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SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 1987

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9mm**

**GUNSITE .45**

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*Loads of loads for the .44 Magnum*

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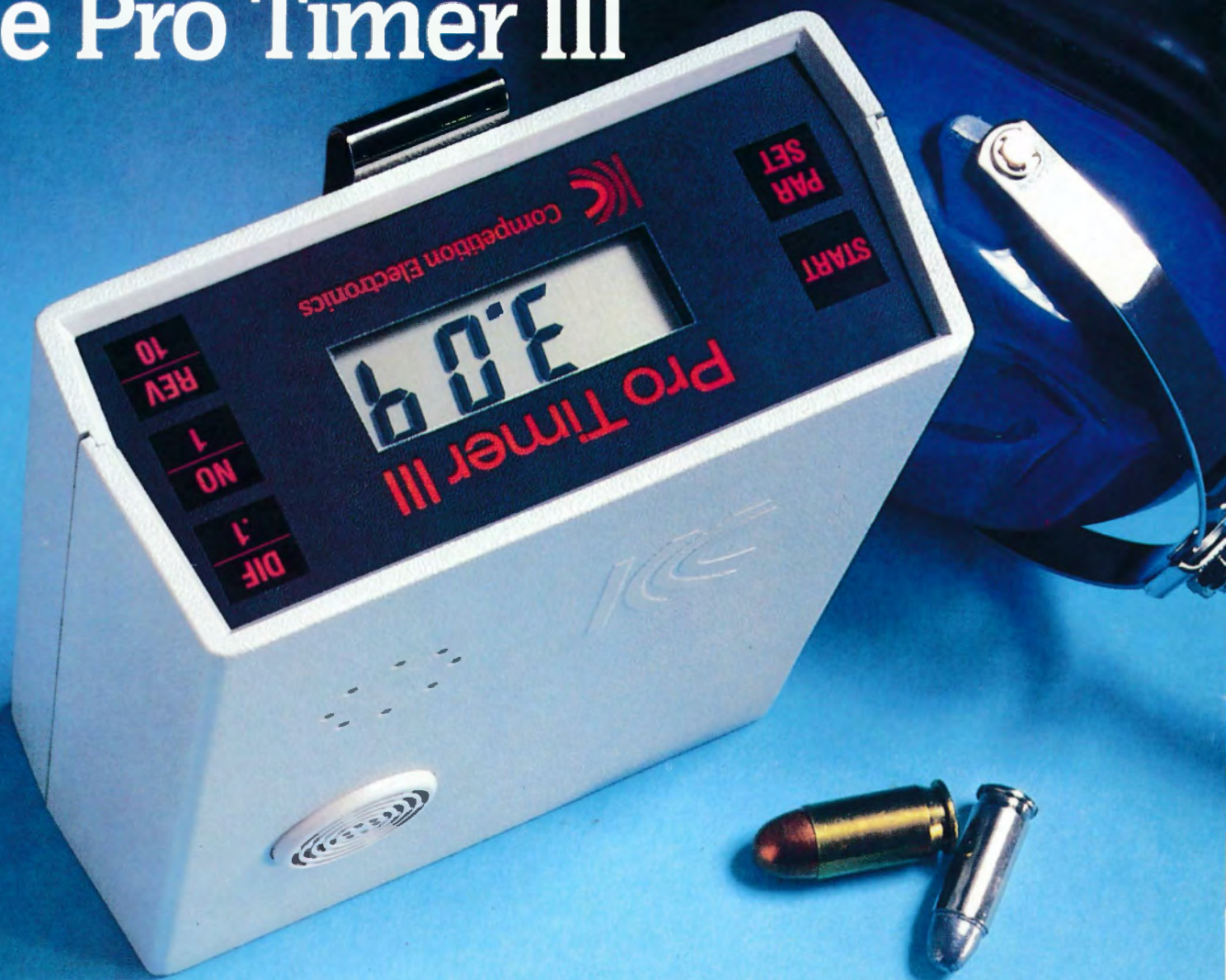
*Ted Nugent*

**Guns of a handgunning rock & roller**

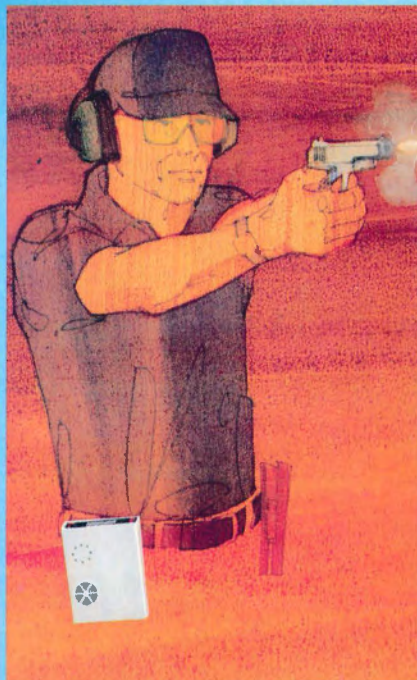




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There are a lot of people with a lot of fancy degrees out there that enjoy telling you that the U.S. is washed up in the production of quality innovative new products. That the American worker is lazy and expensive, that the guys that roll up their sleeves and get their hands dirty are mindless robots. Well they're dead wrong. Dillon Precision is a small tough company that's knocked the competition on its can. We've done it by giving our customers a quality product at a reasonable cost and standing behind our products with the industry's finest warranty and customer service. We have been the leaders in combining space age technology and U.S. ingenuity to bring shooters the very finest in reloading equipment. Dillon Precision now brings automatic progressive reloading within the reach of every pistol shooter. Born in the U.S.A., Dillon Precision proudly announces the most advanced reloader in the world.

## ■ Dillon's Square Deal ■

Our goals in designing this amazingly advanced reloader were simple. It had to be an entry level machine, easy to use even if you've never reloaded a cartridge in your life. It had to have a minimum amount of adjustments to take the mystery out of the reloading process. It had to be a quality lifetime warranted product, not an unsafe piece of potmetal junk. It had to be capable of quickly reproducing factory quality ammunition. Most of all it had to work, not just with a skilled operator, but for everyone that ever wanted to reload but was afraid to try. It had to be priced at about the same price of five or six boxes of factory loaded ammunition. Did we do it? You bet your ass we did. Don't you just love it when a plan comes together.

## ■ Top Gun ■

If you're going to learn to shoot well, you need to shoot a lot. Factory ammo is great but expensive. Our local dealer sells new 45 ACP for \$25.75 per box, that's \$51.50 per hundred. You can load that same ammo for less than \$11.40 per hundred. So economic good sense says you need to reload. It's been said that it's hard to soar with eagles when you're surrounded by turkeys and it's harder still to be a

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## Complete With Adjusted Carbide Dies Order Now.

top gun while reloading with an inadequate, unreliable reloader. The Dillon Square Deal is the most reliable progressive reloader in the world. It is the fastest. It is the most accurate. It is the easiest to use. It has the best warranty. It has a no strings attached 30 day return policy. It's what you're looking for. It's a square deal.

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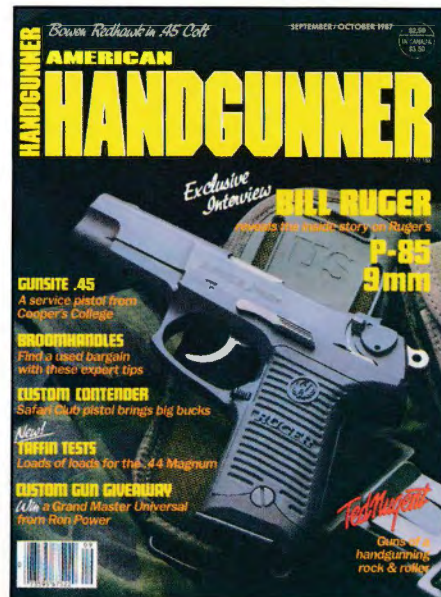
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Cover: The new Ruger P-85 9mm pistol and Bianchi's new military holster. Photo by Ichiro Nagata.

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# THE PACT DIFFERENCE

"The PACT MKII is the only timer you will ever need. It's advanced 32 character LCD display instantly enables you to read out a number of important details from a given string of fire, while its audible start benchmark and stop signals allow it to time all kinds of shooting events. These features allow the convenience of practicing alone for any conceivable match situation. I never go to the range with out it and neither should you."

Rob Leatham CM



\*Patent Pending

## PACT MKII

The PACT MKII Championship Timer and Chronograph represents our commitment to design and production of the finest possible training equipment. To create it we combined the original Timer and Chrono-mod into a single unit. Then we dramatically cut the size and weight of the new package. Did we loose any features in the process? Not a one, in fact we added a few new ones—like a longer time limit for you PPC shooters, and automatic power factoring for all you IPSC shooters. The result is the smallest, lightest, most dependable, most cost effective and we believe, finest shooting timer and chronograph in the world.

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Whether you are practicing for competition or to save your life; if you are going to improve, you must 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, if you practice without a timer, you have no accurate measurement of your speed.

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

... Brian Enos

### EASY TO USE

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

### ADVANCED DISPLAY

The MKII features an advanced 32 character LCD display instead of the four digit display commonly found on other timers and chronographs. This display allows the MKII to provide you with all of the information for a given shot at a glance, eliminating the hassle of having to "toggle" back and forth between functions in order to review your string.

### GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE:

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

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

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

```
#007 1.54 4.07
FIND SHOT
```

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

### \$49.00 CHRONOGRAPH

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

Whether you shoot reloads or factory ammunition, you need to know how fast the ammunition you use is going when it leaves your gun

```
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```

By having the \$49 CHRONO-MOD™ installed in your Timer, you enable it to double as the best portable chronograph on the market. When you fire, your Timer will display the shot number and velocity of the last shot fired, as well as your current average velocity. When you finish your string, push "review", the Timer will display high velocity, low velocity and their corresponding shot numbers. Push "review" again and the Timer will display the extreme variation and average deviation. In addition each shot may be reviewed individually. Enter the bullet weight at the beginning of a string and the Timer will compute the power factor for each shot.

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... Chip McCormick

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# SPEAK OUT

## Pachmayr Thriving

To set the record straight, Pachmayr has not closed down its custom shop. In addition to the work we do in-house, we have in the past farmed-out some of our custom pistol work to Paul Liebenberg. In the future we will be doing the majority of our work in-house where we have better quality control.

Bruce Baker  
President  
Pachmayr Gun Works

## A Great Big Raspberry

In response to Mr. Gerome Courtland's letter, how can he possibly call Mr. Massad Ayooob a lame brain? Has he met Mr. Ayooob personally? I do not think he is a lame brain or he couldn't have survived this long as a police officer.

To *American Handgunner*, thank you for printing Massad Ayooob's articles. To Mr.

Ayooob, you have my thanks and respect for sharing your knowledge of shooting and survival. To Mr. Gerome Courtland, a great big raspberry.

Alan L. Ingold  
Miami, Ind.

## Upside-down Magazines

On page 8 of the July/August 1987 issue, your ad picture of Tom Campbell in action at the 1986 IPSC Nationals shows his extra magazines in his belt pouches are upside-down. Or are they? What's the story?

Alan P. Wells  
Las Vegas, Nev.

*Editor's Note: Those of us who are privileged to call Tommy friend, think he's upside down.*

*Seriously, his magazines are carried the way he likes them and if you could see Tommy perform a speed reload, you wouldn't question him. What can you expect from a man who shoots a Browning .50 out his living room window?*

## Oh, Grow Up

Massad Ayooob, when are you going to grow up? Everyone who started shooting the combat competition courses knew good and well that the rules would change to allow custom guns to dominate. Us average guys never had a chance. Those of us who appreciate the maximum efficiency of a person with his service pistol applaud your scores, but don't carry on like a wounded puppy.

We need to proliferate the expertise, and maybe along the way teach a few professionals to use their weapons in a most efficient manner. Combat training does that, but watch those crocodile tears. Consider yourself fortunate, not wronged.

L. L. Stewart  
Endwell, N.Y.

**AMERICAN HANDGUNNER WELCOMES** letters to the editor of no more than 350 words. Letters must include the writer's full name and address. Letters must be signed by the writer. Typewritten letters are preferred, but legible handwriting is acceptable. Send your letters to Speak Out, *American Handgunner*, 591 Camino de la Reina, Suite 200, San Diego, CA, 92108.

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## BIANCHI BOTTOMLESS

Wolf in sheep's clothing.



You won't catch John Bianchi with his pants down, or will you? In a stunt to promote the concealability of his holsters, John bares his buns, 1 mean guns, to illustrate some of the 27 weapons he's carrying.

Indeed, Bianchi International offers some of the finest concealment holsters in the world. With a huge inventory of different models and styles, Bianchi International still continues a relentless research and development effort to unearth new and innovative holsters for both professionals and sportsmen.

John is toting 27 guns: 4 American Firearm .22 Short, revolvers; 3 Smith and Wesson Chief's Specials; 2 Colt .380 autos; 2 Sterling .25 autos; 2 Walther .380 autos; 2 Beretta .25 autos; 1 O/U derringer; 1 Sterling .380 auto; 1 Mauser .380 auto; 1 AMT Back-Up; 1 H&K 4; 1 Beretta .25 auto; 1 Colt revolver, 4"; 1 H&K revolver, 2" (we didn't know H&K makes a wheelgun, but that's what Bianchi's press release says); 1 Colt Python, 2"; 1 .25 Auto Modela (don't know this one either); 1 .380 auto, custom Guardian, Michigan Armament.



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Tom Campbell in action at the 1986 IPSC National Championships.



# THE GUILD SPEAKS

GEORGE WESSINGER

## LOU CIAMILLO HONORED AS THE 1987 OUTSTANDING AMERICAN PISTOLSMITH

When the Guild awards committee began the process of selecting a qualified recipient for the Guild's *Award of Excellence*, the discussion centered around a member who has contributed a great deal to the pistolsmithing profession. A decision was reached by the membership and Lou Ciamillo of Maryland Gun Works, Ltd., operating out of Hyattstown, MD, was named the Top Pistolsmith of 1987. The presentation of the award was by J.D. Jones, President of the American Pistolsmiths Guild.

Lou is a very talented individual who has been a professional gunsmith for almost 20 years. He was born and raised in New York and developed an early interest in firearms. As a high school student he worked part time in several well equipped local gunshops. Here he learned the value of high quality workmanship, and was introduced to competition shooting. Once bitten by the competition bug there was no turning back. In 1966 he entered the Army with the idea of shooting on the Army team. He graduated from OCS in 1967 and entered the Military Police Corps. He was an outstanding shooter for the 519th Military Police Battalion. During this time Lou learned a lot about how to make the auto shoot.

charge of the Firearms Training Section, Agency Armorer, and team leader of the SWAT team.

PPC shooting was growing by leaps and bounds and Lou was at the forefront not only as an outstanding shooter but also as a noted builder of the heavy-barrel double-action revolvers. He operated Maryland Gun Works, Ltd. on a part time basis with the help of his wife and partner, Louise. The double-action revolver was his personal favorite and became a major part of his business. His revolvers have won several national championships and set numerous national records.

In 1979 Lou decided that the Police Department was taking too much time away from his gun business, so he left the department to devote himself full-time to his first love, building fine handguns.

Lou is a true *custom* pistolsmith with a wide range of talent. He does pistol and revolver work, creates new barrel styles for revolvers, designs and manufactures scope mounts, has designed many custom sights, and manufactures many items in use by other custom pistolsmiths. His tools and fixtures are sold nationwide and he is constantly introducing something new.

Lou is a Distinguished Police Revolver shooter, holding NRA Distinguished badge



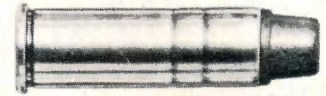
Lou Ciamillo (right) accepts the Guild's top award from J.D. Jones.

He left the Army in 1969 and joined the Montgomery County Maryland Police Department and began competing in Police Revolver competition. It didn't take the Montgomery County Police long to recognize the many talents of this young man and to take full advantage of them. He was soon an instructor in the Police Academy, in

number 35. He is a 1430 shooter and has won over 500 awards in police revolver competition. He and his wife Louise have three teenage sons with whom they spend a great deal of time and they are involved in many community and civic activities.



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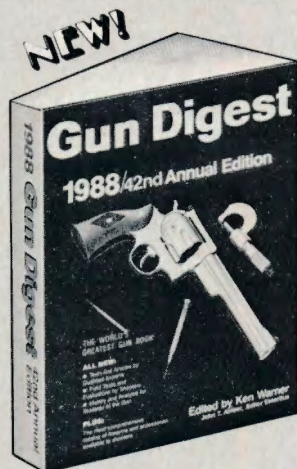
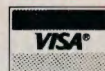
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Edited by Ken Warner

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**Big Bore Bull Pup** by H. W. Sakschek. Military organizations all over the world are turning to the short and compact bull pup design in the newest rifles. Sakschek attempts to get a single all-purpose bull pup to serve all of his shooting needs.

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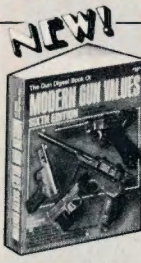
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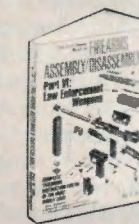
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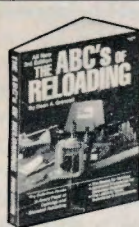
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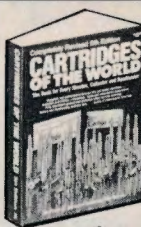
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# COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

## UPDATE OF NYPD'S HANDGUN TRAINING EXCLUDES UPGRADING OF DUTY AMMO

Right now NYPD has some 28,000 city police officers, a legion of bluecoats greater than the armies of some 50 of the world's countries. Their firearms training, since it was overhauled by the legendary Frank McGee starting around 1970, has been a model of street-relevance that emphasized tactics over marksmanship and always cleaved to the military's KISS principle of training: "Keep It Simple, Stupid!"

When Frank took his retirement a few years ago after 30 years on the job, he was replaced by Lt. Tom McTernan, who shares the byline of the modern classic law enforcement text *Street Survival*. Long groomed for the position by McGee, the talented protege quickly showed that he had his own initiative, finally convincing the department to go to +P ammo even though the semi-wadcutter bullet configuration was retained.

executive officer position at a Bronx precinct, and at this writing heads the prestigious Orchard Beach special detail.

That was the bad news. The good news was, McTernan's successor shows great promise. He is Captain John Cerar, at 40 an unusually young NYPD captain who came on the job in 1973. The Department has never liked the idea of having top shooters and gun buffs as heads of firearms training, always feeling that such men would get too self-involved. Never a gun enthusiast, Cerar is nonetheless a gifted administrator who knows the key to good management: keep an ear open to your best people. With this in mind, he brought Richie Rosenthal back to the range as his lieutenant. Rosenthal, who as a sergeant had transferred to the helicopter unit, is one of the nation's top police gun experts (and, I suspect, somewhat sympa-



"Looks good, fellas," reports Ayoob (right) as he is briefed on updated NYPD policies by Capt. John Cerar, new commander of the Firearms & Tactics Unit.

McTernan showed the street smarts that had made McGee's training approach such a good national model, but sadly, his career was cut short last year. A sexual harassment complaint brought against Police Academy staff by the sister of Guardian Angels head Curtis Sliwa resulted in a great number of the cadre instructors being "flopped," or transferred. No sexual impropriety was alleged, just insulting sexist remarks, and though McTernan himself never made such a slight against a female recruit, men under his command reportedly did. NYPD's command position punishes fathers for the sins of the sons, as it were; McTernan, one of the finest minds in police combat training, was transferred from the firearms and tactics unit to an

thetic to law abiding armed citizens as well). In charge of heavy weapons training, Richie also sits at the new commander's right hand when hardware questions come up.

Cerar views the gun as a tool, and the training that accompanies it as three dimensional. While never a firearms instructor, he did teach law for some years at the police academy, particularly deadly force law at a supervisor's level. His choice reflects NYPD's position that how you shoot is less important than when you shoot.

I recently spent some time at the Firearms & Tactics Unit at Rodman's Neck, Bronx, and what I saw looked good. Some of the changes Cerar and his team are contemplating are too embryonic to be publicly dis-

cussed yet—and, of course, proprietary officer survival tactics don't belong in newsstand publications—but those who follow advanced police firearms will be interested in the following:

►NYPD used to bury gunfight statistics inside total shooting reports that encompassed all weapons discharges, including humane destruction of injured animals, accidental discharges, and even suicides. This is what resulted in their oft-quoted figure of 2.4 rounds per officer per encounter. The 1985 SOP-9 report, a breakdown of all NYPD shooting incidents, still shows 2.16 shots fired per officer in *all* firearms discharge incidents. However, the report makes clear that in actual *gunfights*, NYPD officers fired an average of 4.6 rounds apiece.

This figure is much more in line with what we independent observers had been seeing. It proves the wisdom of Cerar's predecessors McGee and McTernan when they approved speedloaders for street use in the early '80s, and tacitly encouraged all their recruits and in-service personnel to carry second guns. Those traditions will apparently continue under Cerar's administration of the unit.

►NYPD is looking at 3" barrel revolvers very seriously. Tests at the range with 3" S&W K-frame .38s and 2¾" Ruger Speed Sixes indicate no loss of accuracy compared to the 4" guns, but higher hit potential than the small frame 2" .38s New York cops have traditionally carried in plainclothes. This is in line with the experience of FBI, for whom the K-frame 3" guns were developed in the mid-70s. The Bureau now issues the 3" model 13, with some 3" model 10s still in service. Interestingly, both Frank McGee and Tom McTernan carried 3" S&W Chief Specials as their personal handguns.

►In previous administrations, the choice of single-action versus double-action fire was always left up to the individual officer. Cops were even allowed to cock their guns at the 15 and 25 yard lines during qualification shoots. Under the new administration, the emphasis is on "double-action only." Indeed, the prototype 3" guns from Smith and Ruger that the unit is testing with a view toward standardization all have bobbed hammers with no single-action cocking notches. The New York holster, manufactured almost exclusively for NYPD by Jay-Pee and used almost nowhere else, does not use a safety strap over the hammer spur.

►Previous administrations had looked at limiting qualification to 15 yards and in, eliminating 25 yard shooting; Cerar is keeping his options open on that and now retains eight shots at 25 yards in the qualification course. Emphasis, however, is on ranges from seven yards to three feet. The Unit is aware that most cops who are shot in New York take the bullet at point blank range, but don't want to give up the ability to shoot straight at longer ranges, because while those encounters are less frequent, the cops almost always win them. One female instructor in the Unit won a Combat Cross for a gunfight in which she coolly took an almost 25 yard shot across a street and instantly killed the gunman who was firing wildly at her.



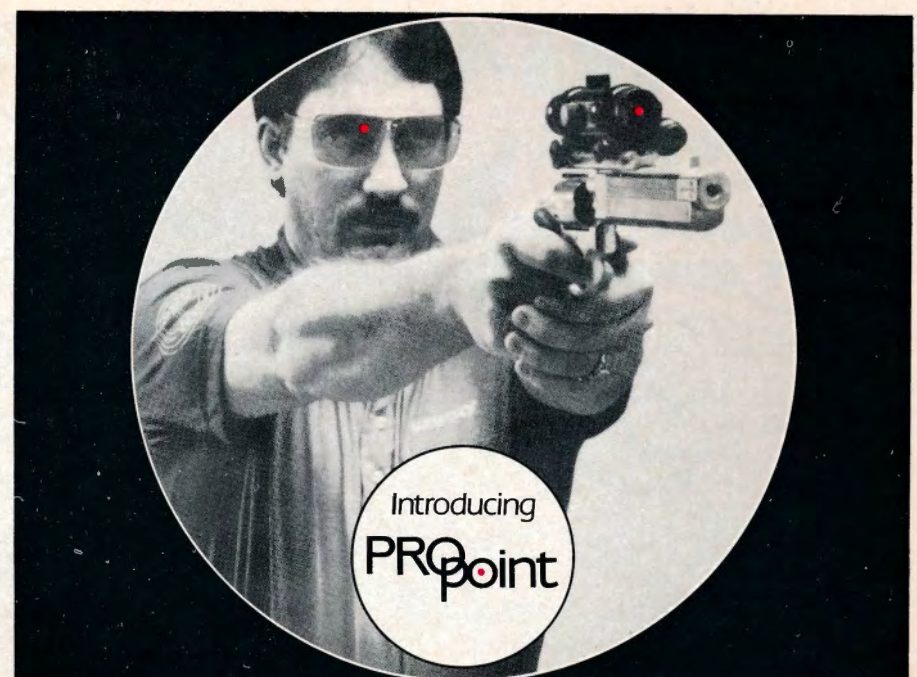
►The Unit will continue to evaluate new ammunition. Cerar said the issuance of +P has made no difference whatsoever in gun-fight results, but that guns are breaking down somewhat more frequently since it was issued. Rosenthal hopes to revive the experimental load the Unit was once considering, a 160 grain full wadcutter at intermediate .38 Special velocity. The political climate in New York does not appear favorable for hollowpoints at this time, though some members of the Unit will tell you privately that they feel adoption of the FBI/Chicago load, a 158 grain all-lead semiwadcutter hollowpoint at +P velocity that has established an enviable stopping power record, could solve their concerns in that regard.

If anything brings the city fathers to accept hollowpoints, it will be the current "crack" crisis. The cheap, highly-addictive cocaine derivative has been publicly implicated in a terrifying crime wave in the city. One crack-head recently soaked up 18 .38 slugs out of some 138 shots fired by some 30 officers during a running gun battle on the Grand Concourse in the Bronx, yet kept running and reloading and firing his own .38. After wounding multiple officers, he was finally put down by a rifled 12-gauge Winchester hollowpoint slug from the shotgun of an Emergency Services (SWAT) officer.

In another highly publicized incident, a punk who drew a concealed Colt .45 automatic while handcuffed in the back of a patrol car shot and severely wounded two officers, and had to be shot ten times with .38 ammo before he fell down and died. The street cops and the union are certainly ready for hollowpoints.

►Brand preference is changing among New York cops. For the past few years, New York cops chose S&W's as their 4" service gun some 90% of the time, with the Colt product a distant second and the Ruger a remote third. Today, according to a source in the Unit's armory, some 25% of new recruits are opting for the Ruger Service-Six, while 75% take the traditional S&W model 10 heavy-barrel. Colt no longer makes a fixed-sight, 4" blue .38 that fits the NYPD uniform guidelines. However, the Colt Detective Special makes up some 15% of the 2" .38s in use, even though the S&W Chief Special can be bought through the department at a much lower price. One who carries the DS is Cerar himself, who paid extra to buy it when he came on in '73 because he also liked the extra shot. Since he wanted a uniform gun with a cylinder that rotated in the same direction, he acquired a 4" Colt Metropolitan MkIII to go with it. Rosenthal also carries the Detective Special. Colt fans should find this reassuring—both of Cerar's predecessors strongly favored S&W's. Of course, none of the Unit commanders officially endorses any brand. Cerar did note, however, that industry wide, bluing quality seems to be falling off in police handguns; for the first time, NYPD is considering authorizing stainless revolvers, and the prototype 3" Smiths and Rugers are of that construction.

►NYPD continues to examine new holster possibilities. Rumors that the City was going



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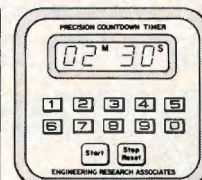
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to a Jay-Pee holster resembling the S&W Security Plus have not proved out. Interestingly, all 14 officers who were disarmed last year were in plainclothes.

The New York Police Department's officers fired 563 shots in action last year, down from recent years. Stats for '86 are expected to be up. As they police what many consider "the gunfight capitol of the US," New York cops will continue in the forefront of real-life police combat, and the doctrine of their chief combat shooting instructors will continue to be of vital interest to police weapons instructors nationwide. We wish Capt. Cerar and the staff of his Unit continued success in keeping New York's Finest safe.



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# SILUETAS

JOHN TAFFIN

## CAST BULLETS FOR SILHOUETTE OFFER MANY ADVANTAGES TO STEEL SHOOTERS

I shoot silhouettes a lot, both in practice and competition, and I would like to shoot even more, but jacketed bullets are just too expensive. Is it very difficult to get into bullet casting? Are cast bullets accurate enough for silhouettes? What would be the best bullet for my handgun?"

These are questions I get in one form or another either by phone, mail, or at our home range.

Is it difficult to get into bullet casting? Absolutely not. I started as a teenager, using one cavity moulds, and a dipper with the lead melted in an iron skillet on the kitchen stove. This required a patient mother and very shortly thereafter, an extremely understanding wife. Thousands of bullets were made this way using Lyman one cavity moulds in .38, .44, and .45 caliber.

The bullets were greased by hand and sized by pushing them through a steel die of the proper diameter. If you have never tried cast bullets, you may or may not know that casting is only the first step. The cast bullets must then be lubricated to prevent barrel leading, and sized to match the diameter of the gun they will be used in. Lyman Products Corporation (Route 147, Middlefield, CT, 06455) will supply information on getting started in bullet casting.

Checking the recent retail price list of these items from either RCBS or Lyman shows a total initial investment of \$320-370. Right at this point is where a decision has to be made. A shooter must really be serious about shooting cast bullets to invest this

amount of money. Or to put it another way, for this amount of money, I can purchase locally 5,000 180 gr. .357 FMJs for silhouetting.

And I have not taken into account the cost of bullet metal for casting. If a shooter only shoots a few practice rounds a month and shoots two guns in one match per month, for a total of 100 rounds per month, it would take four years in recoup the original investment. And if the silhouette range happens to be located in an area that is closed down half of the year because of winter weather, it would take eight years to save enough money to pay for the original equipment! Money can only be saved by doing a lot of shooting, expending thousands of rounds per year.

Are cast bullets accurate enough for silhouettes? Definitely. My best scores with cast bullets are (Revolver) 34 and (Production) 37. With jacketed bullets, (Revolver) 38 and (Production) 36. Cast bullets will shoot right alongside the jacketed bullets and in some cases even shoot better than jacketed bullets.

Cast bullets work well for silhouettes because they can be custom matched to a particular handgun. For example, I have ".44" caliber revolvers with barrel groove diameters as small as .426" and as large as .432". Speer jacketed bullets are .429", Sieras go .4295", and Hornadys are .430". All perfect for the .44's that run .429-.430". However they are all extremely oversize for barrels of .426" and way undersize for barrels of .432". Barrels in these sizes will only perform their best with cast bullets of the proper

diameter. I have sizing dies from .428" to .432" in increments of .001". So by carefully choosing my cast bullet and sizing accordingly, I can match the bullet to the barrel. This flexibility allows each .44 sixgun to have the bullet that will shoot the best for it.

What are the best cast bullets for silhouetting? This is the toughest question to answer. Handguns, like people, have their own particular personalities. What works for one handgun does not always work for a supposedly identical handgun from the same manufacturer. Whatever cast bullet you do choose, allow the barrel to be conditioned to cast bullets before any judgement is made. That is, shoot at least 100 rounds of the chosen bullet, especially if the gun is new or has been used exclusively with jacketed bullets. This allows the barrel to get "used to" cast bullets.

There are some bullets that I have that seem to work well in every handgun in which they have been used. For .357 caliber handguns—be they .357 Magnum revolvers or TC's, or .357 SuperMags, in revolvers or TC's, or Dominators, or whatever—there is one bullet that has been a standout for me. That bullet is the RCBS #35-200, a 200 gr. flat-nosed gas check designed originally for the .35 Remington rifle.

This bullet has to be an "accident" as no one could deliberately design a bullet that will shoot this good.

And it doesn't seem to matter if I use it in .38 Special cases in .357 Magnum at 1100 fps, or in Magnum cases at 1400 in TC's or SuperMags, or in SuperMag brass at 1500 fps in Ruger and Dan Wesson .357 SuperMags (Maximum). It just plain shoots extremely well in all guns at any range at any speed.

Close behind this bullet is Lyman's latest .357 bullet, a 210 gr. SWC gas check design, #358627. This bullet actually shoots better in my Ruger .357 Maxi than the RCBS bullet. Both bullets are cast hard and I have never lost a target with either one of them. The longer, heavier, 200 gr. .357 bullets are definitely superior to the 150 gr. bullets.

There are so many excellent .44 caliber moulds available that it would take a catalog to list them all. I have had exceptional results with NEI's #260.429, a 260 gr. plain based semi-wadcutter; Lyman's #431244, basically the same design with a gas check, and both of SAECO's. .44's designed for silhouettes, a 240 gr. gas check and a 265 gr. gas check. For a ram slammer I like either NEI's #295.429 or SSK's #310.429. Both of these run around 300 grs. and are perfect for stubborn rams.

One of the most fascinating things about bullet casting (or cast bullets), is the more one learns, the more that is left to learn. There is always something new to discover. Experimenting with different shapes of bullets, different alloys, different lubes, different sizing diameters, not to mention different powders, is a lifetime experience. A shooter can be satisfied with one bullet—one load, or he can make a rewarding hobby out of experimentation. Try cast bullets for silhouettes. You won't have to take a back seat to anyone.



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In addition **all shots can be individually reviewed** after you have finished your string. Why is that important? With other chronographs 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 the PACT PC, fire your whole string, up to 200 shots, then use the REVIEW button to receive a statistical summary of your string followed by the display of each shot fired.

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# PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN LAWSON

## PARTS CHANGERS FOIST CLUNKERS BUT PISTOLSMITHS PRODUCE FINE PISTOLS

After nearly an hour on the freeway in driving rain and heavy traffic, the sign *Rest Stop Next Right* caused me to slack off on the pickup's accelerator and coast to a halt near the *Free Coffee* poster. I climbed down and sprinted across the parking lot to the partial shelter of an overhang. Thoroughly soaked by 10 seconds exposure to the down-pour, I fished in my pocket for a quarter. No change! Out came the wallet and a dollar bill disappeared into the donation jar. Broad smile from wet and half frozen volunteer.

I wondered why free coffee always costs me a dollar as I jogged back to the truck, slopping the lukewarm liquid at each bounce. No matter; the rain replenished it as fast as it spilled. Opening the canopy, I set the styrofoam cup on the tailgate and unzipped my garment bag. I muttered something like "What luck" when I realized that I'd forgotten to pack my rain gear. That was interesting, because I was on my way to a match where I'd be out in the open as a Range Official for two days, and the indication was that the Washington rain forest belt was going to live up to its reputation.

A half hour later I took an offramp that led me to the main street of a small town typical of those along the I-5 corridor. I reigned in at the local sporting goods store and mounted the old fashioned veranda porch, complete with squeaking boards and outside displays. Through a glass door was a turn-of-the-century general store atmosphere. Two clerks and one customer. I was in luck. I found the outerwear and began to rummage through the selection. No response from the clerk behind the counter, who continued to sip his coffee from a large, steaming mug.

"Could you give me a hand here?" I asked the fellow. "Nope," he replied, "don't work here. Just visiting." The other fellow was struggling with an outboard motor while the

customer looked on. I settled down, leaning against the glass display case, hoping that I'd be offered a cup of the steaming liquid by the hanger-on. No such luck.

Twenty minutes later the customer was on his way with the outboard and the clerk approached me. I explained that I was on my way to a pistol match and I needed rain gear.

"Oh, you going to a combat match?" he asked. I allowed that I was, if I could ever persuade anybody to sell me a raincoat. "I'm a pistolsmith," he told me in a confidential voice. "Make all the combat pistols around here. This is one I just finished." He reached under the counter and came up with a Government Model, locked back the slide and thrust it into my hand before I could protest. "Isn't that a great combat pistol?" the hanger-on asked. "I shoot one of his Combat Specials myself . . . Have it right here." The clerk made a slight hand signal and the other man backed off.

"What do you think?" the clerk asked. I looked at the pistol in my hand for the first time. Aftermarket frame, G.I. slide that still had some of the lettering visible, front sight dented on top, canted to the left, light showing under the rear. Rear sight almost centered, bearing dents from being drifted into a tight dovetail. Bluing right out of a bottle. Aftermarket Commander style hammer, wide grip safety, extended thumb safety, slide stop and magazine catch release button. Neoprene grips. Slide came to rest 1/8" ahead of frame. Hammer marks where slide rails had been bent to take out side play. Grip screws badly burred. Magazine catch lock slot burred and bent. Disconnecter click. Grip safety tight, clicked on release. Trigger pull rough, about 2 1/2 pounds.

"How'd you get all this into one pistol?"

"Took me nearly two weeks," he replied.

My thumb encountered the slide lock

lightly. The slide jumped forward, taking the hammer with it to half cock.

"Cripes, mister, don't you know *nothing* about combat pistols? You gotta put your thumb on the hammer when you run the slide forward. That busts up the sharp edge on the sear to do it that way. Now I gotta take it all apart and stone it all over again." Both the clerk and the hanger-on were glowering at me. The fellow in the rear set down his cup of coffee and swept aside his coat in menacing fashion, revealing a pistol in a Minute Man holster solidly clamped into his side. I wondered if I was going to have to shoot my way out of there.

The only consolation was that they were both probably carrying pistols like the one I had in my hand. I put it back in the "pistolsmith's" hand and made for the door. The angry voices faded as I took the porch steps two at a time. Back in the truck, I slipped it into gear and ground out down the main drag.

A little chain hardware store at the edge of town looked as though it might have what I needed. The atmosphere was cheerful and the clerk on duty helpful. As I paid for my purchase I asked him: "You aren't a pistolsmith, too, are you?"

"I assume that you've met our local Parts Changer," he said, smiling.

"You called that one right," I said.

Although this sounds like fiction, it really happened exactly the way I've recounted the episode. I couldn't find a more eloquent label for the sporting goods clerk than the one the hardware store salesman tagged him with.

Very few replacement parts will just drop into a pistol without some careful fitting, and nothing should ever be added unless the new part receives a thorough test under actual firing conditions.

I pulled two factory original Combat Commanders off the shelf and as an experiment, switched slides. The two pistols were Series 70 era, SN 70BS71710 and 80BS7385.

7385's slide works on 71710's frame, but the latter's slide does not function on the former's frame. Examination and measurement showed the reason: The position of the disconnecter cut in the slide is different by .090" on the two specimens. In the one instance, the pistol cannot be made to fire, since the disconnecter will not reset. In the other assembly, the hammer will drop .090" before the slide is forward into battery, and although this does not represent a problem with barrel lockup, it is right on the ragged edge of the hammer dropping to half cock. Unfortunately, the slides are not numbered to correspond with frames they fit up to properly. The moral to this is, know the qualifications of the pistolsmith who works on your weapon.

I realize that some of you may have traded and switched parts on numerous pistols without a problem. Others of you will have installed hundreds of aftermarket parts without ever having to carefully fit them to get reliable function. Yes, thinking about it, that could well be true. After all, I'm the only person I know of who always has to pay a buck for a cup of free coffee.



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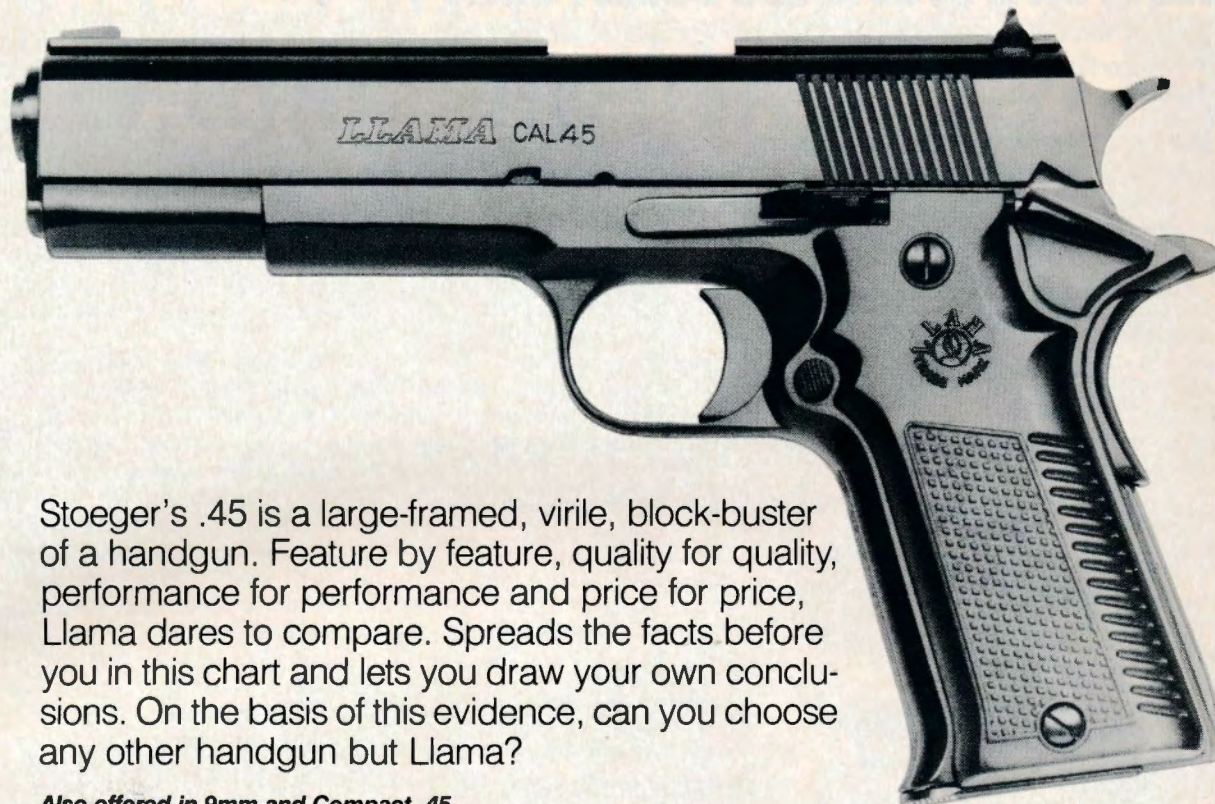
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# INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

CAMERON HOPKINS

## .38 SUPER MAY BE THE WINNING TICKET BUT NOT FOR A STUPID BIG BULLET MAN

Obsolete caliber! Relic! Antiquated cartridge!

I hear it every match. The same snide jabs from my IPSC shootin' buddy Don Hamilton. He giggles like a goosed schoolgirl and taunts me with disparaging remarks about my moss covered dotard, my forty-five.

"Hey Hopkins, why don't you shoot a real gun? That antiquated caliber's *passé*!" Don hoots. He likes to throw in a French word or two so he can sound refined.

I have gone on record as saying I'll never compete with a .38 Super, and I won't. I shoot a .45 ACP.

Don't get me wrong, I'm no martial artist.

I'm as gamey as they come. But I just can't stomach *bullettes*, those itty-bitty micro-calibers. In the words of Harry Selby, the professional hunter who guided Robert Ruark on his Tanganyika safari, "I'm a big bullet man."

Of course this is stupid. If you compete with a .45 because you are unaware of the Super's advantages, then you are not dumb, you are just ill-informed. Me, I know of the Super's superiority yet I stubbornly cling to my big bore. That's just plain stupid.

And lazy. One of my gripes with the Super is that handloading those afterburners for major power factor is a delicate operation.

Seating depth is critical; powder charge is vital; chronographing and load development are fussy. All in all, too much trouble for one who abhors reloading. I'd rather pull the trigger than the press handle, and time spent at the bench is just a necessary evil to allow shooting. I like to crank 'em out, not piddle around.

The .45 ACP allows generous slop in seating depth and a few tenths off on the powder charge is irrelevant. I've reloaded and fired split cases, something I would never gamble with the Super. I haven't checked my Dillon 550's powder measure in, let's see, about six months. Who cares, the .45 is accommodating—a few tenths shy still makes major and a few tenths over just makes the Pepper Poppers fall harder.

Don't try such sloppy reloading with a Super or you'll end up like Mike Dalton at the '85 Cup. He looked like a patchwork quilt with little bandaids all over his face. Super Face.


So other than being stupid and lazy, why don't I shoot a Super? Add boneheaded to my list of attributes.

I'm boneheaded about big bullets. Read too much Elmer Keith and John Taylor, I suppose. I like big bores. My favorite gun is my .470 Nitro Express double. My second favorite? Again not a handgun, a .375 H&H Sako with which I killed a gorgeous black-maned lion. Try tackling a 500 pound simba with a *bullette*.

Hunting has absolutely nothing to do with IPSC, but *la chasse* (see, I can be prissy like Don) sways my fondness of big, heavy bullets. Unlike the Super in IPSC, however, the small bores fail miserably in the field.

The Super is not superior for its diminutive waist size. It's the tube that stacks the tiny cartridges which renders the Super competitively better. Magazine capacity, not recoil reduction, is why the top guns delight in this mini-bore.

Yes, I handicap myself with a .45 against the Supers. But when those fat, stubby rounds smoothly glide up the polished feedramp of my Steve Nastoff customized Colt, I can positively feel confidence surge through my blood. That gun is *not* going to hiccup. The big bullets radiate well-being. The forty-five appeals.

So other than being stupid, lazy and boneheaded, I have no good reason for turning my nose up at the Super. It's a gamesman's gun and I'm a gamesman. But I do have my pride. You won't catch me with a .270 in my hands during hunting season, and you won't find me shooting a Super. You see,  I'm a big bullet man.

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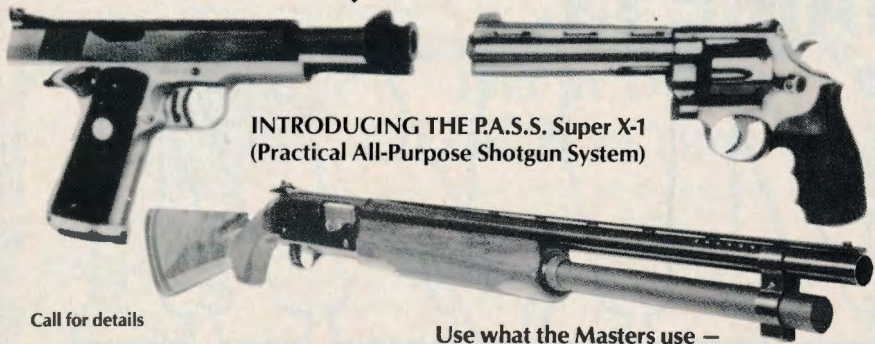
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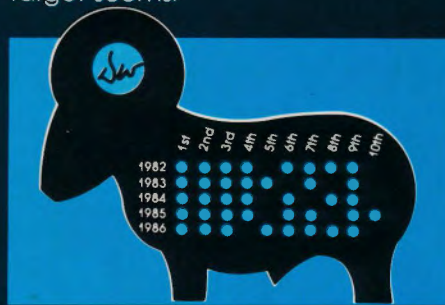


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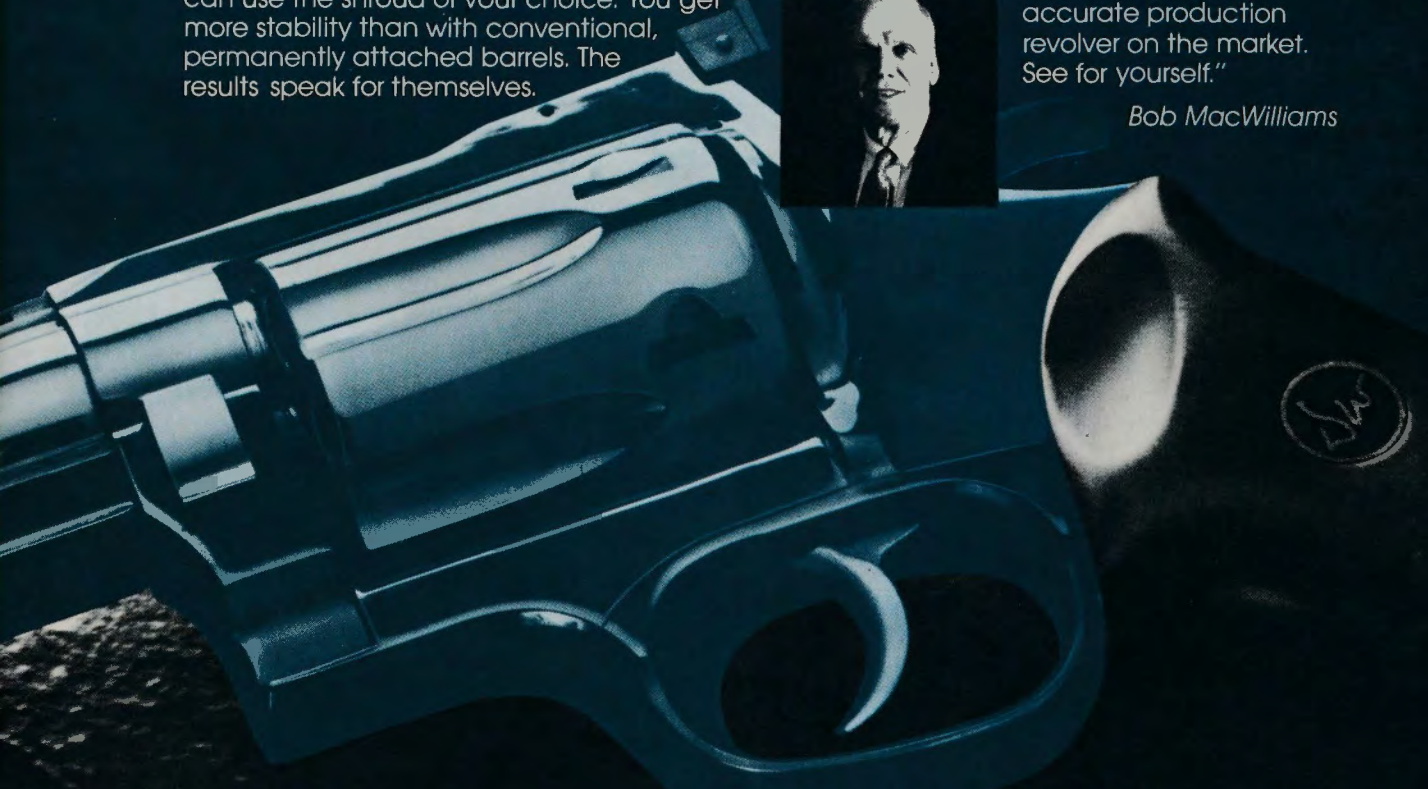
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# LEATHAM'S COLUMN

ROB LEATHAM

## 'MISTER SUPER' ON THE .38 SUPER: THE LITTLE ROUND DOES BIG THINGS

By now everyone has heard of the .38 Super automatic cartridge. This round is currently tearing up the combat pistol circuit and setting new records in many tournaments. Not bad for a cartridge which many say fills no exact purpose. Still, the record shows this old veteran of nearly six decades to be the choice of champions when the marbles are all on the table. Possibly one of the most misunderstood and unappreciated rounds of all time, the Super is finally getting its deserved glory.

As originally loaded at its introduction in 1929, the .38 Super would drive a 130 grain bullet at slightly over 1300 fps. Though noth-

energy figures were very high, in the real world, it would just pass through a target expending most of that energy on the ground behind it. These problems were generally solved in one way or another but, as we all know, it can be very tough getting rid of a bad reputation.

One more curious item surrounding the Super's ammunition inconsistencies involves the velocity current factory rounds achieve. Or better yet, the lack of it. With very few exceptions, velocities claimed now are much lower than in 1929. Whether this is because of a lack of accurate measurement then or an act of caution by ammunition manufacturers

*With very few exceptions, velocities claimed now are much lower than in 1929.*

ing more than a higher pressure loading of the existing .38 ACP, the Super was the magnum of its day. Chambered in the popular Government Model Colt, you had a compact, flat-shooting, easy handling weapon offering an increased magazine capacity of two rounds over the .45 ACP chambering.

For all it had going for it, there were a few nagging problems which plagued it its whole life. The Super's semi-rimmed case was supposed to headspace on a very small surface on the hood of the barrel. This, more than other things, led to a poor accuracy reputation. New barrels which headspace on the case mouth are capable of extremely good accuracy.

Another problem to the hunter or self-defense shooter was for many years the lack of a suitable expanding bullet. Even though

now I do not know, but still I find it interesting.

All these things aside, the Super has become the cartridge of choice by many competition shooters. Its popularity in IPSC shooting has grown in leaps and bounds making it nearly the universal choice of champions in this country.

The reasons for this are both simple and opinionated. What one shooter feels may be totally opposite that of the guy next to him. These are my views, of course, and I will not even try to prove them by scientific testing or formula. When physics are involved, it appears the same laws do not cover us all.

The smallest bullet diameter allowed in IPSC competition is that of 9mm which is somewhere around .355 of an inch. Current loading manuals list both .355 and .357

diameter bullets for the .38 Super. The best way to find which you should use is by slug-ging your barrel and measuring the diameter it actually is. Then use bullets of correct size and skip the guessing game.

The advantages offered by the Super make it without peer. Those requiring the most in refinement will see it as the only game in town, making second best not even close.

The smaller bullet causes the gun to rotate less around the axis of the bore than a .45 since its energy is exerted at a less effective distance from the axis.


The .38 Super also uses much lighter bullets than the big bores. Higher velocities are both possible and necessary. In order to meet the major caliber power factor in IPSC competition, you must at least match a power factor of 170. The Super, as commonly loaded, pushes a 160 grain bullet at 1063 fps to achieve major factor. You could also use a 130 grainer at 1308 fps and make major. Interestingly enough, this nearly duplicates the original factory loadings of some 58 years past.

The advantage light bullets have over heavy ones has to do with the bullet's resistance to being spun as it enters and travels through the rifled part of the barrel. The light bullets cause the gun to twist or torque less, allowing the gun to be controlled much easier. This is simply because the barrel has less mass to spin.

The next and most important feature the .38 Super offers has to do with the wide-spread use of compensators or muzzle brakes. More often than not, the top level competitors use every kind of mechanical gizmo they can find if it allows them to shoot better. A properly designed and installed muzzle brake offers the greatest improvement available to your gun next to an excellent trigger pull and sights. These compensators work much better at the higher pressures the Super is used at. This translates to less muzzle flip in a compensated Super than would be seen in a comparable .45.

Add all these together—less muzzle flip, less twist in your hand, flatter trajectory—and you have a better competition gun.

Of course there is a flip-side to the coin. The Super has much greater muzzle blast and flash. It is somewhat more finicky to reload than the .45. Brass and suitable bullets are not as readily available as are .45 components. And of course there is the human tendency to resist change, especially if your current equipment has served you well.

Still, if what you need is the most effective tool to do the job, sometimes you must sacrifice ego, experience, and tradition to go with the flow. Technology moves on ever forward, even if it does take a six-decade-old design along with it. The only constant is change, and the .38 Super automatic is the wave. Catch the wave. 

*Rob Leatham is now running classes in competition shooting. Classes are now forming for IPSC, NRA Action Shooting, and most speed-oriented pistol shooting sports. For information write to: Leatham Shooting Institute, P.O. Box 1291, Mesa, AZ, 85201*

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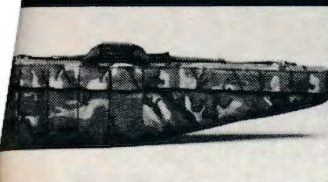
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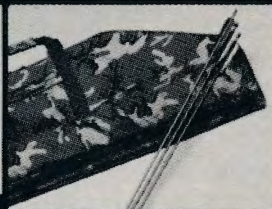
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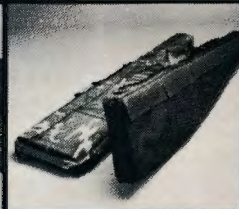
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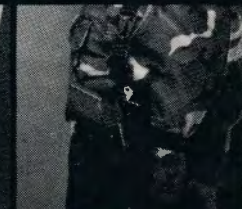
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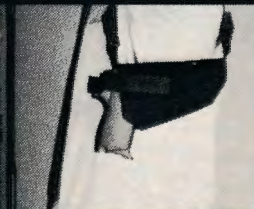
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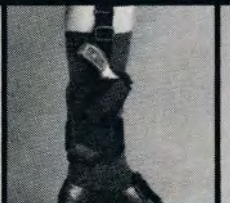
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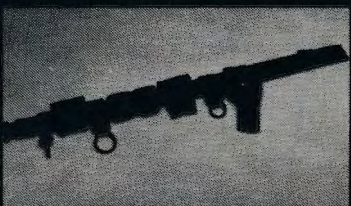
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FROM ASSAULT SYSTEMS®





# HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

## GATES WINS AWARD; PRAISE FOR DAN WESSON; EXPANDING BULLETS ARE OK

Elgin Gates, of the International Handgun Metallic Shooters Association, was presented the 1987 Outstanding American Handgunner Award at ceremonies held in conjunction with the NRA convention. Gates was voted the award by his peers. Awards of this type are not at all unfamiliar to Elgin. His achievements in several sporting fields are legendary. He is a past winner of the Weatherby Award, a champion trap shooter, offshore boat racer and holds numerous other titles in various other sports.

"What is the most accurate over the counter revolver I can buy?", is a question I hear several hundred times a year. My answer is usually Dan Wesson. Okay, okay, I hear your outraged screams of anguish, but let's carry it a little further. Sure, you can get a real tack-driver on occasion from any manufacturer—or a real hunka junk. And so far I've not mentioned the Korth, Manurhin or Freedom Arms guns—more about them later.

Essentially, IHMSA competition places the greatest demands on a revolver. The need

for accuracy to the extreme is great as is the need for the utmost in durability and reliability. There simply isn't any question about it—the DW dominates the top titles in IHMSA competition to the point no other manufacturer even counts. Now, these are essentially over the counter guns with a trigger job. They take a real beating from serious competitors and come out on top.

### *A fast expanding deer bullet is seldom effective on a moose.*

DW has a new scoped hunter pak and NRA/IHMSA rig available in the small calibers. I've been shooting a .32 Mag with a variety of soft swaged, and jacketed bullets by Sierra and Hornady with fantastic results both ballistically and accuracy. For the latest catalog and detailed information on the Dan's that have won in the IHMSA over the years drop a line to Duane Small, Dan Wesson

Arms, Dept. AH, 293 Main St., Monson, MA, 01057.

Let's answer the "My buddy had one and he had to send it back to the factory . . ." letters now so you don't have to write them. First, I don't doubt it a bit. Wesson's quality is like most everyone else's—not perfect. They aren't priced to be perfect either. If you have something wrong with one the proper thing to do is send it back to the factory for a fix. If it isn't fixed the first time, send it back again. Applies to any factory; not just Dan Wesson. Remember, the Dan's are firing an enormous amount of high powered ammo in competition. You are going to hear the worst about any of them first.

From what I read in *The Silhouette* a fair amount of shooters (obviously losers) apparently are crying about the Freedom Arms and possibly Korth and Manurhin—but mainly Freedom Arms guns being too good for the

rest of the competition.

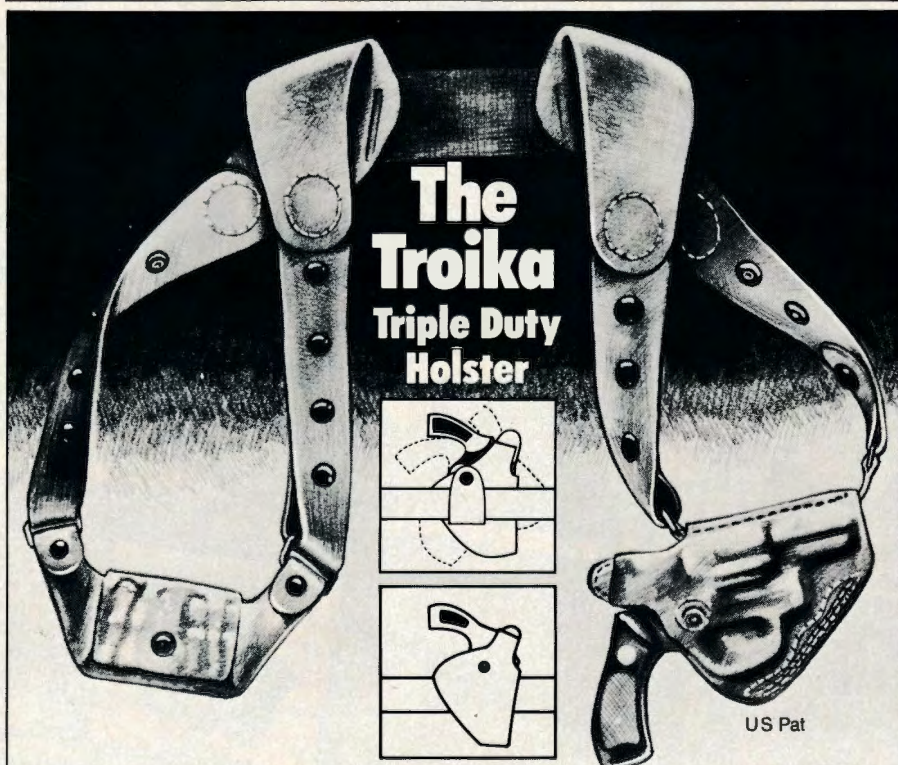
A few of the cryers almost broke my heart. To hear them tell it, they are simply unable to compete with any other revolver and they can't afford a Freedom Arms gun. These whiners are so depressed they sound like suicide candidates.

Personally, that line gets the same sympathy from me as I give Mohamar Kadaffy. But the membership apparently swallowed it and voted in a top price limit that outlaws the Freedom Arms guns.

Congratulations Freedom Arms, on being the first gun to my knowledge to be outlawed from competition because you are *too good!* This creates a real problem though—the losers will have to think of something else to bitch about.

Bullet performance: what is the right amount of expansion and penetration? Answer: there is no answer. A fast expanding deer bullet is seldom effective on a moose—or on a rear-end shot on a deer. A heavy hardcast bullet simply doesn't kill as rapidly on a lung shot as a fast expanding bullet with enough weight to get through both lungs and exit. But it does a lot better on the rear end shot, or the moose, than the fast expander does.

I used some of the fast expanders in .44 Magnum last fall and was generally disappointed with them. I fired more shots per animal than I have previously fired in my life, by a large margin. I simply take shots as they come without waiting for that "perfect opportunity." Definitely came away from the experience feeling the fast expanders are not the best for my type hunting. Didn't hit and lose anything but had to hammer them too many times. Max penetration a couple of times was on the order of 8–10 inches. That's only good for a direct broadside shot. The bullets held together but expanded to such a great frontal area penetration was affected an unreasonable amount.



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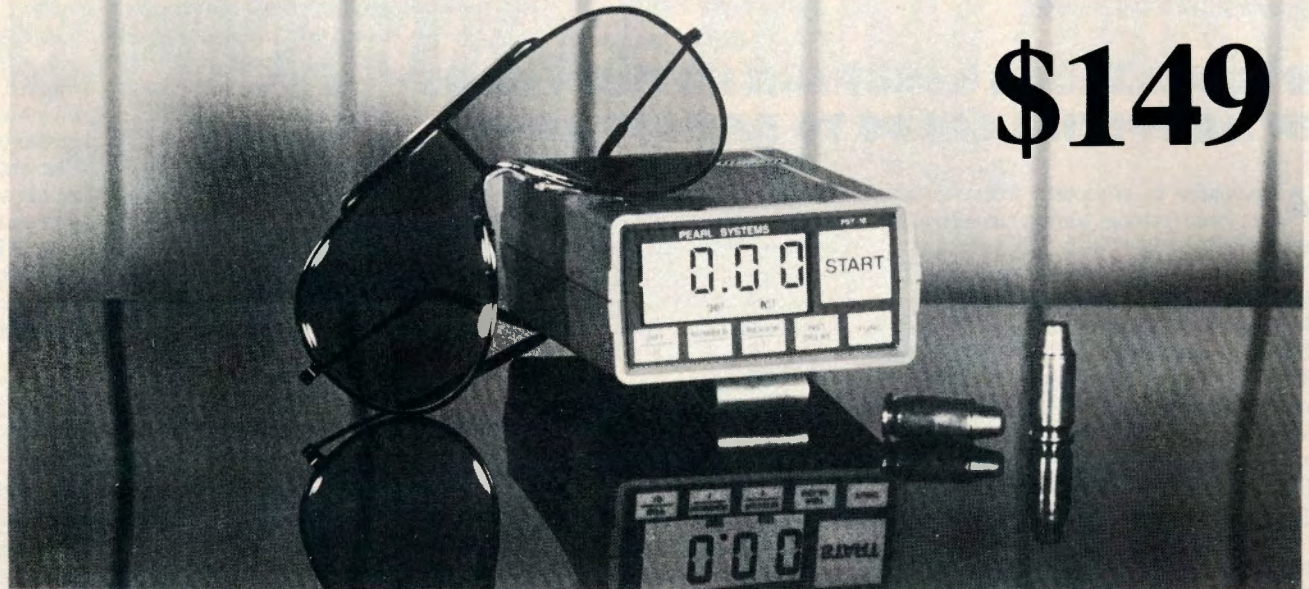
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# HANDLOADING

DAN COTTERMAN

## OVER-ZEALOUS QUEST FOR HOTTER LOADS IN .38 SPECIAL LEADS TO DANGER ZONE

A handloader in Wisconsin writes to say he's been getting "almost unbelievable results" using SR 4756 in .38 Special and .357 Magnum loads. He began working with this powder, which is primarily intended for shotshell reloading, after he began shooting IPSC and discovered that the Unique and Blue Dot charges he'd been using wouldn't make Major out of the four-inch barrel of his S&W Model 28. For example, he found that even 10.1 grains of Blue Dot would only push 170 grain FMCs out of his four-incher at 1019 fps, not the 1345 Hercules lists.

Obviously, Hercules wasn't using a four-inch barrel and just as obviously, Blue Dot is not the powder of choice for short tubes. So, when a shooting buddy asked our correspondent to drum up a load that'd make Major using .38 Special cases in a 2¾-inch Ruger Speed Six, he moved up-scale in burning rate and began working with 4756 charges dropped behind 158 grain Denver lead semi-wadcutters.

Still using a four-inch barrel, but this time a S&W Model 15, he began with 5.3 grains of 4756 and the 158 grain Denver. Velocity was 884 fps and accuracy was poor. Upping the charge to 6.0 grains brought improved accuracy and 951 fps.

The ultimate goal was to come up with some sizzlers using .38 Special brass, for ease of speedloading and ejecting. So, with reward following experimentation, he took military .38 Special cases, went to 8.0 grains of 4756 (a shade above the recommended 7.7 grains), and touched his loads off with CCI 500 primers.

"DuPont tested my loads and found them to have a velocity of 1319 from a six-inch test gun. Pressure was 33,000 psi, so under no circumstances is this load to be used in any gun other than a .357 Magnum," he writes, adding that he distinguishes his .357-only .38 Special "bombs" from regular .38 Special loads by using brass cases for the hot stuff and nickel plate for the rest.

Now, switching to the .357 Magnum, but staying with 4756, he began tipping charges into Winchester cases. Charge weight was raised to 8.8 grains. Touching this one off with CCI 500s, velocity for the 158 grain Denvers went to 1212 fps from the four-inch barrel. Then 9.0 grains of 4756 yielded 1245 fps. A Mr. Downing at DuPont, he says, has estimated that 8.9 grains of 4756 behind a 158 grain lead bullet will produce approximately 42,000 psi. This is within the working pressure limits of .357 Magnum revolvers.

However, there is a point at which tampering with charge weights becomes dangerous. Along the way our friend in Wisconsin had

allowed his enthusiasm for experimenting with super-charges of SR 4756 in the .357 to squelch his better judgment. He went to 12.0 grains, which blasted a 125 grain Hornady JHP out of the four-inch barrel at 1337; 10.0 grains behind a 155 grain lead, gas-checked

Velocity	PSI	Charge Weight	Remarks
1182 fps	30,600	7.7 grains	DuPont Data
1403 fps	49,700	9.7 grains	Powder at bullet base
1470 fps	52,000	10.7 grains	Slightly compressed
1570 fps	59,500	11.7 grains	Moderately compressed
1626 fps	65,800	12.7 grains	Charge compressed

*Ammunition, .357 Magnum; Cases, Winchester; Primers, Winchester 1½; Bullet, 158-grain Speer JHP; Temperature 60° F; Barrel length, 7½"*

bullet gave 1247; 11.0 grains (great snakes!) behind a 158 grain Denver gave 1347 fps, and so on.

He wrote to get my comments on his experiments, and, presumably, to allow all of us to share in the handloading bonanza he'd unearthed. The nine-grain .357 load, I reckoned, was borderline, but perhaps okay if reloaders would work up to it from, say, 8.5 grains while cautiously observing for signs of excess pressures.

But charges of 10, 11, and 12 grains are something else: "The loads are, as you say, amazing for the barrel lengths you're using. I think, however, that you are at least subjecting your revolvers to pressures that will take their toll in the long run . . . I don't recommend them for continuous use."

Also noted was SR 4756's relative quickness (burning) rate: it stands a bit slower than 452AA and Trap 100, and a bit faster than Unique and 800X; it should lend itself well to loading for short barrels, provided it is used according to factory recommendations.


The response was, mildly speaking, astonishing: "I think that the major problem encountered with this powder is its burning rate. You list it as being faster than Blue Dot, but slower than Unique. This is quite possible in the 5.6-grain range for .38 Special, and in the 7.8-grain range for .357 (158 grain bullets). The loads I am using are actually *slightly compressed*. This is a situation most like that found in shotgun use, which 4756 is most noted for. Under this compressed state, 4756 seems to have burning rates more comparable to 2400. This could explain my seemingly low pressures."

A little farther along, the message read:

"When using 8.8 to 9.3 grains I encountered very unpredictable velocities. Example: 8.8 grains at 1212 fps, while 9.3 gave only 1196 fps. Again, a lot of spread per shot string. However, at 11.0 grains/4756/158/CCI 500, I got 1347 fps with very little spread. I will admit that this load seemed a bit stiff in my four-inch Model 28."

That got me off the dime. I figured this handloader was courting a blown revolver, but I wasn't certain of just what pressures he was playing with. Bruce Hodgdon obliged my request and had Tom Browne run some pressure tests with 158 grain bullets and SR 4756 in the Hodgdon lab. Here's what happens when a handloader, exercised by a desire to produce a "miracle" load, begins pushing charges with a fast-burning powder.

Although these tests do not establish exact parallels with the loads used by the man in Wisconsin, they are certainly indicative of the pressures to which he was subjecting his guns. Look back, for example, at that 11.0-grain charge of SR 4756 and figure that it was somewhere between "slightly" and "moderately" compressed, and that pressure was somewhere between 52,000 and 59,500. Then look at the 12.0-grain charge. This one was bumping up against "blue-pill" test pressures for a high-number Springfield rifle action. (High-number Springfield actions will stand more pressure, but asking a revolver to stay intact, throughout prolonged shooting sessions, at more than 50K is ludicrous.)

The digest of all this is that although the handloader in Badgerland may be onto something good with SR 4756 (used with good judgment and caution) in the .38 Special and .357 Magnum, we've got to keep our wits about us in our quest for improved handloads. 

### Handloading Address

Brickbats to toss? Questions to throw? Handloads to pitch? The address for correspondence to Dan Cotterman's *Handloading* column is Handloading, Rt. 1, Box 7, Llano, CA, 93544.

Dan asks that you please use a typewriter or write clearly and legibly. Return postage would be appreciated if you expect a personal reply.



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# CONVERSATION

## *with a Champion*

By Jon Winokur

*Bill Wilson is a well known member of the practical shooting community and a mainstay on the practical shooting "tour." In addition to his countless state and local titles and numerous high-place finishes in national tournaments, he's a two-time Second Chance Champion and has been a member of both the Silver and Gold U.S. IPSC [International Practical Shooting Confederation] World Championship teams.*

*An innovative custom gunsmith and the co-author of a popular book on the handgun of choice for both self-defense and combat competition (The Combat .45 Auto by Bill Wilson and Michael Bane), Bill is now semi-retired from competition and devotes his time to his burgeoning catalog business, his family, and his passion for handgun hunting. I caught up with him recently to talk about handgunning:*

**JW:** How did you get started in handgun competition, Bill?

**BW:** I started shooting PPC in 1974 in a local police reserve outfit. I met a lot of the top shooters and got pretty enthused about the whole idea. By then IPSC was just being formed. The Columbia, Missouri club where the Columbia Conference was held is just about five hours up the road from my home, so I started going up there and shooting club matches with them. At that time I was strictly a revolver shooter—I shot my first two or three matches with a Colt Python. I eventually bought a Browning Hi-Power and shot a couple of matches with it, but when they started scoring major/minor, I realized I had to go to the .45 to be competitive.

**JW:** How did you get into gunsmithing?

**BW:** I'd been in the retail gun business since 1973—I opened a gunshop while I was still in college. I'd read about different gunsmiths in the magazines and I sent my first .45 off to one of them. It came back a disaster. I sent the next gun to another gunsmith and the same thing happened: the gun wouldn't function properly, misfired all the time.

Since I'm trained as a watchmaker, I considered myself somewhat skilled with my hands, so I sold both of those guns and bought a stock Government Model. I called King's Gun Works and ordered a set of King-Tappan sights, an extended thumb safety, and Pachmayr grips. I fine-tuned the gun and it worked! The next thing I knew a buddy wanted me to build a gun for him and then another buddy wanted one, and over a period of about a year I realized I could make a better living as a gunsmith than with the retail gun shop.

**JW:** How have competition guns changed since then?

**BW:** The early guns were crude compared to what we have now. In those days a Government Model with a decent trigger and a good set of fixed sights was all you needed to be competitive. In fact there wasn't anything on the market that would give you an advantage. Now, of course, you can buy a wide range of accessories that substantially improve the performance of the gun.

**JW:** Have the shooters changed too?

**BW:** Today there are people who've only been shooting for six months who can do things that the best shooters in the world couldn't do in 1976. Back then there were very few shooters who could shoot a perfect score in El Presidente much under 10 seconds, but now there are probably a hundred shooters out there who can do it in under

loads we were shooting back then wouldn't beat the frames up.

I knew it was a problem because I had a Gold Cup that I just about beat to death. This was before we started using heavy recoil springs. Everybody was crying about their guns breaking apart. I kept thinking about Armand's idea and I finally asked him if he minded if I pursued the project and in typical fashion he said, "Laddie, I don't have the time to mess with it myself—go ahead."

As coincidence would have it, about that time I met Bill Rogers. I told him the idea and he came up with a material and a way to mold it and I designed the part itself. That's how the Shok-Buff was invented, and that's how we got into the accessory business.

Not long after that we came out with our

*I've hunted exclusively with a .44 revolver. The Contenders in rifle calibers are appropriately named "hand cannons." I don't consider them true handguns.*

seven seconds, a handful who can do it in under six, and a few who have done it in under five.

**JW:** You've built a thriving business around the new equipment, and have developed a number of products of your own. How did it all come about?

**BW:** I was friendly with [master gunsmith] Armand Swenson and when I was first learning about the .45, Armand was real good about answering my questions. I was talking to him one day and he mentioned that he'd been thinking about making a nylon bushing to fit on the recoil spring guide so the real hot

first fixed sight, and then we came out with a Commander hammer, then a beavertail grip safety. So we're not just a custom gunshop anymore—we're an accessory company.

**JW:** Where do you come down on the question of whether a new, inexperienced shooter should have a sophisticated gun?

**BW:** I always recommend novices buy a blue Colt Government Model, put some fixed sights on it, get a trigger job, shoot a few matches, then come back and decide what else they want on the gun. I've seen literally hundreds of people shoot two or three matches and then quit, so there's no sense



spending \$1500 on a gun until the shooter decides he's serious about competition. If he is serious about the sport, he's going to get much more enjoyment out of it if he has every possible equipment advantage.

**JW:** *Would that include buying a .38 Super?*

**BW:** I personally don't think the .38 Super is for anyone but the very serious and experienced shooters and add to that experienced handloaders. No reloaders but handloaders—people who really know what loading is all about and have access to a chronograph. The Super is only a minor advantage for a "C" or "D" Class shooter. The only time that it might possibly be an advantage for them would be if it saved a reload in a particular course of fire.

As far as recoil reduction is concerned, I think it takes a pretty experienced shooter to notice the difference. And the Supers require a lot more maintenance than the .45.

**JW:** *I understand you've been cutting back on competition lately.*

**BW:** That's right. I've decided to devote more time to the things that I've put off doing for a long time. Over the years business and competition have taken up most of my time at the expense of my family.

One of the things that I enjoy that I've been putting off for years is handgun hunting. When I was in Africa in '79 to compete in the IPSC World Championship I was fortunate enough to get to Rhodesia for a week and do a little hunting. That was right before it became Zimbabwe. Then in late '85 I made a trip to South Africa with [American Hand-

gunner Editor] Cameron Hopkins, and I went again last July.

**JW:** *Have you ever hunted with long guns or Contenders in rifle calibers?*

**BW:** To date I've hunted exclusively with a .44 revolver—I guess I'm a diehard. The Contenders in the rifle calibers are appropriately named "hand cannons" as far as I'm concerned. I don't consider them true handguns.

**JW:** *What kind of game have you hunted?*

**BW:** Wildebeest, zebra, impala, warthog, bush pig, kudu—just about all the plains game. The biggest thing I've taken in Africa with a handgun was a lion, which was pretty exhilarating. You don't realize how big one of those things is until you're standing about 25 yards away.

**JW:** *What kind of hunting do you do in this country?*

**BW:** Mainly deer hunting. We just got back from the Kennedy Ranch in Texas and it was really an experience. I had no idea that there were that many whitetail deer in the whole world! We saw two to five hundred deer in one day and over 75 in one herd. Unreal!

**JW:** *What is it that you enjoy about hunting?*

**BW:** It's being in the outdoors and relaxing. When I go on a hunting trip for a few days I rarely think about business, and I just don't seem to get that relaxed on a normal vacation trip. The preparation before the hunt is a lot of fun too because I'm a chronic experimenter—I enjoy trying all kinds of loads.

Another reason I enjoy handgun hunting is that it's a family activity. My wife and my 8-

year-old son both love it. As a matter of fact, he took his first impala on our last trip to Africa. He loves to shoot anyway. I got him a Ruger Mark I .22 automatic pistol with a scope on it and he sandbags it down on a picnic table and shoots tin cans and metallic silhouettes. A couple hundred rounds of .22 shells don't last him very long.

**JW:** *How do you respond to those who oppose hunting on moral grounds?*

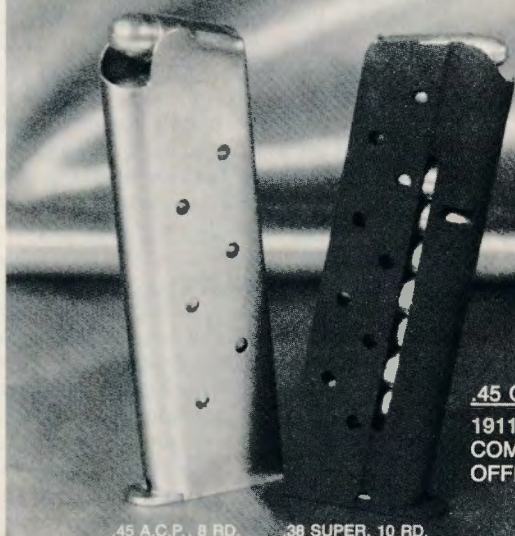
**BW:** Hunting's been going on from Day One, and it was hunters and explorers who founded this country—not computer operators. I don't see any difference between an animal being killed and butchered in a slaughterhouse and being killed in the wild by a hunter. I always try to place the shot as well as I can and kill the animal as quickly as possible, and I make sure the animal is butchered for the meat. Most of the people who are against hunting are not against going to a restaurant and ordering a steak.

**JW:** *What kind of gun do you recommend to the average person for self-defense?*

**BW:** If it's going to be concealed on the person, I think the Colt Lightweight Commander is pretty hard to beat. Or a 2½-inch Model 66 if the person prefers a revolver. For around the house, I prefer the automatic because I can leave the chamber empty with a full magazine in the gun. Even though I've taught gun safety to my children, I still feel better not having a loaded revolver in the house. I figure that by the time they're old enough to be able to cycle the slide on a

*Continued on page 77*

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*A Collector's Guide To Colt's .38 Automatic Pistols*, by Douglas G. Sheldon. Softbound, format six by nine inches. 185 pages, 117 illustrations. \$22.95 (postpaid). Published by the author, Douglas G. Sheldon, P.O. Box 725, Willernie, MN 55090.

This excellent little book is subtitled *The Production History of the Automatic Colt Pistol*, and it is that, and a lot more. For the latecomers among the gun people, who may have the impression that the Colt automatic began with the familiar 1911 Government Model, this book will supply the story of the real beginning. It does not detail the pre-production prototypes made by John Moses Browning, but picks up the story in 1900, with the introduction of the first Colt automatic pistol in that year.

There is much detail on the different variations in slide serrations, hammer styles, and sights used on the early-production pistols. There is very complete information on the mechanism of the "sight safety," the pivoting rear sight that could be pushed down to block the firing pin, and the reasons for its discontinuance early in the production. The schedule followed in this, and the altering of a number of pistols that originally had the sight safety are particularly well-reported, with many serial numbers cited. For those interested in military ordnance, there is complete coverage of the small U.S. Army and Navy contracts.

The Sporting Model and the Military Model of 1902 are covered in the same detail in Section II and Section III of the book. In the latter section is a breakdown of the serial numbering of the Military Model, a system that frequently is confusing for beginning collectors, because at one point the counting was downward rather than progressive. On page 115 I saw two photos I had never seen before—front and back views of the original military contract 1902 holster.

At the end of each section there is an "Analysis of Factory Ledgers," with information taken directly from the Colt Archives. Many catalog illustrations and original instruction sheets are shown, and all of the photographs are of good quality. In Section IV, the Pocket Model of 1903 is covered, and Section V, titled "General Information Common To All Models," has a lot of data that will be helpful to both the experienced collector and the beginner. Particularly good are the serial range comparison chart and the chronological development chart.

This physically slim volume is a perfect demonstration of the fact that a book doesn't have to be thick to be complete. While they are not vital to the information presented, the cover design by Linda Sheldon and the cover photo by Glenn Peterson are an impressive combination that would be appropriate framed, on the wall of any gun room. For our purposes, though, the content is of main importance. There are still many gaps in automatic pistol references. This book fills one of them, and does it well.

J.B. Wood



# The AYOOB Files

By Massad Ayoob

## COPKILLER AT LARGE: THE WETTERLING INCIDENT

**Situation:** You're an armed citizen and you arrive at the scene of a dead cop and his savage attacker.

**Lesson:** Show courage and resolution. Draw your licensed Hi-Power and shoot the copkiller.

Officer Larry Wetterling, 32, of the California Highway Patrol, had just begun his day shift on Interstate 15 in the Cajon area of San Bernardino. He was parked monitoring traffic when a Miss Nancy Newman pulled up next to his cruiser to tell him a strange story: she had been following a man on I-15 in an old black Lincoln that kept swaying across the lanes, and had then spun out in three circles and come to rest heading northbound on the south side, partly on the road shoulder and partly in a lane of traffic. Wetterling nodded—15 minutes before, San Bernardino Dispatch had advised all units of a possible drunk driver fitting that description. Wetterling gunned his black and white cruiser to the scene.

The car had gone off the road at 20 minutes to eight. Miss Newman had run to the vehicle to see if the driver was injured. A scraggly-bearded, scruffily dressed white guy had replied, "I'm all right . . . I've got some pills in the car here somewhere." He had then tried to make a U-turn so violently that a tire had blown, fetching the early '60s vintage Lincoln to its position on the shoulder facing oncoming traffic.

It was now ten minutes to 8 a.m. As Larry Wetterling pulled his car in just south of the Lincoln, he said into the police microphone, "10-97 with wrong-way vehicle approximately half to three fourths of a mile south of the Cajon Summit."

It was to be his last broadcast.

Wetterling approached the seedy-looking driver, who was at the right front of the Lincoln, trying to change the tire. He requested license and registration. Wetterling took the wallet of papers and slipped it inside his jacket pocket, then slid into the Lincoln on the right front passenger side.

It was March 9, 1973. Wetterling had joined CHP six years before, and developed the reputation of being a cautious officer who always followed procedure. But now he seemed most concerned with getting the Lincoln off the road. He had reason to believe that he was dealing with a drunk or doped driver, and wanted to get *him* off the road, too. Since he had not personally observed the man driving and drinking, finding booze or drugs in the car would be critical to his case.

As the gaunt man moved toward the door, casting no warning shadow because the light was coming the other way, the preoccupied Officer Larry Wetterling had no way of knowing just what

he was dealing with.

The gaunt man was Gerald James Youngberg, 30. He had a long record of crimes including attempted murder, assault, burglary, and robbery. He'd gone to prison for almost 11 years on one of the robbery charges, and had been released from Joliet State Penitentiary on parole in 1971. He had come to Las Vegas, Nevada on the scent of an armed robbery that would net him \$200,000, but had chickened out at the last minute.

The night before, he had asked his Nevada landlady if he could use her phone. She obliged, showing him where the phone was in her bedroom. At 3 a.m. that morning, she'd heard a prowler outside, and reached in her night-table drawer for her Smith & Wesson .38 Special revolver, by one account a three-inch model 36 Chief Special. It was gone.

Calling her local police, she was told by the dispatcher that there was nothing they could do in the wee hours of the morning, and since the alleged prowler seemed to have gone, she should make a report when the day shift came on.

That had been four and a half hours ago. The prowler had been Youngberg, and the gun he'd stolen from her earlier that evening was in the glove box of the Lincoln, the glove box the highway patrolman was about to open. Youngberg knew that being a felon in possession of a stolen firearm would quickly end his parole.

And now, Youngberg jumped the officer.

Caught unaware, Wetterling struggled against the surprise attack, but he couldn't keep the gaunt man's hand from snaking into the glove compartment. David Nielson, a passing truck driver, looked on in horror as Youngberg shot the patrolman three times, twice in the torso and once behind the ear.

The killer threw the policeman's corpse halfway out of the car, the head making a sickening sound as it thumped to the roadside. He bent and drew the officer's revolver, a six-inch Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum, from its holster. Though the officer was already dead, Youngberg straddled him and contemptuously fired another bullet through his face and into his brain.

A Smith & Wesson in each hand, he turned and bolted toward the CHP vehicle. As he leaped into it and gunned the engine, another passing motorist took in the horror of the scene. This was Judge Joseph B. Campbell. The jurist raced after the commandeered

*Continued on page 59*



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# TEST REPORT

Southern California's high-desert populations of coyotes, jackrabbits, tin cans, and derelict Dodge Lancer bodies went essentially undiminished one weekend about 20 years ago. By no small coincidence it happened on the very weekend I got my first look at the dark side of safari life. There I was, a long, long way from home, my hunting instincts keen and glistening, with naught save a dreary drive back to civilization to look forward to. I'll never forget the disappointment I felt when, after breaking out one of several guns I'd planned to shoot, I discovered I'd left all my carefully assembled ammo sitting on the reloading bench back in town.

# H.D.S. COMPAC

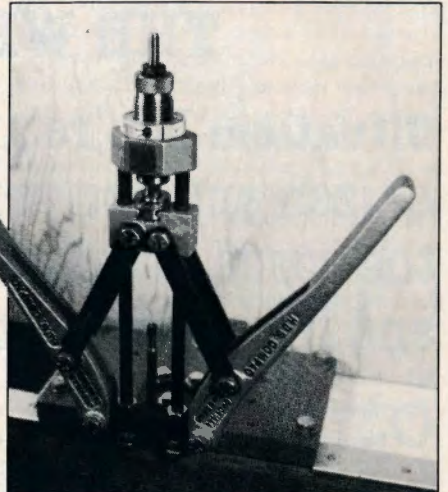
By Dan Cotterman

berg allure, the aspect of appearance and function that's bound to attract anyone who ever cherished an erector set.

And, although the Compac, which sells for \$54.95, may not exist as the ultimate field tool, it performs the functions of resizing, priming, and bullet seating well enough to bridge at least part of the convenience gap.

But read on, please. There are a few things you should know before you operate the Compac—things you won't learn by reading the instruction sheet.

Smallness and lightness of weight are among the Compac's best features. Its overall



Having thus been shafted by incipient senility, I decided to brighten my prospects during future shooting excursions by gathering a few reloading components and tools to carry afield. The novelty of the idea was appealing. There'd always be a ready source of handmade ammo, because an entire reloading kit would be hard to overlook during pre-departure inventories of armament and tack.

There was, however, one problem. The main difficulty with any plan for portable reloading is that although components stored in a compartmentalized carrying case are easy come-alongs, a full-size press is about as handy as a bull fiddle if it isn't bench mounted.

The solution is to use a small hand press. I've worked with several such devices and have found that they're all capable of turning out fairly good reloads. Still, in order to get along with a hand press, you pretty much have to adopt a pioneering attitude—figure you're out there roughing it anyway—and give up a lot of the convenience you get with a bench outfit.

Which is to say there's plenty of room for improvement in the design and handiness of portable reloading presses. So, now we have the Compac, a small rig that's been made and marketed for the past few years by Huntington Die Specialties, P.O. Box 991, Dept. AH, Oroville, CA 95965. The tool, a mad mixture of arms, rods and handles, resembles the get of romantic entanglement between a scissor gate and a nutcracker. That's the Rube Gold-

height is 8 3/4 inches, it's three inches wide, and it measures just 1 1/2 inches from front to back. It weighs 37 ounces by itself, and about 1 1/2 pounds when a resizing die and shellholder are added. Two aircraft aluminum handles 8 1/4 inches in length move through an arc of about 140°, which action causes a small aluminum platen to slide for a distance of 3 3/4 inches along two steel rods that are 5/16 of an inch in diameter and parallel each other one inch apart. Moving the handles to the bottom of their travel, as is necessary for primer seating, extends the width of the Compac to 17 inches, at which point the ends of the handles will be about 3 1/2 inches below horizontal. Because of this, take care to mount the press so there'll be an inch or so of clearance between the ends of the handles and the edge of the mounting surface. If you don't you'll risk barking your knuckles.

Also, although the instructions advise you to adjust the die for full-length resizing by running the platen all the way up, then screwing the die down till it makes "snug contact" with the shellholder, you'll find that running the die down a little farther, so it meets the shellholder on its way up, will provide more knuckle room as you press the handles together at the top of their travel. Of course, the recommended method of adjustment offers the advantage of greater leverage, which is good when large rifle cases are being full-length resized. It is not, however, necessary to command a lot of leverage if you're working with straight-sided handgun cases. Besides, because of its design, the



Compac doubles the leverage available with one-handed presses.

Bullet seating went well, but not till I developed a bit of digital dexterity. It's easy enough to place primers between the two vertical rods and into the priming punch, but tweedling bullets into the same limited space is something else. In fact, the instructions tell you that it's better to use a window-type die, because it puts the operation above the top member of the press where there's more working room. That's true; it is easier that way, but I discovered that it's possible to pick up a bullet, roll it past one of the rods, and recapture it on the other side between thumb and forefinger. Once you've got the Compac mounted on a portable reloading outfit or clamped on the wall of a pickup bed and begin seating bullets, you'll find that the trick is more quickly learned than explained. It is therefore possible to get along fine with regular seating dies.

"It is not recommended that the Compac be secured by its base for case sizing operations." So it says on the instruction sheet. No disrespect intended, but I'm still puzzling over that one. Of course, it's necessary to withdraw cases from the sizing die by grasping the handles from the top and pushing downward, and that could result in a minor amount of torquing against the joints and mounting bolts, or cause the mounting plate to slip in the clamp. Also, downward movement of the handles during full-length resizing is a little more difficult when the press is mounted. Maybe that's the reason for the admonition. Still, I've full-length resized everything from .357 Magnum to .280 Remington cases with the Compac firmly mounted and nothing has gone wrong.

I've also resized by the prescribed method, using the Compac "freehand," while holding it off-vertical. The only problem you're likely to encounter when the press is tilted is incorrect case-mouth/sizing-die alignment. As with any press, this can be solved by using a die with a fair amount of radius around the mouth of the chamber. Also, as the instructions suggest, it's a good idea to avoid setting the shellholder too rigidly. Turn the locking screw in just far enough to keep the shellholder in place, but let it "float" a little in the platen so that both the case and the shellholder will be free to drift into better alignment.

On-site reloading will call for the use of a small bushing type powder measure, or you can get by with a set of dippers. You should check charge weights, regardless of what's indicated on the tables that come with these devices, but once that's done it isn't necessary to pack a powder scale. And, working outdoors where grit is apt to damage tools, it's better to use lube-free carbide sizing dies.

So, now we've got this portable reloading outfit and we've tossed in a Compac, which is about the size of a handgun. I'm not accusing anyone of being sufficiently addled to spend days getting ready for a shooting trip and then drive off without the ammo, but it's nice to know that if it ever happens to you your weekend won't be down the drain.



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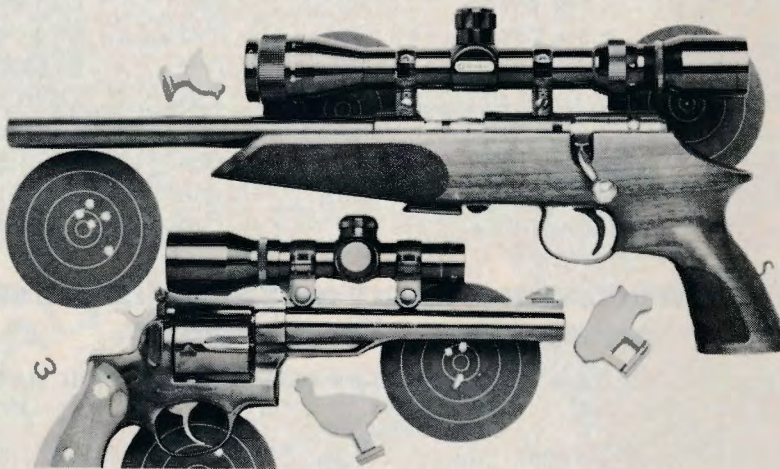
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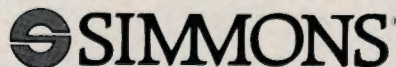


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# TAFFIN TESTS

*Taffin Tests is the name of a new regular feature intended to present a capsulized overview of selected handgun calibers. Noted handloader and handgunner John Taffin shares his decades of experience both in the game fields and on the range.*

*A member of the Board of Directors of IHMSA (International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association) and Field Editor of The Sixgunner, John is perhaps the most knowledgeable expert on big bore sixguns since the sad passing of Elmer Keith. John is a jr. high*

*school teacher, married with three children and a Life Member of the NRA.*

*Taffin Tests covers a different handgun cartridge each issue. Now, over to John for the .44 Magnum.*

My love affair with the big .44 began in 1957. Fresh out of high school, I purchased a very early Ruger Blackhawk 6½ inch Flat-top. The 6½ inch barrel was cut to 4¾ inch and had many miles on it before it was fitted with the 7½ inch barrel that it now

wears. In the early '60s, I added two Model 29s to my then-modest collection, a 4 inch and a 6½ inch. Through the ensuing years, my .44 collection has grown to include Super Blackhawks, Redhawks, Dan Wessons, Abilenes, and TC's.

Picking favorite loads for the .44 is no easier than picking favorite sixguns. Not long after the .44 Magnum became a reality in 1956, a standard load was developed, namely a 250 gr. cast bullet over 22.0 grs. of #2400. That was a good load 30 years ago and still is

## HIGH PERFORMANCE, FAVORITE LOADS

BULLET	LOAD	S&W M29 4"	S&W M629 6"	Ruger BlkHwk 7½"
Lyman #429244	20.0 gr. #2400	1154	1295	1296
	21.0 gr. #2400	1227	1368	1398
	22.0 gr. #2400	1292	1458	1487
NEI #260.429K	20.0 gr. #2400	1095	1231	1263
	21.0 gr. #2400	1187	1331	1388
	22.0 gr. #2400	1227	1380	1414
Lyman #429421	9.0 gr. Unique	869	936	986
	24.0 gr. H4227	1198	1277	1322
Lyman #429215	25.0 gr. #2400	1418	1573	1601
NEI #295.429	21.5 gr. WW296	1126	1270	1277
	22.5 gr. WW296	1195	1350	1380
SSK #320.429	21.5 gr. WW296	1213	1328	1384
	23.5 gr. WW680	1079	1242	1254
	21.0 gr. H4227	1141	1239	1229
Sierra 180JHC	26.0 gr. #2400	1556	1733	1801
Speer 240JHP	24.5 gr. WW296	1167	1311	1366
Speer 240JSP	22.0 gr. #2400	1228	1364	1411
Hornady 240JHP	24.5 gr. WW296	1168	1318	1361
Hornady 265FP	23.0 gr. WW296	1223	1339	1369

## HIGH PERFORMANCE HEAVYWEIGHT BULLETS AND BARREL LENGTH COMPARISONS

BULLET	LOAD	SUPER REDHAWK 4¾"	REDHAWK 5½"	DAN WESSON 7½"	SUPER SS 8"	SUPER SS 10½"
SSK #320.429JDJ	23.5 WW680	1173	1212	1282	1255	1304
	21.5 WW296	1312	1321	1394	1375	1431
SSK #311.429JDJ*	22.0 WW296	1258	1299	1376	1333	1404
SSK #311.429JDJ**	22.0 WW296	1270	1271	1358	1307	1381
NEI #295.429K	21.5 WW296	1242	1252	1297	1257	1383
	22.5 WW296	1314	1335	1371	1376	1453
SSK #340.429JDJ	19.5 WW296	1212	1210	1293	1237	1296

SSK #320.429JDJ is JD Jones designed 310 gr.

SSK #311.429 JDJ is JD Jones designed \*285 gr. cast of linotype, \*\*300 gr. cast of 4:6

Lead: linotype

NEI #295.429K is "Keith-style" SWC, Gas Checked 290 gr.

SSK #340.429JDJ is JD Jones designed 342 gr. GC.

# the .44 Magnum

one of the best. I use a lot of #2400 with 250 gr. hard cast bullets, however, I run up and down the scale from 20.0 to 22.0 grs of #2400 with either the Lyman #429244 or the NEI #260.429K. The former was designed by Ray Thompson back in the early '50s and is one of the most accurate .44 cast bullet designs available. The latter dates back to an Elmer Keith design from 1927 and is still a top notch .44 bullet.

Using either of these bullets cast hard and loaded over 20.0 to 22.0 grs. of #2400 will give from 1100 to 1500 fps depending on the particular sixgun and barrel length. The key is to experiment and find the bullet/load combination that shoots best in each particular .44. Both bullets are excellent performers on the silhouette range and also proven hunting bullets for deer-sized game.

Full-house loads are not always needed in the .44 Magnum, and when I want a mild, low recoiling load, the same weight bullet, 250 grs., is used over 9.0 grs. of Unique. For this load I use the Lyman #429421 Keith SWC so I can tell at a glance that these are my relaxing loads. At 900-1000 fps, again depending on particular sixgun and barrel length, this is a load for a lazy afternoon of busting varmints or tin cans, and will also double as a nearly perfect defense load from a short barreled sixgun. Being the equivalent of a factory loaded .45 Colt, it has plenty of punch and minimal recoil.

Lyman has another beautiful bullet, also designed by Ray Thompson, the #429215GC. This is also a SWC gas checked design and over 25.0 grs. of #2400 will give from 1400-1600 fps, with relatively mild recoil, flat trajectory, varmint accuracy, and also does well on 50m and 100m silhouette targets especially in those sixguns that still



shoot high with 250 gr. bullets even though the rear sight is bottomed out.

The Eighties have seen the development of a new bullet for the .44, the heavyweight cast bullet. For the heavy frame .44s, namely the Ruger Super Blackhawk, Redhawk, and the Dan Wesson .44, I use 300 gr. cast bullets for most of my shooting. These heavy frame sixguns will take the constant pounding of recoil offered by the 300 gr. bullets and ask for more. Two bullets that I use a great deal are the NEI #295.429GC and the SSK #320.429. Loading the NEI 295 grainer over 21.5 of WW296 gives from 1100-1300 fps depending on barrel length, and increasing to 22.5 grs. of WW296 ups the velocity by 100 fps. All fired cases, in every .44 sixgun that I have used them in, from Smith 29's to the new Freedom Arms .44, extract easily with no signs of excessive pressure. I particularly like this bullet in the 4 to 7½ inch sixguns.

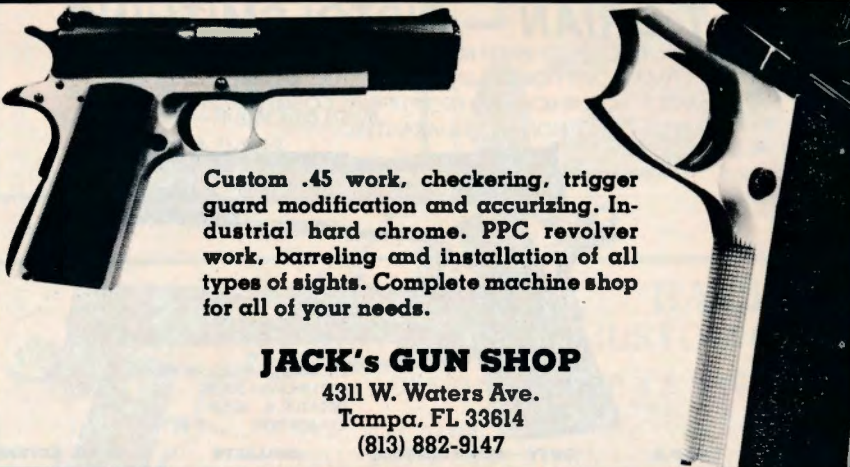
The other heavyweight bullet, SSK's 320 gr. heavyweight, has been used on silhouette ranges and game fields all over the country. I started shooting this bullet over 23.5 grs. of WW680 nearly seven years ago. Velocities run from 1100-1400 fps going from 4 inch barrel lengths up to 10 inch lengths and recoil is stout. For about 100 fps more velocity, the same bullet is used over 21.5 grs. of WW296. I just received a call today from a sixgunner down in Georgia who tried the SSK bullet over 21.5 grs. of WW296 and he was astounded at the relatively mild pressures encountered. "Fired cases just fall out of my cylinder, and I was worried about high pressure!" he exclaimed. Pressure tests on this load read 38,000 CUP, which is less than many factory loadings of .44 Magnums with 240 gr. jacketed bullets.

### PRESSURE TESTS:

BULLET	LOAD	PRESSURE
SSK #320.429	23.5 gr. WW680	35,000
	21.5 gr. WW296	38,000
	22.5 gr. WW296	42,400
	21.5 gr. H4227	34,100
	20.0 gr. #2400	40,900

Besides being blessed with many well-made .44 Magnum sixguns and a wide range of .44 cast bullets, shooters also have many excellent jacketed bullets to choose from. Most of my jacketed bullet shooting has been confined to the FMJs from Speer and Hornady. Using either 20.0 grs. of #2400 or 23.0 grs. of WW296 give velocities of right around 1300 fps in long barreled revolvers. Like cast bullets over the same loads, these are accurate, easy on the shooter, and sixgun, and also pack plenty of punch even though they are about 10% below maximum. I have shot many groups with both cast bullets and jacketed bullets, using these powder char ges, that could be covered with one hand even though the targets were 150 and 200 yards away. This was accomplished of course, by shooting off sandbags and under perfect conditions.

What kind of accuracy should be expected from a .44 Magnum sixgun? I will not be satisfied with any gun/load combination that



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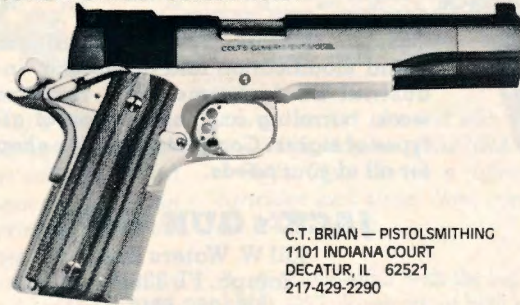
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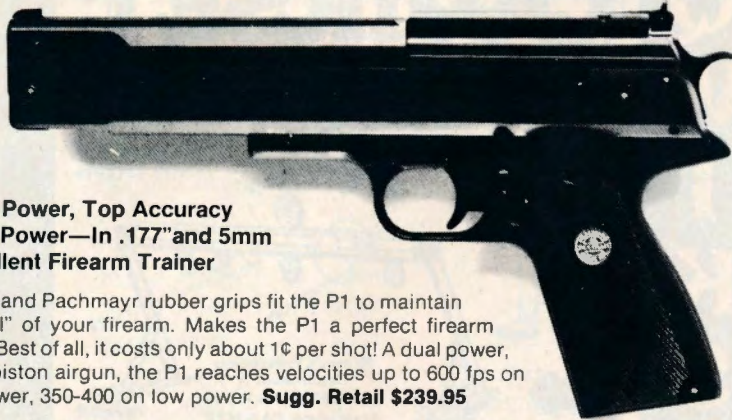
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will not cut one-hole five-shot groups at 25 yards, and stay under two inches at 50. Some .44s will shoot just about any load well while others are very picky about what they are fed. I've had some .44s that were mediocre with all loads using 250 gr. bullets, but become one-inch 25 yard guns when used with 300 gr. bullets. A good .44 Magnum will shoot alongside any other "target" revolver. It can be loaded accurately enough to stay on a ram's body 10 for 10 at 200 meters. Loaded with 300 gr. bullets at 1300-1400 fps it is a premier hunting handgun when used with common sense, and with proper loads becomes a first rate defensive sidearm. It would take a lifetime of shooting to cover all the good high performance loads possible with the .44 Magnum.



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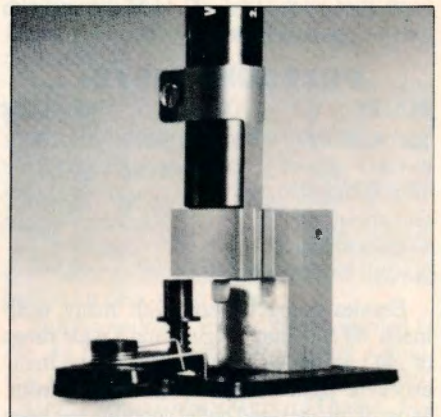
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## WHAT'S NEW

### Hornady Updates Pro-Jector

Hornady's new Automatic Primer Shut-Off for the Pro-Jector progressive reloading machine allows hassle-free loading. The new device prevents primers from spilling.

Now standard on Pro-Jector machines, the primer shut-off assembly permits primers to drop into the primer cup one at a time during progressive reloading. The "Positive Priming System" precisely primes cases in coordination with the rotating shell plate.



Removal of primers from the automatic feed assembly is easier with the shut-off which prevents spilling.

The Automatic Primer Shut-Off may be added to early production Pro-Jectors. The cost is \$30. Persons interested in upgrading their Pro-Jectors may contact Hornady, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 1848, Grand Island, NE, 68802.

### Old Timer

Go back in time and relive the long cattle drives and gunfights of the 1800s with the Old Timer from American Sales.

The Old Timer is a traditional western holster for single and double action revolvers. It is made from double-ply leather, is nylon stitched and has 24 cartridge loops.

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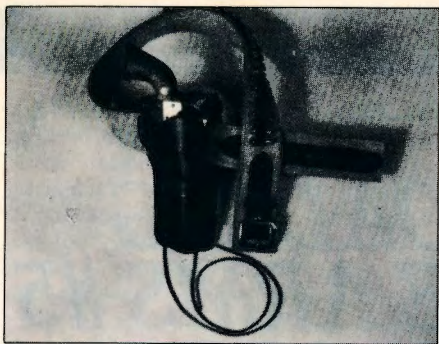
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The Old Timer sells for \$74.95 plus \$3 shipping.

## Handgun Hunting Video

Pachmayr presents a 50-minute video on handgun hunting starring Hal Swiggett. Augmented with Hal's narrative, the film discusses the equipment and techniques favored by handgun hunters. Included are actual hunting sequences filmed in Texas.

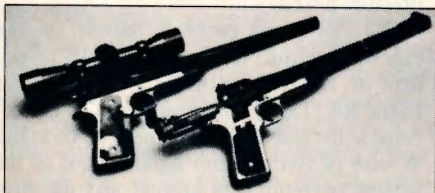


Available on both Beta and VHS, the Pachmayr hunting video may be ordered by calling toll-free 1-800-423-9704. A retail price had not been announced at press time.

## Two New Dominator Calibers

Pachmayr introduces the .22 Hornet and the .35 Remington to the Dominator single-shot conversion kit for the 1911 pistol.

The .22 Hornet comes with a 10½ inch barrel while the .35 Rem. is fitted with a 14 inch barrel.



Pachmayr continues to offer the Dominator in the original calibers, .223, .308 and 7mm-08. For more information, see your local Pachmayr dealer or call toll-free 1-800-423-9704.

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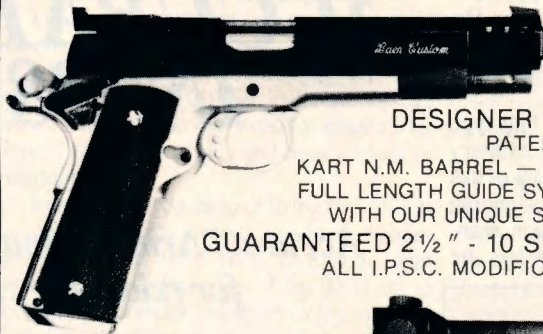
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*Thompson*



By Charles E. Petty

I've been shooting a .38 Super in IPSC competition and for fun for over two years now and I've tried my fair share of loads. Some have been truly lousy, some have been quite good, but *none* have topped what I'm getting now with one of the new line of powders from Accurate Arms Co. (McEwen, TN, 37101).

This firm imports a line of ball-type powders made in Israel by Israeli Military Industries, better known as IMI. Part of this country's aid to Israel has been lending assistance in setting up ammunition manufacturing facilities and IMI's powders are



## HANDLOADING ACCURATE ARMS #5 IN .38 SUPER

*Accurate Arms #5 may be the best propellant yet for reloading .38 Super for IPSC!*

### ACCURATE ARMS #5 POWDER IN .38 SUPER

Charge*	Bullet	Velocity	Pressure	Power Factor
5.6 grs.	155 grs.	1110 fps	30,600 CUP	170.5
5.8 grs.	155 grs.	1127 fps	31,500 CUP	174.6
5.6 grs.	160 grs.	1080 fps	30,800 CUP	172.8

\*Recommended starting load: 5.0 grs. AA#5 with either bullet listed.

WARNING: This data is intended for information only. It is merely a guide and should be used with caution because of unavoidable variations in firearms and handloading components. Neither *American Handgunner* nor the author accept responsibility for results obtained using this information. This data applies 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 designed for the .38 ACP.

produced using the same technology as American products. The entire product line contains nine different powders which cover most pistol and rifle powder needs and has been recently expanded to include cases, bullets and primers—all manufactured by IMI.

Accurate Arms #5 is the fastest burning of their pistol powders with a burning rate that is similar to Unique, and I have found it to be an excellent powder for a number of other applications. Since it's a ball-type powder it meters beautifully and is one of the most consistent powders I've used. Extreme velocity spreads in my .38 Super loads rarely approach 20 fps, and the majority are more like 10 fps.

Ever since I began shooting the .38 Super, I've been looking for better powders. Something that will make IPSC major [bullet wt. (gr.) × velocity (fps)/1000=170] without the problems of blown cases and erratic velocities that have plagued Super shooters since the caliber first became popular in IPSC.

At the SHOT Show I spoke with Marty Liggins, Accurate Arms' guru of loads and such, and he promptly sent me a sample of several of their powders. According to Marty, #5 had never been used in the .38 Super and I very gingerly began working up loads.

My components were Winchester .38 Auto cases, Winchester primers and two different cast bullets. These were the Redding/Saeco #391 round-nose that casts around 160 gr. and the #930 SWC designed by Bill Wilson at 155 gr. Both were sized to .357". Moulds for both are available from Redding Reloading (114 Starr Rd., Dept. AH, Cortland, NY, 13045). Ammunition was loaded on a Dillon 550 to an overall length of 1.23" and taper crimped. Test shooting was done with a Wilson Accu-Comp and chronographed using a PACT Mk II timer/chronograph.

Rather than bore you with a lengthy recitation of all the work I did, we'll get right to the good stuff. The first serious test session I had ten different loads and began the shooting/chronographing with some using W-W 540. Those loads were some that I worked on for another article (*American Handgunner* Nov/Dec 1986) and I was shooting them again just to make sure. I was getting my usual groups at 25 yards and was really using the target only for an aiming point so I wouldn't shoot the chronograph screens. This sort of shooting doesn't prove a lot about accuracy, but when you do enough of it you begin to get feelings.

The first #5 load I tried was a little under major velocity but the damndest thing hap-

pened. Group size decreased dramatically and I really began paying attention. The *worst* group I got was two-inches! All other components were the same—the only thing different was the powder. It wasn't unusual for the chronograph to display an extreme velocity spread of under 10 fps. That is truly outstanding consistency and is, I'm sure, responsible for the excellent accuracy.

Major velocity loads showed no signs of excessive pressure and several successive testing sessions produced identical results. I really began to feel as if I were on to something neat. Of course, all the "feeling" in the world ain't worth beans when you're dealing with chamber pressure and there's no way I'm going to publish loading data for an entirely new component package that hasn't been pressure tested.

But .38 Super pressure barrels are not exactly plentiful. George Wilson III, president of The Wilson Arms Co. (63 Leetes Island Rd., Dept. AH, Branford, CT, 06405) came to the rescue. Wilson (no relation to Bill Wilson of Accu-Comp fame) is one of the largest barrelmakers around and the firm recently began production of pressure test barrels to complement their line of rifle and pistol barrels. Marty Liggins tested my loads at the Accurate Arms ballistic laboratory.

*Continued on page 75*



A few years back I wrote that handloaders are hard-pressed to equal the accuracy of today's factory ammo. That line prompted several replies from target/PPC aficionados taking me to task for that comment. Digressing a bit—yes, it can be done if you wish to go to the time and expense of trying a dozen different powders and bullets and making trip after trip after trip to the range to try 10 rounds of this and that, then back to the bench to make up even more, all in search of the elusive one-hole-group.

All that's fine for those of you who hand-load as a hobby and don't mind all the fuss and bother. I, too, was that way at one time, but my loading these days is limited to just a couple of handgun calibers, and then only for match/target work. When it comes to hunting or defensive work, I let the ammo makers do the work for me, and that brings me to the topic of this article, the Hornady line of handgun ammo.

Once sold under the Frontier name, all ammunition from the Grand Island, Neb., plant now carries the company name on an attractive black, white and red box. The entire line is made from virgin brass, a far cry from the early days when their entire line was limited to rifle calibers formed from basic military 7.62 and .30-06 brass which was bought by the surplus truckload. Today, Hornady offers a total of 31 loadings for handguns in seven calibers, including .25 ACP, .380, 9mm, .38 Spec., .357, .44 Mag., and .45 ACP.

All bullet and powder combinations are developed for loading density. That means that the case is sufficiently full of powder in each round so that variations in the position of the gun when fired won't affect ignition, thereby giving consistent performance from shot to shot.

While Hornady stresses uniform velocity, accuracy, more than velocity, is their main goal. However, their velocities rarely have to take a back seat to any other product, and in some instances goes them one better. Once a bullet/powder combination has gotten through the initial work-up, it's produced only in a limited run and tested and re-tested before being released and given the OK for marketing.

Throughout the loading process, the brass is constantly checked for hardness and grain structure, and all cases are checked for splits before actual loading takes place. They are also checked for primer seating depth, and any high seated cases are automatically rejected. Powder column height is also monitored as is bullet pull. Once the machine has completed its loading cycle in each step, the process is instantly checked again to make sure things are right. Evidently things are just that. In the past, I've used the Hornady line of rifle calibers in match-grade to shoot some outstanding groups in Springfield Armory Garands, MIAs, and other assault rifles ranging from the Beretta to the Chinese AKS.

However, my concern here is with their line of handgun ammo. I tested samples of every caliber with the exception of .25 Auto which was left out at my request. Not all their loadings are listed here. For instance, old standards like the 158RNL in .38 and the 158LSWC in .357 were not requested.

Likewise, no attempt was made at expansion testing. Whatever test media you would use for that purpose would only tell how those bullets act in that particular media. I've never been attacked by a dish of gelatin, nor have I attempted to skin and cook a block of modeling clay.

Range work consisted of firing five rounds of each sampling over a Pro-Tach chronograph set about 10 feet from the muzzle, with accuracy work done later. I lay no claim to being able to shoot bullseyes every time, so I'm sure that some of you would shoot better, and some worse, in your own endeavors. Groups fired from a machine rest would give much tighter results, but I feel it's better you get the results of a shooter, not a mechanical marvel.

What follows is a description of the ammunition tested, along with all pertinent data regarding velocity, accuracy, and test gun.

**.380 AUTO:** There are two loads offered

hollowpoint than its heavier brother and coupled with its muzzle velocity, should perform admirably.

**.38 Special:** Four out of seven listed loads were tested, three JHPs and one LHP. A problem with the .38 is getting up enough velocity to reliably expand jacketed ammo. In a handgun, 1000 fps is the accepted minimum to at least get the ball rolling, and although two of the loads tested were of the +P variety, they all fell short by a wide margin. The 125 gr. JHP (834 fps), 140 gr. JHP (+P) (881 fps), and a 158 gr. JHP (+P) (772 fps) would, in my opinion, be marginal as defensive loads. All were accurate as would be expected from this caliber with groups hovering slightly over two-inches. Interestingly enough, the +P loads were marked on the box, but not on the brass. This could cause problems in guns not meant for this higher pressure fodder. The fourth load, a 158 gr. lead SWCHP (772 fps) would be my load of choice in a .38, as expansion should be much better. Test gun in this case was a Colt four-inch.

**.357 Magnum:** Using a new Colt King Cobra with four-inch tube, the bullets in this caliber were the same as in the .38. A 125 gr. JHP (1287 fps), 140 gr. JHP (1235 fps), and 158 gr. JSP (1166 fps) were fired for accuracy



## HORNADY HANDGUN AMMUNITION

By Jim Weller

in this caliber, a 100 gr. FMJ and a 90 gr. JHP. The three-inch barrel on the test Llama launched these little pills at 825 fps and 944 fps respectively, with groups running in the 2½-inch range at 15 yards.

**9mm:** Using a Glock 17 as the test gun, three loads were run. A 90 gr. JHP (1338 fps); a 115 gr. JHP (1212 fps); and the 124 gr. FMJFP (1228 fps). The FMJ round surprised me by slightly beating out the lighter hollowpoint. I've always found the 124 gr. FP to be the most accurate ball ammo available in the 9mm, and wasn't disappointed as the Glock turned in some very nice two-inch groups with this load. The other two ran between two and three inches at 25 yards. For defensive use, the 90 gr. JHP carries a larger

and all again produced groups between two and three inches. In the jacketed line, I'd opt for the 140 gr. JHP for both hunting and defensive work. Muzzle blast and flash aren't nearly as pronounced as with the 125 grainer which could light a cigar four feet from the muzzle, and sounds like an aught-six. Recoil is easily controlled with this round as well.

A real surprise in the .357 line is their 158 gr. SWCHP that left the four-inch barrel at 1000 fps on the nose. Recoil was surprisingly light, muzzle flash non-existent, accuracy more than acceptable. At that velocity, that lead bullet should open up like an umbrella. It makes a premier load for defensive use in .357s, especially the shorter barreled versions.

*Continued on page 69*

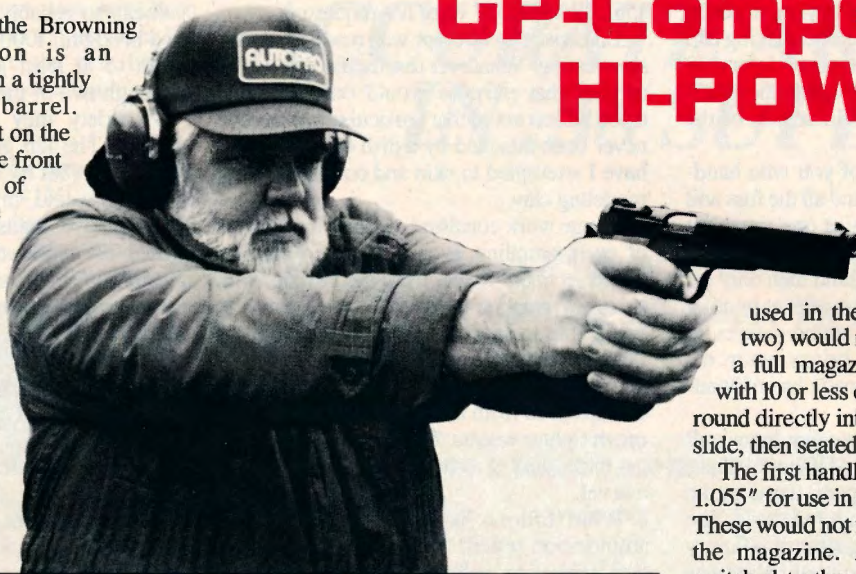


## Browning GP-Competition HI-POWER

By Terry Murbach

Now discontinued, the Browning GP-Competition is an accurized Hi-Power with a tightly chambered six-inch barrel. There is a counterweight on the front of the barrel and the front sight is an integral part of the counterweight. The slide recoils away from this counterweight and does not touch it when fully forward into battery. They are closely fit though; a .005" feeler gauge is a snug fit between barrel and counterweight.

The barrel is fitted precisely to the slide. It locks up with no play



every shot whether stuffed full, or down to one. The first magazine I used in the GP-Comp (it comes with two) would not feed 9mm hardball from a full magazine. It would usually work with 10 or less cartridges if you fed the first round directly into the chamber, dropped the slide, then seated the magazine.

The first handloads I tested had an OAL of 1.055" for use in a short throated S&W M39. These would not feed with over five loaded in the magazine. After 50 rounds or so I switched to the second magazine, stuffed it full of Canadian hardball and found it would not feed either. I stripped off the top round, dropped it into the chamber, re-seated the magazine, put the sights on the target, pulled the trigger and nothing happened. No boom, no nothin, the hammer was still at full cock position. I fumbled around for five minutes

before I figured out the second magazine was too thin front-to-back at the top to depress the magazine safely and allow the trigger lever to do its assigned task. Yes, it was all very aggravating and puzzling.

I shipped both magazines back to Browning's service division in Missouri. They promptly replaced both with two new

ones that will feed and chamber full-length sized cases—usually. Everything else now feeds so smoothly you'd almost swear the slide closed on an empty chamber.

While both new magazines fed perfectly they were larger on the OD and getting them out of the pistol was a fingernail pulling exercise. A close look revealed the magazine safety was putting so much pressure on the mags they were virtually locked into the magazine well.

The magazine safety is spring loaded on its bottom and rotates on a pin that is a bit behind

*Continued on page 84*

***A target-grade 9mm gets high marks from all except the buying public. Lack of demand has prompted Browning to discontinue the GP-Competition Hi-Power.***

whatsoever at the front or back. The slide fits the frame nicely too, with only enough clearance for proper functioning. The inside of the frame is as smooth as the outside. I found a couple of tiny tool marks in a non-critical area, but I really had to look closely.

The external finish on the frame and slide is a fine grain parkerizing that is most appealing. Target guns are usually nicely polished, blued steel but I can see where parkerizing would have definite advantages on a much-used pistol.

The front sight is a Patridge post that is an integral part of the front barrel weight. It gives a clear, black, non-reflective sight picture. It is .125" wide.

The rear sight is a strange looking affair which appears a bit out of character on the finely machined Browning. It is a stamping with more curves and turns than a dog's hind leg. But, it gives the clearest, sharpest glare-free sight picture of any factory sight I've ever used. Standing and shooting in direct sunshine revealed not one glare point on any portion of the rear sight (or the front sight either for that matter). The rear sight is click adjustable for windage and elevation. The windage adjustment moves the entire rear sight left or right. The elevation adjustment raises or lowers the rear sight under spring pressure from an integral flat spring formed from the sight itself.

The GP-Comp's trigger is a new design



***A faulty magazine jammed the GP Comp, but the gun worked fine after the mag was fixed.***

from Browning in that the magazine safety does not affect the trigger pull weight in the slightest. The folks at FN put a trigger in this pistol that breaks as cleanly as any I've seen in a centerfire automatic pistol. Truth be told, it feels like a tuned S&W revolver—yep, it breaks that smoothly. Backlash is just about nil after the sear releases the hammer. The trigger pull weighed 64 oz. (4 pounds) when it was new. After firing 325 rounds the pull had dropped to 56 oz. (3.5 pounds) and was still there at round #668.

Good magazines are the heart of an auto-loading pistol. They must function perfectly

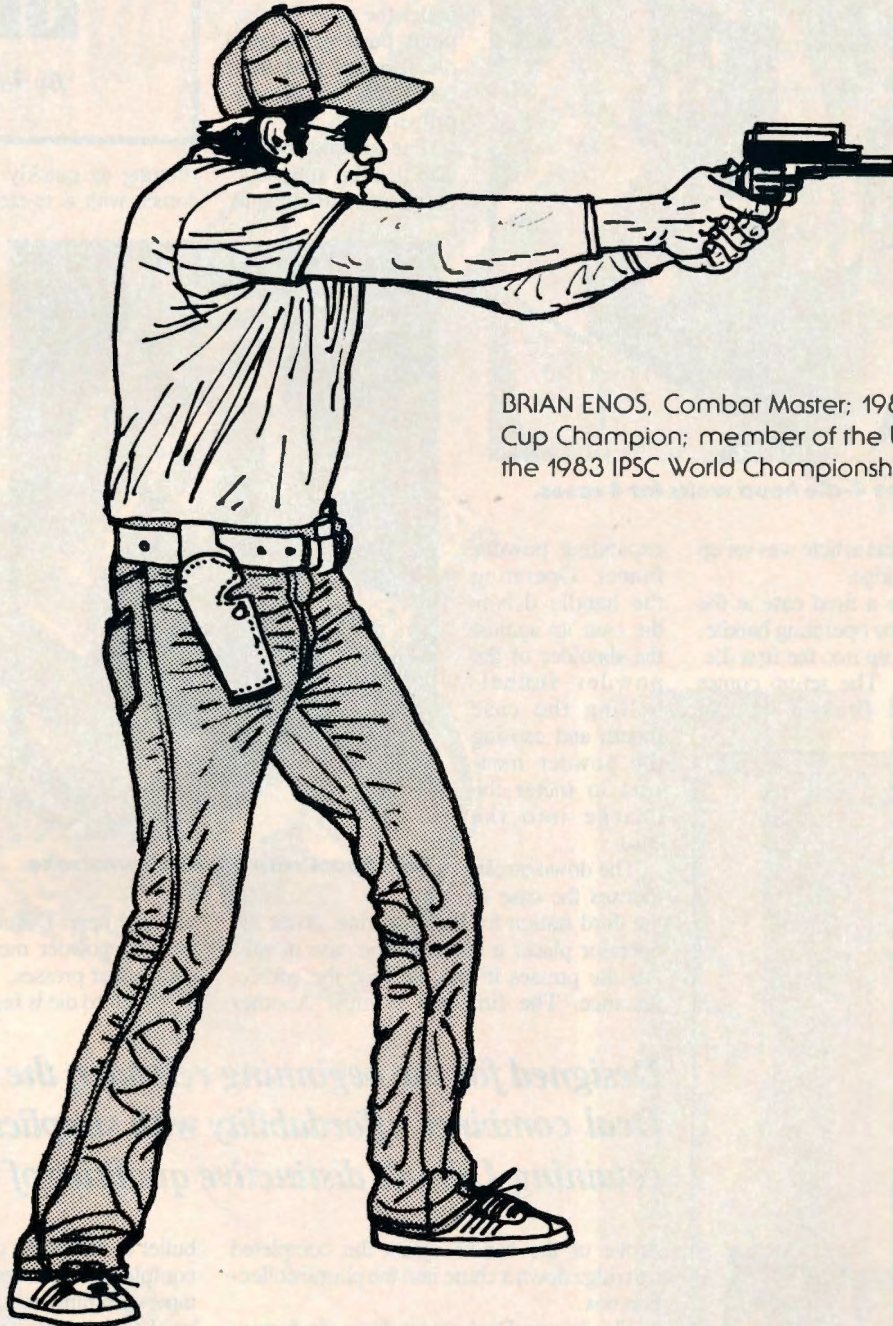


# MASTER TIPS

Collected by Jon Winokur

## The Natural Stance

After experimenting with every type of stance imaginable, including the Weaver and its variations, I finally settled on a stance similar to the Isosceles or "Turret."



BRIAN ENOS, Combat Master; 1983 and '84 Bianchi Cup Champion; member of the U.S. Gold Team at the 1983 IPSC World Championship.

Body is roughly square to the target, feet are about shoulder width apart with the left foot slightly forward. Arms are straight but not rigid and extend toward the target with the pistol in front of the face. Muscle tension is minimal, stance is relaxed.

It's a lot simpler than the Weaver, and simpler is better. There aren't as many critical points to execute, so there's less chance of doing something wrong under stress.



Dillon Precision has a new progressive reloading press for pistol calibers, the Square Deal. Its purpose, says Jerry Jensen, Dillon's general manager, is to provide an entry-level progressive reloader for the novice. Traditionally, a shooter would start with a single-stage press and later, if he wished, move up to a progressive loader. The new Square Deal is a sophisticated design that is to reloading presses what the high-tech Polaroid cameras are to photography.

This is a small progressive press of simplified design, with compound link leverage as on the Dillon RL-550, but with automatic shell plate indexing. The press also has four stations to allow four-die reloading.

The press furnished for this article was set up for the 9mm Luger cartridge.

When the user inserts a fired case at the first station and strokes the operating handle, the ram carries the case up into the first die, the sizer and decapper. The set-up comes with a carbide sizer die. Bringing the ram

down again operates the automatic indexing, transferring the case to the second station. The spent primer drops down a chute built into the ram, and into a spent primer cup at the bottom.

The primer magazine and slide are at this station to re-prime the case. The automatic primer slide picks up a primer and brings it under the case. At this point, pushing the handle forward past top-center will seat the new primer.

The second station also has the automatic powder measure and

running as quickly as possible. The press comes with a re-sized and re-primed case, and a completed cartridge, with bullet seated but without powder or primer, to help the user adjust his press and to familiarize himself with its operation. The well-illustrated manual walks the user step by step through the procedure.

The powder measure requires adjustment, using a 7/16" wrench to turn the bolt. Dillon recommends using a load from a reputable reloading manual. Setting the powder charge weight is critical. Using a scale is necessary for accuracy and safety, and there's no short-cut

possible here. Dillon decided not to use the bushing powder metering system found on some other presses.

The third die is factory-adjusted to seat the

expanding powder funnel. Operating the handle drives the case up against the shoulder of the powder funnel, bell the case mouth and causing the powder measure to meter the charge into the case.

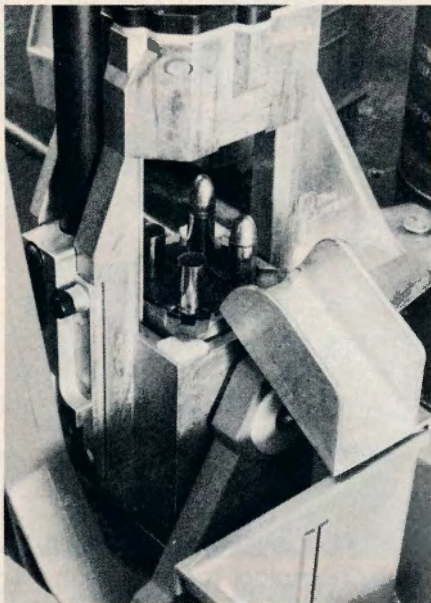
The down-stroke indexes the case to the third station for bullet seating. After the operator places a bullet on the case mouth, this die presses it into the case the correct distance. The final die crimps. Another

bullet to the depth of that supplied with the completed cartridge. The fourth die, for taper crimping, is factory-set and should not need adjustment. Taper crimping is preferable for auto pistol rounds which headspace on the case mouth. A roll crimping die is provided for those ordering the Square Deal set up for revolver cartridges because these headspace on the case rim. It occasionally happens that some lots of cases are slightly

*Continued on page 82*

## DILLON SQUARE DEAL

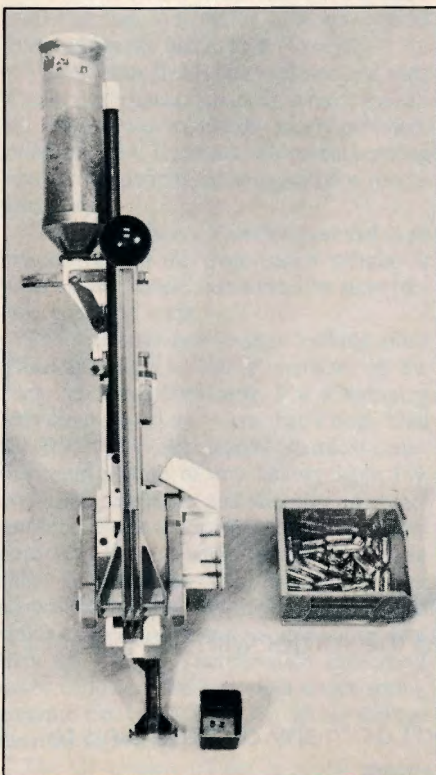
*By Tony Lesce*



**The 4-die head waits for 4 cases.**



**The square ram on the downstroke.**



***Designed for the beginning reloader, the Dillon Square Deal combines affordability with simplicity while retaining Dillon's distinctive qualities of excellence.***

stroke of the handle ejects the completed cartridge down a chute into the plastic collection box.

The Square Deal comes from the factory pre-set for the caliber ordered. It bolts to the work-bench and the accessories, such as the ejected cartridge chute bracket and powder measure, attach quickly with hex keys supplied with the press. The Square Deal was designed to require the fewest possible adjustments to let the beginner be up and



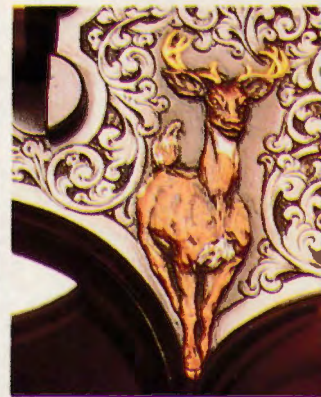
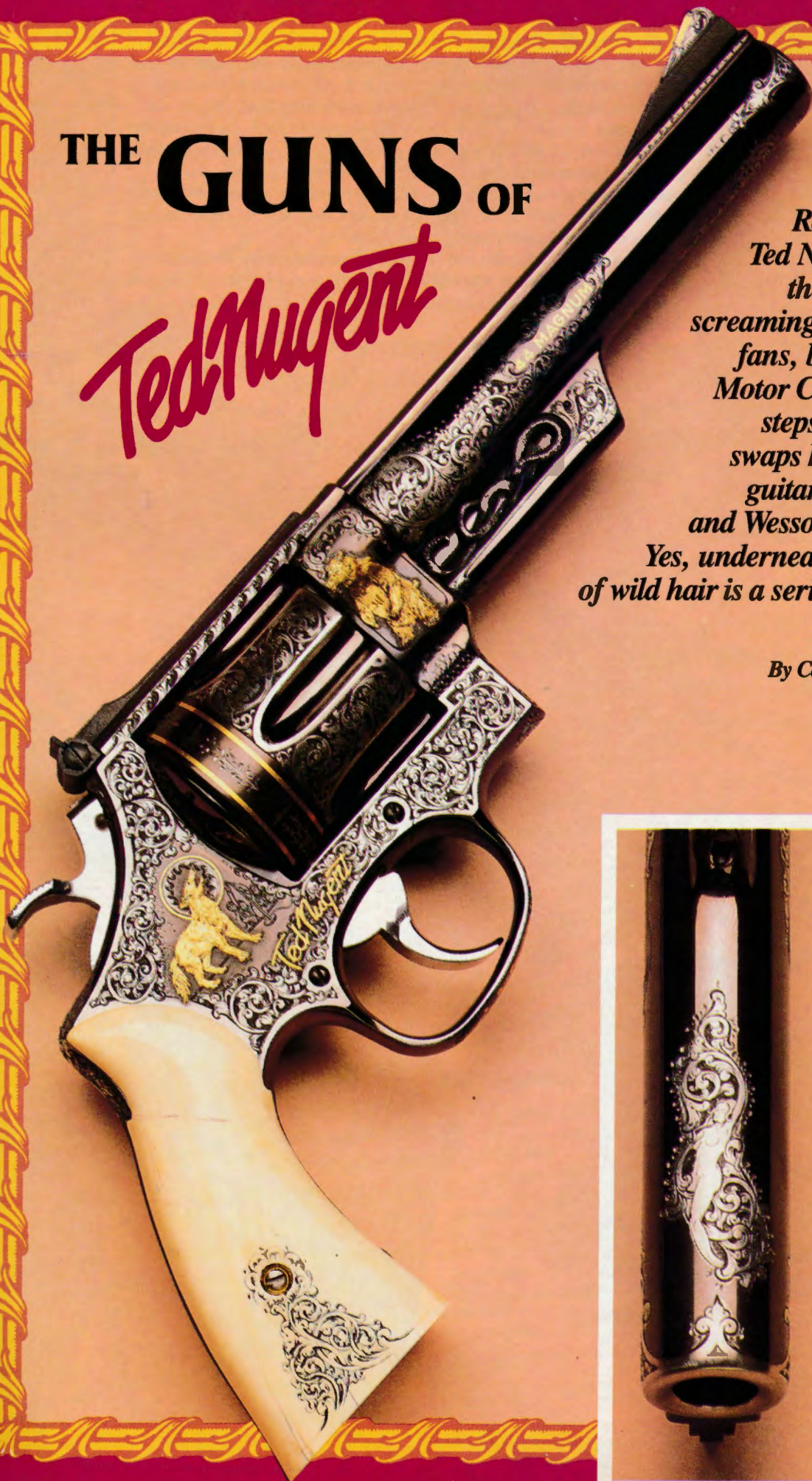
# THE GUNS OF

*Ted Nugent*

*Rock guitarist Ted Nugent packs the house with screaming rock 'n' roll fans, but when the Motor City Madman steps off stage he swaps his glittering guitar for a Smith and Wesson Model 29. Yes, underneath the shock of wild hair is a serious shooter.*

*By Cameron Hopkins*

*Photos by Roger Andrews*







**T**ed Nugent paid his dues with guns and guitars. Like hordes of aspiring rock stars, Ted started strumming in a garage band in high school. He paid his dues in seedy night clubs and dimly lit bars in the tough Detroit suburbs. He paid his dues with guns too. He grew up in a hunting family, but his was not a wealthy family able to shower him with any guns he liked. No, he scratched hard to buy his first .22 rifle. He used to dream of one day shooting the big Smith and Wesson magnum, the Model 29, as he devoured all the gun magazines he could scrape up pocket money to buy. As an impressionable teenager, his favorite writer was Elmer Keith. He says Jeff Cooper was also a strong influence and to this day considers Colonel Cooper "one of my heroes."

When you meet Ted in this interview you will discover a warm and outgoing person, a shooter, a hunter, a handgunner. As his road manager says to the droves of fans waiting for the Motor City Madman to come out on stage, "Ladies and Gentlemen, Ted Nugent."

J. D. Jones custom  
Contender, .375 JDJ

Mag-Na-Port  
custom M-29,  
six-inch

Mag-Na-Port  
custom M-629,  
four-inch





Frank Paris  
custom Colt .45

Frank Paris  
custom Colt .45

## THE GUNS OF

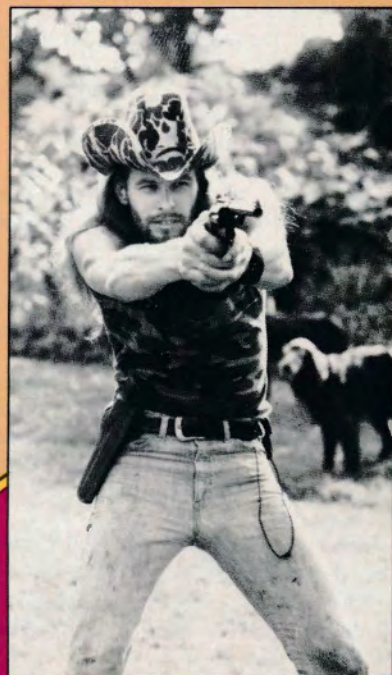
*Ted Nugent*

Mag-Na-Port  
custom M-629,  
two-inch

**AH:** Tell us about your custom 29.  
**TN:** While I was on tour in the area, I called Roy Jinks at Smith and Wesson and it turned out his daughter is a fan, so I invited them down for the show. Roy invited me to tour the factory and gave me a nice reception and we went out to his farm to touch off a few rounds.

We became friends and he convinced me I should own a real fancy gun. Fancy guns aren't my thing—again, I'm utilitarian. But he showed me some of the custom engraving they do and I finally said, "Hell, why not?"

*Continued on page 70*





# .45 Long Colt

## REBORED REDHAWK

**G**ood gun-makers — the really good ones — are about as hard to find as hens' teeth. Not that there is any shortage of hack 'n' whack artists who think they can put together a gun, but after awhile it becomes painfully obvious that it takes more than rented shop space, a set of files and a ball-peen hammer to classify someone as a gunmaker/gunsmith.

Hamilton S. Bowen is a gunmaker and a darn fine one at that. He may be young and his years of service few, but after studying his work closely, it can truly be said that Old World craftsmanship and customer satisfaction are alive and well at the Bowen Classic Arms shop in Louisville, Tennessee.

Young Mr. Bowen sports a fine set of credentials to back up his work, but his most impressive attribute is his philosophy concerning his chosen trade.

For whatever misguided reason, Bowen wants the customer to be happy with the quality of service and products received from BCA. He genuinely believes that solid craftsmanship means as much to him as it does to the customer. Where Bowen gets these strange ideas is anyone's guess, but if the word ever gets out on him, he is going to be a busy man indeed.

As a measure of his work, a Ruger Redhawk .45 Long Colt conversion was sent to us for testing and evaluation. On first glance it's not an overly impressive piece. Sure, it is big, beautiful and simple in appearance, but it also looks so . . . stock.

Unlike many other variations on a similar theme, Bowen's conversion remains true to the original design. And unless you know what you are looking at, there is nothing about the test gun to set it apart from any other Redhawk, save the natural look of the

modified grip, the subtle addition of a well made trigger-stop and the almost imperceptible blending of a .4515 caliber sleeve into the factory barrel. Another clue that the gun is slightly different is the caliber stamp on the right side of the barrel, but that would be too easy. Conversions like this are usually more *obvious*, and that's what makes the BCA .45 L.C. so special.

Okay, so why go through the trouble of putting together a non-standard factory conversion on an otherwise standard factory frame? Bowen feels—and many would agree—that custom guns are more interesting if they are built around established, enduring designs. He doesn't want to set the world on fire with some radical innovation that causes a stir by catching the eye. As a matter of fact, Bowen is quick to point out that his .45 L.C. conversion is not an especially brilliant or novel idea; and the manner in which it is accomplished is not technologically breathtaking. But Bowen also believes that Ruger may have missed the boat in not offering this caliber to big-bore handgun fans, and the BCA .45 L.C. represents a logical and practical answer to this oversight. In a nutshell, Bowen did what Ruger should have.

Big-bore handguns are a breed all to themselves. The difference between the heft of a large caliber model and a small caliber edition is immediately apparent, and any doubts or questions of comparative power are put to rest with the first shot.

A .44 Magnum will starch your shorts if you aren't prepared for the blast and recoil, and the effect of 240 grains of lead making contact down range is a sight to behold. Realistically, it can be *too much* gun for the average weekend plinker, especially in full-

*Continued on page 78*

***Bowen Classic Arms  
revamps the  
Ruger Redhawk!***

***By Fred Romero***





gunsmith and instructor at Gunsite. All of the edges are rounded, not just the outside corners. This saves wear and tear on skin and clothing.

There are no dots, bars, crosses, or other decorations on the sights. If you are in bright light, black sights are just fine. If you have light behind you, black sights are just fine. If there is light in front of you, the dots and bars are not visible anyway—only the black outline. If you are in total darkness, you can't see the target, much less the sights. If there is enough light to see your target, there will be enough light to see your sights.

A good service pistol should have a decent trigger. Factories do not have the time to do this, and the liability lawyers prefer heavy triggers anyway, so most factory .45's come out of the box at eight to 10 pounds. The GSP triggers are all four pounds and crisp.

Some modifications are not so obvious. The firing pin stop is fitted extra tight. This little part can fall

**T**he main single fault of the 1911 pistol is that it has never been just right as issued. It has a long list of minor weaknesses that need correcting. Fortunately they are minor, and can be corrected, but there are many people who prefer a piece to be ready when they buy it."

Jeff Cooper wrote those words in 1974. Since the early 1960s, he has been encouraging—begging—man-

## *the* **GUNSITE SERVICE PISTOL**

*By Mark Moritz*

ufacturers to produce guns with decent sights. Finally, in 1985, Colt began producing .45 autos with high visibility fixed sights.

Despite that much appreciated improvement, .45 autos still are a long way from ready-to-go right out of the box. At this rate of change, Cooper might not live long enough to see his other suggestions acted upon. He has taken it upon himself to produce a .45 auto that is made the way it should have been made in the first place.

At the American Pistol Institute (Gunsite), Cooper has had the perfect laboratory. He has personally observed a couple of million shots

fired from handguns, and he has probably fired close to a million more himself. He knows what breaks, and what cuts skin, and which modifications are necessary, and which are a waste of money. He has taken the lessons of his 50+ years of experience, and the result is the Gunsite Service Pistol, the GSP.

The GSP is ready-to-go out of the box. Ready to go where? Not to a bowling pin match, or a paper-punching contest, but to a gunfight. The primary purpose of a pistol is to save its wearer's life. What the gun-banners refer to as "sporting purpose" is secondary. The GSP is the choice for military and police organizations enlightened enough to adopt the "Big Boy" Rule: "You're a big boy. It's your life, so if you can qualify with it, you can carry it." The GSP is ready to go where a law-abiding citizen might need to defend himself against unprovoked violence, including such proven dangerous places as fast-food restaurants, post offices, and subways.

Start with the sights. They do not need to be adjustable, but they must be large, the edges must be rounded, and they must be affixed very sturdily. Cooper has lost track of how many sights he has seen come flying off guns during his classes. I know that I have witnessed a dozen or so, front and rear, including two of the new Colt improved models. The sights on the GSP are put on to stay on.

The sights were designed by Rob Barrkman, former resident

*Jeff Cooper's combat customized  
.45 with everything you need,  
and nothing you don't!*



**Jeff Cooper has seen so many collet bushings (above) break that he insists on a solid bushing for his GSP. Like this improvement, all features of the GSP are based on Cooper's vision of the ultimate service pistol.**

out of its slot, and tie up the gun. If it falls all the way out, you have to yell "King's X" and suspend the fight until you can find your firing pin. A loose firing pin stop is not something that happens a lot. Cooper reports that he only sees one malfunction like this every month or so. It has only happened to me twice in the past 10 years. That's two times too many for me.

More common is the broken collet bushing. Cooper reports quite a few of those. I have only seen it happen twice, once on an old worn-out gun, and once on a brand new one. When it happens, the gun is completely inoperable, and requires a rubber mallet to unscramble. To avoid the problem, all GSP's have a solid bushing, fitted just loose enough so that the gun can be field-stripped without a bushing wrench.

The thumb safety is extended, but not ambidextrous. If you are left-handed, you can order your GSP with a left-handed safety, but the ambidextrous models are inherently weaker. A simple thing like a loose stock screw can allow an ambi-safety to back out and tie up the gun.

The grip safety is "de-horned," meaning the edges are rounded off. Very few people actually get "ham-

*Continued on page 76*



# Smith & Wesson Model 657

By Frank W. James



**Author field tested the S&W 657 at The Masters three-handgun tournament. He found the revolver adequate for Long Range work.**

Smith and Wesson's new Model 657, a stainless steel rendition of the famed .41 Magnum Model 57, saw its chance for a field test in the heat of competition at The Masters.

The Masters International Shooting Championship captured the imagination of shooters from around the world by requiring the use of three different handguns in three popular, but different disciplines of handgun competition. The contestants were divided into two classes, professional and sportsman.

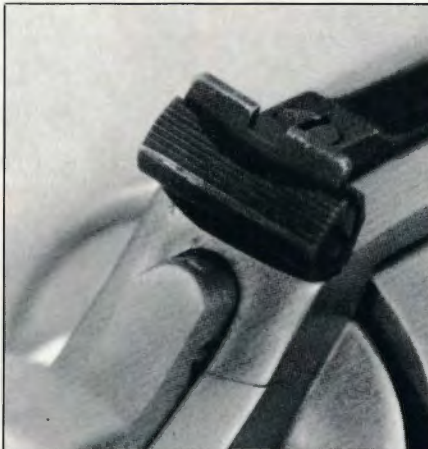
As a sportsman I had never shot in the Long Range silhouette discipline. Selecting the new stainless steel Smith & Wesson Model 657 .41 Magnum with a six-inch barrel was a decision based upon handgun hunting experience.

The .41 Magnum has been around since 1964, and has been considered a joke by some, an embarrassment by others, and perfection by a few. It was originally intended to be a law enforcement cartridge, but has since become a favorite among those handgun hunters seeking reduced recoil and a flatter trajectory.

For a while the future of the .41 Magnum seemed bleak, but recently ammunition manufacturers have introduced new ammo for the .41 along with Smith & Wesson introducing the stainless steel version of the double-action .41 Magnum. Big bore devotees now have an all-weather version of their favorite sidearm.

The stainless steel version differs from the carbon steel in only a few minor details. The first of these differences is the model number. The carbon steel version is labeled the Model 57, and the new stainless model is called the 657. This policy remains consistent with all of Smith & Wesson's stainless steel products by having the prefix "6".

The Model 57 Smith & Wesson has always been the twin brother to the Model 29, and as such has been considered one of the top-of-



**Fully adjustable rear sight is made of carbon, not stainless, steel.**



**Trigger is narrow, smooth type which is good for DA, but not so hot for SA as used in The Masters.**

the-line revolvers Smith offers. It features a red ramp front sight and a white outline rear sight. This is absent with the 657. The front sight is blackened stainless steel on the present production models, but will be carbon steel on future models. This is not an effort to

lower the cost and cheapen a superior product, but an effort to help the consumer maintain the appearance of his purchase.

This front blade is pinned to the barrel, thus permitting any gunsmith to change it to the customer's specifications. The stainless steel front sight is blackened with a process called "PX3," and it has been found to wear very well, but should bright spots appear on this front sight the consumer is not going to

***A stainless steel version of the Model 57 in .41 Magnum struts its stuff at The Masters.***

re-blacken the blade with cold blue. Once it gets shiny, a stainless steel front sight is going to stay bright and shiny.

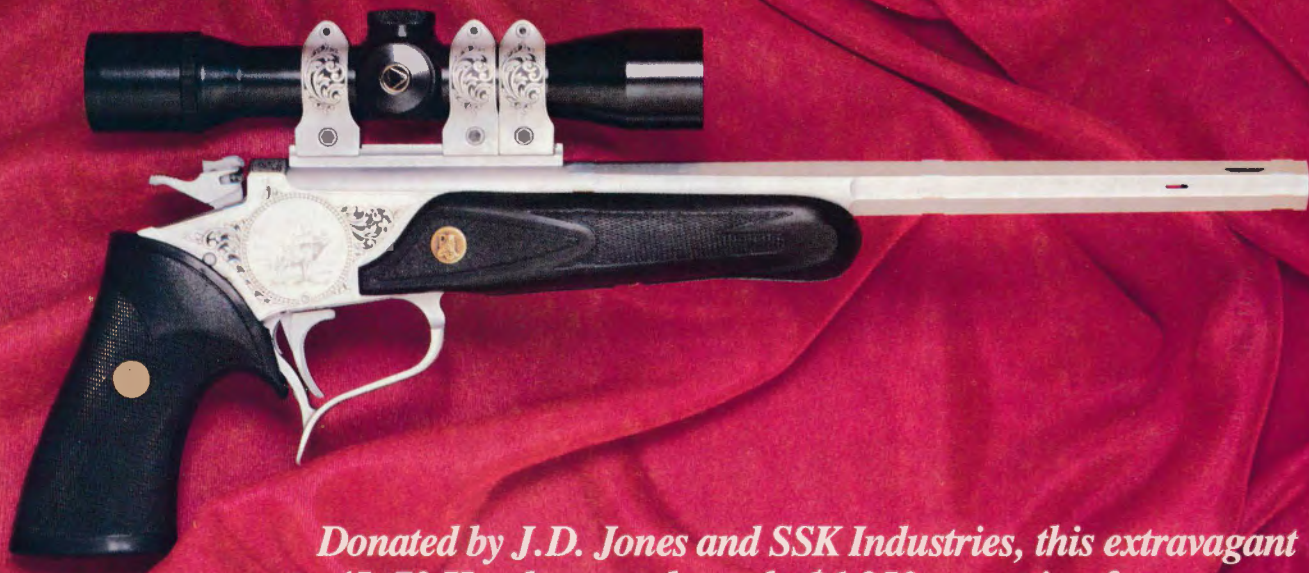
Smith & Wesson is aware of this problem and that is the reason for the change in design. In fact, listening to customer preference is the reason Smith & Wesson has deleted a red ramp front sight in favor of the black serrated ramp on the 657. It is what the customer requested and Smith listened.

It has been reported the Model 657 is made entirely of stainless steel. This is in error. There are several parts made of carbon steel, and there are good reasons for this decision that the shooter will appreciate. The rear sight is made of carbon steel, and the shooter is able to reblue carbon steel if the bluing rubs off. The hammer and trigger are not made of stainless steel, and contrary to gunshop gossip, it is not a move to save money during manufacture. Actually, it costs Smith & Wesson more to use carbon steel, flash chrome plate the pieces, and then fit them to the action.

*Continued on page 80*



# Safari Club's **HANDCANNON**



*Donated by J.D. Jones and SSK Industries, this extravagant .45-70 Handcannon brought \$6,250 at auction for Safari Club's conservation programs.*

**Action:** Thompson-Center Contender, custom-order smooth receiver

**Barrel:** .45-70 SSK custom barrel; half octagonal and half round with the top octagonal flutes machined to spear points converging at the muzzle and scope base; 14-inches; engraved "SSK .45-70 Government" one side and "Safari Club International 1987" other side

**Porting:** Mag-Na-Port's patented recoil reducing ports

**Stocks:** Pachmayr grip and forearm

**Scope:** Bausch and Lomb 4x28 pistol scope, serial number 1

**Engraving:** Tim George of Ken Hurst Engraving; Bolino style; bugling elk, right side-panel; grizzly bear, left side-panel; highlights of deep scroll engraving

**Display Case:** (not shown) Ron Ptashkin of Freedom Arms Custom Shop; walnut and glass, gun suspended by grip retaining screw on walnut base for admiring through glass case

**Auction Price:** \$6,250

**Purchaser:** Lucky Nightingale





*A Ruger Security Six gets the superb Grand Master treatment at the workbench of the 1986 Outstanding American Pistolsmith, Ron Power.*



## *You can win a* **RON POWER GRAND MASTER UNIVERSAL**

**R**on Power refuses to live in the Twentieth Century. This Old World artisan handcrafts each and every revolver that bears the distinctive mark Power Custom. Sequestered alone in his one-man shop, the Missouri pistolsmith lavishes each client's revolver with the care and dedication that is only found in the reverent sanctuary of a true master.

Ron's Grand Master Universal, which you can win, is a Ruger Security Six with a removable compensator for Bianchi Cup action shooting. Replacing the compensator with the false muzzle crown returns the Grand Master Universal to a configuration suitable for PPC shooting.

Guy Hogue has supplied a gorgeous hardwood grip, handmade, of Hogue's unique Monogrip style.

Action Arms has furnished a new Mark V electronic sight for the lucky winner of this mouth-watering masterpiece.

Ron fine-tunes the action of the stainless steel Ruger for a smooth and crisp double-action trigger. The GMU also boasts Ron's superb honing of the single-action mode.

The Wichita sight rib, designed for Wichita by Ron Power, is fitted to the custom barrel. The rib contains integral mounting rails for the Mark V sight.

Ron times the action and precisely aligns the cylinder with the barrel. The cylinder gap is set for maximum accuracy and reliability. The chambers in the cylinder are chamfered and numbered.

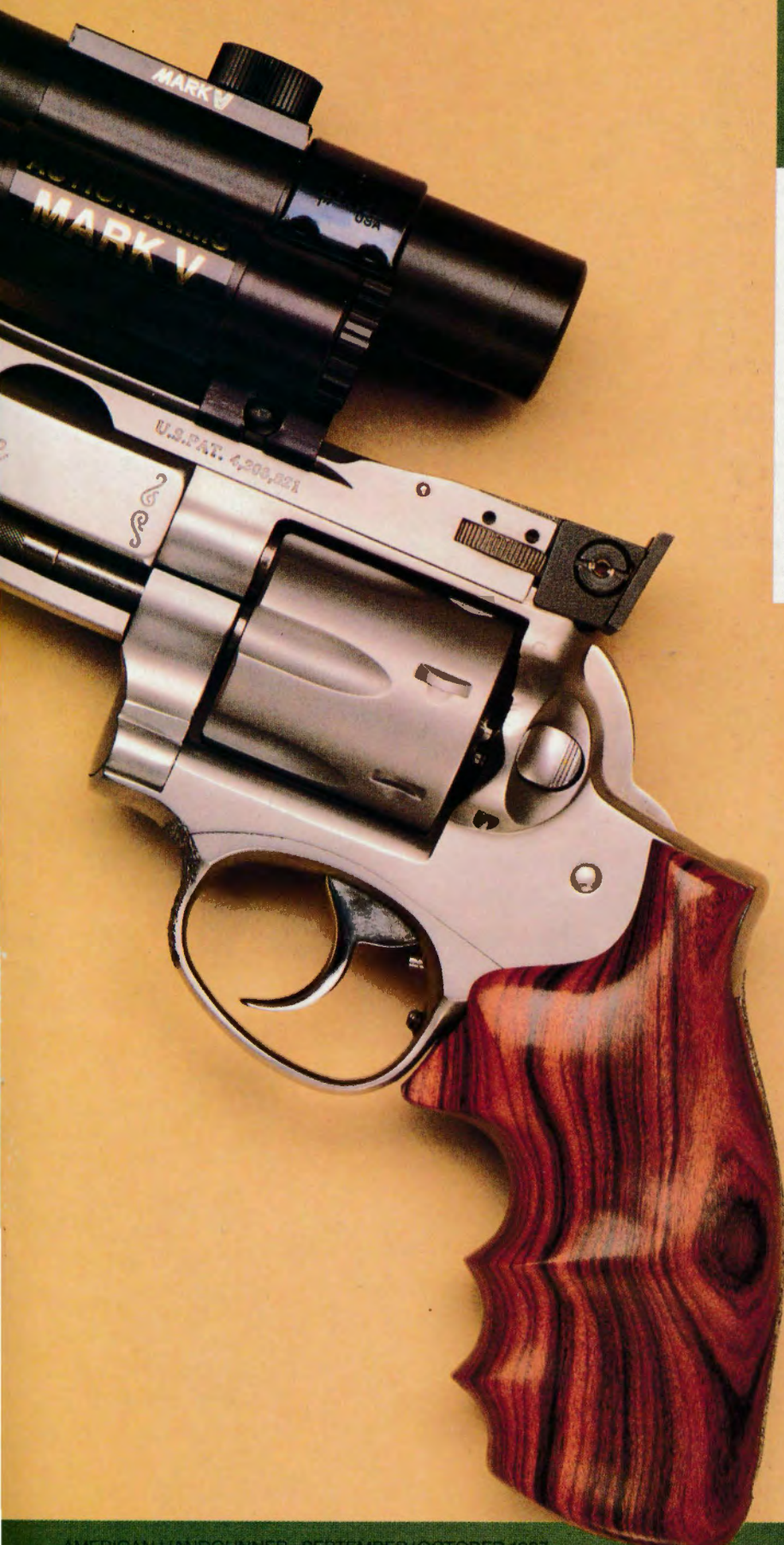
The trigger is polished and fitted with an over-travel stop.

If you believe that a custom revolver should be built by one man, a master pistolsmith, and not assembled on a production line by apprentices, then contact the Old World artisan who still handcrafts every revolver. For a complete catalog of services, write to Ron:

**Ron Power**  
**Power Custom Inc.**  
Box 1604, Dept. AH  
Independence, MO 64055







**TO ENTER CONTEST:** Use a postcard, (no envelopes), follow sample; include your name and address; your answers; dealer name, address and phone number. Mail before October 1, 1987. Send to: AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Dept. H9, POB 880409, San Diego, CA 92108-0009. **Limit 1 entry per household.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
**HOM SEPT/OCT 1987** Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
If I win, please ship my gun through the following dealer:  
Dealer \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone # ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Store Hours \_\_\_\_\_ am-\_\_\_\_\_ pm

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

**AMERICAN  
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CUSTOM GUN  
GIVEAWAY**







# RUGER P-85

*By James E. Fender  
Photos By Ichiro Nagata*

**D**on't look for exotic technology in the design and manufacturing of the new Ruger P-85. The P-85 has a tilting barrel and link rather than some variant of a gas retard system. This is a pistol which reflects American values and virtues in firearms design as exemplified by the efforts of John M. Browning in the ingenious .45 Gov-



ernment Model 1911 and 1911A1, and culminating in the great Browning Hi-Power or P-35. Just as the P-35 was a seminal development in semi-automatic pistols, the P-85 developed some 50 years later has every indication of being another high water mark in the evolution of American handgun design and manufacturing.

The P-85 has only 50 parts, a substantial reduction over other pistols of the same general type. A number of parts perform double duty by incorporating into one part features which previously required two or more parts in order to achieve the same function. The resulting pistol is less complicated and less likely to malfunction due to the breakage of a minor component. Of equal importance in producing a pistol which will be sold in today's



INSTRUCTION MANUAL FOR

AUTOMATIC PISTOL



CALIBER 9 x 19mm

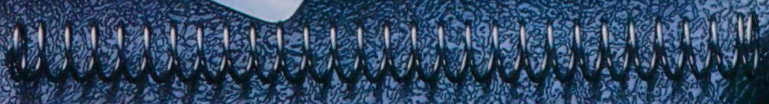
**RUGER® P-85™**

STURM, RUGER & Company, Inc.  
Southport, Connecticut 06488 U.S.A.

READ THE INSTRUCTIONS AND WARNINGS IN THIS MANUAL CAREFULLY BEFORE USING THIS FIREARM

ALWAYS ACCOMPANY THIS FIREARM AND BE TRANSFERRED WITH WHEN THE FIREARM IS LOANED OR PRESENTED TO ANOTHER PERSON

VI/2-87







**Cut-away (below) shows the working parts of the P-85. Nothing new, nothing fancy, just a sound design well executed.**

highly competitive marketplace, manufacturing and assembly costs are reduced.

Okay, so how does the new Ruger 9mm semi-automatic perform on the firing line? I'm only part way through a testing protocol which will see the firing of some 3,000 rounds of various types of ammunition through the P-85. I don't plan any "torture tests" for the P-85 since Jeff Cooper will be subjecting

the P-85 to the same procedures devised by the Army in testing the various pistols in the XM9 competition. (See accompanying interview with Bill Ruger for details.)

My test protocol consists of shooting the pistol with as many types of ammunition as I can locate or reload, and letting other shooters fire the pistol and then give me their reactions. However, editorial deadlines being what they are it is necessary to provide a preliminary assessment of this new pistol from Sturm, Ruger and Company. To date several dozen people, some extremely knowledgeable handgunners, and others who are casual shooters, have examined the P-85 I have for evaluation. An even dozen people have fired it (myself included) and some 600 rounds have gone through the gun. To date here is what I've found.

The P-85 is surprisingly accurate once you find the type of ammunition it likes to digest. The P-85 does not like Winchester 115 grain FMJ. It likes Federal American Eagle somewhat better, but it really thrives on Winchester Silvertips and Federal 115 grain JHPs, Federal index number 9BP. Ten round groups over sand bags at 25 yards were averaging a little over four inches with the





Winchester FMJ. I was glad that I had witnesses to verify the 25 yard groups of 2¼ inches produced by the Federal 115 grain JHPs. That is as good as the accuracy I get from a set of .45 Government Model 1911Als tuned for conventional pistol competition by an armorer from the old Air Force Advanced Marksmanship Training Unit. What's more, the P-85 I'm shooting will produce groups that size consistently with the Federal ammunition.

The pistol isn't nearly so accurate with other brands of ammunition, but the fact that certain ammunition will produce such accuracy speaks very well of the way the guide rod maintains the alignment of the slide on the frame, and the positive manner in which the barrel mates solidly against the breech face. Of course, the P-85's accuracy with any of the ammunition fired through it is more than sufficient for any military or police applications. The group centers were a few inches below point of aim and displaced to the seven o'clock position. It would be easy

enough to drift the rear sight in its slot to compensate for the horizontal point of impact.

I much prefer sturdy fixed sights on a military and police semi-automatic, and the sights on the P-85 certainly meet with my approval. The group centers were "spot on" when fired on a man sized silhouette at 15 yards, and I will gladly accept a few inches variance in vertical

*Continued on page 54*



**A double-tap is easy to control even with gloves on. The P-85 shoots well.**







# Bill Ruger ON THE P-85

**F**or a long time Bill Ruger disliked the category of pistols represented by the Walther P-38 and other double action semi-automatics of a similar nature.

This class of pistols represented a market niche in which he had no interest, and he preferred to direct his efforts to designing and manufacturing firearms suited more for sport and hunting. However, some years back a conversation with officials of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) convinced Bill Ruger that a market existed among foreign police forces for a large magazine double action semi-automatic pistol.

It's difficult to determine exactly when the P-85 first had its genesis. "Sometime four or five years ago," Bill Ruger says, which would place the beginning of the pistol's development in 1981 or 1982.

Ruger thought that the specifications drawn up by the Air Force back in 1978 when that military service embarked on an evaluation program to select a 9mm pistol made a lot of sense. Consequently, as Bill and his design team began to lay out the requirements they wanted for Ruger's first ever centerfire semi-automatic they designed the pistol which would become the P-85 to satisfy the Air Force's specifications.

The P-85 was *not* designed with the intention of participating in the subsequent XM9 or Personal Defense Weapon (PDW) competition conducted by the U.S. Army Armament, Munitions and Chemical Command (AMCCOM) of Rock Island, Illinois to select a handgun to replace the .45 Government Model 1911A1.

"We knew that the Army was going to be evaluating a variety of pistols with a view toward replacing the .45," Bill said, "but we missed the XM9 competition cold turkey."

If the Army had encountered delays in its solicitation of firearms firms to provide test samples, or if evaluations had been postponed until the Ruger design team had developed the P-85 concept then Ruger would have entered the competition.

"However, we didn't have our pistol ready at the time the Army began its evaluation program; it's as simple as that. However, if the Army decides to hold another round of competition for a 9mm pistol the P-85 is definitely going to be a contender."

Bill wants to know exactly how his P-85 will perform against the criteria used by the Army's AMCCOM in the 1984 evaluations. He told me that Ruger is obtaining the services of Jeff Cooper to put the P-85 through a series of tests which will replicate as closely as possible the procedures developed by AMCCOM. This undertaking will represent a substantial amount of time and money to explore the P-85's performance envelope. (*Is nothing sacred? Jeff Cooper testing a nine? Editor*)

The P-85, so designated because 1985 was the year the design more or less coalesced, is conventional in function and appearance. There are no surprises in the pistol's straight forward operation, and many of the pistol's features are innovations of design details first introduced elsewhere.

"Our 'pure research' is conducted on a very limited

*Continued on page 55*

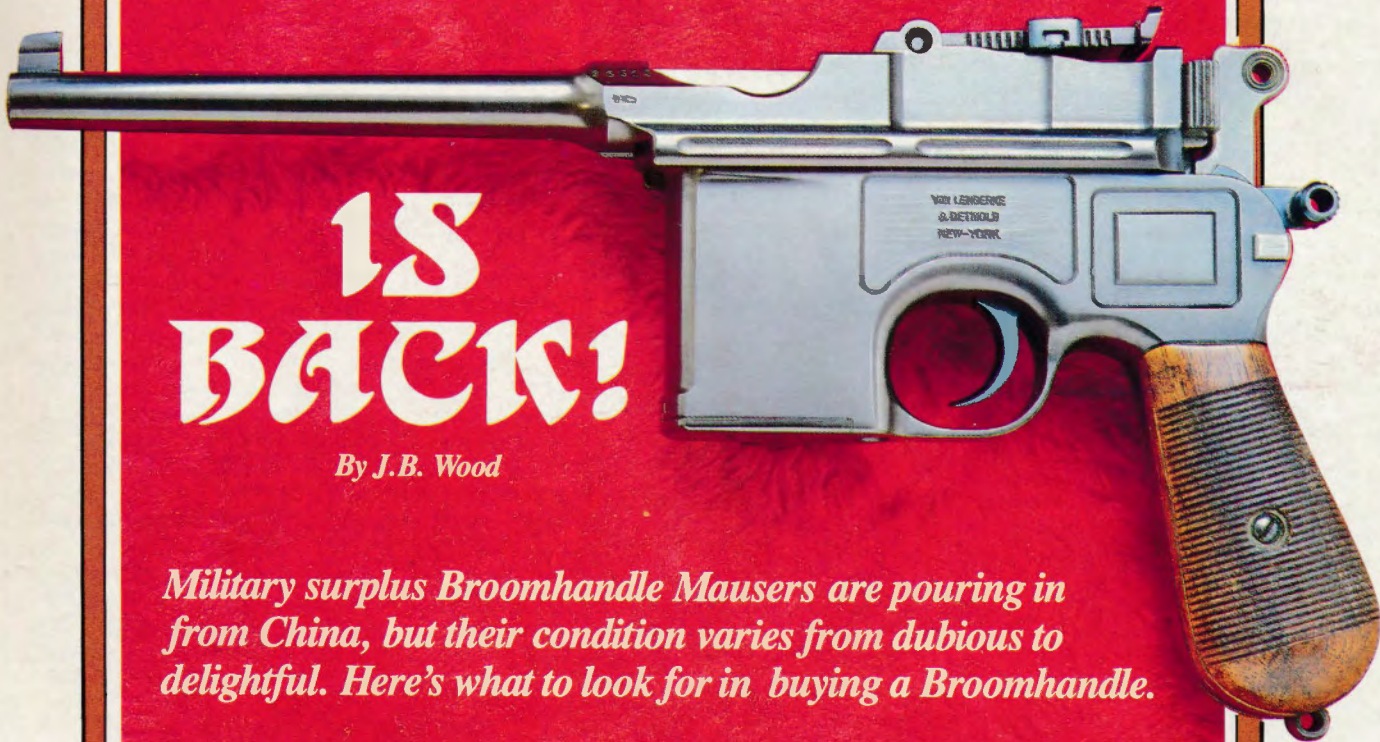


# THE BROOMHANDLE

## IS BACK!

By J.B. Wood

*Military surplus Broomhandle Mausers are pouring in from China, but their condition varies from dubious to delightful. Here's what to look for in buying a Broomhandle.*



There is an ancient Chinese curse that translates "May you live in eventful times." Its origin is centuries earlier, but it could well have applied to the autumn of 1911, when the Kuomintang of Sun Yat Sen overthrew the Manchu dynasty, ending the last days of Imperial China. Two other notable "eventful times" were 1921, when the Chinese Communist Party was formed, and 1928, when the government of Chiang Kai-shek subdued the last of the warlords. By 1934, Chiang's armies were pressing the Communist strongholds in the south, and in that year and the one following, Mao Tse Tung led the northward migration that came to be known as the Long March.

From the days of the October Revolution in 1911 to the Communist victory in 1949, one pistol was favored by all of the Orientals—the Mauser Model 1896, in both the standard and Bolo versions. In one excellent account of the times, Gilbert Stuart, the "T. E. Lawrence of China," related in his memoirs an unusual use of a common Oriental medicinal preparation, Tiger Balm:

*"At lunchtime, Major Chan withdrew all of us. We were fed several miles away. Everyone was excited and alert. A man would rush off in the middle of his meal to inspect his weapon for the thirtieth time that day. Unfortunately, we had little oil.*



**Bluing is worn on these old Mausers.**

*Mausers are very intricate. When not given proper lubrication, they can grow sluggish, or even jam during rapid fire. I suggested that, as a substitute for oil, we smear lard on the bolts. This worked, but we ran out of lard before half the men could apply it. Suddenly, I remembered Tiger Balm, the all-purpose ointment I had been given at the hut of Nora's uncle in Ling-Ma-Hang. It resembled Vaseline. I distributed my tin of it, and it, too, worked."*

—From *Kind-Hearted Tiger*, by Gilbert Stuart with Alan Levy, Little, Brown & Co., 1964 (p. 141)

Stuart was part of a band of guerrillas which eventually were incorporated into the Nationalist Chinese Army, and he was promoted to the rank of Colonel. Now, some 50 or 60 years after the events described in his book, the Mauser C96 pistols of that era and earlier are beginning to come back to the West. When they were first offered in the US, two of my friends ordered a standard Broomhandle and a Bolo, and these were the first that I encountered.

The importer cautioned that these guns were mostly in rather rough external condition, and offered them in several grades. My friend with the full-sized C96 found that his



gun cleaned up well and worked reliably. The friend with the Bolo was not as fortunate. His pistol had a badly-eroded shoulder in the chamber, allowing the cartridge to be pushed beyond extractor reach in loading. At the time this is written, the latter pistol is in Lexington, Missouri, being relined to 9mm by master gunsmith Terry Kopp.

If you order one of these Mausers from China, you will, of course, have a better chance at a working pistol if you choose one of the upper grades. Judging from the three guns that I have now examined, it's a good sign if the gun you get has a lot of packing grease inside. Tiger Balm and lard may have kept the bolts working for Colonel Stuart, but in general, the Chinese troops must have cared little about preserving the superb blue that was originally on these old Broomhandles. And, the long years of storage in China have also taken their toll. You can expect some pitting, even with a top-grade gun.

In the middle and lower grades, there are a few points that might need attention, from minor to major. An extreme example would be my friend's Bolo, which required relining of the barrel. Mismatched numbers will not be unusual, and it's possible that the hammer stop surface on the lower rear of the barrel extension may have to be relieved a little, to allow full hammer contact with the rear face of the bolt and the head of the firing pin. The firing pin point may have been eroded by

corrosive-primed ammunition, leaving a sharp tip that could pierce primers. If so, the firing pin will need to be re-pointed or replaced.

Aside from damage to the finish of the pistols, another casualty of the long storage is the wood of the grips, which absorbed moisture from the air and kept it in contact with the grip frames. Most grip screws will have deteriorated to the point that they will break when removal is attempted. Be prepared to replace the screw, and possibly its escutcheons.

The grips can possibly be saved. The ones on my own Bolo were all right, but badly worn, and I replaced them with a set of excellent plastic reproduction grips from Dave Byron, in the early original floral pattern.

The Byron grips come without the screw and escutcheons, the idea being to use the original parts from the grips you are replacing. I wanted to preserve the original Mauser grips, and was sure they'd be damaged by removal of the escutcheons. So, I made the screw-head escutcheon from a cut-off .32 S&W cartridge case, and the threaded escutcheon from brass rod stock. A screw of the right size and length was then made to fit. Since the original Mauser escutcheons were made of brass, this gave them an authentic look. The Byron grips required very little fitting.

## Broomhandle Stocks

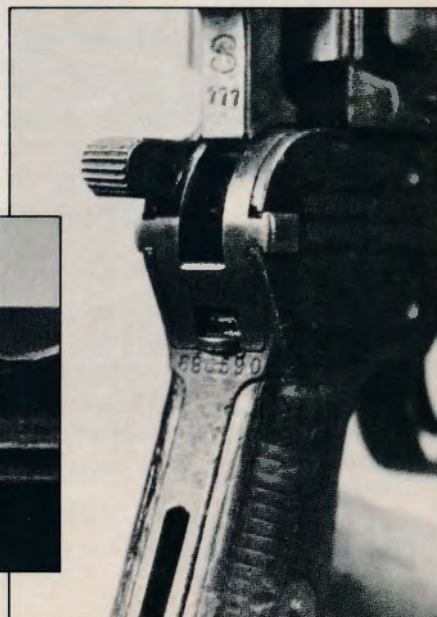
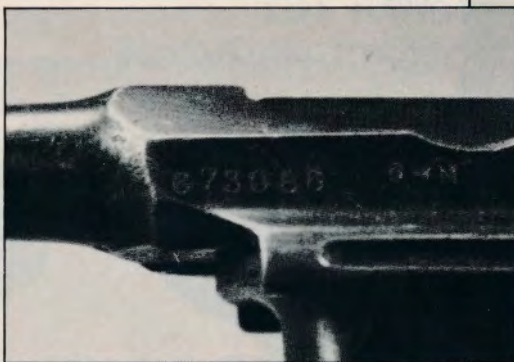
I doubt that there has ever been an owner of a C96 Mauser who hasn't wanted to "complete the picture" by adding the holster/stock combination to his pistol. With the stock attached, the handling characteristics are enhanced, turning the front-heavy Mauser into a very handy and accurate carbine. In recent years, the BATF has ruled that the holster/stocks are legal, as long as the item is exactly the same type as used with the original gun. That is, the shorter stock for the Bolo, and the longer one for the standard pistol. Serial numbers do not have to match, as many of the original stock/holsters were un-numbered.

For the shooter or collector who wants to "stock" his Mauser, though, there is one other problem: original Mauser factory stock/holsters have become increasingly difficult to find, and their prices reflect this. On the rare occasion that one appears on the market, and is in excellent condition, its cost is substantial. Those who are more interested in appearance and practical use than in authentic factory markings now have a reasonably-priced alternative. Keng's Firearms Specialty, Inc. (P.O. Box 1176, Dept. AH, Riverdale, GA, 30274) is importing from China newly-made holster/stocks that are exact copies of the Mauser originals.

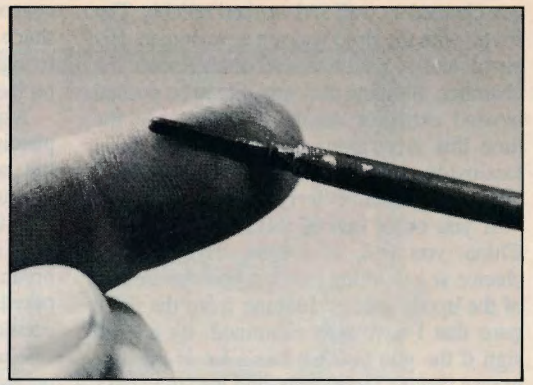
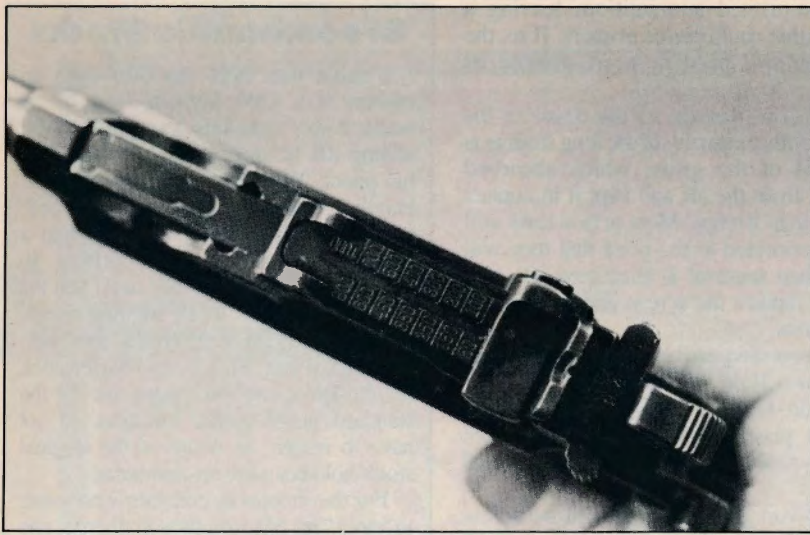
The ones that I have examined fit the slot of a typical C96 well, and the interior is properly fitted to the pistol. While the wood and metal finish does not quite match the pre-war Mauser stock/holster, it is very good. A version for the full-sized pistol is offered that has a little more length, to make a more comfortable carbine when attached. I have fired a Mauser with one of these, and the extra length does make a difference. Prices vary, so you'll have to inquire about the particular model you want. If you want to call David Keng, the number is 303-996-2079.



***It's a good sign if your Mauser shows a lot of grease (above) on the internal parts. Also watch for (right) matching serial numbers on the frame and barrel. These are mismatched which is common on these Chinese imports. The BATF regs state the one on the frame is what counts.***







**Firing pin points (above) are likely to be eroded from long use with corrosive ammo. This one has been re-pointed. The 1000 meter sight (left) is a bit optimistic, but you might be able to scare the enemy!**

In many cases, especially in the top-grade guns, the only things required for a good shooting piece will be a thorough cleaning and the replacement of three springs: The recoil spring (bolt spring), hammer spring, and the firing pin return spring. The recoil spring is particularly susceptible to weakening, and the hammer spring also powers the rocker coupling. A weakness of the latter can cause misfires, and also affect the final lock-up of the bolt. If the firing pin is all right, then its return spring will probably not have to be replaced. Replacement kits containing these three essential springs are available from the Wolff company.

A principal importer of Mauser pistols from China is Pacific International Merchandising Corporation, the source of the three C96 pistols described here. In addition to offering original pistols in the standard 7.63mm chambering, PIMC has also made available, for the reasonable price of \$299, guns with barrels relined to 9mm Parabellum. My own Bolo is one of these. I don't

know who is doing the relining work for them, but whoever he is, he's very good. My pistol not only functions well, but it is quite accurate at reasonable ranges. (The 1,000-

### **Chinese troops must have cared little about preserving the superb blue originally on these old Broomhandles**

meter rear sight is a bit optimistic, though, even in the original caliber!)

For those who are getting guns in 7.63mm Mauser, there's good news and bad news. The bad news is that Midway Arms is now concentrating on obsolete rifle rounds, and at the present they are not offering the 7.63mm cartridge. Now, the good news: Focchi of

America is importing beautiful Boxer-primed 7.63mm Mauser cartridges from Italy, and your local gun shop can order them for you. When I test-fired the other two guns after they were cleaned up, I used the Focchi cartridges, and their performance was perfect.

As for me, I'm delighted with my 9mm, and I sort of like having a Bolo Mauser in a chambering that was never made during the time of its production. I had watched the collector prices of pristine Broomhandles climb out of sight, and often wished for "just a shooter." Now, at last, I have one. And, though I'm not a collector, I am susceptible to the mystique of the Mauser. I can look at my mixed-number Bolo and wonder: Could this, possibly, be the one that Mao carried on the Long March?



*For valuable assistance, the writer would like to thank Ed Faust of Sacramento, California, and Bert Stangler of Manchester, New Hampshire.*

### **Broomhandle Parts**

Pacific International Merchandising Corporation  
2215 "J" Street  
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(Broomhandle importer)

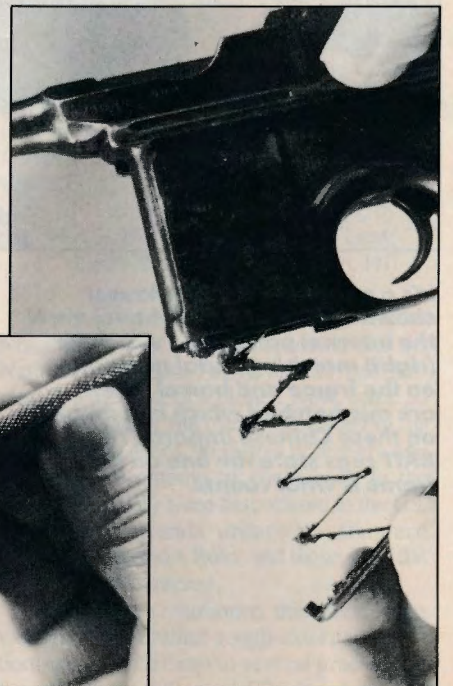
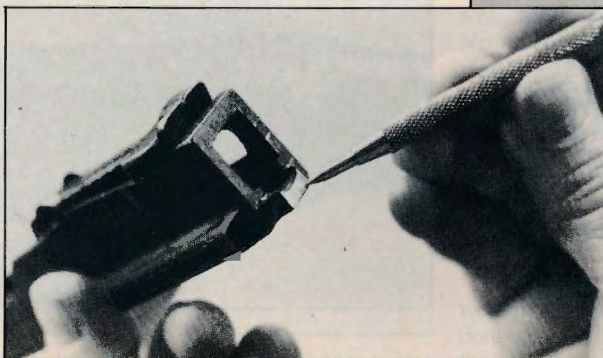
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W.C. Wolff Company  
Postoffice Box 232  
Ardmore, PA 19003  
(springs)

Focchi of America, Inc.  
1308 West Chase  
Springfield, MO 65803  
(ammunition)

**On some mismatched pistols, it may be necessary to reduce the hammer stop surface (below) on the rear of the barrel extension in the area shown. More grease (right) on internal parts is a good sign.**





## THE AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 29

police car, determined to flag down the first passing officer to assist.

The judge watched in horror as Youngberg, knowing how conspicuous the stolen police car would be, pulled behind a motorist's average-looking sedan. Youngberg swept broadside of Mrs. Maisie Hester and ran her off the road. Parking downhill in front of her, he jumped out of the police car with a gun in each fist, and the shaken Mrs. Hester realized that this was no lawman.

Fate saved her. Having spent his adult life mostly in the pen, Youngberg had never learned to drive properly. This was what led to the erratic operation that had started the whole encounter, and this is probably why he forgot to put the cruiser in park. As he moved toward Mrs. Hester, Youngberg realized that his car was rolling down the hill away from him. He turned and ran back, jumping in and finally stopping the car. The terrified woman took advantage of his momentary confusion to step on the gas. As she fled, Youngberg fired, blowing out both front door windows of the fleeing woman's car.

A furious Youngberg raced after her, still tailed by Judge Campbell. The frantic housewife reached speeds of 120 m.p.h. but was still overtaken by the 440 cubic-inch four-barrel engine of the Dodge Polara pursuit car, the most powerful vehicle on the road at that time according to some, and a trademark of the CHP.

But it earned its reputation in the hands of trained and skilled highway patrolmen, not bloodthirsty bozos like Jerry Youngberg. As the copkiller tried to run his quarry off the road a second time, he oversteered the speeding cruiser and spun out. The Dodge whipped across the center strip and the oncoming lane, crashing on the embankment on the opposite side, virtually totalled, with its doors, trunk, and hood sprung open.

Motorists quickly pulled to a stop at the roadside, thinking a highway patrolman was in trouble. But one look at the scroungy man who was trying to rip the Remington 870 riot gun from its dashboard lock convinced them, as Maisie Hester had been convinced, that this was someone who had no business in a police car.

Fortunately, Youngberg could not find the hidden button that released the shotgun lock. He fled, visibly armed with his two revolvers. Witnesses saw him climb the embankment, heading toward the frontage road that ran from a nearby exit and paralleled the Interstate. Two service stations, an Exxon and a Mobil, were located there. One brave civilian ran to the ruined patrol car and grabbed the radio mike, reporting intuitively that an officer had been shot and adding that an armed suspect was in the area. It was now 8:03 a.m.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Hester and Judge Campbell had pulled into a weigh station farther up the highway. Commercial Officer Bob Lowery ordered the citizens to stay there

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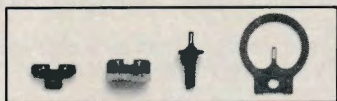
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at the scales as he radioed in their story.

By this time, Youngberg had made his way to the frontage road and entered Odem's Mobil Station. Clerk Robert Jenkins, 38, was on the phone, but quickly and obediently hung up as he saw the gaunt man enter, the six-inch Highway Patrol revolver in his right hand and the compact .38 Special protruding from the front of his waistband.

Youngberg demanded a car. Jenkins stammered that the only working automobile on the premises was presently without front seats. He offered to call the Exxon station across the street to see if they had a car for sale.

Jenkins was on the phone when Youngberg decided he might be trying to send a message to the police. He raised the dead highway patrolman's .357 and shot him in the chest and again in the head. Jenkins fell face first to the floor, dead, blood pouring from his wounds.

As Youngberg stepped out the door, he saw a car pulling in. He recognized the hard-top immediately as an unmarked police unit.

Behind the wheel was Lt. Al Stewart of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, with Deputy District Attorney John Hardy. They'd been en route to a trial in Barstow, California when they had pulled over at the scene of the wrecked CHP vehicle. One of the citizens had shouted to them that an officer had been shot and pointed toward the gas stations on the frontage road. The lieutenant had sped to the scene.

As they pulled in, Stewart and Hardy saw Youngberg moving quickly toward the south of the parking lot, disappearing behind a metal trailer that was between Odem's service station and the nearest adjacent building. Hardy, unarmed, stayed with the car, parked next to a Volkswagen squareback.

He and the officer now faced the trailer, with the VW to their right and open space to their left. Stewart moved left, an easterly direction, to get a better view of the suspect. It was a fatal mistake.

Hardy saw and heard the exchange of shots, and saw the officer run back toward the cars, obviously hurt. Stewart crouched behind the right front tire of the Volkswagen in a covered position, cocking his four-inch Colt Trooper service revolver and leveling it toward the source of the gunfire. Then, obviously in great pain, he slumped down on his side.

"Throw me the gun," the deputy DA yelled, and the wounded Lieutenant did so, first lowering the hammer. He then crawled behind the VW toward the unmarked sheriff's unit.

Hardy was juggling the unfamiliar revolver with his one hand and the hook that served for the other, a legacy of Vietnam, as he simultaneously unlatched the microphone from the radio on the dashboard. As the Lieutenant grabbed the mike and gasped that an officer had been shot and needed assistance, Hardy took the Colt in his one good hand and levelled it across the hood of the unmarked car.

And now, the gaunt man emerged from his shelter some 33 yards away, and moved con-



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fidently toward the embattled pair, murderously levelling the six-inch Magnum.

Hardy fired. And missed.

He pulled the trigger again. And, to his horror, the gun went "click."

Hardy had not tried to keep count of the flurry of shots that had passed between the sheriff's lieutenant and the copkiller. In fact, Stewart had fired four shots, none of which had pierced the suspect's cover behind the trailer to reach him. Stewart, however, had been struck twice. One bullet had ripped through his thigh, and another had burned into his chest, severing the aorta.

Hardy looked down. The lieutenant was prone and unconscious, his shirt soaked with the blood that was spreading out beneath him. Believing his borrowed gun to be empty, he raised his one hand in surrender.

Youngberg didn't shoot him. He couldn't. Both his Smith & Wessons were empty. Instead, he strode rapidly toward the handicapped man who had surrendered to him and slashed him brutally across the face with the barrel of the Magnum. Hardy fell to the ground and closed his eyes against the pain, playing possum.

Youngberg turned the unconscious officer onto his back. Stewart was unconscious, slack-jawed, dying from hemorrhage. The killer roughly pawed through his clothes, looking for another weapon, finding none. It never occurred to him that the lieutenant might be carrying spare ammo that would fit one or both of his own stolen, empty revolvers.

And neither he nor Hardy knew that the lieutenant's fallen Colt revolver still contained one live cartridge, which had been rotated past the hammer when the wounded officer had first cocked the revolver, then lowered the hammer to throw it to his friend.

As the merciless gunman ransacked the body of the fallen cop, the prone DA saw a pickup truck stop near the entrance to the station. He threw himself to his feet and raced to it. As he arrived, he saw another civilian step cautiously onto the edge of the parking area. Hardy yelled the bare facts of the deadly danger scene to both of them.

There was nothing the unarmed pickup driver could do. Not so the second civilian, who had been drawn by the gunfire. His name was James Mayfield, he was a San Bernardino County Supervisor, and he had a permit to carry a pistol. Once having been a deputy sheriff, he was trained in what to do with it.

And now, Jerry Youngberg must have felt true horror. It was one thing to bushwhack an unsuspecting cop, to murder a helpless unarmed gas station attendant, to fire his gun at terrified women, and to ambush a deputy sheriff caught in the open while he himself had a position of cover.

But now, he was facing an angry civilian who had just drawn a Browning Hi-Power 9mm automatic from under his coat.

And the copkiller did the only logical thing. He ran. James Mayfield fired, and ran after him, firing again.

At this point another cop, one Officer Quoznick, pulled into the station. He took in

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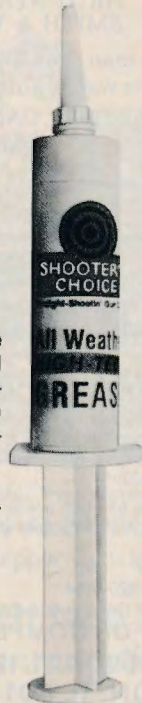
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the scene at a glance. Ripping his Remington 12 gauge from the front seat, he jacked a round of buckshot into the chamber and ran to assist the armed citizen who was in foot pursuit of the copkiller.

As Youngberg ran uphill toward the concealing bushes, citizen Mayfield steadied his Browning, locked the front sight on the copkiller's spine, and pressed the trigger. A copper-jacketed 9mm Parabellum bullet bored into Jerry Youngberg's lower back, and he pitched into the bushes.

Mayfield and the assisting officer took covering, command positions. Moments later, the gunman rose shakily from the brush, a revolver in his hand. The officer shouted to him to drop his weapon or die.

And Jerry Youngberg did the first normal, intelligent thing he had done all day. To the collective and great regret of the California law enforcement community, the copkiller took one look at the Remington 870 and 9mm auto pistol levelled at him, and raised his quickly-emptied hands in meek surrender.

The gunshot wound to his lower back healed without complication. A jury found Jerry Youngberg guilty of three counts of Murder in the First Degree. He was sentenced to serve three terms of life imprisonment, consecutively.

In the excellent re-enactment tape on which this story is based, California Highway Patrol notes that even a conscientious officer like Larry Wetterling needs to drop his guard only once. Erratic operation of a motor vehicle in this case seemed to signal a routine drunk driver, but can also tip you off to a man driving a car that doesn't belong to him, someone spaced out on drugs or psychosis, or in this case, a career criminal who spent so much time in stir he never learned to drive. Ten years plus in Joliet had apparently left Jerry Youngberg prepared to murder at will to keep his parole from being violated.

There is no evidence of Youngberg ever having trained or practiced with weapons. Yet his use of unfamiliar revolvers proved as accurate as his use of motor vehicles proved erratic. Lesson: do not assume that just because you work out weekly on the range you'll be able to outshoot an ex-con determined to kill.

Lt. Stewart took his death wounds because he had moved on foot through a wide-open parking area to attempt to locate the criminal, who was already behind cover. His exchange of shots with Youngberg was a losing battle before it began. He may also have consciously or subconsciously been trying to lure the gunman away from his civilian passenger; it is part of the cop's instinct to protect. He would have been better served if he'd put the deputy DA down in the back seat, or better, in the driver's seat with his head down behind the dash, as the Lieutenant himself used the unmarked cruiser for "rolling cover" with the driver operating by his verbal direction.

Deputy DA John Hardy was obviously a courageous man. So was Judge Campbell, who continued to expose himself to a danger he was ill-equipped to handle. Many judges

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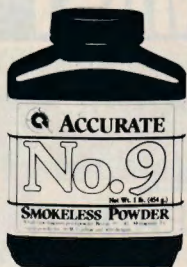
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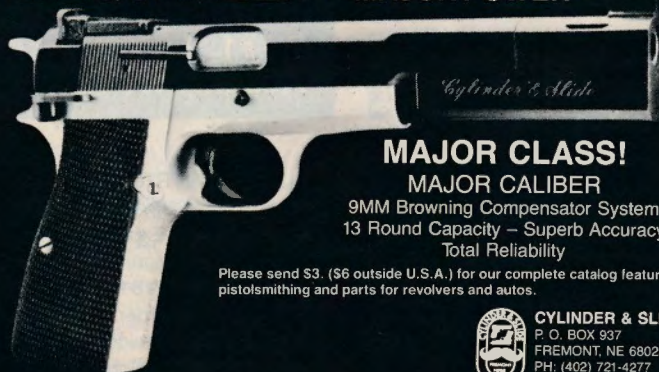
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and prosecutors make a point of carrying concealed weapons and knowing how to use them. Sadly, these believed enough in the system they represented to feel that they did not have to go armed.

Officer Quoznick is to be commended for his ability to instantly assimilate the situation and reflexively "partner" with the armed citizen he recognized as a "good guy." Many officers would have ordered the armed civilian back from the scene, and I know one or two who would have seized on a good excuse to avoid a confrontation with an armed copkiller by demanding that the citizen drop his gun and show him a permit.

Many criminals, though by no means all, are cowards. Youngberg had aborted his big score in Vegas for fear that he'd meet armed resistance, yet at his trial for the murder of three people had the gall to say that he'd not gone through with it because he would have had to hurt someone to carry it off. He stated that he "felt sorry for" the unarmed Hardy, whom he brutally pistolwhipped. One suspects he would have felt even sorer if Hardy had found the dormant, live round in the cylinder of the Colt and shot him through the chest with it.

Likewise, some if not all criminals are stupid. Youngberg had left his wallet with papers identifying him in the pocket of the dead highway patrolman's jacket. He asked a jury of 12 intelligent people to believe that he really thought the man who was trying to find him a car was calling the police. Not knowing how to drive, he had mindlessly driven from Nevada to California with a stolen firearm in his possession.

An argument could be made for anyone who ever steps into a police car being familiarized and trained with the weapons therein. This might have saved one ride-along from being killed in Illinois in 1979, another from being shot in San Diego two years ago, and Hardy from being pistol whipped. Hardy obviously had the guts to fight; if he'd been armed with a fully loaded weapon he could fire effectively, things might have been different.

It should be noted that Youngberg had a clean toxicology screen: no alcohol, and despite his comment to one motorist about pills in the car, no drugs. Also, obviously, he had no cheap excuses for his savage homicidal spree.

Youngberg may have been a stupid criminal, but stupid criminals aren't funny. Youngberg's incompetence at driving led him multiple times to disaster, and shortly before his encounter with the highway patrolman, he had broken the pump of a closed gas station to fill his old Lincoln. Seeing that the gasoline seemed foamy, he lighted a match to see if the gasoline was for real. He managed to set the gas station on fire, though unfortunately, not himself. It will be noted that Wetterling, Stewart and Jenkins are not here to laugh about it.

Many citizens showed great courage in the bloody half hour or less that took three good people's lives. All are to be commended, but none more than James Mayfield, the brave politician who pursued the armed murderer

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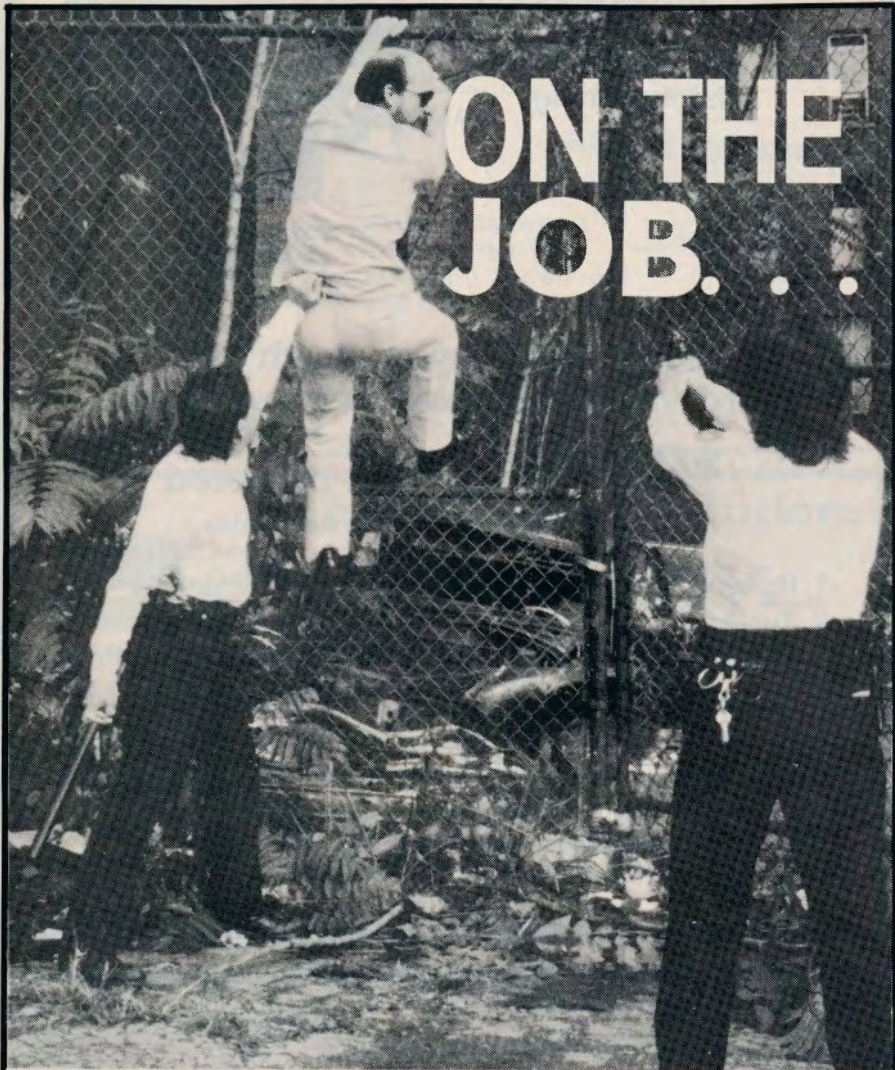
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and finally shot him down like the dog he was. Mayfield ranks with Gary Nuss, the one citizen who emerged from the pack of terrified bystanders to aid the embattled officers in the infamous Newhall Massacre, picking up a fallen police revolver and shooting one of the copkillers, before the gun ran empty and he was driven back in a hail of fire.

No matter what lies anti-gun people may spew about police wanting stricter gun control laws, acts of responsible heroism like Jim Mayfield's do not go unappreciated in the world of the badge.



*The author wishes to thank the California Highway Patrol for their efforts in disseminating their re-enactment of the Wetterling incident in the hope that others could learn from the tragedy and be more likely to survive criminal violence.*



**ON THE JOB...**

**RUGER P-85**

*Continued from page 54*

displacement over standard pistol engagement distances for the benefits inherent in the low profile, virtually indestructible sights on the P-85.

The pistol felt comfortable in my hands though the grips proved more than a little slippery when firing the P-85 in the rain and drizzle which have blanketed the Northeast since winter supposedly ended.

The grips (or stocks, if you prefer) are made from an industrial plastic named "Xenoy," and are horizontally grooved. I don't think it would be any more costly for Ruger to have these grips made with raised checkering to prevent slippage in the hand. Even better would be the offering of cushioned grips such as those Ruger puts on its Super Redhawk and GP 100 double action revolvers. I think the front and back straps of the frame should also be grooved or striated as an aid to maintaining a secure grip.

Some of the people who handled the pistol complained that the frame was too short for their hands and their little fingers rested on or below the lip of the magazine floor plate where they were subject to laceration by the sharp edge of that floor plate. The overwhelming number of people who handled and fired the P-85 thought that the grip size was just about right.

However, the majority of people who handled the P-85 thought that the magazine floor plate was sharp—and it is. I realize that the front of the floor plate can be used as a screwdriver to remove the grip screws, but I think that the possibility of lacerations would be substantially reduced if the magazine floor plate is reduced in size to conform to the base of the frame.

By the way, the magazine well is not beveled, and I applaud Ruger's decision not to add that feature since in my humble opinion the benefits of beveling the magazine well have always been more psychological than real.

The slide is not serrated on either side to aid in operating the slide as are the slides of most contemporary pistols. Early pho-

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tographs of the P-85 show serrations just in front of the safety/decocking lever, but current production units do not have this feature. The absence of serrations is not objectionable, and it is very easy to manipulate the slide without them. Even if one's fingers slip on the slide they are brought up short by the safety/decocking lever, and plenty of purchase is then obtained to operate the slide. I vote not to add serrations to the slide, though as mentioned earlier I would like to see some serrations or striations on the front and back straps to aid in holding onto the pistol.

The ambidextrous magazine latches are well thought out, and can be operated by pushing forward on either the right or left latch, or both of them. I know of only one other pistol with such a feature, and it will probably be some time before that pistol will be available to the public. This concept is superb. Some people who handled the P-85 thought that the latches should be a little larger and more rounded. I like them the way they are now. Making the latches any larger could result in the inadvertent release of a magazine while the pistol is being carried in a holster.

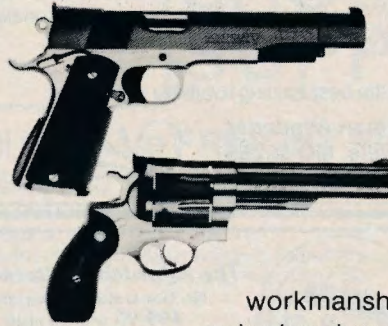
The trigger is typical of most of the breed of double action semi-automatics. Double action trigger pull is close to 15 pounds, and the single action mode is more than 10 pounds with quite a bit of "take up" before the actual trigger squeeze can begin. I think that legal rather than technical considerations cause the triggers on double action semi-automatics to be what they are. However, they can be mastered, and on balance are not objectionable.

The safety/decocking lever operates in the same manner as most other large capacity 9mm semi-automatics. That is, when the lever is in the "up" position the pistol is ready to fire, and when the lever is in the "down" position the pistol is safe. Moving the lever to the "down" position also decocks the pistol and the hammer drops forward where it contacts a raised surface integral with the safety which prevents the hammer from contacting the firing pin. Thus, when the shooter wishes to move the safety to the "fire" position it is necessary to push *up* with the thumb.

I think this is where Bill Ruger and his design team missed a golden opportunity to score a point for ergonomics. Whether by genius or fortuitous happenstance, John M. Browning designed the .45 Government Model 1911 and the P-35 so that a *downward* motion of the thumb moved the safety from "safe" to "fire." This downward motion is much more comfortable and less awkward for the shooter. No motion is wasted in drawing a pistol from its holster, moving the safety to the "fire" position and engaging a target. With a safety which operates so that the safety lever must be pushed *upward* some motion is wasted when the pistol is drawn. The thumb must then be moved downward, so establishing a secure grip on the pistol takes just that much longer. I think this already-good pistol would be immeasurably better if the ambidextrous safety functioned similar to the safeties of the .45 Government Model and the P-35.

The safety on the pistol I have for evalua-

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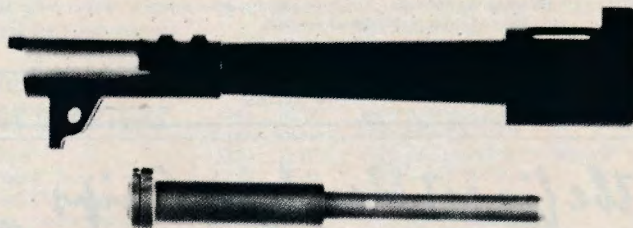
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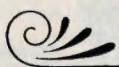
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tion is quite stiff and difficult to move from one position to the other. However, with additional shooting and manipulation I'm sure it will become easier to operate. (*The author's P-85 has been recalled due to a defective detent in the safety catch which made operation very stiff. Editor*)

The instruction booklet with the pistol, and by the way, the P-85 is packaged in a neat plastic case with a second magazine, stated that the magazine holds 15 rounds. I was able to put 16 rounds into both magazines.

There are three holes in the back of the magazine body so that the shooter can tell if the magazine contains at least five rounds, or 10, or 15. With 15 rounds loaded into the two magazines that I have the base of a cartridge is not visible, but is when 16 rounds are loaded. The magazines themselves are very similar in appearance to magazines for the Browning Hi-Power, the Beretta 92 or the large capacity Smith and Wessons. The magazine of a Browning Hi-Power will easily fit into the frame of the Ruger P-85.

The hammer of the P-85 has no half-cock position. The hammer is either all the way back in the cocked position or all the way forward. The hammer on my test sample is stainless steel finished bright. Several people who handled the P-85 stated that their eyes were distracted away from the sights by the bright hammer when they held the pistol at arms length. I don't find that criticism valid, but since several people did mention the bright finish of the hammer as a negative factor further inquiry is warranted.

The P-85 field strips in a manner similar to the procedure with any Browning design—with one important difference. After removing the magazine with the slide pulled to the rear you have to reach into the ejection port and push the ejector downward. The ejector is large and has some rather sharp edges, and I guarantee that a few fingers are going to be bleeding sooner or later in performing this procedure.

When the pistol is reassembled the ejector can either be raised back into position with a finger or by inserting a magazine all the way into the frame. I recommend inserting an empty magazine.

A very good feature is that the slide stop is retained by a spring when the stop is withdrawn from the frame far enough to disengage the link and permit the slide and barrel to be removed. This is a feature which will be much appreciated when field stripping the P-85. How many times have you misplaced the slide stop of a .45 Government Model when you had the pistol disassembled on your work bench for cleaning? You cannot misplace the slide stop of the P-85 since it is retained in the frame.

As best as I can tell the trigger mechanism of the P-85 functions in a similar manner to the well proven Ruger Mark I and Mark II .22 rimfire semi-automatics. Various plunger and hammer springs are in different locations within the frame of the P-85, but their relationships are straight forward and very reliable.

I experienced several failures to feed when firing the Winchester FMJ ammunition.

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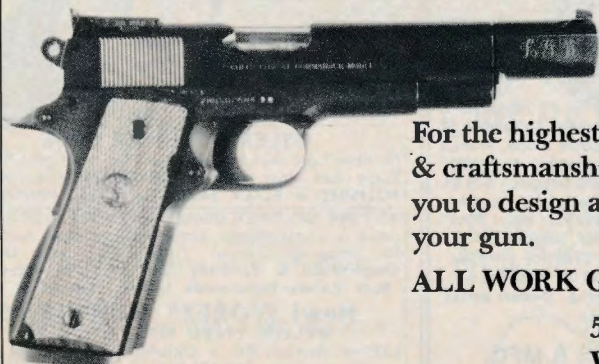
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Since the recoil impulse with that ammunition was noticeably less than with the Federal 115 grain JHP and other ammunitions, I suspect that the Winchester ammunition is not loaded to the power levels of the other ammunitions. In normal firing I experienced no failures to feed with other ammunitions.

I say "in normal firing" advisedly, since a standard test procedure which I perform on any semi-automatic pistol is to fire it with the pistol held in a variety of positions, i.e., upside down, canted 90° from the vertical right and left side, and other angles to ensure that the fired cartridge will be ejected and a fresh round chambered. When the P-85 was held muzzle-pointing-straight-down and fired the spent cartridge case would be caught between the breech face and the rear of the barrel, thus causing a jam which required both hands to clear.

At first I attributed this failure to eject to the Winchester FMJ ammunition, but it occurred with the other brands of ammunition I was using. Other shooters experienced the same occurrence when the pistol was held muzzle straight down and fired. The round in the chamber would be fired but would be caught between breech face and rear of the barrel before the cartridge case could be tossed free by the ejector. If you're wondering whether this inability to function when the pistol is fired in a muzzle straight down position is a liability I know of several "tunnel rats" who went into enemy tunnels in Viet Nam who would agree with me.

*Some people who handled the P-85 thought that the latches should be a little larger and more rounded. I like them the way they are now.*

I draw no negative conclusion from this malfunction with the P-85 I have for evaluation. It is always impossible to draw definite conclusions from a test sample of one firearm—but this abnormality bears further study to determine whether it can be induced in other P-85s. If this problem were to prove to be a systemic one I'm absolutely certain that Bill Ruger and his design team would quickly pinpoint the cause of the problem and correct it. The only point to be made here is that further inquiry is necessary.

On balance I like the P-85. The pistol contains a number of sound design innovations, and it will be sold at a very competitive price. Bill Ruger told me that the P-85 will certainly be offered in other calibers if demand warrants. I'm confident that we'll ultimately see P-85 pistols chambered for .45 ACP and perhaps .38 Super; who knows, perhaps even 10mm. Bill Ruger's firm has already manufactured six firearms which have sold more than one million guns in the design series. I think there is a very good chance that the P-85 will ultimately join that select group.



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## BILL RUGER INTERVIEW

Continued from page 55

basis. What we have done in designing the P-85 is to take desirable features from other firearms and combine them, taking the best of everything, to arrive at our P-85."

However, lest anyone think that he is a blatant plagiarist Bill immediately adds: "We're not crude copyists. We take good sound technology and use that as the departure point of designing a firearm which exemplifies the features we want in the gun. We wanted a pistol which would be compact and simple. We wanted a pistol which would be easy to manufacture, and serviceable to a marvelous extent. By innovating on well established features we came up with a design which worked from the very first time we pulled the trigger. And since we are in a highly competitive business we had to design a pistol which could be sold at a very competitive price."

The design philosophy outlined by Bill is the same philosophy utilized by all reputable businesses in this country and elsewhere. It works because it is simple and builds on what has been done before. We frequently hear about the exciting breakthroughs in medicine and high technology; the Jarvik artificial heart and small hand-held computers which today can perform functions which a decade ago took a computer the size of a garage to perform are only two examples which come to mind. You can come up with your own list just as easily.

However, more progress is made by slow, steady improvements to existing technology than all the dramatic scientific breakthroughs combined. Just ask the Japanese. Step-by-step refinements, daily improving on what already is adequate, looking for ways to make a product better, to simplify it, or to manufacture it more efficiently or at a lower cost—these are the things which keep a company at the top of its industry.

"For example, we never questioned the fact that we wanted to produce a double action pistol. We have a wealth of experience for the design and manufacture of our double action revolvers. We didn't have to go off and re-invent that wheel. We know how to make excellent double action revolvers. That knowledge came in handy when we set about designing the P-85."

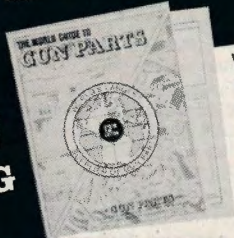
Bill had the idea of producing the P-85 first, but he is very quick to acknowledge the efforts of others. "I don't mean to give the impression that I sit back in my office and create the whole thing by myself. That simply isn't true. Oh, there are at least four patents on the P-85 in my name, ideas that I had, but we are blessed with a superb design staff. These people take my ideas, try to implement them, reject them if they don't work, add their own, so the final product is a team effort."

Bill is keenly conscious of serviceability. "We strive to create a firearm which doesn't break, and that's what the shooting world has come to expect from Sturm, Ruger."

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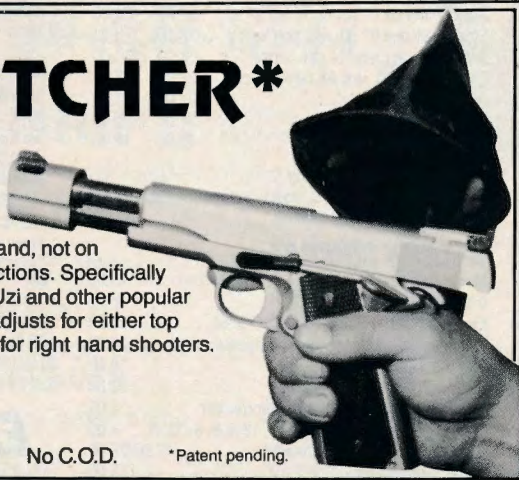
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Up until this point in the conversation Bill had been leaning forward intensely. But now he sat back in his desk chair and smiled confidently. "I think we're achieving that in the P-85, but we're never going to stop improving the P-85 whenever we see a way to do it."

Sitting at my typewriter and going over my notes made during our discussion I'm strongly reminded of a visit I made to the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. many years ago. It's common enough to see painters with their easels set back several feet from a major work of art as they copy it. I wasn't prepared to see a painter actually applying a few new strokes of paint to a major art work hanging on the gallery wall.

"Not to worry," the nearby security guard assured me, "That's the artist himself. He comes in whenever he thinks of some way to make the painting he created more attractive. And you know, whatever he does to the painting makes it even more powerful and meaningful."

That's Bill Ruger and his P-85.



## HORNADY AMMO

*Continued from page 37*

**.45 ACP:** High performance ammo for this caliber is an "iffy" proposition at best. Hornady offers a newly re-designed 185 gr. JHP (930 fps) with a huge cavity. It gave groups of two-inches on demand at 25 yards from a five-inch Bar-Sto barreled Colt auto.

Hornady also offers a 200 gr. C/T round. The bullet is a jacketed SWC similar to the H&G 68. The C/T stands for "Combat/Target," with the "Combat" meaning IPSC/USPSA shooters, I'm sure. This round placed 1½" groups from my Heinie .45 with no trouble at all, and its 937 fps velocity makes major caliber with room to spare. As for the "Target" end of things, I think that bullseye shooters would find this just a bit warm for their use.

**.44 Magnum:** Hornady currently loads both jacketed and lead bullets with weights of 200 and 240 grains. Both the jacketed 200 and 240 grain loads were tested using an old model Blackhawk with 7½" barrel.

The accuracy of these rounds is absolutely above reproach. At 25 yards, the 200 gr. JHP placed four shots into one-inch with a called-flyer taking it out to just under two-inches. All groups hovered around two-inches or less with this load and the velocity averaged 1320 fps for five rounds. The 240 grain JHPs would, in the hands of the gun's owner, shoot into 1½" all day at a 1263 fps velocity. What more you could want from factory ammo, I don't know.

I've included a pretty fair sampling of the entire handgun ammo line here. I use their product extensively in my firearms testing and it never fails to produce some of the best groups of the day. Hornady may not be as familiar a name to shooters as some other major brands, but in either rifle or handgun it need not take a back seat to anyone.



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and the time proven Series 70 safety system. We even offer a choice of two finishes (military Parkerized or polished blue), a choice of two calibers (.45 ACP or 9mm), and a choice of either assembled pistols or unassembled kits. And, in final preparation for our climb to the summit, we've priced our 1911-A1 low enough to make it absolutely the best pistol value on the market.

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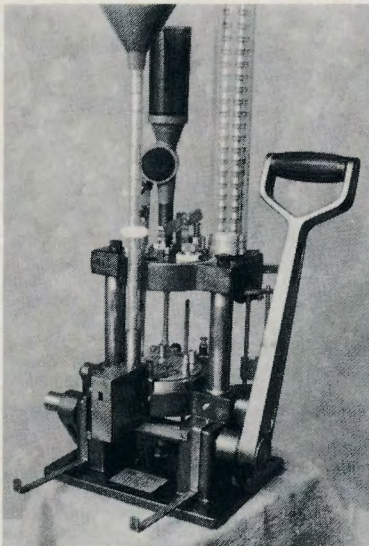
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## TED NUGENT

Continued from page 43

So Roy and I worked up a design of some scroll work on a beautiful 6½" 629. We incorporated my wolf-baying-at-the-moon logo, my preferred wildlife—the grizzly bear and the whitetail deer—a nude under the barrel, a little stage setting with a microphone and rock 'n' rollers screaming. It's just a gorgeous piece.

**AH:** What gun do you favor as a carry gun?

**TN:** I carried 29s and 629s for years, and I still do especially during the hunting season so I have a killer-gun with me, one that's really capable of taking big game cleanly. 'Cause the 9mm is not a big game gun. The properly loaded 9mm, I believe, is a good defense round. In fact, for the last couple of years I've been carrying my Beretta 92F.

**AH:** How can the 9mm be suitable for a 170 pound man and unsuitable for a 100 pound deer?

**TN:** Because deer are so superior to man in the tenacity department. It's uncanny.

**AH:** What do you think of the single-action Colt .45 automatic?

**TN:** I love single-action 45s, I've got some wonderful Frank Paris combat guns based on Commanders. And I carried a Gold Cup for a number of years. I carried a Star PD for a couple of years. I believe in the cocked-and-locked carry of a single-action auto whether it's a Hi-Power or a 1911.

But I did have a bad experience with my Gold Cup. I had a surprise discharge when I was holstering it in a pancake holster. I don't blame the gun; I don't blame the cocked-and-locked carry condition.

I look at Jeff Cooper as a hero of mine in the same way that I look at Jimi Hendrix as a hero of mine. But I don't play a Stratocaster (Hendrix's guitar) and I don't carry a single-action cocked-and-locked auto because I feel comfortable, capable and safe with a double-action auto. I'm sorry Jeff, but I don't.

Forty-fives are wonderful—if you're comfortable with em, carry em. Nine millimeters are wonderful—if you're comfortable with em, carry em.

I'm sure Jeff Cooper would agree that shot placement is the most important thing.

**AH:** Your love of finely tuned Smith and Wesson revolvers is obvious and understandable. What is it you like about the Beretta that the Smith doesn't offer?

**TN:** Well, again, I'm utilitarian motivated. I live on a ranch in Michigan, I'm constantly encountering skunks and possums and coons and feral dogs and cats and other vermin. I prefer to shoot .44 Magnums, but when I gotta roll down the window of my truck to shoot a skunk, after awhile without my ear muffs on, the old .44 gets to be a bit of a roar.

**AH:** You mention the noise. I'm curious: is rock 'n' roll louder than a gunshot?

**TN:** Boy, Cameron, I wouldn't be surprised to find out which has done the most damage to me. I was at the YO Ranch one time hunting ibex and I shot all six chambers of my .44 and I couldn't hear for a week. I had rock



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walls on all sides of me, and that was a stupid thing to do. That was probably the single most damaging thing I've ever done to my hearing. My left ear is ruined, but I think that's from the rock 'n' roll. I play at outrageous volume.

**AH:** *You're a doting father of your two children and you seem to reflect traditional values in many ways. Yet you're known as the Motor City Madman. What is the departure between your rock 'n' roll image and the real Ted Nugent?*

**TN:** I'm a rock 'n' roller. I love rock 'n' roll music. It brings out the best in a person. It is the ultimate motivation for uninhibitiveness and God knows we need more of that. When I'm rockin' 'n' rollin', as when I'm doing anything in my life, I like to maximize the experience. In order to maximize the rock 'n' roll experience as an uninhibited pursuit, one gets wild. Because the music is wild.

People who don't know how to get that uninhibited interpret it as being a little crazed. But tsk-tsk, that's their problem. Real rock 'n' rollers know that I'm just rockin' out.

**AH:** *Many people think that rock 'n' roll stars spend their lives taking drugs, throwing wild parties surrounded by wild women. Yet you travel all over the country giving lectures to school kids on the dangers of drug abuse.*

**TN:** I've never taken a drug in my life. I've never smoked dope, I've never taken a drink, I've never even had a cigarette in my mouth. I don't want to miss a lick from birth to death. There's all kinds of fun to be had and Ted is going to have as much as possible.

No, I don't take drugs. No, I don't drink. As far as the women go (laughs) I try my best to make up for it in that category.

**AH:** *Do you like to shoot bowling pins?*

**TN:** Yeah, I do. I have a Second Chance range right at my house with a table and I get pins from the local alleys. I love it, it's my main source of kindling for my fireplace.

**AH:** *Do you shoot some of the other games? Speed shooting at steel plates?*

**TN:** I have Bianchi speed plates at the house. I shoot them in two modes—I'll either shoot at seven yards, rapid fire, or I'll get back at 50 yards and off-hand shoot for my eye at long range shooting. I'll back off and shoot at 100 yards too.

Those are the only two I've done. I can't wait, someday, I hope to go to a practical police course . . .

**AH:** *PPC or . . .*

**TN:** No, the bad guys in the windows . . . I've always been fascinated by the Dirty Harry movie with the Hogan's Alley.

**AH:** *Jeff Cooper once remarked that if he ever told some of the shooting exploits he's done, like popping a balloon with one shot at 200 meters with a .45, that he'd be branded a liar. So he doesn't bother to tell the stories. What are some of your shooting accomplishments?*

**TN:** I can relate to that. I don't know if I can convey the image of how much I shoot . . .

**AH:** *How many rounds a month?*

**TN:** Thousands.

**AH:** *Two thousand?*

**TN:** Some months probably 5,000. I'll go

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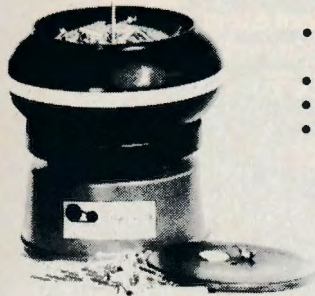
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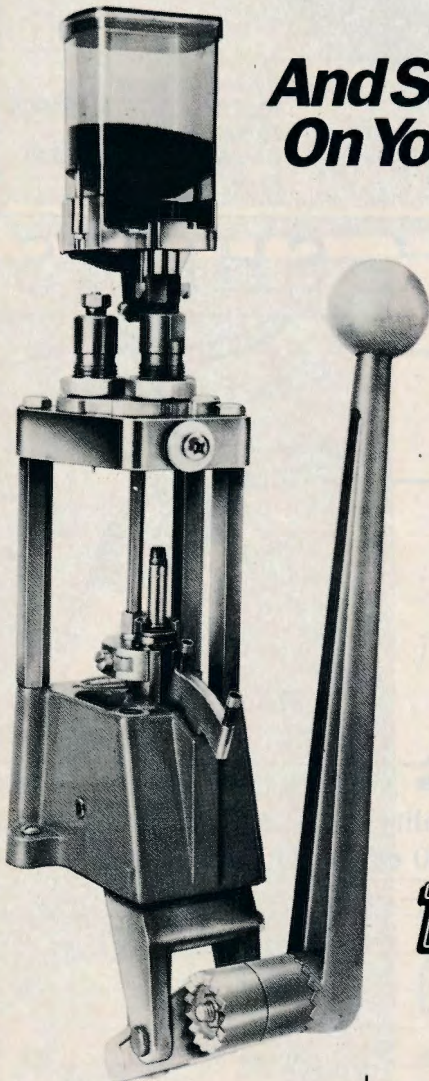
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Some of the specialty shots I've made, well, this is not bragging because I'm as excited about it as anybody, more so. I wasn't being irresponsible, I was executing shots I've made in practice situations hundreds of times over.

I was on horseback going through a dump and I had my six-inch 29 in a Lawman rig. This coyote took off out of the dump. By the time I maneuvered the horse through some saplings, he had a 100 yard headstart.

I got that horse going as fast as he could possibly run, stretching out like Sea Biscuit in the final furlong. That coyote was running for his life as fast as any four legs could ever carry a dog. At full gallop, at about 80 yards, that coyote started swinging to the left. I drew that 29 and threw a shot at that dog.

I shot him right through the heart. I couldn't believe my eyes! I had two guys with me, and they couldn't believe their eyes. Rolled that coyote! It was the most fantastic shot you could ever fathom.

That same day we were headed back to the house up a lane and a woodchuck ran up an oak tree, about 25 feet up. I was reining my horse around, the horse reared up on its hind legs à la Hopalong Cassidy and over my right shoulder I leaned back, and blew that woodchuck's head right off. No sights, just instinctive pointing.

Another time I was deer hunting with my buddies in a swamp. A buck had gone up between us out of the cat-tails. I never got a good sight-picture on him. I had my four-inch 629 out and the buck finally came up out of the reeds at 250 yards at a slow canter. Just before he got to the thorn apples I covered up his nose with the red front ramp and touched it off, and shot him right through the neck. At 250 yards, trotting! One shot—bang!—a .30-06 with a scope wouldn't have done ya any better.

My cousin saw me do that.

I was so fortunate to correspond with Elmer Keith before he died and I told him about some of my shots and he told me about some of his shots and how we don't really expect anyone to believe them and how we don't really care. And that's the bottom line. I've got witnesses to most of these shots, and they'll shake their heads and tell you, "Yeah, I don't know how, but I saw it." It is unbelievable.

**AH:** You've done a lot of handgun hunting. What is the attraction of handgun hunting?

**TN:** Well, primarily I'm a bow hunter. The intimacy of flexing your more serious predatorship in a close-range encounter is the most thrilling. I've been bow hunting all my life. I was shooting a bow when I was 7-years-old



in 1955.

To get that close to an animal is the ultimate. I love my long-range .270 shootin' and 7mm shootin', but the handgun is such a neat tool. It has been touted as being a short-range weapon for so long—unjustifiably so—that I get a big kick out of getting real close.

To use a gun like that, to use a weapon design that you really enjoy shooting, in a hunting situation is just another thrill. I do most of my small game hunting with a handgun, from flying game to rabbits and squirrels. I've always used my Model 17 Smith on squirrels and I can shoot as many as anybody with a shotgun can shoot. I've always used my .44s for rabbits and stuff. I use that silhouette load, the 210 grain, and it just punches holes through the critters so it doesn't damage any meat. It keeps your eyes sharp.

Plus handgun hunting gives you another excuse to shoot a handgun, and anytime I can shoot a handgun is good for me.

**AH:** *What's your favorite handgun hunting weapon?*

**TN:** Smith and Wesson Model 29 or 629, six-inch barrel, with factory Remington 240 grain either jacketed hollowpoints or jacketed soft points. Soft points where more penetration is desirable and I use it for everything from rabbits to elk.

I've killed an awful lot of deer with my Smiths. I've killed deer with my two-inch snub 29 and a lot with the four-inch 29 and the six-inch and I've got an eight-inch with a scope on it. I have the 29 silhouette gun with the adjustable front sights. They're all beautifully accurate and they're all fun to shoot. They're all capable.

The .44 Magnum is certainly a capable round. I hear a lot of controversy even amongst the shooters ourselves about whether the handgun should be a hunting tool or not. And whether an open sight handgun should be a hunting tool or not. My open

sight handgun is capable of long range accuracy whenever I do my part.

**AH:** *Do you prefer iron sights or . . .*

**TN:** I prefer iron sights. I've got a scope on my eight-inch 29 and when you have a rest or the time and conditions to utilize a scope—and it takes a little more time, but not much—it's beautifully accurate, but so are the open sights. I have no problem with the open sights. At long range the front ramp generally obliterates your target where you literally have to cover up a deer-sized target over 150 yards. Again, you learn what a sight picture looks like and it works.

It works, believe me it works. My freezer is my guide!

**AH:** *What do you think of the powerful single-shots?*

**TN:** I've shot my .375 JDJ on the target range, but I haven't used it to hunt with yet. They're obviously wonderfully designed for taking large game. I mean, all you have to do is read of J.D.'s exploits (J.D. Jones) or any of a number of the many, many kills made with the weapons to realize that his 6mm is wonderful, the .375, the .411 and all the different ones.

I've seen a .460 one time, a .460 handgun, (laughs) which I think is real cute! I'd love to get a Casull, a .454, and I expect I will. But I think a .44 Magnum will take anything in North America—no problem. Right up to and including grizzly bears—no problem.

**AH:** *Do you think the single-shot handcanons with 14-inch barrels and high power scopes are big handguns or small rifles?*

**TN:** They're big handguns, there's no question about it. I know Ross Seyfried wouldn't agree, but of course they're handguns. It doesn't have to be a revolver to be a handgun, anything you hold in your hand is a handgun.

I don't see why we have to argue with ballistic accomplishments and pretend they didn't happen. When Bob Milek dusts an antelope at 300 yards with his 7mm Bench

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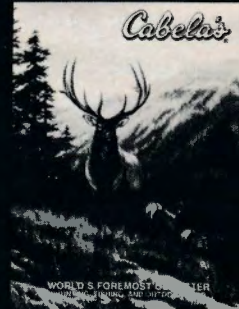
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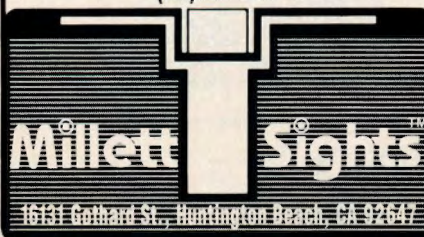
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Rest, he did it didn't he? When Ross dumps a Cape buffalo with his .45 Long Colt Express Gonzo load, he did it—the buffalo's dead.

Let's just shut-up and take it for what it is. All this in-bickering is just . . . all it does is just complicate our cause. I don't think we should promote that. Look, this bullet will do its job because, look, here's a big dead thing. It did it. Case closed.

AH: *What's your advice to a handgun hunter who's just starting out?*

TN: Get yourself a .44 Magnum and shoot the hell out of it! If you know a gunsmith who can tune your action for you and give you a nice, light trigger, do it. The trigger is THE most important thing for accurate shooting, especially beyond 50 yards. And get out there and do it! Get out and do it and have a good time, that's the name of the game.

No offense to my fellow shooters, but wait till you kill a deer with a bow and arrow. That's the kick, that's the real thrill! Anytime you can intensify the intimacy of a hunting situation, the thrill is accelerated accordingly. AH: *What's your favorite type of handgun hunting?*

TN: Deer. They're a wonderful game animal, extremely bright and extremely plentiful. I personally don't know what my life would be like without whitetail deer. I hunt every day of the season. I don't work between September and January because I hunt every single day.

Hunting is not just sport or recreation with me, it's my life-style. That's all we eat in the Nugent house, what I kill. It's real, real special.

AH: *Let's play a word association game. I'll say a word and you say the first thing that pops into your mind.*

TN: Okay.

AH: *Colt.*

TN: Equality. God made men, but Sam Colt made 'em equal.

AH: *Smith and Wesson.*

TN: My favorite, Model 29, six-inch, blue. Confidence on my hip.

AH: *Africa.*

TN: The old days. I went to Africa in '78 and had a wonderful safari and I can't wait to go back. I think it's the next notch in the stock of encroachment of civilization. Damn shame.

AH: *Ted Kennedy.*

TN: (pauses) Enemy.

AH: *Saturday night special.*

TN: No such thing.

AH: *Beretta.*

TN: My best friend (laughs).

AH: *Handgun hunting.*

TN: Escape.

AH: *Alaska.*

TN: Seventy-inch moose. A dream hunting field.

AH: *Elmer Keith.*

TN: Father of the forty-four. My kinda guy.

AH: *Charles Askins.*

TN: Say that one again now.

AH: *Charles Askins.*

TN: Oh, the colonel. Pistolero.

AH: *Gun control.*

TN: Ridiculous (pauses) we don't need any gun control. The best gun control there is is

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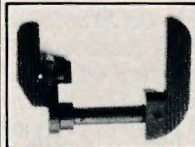
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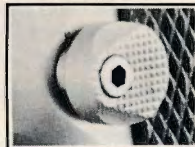
Reduces felt trigger pull for better control. Exclusive design is better than a trigger shoe, will not snag holster on draw or insertion. Simple installation, also eliminates magazine safety.

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Mag-Na-Porting a forty-four.  
 AH: *San Ysidro.*  
 TN: That's the McDonald's Boogie, isn't it? Where were the good guys with guns?  
 Where were the good guys?  
 AH: *Bernie Goetz.*  
 TN: My hero! A perfect example of justice now. Not waiting, not procedure, not ascertaining if they carried the screw-drivers for ill intent—justice now.

On my last album I thanked my producers and I thanked my friends and I thanked Bernie Goetz. Here's a situation where recidivism, in our face, in the face of the subway users, got a rude awakening by the way you force scum—for this one instant—to realize: Crime is not going to pay. Try this ammo on for size!

And I feel that what Bernie did should happen with regularity. It should happen somewhere every day. Because after about 20 days of people standing up and stopping crime *right now*—not calling for help, not bending over, not turning the other cheek—come up shooting. Crime would cease to exist as we know it today.

The criminals of America know one simple truism—crime pays. You're not going to meet resistance, so go ahead. Don't get a job, just knock over some poor sniveling wimp. That's the law of the street.

But Bernie woke a few of 'em up, one day. If only society hadn't confused the issue, Bernie would have been carrying something better than rabbit ammo and he wouldn't have had to wound anybody. He could've shot 'em all dead. And that would have been even better.

**ACCURATE ARMS #5**  
*Continued from page 36*

The SAAMI maximum product average pressure for the .38 Super +P is 35,700 C.U.P. (copper units) and prudence dictates that there be a safety margin. Most authorities agree that loads should not exceed 95% of SAAMI's maximum and my loads do not exceed 85%. Plenty of safety there, but it is still important to remember that there are variations in guns and all loads should be worked up carefully. It is also important to note that my test gun has Wilson's fully-supported-chamber-barrel and shooters with conventional barrels should use even more caution. If W-W .38 Auto brass shows any sign of bulging, switch to Remington .38 Super cases.

Using the same components I find that a charge of 5.0 gr. makes an excellent practice load with either bullet. It is also an ideal starting point for working up loads for your gun. The pressure tested loads should be considered near maximum and treated with due caution.

The down side is that Accurate Arms powders are relatively new and a lot of dealers may not have them. Of course, Accurate Arms will be tickled to sell your dealer some and they also have a booklet of loading data that covers the use of all their powders in a variety of handgun and rifle cartridges. It's free for the asking.

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## COOPER'S GSP .45

Continued from page 45

mer-bite." Usually when there is blood in the web of the hand, it is caused by abrasion from the sharp edge of the grip safety. You can spend \$70-\$100 to have a gunsmith install a "ducktail" safety, or you can round off the edges with a Dremel tool. The result will be the same.

The basis for the gun is Springfield Armory's version of John Browning's masterpiece. After the gunsmithing is done, by Gunsite's resident gunsmiths Richard (Kit) Carson and John Mahan, the piece is finished in non-reflective black.

The Gunsite Service Pistol has everything you need on a personal defense weapon. It also has nothing you don't need.

For example, there is no ambidextrous or extended slide release. It's not just that it is a bad tactic to let your gun go dry. Thanks to the miracle of electronic timers, we can now prove what we suspected all along: there is no speed advantage in using an extended release. An extended slide release can interfere with holstering. It can lock the gun open when it shouldn't (if you bump it), and it can keep the gun from locking open when it should (if you rest either thumb on it). You can see why there is no such thing on the GSP.

The magazine release is not enlarged. In a one-pound, steel-lined, groin-covering "competition" holster, there is no problem, but in a practical holster, like a Sparks or Nelson Summer Special, it is too easy to release the magazine accidentally.

There is no "recoil reducer." The best recoil reducer is still a Weaver stance with the support elbow bent down toward the ground. Action shooting competitions have become obsessed with putting two hits on all targets, even when there are 4 or 5 or 6 targets. Muzzle compensators and barrel weights (combined with light loads) are useful in that artificial context, but they are not worth their cost in money and weight on a serious gun.

The GSP is not stainless. On this point, Cooper may have been influenced by his own environment. Rust in Arizona is about as common as polar bears. On the other hand, he recently carried his own GSP in Colombia for a month, with no evidence of rust. We probably make too big a deal out of rust-proofing our guns.

There are no fancy stocks. There are no holes drilled in the trigger. There are no chrome-plated mudflaps, no foxtails on the antenna, and no flames painted on the sides.

The GSP is not a "custom" pistol. The only options are the left-hand safety mentioned above, and pinning the grip safety, if you need that modification. (No, the gun won't go off by itself. The Browning P35, the Star PD, the Detonics, and many other pistols do not have grip safeties, and they are no less safe as a result.)

At such time as some manufacturer produces a pistol with decent sights and trigger, with parts that don't fall off or tear up the

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shooter's hands, then Cooper will happily get out of the gun business.

This is a gun for saving your life, not impressing your friends. If you wear \$95 jeans embroidered with the names of Italian designers of indeterminate sex, then you won't like the GSP. Let me suggest something in a shiny two-tone, with sharp corners and lovely pearl stocks. If your jeans say "Levi" or "Wrangler"; if you want a gun that goes bang when it should and hits where it should; if you want a hard-hitting, heavy-duty pistol to carry for the serious business of self-defense, check out the Gunsite Service Pistol.

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**CONVERSATION**

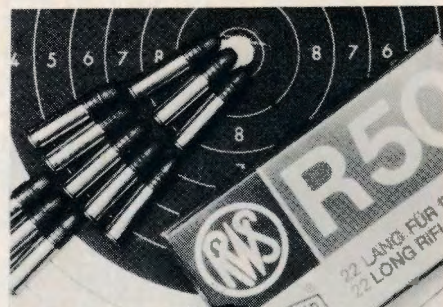
Continued from page 26

Lightweight Commander they'll be mature enough to be safe.

**JW:** What would you recommend to a complete novice?

**BW:** You shouldn't have a handgun for self-defense unless you're willing to spend the time necessary to learn how to use it. Even if you have no interest in sport shooting, you still need some education on how to use it and you should go out and shoot it for familiarization every few months. So for the complete novice or someone who isn't otherwise interested in guns, I'd recommend a pump riot shotgun. It's the most forgiving weapon for the inexperienced shooter and you can keep the chamber empty the same as an automatic handgun.

It's not something your kid can pick up and shoot somebody with, penetration is minimal so you're not likely to accidentally kill somebody in the house across the yard, and everyone's watched enough TV to know the sound of shuckin' a round into the chamber of a pump shotgun. I'm sure there have been lots of instances where a shooting was averted just by that sound. If you were trying to break into someone's house and you heard that sound, I'll bet you'd change your mind.



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**BOWEN REDHAWK**

*Continued from page 44*

loadings. That's where the .45 L.C. comes in. The .45 Long Colt is a blood-relative of the .44 Magnum; they are both about the same caliber and, depending on your choice of bullets, the pill that comes out of the muzzle can also weigh the same. The big difference is the powder charge, and that translates to less muzzle velocity for the .45 Long Colt: 800-1,200 fps for the .45 L.C. vs. 850-1,390 fps for the .44 Magnum. Not a lot, but enough to make the .45 L.C. a pleasure to shoot when you want to see dust fly down range without loosening the fillings in your teeth.

We all know that talk is cheap and opinions are a dime a dozen. What really counts is how a gun feels and how it shoots. So with a supply of ammo donated by Jim Davis Guns of Reseda, California, we set out for some open-air shooting.

Right up front, the BCA .45 L.C. feels and handles like a Ruger .44 Magnum, except for a few less obvious changes which become apparent when you pick the gun up. The addition of a round-butt conversion and a set of over-sized custom walnut grips gives the gun a feel and balance that lets you know you have something special in your hand. And when the action is worked a few times, you can hear the quality of Bowen's work as the trigger, the hammer and cylinder all move together in finely-tuned harmony. Some guns



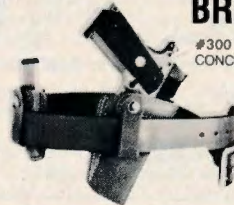
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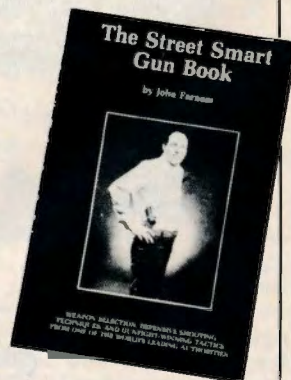
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just sound good when the action is cycled and this is one of them.

After admiring the gun and passing it back and forth to a few curious onlookers, six rounds were dropped into the classic, oversized Ruger cylinder and a distant rock was chosen for the first shots of the test. Unlike the characteristic jump of a .44 Magnum, the converted Bowen gun rolls back in the hand in a pleasant and controllable manner. After a couple dozen shots it became clear why the .45 L.C. is such a popular load and why it refuses to go away. With the added weight of the over-built Ruger frame, shooting this big-bore beauty was actually fun.

Next came the accuracy test. Breaking rocks is one thing, but laying groups on paper with scoring rings is where the rubber meets the road. After all, Bowen is a sports shooter and he says he built the gun as much for hunting as anything else.

A standard NRA pistol target was set up at 25 yards and, after a couple of sighting-in shots, all groups were kept in the black. Still not satisfied, we set up another clean target and laid in five more shots from a makeshift counter top. In spite of the roar of the muzzle blast and the effects of recoil induced by using factory ammo, the resultant group was confined nicely to the ten-ring. Not bad for such a heavy-hitter.

In all honesty, the BCA .45 L.C. was such a delight to shoot, the remainder of the test eroded into a shooter's free-for-all. We finished the afternoon off by shooting at all manner of targets of opportunity (i.e., numerous boulders, hillsides and stumps) until the ammo ran out. With a little more fodder for Bowen's friendly cannon, we no doubt would have stayed not long enough to test the effects of muzzle blast at night.

Bowen has proven his point. He knows how to make a gun and make it well. For his .45 L.C. conversion, he uses a Douglas sleeve inside the drilled out factory barrel. A specially made one-piece barrel could have been used, but after much thought, Bowen decided that a quality sleeve would allow him to use a proven grade of barrel with minimum turn around time, and at a more reasonable price to the customer with no loss of accuracy.

Ordinarily, the idea of a sleeved barrel brings to mind some pretty shoddy images of less than perfect examples of this technique, but Bowen does a lot to dispel this idea. At BCA, each sleeve is carefully set and affixed with such precision that the seam between the sleeve and the barrel is barely visible. In many cases the overall quality of the converted gun is such that it will probably shoot better than before! And as Bowen is fond of emphasizing, this is all done with the idea in mind that the finished product should not jump out and scream at you for attention.

Bowen also offers a line of services related to Ruger modifications, including: single-action models, double-action models, as well as rimfire automatics. He can even make you up a match-grade PPC revolver on a Ruger or S&W frame.

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## S&W 657

Continued from page 46

If they were made of stainless, the management could eliminate the chrome plating process and save money. Experience gained with the first stainless steel revolver, the Model 60, pointed out the need for flash chrome plating on the trigger and hammer as early as 1966.

The trigger pull on the test Model 657 is a single action pull of 3½ lbs., and a double

*The Model 657 would hit the targets if the shooter was up to the task.*

action pull of 12½ lbs. The action is tight and the lock-up positive for a box stock revolver.

One of the questions facing someone contemplating a metallic silhouette style of competition is whether the cartridge being used maintains sufficient accuracy and power to engage one-inch thick steel targets at 200 yards. With a minimum amount of practice it was determined the Model 657 would hit the targets if the shooter was up to the task. Granted, it will not compete in accuracy with the more developed bolt action pistols built for these ranges, but it was shown to be capable of hitting a target at 200 meters.

The question becomes one of power. One of my favorite handloads for the 41 Magnum is 20.0 grs. of IMR-4227, and a 220 gr. cast SWC bullet. The first thing noticed in practice was the failure of the ram silhouette to fall when struck repeatedly by this load at 200 meters while testing from the bench. Realizing the late hour (this was discovered just days before the match) I decided to test the factory Federal 210 grain hollowpoint ammunition. It chronographed an average of 1335 fps out of the six-inch barrel while the 4227 handload was moving at 1051 fps. Lacking the time to develop a good, accurate and stout handload for the competition the decision was reached to use the factory load.

The 657 is not equipped with the wide target type trigger normally found on top of the line N-frame Smiths. It has, instead, the smooth combat style trigger, and again, this is in answer to those who have objected to the target trigger for double action work. The problem with this is during the Long Range competition only single action was employed, and a wider trigger would have felt more positive. However I prefer the smooth combat trigger because of the use of double action while hunting.

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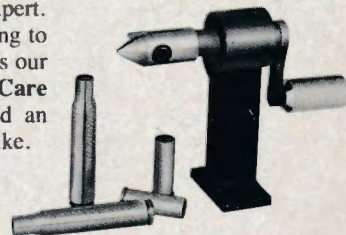
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The final results of the Long Range competition at the Masters were a demonstration of my low skill level, but it is a poor carpenter who blames his tools for a shoddy job.

The Smith & Wesson Model 657 is a solid, well built stainless steel revolver in a superior chambering. With the Federal 210 gr. hollowpoint ammo, and in a box stock state it is capable of knocking over the one-inch thick targets at 200 meters at the Masters. I did, the only trouble was I did it out of sequence, and had to laugh at my error, not the guns. The Model 657 will remain this sportsman's choice.



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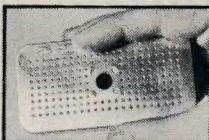


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Continued from page 40

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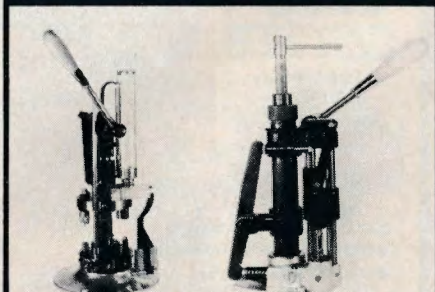


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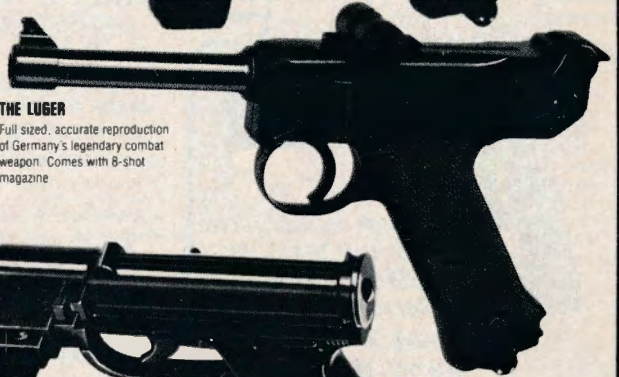
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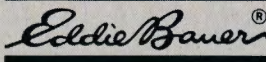


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**GP COMP**

Continued from page 38

and above the trigger. Drifting this pin out to the right lets the magazine safety self-eject itself down the magazine well. Putting the pin back closed up the pin hole.

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*I'm trying to figure out how to reengineer the GP Comp so it can function properly.*

All the rest were under two-inches at 25 yards. Many 10-shot groups were one ragged hole in the target. The Sierra 115 JHC and the Hornady 115 JHP shot very well. Hell, 40-year-old Canadian hardball averaged right around 1.5 inches at 25 yards and 3.25 at 50 yards.

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**ON THE DRAW**



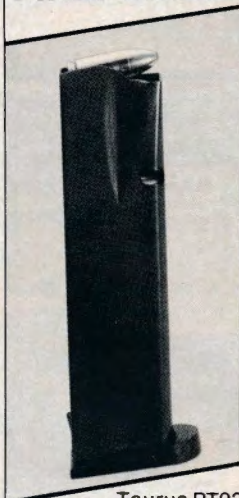
I gotta get a hotter load, those pins still keep dancing around on the table.

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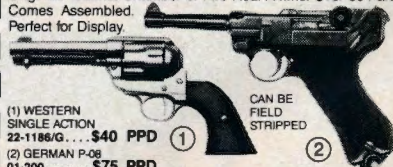
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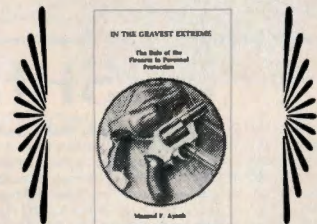
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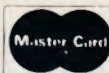
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HH024-38005	Vari-X 3x9 Compact Matte Duplex Rifle Scope	307.40	215.20	175.59
HH024-43045	NEW! Vari-X III 1.5x5 Matte Duplex Rifle Scope	330.10	231.05	188.54
HH024-37788	Vari-X 111 2.5x8 Matte Duplex Rifle Scope	370.00	259.00	211.34
HH024-42339	20x60mm Gold Ring Spotting Scope	419.65	293.75	239.70
HH024-42787	20x50mm Gold Ring Compact Spotting Scope	401.80	281.25	229.50

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HH051-1020	3x-9x32 Bronze Medal Series WA Plex Vari. Power Scope	101.70	64.07	40.50
HH051-1021	3x-9x40 Bronze Medal Series WA Plex Vari. Power Scope	135.60	85.43	48.95
HH051-1140	8x24 Compact Folding Camouflage Binoculars	158.20	99.66	63.00
HH051-1141	10x24 Compact Folding Camouflage Binoculars	171.76	108.21	67.50
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HH002-PR403	CVA Squirrel Rifle 32 Caliber Percussion Complete RH	211.95	159.04	118.06
HH002-PS409	CVA 12 Ga. Shotgun Obl. Bri. Comp Percussion	293.95	220.65	153.09
HH031-5020	Thompson/Center Hawken 50 Cal. Percussion Complete	315.00	245.07	208.37
HH031-5070	Thompson/Center Hawken 54 Cal. Percussion Complete	315.00	245.07	208.37
HH031-5052	Thompson/Center Renegade 50 Cal. Percussion Complete	265.00	206.17	175.30
HH031-5054	Thompson/Center Renegade 54 Cal. Percussion Complete	265.00	206.17	175.30
HH031-5302	Thompson/Center Cherokee 32 Cal. Percussion Complete	265.00	206.17	175.30
HH031-5303	Thompson/Center Cherokee 36 Cal. Percussion Complete	265.00	206.17	175.30
HH031-5305	Thompson/Center Cherokee 45 Cal. Percussion Complete	265.00	206.17	175.30
HH031-5220	Thompson/Center Cougar 50 Caliber Percussion Complete	395.00	291.75	248.06
HH031-6820	T/Center New Englander 50 Cal Perc. Single Trigger	199.00	153.23	131.64
HH031-6810	T/Center New Englander Shotgun Single Trigger 12 ga.	199.00	153.23	131.64
HH031-5552	T/C Renegade Hunter Single Trigger 50 Cal. Perc. Comp	245.00	190.61	162.07
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HH002-KA742	CVA 12 Ga. Shotgun Kit Obl. Bri. Percussion	223.95	168.48	95.94
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# INDUSTRY INSIDER

JERRY RAKUSAN

## TEA TIME AND TOILETS: S&W SOLD TO BRITISH PLUMBERS FOR \$112 MILLION

British firm F.H. Tomkins PLC was the successful bidder for Smith & Wesson. Tomkins plans to pay for the purchase with \$38.8 million from its own resources and an issue of 18.2 million new shares, raising \$73.7 million.

The British firm is said to be manufacturers of lawn mowers and plumbing equipment, so one would not expect any drastic changes in management, production, or product line.

Lear Siegler Holdings Company, which held Smith & Wesson, announced the total sale price at \$112.5 million.

Speaking of Smith & Wesson, there is word that a new .44 Magnum revolver is in the works. This is reported to be built on the "N" frame, with a full length underlug, à la the "L" frame guns and an unfluted cylinder. Look for a 6½" and a 8¾" barrels.

The first production run of Colt's 10mm auto pistols is just about completed, and a source at the factory tells me that dealers will begin receiving guns some time in June. There's not a great number of guns, so I



suspect that production will increase during the summer, but until then the guns will be allocated to dealers to assure wide distribution.

We have received many plaintive pleas from readers asking for a source of Bren Ten magazines that work. It appears from the letters we have received that either they have 10mm guns that do not have magazines, or they have defective magazines. If anyone has a source for these we would be happy to pass it on to all of our readers.

The Browning double-action 9mm auto pistol, which appeared for a short while in the Browning catalog, is a thing of the past.

According to Browning sources, the pistol, as made by FN, will not be imported. There is a possibility that Browning will go elsewhere for production of a double-action Hi-Power.

On the Sig-Sauer front, their new distribution system seems to be working, and reports are that more and more police departments are becoming interested in the guns. What is unusual is that interest is split almost 50-50 between the P-220 in .45 ACP and the P-226 in 9mm.

It seems that 9mm double-action pistols are hogging the news these days, and it's no different with Llama. Their new Model 82, which has been adopted as the official side-arm of the Spanish army, will soon hit the U.S. market. The new generation of single-action Llamas, with a more positive safety that locks the firing pin, a modified extractor, and re-designed grip panels, are also becoming available.

One of the more interesting handgun ammo developments is the new 9mm revolver cartridge announced by Federal Cartridge Co. In case you hadn't heard, Federal is now distributing Norma ammunition. This should alleviate some of the prob-



lems of obtaining their proprietary ammo, but it is doubtful that the price situation will change.

### Let's Get Political

With the NRA convention over, and the status within the organization pretty much status quo, perhaps now we, and they, can get down to some business of fighting the myriad of anti-gun bills in Congress. If I came away from the NRA meeting with any ideas at all, it was that the so-called dissidents, beside their political thrust within the organization, tried to instill but a single thought to all the members—when it comes to anti-gun legislation, let there be no compromise!

We have, in the past, compromised away little bits and pieces of our firearms rights, and if we haven't learned by now, perhaps it's already too late.

There is one piece of legislation that cries out for no compromise. That is the proposed federal 7-day waiting period for *all* handgun transactions. As I understand it, if you sell your buddy a handgun and don't wait seven days before you deliver it, it's the pokey or a fine. What a field day the BATF could have with that one.

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