

surface with deep grooving, and its round tip gives a good non-slip thumb grip for easy operation. When it's turned downward to on-safe position, it first blocks the hammer face from the firing pin head, then trips the sear to drop the hammer. For those who want to, the hammer drop can be cancelled without affecting the other function of the safety. I should point out that this is entirely my idea, and the importer does not approve of any alteration of the safety system.

There is also an internal automatic safety that blocks any forward movement of the firing pin at all times, and this system is cleared only in the last fraction of the trigger arc. The PMK has a twin to the Walther "horseshoe sear," and the double-action trigger pull is similar—short and relatively stiff. The single-action pull on my pistol is good, with a small amount of slack, a 4½-pound let-off, and no over-travel. The trigger has deep vertical grooving, a feature I could do without, but for those who like it, it's there. The ring-type hammer is also deeply cross-grooved, and cocking for single action firing is easy.

The rear sight is dovetail-mounted, and lateral adjustment is possible by drifting. It has a U-notch, and the front sight has a square-post picture. Both sights are low-profile, and they are not likely to snag on holsters or clothing. The top of the slide has a slightly raised and lengthwise-grooved rib. While the sights are not high-visibility combat-type, they're quite adequate for the usual back-up rôle of a .380 automatic. In this use, the good natural pointing qualities of the PMK are worth more than sights.

I tried the pistol at the range on combat silhouettes, firing three-shot groups from belt level, one-hand hold, with the first shot double action. I had no difficulty keeping all of the hits in vital target areas at a distance of 15



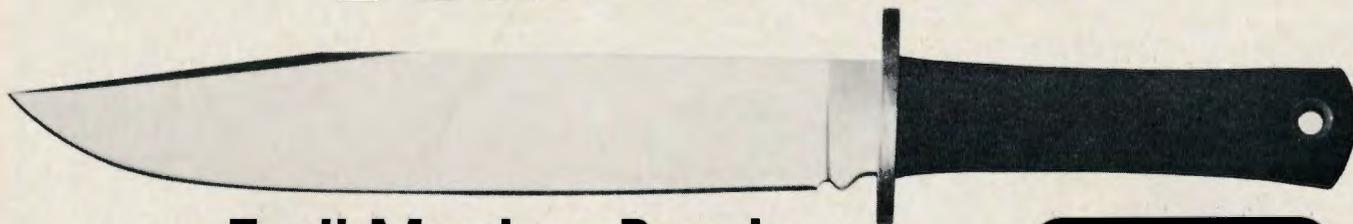
The safety is shown in the on-safe and off-safe positions. When turned downward, the safety blocks the firing pin and drops the hammer.

feet. Moving back to 25 yards, I tried it from a casual rest on standard targets. All of the groups were well-centered, but the first one was a little high. It was fired with a lead bullet handload, a 105 grain SWC over 2.5 grains of Bullseye, and the slightly increased recoil had an effect. The following groups were all

Continued on page 94

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AMMUNITION FOR THE DARK PLACE

Weatherproofing Your Lifeguard

By Robert Mejia

Every hard-core reloader has a hoard of "trash" brass that he keeps on hand for emergencies and visiting relatives who shoot. Not long ago, I was given 500 or so once-fired PMC .38 Special cases. I was about to dump them into my trash hoard when another thought struck. Now was as good a time as any to try a project that had been in the back of my mind for awhile.

My father, a naval aviator in WWII, once told me of the time he was hit by ground fire and forced to ditch in the Pacific. It was all rather routine. He was immersed in the ocean for no more than two minutes, the time it took for his raft to inflate. He specifically remembers immediately drying off his issue S&W revolver and its ammunition. Later, while trying to signal a passing destroyer, none of the rounds would function.

Several years ago, a cop on the West Coast became involved in a gun fight and had several misfires. The problem was traced to his habit of liberally dousing his duty weapon with WD-40, without first removing the rounds. The solvent had penetrated some of the rounds and rendered them inert.

So, here we have two instances of ammunition failure. While decades apart, they are related. The ammunition was contaminated by an external substance, and both situations became life-threatening because of the failures.

My duty ammunition is regularly exposed to the elements, so I rotate it every three months. I also have a "war bag" of odds and ends that stays in the trunk of my patrol unit. Would it be worth my time to carefully handload and seal a supply of ammo that I could throw in the trunk and forget about?

To find out, I loaded 50 of those PMC cases with W-W primers, 5.9 grains of Unique, and Hornady 125 gr. JHP bullets. Half of them were sealed. While there are several ways to go about this, I found that the easiest method is to size, reprime, and expand the mouths first. The cases are then inverted in the loading block and the primers are sealed with nail polish (in this case, Maybelline red). It is best to daub a puddle over each primer, let it sit a minute, then wipe off the excess. The point is to let the nail enamel fill up the space between primer and primer pocket. I let the first application dry thoroughly (2-3 hours), then repeated the process. The cases are now charged with powder, and, prior to seating, each bullet is given a thin film of nail enamel along the entire circumference of the crimping groove (we are talking serious tedium here, folks). I used clear nail enamel on the bullets so my seating die would not become too messy. Still, it is necessary to swab out the die every ten rounds or so to prevent a build-up. For this, I used a cotton bore mop soaked with acetone. The resulting rounds were very neat in appearance and indistinguishable from the unsealed ones.

After much thought, it seemed that the most realistic test would be a simulation of what might actually occur to these rounds. Accordingly, 10 of each, sealed and unsealed, along with 20 W-W .357 Silvertip factory cartridges as a control, were placed in six clean baby food jars, 10 rounds per jar. Separated into two groups of three (sealed, unsealed, and control), the first group of jars was filled with water and the cartridges allowed to soak for one minute. The water was dumped out and the jar tightly sealed, with no attempt made to remove the excess water or moisture. The second group of jars was handled in the same manner, with Break-Free substituted for the

Continued on page 78

Handloads for Defense?

By Charles E. Petty

Handloading is fun. Handloading is economical. Handloading offers the shooter all sorts of advantages, but there is one place where handloading is not only ill-advised but could be downright foolish. You should not use handloads for self-defense.

Anyone who handloads knows the pitfalls. Level with me now—haven't you loaded a round that went *pfiff* instead of bang? I have, and I've also committed all the other cardinal sins of reloading that could lead to a malfunction like a burr on the case mouth or forgetting to crimp and ending up with a cartridge that wouldn't go into the chamber. The factories are painfully aware that one of those *pfiffs* will cost them a customer forever, not to mention the possible product liability consequences. Their entire loading process is geared to make sure those don't happen. American ammunition is probably the most dependable consumer product there is, so reliability is not something I'm going to worry about.

Suppose, for a moment, that you are involved in a defensive encounter and shoot an assailant. Regardless of the circumstances, the shooting will be investigated by the police and their report will be passed on to the District Attorney for a finding of whether or not the shooting is justified.

Now let's carry our game of "what if" a step further. Criminal procedures have found the shooting justified. So you're home free, right? Wrong! There still remains the possibility of civil litigation. Up to this point everyone has been concerned with the simple facts of the case: was the shooting justified under the concepts of self-defense that apply in your particular jurisdiction? But civil cases are not so limited and you might find yourself sued by the person you shot or his family and suddenly it's a whole new ball game. Woe be to you if he suffered permanent injuries, for any enterprising personal injury lawyer will trot him into court and take every possible opportunity to gain sympathy for him.

All at once your assailant has become a victim! You can expect to be questioned at length about things that really have no bearing on the case and the lawyer will do all he can to make the jury think you're Attila the Hun.

Now let's complicate things a little more. You're an avid shooter and handloader and the ammunition you used in the justifiable shooting was your own pet reload that you had carefully crafted for maximum efficiency and maybe it was just a tad hotter than commonly accepted factory ammunition. If the plaintiff's lawyer discovers this, he is sure to elicit all sorts of testimony that will capitalize on this and make your action appear to be cruel and unusual punishment. His questioning might go something like this:

"Mr. Smith, I understand that you are a reloader. Is that right?"

"Yes."

"Isn't it true, Mr. Smith, that you deliberately loaded the ammunition you used to shoot Mr. Jones with a dum-dum bullet with the intent of creating the worst possible wound?"

"No."

"But didn't you use a hollowpoint bullet?"

"Yes."

"And didn't you load a maximum powder charge?"

"Yes."

"And isn't it true that hollowpoint bullets are intended to expand and do the most possible damage?"

Continued on page 78

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7rd—.45 Stainless	16.50	18.50
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TAFFIN TESTS

Most new handgun cartridges are welcomed with enthusiasm and applause by the major gunwriters. The .357 Maximum, however, has the distinction of being one cartridge that some major writers, who did not understand the cartridge, tried to kill

off. The theory behind the .357 Maximum, which was pushed by Elgin Gates and thoroughly tested by a number of writers for *The Silhouette*, was to create a revolver cartridge for silhouetting capable of moving 180-200 grain bullets at 1400+ fps.

much lower velocities, made the trip across the barrel/cylinder gap. Heavy doses of ball powder also caused a sand blast effect on top straps and forcing cones.

The .357 Maximum was pronounced a failure by some while the silhouetters, who knew better, went on to make it the winningest revolver cartridge in competition. Silhouetters were not interested in seeing how fast they could drive lightweight .357 bullets; they were only concerned with heavyweight bullets that would shoot accurately at 1400+ fps. Unfortunately, the Ruger .357 Maximum was pulled from the market because of top strap and throat erosion caused by improper loads and has yet to be reinstated.

the .357 MAXIMUM

Silhouetters had earlier learned that 180 grain .357 Magnum bullets at 1100 fps were far superior to the normal 158 grain .357 Magnum bullets at 1500 fps. The .357 Maxi-

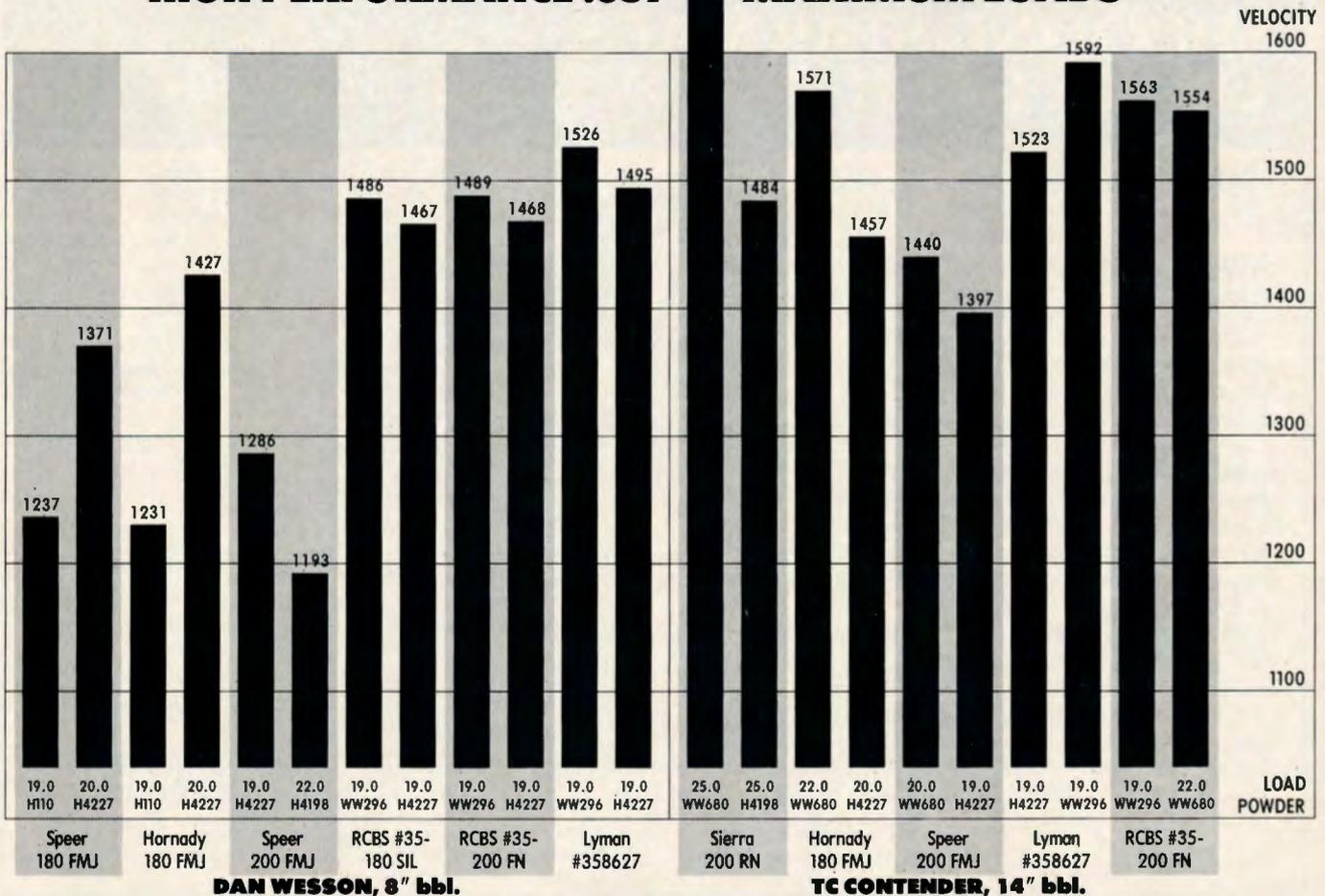
drive 110 grain .357 bullets.

Problems quickly arose in the guns and the loads. Throat and top strap erosion, which always occurs in magnum revolvers, was accelerated as the lightweight bullets at very high velocities slammed into the forcing cones. Quite often the bullets were misshapened as the light jackets, designed for

This is regrettable because the 10½" Ruger .357 Maximum is one of the finest long range target revolvers ever made when it is used with 180 grain jacketed bullets at 1400 fps, and 180-200 grain cast bullets at 1400-1500 fps. Dan Wesson has kept their .357 SuperMag in production and the result has been the rewriting of the record book by silhouetters using the Dan Wesson.

HIGH PERFORMANCE .357

MAXIMUM LOADS



The .357 Maximum is simply the .357 Magnum stretched from 1.300" to 1.600". It can be loaded with .357 dies that decap at the same time that the resizing operation is performed and is no more difficult to reload than the .357 Magnum.

Silhouetters normally favor three jacketed bullets for the .357 Maximum: Hornady's 180 grain full metal jacket, and both 180 grain and 200 grain full metal jacketed bullets from Speer.

There are also three excellent cast bullet designs for the .357 Maximum. In the 180 grain weight range, RCBS has a fairly new bullet, #35-180SIL, designed specifically for silhouetting. An even better bullet is their #35-200FN, a 200 grain bullet originally designed for the .35 Remington rifle that is superbly accurate in the .357 Maximum. Lyman offers #358627, a 200 grain gas checked Keith bullet, that is not only an excellent silhouette bullet, but should be the first choice for hunting with cast bullets in the .357 Maximum revolver.

Powder selection for the .357 Maximum revolver is limited to basically four powders: H4227, H110, WW296 and WW680. Some others that show promise, but need more experimenting, are AA5744 and H4198, especially with 200 grain bullets.

My favorite jacketed bullet loads for the .357 Maximum revolver are assembled with 19.0-20.0 grains of H4227 with either the 180 grain Hornady or Speer, and 19.0 grains of H4227 with the 200 grain Speer. I have also had extremely good results with 19.0 grains

of WW296 and the 180 grain full metal jacketed bullets. These loads with the 180 grain bullets are in the 1300 fps range in the 8" barreled Dan Wesson and will achieve 1400+ fps in the 10½" Ruger.

All loads for the .357 Maximum are assembled with small rifle primers, and switching to cast bullets sees very little need for change in powders or charges. Velocities are significantly higher with cast bullets due to less friction and the 200 grain cast bullets will achieve 1400-1500 fps in the 8" Dan Wesson and approximately 100 fps more in the longer barreled Ruger.

In addition to being chambered in three revolvers—Dan Wesson, Ruger and Seville—the .357 Maximum is available in single-shots in the form of TC's in both 10" and 14", the Wichita, Dominator, Merrill, XL and Competitor. Thus it is possible for a silhouetter to shoot all categories of long range pistol with the .357 Maximum, and it can even be done with the same load. That is a lot of versatility for a cartridge that was pronounced dead a few years ago.

Single-shot pistols do not have the top strap or throat erosion problem inherent in the .357 Maximum revolvers and the lighter weight bullets can be used with good success. I personally see no need for any bullet lighter than 158 grains for the .357 Maximum and this bullet can easily be driven at 1850-2000 fps in any of the single-shots making it an excellent hunting bullet for deer-sized game. The same bullets and loads that perform well in the .357 Maximum revolvers will also do

well in the single-shots plus the single-shots have the advantage of being able to use .35 caliber rifle bullets.

Of all the many hundreds of bullet/powder/handgun combinations I have tried, one of the most accurate has been the Sierra 200 grain round nosed .35 caliber rifle bullet at 1900 fps using 25.0 grains of WW680 in the .357 SuperMag Dominator. Since the Dominator is basically a bolt action pistol, one would expect it to provide excellent accuracy and strength, and it does.

Cast bullets also work well in the single-shots, especially the 200 grain bullets from RCBS and Lyman moulds. Either 19.0 grains or WW296 or H4227 will give 1700 fps in the long barreled single-shots and also give excellent accuracy with relatively low recoil.

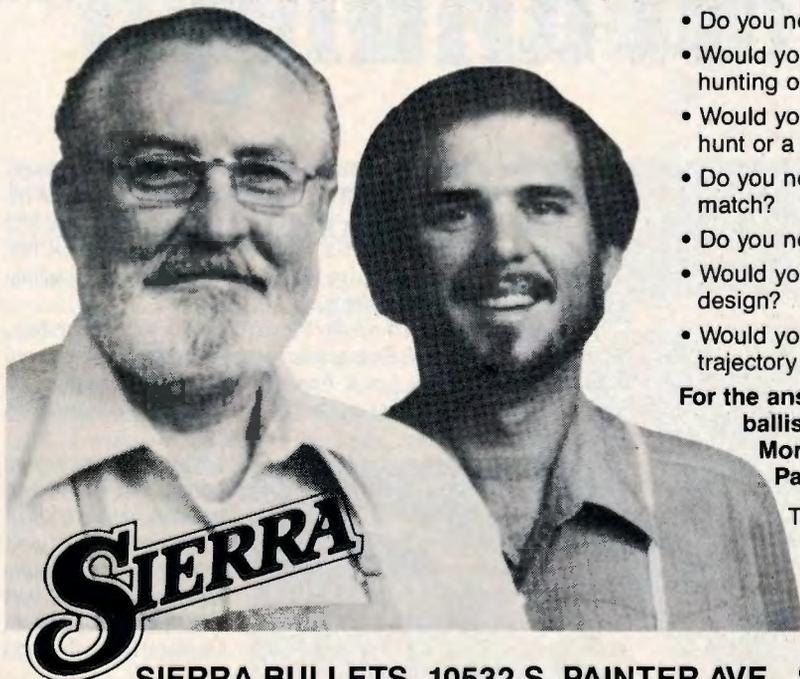
The .357 Maximum is an excellent revolver cartridge for silhouetting. The revolvers themselves, with their long cylinders, are a little too bulky for hunting, and even though the .357 Maximum can match the .44 Magnum on paper, in reality the .44 Magnum remains the much better choice for hunting.

In the single-shots, the .357 Maximum can be used with success for both Production and Unlimited silhouette classes; and also is an excellent hunting cartridge, when properly loaded, being over-shadowed only slightly by the .35 Remington and the .357 Herrett.

The .357 Maximum, properly loaded, is an unqualified success on the silhouette range and remains one of the most versatile of all handgun cartridges.



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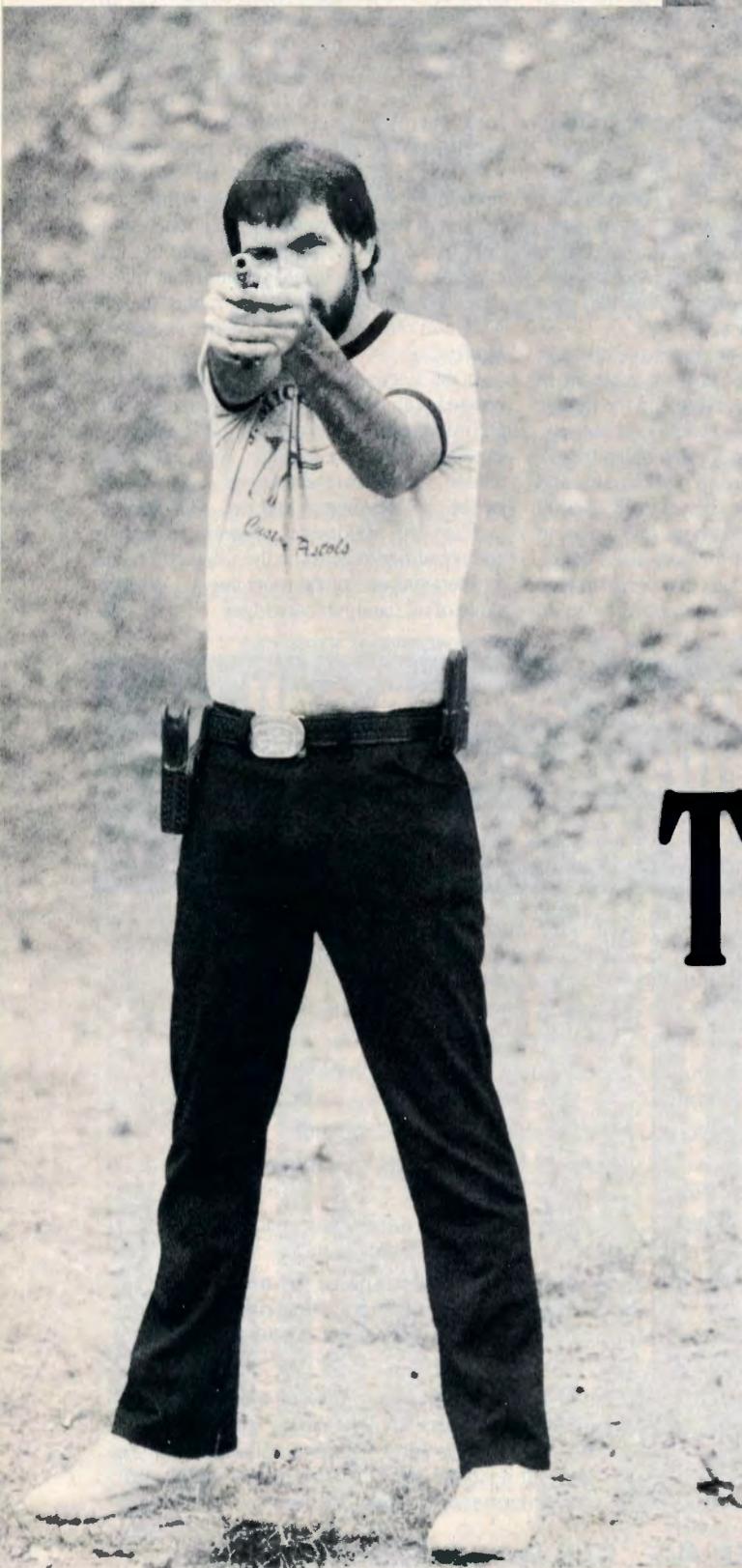
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Mike Plaxco:



Training With

J Michael Plaxco is the only man who has won the Steel Challenge, *Second Chance*, and the IPSC National Championships. In his early 30s, he is approaching the peak of his powers. He does the gun for a living, and does so in two ways: gunsmithing .45 autos that usually sport his highly effective Plaxco Compensator, and teaching his winning ways with the handgun.

I recently sponsored a three day Plaxco course in New Hampshire. I'd found him to be an excellent teacher when he briefly guest-lectured while taking one of my Lethal Force Institute courses the previous year, and I was delighted to see that his instructional skills stood up well over the long haul.

Like every good shooting instructor, he begins with a morning's lecture on the basics—sight picture, trigger press, etc. There is no patented "Plaxco stance." Mike uses Ray Chapman's modification of the Weaver technique (gun arm locked straight out, support arm bent) but tells his students that there's nothing wrong with an isosceles or the original Weaver with both arms bent, if that's what works best for them, and he cites top shooters from World Champ Rob Leatham (isosceles) to Ross Seyfried and Murray Gardner (radically bent Weavers) to prove the point.

He no longer uses the Rogers holster that is named after him, having switched to the Combat Assault design by the same maker. He likes the way it holds the gun clear of the body for swift access. "Almost all

When one of the nation's foremost firearms instructors sings the song of praise for the training of another teacher, you can bet there's good reason!

the top people have gotten away from cross draw in favor of strong-side holsters," he tells the class. "The ability to line the holster up with the target is the reason why." Mike explains that he likes to be facing the target in such a way that the top of his pistol's slide



This is the technique of switching the gun from strong to weak hand. The transition should be smooth and consistent to assure a good, firm grip. Plaxco teaches a nifty trick for this, you have to take his class to appreciate the subtle maneuver.



at any point along that "track." If not, this last stage of the movement gives you extra time to verify the sights and squeeze the go-button.

Mike emphasizes *sight verification* more than sight picture. He feels that highly practiced shootists should be able to take their position and address their target, and when they draw, have the gun come up centered on it even if their eyes are closed. He wants you to "verify" the sight picture to make sure they're in line and properly centered on the target just before you trigger the handgun.

A World Champion

By Massad Ayoob

Right, the grip Plaxco uses may not work for those with small hands, but he teaches several techniques. Below, the proper method of inserting a new magazine.

is in line with the target. This allows the shooter's arm to move in a short, straight line from the leather to the mark.

Plaxco's drawing technique is almost a two-step one. The hand grasps the gun firmly, the finger clear of the guard and the safety on, and brings the pistol up until the muzzle is pointed at the target, with the second hand taking its support grasp as the sights come to eye level. Now, the gun is thrust toward the target into its final position, with the finger taking up the slack on the trigger. If necessary, the gun can be fired



Photos by Glenn V. Dalrymple, MD

"Prep the trigger" is another piece of advice you'll hear often from him. By prepping the trigger, he means taking up the slack, making sure the finger is in exactly the right position, and preparing for the final pressure that will make the gun go bang. With a double-action revolver, he does the prep and begins the trigger stroke as he's coming up on the target. With the single-action Colt auto that he, and most of his students, prefers for IPSC, he doesn't start pressure on the trigger until the barrel is almost in line with the target.

When manipulating the trigger, he uses a technique he learned from his friend and arch-competitor, Tom Campbell: "You don't want to actually take your finger off the trigger between shots. The placement could be very slightly different shot to shot, and it's wasted movement that takes unnecessary time. The finger should remain in contact with the trigger from the first shot of the string to the last."

Mike begins the firing portion of the class with an exercise he explains was developed by his friends Mickey Fowler and Mike Dalton at ISI: shooting dots. He'll spraypaint dots the size of a small bullseye around-the-clock on an IPSC target, and direct them to fire X number of rounds at a given mark. "Shooting at the small dots at close range really teaches you how to control your marksmanship," he says. "At seven or ten yards, it's much easier for the student or his instructor to analyze what's going wrong with his technique than from long range. The

student can also see improvement much more rapidly."

Unlike the private academies that insist you shoot exactly the way the instructor does, Plaxco encourages experimentation with different holds and techniques. He personally shoots with his left index finger hooked around the front of the trigger guard, but freely admits that the technique isn't for everyone: he'll show the student both ways and let him or her see in the controlled laboratory environment of the range which seems to be best for them.

A point he makes early on the first morning and reinforces throughout the program is that he teaches *competition*, not street gunfighting techniques. The assumption is that if it's warm enough to shoot, you don't have to worry about having a coat on, so practicing concealed carry becomes an exotic technique rather than a basic staple of the program. This is well understood by the clientele: most students arrive wearing compensated IPSC guns and competition speed holsters.

Plaxco addresses the question of buying competence through custom gear openly and frankly. While he makes .38 Super comp guns and shoots one himself, he tells the students flatly that the faddish new guns are finicky with major loads and probably aren't worth the effort for most shooters. "A .38 Super loaded up to major caliber isn't going to kick that much compared to a 200-grain .45 handload, which really doesn't recoil as much as factory hardball. To

me, the real advantage of a .38 Super is that its cycling time is much more rapid than a .45, and it takes me less time between shots. I think that was a definite factor in my placing second this year at the IPSC nationals. But how many people can accurately shoot faster than a .45 auto can cycle? I think there are maybe a hundred shooters in the country who can significantly benefit from the switch to .38 Super. For most of the rest, it's a psychological thing: they feel a little more competent shooting the caliber gun that Rob Leatham and Brian Enos have switched to," he told the class.

What does he, as a pistolsmith *and* master shooter, expect in a .45? "I don't care for a super-light trigger, and don't care to make them any lighter than 3½ pounds. I know shooters who do their best work with 5-pound triggers. You want an accurate gun, but it doesn't have to shoot one-inch groups at 50 yards. Look at the victories Tom Campbell scored over the years with a 9mm auto that had a heavy trigger and probably shot five-inch groups at fifty. What you *do* want is a gun that can reliably go a thousand rounds without cleaning and not jam once."

He continues, "I've worked on about every make of .45 there is, and I prefer the commercial Colt. A pre-Series 80 is your best bet, because I can give you a lighter trigger without the firing pin safety. I won't remove a safety mechanism from a pistol, including the deactivation of a grip safety, and neither will any other professional pistolsmith I know. I also think the Colt magazines are the best on the market, and they're the only ones I'll use myself."

Mike has studied many handgunning disciplines to develop his skills in practical shooting. His primary hold on the gun comes from bullseye. "I don't care at all for the high thumb position up over the manual safety," he says, "and I don't like the technique with the thumb locked down, either. That makes you hold the gun too hard, and when your whole hand is that tight, you start losing some of your trigger finger control. I'd rather take a firm grip and then back off about 20%."

"In line with that, I put my thumb in sort of a middle position, pointed at the target. That gives you maximum control of your trigger finger, and of course, that's the heart of good shooting. I keep my left thumb up forward and out of the way. I think the main thing the left thumb is good for is releasing the slide on an auto pistol if you've had to shoot it all the way dry."

Mike enjoys working with revolver shooters. "Even apart from the reliability factor," he points out, "the long double-action stroke reduces your likelihood of anticipating the let-off and jerking the trigger. That's why so many of us who shoot autos all year in IPSC and World Speed Shooting Association matches will switch to .38 revolvers about a month before the Bianchi Cup. For very precise, medium-fast shooting, I don't think the revolver can be beat. In fact, I think its full potential for IPSC hasn't been explored yet. At my local club matches, where you're allowed to enter once with a revolver and once with an auto, I've

Continued on page 95



Mike's personal favorite variation of the Weaver stance.



The "bent arm" variation of the Weaver favored by Ross Seyfried.

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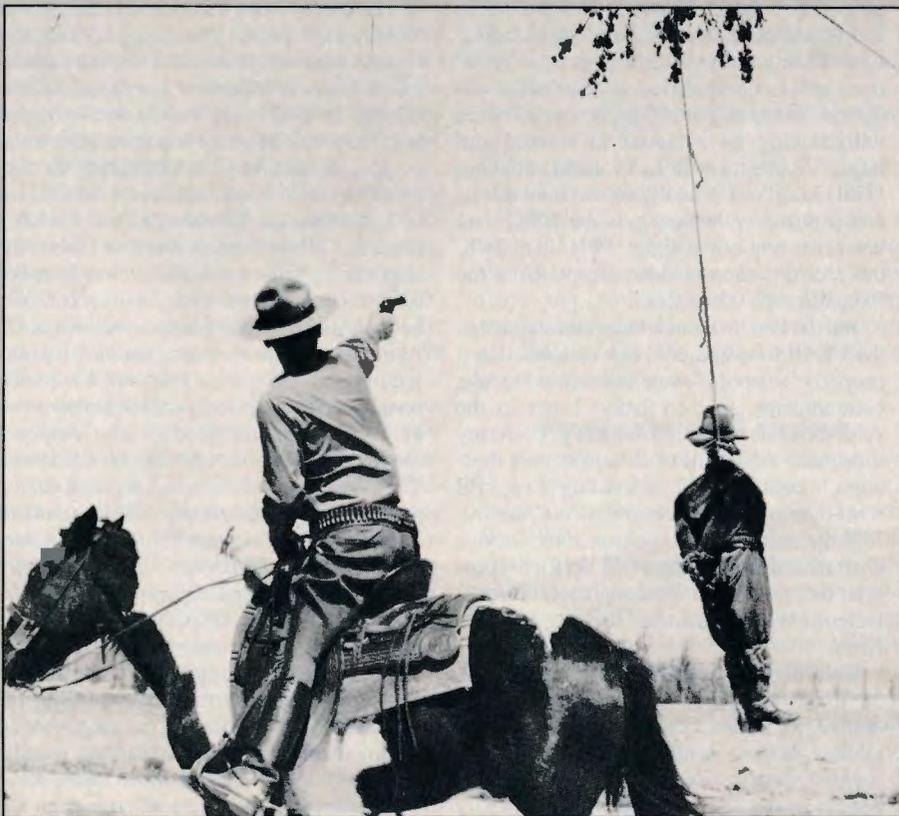
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The US PDW XM9 Programme

Pentagonese is no easier to understand than the Army's wacky tests for a new sidearm.

By Jacques Lenaerts

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Since it is the only recent large-scale military programme in the field of semi-auto pistols (the details of the French programme are not perfectly known at the time of this writing), the US PDW XM9 (Personal Defence Weapon) programme, aimed at replacing the Colt 1911A1 with a 9 mm PB weapon, is well worth a closer look. What matters particularly is that the US programme has been the only recent case in which at least eight manufacturers have submitted their handguns to a severe military competition, tailored according to stringent specifications which in general could well be assumed as standard reference points.

On the other hand, all those involved—apart, perhaps, from the US Army!—unanimously agree that the PDW XM9 programme could hardly be regarded as a textbook example of how to organise and manage a small arms technical and operational evaluation.

Programme history

Back in 1978, the House Appropriations Committee was seriously worried by a report about the proliferation of models of handguns (and ammunition types) in use by US military agencies. The study indicated that the 590,000 or so handguns in service or in stock (73% of which still usable), were subdivided into more than 25 different makes, types or models, using something like 100 different ammunition types. The Army, the Navy, the USMC and the Coast Guard were almost exclusively using the standard-issue M1911A1, whereas the USAF relied largely on .38SP revolvers—although these had never been officially adopted as service standard weapons.

With an eye to obvious rationalisation, logistic and maintenance cost goals, the HAC recommended the DoD to pursue standardisation of a single handgun type common to all services. Actually, shortly before this rec-

ommendation was formulated the DoD had already tasked a joint-service committee, the JSSAP (Joint Service Small Arms Programme) with assessing the real requirements by the different services, examining the alternative solutions and expressing its advice about the possible adoption of the NATO-standard 9 mm PB round. The final report, presented by the JSSAP in 1980, indicated that a single family of 9 mm PB handguns was sufficient to meet all military requirements. The report also concluded that, because of the advantages offered by the 9 mm PB ammunition, acquisition of a new pistol for all the four services was preferable to all other conceivable options (standardisation on either the M1911A1 or the .38SP revolvers, or continued acceptance of the *status quo*)—although this approach involved withdrawing all weapons in service and larger expenditures (then evaluated at about US\$133 million). Finally, and on the basis of comparative evaluation tests the USAF had been carrying out at Eglin AFB since 1978, the JSSAP recommended adoption of the Italian Beretta 92S-1 pistol.

But the DoD was under the impression that the USAF tests had not been conducted in a properly “scientific” way, and refused to take commitments on their basis. Later in the year, the DoD hence instructed the US Army to launch—on behalf of all services—a thorough, examination of all existing 9 mm PB semi-auto pistols. Accordingly, on June 10, 1981 the Army issued the first Joint Service Operational Requirement (JSOR) for the programme, now officially designated Personal Defence Weapon/Standard Service Sidearm XM9.

The JSOR document specified more than 50 “mandatory requirements,” including several AQRs (Absolute Quantitative Requirements). It was immediately evident that several of these requirements had clearly been tailored to a weapon specifically

designed by and/or for the military, and were hardly compatible with the commercial, “off-the-shelf” handguns the programme was officially intended to evaluate.

At any rate, the competition was officially launched in late 1981, with the participation of four commercial manufacturers (Beretta, H&K, Smith & Wesson and Maremont/SIG-Sauer)—only to be abruptly interrupted in February 1982. None of the weapons submitted to the tests had been able to satisfy all the “mandatory requirements”; actually, at least 11 of them had proved to be too severe for all four contenders.

The Army then announced that it was “reviewing” (read: lowering) its requirements, so as to allow selection of an existing pistol. However, the new specifications circulated in 1982 were hardly less stringent than the previous year’s document: there was no longer mention of “desirable” characteristics, but in good exchange a detailed list of requirements for compatibility with a silencer has been added. But—and this is the important point—the AQR list was followed by a “technical assessment,” which can only be regarded as being geared to allow the US Army to somehow circumvent its very own requirements. It goes as follows: “It is anticipated that little difficulty will be encountered in developing and producing a Personal Defence Weapon/Standard Service Sidearm. The acquisition of this weapon is considered to be of a low risk nature. Testing shall be limited to the minimum required to assure that the weapon conforms to the Joint Service requirements for type classification and fielding.” (JSOR, p. 9—DAAA09-81-R-2540). In other words, the Army reserved the right to set—on its own judgement and without providing any information regarding the methods—the minimum ceilings to be assumed as satisfactory for the joint requirements. This was tantamount to laying a red carpet for future protests and claims.

In November 1983, the Army re-opened the competition by circulating a formal Request for Test Samples (RFT), which requested interested companies to deliver 30 pistols for testing purposes. The RFT also engaged the Army to give each company, at the conclusion of the evaluation process, full access to the test results of its own weapon. Eight manufacturers answered the RFT by January 1984, and a second round of competitive tests began in February.

The first "casualty" was the Steyr GB, eliminated on April 4 because of insufficient reliability. The FN design was voluntarily withdrawn on May 31, followed by the Colt SSP on July 18. On September 18—less than a month before the deadline for price proposal submission—the Army eliminated on technical grounds a further three contenders: the Walther P88 (failure to pass the drop test, excessive dispersion, insufficient resistance to corrosion and adverse agents), the H&K P7M13 (insufficient reliability, insufficient resistance to corrosion) and the S&W 459M (too short service life, insufficient firing pin energy). Only two weapons—the SIG-Sauer P226 and the Beretta 92SB-F (a derivative of the 92S-1) were left to compete as "technically acceptable finalists."

The final phase of the competition involved the price proposals. On October 9, both Beretta and Maremont submitted their "best and final offer" for delivery of 305,580 pistols over five years; and when these offers were officially compared on November 22, it looked like Maremont/SIG-Sauer were out to win, their price—around US\$75 million—being about \$9 million lower than Beretta's. Curiously, however, the US Army did not select Maremont as the winner; rather, the service decided to increase the number of the pistols requested by 10,350 units (plus a corresponding increase in the requested numbers of magazines and spare parts). Although this increase was very small (about 3%) when compared to the overall volume of the programme, the Army stipulated that "best and final offers" should be submitted anew, deadline being set at December 11.

Surprise, surprise: while Maremont quoted a proportionally unchanged price, Beretta cut its offer by about 18%, lowering the cost of each pistol to \$178.50 as against \$217.84 in October. Despite this, the P226 was still cheaper in itself (\$176.33 each); the decisive factor proved to be the prices for the magazines and the spare parts—although it is not completely certain that both companies actually used the same standards to assess the quantities of spare parts needed. Thanks to its total price of \$74.762 million—\$3.054 million lower than Maremont's—Beretta finally won the competition, and the 92SB-F was accepted for US service as the M9. The contract was officially signed on April 10, 1985; an additional batch of 4,100 pistols was added a year later, bringing the total volume of the order to 320,030 pistols.

But this was hardly the end of the problems for Beretta. For reasons which have never been clarified, the Italian manufacturer at first failed to pass the "first article acceptance testing," carried out on 20 pistols delivered to

the DoD in July 1985; a second series of tests (January 1986) was necessary to demonstrate that the weapons Beretta was delivering were actually up to the contract-specified standards. This caused a delay in the planned



Beretta 92F



SIG P-226

time schedules, and by May 1986 deliveries were 8,800 pistols short of the established quotas. However, because of Beretta's output capabilities (peak production is 12,000 92Fs/month), this delay could be re-absorbed much more easily than some circles would like to believe, and Beretta is fully confident that yearly quotas will be respected. The production programme covers five years, as follows:

- 1st year: 52,930 pistols, all manufactured in Italy
- 2nd year: 57,000 pistols, assembled and tested by Beretta USA Corp. with Italian-manufactured components
- 3rd year: 72,000 pistols, manufactured in the USA with some minor Italian-made components
- 4th year: 72,000 pistols, totally manufactured in the USA
- 5th year: 62,000 (+ 4,000?) pistols, totally manufactured in the USA.

The contract clause, according to which at least 134,000 weapons of the first order should be of total US manufacture, is hence respected. Subsequently, the US Army announced its intention to eventually procure an additional 124,000 pistols (to be produced in the USA, of course).

Protests and claims

Very seldom has an evaluation/acquisition programme caused such a furore—and this even before the results were made known. Since 1980, certain US political and industrial circles have been leading an extremely stiff opposition campaign to the recommendations by JSSAP, which had the nerve to suggest replacement of the legendary M1911A1 with a foreign weapon. And even when the US Army took over the responsibility of an evaluation programme which by definition was intended to be more "scientific" and thorough than the earlier Air Force's analysis, it was only too easy to forecast that

nationalistic nerves would have reacted very badly to any preference given to a non-American weapon.

The first official complaint came from H&K, which (soon followed by Maremont and S&W) filed a bid protest (these protests delayed the signature of the contract with Beretta from January to April, 1985). The bid protests were rebutted on their merits however, and this—at least for the time being—is the end of the story as regards Maremont and H&K.

Not so for S&W. The company withdrew its bid protest, and filed a challenge in the Federal Courts alleging that the US Army's selection procedure had been "arbitrary and capricious." This was however denied by a district court, and the decision was upheld on appeal.

End of the road? By no means. Defeated in the court, S&W turned to the Congress General Accounting Office, claiming "unfair treatment." And sure enough, a GAO report found out that S&W had indeed been treated "unfairly"; the House Government Operations Committee shared this judgement, and consequently on June 16, 1986 it recommended to the Army Secretary to cancel the contract with Beretta and re-open the competition. On August 14, the House Appropriation Committee upheld this recommendation, and suggested that the credits already voted for the M9 programme should be "frozen."

Leading the manoeuvre against Beretta have been Reps. Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.) and Silvio O. Conte (R-Mass.), whose electoral districts happen to cover Springfield (where S&W is located). Things could have taken a very bad turn for Beretta if it was not for the fact that S&W supporters were less strong in Senate than in the House. The final result is one of these highly bizarre situations which are (unfortunately) so typical of US procurement procedures: the House/Senate compromise, enacted in the FY87 defence spending legislation, preserves the current multi-year contract for 320,030 Beretta M9s, but directs the Army to hold a new competition in FY87 for a similar quantity of follow-on pistols. Additionally, the pistol which will win the new competition will have to be procured immediately, in parallel with the M9 (whereas, as said above, the Army was planning to start procurement of a further 124,000 pistols only some years after completion of the current order).

Hence the current proposals border on sheer lunacy: the programme, launched with the logical aim of standardising a single type of sidearm for all US services, could well end up with the services being forced to adopt two different pistols, of the same calibre and in the same quantities. And although the whole manoeuvre was obviously geared in favour of S&W, unexpected results could well happen: for instance, Maremont's plans are not known at the time of this writing, but the company could well claim to have at least the same rights as S&W of being given "a second chance."

If some recent experience (in particular, failure by Northrop to force its F-20 down

the Air Force's throat) is any indication, one could guess that—notwithstanding Congressional support in this phase—S&W is rather unlikely to succeed in the face of the clear determination by both the DoD and the Army to stick to their choice. Also, the new competition will be held not on the basis of S&W's claims, but again on technical and cost grounds; and it will be quite difficult for everyone (including a US company) to beat off the M9, simply because it is now a US Government-owned design.

S&W's claims of "unfair treatment" are based on the allegation that the company was unjustly eliminated from the competition. S&W accuses the US Army of having made several procedural errors, and argues that the competition was "wired" in favour of Beretta, for political reasons, since its very beginning; this argument is no longer openly used since the GAO was unable to find any evidence that the competition was indeed biased, but the idea is still "floating."

More specifically, and on the purely technical ground, S&W alleges that the US Army made a mistake in converting NATO standard metric measures into US measures.

According to S&W, this error caused rejection of the 459M at the primer indent test (measurement of the firing pin energy); should the conversion have been accurately calculated, the S&W pistol would have passed the test. Also, S&W challenges the strictly literal interpretation of the AQR for an "expected service life of at least 5,000 rounds." Out of three 459Ms used for this test, two attained 7,000 and 6,500 rounds, respectively, while cracks were reportedly noticed on the frame of the third pistol between 4,500 and 5,000 rounds (hence, the minimum requirement was not satisfied). This incident contributed to the elimination of the S&W contender, although the average for the three weapons was 6,000 rounds, and this notion of "average" is now the matter for discussions.

Additionally, S&W hints that the Italian Government, or its diplomatic representatives, put pressure on the US authorities in favour of Beretta. But although it is undeniable that the Italian Government indeed tried to help Beretta—and this is even openly admitted by Beretta's Managing Director, Dr. Ugo Gussali Beretta—it cannot be forgot-

ten that in its turn S&W has attempted to influence Congress by trying to discredit the two final contenders, most notably through the aggressive press releases circulated in 1986 (we refer in particular to a document entitled "Is Beretta bumbling? Some surprising new disclosures").

Enough of all that. It must also be commented, however, that on several occasions during the evaluation programme the Army's behaviour has been particularly apt to fuel criticisms. For instance, by adopting the new RFTS (Request For Test Samples) procedure the Army deliberately prevented the competing companies from witnessing the tests, and hence from verifying their regularity. Also, the Army is found guilty of not having respected its own engagements, because the competitors have not yet received the promised report on the results obtained by their pistols, more than two years after the conclusion of the evaluation. Such behaviour is sure to arouse suspicions, whether justified or not. Finally, if it could be proved that the Army indeed made such an appalling mistake in the conversion of NATO standard metric measurements (1)—a mistake which would have

Current Automatic Pistols, Calibre 9x19 mm Parabellum

	U.S. XM 9 PDW Requirements (JSOR)	Beretta		Sig-Sauer		Smith & Wesson						H & K	
		92F	92 SB Compact	P 225	P 226	439	459	469	639	659	669	P7M8	P7M13
Function—short recoil (SR) —gas delayed blowback (DB)	None	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	DB	DB
Trigger Mechanism: Double Action (DA)	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	Unique	Action(2)
Magazine Capacity (Rounds)	10 (15 desirable)	15	13	9	15	8	14	12	8	14	12	8	13
Overall Length (mm)	Max. 221	217	197	180	196	194	194	173	194	194	173	171	175
Overall Height (mm)	Max. 147	137	135	131	139	134	134	128	134	134	128	128	135
Overall Width (mm)	None	38	38	34	37	34	35	32	34	35	32	29	33
Barrel Length (mm)	Min. 101.6	125	109	97.6	112	102	102	89	102	102	89	105	105
Line of Sight (mm)	None	155	147	145	160	146	146	146	146	146	146	148	148
Weight w. Empty Magazine (kg)	None	0.960	0.900	0.820	0.845	0.851	0.851	0.737	1.021	1.120	0.737	0.854	0.979
Weight w. Fully Loaded Mag. (kg)	Max. 1.260	1.140	1.080	0.928	1.025	0.947	1.019	0.881	1.117	1.288	0.881	0.950	1.135
Trigger Pull: Single Action (N)	Min 18.2—Max 22.7	18—29	18—29	20	20		17—38				17—33	20	20
Double Action (N)	Min 36.3—Max 63.6	36—73	36—73	55	55		54—63					—	—
Trigger Displacement: SA (mm)	None	6	6	5	5	5.6	12.7	6	5.8	12.7	6	3	3
DA (mm)	None	16	16	14	14	14.7	16.5	15	14.7	16.5	15	—	—
Trigger Pull Distance (DA only) (mm)	SA: Max. 69.9 DA: Max. 76.2	74	74	76	74	73	73.6	74.4	73	73.6	74.4	73	76
Firing Pin Safety	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
De-Cocking Lever	(Yes) (1)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	—	—
Locking Safety	None	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Magazine Disconnecter	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Ambidextrous Magazine Catch	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Ambidextrous De-Cocking Lever	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	—	—
Frame	None	Alloy	Alloy	Alloy	Alloy	Alloy	Alloy	Alloy	Steel	Steel	Alloy	Steel	Steel
Slide	None	Steel	Steel	Pressed Steel	Pressed Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel

eliminated the S&W pistol for having failed the test by 1/10,000th of an inch—one could wonder whether a similar superficiality did not affect other aspects of the competition as well.

The JSOR requirements

The US Army requirements—as expressed in both the 1981 and the 1982 documents—were particularly stringent, and (no matter what one could think of the way the programme was managed) allow for a generally-acceptable definition of what a modern military pistol should look like. For this reason, we have adopted the physical data stipulated by both JSOR requirements for our comparison table.

Amongst the “mandatory requirements,” particularly important is the demand that the firing pin should be disconnected (or deflected from the hammer head, or anyway made inoperative) when the weapon is in “safe” position (which is tantamount to specifying an automatic firing pin safety); additionally, both the manual safety lever and the magazine release button were to be reachable with the shooting hand, both for right- and

left-handed firers. Pressing the magazine release button should not simply disengage the magazine, but rather eject it out of the weapon, in order to allow for rapid reloading. The manual slide catch was to be ambidextrous or at least convertible (this requirement has not been satisfied however), and the lanyard loop should not protrude from the handgrip (AQR). Other detailed requirements addressed the anti-slip design of the handgrip, the dimensions of the trigger guard, the interchangeability and replacement of parts, the elimination of protruding elements likely to catch in clothing, or field stripping (to be performed without tools, and to be at least as easy and rapid as with the M1911A1). To be underlined again is the US Army's insistence on a weapon compatible with all hand sizes (clearly defined, in particular, by the maximum trigger pull distance of 6.99 cm in single action and 7.62 cm in double action), as well as the minimal firing pin energy (the original requirement being 22 inches/ounces!) and the categorical refusal of a magazine disconnect (AQR).

As regards the operational characteristics, the US Army demanded reliability under

adverse conditions at least as good as that of the M1911A1, a high resistance to corrosion and, above all, a double action mechanism (AQR), the possibility of cocking, decocking or lowering the hammer without pulling the trigger or firing (AQR), and both visual and touch (through the shooting hand) safety indicator (AQR). The PDW was expected to offer performance equal to or better than the M1911A1, particularly as regards hit probability against a human silhouette at 50 m. Expressed in terms of dispersion, the accuracy specified translated into an average mean radius (10 groups of 10 rounds each, fired against a target at 50 m) not exceeding by more than 3.55 cm the average mean radius obtained by the same ammunition when fired through a standard reference proof barrel. For the same series of 100 rounds, the average impact point should not be more than 10.16 cm away from the aiming point. The PDW should withstand a drop test (from 1.22 m), and offer an expected service life better than the M1911A1 (5,000 rounds as a minimum, 10,000 as a desired goal).

The RAM specifications (Reliability,

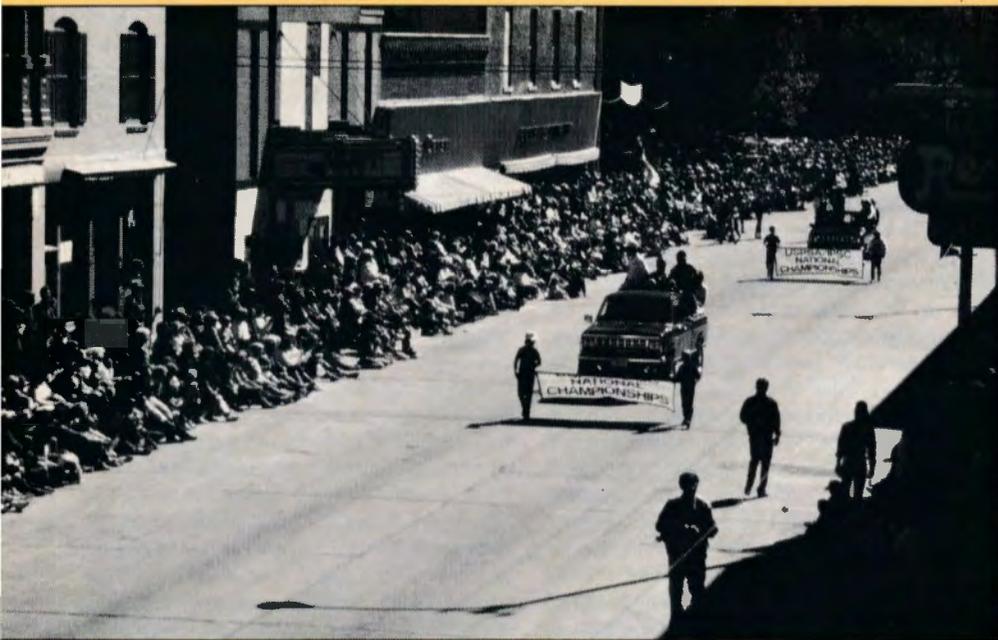
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Technical Characteristics

Steyr GB	Walther			Glock 17	Taurus		Star		Llama M82	Benelli B76	Korth (9)
	P38	P5	P88		PT92AF	PT99AF	30M	30PK			
DB	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	SR	DB	SR
DA	DA	DA	DA	Safe Act.(4)	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA
18	8	8	15	17	15	15	15	15	15	8	10
216	216	180	189	188	217	217	205	193	209	205	206
143	137	129	141	131	137	137	135	135	135	139	148
37	37	32	38	30	37	37	33	33	35	32	33
136		90	102	114	125	125	110	98	114	108	
162		134	147	165	155	155	161	151			
0.962	0.800	0.795	0.900	0.661	0.950	0.980	1.135	0.865	1.100- 0.875 (7)	0.970	1.240
1.185	0.896	0.885	1.080	0.870	1.130	1.160	1.310	1.040	1.290- 1.055	1.066	1.362
22	20-30	20N(+4)	20(+3)				15	15	?	?	15
65	+65	50max	55	20-30(4)	(5)	(5)	50	50	?	?	50
3	2.5	5	5	7.5 (4)	(5)	(5)	1.5	1.5	?	?	2.3
15	13	14	14	—			15	15	?	?	13.3
75	71	73	75	78 (uncocked) 63 (cocked)	74	74	76	76	?	?	74
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (6)	Yes (6)	Yes	No	No
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	—	No	No	No	No	Yes (8)	No	No
Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Yes	No (3)	No (3)	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
No	No	No	No	—	Yes	Yes	—	—	Yes	No	No
Steel	Alloy	Alloy	LM (11)	Composite	Alloy	Alloy	Steel	Alloy	Steel-alloy	Steel	Steel
Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel	Steel

Notes

- (1) The pistol had to be brought to its safety position without actuating the trigger.
- (2) This system uses a drag lever and a squeeze cocker to cock the firing pin, so there is one pressure to exert in the squeeze cocker with the three lower fingers of the firing hand, and one pressure (constant) to exert on the trigger with the index.
- (3) Magazine catch is located at the bottom of the pistol grip.
- (4) The Glock “safe action” uses the same principle as the H & K P7M8 & P7M13 (no hammer, but a floating firing pin). The words “safe action” also apply to the trigger safety, which has to be released before effective pressure on the trigger can be exerted—and thus the firing pin cocked. This safety consists of a small lever located at the centre of the trigger.
- (5) Not given by the manufacturer. But as the Taurus pistols are made under Beretta's licenses, it can be supposed these values are almost the same as the Beretta's ones.
- (6) Only when the classical safety lever is engaged (down position), thus when the pistol cannot be fired.
- (7) Alloy frame available.
- (8) The hammer is automatically de-cocked when the slide is released (action on the slide release catch) and moves forward to the locking position.
- (9) This pistol is still under final development, and will appear in the first half of 1987.
- (10) ASTRA pistols are not listed due to lack of information at time of printing.
- (11) LM = light metal.



Yes, that's a parade for shooters! The crowds cheered the champions.

1987

By Charles E. Petty

Photos by Charles E. Petty

Jerry Barnhart rolls off a Steel Challenge victory to unseat Rob Leatham, the reigning four-year National Champion.

There were two big stories, and a lot of little ones, at this year's USPSA National Championships. The biggest were the dethroning of four-time champ Robby Leatham by Jerry Barnhart and the out of the blue rise of Debby James to the ladies title.

The other story was the place the matches were held. The ranges were second to none and the communities of Quincy and tiny Barry, Illinois went so far out of their way to make the shooters welcome that I almost felt guilty. Folks, you can't believe what a thrill it is to see the winning shooters riding down the main street of Barry as part of the Apple Festival parade or to pull up to the self service pump at a gas station and have your windshield washed by an attendant who asks, "How're you shooting?"

There were banners across the main streets that read, "Welcome USPSA National Championships." Motel billboards said, "Welcome Shooters." All of this didn't happen by accident. It was a deliberate plan on the part of the two communities and the Pike-Adams Sportsman's Alliance to establish a Mecca for shooters. Quincy, on the banks of the Mississippi river, has an active Convention and Visitors Bureau that solicited, and gained, the support of area merchants. But the most graphic evidence was the interest shown by the local media. It was a far cry from *The Guns of Autumn* or Geraldo Rivera, for the coverage was entirely positive and it was treated as a news event.

Perhaps the real attraction of these small towns is that this is heartland America where shooting and hunting are still very much a way of life. Where schools close on opening

day of deer season and shooting sports are just part of the scenery. It was best said by a local, "For a shooter, this is as close to heaven as it gets."

There was a splash of early fall color on the trees and the farmers were working overtime to get the corn and soybeans in. Competitors at the beautiful Pike-Adams Sportsman's Alliance ranges sweated, not in last year's 105° Dallas heat, but from the competition. Last year the heat won; this year with temperatures mostly in the low 70s the shooter didn't have to sweat anything except their own performance and the eight stages that made the Nationals. But, when a passing cold front drove the temperature into the 30s Friday night, sweatshirts sold like hotcakes.

In the haste to gouge seven of the eight ranges out of the rolling hills, there simply wasn't time for grass to grow and the only alternative was to bring in hundreds of yards of sand. Shooters probably felt like desert fighters, for there was sand everywhere. It was either that or mud. Even though the staff tried to provide ground cover where possible, the field courses were literally ankle deep and magazines all but disappeared. Everywhere you looked shooters had mags apart shaking, blowing and washing. The sand also made running tough and one competitor quipped, "I should have practiced beach volleyball!"

As usual, you can't please everyone, but the stages were generally acclaimed as genuine tests of skill not gamesmanship. They were remarkable for their challenge, which ranged from moderate to diabolical, but they were straightforward. What you saw was

what you shot. There were no flaws which, by sleight of hand, could be turned to a gamesman's advantage. Well, there was one. A competitor tripped, fell and discovered that he could shoot a stop plate that you weren't supposed to see until you had run another 10 yards. Soon everyone was belly flopping in the sand.

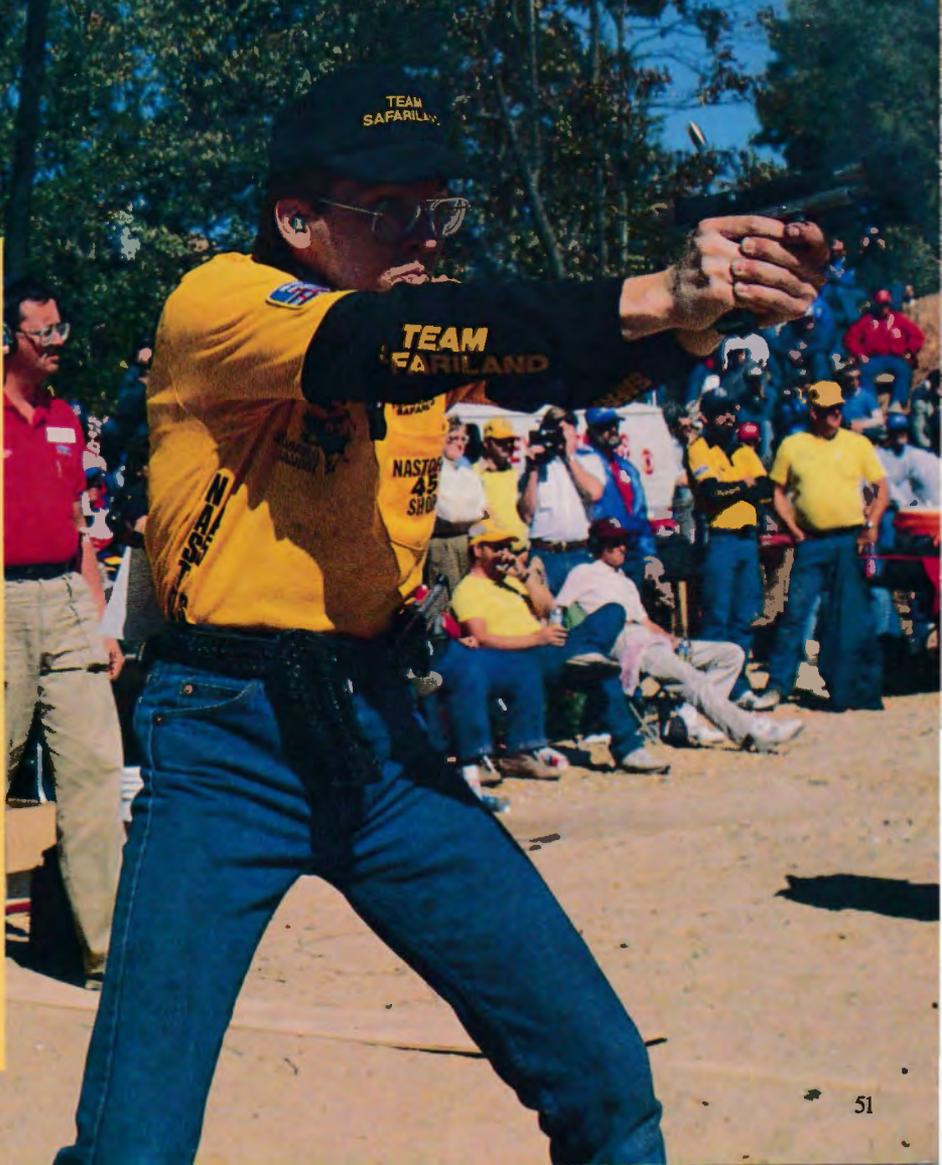
There were white "no-shoots" everywhere and tight angles that required precise slight alignment and trigger control. There were places where hosers could have a ball, but more where hosing would lead to disaster. You had to shoot through itty bitty holes, and around hard cover or "no-shoot" Pepper Poppers that obscured all but the head of the one you had to hit.

As I shot the stages I ran a mental tally for hardest and *Double Duty Standards* won hands down. Not because I did worse there, but because it was the purest application of the principles of practical shooting. Three turning targets, set at five seconds, had to be engaged with six shots in each sequence: standing, kneeling and prone at 50 yards (six shots on one target). Then at 25 yards, two shots on each with the strong hand and at 20 with the weak hand. The final insult was one shot per target, reload, and one more time. Dropped shots were plentiful.

And it was on the standards that disaster struck Rob Leatham. At 11:45 a.m. Tuesday, September 29, 1987, Leatham went down for the kneeling string and all he got was *click*. He frantically snatched the slide back, but the next round didn't want to chamber and by then it was too late. The targets snapped away

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IPSC NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



The jam heard round the world. Rob Leatham (above) fights his Wilson Accu-Comp as primer flow-back jams the firing pin. The cause is with the .38 Super ammo, loaded too hot. But Jerry Barnhart (right) didn't have to worry about dicey Super ammo as he won with a Nastoff .45. Rick Castelov (above) placed second, also with a .45 ACP.

SMITH & WESSON OLYMPIC RAPID FIRE PISTOL





This one-of-a-kind prototype proves that design innovation is still alive in America and our boys will compete with a *Made In The USA* .22 Short in the 1988 Olympics!

By Sam Baiocco

Photos by David Stansbury



Remember when you were little? Just about every product your Mom and Dad used around the house was **Made in the USA**. Times have changed since those days, today a lot of products used by Americans are foreign made.

The American firearms industry, bending with the winds of change, have gone through the same transformation. Specifically, in the field of competition firearms. There was a time when American made competition pistols were some of the best available. As late as the 1960's, American shooters using American pistols were winning World and Olympic Championships. Slowly but surely thereafter, the influx of foreign target pistols began, and by the 1980's foreign manufacturers, particularly the European countries, were producing the majority of the target pistols used for international and Olympic competition.

Olympic competition has always been considered the pinnacle of achievement. For years, Olympic pistol competition has featured two events for men: free pistol and rapid fire pistol. The 1984 Olympics saw pistol shooting introduced for women (sport pistol) and the upcoming 1988 Olympics will see air pistol for men and women introduced.

Although more events have been added and more shooters are competing, Olympic firearms are still produced by a few European countries that specialize in this type of firearm. American shooters have had no choice but to use these pistols if they wanted to be competitive.

American shooters may not have to despair much longer, as a new dawn appears to be rising! For those of you who haven't heard, Smith and Wesson from the good old USA has made a commitment to build a rapid fire pistol for Olympic competition.

In 1985, S&W was approached by Dr. Henry Cross who was representing the U.S. Shooting Sports Research Council and the U.S. Olympic Committee. He inquired about the possibilities of building a rapid fire pistol. Although S&W had made financial contributions to the Olympic committee in the past, they now felt that this would be a chance to make an important and lasting contribution for U.S. Shooters, so they decided to accept the challenge and to build a rapid fire pistol for Olympic competition.

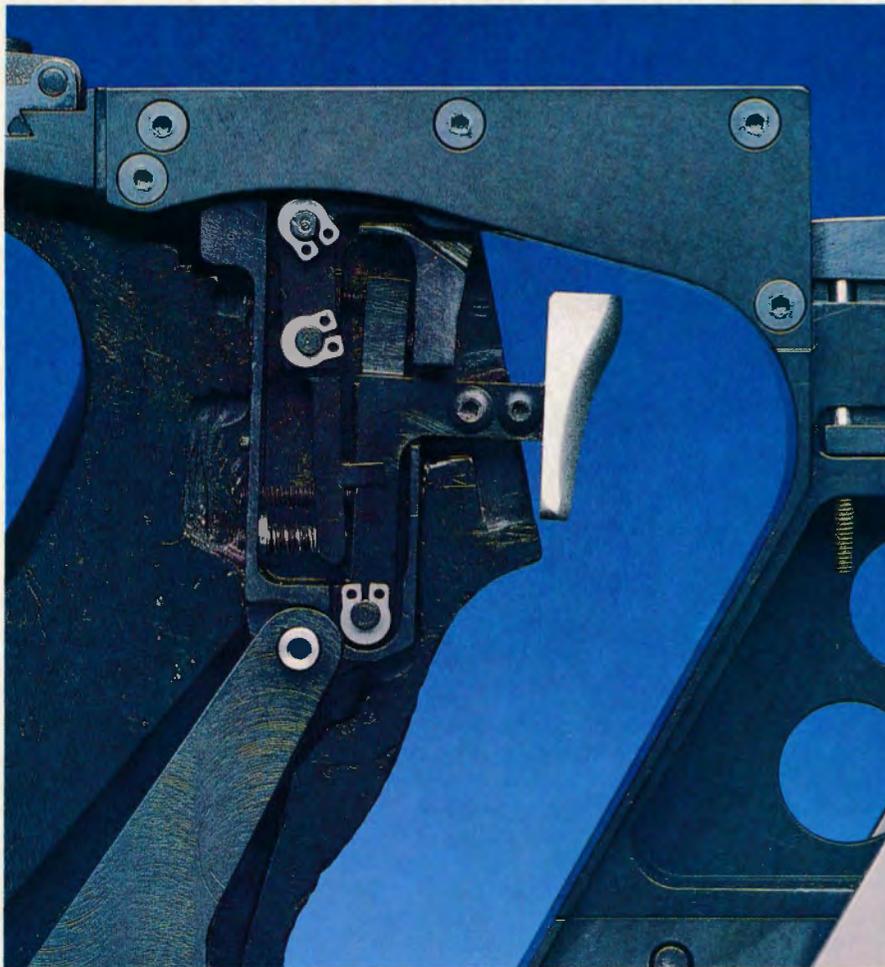
Smith & Wesson had learned of some early experiments by a former employee of High Standard and approached him for his ideas on a new pistol. The man was Paul Laviollette, who was actually the manager of product design for High Standard in 1970. He had started to experiment with a new concept for rapid fire pistols, trying to improve on some of the pistols that High Standard had built in the 1960's. (Bill McMillan used a High Standard rapid fire pistol to win the gold medal in the 1960 Olympics.)

Paul was experimenting with ideas to somehow keep the pistol as level as possible when firing. He wanted to do this by controlling muzzle jump, as opposed to controlling recoil. Present day pistols use holes in the barrel to vent the gases in an effort to control recoil. A simple compensator.

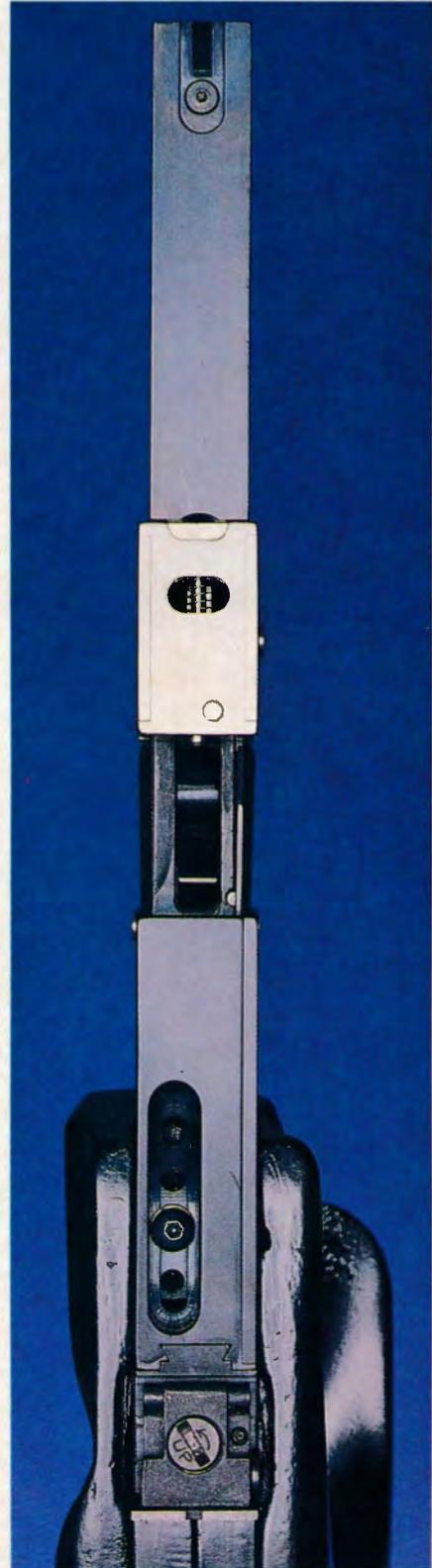
Paul actually built a working prototype but no companies seemed to be interested at the time, so the project was shelved. Now, 15 years later, someone was interested! Paul still had his original design ideas and was willing to build a prototype and then a working pistol for Smith. In early 1986, the project was started and, to date, two working prototype pistols have been built and will be used as test pistols to develop Paul's concepts into production pistols.

When developing the prototypes, Paul had consulted with U.S. shooters and coaches to obtain desirable characteristics of a rapid fire pistol. Such ideas as low barrel axis, light trigger pull and grip angle all were taken into consideration.

Dan Iuga, the U.S. Pistol Coach, worked closely with Paul to develop a reliable trigger system that would give the desirable light trigger pulls that rapid fire shooters prefer. Ben



The trigger mechanism features a unique new design which the author describes in the text. It is designed to give a light yet positive let-off on the fast-paced rapid fire event. The gun is loaded from the top with a five-round magazine (below). It's really quite an ingenious design and one that S&W hopes will bring home the gold this year in the Olympics. American Handgunner applauds S&W for the bold step of making a special pistol just so our athletes can compete with a "Made in the USA" firearm.



Swan of Smith & Wesson's engineering and metallurgy departments worked closely with Paul to put ideas into working pieces of metal.

Titanium is used for several pieces of this pistol not only to obtain the necessary strength but also to keep the total weight down to the necessary minimum. (The gun weighs in at about 2.6 lbs., well under the 2.78 lb. maximum limit imposed by the UIT.)

Naturally, anytime you use the resources of a company like Smith & Wesson, you have to have a green light from somebody. Bob Hass, the senior Vice President of Marketing, was instrumental in giving the go-ahead to get this project started. The commitment was made!

There are three parts of this pistol that present radically new concepts for a rapid fire pistol. They are: (1) the roller/slide assembly, (2) the trigger system and (3) the grip assembly.

The roller/slide assembly is really the heart of this pistol. This was Paul's idea as to how to control muzzle jump of the pistol. Paul's idea was to use the energy from the initial firing and transfer this energy to the bottom of the pistol thereby helping to compensate for muzzle jump. This is done by an elongated slide that is connected to the lower frame by a roller system.

The roller system's forward and aft movement is controlled by a recoil spring guide and spring that extend to the lower grip area of the frame. The rollers consist of two assemblies with three roller wheels in each assembly. The rollers are made of titanium and are arranged in a unique "offset track system" to prevent them from counter-rotating as the slide moves them back and forth. Each roller assembly is held in place by a titanium axle secured by locking clips at respective ends.

The entire slide assembly is also made from titanium and has a clearance of approximately .015" on each side so that no part of it touches the frame. The only contact point is at the lower frame, at the roller assembly point. The top of the slide houses a conventional firing pin and spring (pin also made of titanium) and is held in place by a dowel pin.

At the present time, the slide is designed to remain closed after the last round is fired. Then the shooter can open the slide to the rear and use a manual latching lever on the left side of the pistol to hold it open.

The second new concept of this pistol is the trigger system. One of the problems Paul had to address was how to get a very light trigger pull (150 grams or less) and yet have a safe, reliable trigger system. One that wouldn't double or go automatic. Dan Iuga, the U.S. Coach, came up with an idea for a trigger system and Paul was able to develop and use it in this pistol. The system is fairly complex, but in a nutshell, here's how it works.

The system has a sear loading system, which eliminates the basic sear spring. This allows for light trigger pulls without the risk of doubling. When the sear bar is depressed (this happens as the slide moves rearward cocking the hammer) it loads the tail of the sear lever, which in

Continued on page 82

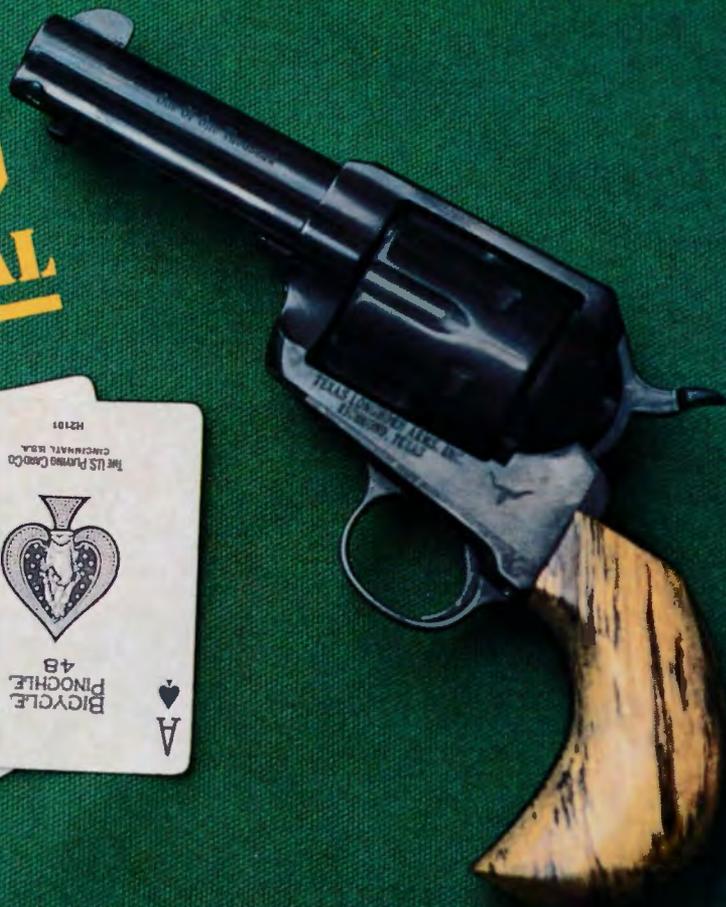
TEXAS

BORDER SPECIAL



*A new single-action
.44 Magnum
with a new twist.*

By John Taffin



Sam Colt was left-handed, that's why the Colt Single Action has the loading gate on the right side!" This is one of the first things I heard from Bill Grover as I met him for the first time at *Shootists Holiday '87*. I didn't have the heart to tell him that Sam Colt died in 1862 and probably had nothing to do with the design of the 1873 Colt Single Action, the famed .45 Peacemaker.

Even if Sam didn't design the Colt, Grover's point is well taken. The SAA is definitely made for a southpaw. I know that I, personally, always load and unload my single-actions by switching them to my left hand. Bill has taken care of this mistake of history by offering his line of Texas Longhorn Arms Single Actions made for right-handers.

By reversing the Colt, and placing the ejector rod and loading gate on the left side, it is natural for a right-hander to open the loading gate with his right thumb, and eject empties and load new rounds with the left hand, the sixgun never leaving the shooting hand.

Bill is offering his "right-handed" single-actions in three models: The West Texas Flat-top Target, which, just as the name implies, is a target-sighted sixgun; The South Texas Army, a fixed-sight which looks quite a bit like a mirror image of a standard Colt SAA; and my particular favorite, The Texas Border

Special which is a four inch barreled sheriff's model.

Each Texas Longhorn Arms sixgun is marked "One of One Thousand" as there will be only 1000 of each made during the initial production. My particular Texas Border Special is serial numbered B-44 to match its .44 Magnum chambering. All models are avail-



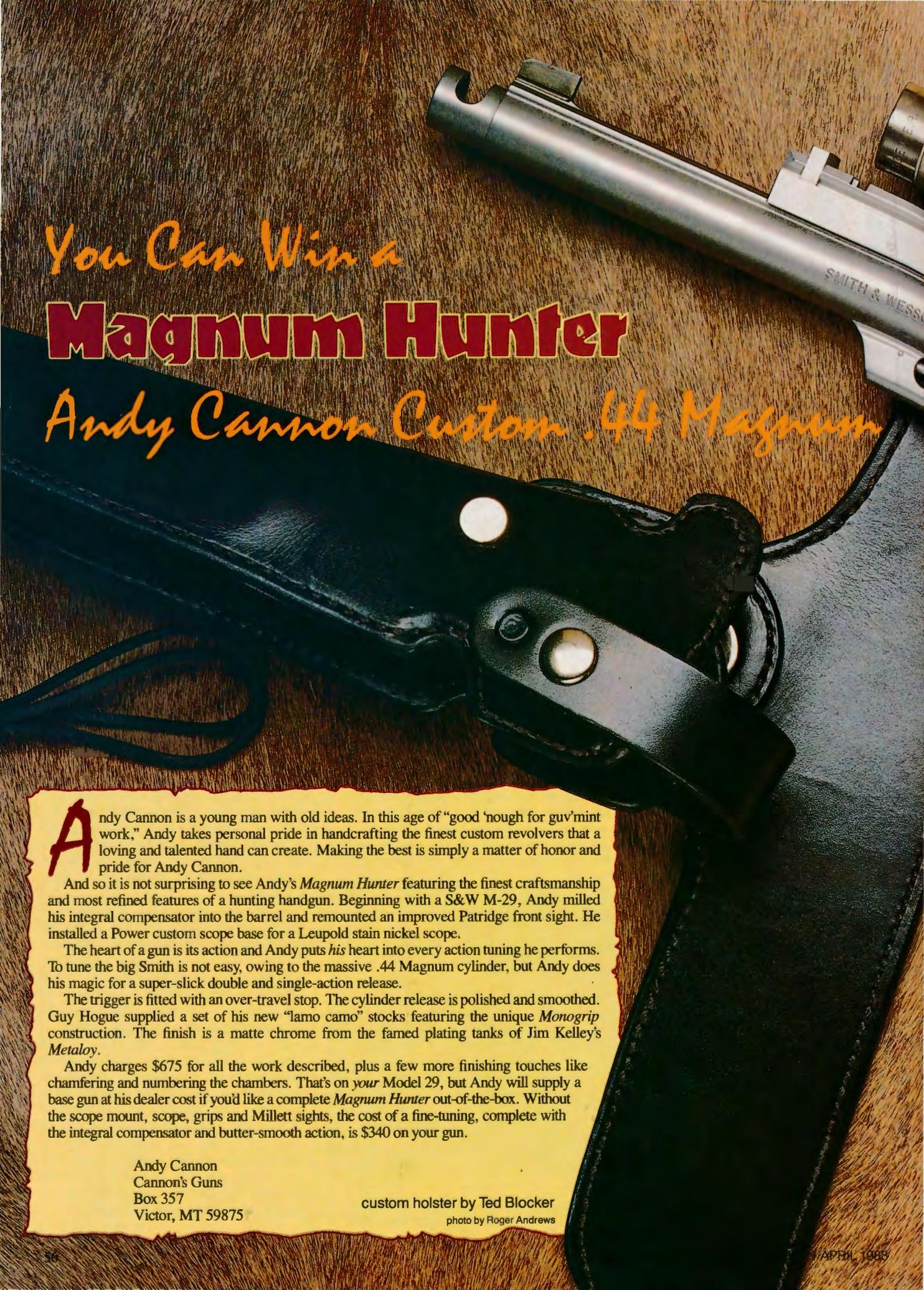
**The loading gate is on the left side,
which makes the gun right handed.**

able in blue, blue with a case hardened frame, nitre-blue, nitre-blue with a case hardened frame, or antique nickel finish. And all are available in .32-20, .357 Magnum, .44 Special, .44 Magnum, and .45 Colt, or any other center-fire sixgun chambering desired. For those who realize that the Colt Single Action's frame and cylinder are probably too small for the .44 Magnum, rest assured that Bill has made both larger to handle .44 Magnum pressures.

What makes the Texas Longhorn Arms sixguns different from the Colts other than the obvious moving of ejector rod and loading gate to the left side? I spent a few hours with Bill asking the same question and it was an absolute pleasure to see his eyes light up and know that here was a man who really cared about building a top quality sixgun.

What, then, makes the TLA shotgun worth its \$1500 price tag? Each sixgun is made completely of 4140 steel, with all coil springs, and a spring loaded firing pin set in the frame. The cylinder is locked into place with a double locking on the bolt, one coming from the bottom, the other from the top. Grover maintains that a properly timed TLA sixgun will stay that way if it is handled correctly. This means no line around the cylinder from the drag of the locking bolt.

Continued on page 84



You Can Win a

Magnum Hunter

Andy Cannon Custom .44 Magnum

Andy Cannon is a young man with old ideas. In this age of “good ‘nough for guv’mint work,” Andy takes personal pride in handcrafting the finest custom revolvers that a loving and talented hand can create. Making the best is simply a matter of honor and pride for Andy Cannon.

And so it is not surprising to see Andy’s *Magnum Hunter* featuring the finest craftsmanship and most refined features of a hunting handgun. Beginning with a S&W M-29, Andy milled his integral compensator into the barrel and remounted an improved Patridge front sight. He installed a Power custom scope base for a Leupold stain nickel scope.

The heart of a gun is its action and Andy puts *his* heart into every action tuning he performs. To tune the big Smith is not easy, owing to the massive .44 Magnum cylinder, but Andy does his magic for a super-slick double and single-action release.

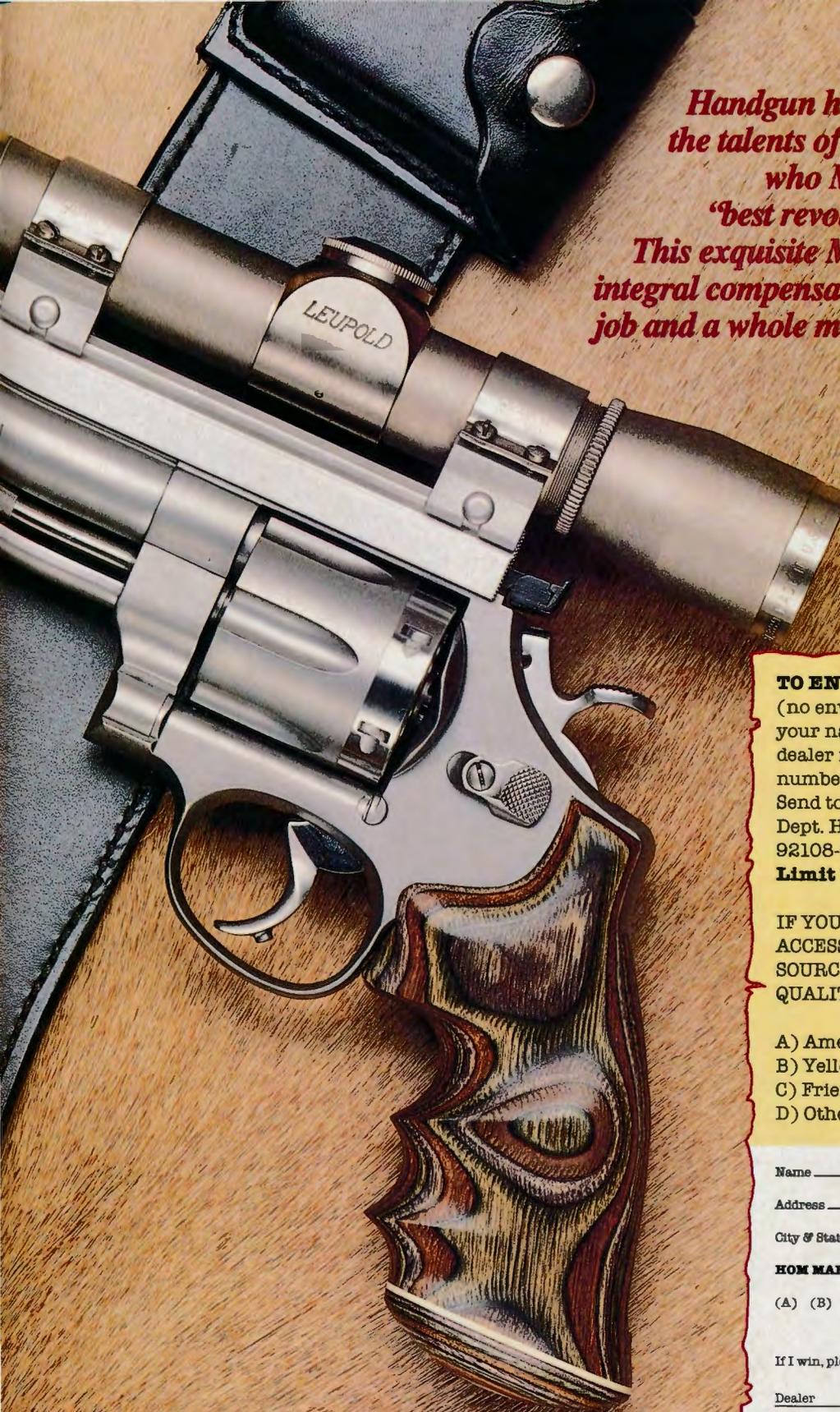
The trigger is fitted with an over-travel stop. The cylinder release is polished and smoothed. Guy Hogue supplied a set of his new “lamo camo” stocks featuring the unique *Monogrip* construction. The finish is a matte chrome from the famed plating tanks of Jim Kelley’s *Metaloy*.

Andy charges \$675 for all the work described, plus a few more finishing touches like chamfering and numbering the chambers. That’s on *your* Model 29, but Andy will supply a base gun at his dealer cost if you’d like a complete *Magnum Hunter* out-of-the-box. Without the scope mount, scope, grips and Millett sights, the cost of a fine-tuning, complete with the integral compensator and butter-smooth action, is \$340 on your gun.

Andy Cannon
Cannon’s Guns
Box 357
Victor, MT 59875

custom holster by Ted Blocker

photo by Roger Andrews



Handgun hunters now benefit from the talents of Andy Cannon, the man who Massad Ayoob says is the "best revolversmith in the nation."

This exquisite Model 29 features Andy's integral compensator, his incredible action job and a whole mixed bag of refinements.

TO ENTER CONTEST: Use a postcard, (no envelopes), follow sample; include your name and address; your answer; dealer name, address and phone number. Mail before April 1, 1988. Send to: AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Dept. H3, POB 880409, San Diego, CA 92108-0009.

Limit 1 entry per household.

IF YOU WERE TO MODIFY OR ADD ACCESSORIES TO A HANDGUN, WHAT SOURCE WOULD YOU USE TO FIND A QUALITY PISTOLSMITH?

- A) American Handgunner Magazine
- B) Yellow Page Directory
- C) Friend's Recommendation
- D) Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City & State _____ Zip _____

HOM MAR/APR 1988 Phone _____

(A) (B) (C) (D) _____

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

Dealer _____

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SAMPLE



10mm



Is the awesome power of the 10mm Auto too much for the 75-year-old GI clunker? The author was leery about pushing pressures so high in a tilting-barrel design, but much to his delightful surprise, the Colt engineers hit the mark with the

DELTA ELITE

*By Charles E. Petty
Photos by Mustafa Bilal
courtesy of Bangers Distributors*



Well, after a few fits and starts and a masterful media campaign that saw prototypes of the Delta Elite on the cover of many gun magazines, Colt is shipping guns. The media blitz was carefully orchestrated to introduce writers to the gun under the most favorable conditions. Nobody was able to have a gun for independent test and evaluation. They were able to shoot and examine them only under the watchful eyes of Colt employees. I'm not sure this leads to particularly objective writeups. To do it right you have to live with the gun for awhile and, shoot it, and that is why *American Handgunner* preferred to avoid the bandwagon.

When I first learned that Colt was considering adapting the venerable Government Model to the 10mm Auto cartridge, I thought it likely to be the biggest mistake since Watergate. I was wrong. I thought it would self-destruct after a relatively few rounds. It didn't. I've shot, or witnessed the firing of, 1000 rounds of Norma factory ammo, without cleaning, and the gun is still doing fine, thank you.

Originally developed for the ill-fated Bren Ten, Norma factory ammunition is loaded with 200 gr. ball and 170 gr. hollowpoint bullets. Norma advertised the hollowpoint load at a velocity of 1400 fps and the ball at 1200 fps but actual velocity of the ammunition used in this test is considerably slower. The hollowpoint averaged only 1108 fps from the Colt's 5" barrel while the ball delivered 1023 fps. In addition, the hollowpoint load displays extreme velocity spreads that have been as high as 200 fps and occasional rounds have large muzzle flashes with a distinctly different report and velocity considerably lower than other rounds. I can't pinpoint the cause for this, but it happens with predictable regularity. Nor am I the only one to observe these facts for several authorities within the industry have reported the same thing. The ball ammunition does not seem to suffer from this malady although it too has been reduced.

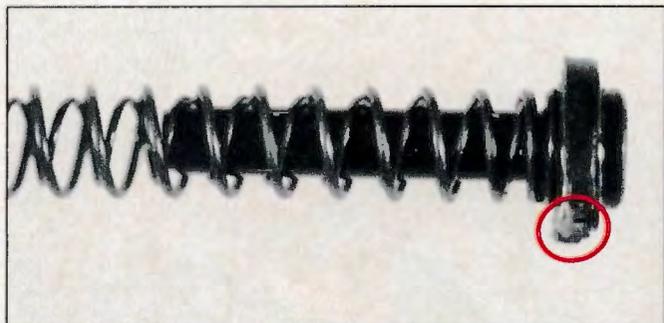
Since the ammunition was so different I asked Mike Bussard, Federal's Marketing Manager for Specialty Products, who oversees Norma products for Federal (Federal has recently assumed U.S. distribution of Norma products) to investigate. Norma's engineers replied that they were aware of the problem which they attribute to powder, and state that the reduction in velocity involved only one lot (naturally it's the one I tested) and is purely temporary. New production will be loaded to 1300 fps for the hollowpoint and 1120 fps for the 200 gr. ball.

Even so, this translates into a lot of recoil energy and I'm concerned with what happens to the frame when the slide slams into it.

To tame the jackhammer recoil of the 10mm, Colt went to a double recoil spring. This helps to retard the slide's rearward momentum. Note the indications of heavy pounding on the recoil spring guide. The author did not find this wear to be serious, but it is a hint of the powerful forces at play inside the 10mm Delta Elite.

Colt calculates that the final recoil velocity of the slide is 33 fps. Army .45 ball ammunition, by comparison, generates a relatively sedate 23 fps. Although we take it for granted, there are a lot of things going on in the firing/feeding cycle and Colt's engineers did a lot of work to balance these forces.

Their solution is basically simple. The major change is in the recoil spring and guide. The Delta Elite uses a double recoil spring and Delrin guide to help absorb some energy. You'll notice the difference as soon as you pull the slide back, for there are two distinctly different spring elements that provide a cumulative effect. As the slide begins to move rearward spring resistance is stiffer than a Government Model, but when the second element comes into play,

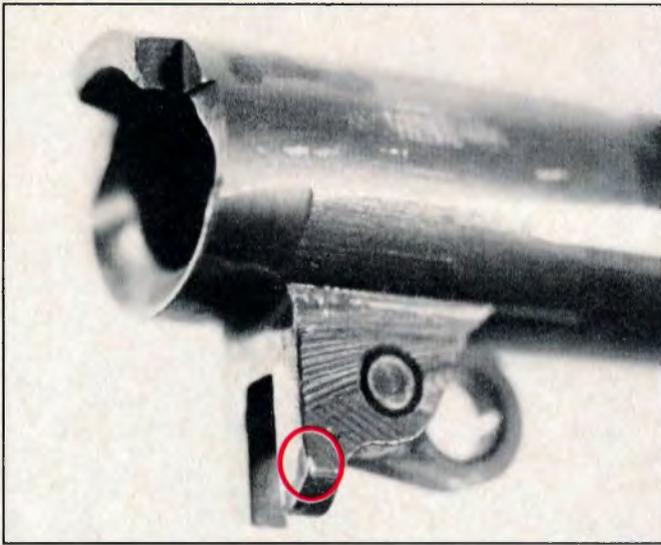


at about the halfway point of the slide travel, it becomes appreciably heavier. This, coupled with the recoil absorbing properties of the guide, dampen things some, but there is still considerable energy transferred directly to the frame.

The most dramatic proof is the way brass comes out of the gun. We're all used to .45 cases going over the right shoulder but the 10's brass is launched 25-30 feet to the right. It goes either at right angles or a little forward, so be sure to warn your buddies to stand to the left. It comes out hot in more ways than one, so let it cool a bit before you try picking it up.

Most of the changes in the gun are subtle. Colt Engineer Bill Griehl, who has worked on the project since the beginning, pointed out some of them. Keeping in mind that Colt did not want to build a totally different frame, he concentrated on keeping things as simple as possible. The majority are subtle changes in radii of cuts on the frame. It is well-known among engineers that stresses are often greater with sharp angles, so these are gently rounded wherever possible. The barrel bushing is solid and short, about the same as a Commander bushing and probably an absolute must, for I doubt that collet bushings would survive much 10mm.

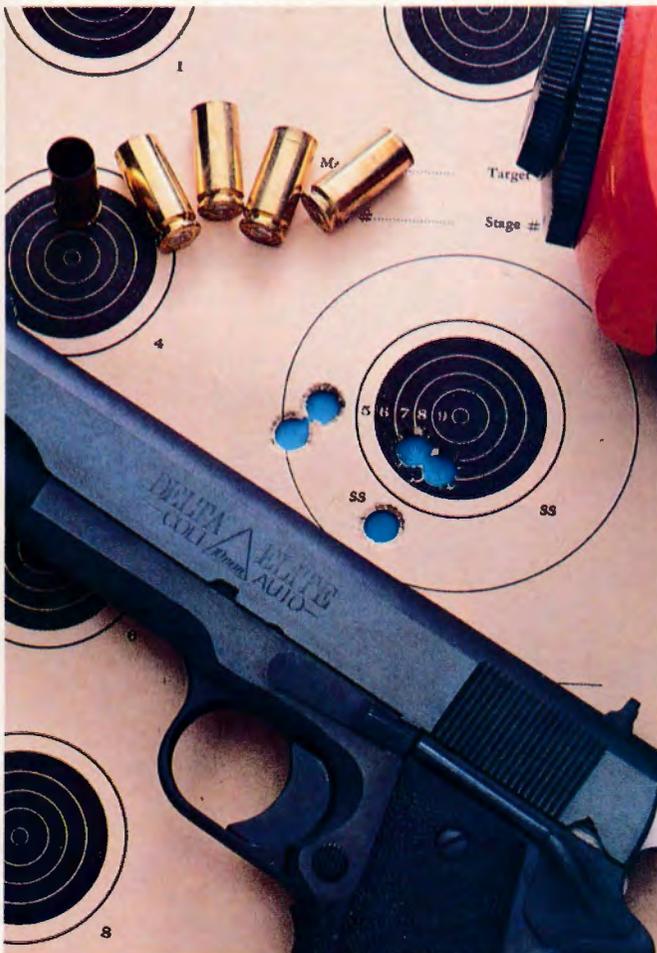
But the really interesting change is on the frame. The weakest point on the Government Model frame is the cutout where the slide stop goes in to engage the magazine to hold the slide open after the



last shot. Hairline cracks in the slide rails are reasonably common at this point: I've seen lots of them. Cracks here are basically benign and guns keep shooting with no ill effect. There's no doubt in my mind that 10mms would have shown cracks there, so Colt simply removed the area where it would have cracked anyhow.

The foot of the recoil lug shows a few shiny spots which indicate yet another area of high stress from the recoil of the 10mm.

When I first noticed the cut in the slide rails it was obvious that this is a perfect place to measure to see if extended firing was enough to warp the rails. I carefully measured the frame in five places where any change would be obvious (including the cutout) and recorded these dimensions. After the first 100 rounds and then at 200 round intervals I repeated these measurements and noted that none of them showed any change whatsoever. I was, truthfully, a bit surprised, and



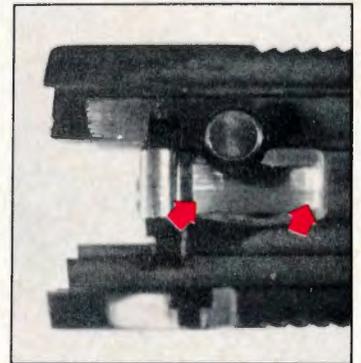
my impression became more and more favorable.

Almost everyone who has seen the gun has asked about the recoil and I can say with confidence that there is some, and both the shooter and the gun are going to know about it. Perception of recoil is such a subjective, individual thing that I received conflicting reports from a number of shooters who got to try the gun during my tests. Some found it very objectionable and put the gun down after only a few rounds while others, son Chip leading the pack, didn't seem to mind and shot many rounds. I found it sharper than ball .45 ammunition with a distinctly greater muzzle flip. Personally, I wouldn't relish having to shoot hundreds of rounds of factory ammunition at one session, but I had no difficulty controlling it.

The testing methodology was simple: to shoot the gun until 1000



The most common place for a 1911 frame to crack is over the slide stop cut-out, so Colt simply eliminated this (above) by removing the bridge across the slide rails. The disconnecter notch in the slide (right) shows bright spots indicating harsh treatment of the bone-wrenching recoil.

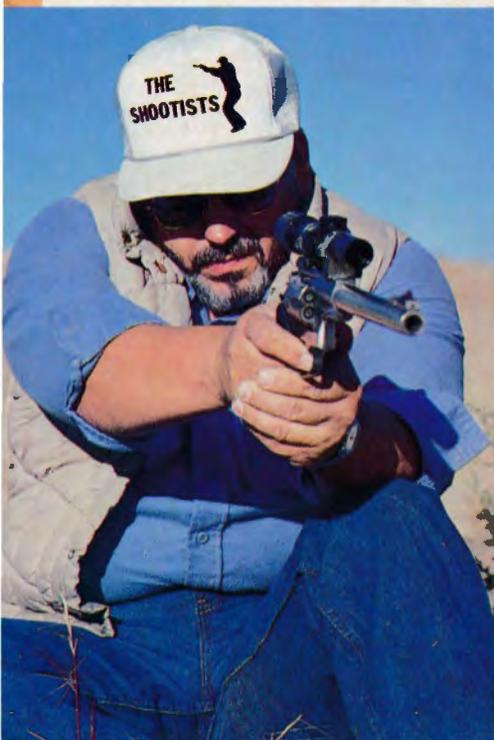


rounds of factory ammo were fired—or it broke, whichever came first. Testing was done over a period of two weeks and included three sessions where students in one of my classes fired the gun in 200 round batches where they shot as fast as they could. During shooting the gun became so hot that, were it not for the Pachmayr grips, it would have been impossible to hold. After each shooting session the gun was examined, measured and lightly lubricated but not cleaned. There were two stoppages: both premature engagement of the slide stop. I was watching when both happened and they were caused by relatively inexperienced shooters allowing their grip to shift and inadvertently pushing up on the slide stop. There were no other malfunctions and the gun successfully fired 1000 rounds without cleaning. There were no parts failures although the gun does show evidence of wear in several areas.

The base of the Delrin recoil spring guide is reinforced, sandwich-style, and this became battered early on. Colt engineer Bill Griehl had observed that wear of this type appeared to be self-limiting and I found this to be accurate. Colt estimates that the useful life of the recoil spring and guide is 5000 rounds but I think it might be a good idea to keep spares on hand if you shoot a lot of full charge loads.

One area in which wear may be a more serious problem is the

Continued on page 80



BIG RED

By John Taffin

The new Super Redhawk is the first Ruger handgun to break the \$500 price barrier.



When it comes to hotrodding a .44 Magnum, bigger is better. Bigger is stronger, bigger is tougher. The Ruger Super Redhawk is all of that, a Herculean handgun to handle your hottest loads!

The 1970's were dismal times for fanciers of the .44 Magnum. Movie characters had caused such a demand for double-action .44 Magnums that Smith & Wesson, even though they continued to expand production, simply could not meet the public's appetite for the big .44. It was not in the least unusual to see Model 29's going for over \$200 above the retail price. Even Ruger single-action Super Blackhawks were in short supply as the demand spilled over to anything that was chambered for the .44 Magnum.

Relief came at the end of the '70s as both Dan Wesson and Ruger brought out double-action .44 Magnums that were even bigger and stronger than the Smith & Wesson Model 29. However, the relief which came was hardly a cool glass of water after a hot hike—the first Redhawk in my town sold for \$750! After the first buying wave, the market settled down and it was once again possible to purchase double-action .44 Magnums at retail, and even below.

The new Redhawk .44 represented the Magnum of the '80s, big and tough and able to withstand the recoil of the new heavyweight bullet loads that had become popular with handgun hunters. Handloaders found that the durable Redhawk was capable of delivering 300 grain cast bullets at 1500 fps from its 7½" barrel, a load that gives maximum .44 Magnum penetration on large game.

Now Ruger has seen fit to bring out an even larger Redhawk, the Super Redhawk. The Super Redhawk is not simply a Redhawk made bigger, as one would expect. Instead of just enlarging the Redhawk, Ruger has used the GP-100 as the basis for their latest .44 Magnum. Actually, the Super Redhawk is a result of blending the best features of the GP-100 and the standard Redhawk.

Three major changes are found in the newest Redhawk. First, for those who have





The Super Redhawk incorporates Ruger's integral scope bases on the extended frame, which is good for balance.

on the frame rather than the barrel.

The Super Redhawk comes with stainless scope rings that mount solidly on the frame using one large screw each and semi-circular recesses on each side of the frame. For added strength, a lug on the bottom of each ring mates with a recess on top of the frame. This allows each ring to be anchored from side-to-side as well as front-to-back. The rings install easily, and once the scope is zeroed-in it holds zero very closely when the scope is removed and replaced again.

This easy on-again, off-again feature allows almost instant use of scope or iron sights, and should make the Super Redhawk very popular as a double duty sixgun for hunting or silhouetting. A major selling point for the Super Redhawk will be the fact that it comes already set-up for easy scope mounting at no extra cost, thus saving scope users the \$50 to \$100, or more, that it normally costs to have a scope mounted properly.

The iron sights consist of a red insert front sight that is removable by depressing a plunger at the front of the sight base, thus allowing the use of replacement colored nylon front sights which are available as options from Ruger. The rear sight is a stan-

Continued on page 90

complained about the poor trigger pulls of the standard Redhawk, the Super Redhawk uses separate springs for the trigger and hammer, going back to the hammer spring and strut used in their single action revolvers. The result is a much smoother from-the-box trigger pull. In fact, while most Redhawks require either a gunsmith's tender care or extensive breaking-in to smooth out the trigger pulls, my test Super Redhawk came with an excellent trigger.

The second major change is found in the grip area. The Redhawk grip frame has been replaced by the GP-100 stud that accepts the rubberized GP-100 grips. This is an improvement—or a step backwards depending upon one's point of view.

The grip panels furnished on my test Super Redhawk are too small leaving the sharp edges behind the trigger guard exposed. Even though wearing a shooting glove, one session of 600 rounds of full-house ammunition left me with a very sore and blistered middle finger on my shooting hand. I immediately surmised, sore finger and all, that grips panels which fit the frame properly would solve this problem easily.

So my curiosity getting the best of me, I tracked down a GP-100 and confiscated the grips to try on the Super Redhawk. As hoped, the replacement panels were slightly larger and filled in the sharp edges behind Big Red's trigger guard, alleviating the problem.

The third change is the most radical by far. The Ruger Super Redhawk has a distinctive profile not found on any other revolver. The frame itself has been extended forward of the cylinder so that the first 2½ inches of the barrel is actually enclosed by the frame. This feature accomplishes two things: the frame is made heavier and stronger, and it also allows the use of an integral scope mounting system

RUGER SUPER REDHAWK .44 MAGNUM 9-1/2" HEAVYWEIGHT CAST BULLET LOADS:

ALL GROUPS ARE FIVE SHOTS @ 25 YDS WITH IRON SIGHTS.

SSK #310.429 310 GRAIN

LOAD	PRIMER	BRASS	MV	GROUP
23.0 GR. WW680	CCI 350	WW	1377	2"
24.0 GR. WW680	CCI 350	WW	1481	1½"
21.5 GR. WW296	FED 155	FC	1446	1¼"
22.5 GR. WW296	FED 155	FC	1498	1½"
21.5 GR. H110	CCI 350	WW	1442	1¼"
22.5 GR. H110	CCI 350	WW	1515	1¾"
18.0 GR. #2400	CCI 350	WW	1434	1½"
19.0 GR. #2400	CCI 350	WW	1466	1¼"
18.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1338	1"
19.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1385	1½"

NEI #295.429 KEITH SWC GC 290 GRAIN

LOAD	PRIMER	BRASS	MV	GROUP
24.0 GR. WW680	FED 155	FC	1389	1½"
21.5 GR. WW296	FED 155	FC	1394	1½"
22.5 GR. WW296	FED 155	FC	1465	1"
18.5 GR. #2400	FED 155	FC	1414	1"
19.5 GR. #2400	FED 155	FC	1487	1¾"
18.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1284	1¾"
19.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1375	2"

LYMAN #429421 KEITH 250 GRAIN

LOAD	PRIMER	BRASS	MV	GROUP
20.0 GR. #2400	CCI 350	WW	1366	1"
21.0 GR. #2400	CCI 350	WW	1582	1½"
22.0 GR. #2400	CCI 350	WW	1625	1½"
19.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1423	1¾"
20.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1477	1½"
21.0 GR. AA#9	CCI 350	WW	1509	2"
24.0 GR. H110	CCI 350	WW	1567	1"
25.0 GR. H110	CCI 350	WW	1590	1¼"
26.0 GR. H110	CCI 350	WW	1629	1"

By Charles E. Petty

Here's the media's latest *cause celebre*, the next awful thing the gun manufacturers have propagated to endanger us. It's the plastic gun, the one that can be carried with impunity through airport metal detectors—the greatest thing for terrorists since Kalishnikovs!

The cause for all the alarm is the fact that the Glock 17 does have a plastic frame—an ingenious thing, and much more a tribute to polymer chemistry than a threat to safe skies. What was ignored, or at least minimized, was the fact that the top half—that part where the gun things happen—is good old steel. According to my calculations, the total weight of the gun (less magazine) is 22 ounces. The frame weighs 5 ounces; so this means that there are some 17 ounces of steel in the slide and barrel. Airport metal detectors light up like Christmas trees over that much steel.

Even though the frame is plastic that doesn't mean that it will be invisible to X-rays either, so I did what any reasonable researcher would do: I X-rayed the thing. There is no mistaking the shape of the frame, springs and parts are clearly visible and unmistakably a gun. And, of course, bullets still look like bullets under X-ray. Glock's US representative pointed out that the gun has been on the market in Europe, where airport security is taken much more seriously, for over three years without incident.

I'm sure most folks are wondering just who Glock is, for it certainly isn't a familiar firearms name. The company is located in Deutsch Wagram, Austria, which is 10 km



To field strip, pull slide back 1/4", then pull down on latch on the front of the frame, then slide removes to the front.

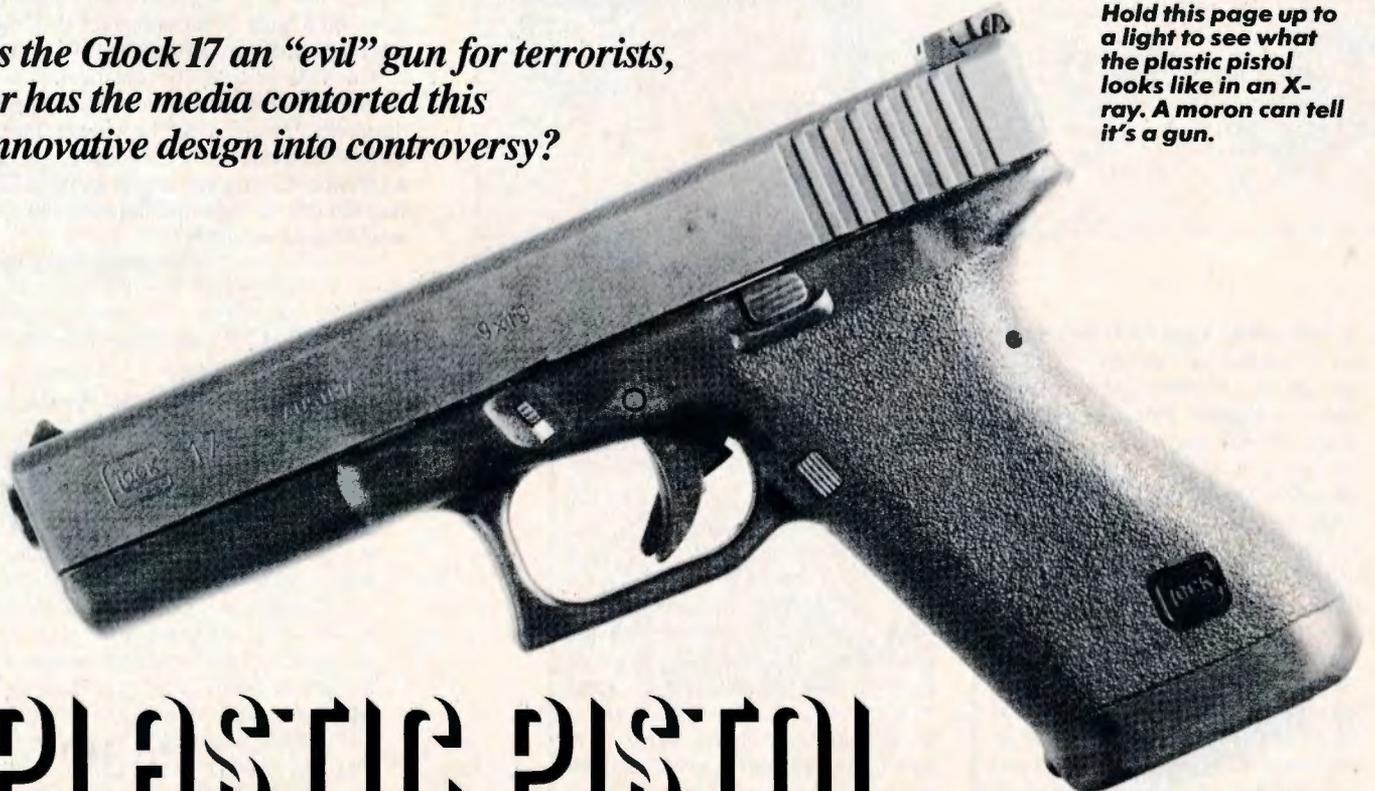
outside Vienna, and has been in the plastics-molding business for over 30 years. The gun was designed from the ground up, in response to the Austrian Army's need for a new service pistol and has now been adopted by that service and at least one other NATO member. The design is covered by no less than 23 US patents and it represents a real application of high technology to firearms design and manufacture. I first saw one in England in the spring of 1984, but it wasn't

until the company established offices in this country at 5000 Highlands Parkway, Smyrna, GA, 30080, that the pistols reached the American market.

The Glock's frame is an injection molded polycarbonate material that is strong stuff. I suspect that there will be a general UGHH among some purists, but the stresses on handgun frames are really not that great. The places where they are, the slide rails and where the barrel locks up and contacts the

Is the Glock 17 an "evil" gun for terrorists, or has the media contorted this innovative design into controversy?

Hold this page up to a light to see what the plastic pistol looks like in an X-ray. A moron can tell it's a gun.



PLASTIC PISTOL

frame on recoil, are reinforced with imbedded metal. The rest of the frame doesn't take that much of a beating and some of these new space-age polymers are more than up to the task.

Glock's representative, Karl Walter, told me that the material actually has a higher tensile strength than steel, while still retaining the elasticity that makes plastics so useful in other products. Glock claims to have two

something that's already been done. In appearance it isn't much different from many of the current crop of high-capacity 9mm pistols—boxy. Perhaps the most obvious departure is the absence of a safety—at least as we're conditioned to expect. There is one, but it's a little widget that sticks out of the trigger. The trigger cannot be pulled unless the gizmo is depressed and there's a lot of thought behind this little piece. Its prime

to be defeated. There is no magazine safety either.

When you pull the trigger you'll notice something else unusual too. It doesn't *feel* the same as conventional triggers. It shouldn't, for there is no hammer to be cocked. The gun is actually striker-fired so the trigger is first cocking and then releasing the firing pin/striker. When it comes time to describe the action it is neither single nor double-action. I don't know what to call it, but Glock calls it, "safe-action."

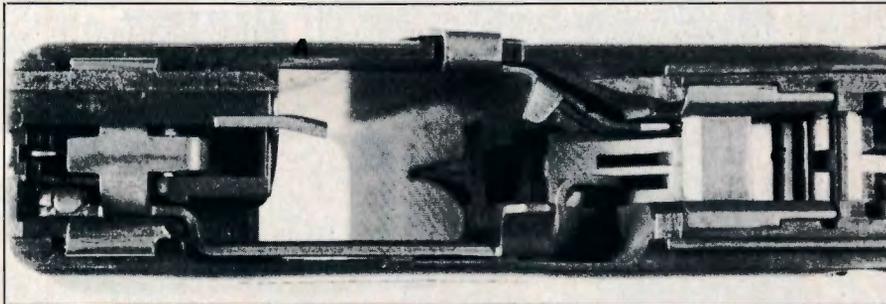
There is a conventional trigger-actuated firing pin safety, but that's where the similarity to most other automatics ends—at least as far as the trigger is concerned. One would expect the trigger weight to be a little heavier, since there is a lot happening when it is pulled, but that isn't the case either. With DA automatics and revolvers we are compressing a fairly large spring, the mainspring, as the trigger is pulled, but the only springs that have to be compressed in the Glock are the firing pin/striker spring and a small trigger spring. This gives the pistol a distinct two-stage trigger pull. The first is a combination of slack and spring; the second is the force required to pull the sear (in Glock's terminology: connector) off the striker. Sure, it feels a little strange, but the letoff is surprisingly crisp and, at 6 pounds, not too heavy.

The simplified firing mechanism is also responsible for the paucity of parts throughout. There are only 33, including four that make up the magazine. Most automatic pistols have far more; some over twice as many.

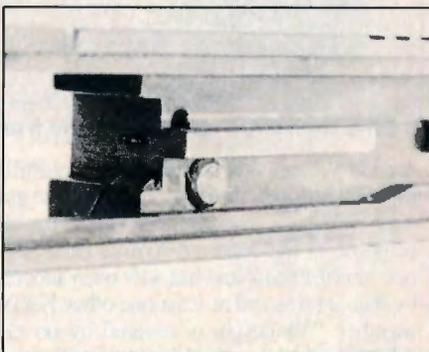
Mechanically, the top half looks rather conventional, but closer examination will show that there's some pretty sophisticated machine work in the slide. Karl Walter reports that it is machined from solid bar stock on a bank of six computer controlled machines which are all operated by one man.

The slide is specially heat treated to 69 Rockwell. This is a means of increasing durability, for it is all but impossible to scratch the slide's surface. I know, I tried, and a screwdriver dragged across an inside surface left only a slight discoloration and a file would barely scratch it.

Continued on page 93



Glock's plastic frame (above) incorporates steel parts like (A) slide rails (B) connector and (C) locking block. These parts show up clearly on X-ray. Note the square firing pin (right) in the slide.



test guns that have fired over 300,000 rounds without a malfunction or parts replacement and all dimensions have remained within factory tolerances. Those rounds were the super-hot European NATO 9×19 ammo which makes the stoutest American stuff look anemic by comparison.

The frame isn't the only unusual thing and it is really refreshing to see a gun come onto the market that isn't just simply a rehash of

function is to prevent discharge if the gun is dropped. Conceivably, the weight of the trigger could be enough for inertia to release the trigger, but the little trigger safety is so light that there simply isn't enough mass there for it



By Trip Neisler

Just about the only similarity between an all-out PPC revolver and a revolver suitable for service-gun PPC matches is that they're both revolvers. At the service-gun PPC matches I attend, you won't find any bull barrels with heavy underlugs, no short cylinders, and no aftermarket ribs or custom sights. What you will find is stock-appearing guns with six-inch or shorter factory barrels, factory sights, and usually a set of rubber grips. An action job is the single modification allowed.

Tuning the Dan Wesson

Given these restrictions, what gun should you choose to compete in a service-gun PPC match? Good question. Most shooters seem to favor Smith & Wesson's K or L-frames, but I've noticed N-frames, Pythons, Troopers, Ruger Security-Sixes, and even some Redhawks on the firing line. Now those are all fine handguns—I shot an old-model Trooper for years—but I wanted to try something a little different, and I decided that a Dan Wesson Model 15-2, with a six-inch vent-heavy barrel, would probably be a worthwhile choice.

I picked a Dan Wesson revolver because they are reasonably priced, they have a reputation for accuracy, and they have useful features not offered by other manufacturers. Among these features are: both front and rear sight blades are removable, with optional factory replacements available; the cylinder locks at the front for reliable alignment; the one-piece grip is very stable, and several grip styles are available; the barrel can be easily adjusted by the shooter for the correct barrel/cylinder gap; different barrel lengths and shroud styles are

Do-it-yourself tips for improving the Dan Wesson action.

interchangeable on one receiver; and the barrel, by design, is under tension at both ends, giving fine accuracy.

After the addition of a set of Pachmayr's Gripper stocks, the gun fit my hand very well. The wide, smooth trigger hit exactly the right spot on the first joint of my trigger finger. The sight picture was acceptable, although I opted for a yellow front sight insert to replace the red one shipped with the

gun. The vent-heavy shroud, with its full-length underlug, put the barrel weight right where it felt the best. Basically, the gun was nearly ideal for shooting service-gun PPC matches.

Unfortunately, however, there was a small, expected, problem area. The action was extremely stiff—all but uncontrollable. There was lots of creep in the single-action trigger and too much spring pressure in double-action. An action job was an absolute necessity.

I looked for and found an exploded view of the internal parts of the revolver in the back of the instruction manual. Since the action didn't look very complicated I got out the combination tool supplied with the gun and removed the sideplate. An inveterate tinkerer, I most likely would have disassembled the gun, anyway. The first thing I noticed was that the design used two springs, a hammer spring and a trigger spring. The second thing I noticed was that almost all the internal parts were parkerized, even some of

(18717 East Fourteen Mile, Fraser, MI 48026), makes springs for almost any handgun, be it revolver or auto, for just this purpose. I fired off an order for their Bullseye Spring Kit #12, and in less than two weeks I had the new springs.

There're a couple of tricks to disassembling the Dan Wesson .357. First, remove the grips and sideplate screws. The receiver has a notch near the front of the trigger guard that prevents the sideplate from being lifted straight up. Cock the hammer and insert a soft tool between the receiver and sideplate, in front of the hammer. Pry up gently and the sideplate will come right off. Next, leaving the hammer cocked, take the longer sideplate screw and insert it into the mainspring seat. Tightening on this screw with the combination tool will compress the mainspring against a shoulder on the mainspring guide, releasing the pressure on the hammer.

When the hammer feels free of the mainspring guide it can be easily lifted



the bearing surfaces. A little polishing would quickly eliminate any drag that might be present. I decided to do the action job myself.

A word of caution here is mandatory. Before you attempt to disassemble or work on your own gun be sure you understand the function of all parts, and know what work is required to achieve the desired results. It's entirely possible to make a time bomb out of what was once a perfectly good handgun. *If you aren't comfortable about working on a gun, don't try it.*

The easiest, and most effective, part of a revolver action job is replacing the standard springs with lighter springs that reduce the amount of force needed to cycle the action. Trapper Gun, Inc.

out, taking the trigger spring with it. Be sure to release the pressure on the trigger spring before removing the hammer assembly. Initially, I didn't, and got a sore finger for my dumb move. A small screwdriver will lift and hold the trigger spring so that the tension can be gradually released. Don't forget to exchange trigger springs when it's time for reassembly.

The rest of the disassembly is nothing more than lifting out the parts. Remove the crane lock, and the crane, with the cylinder assembly, will slide out. Note the way the hand spring works with the hand, then remove the hand. Take out the trigger, connector (transfer bar), and bolt, and disassem-

Continued on page 94



1/3 MOON CLIPS

Use .45 acp ammo in place of .45 auto rim. For Colt 17, S&W 25 and S&W 55 revolvers. Allows storage in ammo belts & std. boxes. Reusable indefinitely. For a FREE sample, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We now make full-moon clips.)
Clip Prices: 25 for \$4.99; 50 for \$8.99 ppd.

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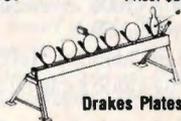
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Patron Saint of Handgunners

A holy father, a saint canonized by the Vatican, defended a young girl's life with a handgun. St. Gabriel Possenti (1838-1862) saved a village girl by driving back a band of brigands, a looting gang of rapists, with a revolver.

Blessed be Saint Possenti. For his courageous actions as an armed citizen makes him the Patron Saint of Handgunners.

According to *Gun Week*, which in turn cites the Catholic magazine *New Covenant* as the source, the story holds that the young monk joined the Passionist Order, despite opposition from his father. Prior to his calling to serve God, young Gabriel had been an ardent shooter and, says the Catholic journal, was an "expert marksman."

To quote from the *New Covenant's* "Lives of the Saints" from the Feb. 1987 issue:

"After completing his novitiate, Gabriel was sent with several other clerical students to the monastery at Isola, Italy, high in the mountains. There was much political turmoil and fighting at that time, and it was felt that the monastery would be the safest place for them to continue their studies.

"A frightening rumor circulated that a band of marauders was approaching Isola. Families who lived there rushed to the back

woods. For the few who remained, the next hours were a nightmare as they watched the soldiers loot without opposition.

"At the thought of the injustice, Gabriel became angry. After receiving permission, he ran to the town. There, about 20 drunk and abusive men were ransacking and burning everything.

"A soldier, dragging a young girl, stepped directly into Gabriel's path with a sneering remark about such a young monk being all alone. Gabriel quickly took the man's pistol out of his holster and threatened to shoot if the man failed to release the girl. Seeing a second soldier, Gabriel commanded him to drop his gun, which the surprised soldier did.

"The shouts brought the rest of the company to the scene. Gabriel demanded that they drop their guns.

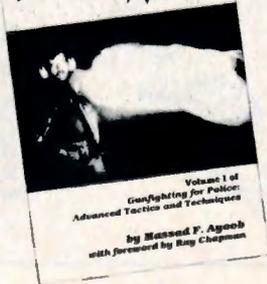
"The sergeant made a sarcastic comment about a single little monk thinking he could stop a whole company. Just then, a lizard darted into the street and paused a moment. Gabriel barely took aim before he fired, and the lizard flopped over dead.

"Pointing the revolver at the sergeant, Gabriel again commanded the company to drop their arms. His marksmanship had impressed the cowardly crew, and they disarmed immediately. Gabriel made them drop the loot they had collected and quench the fires. Finally, marching the whole company ahead of him, he made them leave town."

God bless Saint Gabriel Possenti, the Patron Saint of Handgunners.



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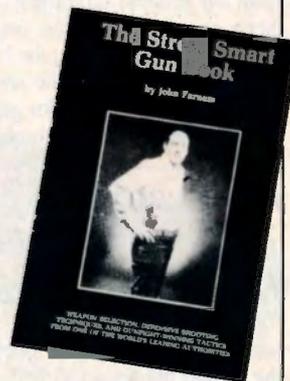
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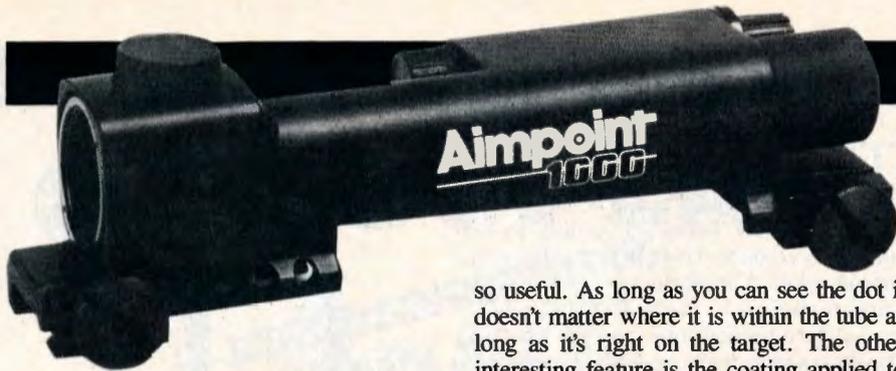
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TEST REPORT

Aimpoint 1000

By Charles E. Petty

Since illuminated dot pistol scopes appeared on the scene in the mid 1970s they have earned a prominent place on the equipment list of the pistol shooter, for they eliminate one of the biggest problems we all face: sight alignment. The impact that Aimpoint has had is impressive and their products are seen on many guns at bullseye matches and on nearly all in Bianchi Cup competition.

It's funny how sometimes the brand name of a product reaches generic acceptance and this seems to be the case with Aimpoint scopes. Over the years common usage has been applied to all illuminated dot scopes and they are often called Aimpoints, regardless of who made them. Aimpoint Corp. (203 Elden St., Herndon, VA 22070) doesn't mind and their U.S. sales manager Kim Hendon laughed when I suggested that they might. "It's the best advertising we can get," he said.

Aimpoint's technology uses a double lens with a concave element to provide the parallax free sight picture that makes their scope

so useful. As long as you can see the dot it doesn't matter where it is within the tube as long as it's right on the target. The other interesting feature is the coating applied to the element which reflects the red light from the light emitting diode source, but allows ambient light to pass through to the shooter's eye. That's what makes the red dot appear suspended within the scope body.

The early scopes extracted a price for their benefits though, for they were bulky, expensive and very heavy. Until now though, price has remained a barrier for some shooters, for the average has been over the \$200 level. Aimpoint has changed that with their Model 1000 which is intended to retail for \$149.95 which is \$50 less than the least expensive version of their other new model, the 2000.

The Aimpoint 1000 is quite a bit smaller than earlier versions and reminds me of a scaled-down Mark III. Its biggest difference, compared to the 2000 and earlier versions, is the slightly smaller tube diameter, but I didn't find this to be a significant handicap. The other major difference is in the intensity adjustment which has a 9 position switch with distinct clicks stops as opposed to the

infinitely variable rheostat of the more expensive version. Perhaps the best news though is that Aimpoint has changed batteries from the previously used types that were all but impossible to find, to standard types that are used routinely in cameras and calculators. These can be found at most camera shops and drugstores.

In testing the Aimpoint 1000 I mounted it on a Smith & Wesson Model 41 in place of the resident Mk. III. The first notable observation was that the gun wasn't nearly as hard to hold out there, for the weight of the 1000 is one third less than the older model. I think most people would be a little sceptical of any product that is a low priced alternative to an established product and they expect to suffer some loss of performance. I couldn't detect that much difference between the old Mk. III when shooting bullseye and I have some pretty dramatic proof that the 1000 works. It's a 100-18X target that I shot at a timed fire pace.





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TEST REPORT

The new RCBS Partner single-stage reloading press wasn't ready for production and marketing in time to be included in the 1987 Omark Industries catalog, so the information you're getting here amounts to an introduction. The Partner is essentially a press for beginners, but because it is suitable to use in reloading most popular rifle and handgun ammo, it may appeal to experienced handloaders as well.

In the latter regard, it all depends on how fast you want to turn out handloads; this is not a mass-production ammo press, and the only



RCBS PARTNER PRESS

By Dan Cotterman

thing "progressive" about it is that you progress through the stages of reloading by switching dies, one at a time. Still, this press—you might say it's for the "deliberate" handloader—is fully capable of turning out quality handloads.

The Partner, which is more or less a reincarnation of the RCBS "Jr" one-holer, is being offered in three separate packages: 1) without dies for \$45; 2) with dies, shellholder, powder scale, case-lube kit, powder funnel, primer tray, deburring tool, loading block, and Speer reloading manual for \$130; 3) with all that plus 100 Speer bullets, 100 CCI primers, and a VHS video that'll give beginners a colorful insight to the fundamentals of handloading. Entertainment and all, the deluxe package sells for \$190 in five rifle calibers and for \$193 in 9mm, .39 Special/.357 Magnum, or .44 Special/.44 Magnum. The selection of calibers is limited here, but you can get around that by using your own dies; the Partner will accept all standard dies and shellholders.

That's the catalog skinny—now for a look at what you gain and what you give up with a press such as this. The scene opens as we unpack the Partner and begin figuring how it'll mount on the bench. Here's a plus: the linkage has no backswing so it'll be possible to complete the mounting phase without being fazed into hacking a notch, which klutzing would certainly play hell with the virginity of a well-finished bench facing.

Also, the Partner, which weighs less than four pounds, won't hog much space: it extends back onto the work area about three inches, is less than three inches wide, and doesn't reach up, down, or out very far.

The center-section of the Partner's alumi-

num O-frame provides a work space 1 7/8th inches wide by 3 3/4ths inches high. That's enough to accommodate most of the lengthier rifle rounds, and fingering cases into the shellholder is made easier by virtue of the fact that the ram is positioned slightly to the left of the frame's forward member.

Don't expect the Partner to handle the likes of the .50 Sharps or the .460 Weatherby. For that matter, this press is not meant to be used with any of the extra-long rifle cartridges. It will, however, do well with those of the '06 variety, as well as all handgun rounds, including the woolly old .45-70. And the Partner's compound leverage allows full-length resizing of fairly long hulls with seemingly less effort than was required with the old "Jr."

Priming is accomplished by means of a square priming arm that pivots on a screw at the front of the frame. As the handle is raised, the arm drops into a slot in the ram. Then, as the ram bottoms, the arm and its priming punch line up to seat the primer. Punches for large and small primers, furnished with the press, are interchangeable. The routine for changing punches calls for moving the primer sleeve down so as to expose a hole in the head of the punch, into which a small nail or a paper clip is inserted. This done, the plug can be unscrewed and another installed.

Primers are seated as the handle arcs through the last few degrees of its upward travel. Leverage at this interval is low, which makes it possible to determine exactly when the primer anvil is set against the bottom of the pocket. There's another plus, because if a primer doesn't feel right going in—that is, if it's hard to seat, or if it bottoms with too little resistance—you'll be alerted. Larger presses

Continued on page 96

.38 SUPER

UPDATE

By Charles E. Petty

Don't you just hate it when somebody changes the rules . . . just when you think you've got the game figured out. The game I'm talking about is making IPSC major power factors with the .38 Super. When the USPSA adopted the International power factor of 175 they made a whole new ballgame for the Super. Don't misunderstand, I think it was a good decision; the USA should be in

levels. More testing was the only answer.

My efforts focused on only three powders that my earlier research had shown to be capable of higher velocities: Accurate Arms #7, Winchester 540 and Winchester 473AA. All three are ball type powders which meter well through the progressive loaders most of us use and all three proved to produce major loads at reasonable pressure levels. All loads used 160 gr. RN lead bullets in W-W cases with Winchester primers. Loaded length 1.240".

POWDER	CHARGE (GR.)	VELOCITY (FPS)	PRESSURE (CUP)
Accurate #7	8.5	1140	30,000
W-W 473AA	6.2	1130	31,300
W-W 540	7.0	1100	32,000

WARNING: This information is intended for information only. This data is merely a guide and should be used with caution because of unavoidable variations in firearms and components. Neither *American Handgunner* nor the author accept responsibility for results obtained using this information. This data applies only to the .38 Super and is not for use in the .38 ACP. Do not under any circumstances attempt to fire .38 Super cartridges in guns chambers for the .38 ACP.

step with the rest of the world, but while it is of little consequence to users of the .45, the change has a profound impact on the .38 Super.

A lot of loads that made the old power factor were close to the SAAMI maximum pressure of 35,700 CUP so the extra 32 fps needed to go to the new major is not a simple matter of upping the charge a bit. Most competitors use either 160 or 155 gr. cast bullets for the Super so their loads need to generate at least 1094 fps for the 160 gr. and 1129 fps for the 155 gr. bullet. If you use another bullet weight it's easy to find the velocity needed with a pocket calculator. Simply divide 175,000 by the bullet weight and the calculator will display the minimum velocity for that combination.

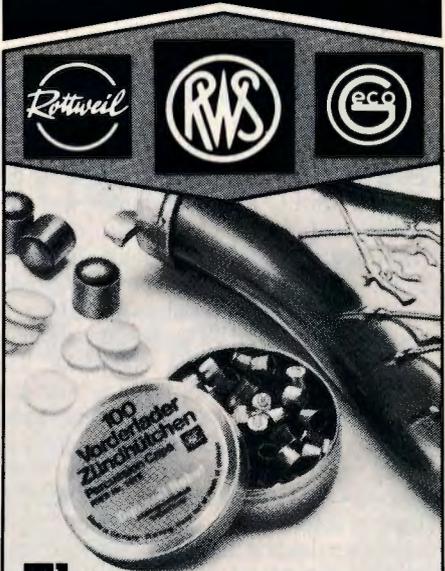
After a couple of years, and countless rounds, I had finally concluded that Accurate Arms #5 was the best powder for this sort of load. It made the old power factor handily and was remarkably clean and accurate, but pressure was about as high as I want to go. My first attempts at the new major used it and I observed some things I didn't like. Primers were markedly flattened and testing confirmed that pressures were above SAAMI

Testing using these three powders revealed that all are capable of making major velocities at charges slightly below those listed. The variation is attributable to the differences between pressure barrels and production guns. For this reason all loads should be reduced by 0.5 gr. and worked up carefully. Users of the 155 gr. bullet should reduce by 0.7 gr. and work up.

Right now I'm still a bit undecided as to which one I prefer, but am leaning toward 473AA. Accurate Arms #7 produced the most consistent velocities but it is also very dirty. Unburned powder is plentiful and I think that this could be a real drawback if the gun is not cleaned regularly. Winchester 540 is also dirty, although not quite as bad as AA #7, and the recoil seems sharper. 473AA is cleaner burning, delivers consistent velocities, and accuracy in my guns has been very good. But I don't believe this is the final answer to loading the .38 Super, for some new powders need investigation and Winchester's new .38 Super brass (if it ever becomes available) may require some additional changes but, for now, these loads will keep you from getting kicked down to minor caliber.



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THE AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 32

when a passing Harley Davidson motorcycle trips the digital readout of their dash-mounted moving radar unit to "77." It is a 55 mph zone. Burchette swings the patrol car into a U-turn as Kolowski, in the right passenger seat, activates the hidden red light. The biker is hesitant to stop, pulling over only after both vehicles have covered half a mile.

It is a dark, moonless night. In addition to the headlights, Burchette plays the spotlight on his door at the idling motorcycle. The driver dismounts, leaving a young woman in the pillion seat as he walks toward the squad car. Burchette meets him midway, and they stand together in the glaring beam of the high-powered aircraft landing light that ISP uses for a spot beam. The tall, black leather clad biker fishes in his wallet, flashing a large amount of cash, and apologizes to the slightly built, immaculately uniformed black trooper that he has only his driver's license and not his registration. The burly white trooper waits at the vehicle.

The biker follows the young trooper to the car and leans in the window as the recruit takes his position in the driver's seat to work the radio. "Can't you give me a break, man? I swear on my mother's grave, I'm just taking the bike for one last ride before I put it in storage for the winter."

The young trooper's reply is polite but

firm. "The citation will be issued. Would you please return to your motorcycle?"

The biker stalks back to the Harley. He swings himself onto the leather seat as, back in the unmarked squad car, the report on the driver's ISP computer check comes crackling over the radio. He is wanted, and he is heavy.

The two troopers quietly discuss the situation. They know that the Harley can easily outrun their mid-size sedan. They know that if they wait too long for backup on this remote secondary road, the outlaw will smell trouble and put his bike in gear. He has two dangerous advantages: a two-wheeler that

He is expecting to hear the gunshot, and instead he hears the sound that saves his life.

can easily out-distance them, and a woman sitting behind him that he can take hostage. He is watching them out of the corner of his eye, and they know that if he even sees the silhouette of the shotgun or a drawn pistol as they approach, he can peel out with the Harley or take the woman at gunpoint. Kolowski sees the man's hand slip back to the saddlebag and remove something, bringing it up to his midriff.

The plan is formulated quickly. Kolowski will hold a low-profile cover position while Burchette tries to get the man off the bike and

away from the girl. It is not a perfect plan, but there are only seconds to formulate it. The man on the bike is becoming visibly "hinky."

The troopers exit the vehicle. Kolowski stands near the right fender, at the edge of the glow of light from the squad car, his hand on his holstered 9mm. Burchette walks forthrightly up to the left side of the parked bike.

The young black officer says calmly, "Were you aware that there's a warrant for your arrest, out of Matteson? At this time you'll be placed under arrest." The trooper's hand moves toward his handcuffs.

And now, it goes up for grabs.

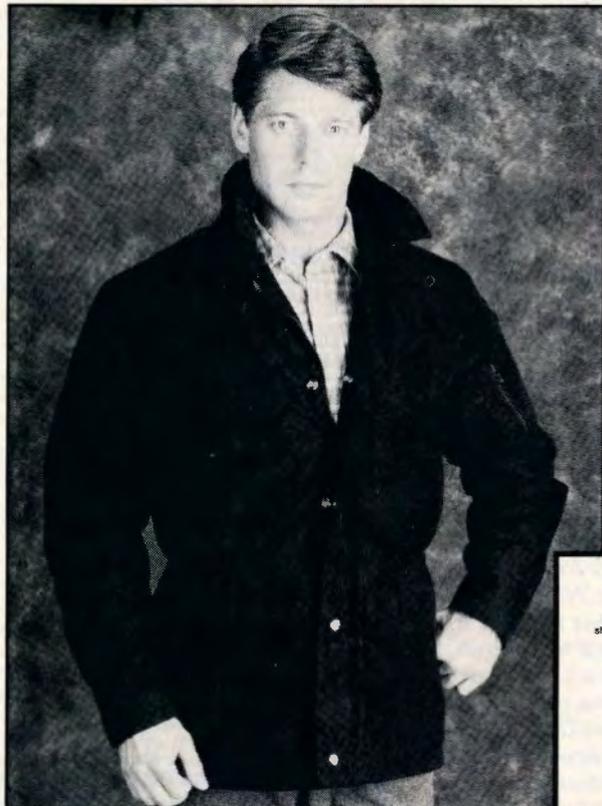
O'Brien barks a harsh, wordless sound, some sort of prearranged signal. The young woman behind him dives from the rear of the bike to the right, into the weedy ditch at the side of the road, just on the edge of the cone of light emanating from the squad car.

O'Brien's own hand flashes to his waistband, and comes up with the stubby blue revolver. He swings his right leg across the bike as he dismounts, pointing the gun at Burchette.

The young trooper has been outdrawn and he knows it. He moves back, crabwise, toward the protection of the cruiser as the little snout of the .38 swings up on him. He is expecting to hear the gunshot, and instead he hears the sound that saves his life.

"The gun! Drop it!"

It is the explosive command voice of his training officer, Bob Kolowski, and Burchette sees the startled confusion on the gunman's face as he falters for an instant, then



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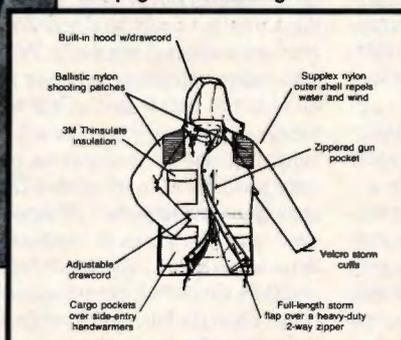
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swings the gun from the certain target of the young trooper and aims it toward the bigger policeman on the other side of the squad car.

Orange flame lances the night as O'Brien fires.

Kolowski has already cleared leather and taken his Model 39 in a cup and saucer hold as the first shot explodes from the biker's .38 Special. The trooper shoots back, aiming for the head. He is being fired on, and instinct tells him he needs an instant kill.

But instinct has betrayed him, because instinct also makes the trooper, like any man, watch the danger instead of the gun.

In the high intensity beam of the spotlight and the headlamps, the aluminum jacket of the silvertip bullet reflects light with a tracer effect, like a copper-jacketed .22 slug flashing its streak as it heads downrange on a bright summer afternoon. Kolowski sees the bullet flash past the gunman's head. He fires again, and again the bullet goes wide. He sees another bloom of fire from the would-be copkiller's .38 and is aware that he has not been hit yet.

The senior trooper knows his bullets are not taking effect. He lowers his aim and fires for the chest, and in the reflected milli-second of light he sees the 9mm Silvertip dart into the gunman's chest.

But there is no reaction. Twin thoughts race through Kolowski's mind. One is, "I've got to get to cover!" The other is, "Can this bastard be wearing a bulletproof vest?"

Kolowski crouches low under the fire, his left hand reaching to index his cover. He touches the hood of the squad car and moves sideways down toward the rear, with the 9mm extended in his right hand, still firing.

Kolowski reaches the trunk of the police car. He crouches behind the bumper near the right taillight, with Burchette on his left. Both men's pistols are now levelled forward. Both are amazed that the firefight is still going on: Kolowski *knows* that the man has been shot in the chest, and Burchette believes the gunman must have been hit at least four times.

Yet O'Brien shows no reaction. He scuttles sideways like a crab from the left front of the squad car to the right, and back. Orange flame blooms again from the revolver in his hands. Burchette sees the windshield explode in slow motion as the impact of a .38 slug sprays glassine shards.

At almost the same time, the woman in the weeds pops up, screaming something unintelligible. Kolowski, the nearer trooper to her, reflexively swings his 9mm at the movement, and she reacts by ducking back into the shadows. Kolowski has seen no gun in her hand, and does not fire at her. Then another explosion of gunfire brings his attention back to the front.

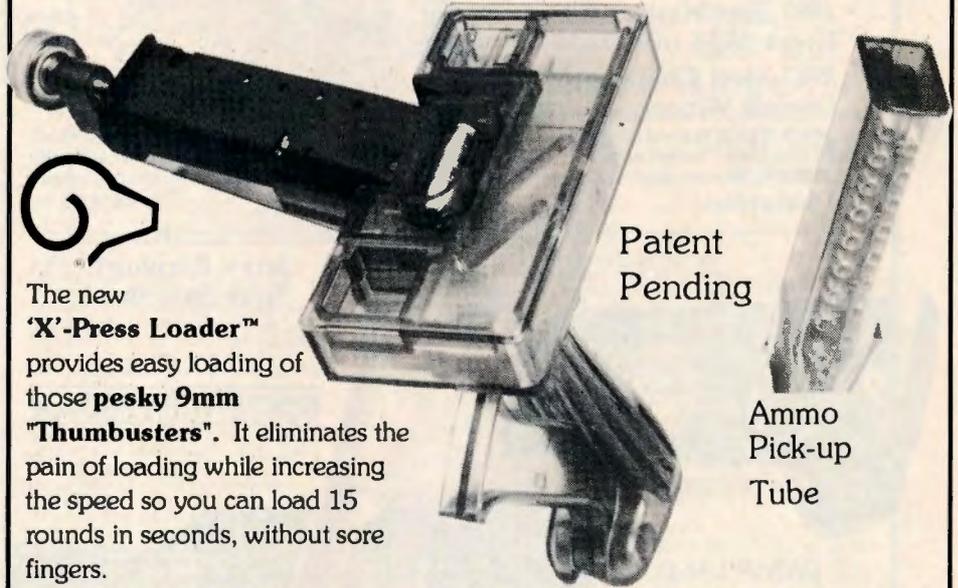
Burchette has rocked out from behind his cover and opened up. Firing with a careful, two-hand hold, the young black trooper holds his sights on the leather-clad figure as he squeezes off shot after shot. But there is no response: the big man with the reddish mustache darts back and forth across the arc of the headlights, and fires again at the troopers.

Burchette pulls his trigger yet again. Noth-

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ing happens. He looks down and sees in the eerie light that his slide is locked back, empty. And his spare magazine is in the front seat of the cruiser.

"Bob!" he yells. "I'm empty!"

Kolowski, virtually shoulder to shoulder with him, does not hear. Part of it is the psycho-physiological effect called "auditory exclusion" that occurs so frequently in gun-fights. The older trooper's ears still hear, but cortical perception inside his brain, which has been taken over by the survival response, is screening out anything from his conscious mind except the danger of the killer in front of him. Kolowski is aware only that he is aiming his own Smith & Wesson automatic at his antagonist, that there is flash from his muzzle outlining his sight picture, and that on the other side is coming another flash as the suspect fires his .38 at him.

At last, the bullets seem to be taking effect. For the first time, Kolowski detects a stagger in his opponent's movements as O'Brien backpedals slightly. Then, a flash of horror, Kolowski's gun is no longer working.

Like Burchette, he looks down, and like Burchette, he sees that his slide has locked back, signalling an empty gun. He doesn't know it yet, but this is the syndrome among men caught up in battle: it is virtually impossible to count one's shots.

The speed reload training from the Academy comes back, automatically. The spare clip of Silvertips is in his left hand as his thumb hits the release button to eject the empty magazine that clatters away in the darkness. Kolowski thrusts the fresh mag home with his weak hand, drops the slide, and shoves the pistol out at the end of his right arm, sighting on O'Brien and firing again. And again.

***"We've had a shoot-out!
We need an ambulance -
supervisors - back-up!"***

By now, the biker has made his way back to the motorcycle. His right side is toward Kolowski, as if aiming offhand. Kolowski fires once more. O'Brien swings his leg over the bike. Kolowski keeps shooting.

And, at last, reaction. O'Brien slumps visibly forward. Kolowski, on the right, sees the gunman's right hand fall limp, though he cannot see where the pistol is. On the left, Burchette observes the black-clad man's left hand drop down, loose and dangling.

Kolowski holds his fire. In the sudden eerie stillness as the echoes of the pistolfire die away, Wayne O'Brien slumps in slow motion off his Harley. He ends up on his knees at the left of the bike, his head on the worn leather seat, his arms hanging aimlessly. It is as if he is praying on his bike.

From the weeds the woman screams, "Don't shoot him anymore! He's hit!"

Kolowski advances cautiously toward the slumped O'Brien, his 9mm levelled in front of him. Burchette drops the slide on his useless empty Model 39 so it at least looks like a gun that can shoot, and moves toward the woman, who may still have a gun. It turns out she doesn't. Burchette holsters his empty pistol and puts her in handcuffs.

Meanwhile, Kolowski reaches the motionless form of the downed gunfighter. There is no breath, no pulse. The 9mm tight to his body and ready to fire in his right fist, the trooper uses his left hand to turn the slumping man's face toward the headlights. Even in the bright white beams, the pupils have dilated wide open.

The gunfight is over. Wayne O'Brien is dead.

Kolowski runs back to the squad car. Neither man has been issued a portable radio, and at one instant in the gun battle, Burchette had reached to his lapel where the radio mike always hung during his two years as a municipal lawman. When his hand had closed on empty air he had thought, "Oh, God . . ."

But now they have communications. Bob Kolowski's voice is urgent and breathless as it is recorded at central dispatch: "We've had a shootout! We need an ambulance—super-visors—backup!"

Almost as an afterthought, once he has holstered the gun and hung up the microphone, he goes to the back and gets the olive-drab blanket that is standard issue for Illinois State Police cars. He is draping it over the corpse of his fallen opponent when he hears the distant siren wail of the Will County Sheriff's car that is the first responding backup unit.

Post-Mortem

The LaSalle Incident was one of the most thoroughly investigated police shootings in the history of Illinois. Wayne O'Brien had been shot 13 times before he went down, and an unsophisticated public saw this as *prima facie* evidence of police brutality. Study and reconstruction of the shooting proved that it was nothing of the kind.

O'Brien was boozed up, and they don't call it "feeling no pain" for nothing. In addition, he had known for perhaps two minutes that he was going to initiate a death battle with two police officers, and his adrenal glands must have been raging, feeding his body with supernatural strength and with endorphins and nor-epiniphine, the substances doctors call "nature's pain killers." In addition, he was a body-builder described in the autopsy report as "unusually muscular and well-developed."

An Illinois State Police commander who reviewed all the evidence put it more succinctly: "The bastard didn't want to die until he'd killed our two troopers."

Many myths have arisen in police circles about this well-known shooting, but few outside officers had access to the particulars. This is a good time to debunk these myths.

"The troopers didn't hit him anyplace vital, just in the arms and legs." FALSE. Autopsy showed two bullets through the cardiac complex, bullets through both lungs, one through

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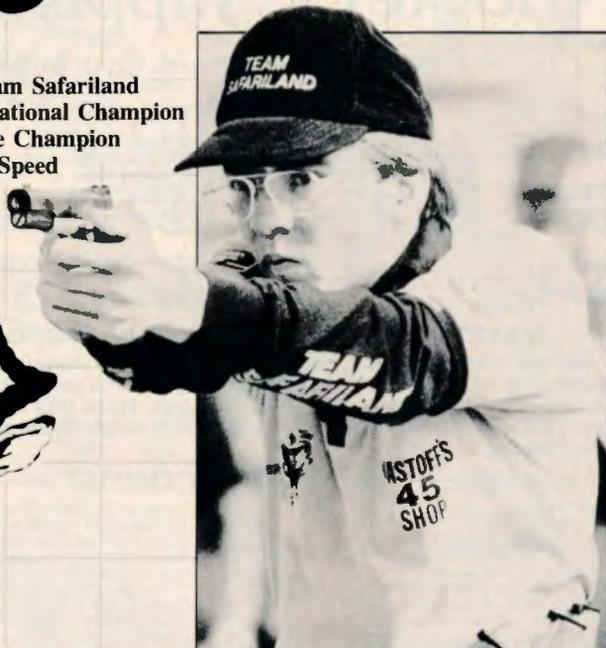
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the liver that literally exploded it, a severed aorta, and wounds to the stomach and one kidney. There were two through-and-through gunshot wounds of the neck, neither of which touched the spine nor the carotid arteries or jugular veins.

Burchette fired eight shots, Kolowski eight and another five after the reload: 21 shots, 13 hits. This is a 61% hit ratio, which compares very favorably with the national average of 25% hits of handgun rounds fired in combat by US police officers armed with revolvers. Bear in mind that many of the shots were fired one-handed and while moving, and all were fired in the dark under tricky light conditions.

"The hollowpoints opened up and exploded on the biker's leather jacket." FALSE. Indeed, the reverse may have happened. Eight of the 13 bullets perforated and exited O'Brien's body. It is believed that the leather jacket and leather vest he was wearing "plugged" the hollow cavities of the bullets, turning them into penetrative hardball configuration.

"None of the hollowpoints opened up on the suspect." Again, FALSE. Of the five recovered bullets, only one was undeformed. Two were fully mushroomed and two partially mushroomed. One bullet entered the back, mushroomed as it tore through the chest, and came to rest as it exited the pectoral muscle in front, peeking through the skin. Police observers at the autopsy erroneously thought this was a bullet of entry that had lodged in the pectoral muscle without penetrating. In fact, it was a lethal gunshot wound demonstrating perfect mid-caliber bullet performance. Of the eight bullets that exited, four tore exit wounds substantially larger than .356" in diameter, indicating full or at least partial expansion. One exit wound resembled that of a 12-gauge rifled slug, being nearly an inch in diameter.

Lessons

Shortly after this incident, all Illinois troopers were furnished with spare magazine carriers. Since LaSalle, there has not been an incident where a trooper had to reload his 8-shot S&W 9mm under fire, nor had there been before.

Within days of this incident, the Silvertip ammo was recalled and replaced with Winchester 95 grain softnose. This in turn was followed with an issue of Federal 115 grain hollowpoint, and then with the round currently in service: a Winchester copper-jacketed 115 grain hollowpoint loaded to "+ P +" pressure and sold only to that agency under special contract. This load chronographs over 1400 fps from a 4" S&W barrel, compared to under 1200 for the Silvertip, and has performed superbly in recorded gunfights.

Winchester has not once but twice modified its 9mm Silvertip load since this incident. The present 3rd generation Silvertip 9mm Parabellum has performed quite well in police gunfights, with approximately an 18 to 20 success/failure ratio, which is about as good as one gets with any auto pistol round. This writer, once the foremost public detractor

tor of the 9mm Silvertip due to incidents like LaSalle, is now at last comfortable in recommending contemporary Silvertip ammo for police guns in 9mm Parabellum. Silvertip has also proven to be the odds-on choice for .380 auto, .45 Long Colt, and some other largebore revolver calibers, while performing acceptably in .45 ACP as well.

Officer survival instructors have, in some cases, misinterpreted the LaSalle incident as a case of a "Terminator"-like monster impervious to gunfire. In fact, reconstruction by ISP's Professional Standards (internal affairs) unit indicate that the gunfight probably lasted only 25 seconds, and that the more severe and most effective stopping wounds sustained by O'Brien were delivered in the last few seconds of the gunfight.

Aftermath

Neither Kolowski nor Burchette had ever really thought it would happen to them, they told me. After the shootout, both became even more cautious and conscientious troopers. Both have since managed gun-related incidents without having to fire their service weapons. Both also told me for the record that they would be more comfortable carrying Colt .45 automatics if they were allowed. Said Kolowski dryly, "I remember watching that first bullet go into his chest and him not even flinching. I think a .45 might have at least gotten his attention."

Both troopers were ruled to have used justifiable force, and both were cited for bravery under fire.

But the nightmares would remain. Lloyd Burchette told me of the dream that haunted him for weeks after the shooting: he was alone in a black void, with his car windshield exploding into bullet-shattered dust in front of him, with the slugs homing in again and again until he woke up. He found that visiting the scene in the daylight helped put it all in perspective, and helped put the nightmares to rest.

For Bob Kolowski, the nightmare was different. In his dream, he found himself again and again standing in a disembodied dark place lit only by the glow of police strobes and headlamps, as a man clad in black leather advanced on him, aiming a gun. In the dream Trooper Kolowski fired again and again with his 9mm, but the man in black showed no reaction to the bullets.

Instead, the nightmare figure would raise his pistol as the 9mm bullets dug impotently into his body, aim it at Kolowski and grin as he pulled the trigger.



The author wishes to gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of the following members of Illinois State Police and Illinois Troopers Lodge #41, FOP, without which this article would not have been possible: Lloyd Burchette, Robert Kolowski, Cpl. Robert Cappelli and Dep. Supt. William Pierce.

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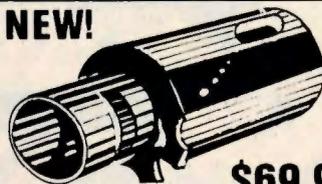
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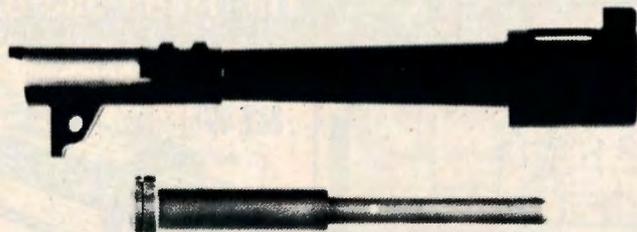
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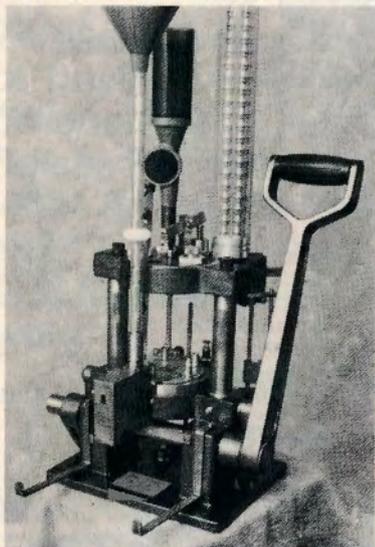
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WEATHERPROOF

Continued from page 38

water. The jars were then left to sit for seven days.

While the powder/bullet combination I chose is not in the "cow-killer" class, it does qualify as a +P load. My one concern was that sealing the bullets to the case would increase bullet pull to a point where the round might generate excessive pressure.

The first five sealed test rounds were shot in a S&W M-27.

Those five went off exactly like the five unsealed ones shot just before them.

Sixty rounds were fired, 20 of which were sealed, 20 unsealed, and 20 factory rounds. All of the sealed rounds functioned perfectly on the first hammer fall. Of the unsealed reloads, there were two misfires among the water-soaked rounds, and only one of the Break-Free rounds went off normally, six misfires and three squibs (reduced report and velocity) accounting for the remainder. All of the water-soaked factory magnums functioned normally, but the Break-Free group experienced three misfires. One of these fired on the second hammer fall.

While this test is rather limited, I feel that my original purpose has been validated. Sealing reloaded ammunition by the methods described will make it resistant to some pretty extreme conditions. The only noteworthy constant pertaining to the sealed reloads, other than uniform function, was that their point of impact was approximately 2" to the left of the others. A small matter, indeed. Accuracy was fully equal to the unsealed and factory control rounds.

A friend of mine has used this procedure successfully on 9mm ammunition. A logical extension, I suppose, would be to seal rifle cartridges used for hunting. Whatever your reason, if you want to proof your reloaded ammo from just about anything Mother Nature or brain damage can throw at it, try this. It is a tedious, but worthwhile, project.



RELOADS

Continued from page 38

"Yes, but . . ."

"No matter how you would answer, it wouldn't be too hard to make it appear as if you loaded those special rounds in breathless anticipation of being able to use them; changing your defensive shooting to offensive and portraying you as some sort of sicko who went around looking for the opportunity to shoot someone.

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CLARK LONGSLIDE

Continued from page 30

out of the shooter holding it.

I came in second overall the first time, and it was me, not the gun. The second time, using match reloads from Al Noviello in Sanbornton, NH, I won the tournament with a score some five points ahead of the master shooter I'd known I had to beat. In that match, only one shot escaped the 9-ring, and most were tens. Interestingly, I'd never had to touch the BoMar sights with a screwdriver from the moment I'd taken the gun from the box. Clark had sighted the pistol in dead-on, something few 'smiths bother to do, and another sure sign of a craftsman who takes the ultimate care in each specimen of his work.

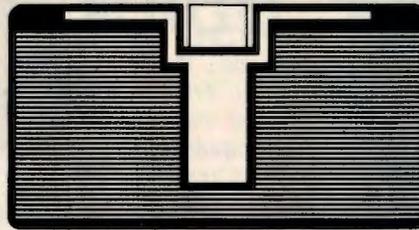
When I finished the last match and slid the gleaming Clark out of its Bianchi #50 longslide holster and into its Umberger Competition Bag for the trip home, I knew I was holding a special handgun. Over the months I'd had it, many of the shooters who had tried it had sworn to order one of their own. These were not novices getting their first taste of an accurized target pistol, but men and women who owned several sophisticated custom handguns apiece for competition, and had developed an instant appreciation of design features and workmanship that could give them the critical edge in championship competition.

Yet the price was surprisingly affordable, hundreds of dollars less than one accustomed to the current custom target auto market would expect. Jim is the only custom smith I know of in these inflated times who publishes in his brochure the prices he was asking for his work 25 years ago. He then invites you to compare the price then with the price now, cross-referenced with earning power. A working man himself, he's always been acutely conscious of making his product available to the average guy instead of just the rich dilettante. He has succeeded, as evidenced by the number of Clark handguns one sees in PPC, IPSC, Bullseye, and Bianchi Cup competition despite the host of often overpriced imitators.

At home after the match, I went over the gun with a critical eye. My reputation was made on no-BS gun evaluation, and being the guy who would write what was wrong with guns that everyone else said were the best thing since sliced bread. Yet I could find no fault. The pistol did exactly what it was supposed to, did it superbly, and in my hands and many others, brought forth a hitherto unseen level of performance. There is an arcane "something" in the Clark longslide that makes you feel a little of what King Arthur must have felt when he held the sword Excalibur: not invincible, necessarily, but a whole lot more confident.



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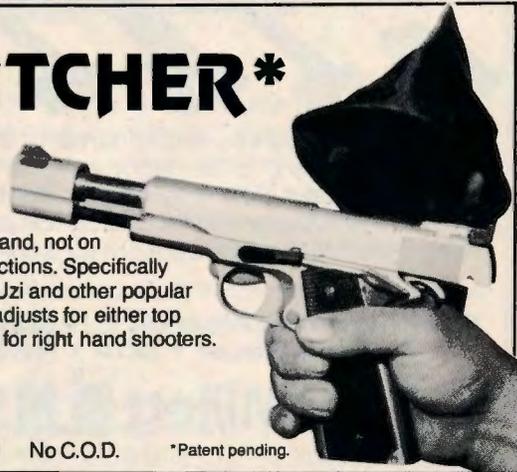
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10mm DELTA ELITE

Continued from page 61

disconnecter cut on the slide. This area showed evidence of deformation caused by the force with which the slide hits the disconnecter. Again, though, it appeared to be self-limiting and caused no problems during the test. I think this area should be carefully monitored for there is a real chance that this could interfere with the operation of the firing pin safety or rub against the ejector.

Once I was convinced that the Delta Elite is a safe, reliable addition to Colt's line I began to focus on what the 10mm will be good for. Aside from the obvious defensive use, there has been a lot of talk about using it for handgun hunting. As it came from the box, my test gun routinely shot groups around two inches at 25 yards but they were, also routinely, six inches high and right. The targets looked as if I had the world's worst

*As far as I'm concerned,
the Delta Elite is not a
hunting handgun. At
least not the way it comes.*

case of recoil anticipation. Poor sight regulation aside, there is a definite accuracy potential in the cartridge that may make it suitable for some forms of handgun hunting.

Using Norma's velocity figures for new ammunition, muzzle energy calculations show that the hollowpoint should deliver something around 638 ft/lb and ball 557 ft/lb. These compare pretty well with .41 and .357 Magnum respectively.

As far as I'm concerned the Delta Elite is not a hunting handgun. At least not the way it comes. With good sights, a trigger job and possibly some accurizing my answer would be a heavily qualified *maybe*. In the hands of a skilled marksman who was able to accurately judge range and limit himself to relatively close shots there is no doubt in my mind that the cartridge is capable of taking deer sized game. I am also sure that it isn't going to take the place of the .44 Magnum in the hunting field. When the bullet designers go to work and handloading data is developed, this picture may be brighter.

The future seems to be assured for both the gun and cartridge. To be sure there will be those who, in their search for more power, will love it, but I suspect there will be a greater number who realize that it is a *magnum* automatic pistol. With most magnums you have a choice of shooting their "special" cousins which regrettably don't exist in 10mm. Factory ammunition is truly expensive and reloading is the only choice open to someone who wants to realize the full potential of the cartridge.

The problem with reloading is that sources of components, particularly bullets, have

been limited. But that's changing quickly. Sierra 150 and 180 gr. JHP bullets should be available by the time you read this and Hornady has a 170 JHP available now and will have a 155 JHP and a flat point bullet of either 200 or 210 gr.

Bullet moulds are available from several sources for cast bullet shooters. Norma brass is available from Federal and several distributors have Norma bullets. Hornady is also working overtime to make brass and will probably have loaded ammo in the very near future. Although the price is yet to be determined a source there said, "You can bet it'll be cheaper, probably close to .45 ammo."

In the past most of the industry took a "wait and see" attitude, but it seems to me as if this is changing daily. A source at Winchester reported that they are, "taking a hard look" at producing the cartridge with their excellent Silvertip bullet. PMC ammunition is supposed to be available soon, perhaps by the time you read this, and rumor has it that Remington is working on it as well.

Before long you're probably going to ask yourself what I really think of the gun. I admitted in the beginning that I was skeptical and my testing has proven that I was wrong. The gun has absorbed 1000 rounds of factory ball and hollowpoint ammunition without a single malfunction that can be attributed to the gun. It shows signs of the wear inevitable with a hot cartridge like the 10mm, but none of the frame dimensions I measured so carefully when it was new have changed. I wish that the ammunition used in these tests had been representative of what the consumer will get in the future and it is logical to wonder whether the outcome would have

There's simply no practical reason to throw away a perfectly good .45 and switch to 10mm.

been different. I don't think so, for Colt's development testing used earlier ammunition that was not reduced and they have been in contact with Norma to help resolve the current ammunition problem.

I also expect to be asked about the Delta Elite's suitability for law enforcement use. For a department whose officers are already used to .45s and can manage that level of recoil, I don't think the 10 will be a problem. But it certainly would be if the change were from .38 Special loads.

On the subject of competition shooting, I've already satisfied myself that the cartridge is suitable for IPSC style shooting but not until components become more readily available, and a lot cheaper. I'm equally sure that you won't see too many in matches. There's simply no practical reason to throw away a perfectly good .45 and switch to 10mm. There's really no incentive to change guns unless it's just the desire for something new.

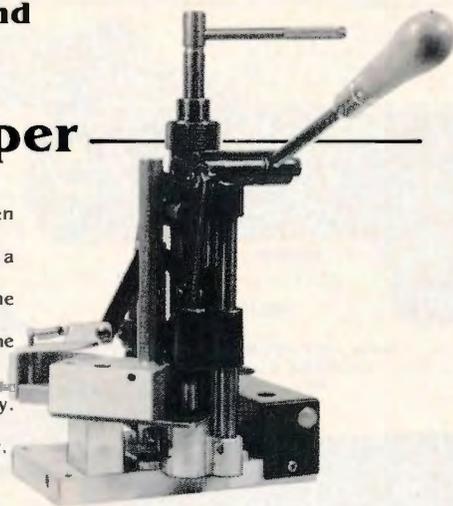
The only criticism I have is with the sights for it seems to me that they should shoot to

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point of aim, especially when the manufacturer ballyhoos the upgraded sights featured on the Delta Elite. But this may be a moot point, for I also know that few shooters will leave the gun that way it came very long. We also know that the trigger is going to be heavy. In this day of product liability mania, Colt doesn't have a choice and most will find their way to the gunsmith's bench, just like other Government Models.

I think Colt has done an excellent job of adapting the Government Model to a more powerful cartridge and its future appears bright, but all this must be tempered with the realization that there are going to be some growing pains with both gun and ammunition. I suspect the ammunition problems are caused, at least in part, by lack of production experience with the cartridge. After all, Bren Tens were not exactly plentiful so the Colt really is the first gun chambered for the cartridge that will be produced in significant numbers. Ammunition problems can be solved and components will be available. I'm also sure that aftermarket products will soon appear and custom pistolsmiths will apply their talents to the 10mm in the same fashion they have the .45 and .38 Super.



S&W OLYMPIC GUN

Continued from page 54

turn engages a positive notch on the sear bar that holds the sear lever in a loaded position until the trigger is released. When the trigger is released after each shot, the sear bar moves backward and upward, thereby releasing the sear load and readies the trigger for firing again.

Therefore, this "loading system" mechanically locks the sear and hammer with a heavy spring during the time the trigger is in the rear, or pulled, position. As the trigger goes forward, or is released, this heavy spring load is released, so that now just the friction of the hammer and sear has to be overcome by the trigger pull, thus eliminating sear spring pressure. In addition, the trigger system has five screws for adjustment. Adjustment is possible for forward trigger stop, rear trigger stop, free play or take up adjustment, trigger weight and finally sear-to-hammer engagement.

This system appears to be a good concept as by eliminating a sear spring to keep pressure on a cocked hammer and using a mechanical leverage system in its place, the desired goal of a safe reliable system using light trigger pulls is accomplished.

The third and last new concept of this pistol is the grip system. All of the rapid fire pistols that I know have a fixed angle grip, determined by the pistol frame. This pistol features a system that allows you to change the angle of the grip by physically moving the grip section of the frame.

On the top of the frame just ahead of the rear sight are two binding screws. These screws mechanically lock the trigger mechanism housing. The grip (part of the frame that moves) is mounted on the trigger housing.

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Therefore, if you're not happy with the angle, you loosen the two binding screws on the top of the frame, rotate the grip to your desired angle and retighten the screws. Remember, your wooden grips on the pistol have an angle built into them. Now by rotating the grip/frame you have an additional 10 degrees of angle movement in either direction.

The part of the grip/frame that moves actually pivots around the center of the palm of the hand. Most importantly, when you do change the angle of the grip it doesn't change the relative position of the grip and trigger because the grip is mounted on the trigger housing and both move together. Thus the web of the hand and trigger finger always have the same angle and reach.

This particular aspect of the pistol will probably be more popular with shooters who will end up using the standard factory grip that comes with the pistol. If the grip doesn't suit them just right, they now have the ability to change the grip angle and perhaps achieve a better "feel" of the pistol in their hand. Shooters who end up getting special orthopedic grips form-fitted for their hand will probably pick the angle they like best and never adjust it again.

Wouldn't it be great for American pistol shooters to once again start winning gold medals using pistols that were Made in the USA!

Quality of materials is evident throughout this pistol. I mentioned the slide and slide struts as well as the firing pin are made of titanium. The lower frame is hardened 4140 steel and the upper frame is 7075 aluminum T6 series.

The barrel in this pistol is a Douglas match grade .22 Short barrel with a 1 in 24 twist and is about 3½ inches long. Although the original barrel is round, the design was changed to a square or slab sided barrel to enhance the appearance of the pistol and also to add a little more weight to the front of the pistol. The barrel is attached to the frame with locking slots positively aligned in the frame and is held in place by two allen head screws from the bottom. The underside of the barrel is drilled and tapped for additional weights if desired. The front sight is interchangeable and is held in place by a dowel pin. The rear sight used at the present time is a sight from the S&W M-52 center fire pistol. Eventually a wider sight blade will be added but for the present time this sight accomplishes the job.

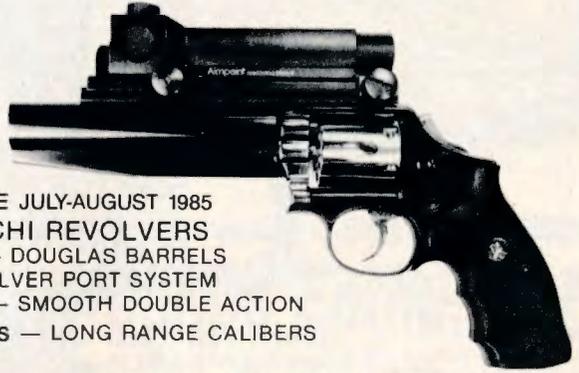
The 5-shot magazines are small (about 3" long) and appear to be of good quality. They are inserted from the top. The magazine release button is directly in front of the pistol and literally shoots the magazine out of the pistol with a strong spring force. Also in front of the pistol, midpoint between the upper and



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lower frames, is a horizontal groove that is actually a finger groove and is used to cock the slide.

At the present time, this pistol has no vent holes in the barrel to vent gases. If the roller/slide system works as planned, vent holes will not be necessary. This allows the full power of the bullet to be used, producing a higher velocity and theoretically better accuracy. Accuracy will be of prime importance starting in 1989. The UIT (International Shooting Union) has decided to replace the present half silhouette targets with a round bullseye target after the 1988 Olympics.

From a shooter's viewpoint, I think the pistol is very well made, using the finest materials and should be a very durable pistol. The trigger system appears to be mechanically sound and should please shooters who desire light trigger pulls. The moveable grip section of the frame is an excellent idea, particularly for younger shooters who will be making many grip adjustments as they grow older.

Unfortunately, I didn't get a chance to test fire the pistol. This should come about in a few months when the prototypes are perfected. Then I will have a chance to test the concept of this pistol and also the accuracy.

I applaud S&W for undertaking a project such as this. Perhaps other U.S. companies will follow their lead and start developing match grade pistols and ammunition for Olympic competition. I realize the profit motive might be small, but how can you put a price on pride? Wouldn't it be great for American pistol shooters to once again start winning gold medals using pistols and ammunition that were **Made in the U.S.A!**



Sam Baiocco is a gold medalist in rapid fire pistol. He won the gold in the 1985 and 1986 Olympic Festivals. He has been a member of the U.S. Shooting Team in 1979, 1982, 1984, 1985 and 1986. He was a member of the gold winning team in the 1979 Pan Am Games. He holds numerous records in rapid fire pistol in both Open and Civilian categories. A resident of Texas, the author is employed as an airline captain with American Airlines.

TEXAS LONGHORN

Continued from page 55

For a better aesthetic quality, a number of cosmetic features are added. All trigger guards are rounded, with the trigger also rounded and set far back in the trigger guard and contoured like a shotgun trigger. The three frame screws do not protrude all the way through the frame, leaving the left side of the sixgun "clean" for engraving. Also, all screw slots line up together, a feature that takes a great deal of careful fitting.

As with the early Colts, Grover fits each of his sixguns with one-piece grips of walnut or fancy woods. Grover takes special care to see that the grips fit right, both on the gun and in the hand. No slab-sided feeling here. The grips are curved in the right places and feel

like they belong in the hand.

Each TLA sixgun is fitted with a large base pin, something custom gunsmiths have done for years on Colt SAAs, plus the pin is held in place with a screw at the front of frame rather than the spring loaded "modern" set-up which fails so often with heavy loads.

For better handling, the grip straps on The West Texas Flat-top Target and The South Texas Army have been extended by $\frac{3}{16}$ " allowing more room for the little finger. Each sixgun is fitted with a low, wide hammer, deep cut in front of the spur to allow for ease of cocking with no need to change the grip when cocking the hammer.

Grover sees no need for recessed case heads, thus it is easy to tell at a glance if the gun is loaded or not. Tolerances are kept very close with barrel/cylinder gaps held at .0015"-.002", and a blending of modern technology with tradition can be seen in the serial numbers which are all hand stamped with original style Colt stamps.

I had my choice of two test guns, a five and one-half inch South Texas Army in .45 Colt, and a four inch Texas Border Special in .44 Magnum. I chose the .44 Magnum for a number of reasons. I was fascinated with the round butted, easy carrying big bore sixgun; I've always wanted a .44 Magnum in a Colt Single Action; and most importantly, the little Border Special shot better for me than the .45 Colt South Texas Army.

This is a no-nonsense, traditional defensive single-action sixgun.

Shooting a .44 Magnum in a short barreled, 38½ ounce sixgun is normally not a very pleasant experience. Since the barrel was marked ".44 CALIBRE," I re-checked with Bill specifically to make sure that it was really intended to fire .44 Magnums and not just .44 Specials. Loading the cylinder for the first time with factory .44 Magnums, I prepared myself for an unpleasant experience and as the little sixgun went off I was pleasantly surprised to experience no pain. The little .44 really roars and bucks, but it does not punish.

The reason for the lack of pain is the fact that the Texas Border Special is fitted with a grip reminiscent of the old double-action Colt Lightning, a grip style known as "bird's head." The original design may be more than 100 years old, but Grover's modification certainly takes the sting out of .44 Magnum loads.

This is a no-nonsense, traditional defensive single-action sixgun, that one would not be afraid to bet one's life on. It packs very easily in a hip holster or even in the waist band of my jeans. The specially designed hammer makes cocking for the first shot very fast and is easy to get to for repeat shots although I would think a load of a 250 grain bullet at around 900 fps would be much better as a defensive proposition than a full house .44 Magnum. Winchester's medium .44



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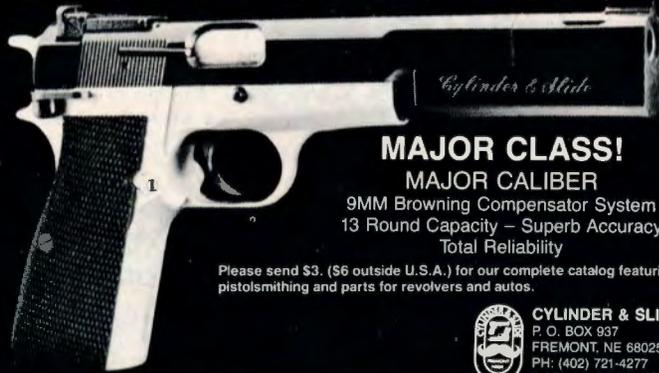
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Although this is not a target gun by any means, I was able to keep my groups at two to three inches at 25 yards which is about normal for me with short barreled sixguns. This is not a sixgun that would be normally fired as a target pistol, but one that is intended to get that first shot off from the hip as quickly as possible. It is perfect for this task.

Thirty years of conditioning with Colt and Ruger single actions, made it very difficult for me to operate the Texas Longhorn Arms Single Action as a right-handed sixgun. I repeatedly found myself switching it to my left hand for loading and unloading, and only the awkwardness of the situation forced me to return it to my right hand as it is designed to be used. It will take awhile for "right-handed" use to become second nature.

Bill Grover and his small crew of skilled workmen are putting out a top quality sixgun built the way a gun should be. They have a traditional look and feel, but are capable of handling all the modern sixgun cartridges. For further information, contact Bill Grover, Texas Longhorn Arms, Dept. AH, PO Box 703, Richmond, Texas 77469.

As an added bonus, Grover is now offering newly manufactured Colt style frames for those who have old Colts in need of rebuilding. Frames are offered in traditional style as well as flat-top target style, in the white, or blue, or case hardened. I have encouraged him to offer Colt style single action kits with everything necessary to rebuild a Colt except barrel and cylinder. Perhaps someday I can do something with all the barrels and cylinders in my parts box.



IPSC NATIONALS

Continued from page 51

and Rob was left on his knees trying to determine what was wrong. It turned out to be an ammunition problem ("It was *my* fault.") and he lost eight shots.

Even though Mike Plaxco gave Leatham ammunition that worked, he had problems on other stages too and dropped a shot and hit a no shoot ("I gotta stop shooting those white guys").

Those 40 possible points he lost on the standards were the difference, for the spread between Leatham's third place total and winner Barnhart's was only 27 points.

Rick Castelov was a solid second only nine points behind and Brian Enos was fourth a mere 0.0838 points behind Leatham. Chip McCormick, Tom Campbell, Frank Garcia, Paul Miller, John Fair, and Roland Barasits from Vienna, Austria, rounded out the Top Ten.

It's truly amazing how fast word spreads at a big match and, as I walked down the line of ranges after Rob's tragedy, there were small groups of shooters gathered talking about it. Of course a lot of their information was wrong, for such is the nature of rumor, but the bottom line was, "Can he overcome or will we see a new National Champion?" The prognostication award goes to Tommy

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Campbell for, as we talked after the first day's shooting, Campbell said, "The winner will be either Leatham or Barnhart. Jerry's the only man who can beat him."

I watched almost every round Jerry Barnhart fired over the four days and the most appropriate description I can find is *smooth*. It really didn't seem as if he was shooting as fast as the timers indicated, but the real significance didn't hit me until I looked at the scoreboard. Barnhart's name appeared at the top on three stages including the difficult standards where he posted 150x180 to lead Rick Castelow by a single point. In fact, on only two of the stages did his name drop from the top 25 printout from the marvelous stat computer. It was the consistency over the four days that won the match for him.

It is noteworthy that the top two shooters, Barnhart and Castelow, used .45s as did four others in the top sixteen men, and three of the top eight women. The 1987 Nationals marked the first time the International power factor of 175 has been used for a match in the U.S. Region (it has been used in World Shoots held here) and while .38 Supers were still used by most of the other top shooters, it may well mark a change in the Super's dominance.

I watched almost every round Jerry Barnhart fired over the four days and the most appropriate description I can find is smooth.

All competitors were squadded to the chronograph and ammunition was drawn on a surprise basis during one of the stages prior to chronographing. The test was performed using the shooter's own gun to eliminate at least one source of error. Although lots of shooters approached the chrono with dread, the number actually dropped to minor was small, but a lot of them just squeaked by when loads that made major handily at home showed velocity loss when shot at Barry. This has always been a problem since temperature and things like barometric pressure and humidity have a marked affect on velocity, but .45 shooters usually approached the chrono with grins. For the record, two shooters in the top 16 shot 9mms loaded to major velocities.

When all was said and done, two new National Champions were crowned. Jerry Barnhart is a personable 27-year-old electrician and new father from the Detroit suburb of Berkley, who is making his living now from shooting. Debby James is a 34-year-old physical education teacher from Bristol, Connecticut. Debby has risen quickly in the IPSC world, but her victory was a surprise to almost everyone. Hers is a story of adversity overcome, for her budding shooting career had been stifled for lack of a place to practice since most of the clubs in her area do not admit women to membership. Husband Russ could join, but she could only shoot if he were present.



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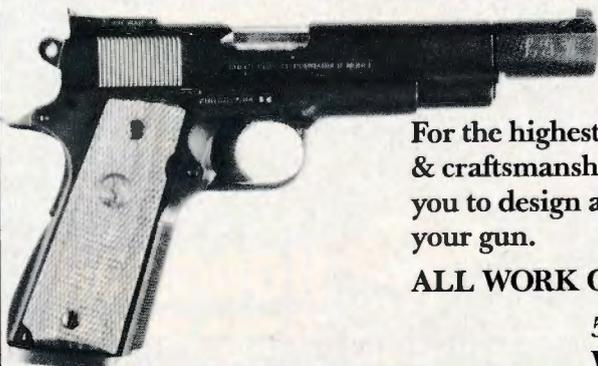
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A friend built a range in his backyard so Debby and Russ (who finished in 38th place) could practice. She had been shooting conservatively all week and knew that it would take a top performance on her last stage and decided to "go for it." She came through, posting a total only 21 points behind reigning World Champion Kerry Lathwell of Canada whose nationality made her ineligible for the U.S. title. Shirley Hamilton, Bert Geer and Christie Rogers rounded out the top five ladies with a spread of less than six points deciding the order of finish.

No match report would be complete without an *attaboy* (or girl) for the behind-the-scenes people who made everything happen. Local civic groups manned the gate to welcome shooters and visitors alike and direct them to parking. The ladies in the stat office nursed, and sometimes cursed, the computers that kept track of everyone's scores and the range officers who were unfailingly professional. And the sponsors from the industry, with Colt and Springfield Armory leading, who donated thousands of dollars in cash and merchandise to make up the \$60,000 pot that all the shooters shared. Everyone came away with a prize although I did hear some good natured talk about, "a thousand dollar gun rug" from one who finished near the bottom.

For four days shooters were king in Quincy and Barry, Illinois. To say it was neat would be an understatement.



ARMY'S WACKY TESTS

Continued from page 49

Availability, Maintainability) called for a "minimum acceptable value" (MAV) of 645 mean rounds between operational mission failures (MRBOMF), over a 5,000 rounds minimal service life. Over the same service life, the "best operational capability" (BOC) was established at 1,000 MRBOMF. In this context, "operational mission failure" means any malfunction which causes, or could cause, one or more of the following phenomena:

- stoppage requiring a corrective action;
- incapability to commence, or to interrupt, functioning;
- incident affecting the security.

Maximum repair time (MAX-TTR) could not exceed 10 min. for 95% of malfunctions which could conceivably be corrected directly by the user in the field, and 30 min. at upper maintenance levels.

A close look at the list of malfunctions which were "tolerated" during the service life/reliability tests (listed under the heading; "Malfunctions, unacceptable conditions and broken parts") shows that the US Army has been particularly demanding, accepting only:

- a) during the first series of 2,500 rounds:
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 - two minor jammings.
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 - one pierced primer;

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BIG RED

Continued from page 64

Standard Ruger white outline with adjustments that move bullet impact approximately 3/4" at 25 yards. Not the best sights for silhouetting, but tolerable.

As barrel length is increased, the rear sight notch should be decreased in size to match the front sight. With the 9 1/2" Super Redhawk, the rear sight notch is much too wide making it difficult to align the sights with precision. Silhouetters, in particular, may find this a problem.

Because of Big Red's hefty weight of 57 ounces, it dampens the recoil of full-house .44 Magnum loads. Its size and weight should certainly preclude the Super Redhawk from being carried in a hip holster. The big gun should, however, be a natural for a shoulder holster or even a set of swivels and a sling. Scoped, it also fits in the Bianchi Hush holster I use for my scoped 10" single-action revolvers.

The 9 1/2" barreled Super Redhawk has a decidedly muzzle heavy feel, but the balance is good and I did not find myself having to struggle to keep the muzzle up. It just seems to balance naturally in my hands whether shooting standing, with either one or two hands, or shooting from the silhouette Creedmore position.

*Because of Big Red's
hefty weight of 57
ounces, it dampens the
recoil of full-house .44
Magnum loads.*

More than 40 different loads, with over 1,000 rounds fired, were utilized in testing the Super Redhawk. Loads were classified into four categories: heavyweight cast bullet loads; standard weight cast bullet loads; silhouette loads; and jacketed bullet loads. Initially, all firing was done at 25 yards with iron sights and loads were chronographed at the same time. Thirteen loads were then selected to be fired for group size at 50 yards after a 2X Bausch & Lomb scope was mounted on the Super Redhawk using the Ruger rings provided. Finally, the Super Redhawk was fired at long range using both iron sights and the 2X Bausch & Lomb scope.

At 25 yards, all loads stayed within 2" with a number of loads in the 1" neighborhood. Since all loads were fired in one day and using my aging eyes, I believe the new Redhawk is capable of even better groups than I accomplished. Also, firing for group size and chronography at the same time is not conducive to the best accuracy, at least for this shooter. Somewhat like trying to walk and chew gum at the same time!

The Super Redhawk will be a natural for 300 grain cast bullets and a number of loads showed excellent accuracy. Using SSK's



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#310.429 bullet, cast hard, groups of 1 1/4" for five shots were accomplished using 21.5 grains of WW296, or 21.5 grains of H110, or 19.0 grains of #2400 plus all three averaged right at 1450 fps. Any of these three loads combine accuracy with maximum muzzle energy for the .44 Magnum and still stay within recommended industry working pressures.

By chopping the barrel of the Super Redhawk off flush with the frame, milling off the scope recesses and fitting a front sight, the Super Redhawk joins the ranks of the snub-nosed .44 Magnums.

The most accurate load with the SSK bullet proved to be 18.0 grains of Accurate Arms #9 giving 1" 25 yard groups and still maintaining plenty of muzzle energy with a muzzle velocity of 1300+ fps.

Switching to another favorite heavyweight cast bullet, NEI's #295.429, a 290 grain Keith-style bullet, yielded much the same results as the SSK 300 grainer. Both 22.5 grains of WW296 and 18.5 grains of #2400 yielded groups of 1" at 25 yards and gave muzzle velocities in excess of 1400 fps.

Both bullets were fired at 50 yards with the scope sighted Super Redhawk, and in spite of very heavy cross winds, both bullets grouped under 2". The load was 21.5 grains of WW296 which has almost become the standard .44 Magnum loading with 300 grain cast bullets. This load, like all loads tested, should be safe in any .44 Magnum revolver in good working order, but should be worked up to carefully watching for any signs of excessive pressure.

Switching to standard weight cast bullets in Big Red also gave excellent results and a few surprises. Using the standard Keith bullet, Lyman's #429421, cast at 250 grains, velocities exceeded 1600 fps using either 22.0 grains of #2400 or 26.0 grains of H110. One inch groups were accomplished with 20.0 grains of #2400 (1366 fps), 24.0 grains of H110 (1567 fps), or 26.0 grains of H110 (1629 fps).

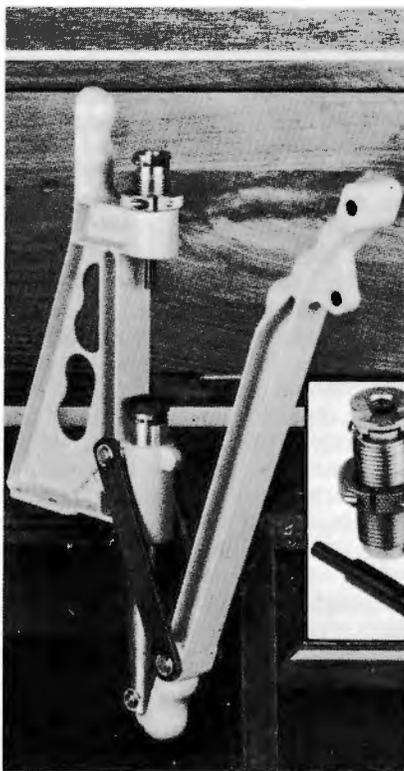
Both heavyweight and standard weight cast bullets were fired at long range using an unscientific, but oft-used method—rocks on yonder hill. At a distance of 250 yards, again using the Bausch and Lomb scope sighted Super Redhawk, bullets showed a marked propensity for dropping into the same spot.

Switching to some favorite silhouette loads, Big Red also gave excellent results. The Hornady 240 FMJ, the Speer 240 FMJ, and the Sierra 250 FPJ, all shot well using 23.0 grains of H110 or WW296. Fifty yard groups averaged 1" to 1 1/2", with velocities

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averaging 1400 fps. Both group sizes and velocities are more than adequate for silhouetting.

Testing the new Redhawk also gave me a chance to try some new heavyweight .44 jacketed bullets from ICBM (Paul Low, RR #1, Dunlap Illinois 61525). There is a real need for heavyweight jacketed .44 hunting bullets and these should fill the bill. ICBM offers a number of different nose styles but my favorite is their 285 grain Keith style. Loaded over 22.0 grains of WW296, this bullet goes 1235 fps from the Super Redhawk and shoots extremely well.

In the firing of over 1,000 full house .44 Magnum loads, no malfunctions of any kind were experienced with the Super Redhawk. The Bausch & Lomb scope and rings have been removed and replaced a minimum of 10 times without experiencing any problems or difficulties whatsoever.

The Super Redhawk should be a natural for custom 'smiths to work their magic upon. For some strange reason, there is a demand for short barreled, that is under 3", .44 Magnum sixguns. By chopping the barrel of the Super Redhawk off flush with the frame, milling off the scope recesses, and fitting a front sight, the Super Redhawk joins the ranks of the snub-nosed .44 Magnums. Since there is no grip frame as such, it will be very easy to make small concealable grips for such a snubby. Ruger has produced a massive, super strong .44 Magnum that sixgunners, especially hunters, should go for in a big way.

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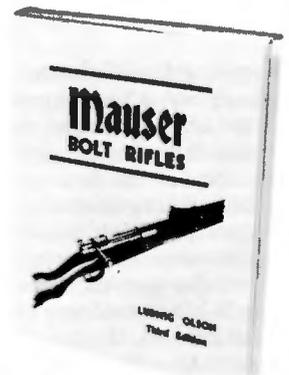
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GLOCK 17

Continued from page 66

The lockup is a modified Browning type with a 4.5" hammer-forged barrel. There are elevation adjustable sights that are low mounted and the sight picture is a white outline rear, white dot front. Windage can be adjusted by drifting the rear sight.

When you pick up the first fired case, another design difference may be obvious. The primers sure look funny. It took some time to figure this one out but the answer has a sound engineering basis. The firing pin is actually rectangular and protrudes through a narrow slot in the slide. Primers tended to flow into it on firing, but this was very much dependent upon the ammunition: the hotter the ammo, the more pronounced the effect. All primers do this to some extent, but we don't normally notice it because the area of unsupported primer is usually round. In the Glock the actual unsupported area is smaller, but the rectangular shape makes the effect visible and pronounced. With some of the hottest loads a tiny bit of primer metal was actually sheared off and accumulated in the slot. No primers ruptured and it did not interfere with operation, so the observation is purely academic. Reloaders should be aware, though, that conventional primer pressure signs may be masked and approach maximum loads with extra caution.

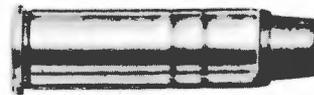
As I have continued to shoot the Glock, my favorable initial impressions have been reinforced.

I was pleasantly surprised when I first fired the Glock, for I had expected recoil to be severe due to the light weight. It wasn't. On the contrary, it seemed to be less than other guns of the same size and was considerably milder than a S&W 669 I was shooting at the same time.

Three factors contribute to this. Karl Walter explained that weight ratio of slide-to-frame is largely responsible. With most conventional automatics this relationship is roughly 50-50, but in the Glock 80% of the weight is in the slide so it absorbs a portion of the recoil rather than transferring it to the hand. Another is the fact that the slide sits quite low in relation to the hand, so recoil is directed in a more rearward motion and, third, is the shape of the grip. It is surprisingly thin considering the magazine capacity, but is anatomically shaped to fit the hand well.

As I have continued to shoot the Glock my favorable initial impressions have been reinforced. It has handled close to 500 rounds of every type of ammo I could find without the

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first malfunction and is pleasant to shoot. Accuracy is excellent for a gun of this type and it also carries well. The manufacturer sent along a couple of sample holsters that are made of — what else? — molded plastic. One is an ambidextrous belt-slide-type that holds the gun firmly against the body and is so precisely molded to fit the gun's contours that it actually locks in place with an audible snap. The gun is securely held, but easily drawn. The other is a more conventional style with thumb break.

I'm sure the Glock will not be everyman's next handgun purchase, but plastics have become so widely accepted in our everyday lives that shooters who saw the gun as I was testing it mentioned the plastic only because they had seen all the TV coverage. Everyone was impressed with the light weight. At \$443.65 it is certainly competitively priced. I'm stingy in using superlatives, but the Glock is the most thoughtfully designed gun I've seen in a long time.



PMK .380

Continued from page 36

with the 85 grain Winchester Silvertip hollowpoint, and the best measured 2¼ inches vertically, 1¼ inches horizontally, with two in the X-ring.

The PMK had no problems with the semi-wadcutters or the hollowpoints. Any brand-new out-of-the-box automatic may have some teething incidents before it's broken in, but in this case there wasn't a single malfunction. I will note that my pistol was a regular-production piece, and not specially selected. In spite of the light weight afforded by the alloy frame, the felt recoil was mild, and muzzle-whip was minimal. Target re-acquisition was quick.

If I were going to customize the PMK for my personal use, I'd get rid of the hammer drop, the thumbrest on the grip, and the grooves on the trigger. Actually, for most shooters, it's fine as it comes. The quality and performance are outstanding, and in comparison with other double action .380 pistols, the low price is certainly attractive. Anyone considering a medium-frame gun of this type for back-up or personal protection would do well to look at the Kassnar PMK. It does what it's supposed to do, and does it well.



TUNING DAN WESSON

Continued from page 67

bly will be complete.

To replace the standard, heavy mainspring with the lighter one, use a thick cloth to press in on the mainspring guide, then unscrew the long sideplate screw. Use eye protection and plenty of care while performing this operation; that spring is pretty strong. Once the mainspring guide is free, exchanging the springs is a simple matter. Secure the new spring using the guide and long screw.



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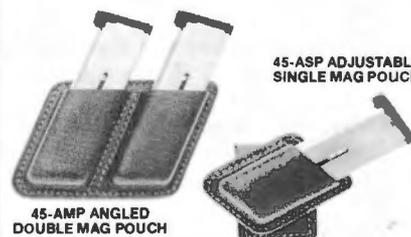


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A correct relationship among the parts of any gun *must* be retained. A single file, stone, or sandpaper stroke can destroy this delicate relationship and create a dangerous situation. Therefore, I did not attempt to remove *any* metal from the internal parts of this gun. In fact, I used only crocus cloth to polish the bearing surfaces, no files, stones, or sandpaper at all.

Parts that needed polishing included: the face of the bolt plunger, the bearing surfaces of the bolt (but not the edges), the ball-like end of the mainspring guide where it contacts the hammer, and the bearing surfaces of the strut. Neither the hammer nor the trigger showed evidence of dragging on the receiver, so I left their sides alone. I also did nothing to the receiver's pins; polishing them will only create sloppiness in the action. I did *not* diminish the sear engagement surfaces to eliminate the single action creep I mentioned earlier; I merely polished these areas until the creep was unnoticeable. The sear engagement of the hammer and trigger is precisely balanced and must not be altered, at least not by an amateur. *Consult a competent gunsmith if you feel the need for serious sear work.*

After assembling and disassembling the revolver several times to check for unpolished areas, I finally decided that the action was as smooth as I was going to get it. A light coating of Breakfree during the final assembly finished the job.

I'm sure that a gunsmith could vastly improve on my work, but not without a lot of extra expense I'd just as soon do without. One last note: once the barrel gap is set correctly, don't change it; if you do you'll need another sighting-in session.

Can the Dan Wesson hack it in a service-gun PPC match?
I think so.

PLAXCO CLASSES

Continued from page 44

frequently won the match with my auto, then gone back and bettered my score with my scoped S&W bull-barrel .38."

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By the end of the course, most of the shooters had improved visibly—some dramatically—compared to their performance the first morning. I was not surprised: glowing comments from other Plaxco graduates was one of the reasons I signed him up. I was extremely pleased with Mike's performance, and will doubtless have him back.

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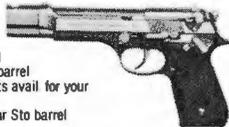


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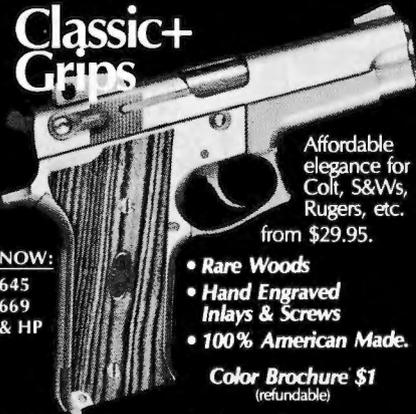
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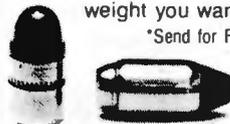
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RCBS PARTNER

Continued from page 70

with awesome leverage, even at the tail-end of the stroke, are often deficient in this regard.

The action of the Partner's handle, which moves through an arc of about 110 degrees, is remarkably smooth; however, I am not completely at peace with one of the little flanged washers used to hold the center link in place. This particular washer was loose in the box when I unpacked the press and up till now has declined to stay put on the end of the pin. The pin has but the slightest tendency to drift out, so, considering the Partner's several good points, I've been faced with nothing beyond a minor inconvenience. Moreover, I may be in possession of the world's only errant Partner link-pin washer. One solution, if such a problem becomes pandemic, might be to install slightly longer pins so the flanges would have a little more metal to grip.

Another little problem, that of having to shag, sweep, or vacuum up spent primers, might be remedied. Unlike the RCBS "Jr" or any of the other RCBS presses, the Partner has no provision for corralling these little devils. For one thing, the handle comes too close to the frame to permit the use of a wrap-around tray on the front side of the press. Also, the ram is holed-out to the right, which is where most of the spent primers exit. I wound up making the best of it by jamming an empty bullet box against the base of the press. This did pretty well, but I'd like to see RCBS come up with a proper primer catcher; perhaps a small plastic box that would somehow be fastened in place.

Light beefing aside, this is a good outfit; even reading the instruction pamphlet, which devotes five pages to telling you how to hand-load with the Partner, will be almost as much fun as going shooting. Included is an exploded drawing of the press, along with a parts list, and there are a number of helpful hints that cover mechanical and operational foibles. The Partner packages (particularly the one that includes the how-to video) stand as good deals for beginners who write to complain that some overzealous gunshop toolmonger has been trying to snow them into buying more than they need.



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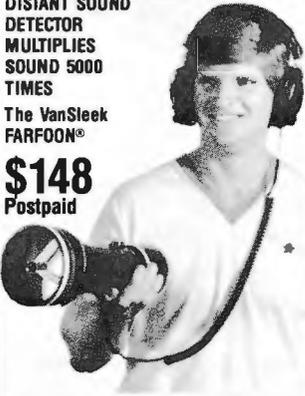
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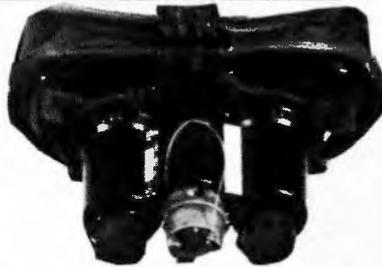
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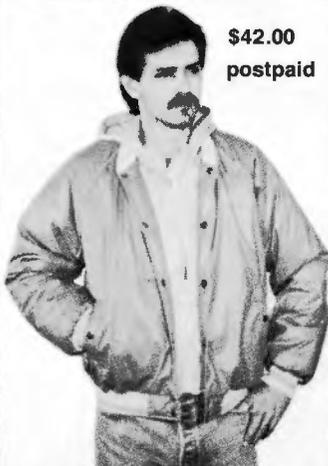
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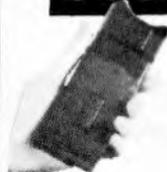


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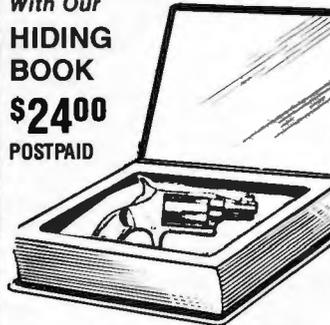


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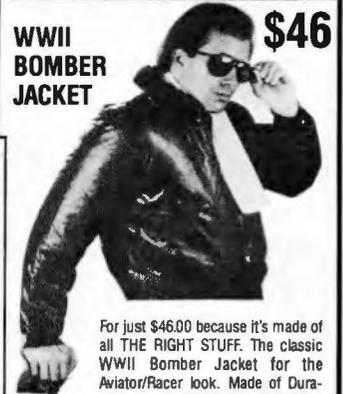
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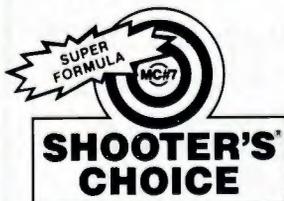
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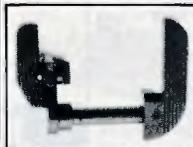


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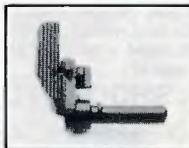
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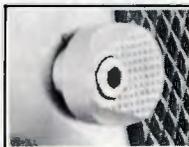
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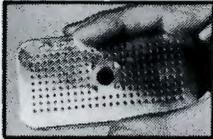
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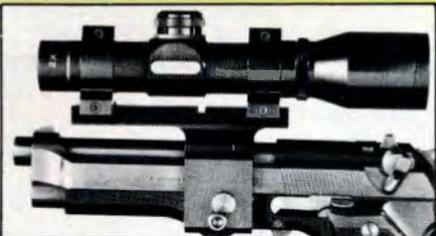
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For more information, write to Ram-Line, 15611 West 6th Ave., Dept. AH, Golden, CO, 80401.



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TEST REPORT

TASCO PRO-POINT

By Charles E. Petty



Ever since the first illuminated sights came on the market some years ago they have become increasingly popular with pistol shooters for bullseye and other precision events. The reason is simple. You put the little red dot where you want the bullet to end up and, if the gun is capable and you don't jerk the trigger, that's where it will be. The dot type sights eliminate one of the biggest bugaboos of pistol shooting: sight alignment.

The new Tasco Pro-Point is very similar in appearance to other models and is their entry into the field of red dot scopes. According to Tasco, it is deliberately designed to improve light transmission and dot brightness. The key to all dot scopes is a special coating applied to the front lens which reflects only a certain portion of the visible light spectrum while allowing the rest of it to pass through. In the case of these scopes the reflected light is the color red which is produced inside the scope by a light emitting diode. This is carefully focused on the front element to make the dot appear suspended within the tube. Any selective coating cuts down the amount of other light transmitted so you won't have the same sort of image you would with a traditional scope. Tasco's engineers have chosen to make the lens elements larger to allow more light through. This is the same principle used in camera lenses. The larger lenses, of course, lead to a larger scope tube and the Pro-Point uses the European 30mm tube diameter. This would be a mounting problem for most U.S. customers so they thoughtfully provide 30mm rings with the scope. They will fit the Weaver type bases normally used.

For testing, the Pro-Point was installed on a .38 revolver I use for Bianchi type matches. Tasco provides an extension tube that screws into the front element and I found this was necessary to allow proper ring spacing with the Weaver base I was using. Without it the scope is a little under 4 inches long, but the

tube adds an inch or so and makes everything work just right. The pistol will really shoot and, from sandbags at 25 yards, I was able to adjust the brightness to the point that the dot covered just a bit less than the area of the first "X" I shot. From then on it was just a matter of covering up the hole and trying not to jerk the trigger. The result (using Federal wadcutter) was a 10 shot group that measures just a tad under one inch and obliterates the "X." I was tempted to try for a better one but, naah, it don't get much better than that.

Over the next few weeks I shot with the Pro-Point on several different pistols and under a variety of light conditions. I found it necessary to vary the rheostat depending upon the type of target and light, but I never encountered conditions where the red dot was too dim or any other problem that I could remotely blame on the scope. My shooting is another story and I wish I could blame that on something (or somebody) else.

A lot of shooters are concerned about battery life and availability. The Pro-Point uses a standard size (Duracell RM640 or equivalent) that is readily available at camera shops. I think battery life is going to be good too. So far the scope's been on for approximately eight hours of shooting and I deliberately left it on overnight and the original batteries are still doing fine. I can't detect any change in light intensity but the prudent shooter always carries spares for they never run out at an opportune time.

The Tasco Pro-Point has a suggested retail price of \$249.95 complete with rings, polarizing filter and batteries. The only thing you need is a base. Even though the price is a little higher than some others, you don't have to buy rings. I'm certainly no expert on optics or electronics but this I do know—the Pro-Point works well for me and that's enough.



TEST REPORT

PACT

Precision Chronograph

With Printer

By Charles E. Petty

simple, for all the printer has to be able to do is "see" a small window on the back of the chrono unit. The distance between the two pieces is not a big consideration and mine has worked perfectly at a distance of almost two feet. This permits more than enough flexibility to allow for the equipment to be arranged on the shooting bench.

The convenience of the printer is something you won't appreciate until you use it and then you'll wonder how you ever got along without it. One of the most tedious parts of any chronographing session is the recording of the data generated. Whether the chronograph is capable of storing data or not, there



It seems as if no sooner than I get through doing one test on an electronic product for shooters than another comes along that's even better. The reason for this comment is that my review of the PACT Precision Chronograph just appeared in these pages and it's already a bit dated.

The latest news from PACT is the application to a chronograph of technology that's pretty well everyday in other uses. I'm talking about the remote control that has become ordinary on TV sets in our homes. A few years ago remote controls were considered luxuries but their popularity has driven the price down and now everyone seems to have one. The same technology has been adapted to the PACT PC to provide a printer which does not require any wires and will print out all the data normally available through the display.

Using infrared light, the data is transferred between the chronograph and a small, battery powered printer that prints a completely legible copy of everything the chronograph will calculate. The shooter doesn't have to do anything except push the review key twice. Since I just reviewed the chronograph functions (*American Handgunner* July/August 1987) I don't think it's necessary to repeat all that, for the new version works exactly the same. Only better.

Current models also have upgraded electronics which improve low light performance which was already excellent. Operation is

always comes a time when you have to stop shooting and write it all down. The PC made it easy because you could wait till you were through with a string before stopping, but the printer makes it even easier. All you have to do is push "review" twice and start loading magazines.

All of this convenience does add to the price so it will not appeal to everyone, but reloaders who do a lot of testing will find the convenience of the printer invaluable. The basic Precision Chronograph still costs \$199 complete with skyscreens and the circuitry needed to drive the printer adds \$25 to the price. The printer itself costs \$125. That brings the total cost of the printer equipped package to \$349. Existing units can be retrofitted for printer operation for \$49 plus the cost of the printer.

As I write this I have just returned from a lengthy chronographing session where I used the new printer equipped PC exclusively. I am not given to superlatives, but by the second or third string I was hooked. All I had to do was jot the load data on the printer paper and get on with the shooting. It was great, and the time it saved more than made up for the extra expense.

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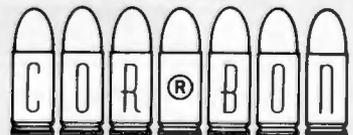
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11:03 a.m.

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11:04 a.m.

Witness sees one of the unidentified males reach for magazine rack. Suspect obviously mistakes sudden movement for an attempt on his copy of GUNS. Suspect reacts by assaulting both men with a rolled up magazine.

11:16 a.m.

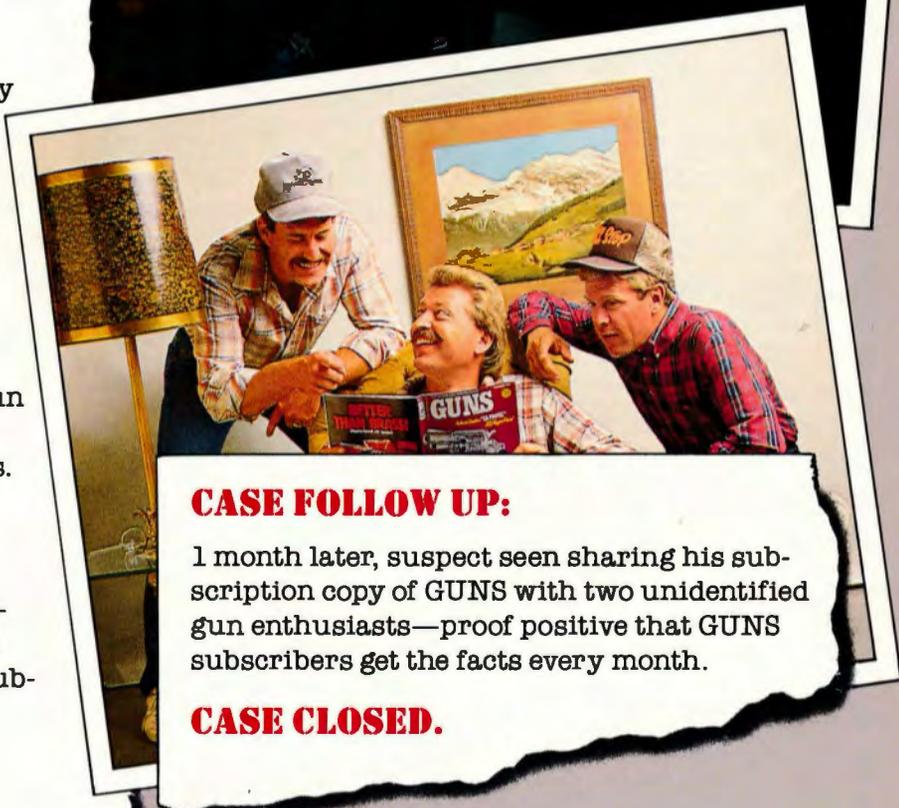
Suspect flees the scene and is quickly arrested for needlessly magazine whipping two innocent fishing enthusiasts.

12:43 p.m.

Suspect confesses to criminal acts. His reason? Nothing was going to come between him and the only magazine he trusted for the latest gun and shooting sport information. He wanted the facts . . . just the facts. He wanted GUNS Magazine.

1:05 p.m.

Suspect is released on his own recognition promising to never frequent newsstands again and agreeing to subscribe to GUNS instead.



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1 month later, suspect seen sharing his subscription copy of GUNS with two unidentified gun enthusiasts—proof positive that GUNS subscribers get the facts every month.

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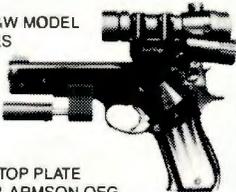
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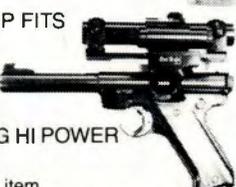


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TEST REPORT

John Jovino Co. is offering a slicked up and cut-down Astra revolver chambered for the popular .44 Magnum and .45 Colt cartridges. They call it *The Terminator*. While I'm not thrilled with the name, the gun is a pleasant surprise. The .44s are available in both blue and stainless steel but the model chambered for the .45 Colt is available in blue only. The test gun is in stainless and the appearance belies the \$345 suggested retail price.

full house .44 Magnum load in any short barreled gun like this there can be no doubt that something happened.

Even though the gun weighs 41 ounces empty, recoil is substantial and the muzzle blast is, to say the least, spectacular. Even so, the recoil is not as bad as I expected it to be.

I am on record against the use of .44 Magnums for defense. I think it's overkill, and it takes a truly exceptional shooter to

ASTRA'S TERMINATOR

By Charles E. Petty



handle full charge loads without flinching. My position remains unchanged. I am, however, a longtime fan of the .44 Special and I think proper application of these will tame the Terminator and make it a useful defense gun. Factory loads for the .44 Special are pretty stodgy creatures with the notable exception of Winchester's 200 grain Silvertip, but the combination is a handloader's dream. There are all sorts of good bullets available, and loads that are at the top end of .44 Special characteristics (the bottom of .44 Magnum if you prefer) proved to be manageable and effective. Sure it's nice to cut loose a full-blown magnum once in awhile for kicks, but the hot ticket for the Terminator will be the .44 Special Silvertip load from Winchester, or a carefully crafted handload.

The Astras are imported with a three-inch barrel and Jovino shortens it to 2 3/4 inches, but the real trick is the work that is done on the trigger. As it comes from the box the Terminator has a double-action that is remarkably good. The pull measures 10 pounds and is smooth throughout its range. The single-action pull is a crisp but heavy six pounds.

The Astra lockwork is highly reminiscent of S&W with a couple of exceptions. S&W's hammer block becomes a transfer bar which is a safety, and the flat mainspring is replaced with a coil spring which utilizes an interesting feature to allow some adjustment of trigger pull. Instead of engaging a slot in the frame, as in S&W's "J" frames, the hammer strut and mainspring are held by a round piece called a "regulation ring." In it are four different holes of varying depth with which the compression of the mainspring can be varied and a degree of trigger pull adjustment achieved. Sights are Astra's adjustable rear and red ramp front. Due to the barrel shortening, the front sight is relocated slightly.

The Astra accepts Pachmayr's round butt grips designed for the S&W "K" frame and these are added as standard equipment. They provide an improvement in concealability, but the best part is the effect that the grips have in helping tame some of the recoil. Let me begin by saying that when you touch off a

Range testing of the Terminator was uneventful. Accuracy was good and fired cases, even the hottest magnums, extracted easily. Any time we shoot a cartridge in a barrel that is shorter than normal we know that there will be some loss of velocity and energy. I fired several different .44 Magnum and .44 Special loads through both the Terminator and my 6" S&W Model 29. As expected, there was an average 13% loss of velocity through the snubby barrel.

There happened to be an IPSC match at the range the day I was doing the testing and I asked a number of shooters if they would like to try the Terminator. Over 200 rounds were fired that afternoon by half a dozen different shooters and they were unanimous in their favorable comments. Everyone liked the double-action trigger and all expressed surprise that the recoil wasn't worse. The down side was that leading was severe after firing only one box of Winchester 240 grain Medium Velocity lead bullets. The Lewis Lead Remover took it out, but I believe I would stick to jacketed bullets, particularly for hotter loads. Summing up, my impression of the Terminator is favorable and the problems encountered were due to the cartridge, not the gun. For the shooter who wants a big-bore defense gun at a modest price, the Terminator looks like a good deal.





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by Duncan Long

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INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

THE AFFORDABLE .454 CASULL IS HERE AT TWICE THE PRICE OF A MODEL 29

These are the times that try men's souls. As this is written it's still a couple of months before the big firearms trade show, and most companies are reluctant to divulge anything new that may be shown or introduced at the SHOT Show.

However, we do have a few tidbits that may be of interest.

From the Glock folks, who are riding high on the successes of their so-called "plastic" pistol, comes word of a new model, the Glock 19, a shorty version with a barrel about 1/2" shorter than the Glock 17. The frame is shortened, and so is the magazine capacity—down to 15 rounds.

Glock will also introduce a full-size model in a full-house competition gun, complete with long slide and a built-in compensator. When asked if this new comp gun designed for IPSC competition would take 9mm major loads, Bob Gates, Glock's National Sales Manager said, "It'll take anything you can put into it!"

If the price (about \$1,000) of the .454 Casull single-action would leave you without any mortgage money, you'll have a chance to buy all that power in an "affordable" model, which Freedom Arms calls the "Field Grade." It won't have some of the

bells and whistles of the Premier Grade, such as the replaceable forcing cone bushing, but Freedom promises that performance will not be changed.

The price of the Field Grade has not yet been finalized, but word is that it will be under \$800.

It appears that perhaps we have seen the last of the Arminex Trifire .45 auto. Jim Mongello is moving the outfit to Las Vegas, and he tells the *Handgunner* that he may concentrate on rifles rather than handguns.

Over at Hartford, the Colt folks are not really introducing any new gun models for 1988. They will be offering some new versions of the popular King Cobra, namely a blued version and one in bright polished stainless steel.

If your dealer has not yet received a shipment of the Automag II, fear not, they are on the way. Our intrepid reporter caught some of the AMT gunsmiths at a local range, test firing one production run. You see, someone does check out the guns before they leave the factory!

The off-again, on-again Predator single shot pistol from Kimber of Oregon is on again. Evidently Greg Warne had second thoughts about dropping the gun, and it will appear in the 1988 Kimber catalog. That's good news, as it is one fine pistol.

We find it curious that Greg, Kimber's president, had decided to drop the Predator after disappointing initial sales, but then all of a sudden he gets a slew of orders, coincidentally, right after our feature story on the Predator broke in the Nov/Dec '87 issue. Could it be that you, our serious handgunning readers, have breathed life back into the Predator after you read our feature article and decided to order a few? It's hard to say for sure, but it could be that the "power of the press" combined with your responses to Kimber has saved this fine single-shot from a very premature demise.

Our Southeast Asia correspondent checks in with a report from Korea. PMC should have landed its first shipments of 10mm Auto ammunition by the time you read this, and you fanciers of the Delta Elite will have an alternative to the excellent, but outrageously expensive, Norma fodder.

Also on the 10mm front, Hornady is soon to be introducing a line of bullets for the handloader, a 170 gr. hollowpoint and a 155 gr. hollowpoint. There is also a full-patch ball bullet of 200 grains.

Scott Heter, one of the Good Ole Boys from Speer, says that Omak Industries is currently fulfilling a military contract for Blazer-type blanks and that has precluded production of the new Speer 10mm bullets. Designs have been perfected, though, and as soon as the Army's order is filled, the Good Ole Boys will set about the 10mm bullets.

Sierra has two new 10mm bullets, a 150 grain JHP and also a 180 gr. jacketed hollowpoint. We'll be curious to learn the actual velocities of the lighter weight slug which we suspect will make an excellent small-game round.

Bo Clerke, out in California, has developed a conversion unit, of sorts, for the Colt Government Model. Using the frame and action, he makes up a new slide and barrel assembly which converts the .45, not to another caliber, but to a fixed barrel. Bo tells the *Handgunner* that this also converts the gun from a blow-back action to a . . . ?



T/C Sponsors Masters

Thompson Center Arms, makers of the renowned T/C Contender single-shot pistol, generously supported the shooting sports by pledging \$10,000 as a major sponsor of the 1987 Masters Tournament. In the coverage of The Masters last issue (Jan/Feb 1988) we neglected to credit Thompson Center as a major sponsor. The *Handgunner* regrets the error.



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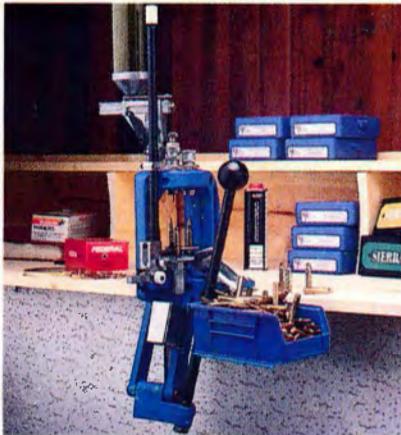
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