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JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1989

HANDGUNNER

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MAGNUM**

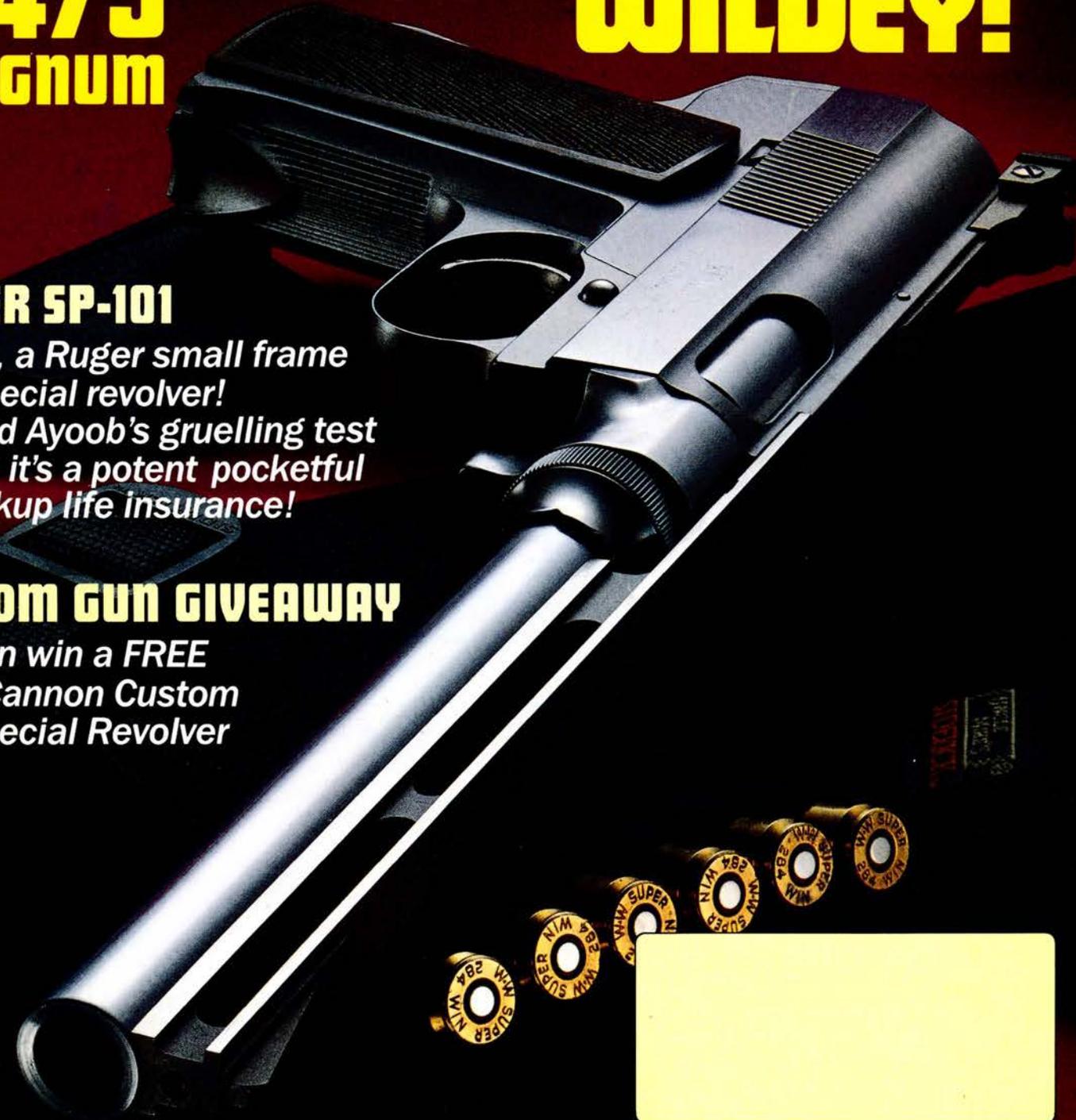
WILDEY!

RUGER SP-101

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CUSTOM GUN GIVEAWAY

You can win a **FREE**
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He's Got Everything He Wants

I hate to keep handing you the same old line, but it's true and I hear it every year about this time. It goes like this, "I just don't know what to buy, (fill in your name), for Christmas." "He's so hard to buy for." Your wife and/or sweetheart says it, I'll guarantee it. Then she says, "he has everything he wants". Now you know damn well that's not true, but she says it. The end result is that we've gained a reputation for being hard to shop for and most of it is our fault, because we never tell them what we want. Maybe it's because we think they won't understand and if we explain it to them it takes some of the fun out of it. I don't know, but I know this much, if we don't tell them, we'll wind up with some new socks and some damn silly neck tie we'll never wear. Well this year dare to be different, tell her what you want. Just leave this ad somewhere where she'll find it. Try the refrigerator, be inventive, maybe her lingerie drawer or the front seat of her car. Don't be bashful, just check the boxes in this ad, and don't worry, our guys will help her with the ordering to make sure you get the right caliber. Try it, all you've got to lose is another pair of socks!

THE RL550B

The Worlds Most Versatile
Progressive Reloader

The RL550B is available in and will reload over 120 different rifle and pistol calibers, a task made easy by our unique removable tool head. This tool head holds all of your dies in perfect alignment allowing you to change calibers without time consuming, critical die adjustment necessary in our competitors' presses.

UNIQUE FEATURES

The NEW RL550B has several unique features built into its automatic priming system. A primer early warning device tells you when you're down to three primers by emitting a loud piercing buzz.

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- GFP 90. cartridge case finish \$4.50 per 8 ounces.
- Rapid lube. Dillons aerosol cartridge case lubricant. \$4.50.

PRECISION RELOADING ACCESSORIES

- Primer Flip Tray, high quality metal, a must for filling primer tubes. \$10.50 each.

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The Dillon RT1200B takes the work out of case trimming by allowing the simultaneous sizing and trimming of rifle cases.

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The Dillon RT1200B Electric Case Trimmer with a Steel Size/trim die is \$125.00.

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This precision scale eliminates the guess work by a simple three poise balance beam. Easy to use for the Novice, precision accuracy for the professional. FACTORY DIRECT \$39.95.

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PRECISION RIFLE CASE GAGES

Quickly determines the correct case dimensions for the following rifle cases; 223, 308 and 30.06. \$14.95 each.



THE NEW RL550B Progressive Reloader \$249.95

Factory Direct
(Less Dies)

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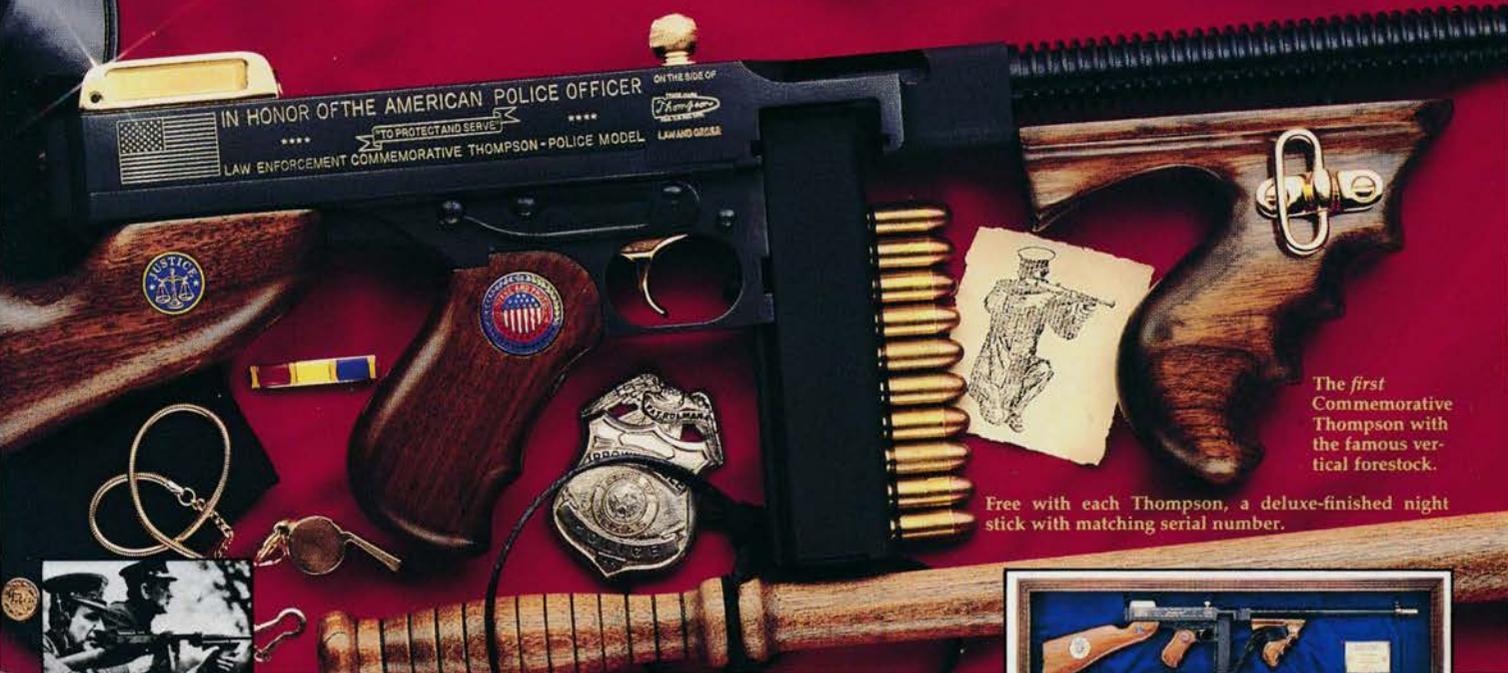
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Presenting . . .

THE LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMEMORATIVE THOMPSONS

The First Commemorative Longarm ever Issued to Honor America's Police Officers



The first Commemorative Thompson with the famous vertical forestock.

Free with each Thompson, a deluxe-finished night stick with matching serial number.



"On the Side of Law and Order."

Gen. Thompson's motto in 1920 for his new firearm

Around the clock, seven days a week, Police Officers across our country put their lives on the line protecting our families and loved ones. Yet, each time they go on patrol, they never know if they'll ever see their families again. Often unheralded, they live by their motto: "To Protect and Serve."

And ever since the "Roaring '20s," Police and Sheriffs Departments have relied on Thompsons to help them in the battle against crime. Even today, many Thompsons are on active duty in law enforcement agencies, while others have been proudly retired to museums where you'll see a photograph of a famous lawman, his badge and his Thompson displayed alongside.

Now, to draw attention to the deeds of valor of America's Police Officers, The American Historical Foundation is proud to announce The Police Model Law Enforcement Commemorative Thompson.

A Collector First

This is the first commemorative Thompson issued in honor of America's Police Officers—and the first commemorative longarm of any type to honor Law Enforcement. As such, this is in the "first ever" class of distinction, which has seen many, well-documented price increases. From a collector viewpoint, this Thompson will be highly prized.

Famous Vertical Forestock

Also of great importance to collectors, this is the first commemorative Thompson ever issued with the classic pistol-grip vertical forestock, made famous in the '20s on both sides of the law.

Your finger curls around the 24-Karat Gold plated trigger as you grasp the deluxe-finished solid American Walnut stocks and shoulder this 12 pounds of Steel, Gold and Walnut.

You cradle under your right elbow the heavy, precision-milled steel receiver, which is highly polished, emphasizing the roll-engraved and gold-gilt inlaid commemorative inscriptions, the U.S. flag and the famous Thompson "bullet" trademark.

You sight across the 24-Karat Gold plated rear sight base and the 24-Karat Gold plated knurled actuator knob, across the 35 deep-cooling fins and along the highly polished blued barrel to the 24-

Karat Gold plated front sight and hefty Cutts compensator. Even the sling swivels and mounts are 24-Karat Gold plated. A deluxe, black leather, adjustable sling is provided.

The shoulder stock is fitted with fired-enamel cloisonne medallions bearing the Police Officer "shield" and the Scales of Justice. The rear grip is also inset with a cloisonne medallion bearing the Police motto with patriotic device.

Limited Edition of Only 1500

Only 1500 Police Commemoratives will be custom built in this strictly limited edition by the official maker, Thompson/Auto-Ordnance Corporation. Each is specially serially numbered between 0001 and 1500, with the prefix "P" for Police. To enhance the display of your Thompson, you will also receive, free, a companion deluxe-finished night stick, serially numbered to match. This number is also inscribed on the Certificate of Authenticity, which attests to the purity of the 24-Karat Gold plating and the strict edition limit.

This is a Firing Thompson

But this is not just a showpiece. It is a firing Thompson. Because it fires in the semi-automatic mode, you do not need a special license; anyone who can own a standard hunting rifle can own it. Hence, it could even be called upon to defend your home and family—with the same famous .45 ACP ammo well known to lawmen, GIs, and American shooters.

In addition to the Police Model, a Sheriff/Deputy Model Commemorative Thompson is also available to honor those who serve as Sheriffs and Deputies. Each Sheriff/Deputy Model Thompson is numbered 0001 to 1500 with the prefix "S" for Sheriff. Collectors who reserve a Police Model and a Sheriff/Deputy Model will receive matching serial numbers. If both Walnut Display Cases are reserved, you will also receive, free, a Master Mount into which the cases fit.

Satisfaction Guaranteed

This is available exclusively from The



The deluxe-finished Walnut Display Case (45" x 14" x 4") is lined with Police Blue or Sheriff Brown velvet and is easily wall mounted. The acrylic glass lid and solid brass locks protect your investment from dust and unauthorized handling.

American Historical Foundation. To reserve, write, call toll free or visit. When you reserve, you will be made a Member. Satisfaction is guaranteed, or return within 30 days for a full refund.

If you do not have a Federal Firearms License, we will coordinate delivery with you through your local firearms dealer after your reservation is received. If you have a FFL, send a signed copy and your Thompson will be delivered directly to you.

This Law Enforcement Commemorative Thompson will hold a place of honor in your collection as a visible symbol to you, your family and friends of your respect for those who have dedicated their lives to the preservation of our American society through Law Enforcement.

RESERVATION

Satisfaction Guaranteed or Return in 30 days for Full Refund

To: The American Historical Foundation
1142 West Grace Street, Dept. G100
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Telephone: (804) 353-1812
TOLL FREE 24 hours: (800) 368-8080

I wish to reserve the Law Enforcement Commemorative Thompson(s), issued in a firing, limited edition of only 1500 each, worldwide, with Certificate of Authenticity and membership in the Foundation. Satisfaction guaranteed.

- Police Model Law Enforcement Thompson
- Sheriffs Model Law Enforcement Thompson
- A set of Police and Sheriffs Law Enforcement Thompsons, with matched serial numbers.
- My deposit (or credit card authorization) of \$95 per Thompson is enclosed.
 - Please charge or invoice the balance due per gun . . .
 - in 6 equal monthly payments of \$250, or in full.
- My payment in full is enclosed (\$1595 per Thompson; display case, add \$225 for each Thompson reserved).
- Please send the optional Walnut Display Case, at \$225 for each Thompson reserved.

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Address

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A 2 1/4" four-piece, 24-Karat Gold plated medallion forms the focal point of the shoulder stock.

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entered by February 28, 1989.

THE CARIBBEAN... crossroads of empire and wealth. Where galleons, men-of-war and marauding privateers challenged the elements—and one another—in their quest for treasure. And where, today, adventurers explore for those ships that went down long ago—laden with riches beyond measure.

Now, for the very first time, you can acquire a collection of official coinage that embodies this seafaring heritage of the Caribbean. A collection of monetary coins unlike any other ever issued. Consisting of 25 sterling silver coins that recapture, in superb sculptured detail, the legendary treasures of the Spanish Main.

As legal tender of the British Virgin Islands, the coins will bear a face value of \$20, equal to \$20 in U.S. currency. The coins are large—the size of coveted pieces of eight. And Proofs will be struck only in solid sterling silver. The use of this precious metal is becoming a rarity in world coinage—especially in coins of this size and weight.

Portrayed on the coins will be the most significant treasures of the fabulous ships of fortune lost in the Caribbean. Each has been selected through a major initiative involving marine archaeologists, treasure-divers, and such noted repositories of maritime records as the British Museum, Lloyds of London, and the *Archivo General de las Indias*—the leading authority on Spanish colonial shipping.

There will be coins showing the great riches of empire...bejeweled rings, exquisite works of silver and gold, royal revenue and private wealth that never reached its destination. Other coins will depict significant archaeological finds—offering a view of life during the age of exploration. And perhaps most intriguing of all will be the silver coins portraying those treasures still *undiscovered*—but whose existence is known through drawings, ships' manifests, and maritime disaster reports.

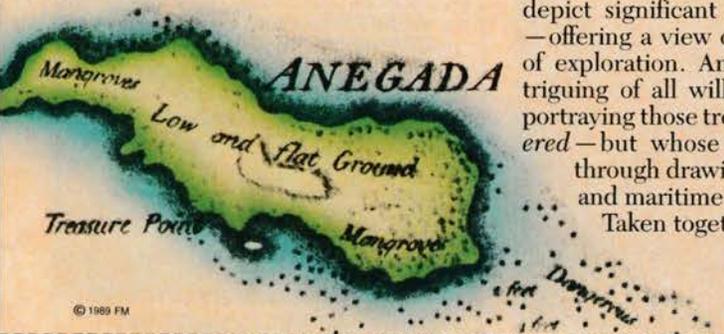
Taken together, these 25 match-

ing denomination coins will constitute the most comprehensive series ever issued on a unified theme. A collection unequalled in scope by the coinage of any nation in our time.

The collection is available by subscription only. The Government of the British Virgin Islands has authorized its official minter, The Franklin Mint, to accept and fulfill valid applications. Subscriptions entered by February 28, 1989, will be accepted at the guaranteed price of \$29 for each sterling silver Proof. To make this guarantee possible, the minter will contract for sufficient silver, at current prices, to cover the entire series of coins for each subscriber.

Each Proof coin will be accompanied by a reference folder and location map, relating the intriguing story of the treasure portrayed. A special presentation case for the collection will be provided at no extra cost.

By entering your subscription now, you and your family can share a unique adventure in collecting—as you build a valuable treasure of solid silver coins. To acquire your collection at the guaranteed price, return the accompanying application by February 28, 1989.



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Please enter my subscription for one Proof Set of "The Treasure Coins of the Caribbean," consisting of 25 coins of the British Virgin Islands with the face value of \$20, each, to be minted in solid sterling silver and sent to me at the rate of one per month.

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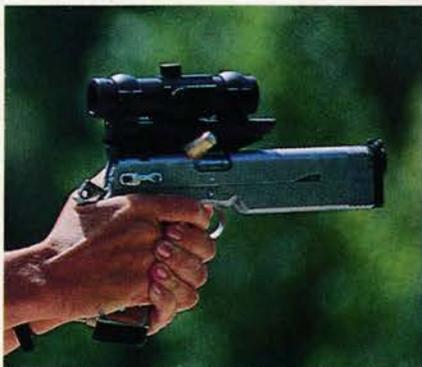
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AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 1989 Vol. 13, No. 73

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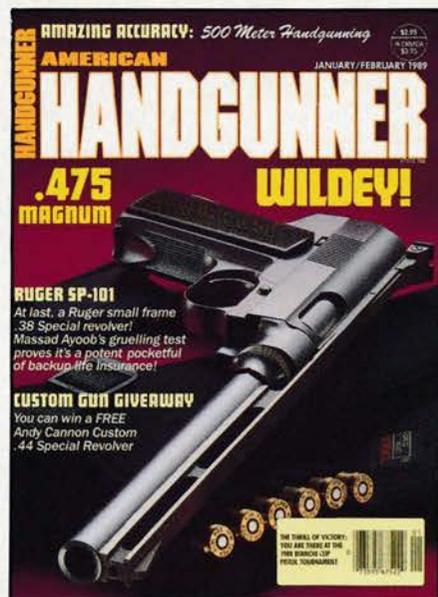
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Cover: The Wildey Survivor auto pistol, a stainless steel powerhouse. Photo by Ichiro Nagata

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TRAIN WITH THE BEST

The \$64.00 question

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

Why do I need a timer?

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

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



Advanced display

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

Full function keypad

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

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

A few of our features

- A buzzer that's **loud** enough to hear with your earphones on
- **Sensitivity** of shot detector is adjustable
- Instant GO or **adjustable** fixed or random delay
- **999.99** second time limit
- Automatic **Comstock** function
- **Lap** function

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

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... Ross Seyfried

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

30 Day Money Back Guarantee

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

Lifetime Warranty

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

Shop Around & Call Us Last

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

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Battery Powered Printer.....\$125
Extra Printer Paper (6 rolls).....\$12
Extra Skyscreens.\$15 each \$25 pair
Skyscreen Housings\$2.50 each 4 for \$9

*Shipping & Insurance \$4.50 UPS ground/\$10 UPS 2nd day air. Extra shipping for bracket (separate package) \$3 ground/\$6 2nd day air. Bank service charge for VISA/MC. COD fee \$2. Write or call for foreign rates. Texas residents add appropriate sales tax.

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

PACT

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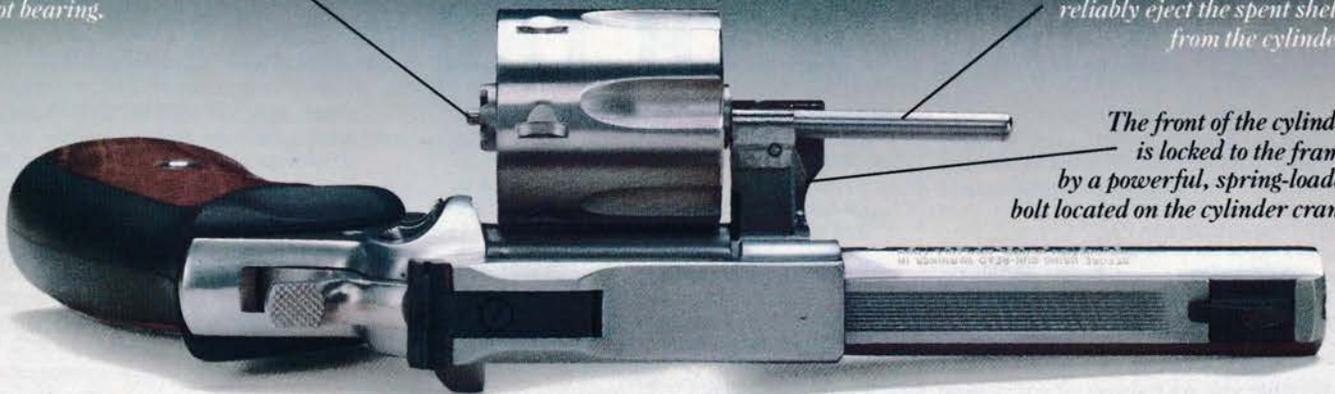
RUGER GP100

THE STRONGEST .357 CYLINDER SYSTEM

The cylinder is locked to the rear of the frame by a heavy duty pilot bearing.

The ejection rod is not a part of the locking system. It is offset and non-rotating, serving only to quickly and reliably eject the spent shells from the cylinder.

The front of the cylinder is locked to the frame by a powerful, spring-loaded bolt located on the cylinder crane.



Built for Strength

All Ruger firearms start as a concept. Nowhere is this fundamental strength better illustrated than in the Ruger GP100 cylinder and its revolutionary locking system. From the beginning the Ruger GP100 crane and cylinder assembly was designed with all the size and strength needed to withstand the huge pressures of repeated firing of the modern .357 Magnum cartridge.

Secure Crane Latch

When the GP100 cylinder is in the locked up, firing position, it is firmly latched into the frame with a powerful, spring-loaded bolt in the front, and a heavy-duty pilot bearing at the rear. This entirely new cylinder locking system was expressly invented by Ruger engineers to ensure proper cylinder and barrel lockup and alignment in a gun made for a long, accurate life shooting Magnum cartridges.

Offset Ejection System

In the Ruger ejection system, the ejector rod serves only to activate the ejector. It is designed in an offset position allowing Ruger engineers to build a thicker, stronger frame at the forcing cone—the section which undergoes the severest pressure.



Ruger's GP100 firmly establishes a landmark in the development of the revolver. The GP100 is a beautiful gun designed to command the powerful .357 Magnum cartridge, putting control reliably and comfortably into the hand of the modern police, competition, and sports shooter.



**STURM, RUGER
& Company, Inc.**

2 Lacey Place, Southport, Connecticut 06490

Free instruction manuals for all Ruger firearms available upon request.

GP100 is a U.S. registered trademark.
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SPEAK OUT

A Thousand Words

You seem to receive numerous comments on the columns and articles written by various contributors. But I've seen little mention of the outstanding photographs by Ichiro Nagata. And in particular, his photos of the S&W Classic Hunter and Ed Brown's Maxi-Comp (Nov/Dec '88). His work is a "cut above," especially when compared with gun photos submitted by other photographers.

I know yours is not a "photo mag," but I would like to know some specs: What camera? What lens? What film? I notice that Mr. Nagata's work is printed on heavy paper stock. Why?

Speaking as a professional video cameraman, I appreciate how much credits mean—I think Mr. Nagata deserves more.

William Kelsey
Burlingame, Calif.

Mr. Nagata primarily works with a Siner 4x5 view camera and a Fijinon 210mm f/45 lens. His composition is outstanding, and the clarity of the photographs is obvious, but perhaps the most noteworthy aspect of his work is the use of light. Unlike most photographers, Mr. Nagata uses no flash or strobe for his studio work. Instead he employs tungsten fixed light sources for better control.

His 35mm is done with a Canon F-1 and a Nikon F-3 using a 105mm Macro, a 25mm wide angle and a 75-210mm zoom.

Mr. Nagata prefers Kodak Ektachrome Professional film for both 4x5 and 35mm.

We use #1 and #2 grade "free" paper (free from all blemishes, specially white and bright) for the center color section and the cover. The magazine's imposition is specially engineered to allow us to use this top grade paper stock on both the cover and the inside center section.

This paper is not "publication grade." Paper of this quality is normally used for corporate stockholders' reports. We estimate that use of this "free" paper costs us an additional \$128,000 per year.

We use it because you, the readers of American Handgunner, deserve the best. Which, of course, is the same reason why we are proud to feature the artistry of Ichiro Nagata.

Boilershop Boys Are Back

To say that me and the boys down at the boilershop were surprised to find my letter in your magazine (Sept/Oct '88) is the understatement of the year! But even more amazing was finding a response from his eminence, Massad Ayoob.

Although I expected no response at all, Ayoob's reply proves the existence of a hitherto unknown species: The gun snob. Just because there are some of us who have to work for a living, that doesn't mean we've never been shooting, or that we don't understand what is or isn't possible with a firearm. As for technology, I'm fully aware of the disciplines and equipment required

to win in competition. I'm also aware of how many rabbits you'll bag with a .44 from the back of a bouncing truck.

Ironically, as Ayoob boasted that this was no "lounge lizard" safari, but one of those kill to eat jobs, Cameron Hopkins published his version of the trip (*Planning Your Handgun Safari*, Sep/Oct '88) in the same issue. In his article he rhapsodizes poetically of awakening to a chorus of wild birds, lazily wiping the sleep from his eyes as a native girl gently rapped on his bedroom door to deliver a steaming mug of tea.

He speaks further of roughing it in the outback for a nominal fee of several hundred dollars per day for which you receive

Continued on page 12



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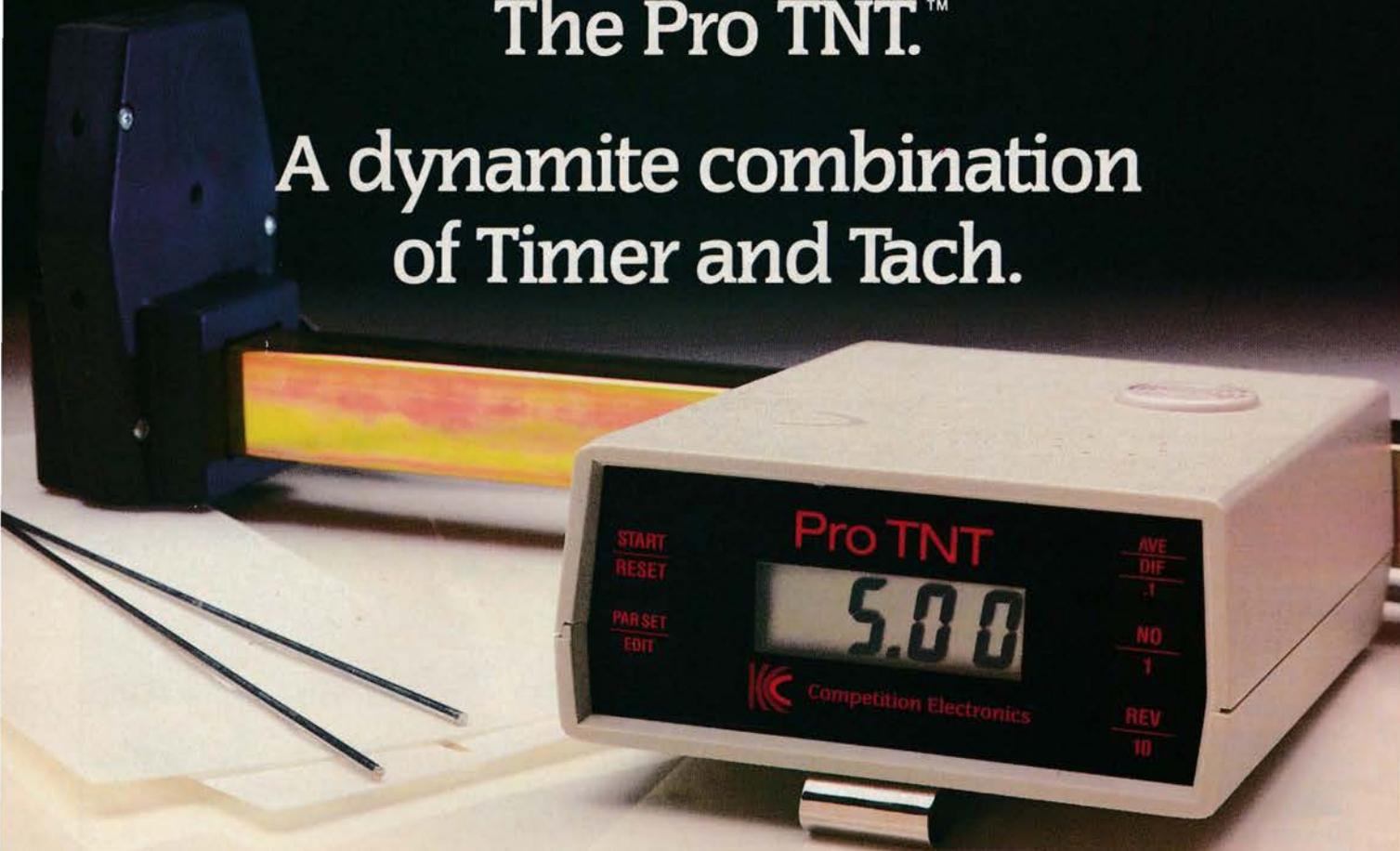
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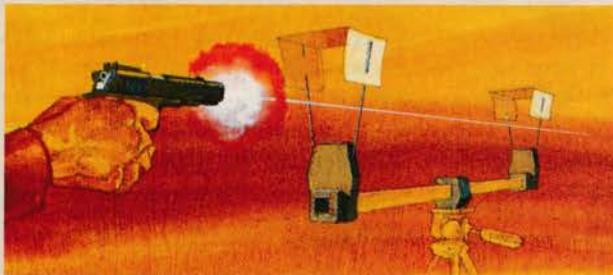
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The African elephant. Mountain gorilla. Eastern cougar. Animals so familiar to us, we almost

take them for granted. But all are approaching extinction. And to call attention to their plight, Wildlife Preservation Trust International is issuing its first-ever sculpture collection. Created in the tradition of hand-painted bronze.

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Enter my subscription to the official Wildlife Preservation Sculpture Collection, consisting of fifteen intricately hand-painted sculptures and the custom-designed display. I will receive one sculpture every other month and will be billed for each in two monthly installments of \$19.75* each, beginning prior to shipment.

**Plus my state sales tax and a total of \$1. per sculpture for shipping and handling*

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11509-72

Continued from page 9

the services of a professional hunter, as well as trackers, skimmers, gun bearers and other assorted camp staff. Also included were accommodations, meals, laundry service and rides back and forth from the airport.

Really, Ayoob, no lounge lizards?

Don't get me wrong, I don't hate Ayoob. *The Ayoob Files* is the first thing I turn to when my copy arrives in the mail. It's always entertaining and seems to be well researched.

These other Lager generated fantasies that were obviously dreamed up on a camping trip to some well regulated game preserve are impossible to swallow. They're entertaining and all that—but don't try to pass that gas as gospel.

Well, I have to go. As I was stirring my coffee with my trusty .44, I saw a rabbit down by the interstate. It's only two miles, I can probably nail him right through the kitchen window! The boilershop boys can have some "pot-meat" for lunch.

Gary Sillett
Princeton, Kan.

Can Cops Shoot?

For a long time now I have been seeing articles describing people who took a considerable number of hits from 9mm bullets and still had a lot of fight left in them.

I also notice that many police departments are adopting high capacity 9mm

autos as issue arms.

I am very concerned about this and I'll tell you why.

The problem is that most police officers just can't shoot. The average officer cannot hit a man-sized target at 75 yards shooting a revolver double action. You don't believe me? Just make arrangements to watch a certification course some time.

Now, since the average police officer is a poor marksman with six rounds, you want him to blast away with 15? Personally, I don't want to be within a mile of him.

The solution to this problem is not more rounds in the gun, it is extensive marksmanship training including instinctive point shooting and long range training using full power, authorized ammo not wadcutters.

M.J. Guy
Maumee, Ohio

2001, A Handgunner's Odyssey

Handgunner's Son: Dad, what were you doing in 1988 when the US Congress passed the first handgun registration law?

Handgunner: I think we were arguing whether some handgun writer could make a 200 yard kill with a .44 Magnum.

Handgunner's son: What's a .44 Magnum?

Handgunner: I think I still have an old magazine with a picture of one. Most of them were confiscated years ago.

Handgunner's son: Why did you let this happen?

Handgunner: Well, we trusted politicians whom we had elected and we thought the other guy would spend his money and time to protect our rights like he always had before . . .

Handgunner's son: Excuse me, Dad, I think I hear someone breaking in the back window. Shall I get the baseball bat again?

Jim D. Mooney
New Braunfels, Texas

Kudos for Eagle

Just a short note to let folks know how well Eagle Grips took care of my needs for a set of grips for my Charter Arms Bulldog .44 Special. As you know, there aren't many nice wood grips made for this gun. Eagle Grips took time to trace an outline of the grips I wanted before I ordered them. I thought that was super-nice of them.

I got the Rosewood "finger position" grips on the gun and shot it. I was very happy with the way they fit my hand, and the workmanship is top of the line. So if anyone is looking for nice, well fitting grips for a Charter Arms gun, I would say call Eagle Grips.

Billy B. Crites
Albuquerque, N.M.

Eagle Grips offers a full line of custom grips for all popular makes and models of handguns, not just Charter Arms. Contact them at 460 Randy Road, Dept. AH, Eagle Business Center, Carol Stream, IL 60188 or call toll free at 1-800-323-6144.

Reading Problem

I have a complaint. Yours is the best handgun magazine on the market and I read it from front to back and often order directly from some of the advertisers.

My complaint is that within 3-4 days I've read it, and I mean every darn article and column. Given another 2-3 days I've read some of the articles and columns. What am I to do with the next 53 days I wait for AH?

True, time is spent reloading, on the range and doing free work to keep the range functioning. I also clean my handguns and while I work three days a week, the other four are free. And that is basically it. This old bachelor is left without AH so long it hurts.

R.E. (Bob) Smith
Summerland, BC
Canada

Beretta Responds

I read your article in the September/October issue of your magazine and have written this letter to clarify several points which were either confusing or inaccurate.

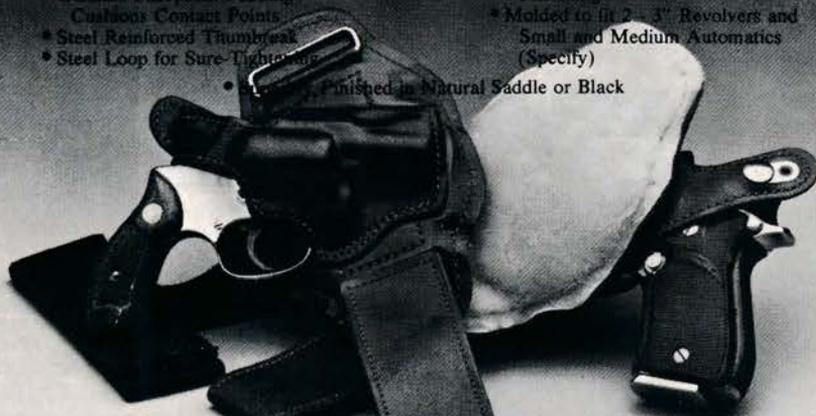
First, the U.S. Government did not call for a new test of the M9 pistol as a result of the slide failures as your article leads readers to believe. The new test is the

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result of congressionally mandated language found in the 1987 Conference Appropriations Bill. This language was instituted after repeated efforts by Massachusetts congressional delegation members to have the contract awarded to Beretta U.S.A. Corp. cancelled, failed. These efforts were initiated on behalf of an interested constituent.

The article is somewhat confusing as to the number of pistols that have experienced unexpected slide failures. Over 1,000,000 slides of this design have been manufactured and, other than the incidents reported to us by the Government, we have never experienced any unexpected slide separations. To set the record straight, four incidents have been reported by the Government. Three occurred with the Navy SEALS, an elite special operations unit; and one while the Army was conducting ammunition testing. The Navy incidents took place at 30,000+ rounds, 5000-6,000 rounds and 10,000+ rounds respectively. The Army incident occurred at 6,000+ rounds.

I must also state that I take exception to the use of anonymous sources as a basis for factual data. Too often times these anonymous sources are only conduits for rumors. I suggest that your "confidential source who spoke on condition of anonymity" check his facts. No slide separations have taken place in Europe.

It is Beretta U.S.A.'s contention that ammunition was a factor in these incidents. While your article quotes a Winchester spokesman as saying that their M882 produced ammunition is within SAAMI (not NATO) standards, you make no reference to the fact that Winchester is only one of two manufacturers of the M882 ammo. It has never been our contention that Winchester is the manufacturer of the lots of suspect ammunition.

The Army has conducted exhaustive testing of the M9 pistol to include firing over 240,000 rounds of different types of ammunition through 12 M9 pistols without failure. The Army had advised Beretta U.S.A. Corporation that the M9 pistol fully conforms to the exacting technical requirements of the contract.

Beretta prides itself on its quality and responsiveness to customer needs. We are working closely with the Army to find a solution to this situation, regardless of the reason for these incidents.

Robert L. Bonaventure
Vice President and General Manager
Beretta USA

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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Each time you fire a round over the PC's optical skyscreens, your shot number, velocity and current average velocity are displayed simultaneously, on our state of the art, easy to read, 32 character display. All of this is done automatically, no button pushing required, so you are free to concentrate on your shooting instead of having to constantly fuss with your chronograph. In addition the shot number and its velocity are automatically stored in memory for your later review.

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When you complete a string simply press the review key to display a complete statistical summary of the string. This summary consists of your highest and lowest shot velocities and their corresponding shot numbers, the Extreme Spread and average velocity of your string. The Standard Deviation and Mean Absolute Deviation (a PACT exclusive and the best measure of ammunition consistency yet developed) are calculated and displayed automatically. In addition both of these numbers are also displayed as a percent of your average (coefficient of variation or CV). We have found that this method of describing the average variation of your ammo is much more useful to the shooter who's trying to develop better, more consistent loads, than simply handing him, the "SD" of a given string. Take a look at Handloader #128 for more information.

After completing the statistical summary your PC will allow you to review each shot (up to 300) of your string.

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- adjustable screen separation

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- each chronograph is electronically "calibrated" to insure accuracy

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By having us install our optional Print Driver and purchasing our battery powered printer you will find your self in possession of the **ultimate chronograph system**. When you complete your string just press the review key. The PC will ask you if you would like to print the string. Tell it "yes" and you will be provided with a print out consisting of the string number, complete statistical summary, and the velocity of each individual shot. Keep in mind that once the Print Driver is installed you can add the printer at any time.

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A handmade Hand Cannon sells at a fund raising auction to benefit SCI's environmental conservation programs.

SSK Handcannon

This exquisite example of the gun-maker's art is from master pistol-smith J.D. Jones. A renowned handgun hunter, Mr. Jones is a past winner of the prestigious *Outstanding American Handgunner Award* and the *Handgun Hunting Editor of American Handgunner*. He has long championed the cause of hunters and, in particular, the conservation and education efforts of Safari Club International. Mr. Jones' generous donation of this very special Handcannon realized a staggering \$4,800 at auction to benefit SCI.

Action: T/C Contender

Barrel: SSK round/octagonal

Caliber: .475 JDJ

Ballistics: 500 grain .475" bullet at
850 fps

Engraving: Ken Hurst

Finish: SSK Khrome

Special Features: Arrestor Muzzle

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INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

DAVE ANDERSON

COLORADAN PAUL MILLER TAKES THE ROSES AT CANADIAN IPSC NATIONALS

City of champions! That's how Edmonton, Alberta bills itself, and certainly its major sports teams, the football Eskimos and the hockey Oilers, are perennial champions in their respective leagues. It was fitting, therefore, that from July 31 to August 6, 162 competitors should gather in Edmonton to find a new champion, the winner of the 1988 Canadian IPSC Nationals.

The course of fire, which was approved by IPSC President J.P. Denis, was a tremendous test of shooting ability. Match Director Gary Dolynchuk and Rangemas-

ter Rick Clements took ideas from their fellow Alberta members and refined them into a 19-stage, 250-round shooting challenge.

The emphasis was on *realistic scenarios* with close to medium range targets, but there was a little of everything—speed shoots and field courses, strong hand and weak hand, close targets and far, singles and multiples, movement and reloads, plus two really demanding standard exercise stages.

One competitor commented, "The shooter who can do everything in this

match well is a real champion."

Right. And that champion is Paul Miller of Montrose, Colorado. Well known as a strong competitor on the USPSA circuit, Miller has won the Colorado state championship and has made the Top 16 shootoff at the US Nationals and at the 1986 World Shoot.

Drawing his Gary Kimball-tuned Colt 9mm from Ernie Hill leather, Miller set a blistering pace that kept him in the lead from start to finish. His only serious setback came on the second exercise stage when he dropped 30 of a possible 120 points and left the line looking visibly disappointed. But like a true champion, he quickly put that stage behind him and resumed his winning performance.

Randy Fisher of Vancouver, British Columbia, was the highest-placing Canadian citizen and becomes the 1988 Canadian IPSC Champion. Fisher has been a top competitor since the first Canadian nationals in 1978, seldom missing the top five, and has been B.C. champ several times. He shot a Colt 9mm, customized by Vancouver pistolsmith Joe Dlask, and uses leather gear from Gordon Davis.

Top Lady was Kerry Lathwell—which surprised no one since this British Columbia shooter is the reigning women's World Champion! Kerry's competition guns are built by Ohio pistolsmith Steve Nastoff, and she said she is anxiously awaiting completion of a new .38 Super. In the meantime she used her Nastoff .45, along with Ernie Hill leather, to place 24th overall.

The several wheelgunners in the match had an award to shoot for as well, with Top Revolver going to Perry Snyder of Saskatchewan.

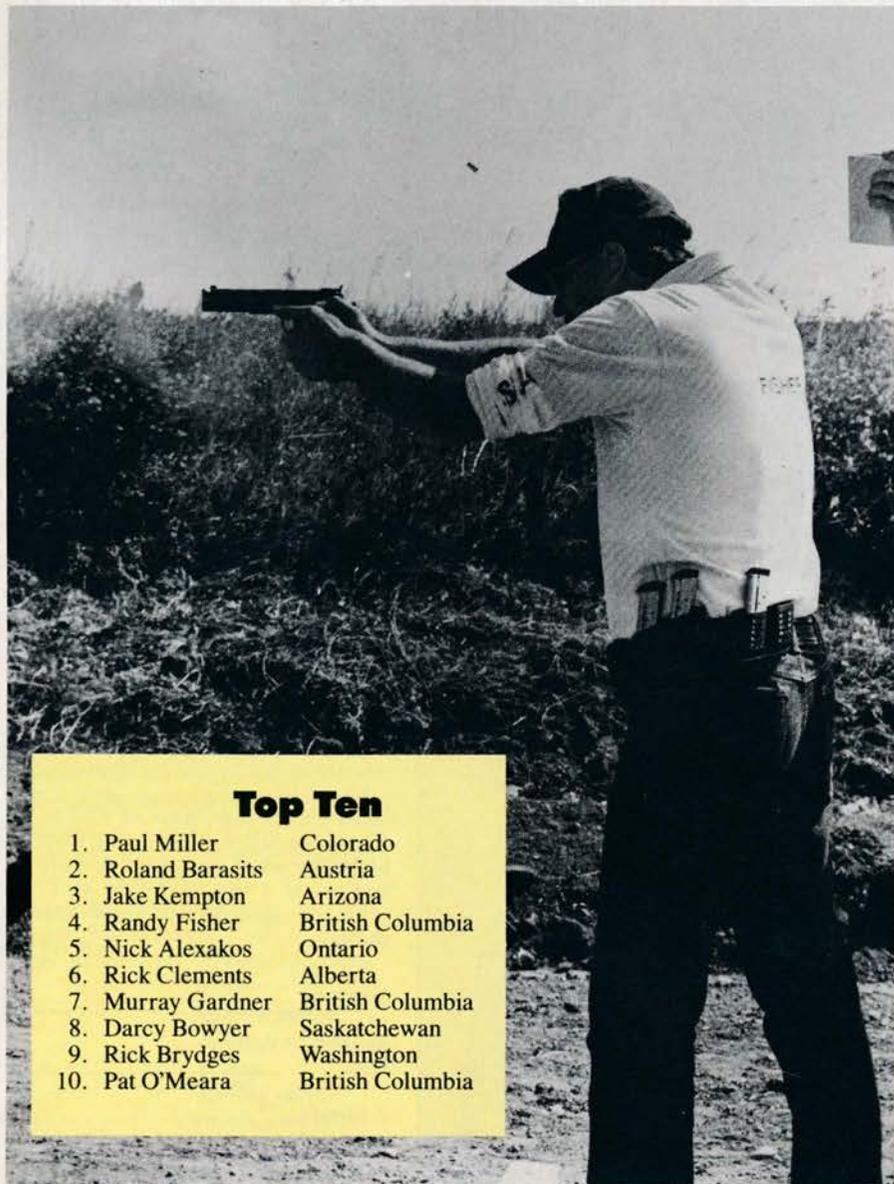
Shooting in international competition is rewarding in itself, but there are other benefits; the chance to renew acquaintances and meet new friends, and—for us equipment nuts—the opportunity to see what's new and what trends are developing.

Roland Barasits of Austria is both a pistolsmith and an excellent competitor. He and his shooting partner, Hans Silbitzer, had guns sporting the darndest mag chute I've ever seen. Now mag chutes are nothing new, but these extended some 1½ inches below the gun butt and weighed as much as some pocket pistols.

The purpose? Partly to add weight, but primarily to serve as a base when shooting prone. The Austrians shot very well indeed, prone or otherwise, with Barasits placing second in the match.

Arizona's Jake Kempton is another pistolsmith who is applying the knowledge gained from his years of competition to building guns. He showed up with a Springfield Armory .38 Super that included a cleverly designed double-chamber compensator. I had an opportunity to examine and fire the gun after the match and found the comp design to be very effective, and overall workmanship excellent. Kempton, who won the Canadian nationals in 1987, was third this year.

Looking at equipment used by the top



Top Ten

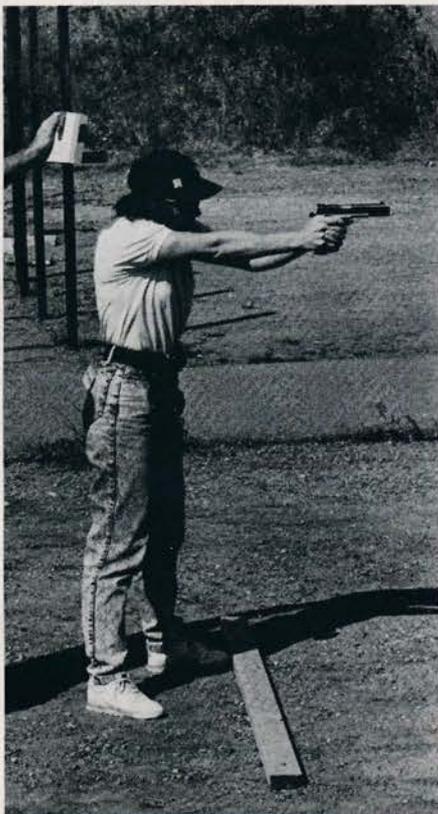
- | | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. Paul Miller | Colorado |
| 2. Roland Barasits | Austria |
| 3. Jake Kempton | Arizona |
| 4. Randy Fisher | British Columbia |
| 5. Nick Alexakos | Ontario |
| 6. Rick Clements | Alberta |
| 7. Murray Gardner | British Columbia |
| 8. Darcy Bowyer | Saskatchewan |
| 9. Rick Brydges | Washington |
| 10. Pat O'Meara | British Columbia |

Randy Fisher, 1988 Canadian National Champion

shooters, the 1911 autopistol, Ernie Hill leather, and the .38 Super cartridge continue to dominate.

One thing I found interesting, though, was that three of the top four competitors—Miller, Barasits, and Fisher—were using 9mm major loads. But they were shooting them from Colt Government Model pistols, using .38 Super magazines, seating the bullets so that overall cartridge length was the same as .38 Super loads. Since in every major respect—ballistics, recoil, and magazine capacity—the loads duplicated .38 Super performance, the obvious question is why not simply use the Super?

Paul Miller offered three reasons: the 9mm case is a very strong design, with a thick, heavy web and a strong rim; the tapered case improves feeding and gives a better gas seal; and good military surplus brass is cheap and widely available.



Kerry Lathwell, Ladies Champion

Miller has fired more than 100,000 rounds of major nine with no problems but he points out that he uses high quality barrels with fully supported chambers, and that the barrels have been freebored to reduce pressure. He uses only 1911 pattern pistols, which allow bullets to be seated out to give the same overall cartridge length as the .38 Super. With most other designs, heavy bullets must be deep-seated to fit in the magazine, and deep seating in the small 9mm case runs up pressures fast. This is a good time to point out that neither this writer nor *American Handgunner* recommends or endorses the use of 9mm major loads.

Miller will soon have a new 9 to play with: Topping the prize table (over

Continued on page 21

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Continued from page 19

\$22,000 in merchandise) was a full house competition Colt pistol donated by Behlert Precision. It was a .38 Super, but Frank Behlert offered to take it back to the shop in Pipersville, Pennsylvania and fit a 9mm barrel. Miller said he is really looking forward to trying out the famous Behlert pivoting trigger, which gives a light pull while maintaining full sear engagement.

Canadian champ Randy Fisher also took home a full house custom pistol, built and donated by Edmonton gunsmith Mike Toma. Colt Firearms donated one of their excellent AR-15A2 rifles, while other major sponsors were Beaver Lumber, Ernie Hill Speed Leather, The Firing Line, H&K Bullets, and Smith & Alexander.



Paul Miller, match winner

So what did people think of the match? The match winner, Paul Miller, gets the last word. "You always like a match that you win, but even allowing for that this was the best IPSC match I've ever attended. There was lots of shooting and the stages were great, realistic and fun to shoot but still challenging. The organization and the range officers were first rate. It's a real pleasure just to shoot in international competition, and the good prize table was a nice bonus."

Were there any problems bringing firearms into Canada? "None at all, the host club did all the paperwork and sent us our permits. All we had to do was show our permits coming in and leaving."

How about the 1989 match, to be held in Regina, Saskatchewan? "You bet I'll be there. It's one of the big matches on my shooting schedule."

Match dates have not been set at this time but will likely be early August. For information call Steve Johns at (306) 924-0193.



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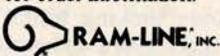
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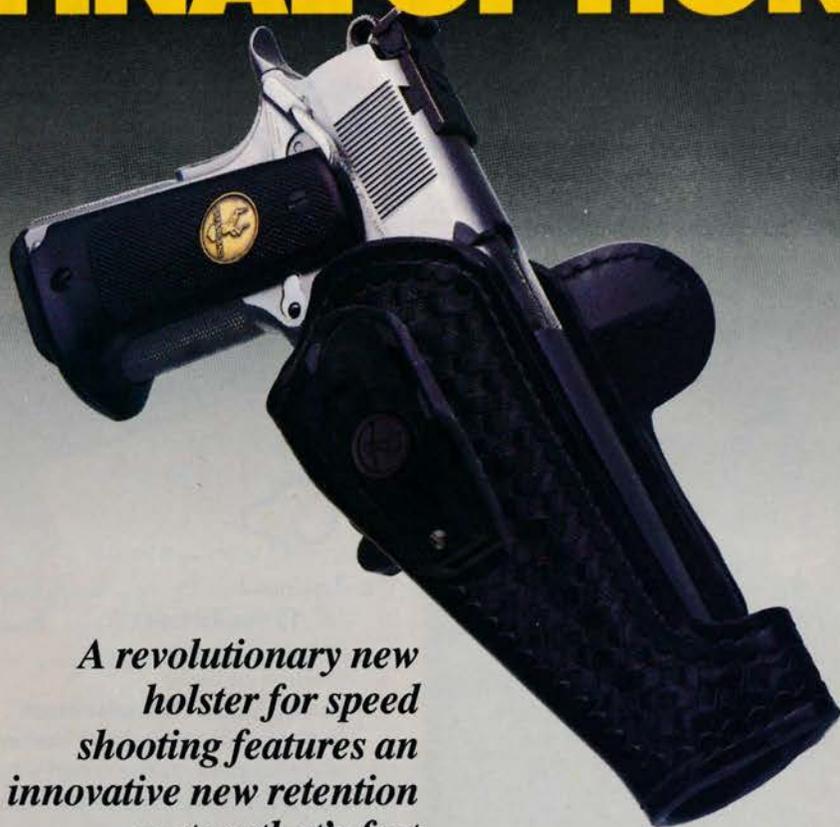


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Safariland's FINAL OPTION



*A revolutionary new
holster for speed
shooting features an
innovative new retention
system that's fast
yet secure!*

By Cameron Hopkins

Safariland's new Final Option speed holster distinguishes itself in many ways, one of which is its instructions. I've never used a holster that came with instructions, but this remarkable new design not only comes with directions, but two and a half typewritten pages worth, more words than this article!

The Final Option is made for customized Government Model pistols with various compensator lengths and shapes. The fast, low-cut rig is designed by Combat Master Bill Rogers and is intended for IPSC and other fast-draw shooting competitions, like the Action Event of The Masters.

The primary design feature of the Final Option is the method of retaining the gun securely while at the same time allowing a fast draw. The holster is cut low in front so you only need to lift the gun an inch or so before it's clear to punch toward the target.

How, then, does such a skimpy design retain the gun?

An ingenious locking block wraps around the trigger guard and secures the pistol firmly. Safariland warns that a hard blow from the rear can dislodge the gun.

Despite the wordy instructions, the holster works much like any other. You just stick the gun in and pull it out. However, the trigger guard locking device interferes slightly with a straight-down holstering of the pistol, so Safariland recommends that the gun be canted slightly forward as it's initially inserted, and then rocked back to lock into the trigger guard tension device.

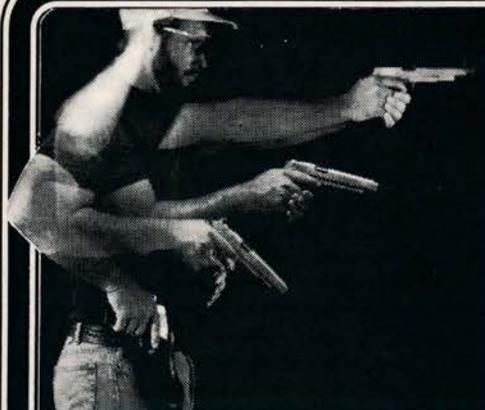
The speed of the draw is enhanced because the gun is completely free after it clears the locking device. There is no friction of slide-against-leather on the draw.

The Final Option is constructed with Safariland's unique Thermo-Laminate process, a patented method of sandwiching a plastic insert between layers of leather for rigid retention of the holster's shape.

I find the Final Option an improvement over its predecessor, the Combat Assault. It is faster. The gun swings up on target smoothly and quickly, which is what this game of speed shooting is all about.

For a complete color catalog illustrating the Final Option and the full line Safariland's quality holsters, write to Safariland, Dept. AH, 1941 S. Walker, Monrovia, CA, 91016.





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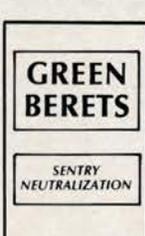
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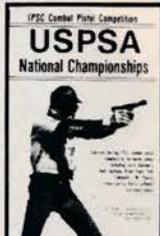
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A good shot becomes a good shot only through years of work on the fundamentals of shooting. Proper sight alignment and a smooth trigger pull are motor skills easily learned by most individuals. Progressing from the stage of having learned what to do and how to do it with excellence may require years to master. Practice by repetition of the task is by far the best training aid. Dry firing has been recommended as a good way to learn and it certainly is. However, nothing beats actually shooting.

Shooting is expensive, though. Even shooting .22s or low cost reloads can eat a fairly deep hole in your pocket. Add in the bucks and time to get from your place of dwelling to a place to shoot safely and there is a lot of inconvenience involved.

A new product for pistol shooters is a rig called Target Ranger. I suspect it will have a good reception with police training departments and will prove a very valuable tool for anyone who wants to use it. This is an electronic unit adaptable to most handguns to simulate the firing of a shot. No, it doesn't make a loud noise or any odor and is completely compatible with indoor use. In fact, current units are only good for about 25 feet maximum range. The unit consists of a 9 volt battery operated electronic target which lights up to tell you it has been hit. An electronic cartridge in the gun's chamber when hit by the firing pin generates a flash of light that

is projected through an optical lens system and hopefully on to the bullseye of the electronic target. No, you can't see the light, but it is there.

The unit is hi-tech in manufacture and theory—reliable low tech in use. In short, it works. My test unit is set up in a four inch Colt MK V and the target across the room on the horns of a Hartebeest. The Colt lays on the desk and I find it irresistible to snap off a few shots a day with it. One problem is the fact the target has to be turned on—it shuts down by itself about five minutes after the last hit.

The target has a yellow light to show it is on and a red light lights up when the bull is hit. Everyone in the shop plays with it occasionally. Tammy, my secretary, improved so rapidly in her ability to hit the target that it impressed me this might well be the way to go to make a game out of teaching beginners to shoot. It's fun. It's easy to see a jerked trigger or most other shooting errors. It's the old shooting gallery at home as well as being an invaluable training aid.

The unit is packaged in a small, very tough foam fitted permanent storage box. Prices of the unit vary considerably. Six light generators (cartridges) for revolvers obviously cost more than a single for auto pistols. None of the units are cheap—they aren't toys. Try Nu-Teck Ltd., Chester Research Park, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 540, Chester, CT 06412. Or

call 203-526-4372 for additional information and prices for your individual gun. Ask for Ivan Stein if you call.

After having taken short courses in internal and terminal ballistics last summer I find the guys that are really into it don't operate in the old "feet per second" mode anymore. Velocities are more easily measured and discussed in the kilometer per second (kps) mode than others.

As a matter of interest, I don't think it would be at all difficult to build a gun capable of velocities in the 10-15,000 fps range. Of course it would have little practical use and bullets would definitely be a problem. But, don't be surprised to see "conventional" small arms operating in hypervelocities in another 10 to 20 years. As a matter of interest, experimental guns for scientific uses capable of 50,000 fps are currently available.

Up to this point my knowledge of ballistics was almost purely self-taught. These courses generally reinforced several of my theories as fact, and provided a great deal of information that was very thought provoking. In my opinion, significant amounts of information published in the general run of the mill gun magazines contain a large amount of error in both theory and information presented as fact. I strongly recommend keeping an open, questioning mind when reading. Just because you read it doesn't mean it's true or fact. I—or anyone else—can write something I believe to be the simplest fact and still be wrong.

A very large part of hunting takes place in the woods at relatively short ranges even though the majority of the press goes to the exotic long range cartridges. *Handgun Hunters International* is celebrating its tenth anniversary in October and I've developed a cartridge to go with a low cost, limited edition Contender.

This model is called the Woodswalker. It is a flat-side, hard-chromed Contender with a Ruger white outline rear sight and the interchangeable C-More nylon front sight. The barrel is a 10 inch bull. When you look through the sights you get the same sight picture as you do on a Super Blackhawk. It's like seeing an old friend. (These sights will also be available as replacement sights for T/Cs.) Pachmayr Gripper grips and forend complete the package. It has a special serial number and appropriate barrel engraving.

The cartridge is called the .338 Woodswalker. It is unique in two areas. It is easily formed from RWS 8.15 x 46R brass and it will push the .338 200 grain Hornady flat nose and 210 grain Nosler Partition bullets to 2000 fps. That figures out to about 1776 foot/pounds energy with excellent bullet performance. If that power level isn't always desired, I've developed loads producing minute-of-angle accuracy with the 200 grain Hornady at down to around 1300 fps. At that point it feels like it's a popgun.

If you would like full information on the rig send three bucks to HHI, P.O. Box 357 Mag, Bloomingdale, OH 43910 and you will receive a copy of *The Sixgunner* with a full description, load data and photos.



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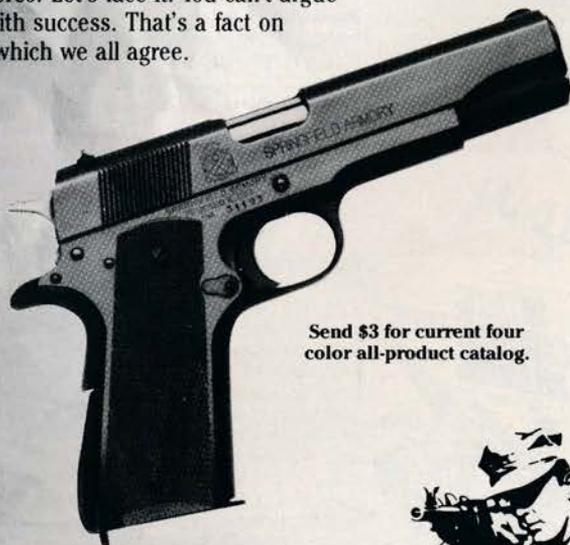


Rob Leatham and Jerry Barnhart are as different as two winners can be. For instance: ■ Jerry's not a big guy, but he used a Springfield .45 ACP to win the '87 Steel Challenge, and to smoke the field at the '87 USPSA Nationals. Although Rob's big and burly, he used a smaller caliber Springfield .38 Super to blaze his way to victory in the shootoffs at the '87 Steel Challenge, the '87 Bianchi Cup and the '87 USPSA Nationals. ■ Rob's a veteran, with four USPSA National Championships, two IPSC World Championships, and a Triple Crown win to his credit. Jerry's a relative newcomer to the pro circuit, but he's already become one of America's pre-eminent pistoleros. ■ On the firing line, Rob is cool as a cucumber. Jerry is the picture of intensity as he psyches himself into his shooting stance.

Differences aside, there's one thing on which Rob and Jerry do agree: To be the best, a shooter must use the best. That's why they're both shooting Springfield 1911-A1 pistols again in 1988.

They're not alone in their choice. In 1988 as in 1987, perennial winners like Brian Enos, Mike Plaxco, Chip McCormick, Wayne Bowker and Ken Tapp will be using Springfield pistols as members of Team Springfield's "A" team. And, America's most prominent master pistolsmiths are now building more custom Springfields than any other major brand.

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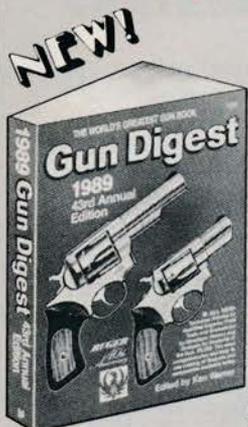


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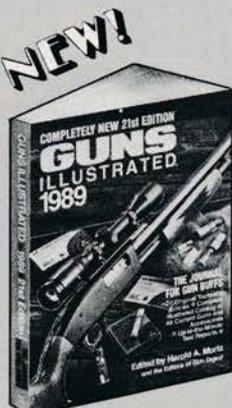


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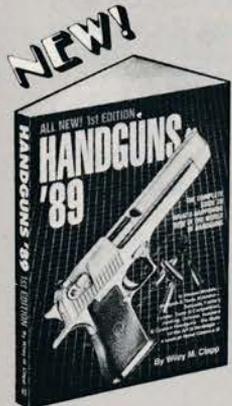
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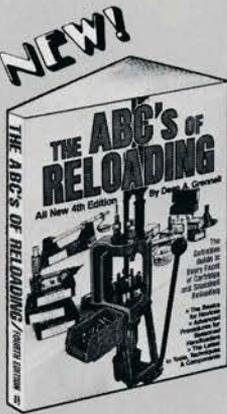
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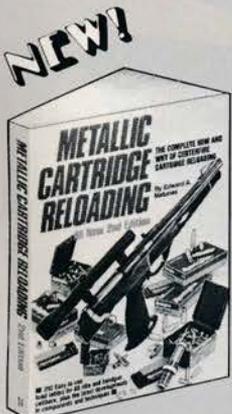
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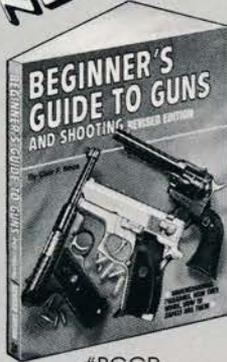
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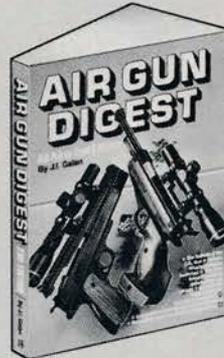


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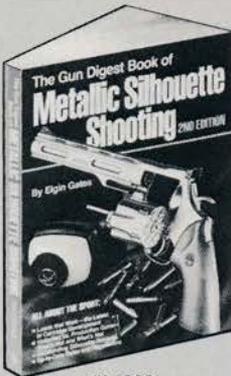


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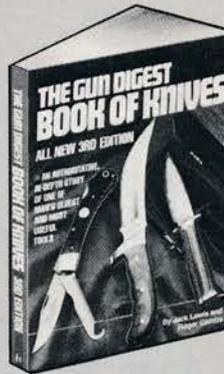


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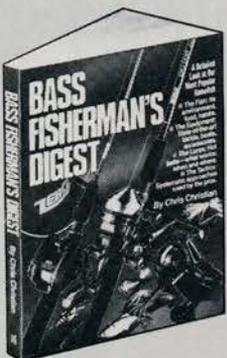


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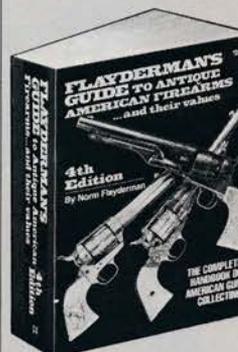


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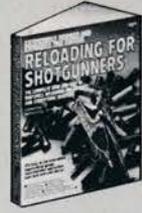
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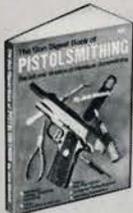
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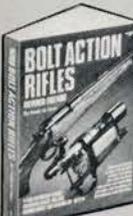
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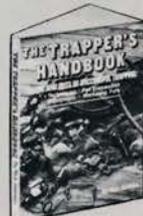
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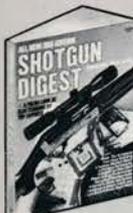
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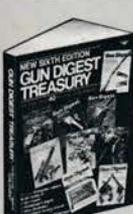
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SILUETAS

JOHN TAFFIN

WHY JOHNNY CAN'T SHOOT: SILHOUETTE SHOOTERS WOULD IMPROVE BY READING

Johnny can't read!" has been a major criticism of education in the '70s and '80s. Statistics tell us that we are fast becoming an illiterate nation with reading being a low priority. Why read when we can watch T.V.? The problem may not be a case of *can't*, but *won't* read.

I often ask a fellow shooter a question only to be met with a blank stare. Something that I would expect every handgunner to be informed about often turns out to be a subject that is a mystery. The reason, of course, is that many shooters, like the rest of the population, are simply not well-read.

When I started shooting as a teenager back in the '50s, there was no such thing as a gun magazine. The closest was *The American Rifleman* and the hunting and fishing magazines. In 1955, *Guns* appeared and was followed in the late '50s and early '60s by *Guns & Ammo*, *Gun World*, and *Shooting Times*. The '70s and '80s have witnessed the introduction of a number of gun magazines, not the least of which is *American Handgunner*, the first publication dedicated exclusively to handguns founded in 1976. With all the new developments in handguns being covered in so many publications, there is simply no excuse for anyone not to be informed as to what is going on.

What about silhouetters? What publications are available for the silhouetter to help him better understand the game, learn about the latest developments, find that "perfect" load, and even to be able to converse intelligently with other silhouetters?

For ease of reference, I will divide the reading material of greatest interest to silhouetters into three categories: Loading Manuals, Periodicals, and Books. All of those that follow should be on every silhouetters bookshelf.

LOADING MANUALS

Hodgdon Data Manual #25 contains a special section on silhouette loads covering 23 different cartridges ranging from the .223 Remington through the .45 Winchester Magnum plus information on bullets, powder, etc.

Hornady Handbook of Cartridge Reloading, Third Edition offers a special section on the favorite single shot of silhouetters, the Thompson/Center Contender covering 10 cartridges plus trajectory tables specifically for short and long range silhouetting and also very helpful wind drift tables.

Lyman Reloading Handbook 46th Edi-

tion also has a special section on the Thompson/Center Contender covering 16 cartridges from the .22 Jet through the .45 Colt plus an enormous amount of excellent information on cast bullets.

Sierra Bullets Reloading Manual contains special trajectory tables for revolver silhouette cartridges plus a small section on silhouette shooting. Like the Hornady Manual, this one needs to be updated as they are both 10 years old and a lot of new developments have occurred that are not covered.

Speer Reloading Manual Number 11 does not have a specific section for silhouette cartridges but information is found within the regular handgun loading data. This is the newest manual available and covers silhouette cartridges that are difficult to find elsewhere, namely the .32 Magnum, .32-20, 7mm International Rimmed, and the .454 Casull.

Silhouetters should not choose from the above but have all them available for reference. All of these manuals are available at local gunshops and quite often at local bookstores.

PERIODICALS

American Handgunner, strangely enough, with the multitude of gun magazines available, is the only one that offers a regular column on silhouetting. The fact that you are reading this affirms that you are interested in keeping informed and we will try to continue to bring the latest developments to readers both in *Siluetas* and in feature articles.

The Silhouette is the official publication of IHMSA (International Handgun Metallic Silhouette Association, P.O. Box 1609, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83403) and available to members only. Membership in IHMSA is \$20 annually. IHMSA has been, and continues to be, the major force in silhouetting. *The Silhouette* is filled with useful information on the newest guns and cartridges that is not available elsewhere. Match scores are published from around the country.

IHMSA members and *The Silhouette* have been on the leading edge of both gun and cartridge development for silhouetters and are responsible for most of the improvements in silhouette pistols and dissemination of information to silhouetters. *The Silhouette* is strongly pro-IHMSA, but even if one only shoots under NRA rules and in NRA matches, this is still a valuable publication for the new equipment and loading information each issue contains.

Shooting Sports USA is the official NRA competition publication and has replaced *Tournament News*. Since it covers all aspects of competition under NRA rules, silhouetting is but a small part of this publication. Dates are published for silhouette matches, both Hunter Pistol and Long Range. Subscription price is \$10 a year for non-competitors and free to NRA competition shooters. Available from NRA (1600 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036). Subscribers also receive information in booklet form on the NRA National Silhouette Championships.

National Silhouette Report is a brand new publication with the first issue mailed in July 1988. Billed as an independent publication with no ties to either NRA or IHMSA, it is available for \$12 per year from National Silhouette Report, 4141 Casa Loma Avenue, Yorba Linda, CA 92686. Unlike *The Silhouette*, this publication does accept advertising from manufacturers, gunsmith, etc., and the first ad that appears consists of a full page from Freedom Arms whose silhouette pistols do not qualify under the IHMSA price ceiling rule, but are being used in NRA competition. *NSR's* stated purpose is to publish match reports and provide an exchange of information between silhouetters and provide an open forum for gunsmiths and manufacturers.

BOOKS

The Gun Digest Book of Silhouette Shooting by Elgin Gates, president of IHMSA, was published in 1979 and is out of print but still found on the shelves of bookstores. It has been replaced by *The Gun Digest Book of Silhouette Shooting, 2nd Edition* which is available for \$12.95 from DBI Books (4092 Commercial Avenue, Northbrook, IL 60062) or members can purchase it for \$9.95 through IHMSA. Both of these books contain a wealth of information about cartridge development, sixguns and single-shots, unlimited guns, cast bullets, accuracy, the price ceiling, etc. Much loading data is included and one of the few sources for loading data for silhouetting with the .45 Colt. Excellent information, but the 2nd Edition's negative remarks about Elmer Keith and Freedom Arms should have been edited out.

Reloading Guide For Handgun Accuracy is a comprehensive handbook that was compiled by silhouetters Riley, Shaver, and Stringfellow and is an extremely valuable reference work. Published in 1982, it is still available to IHMSA members for \$8.95. Bullet and powder selections, plus accuracy loads are given for eight production single-shots, 16 unlimited guns, but only three revolvers, .357 Magnum, .41 Magnum, and .44 Magnum. It predates the SuperMag revolvers and Field Pistol, so it needs to be updated.

Shooting Steel is a 420 page book that bears the distinction of containing the most handgun information ever compiled between two covers. Consisting of reprints from *The Silhouette* from 1977-1986, it is

jammed with loading data, handgun tests, cast bullet information, performances of top shooters, etc. Since it predates the price ceiling rule, there is a section on silhouetting with the .454 plus information on the wildcat .44 SuperMag pre-dating the present Dan Wesson .445 SuperMag. This writer is pleased to be the author of 12 of the articles reprinted in *Shooting Steel*. Available to IHMSA members for \$18.95.

A well-equipped reloading bench is a necessity for success in silhouetting. So is a well-stocked bookshelf. Many of us spend much trial and error time looking for handgun loads that could easily be found by simply perusing the above publications. Reading can save time, money, and avoid a great deal of unnecessary experimentation. **READ!**



Ivory Grips: Going, Going . . .

Custom grip maker extraordinaire Roy Fishpaw checks in to alert readers of *American Handgunner* that his supplier of ivory has terminated importation of ivory due to skyrocketing prices. "There ain't gonna be no more ivory after this is gone," Roy laments, "so if anyone ever wants a pair, they better get em quick."

Roy sent a copy of a letter from BGI Distributors of Botswana, with offices in such exotic places as Gaborone, Kasane, Mahalapye and Palapye, stating that ivory has leaped from \$82 a pound to over \$275 per pound. In the letter to its US importer, BGI states, "As a result of the unbelievable price increase in ivory that overseas buyers (Japanese) were prepared to pay for the recent Harare Auction of ivory, I have decided it is no longer feasible to supply you with ivory."

The US importer then informed Roy that, "I will be closing my ivory business when inventory is depleted."

If you have ever desired a set of genuine ivory grips, it's now or never. They're going, going . . .

For more information on the exquisite ivory grips available from Roy Fishpaw, write *fast* to him at 101 Primrose Lane, Lynchburg, VA, 24501.

We just turned your living room into a target range.

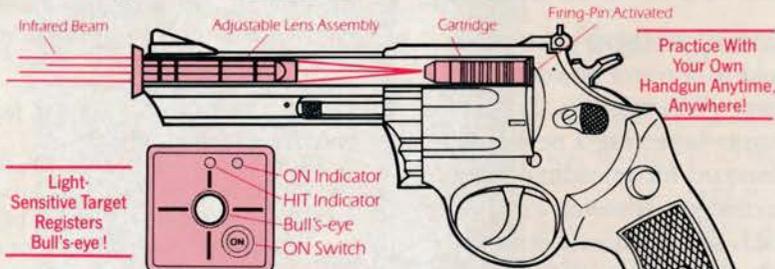
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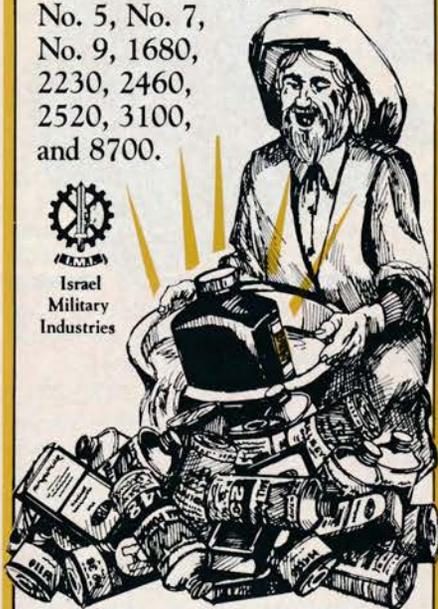
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If you have been mining for gold in a pistol powder, pan some Accurate No. 2. Accurate is setting a new gold standard for reloading pistol cartridges. It's even labeled in gold, so dig around your dealer's shelf before the Gold Rush begins. And while you're there, look for the full line of Accurate powders:

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No. 9, 1680,
2230, 2460,
2520, 3100,
and 8700.



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Industries



**Accurate Arms
Company, Inc.**

P.O. Box AH1
McEwen, Tennessee 37101

HANDLOADING

CHARLES PETTY

VERSATILE ACCURATE ARMS POWDERS SPAN FULL SPECTRUM OF HANDLOADS

By now most of you have heard of Accurate Arms powders. The company is located in McEwen, Tennessee and imports a broad range of powders manufactured by Israeli Military Industries. They began, in the 1960s, selling surplus powders under the "Data Powder" trademark but now the majority of their powders are newly manufactured ball type propellants. This is good news for pistol shooters because some of their powders are quickly becoming well known for extremely uniform loads and exceptional accuracy.

Their handgun powders are identified by a system of numbers that relates to burning rate. Recently, Accurate Arms introduced #2, a fast burning, ball type powder suitable for use in mild to moderate loads in almost any handgun caliber. Where #2 will find its niche is in target loads for the .38 Special, .45 ACP or moderate loads for practically anything else.

AA #2 has been compared with Bullseye and 231 with a burning rate somewhere between the two. It is a double base, ball type powder with 24% nitroglycerine content. Although it's only been available a short time, I've already shot quite a bit in .38 and .45 target loads and have found it to be extremely consistent. It meters beautifully. I've been shooting 2.8 gr. in .38 Special loads with the Zero 148 gr. HBWC bullet and getting around 650 fps from a 6" barrel. Accuracy in my PPC gun has been outstanding.

In the .45 ACP, a load of 4.5 gr. with the H&G #130 185 gr. cast bullet gives about 700 fps and is exceptionally accurate. Another combination that is proving interesting is a load of 5.3 gr. with the new Speer 185 gr. TMJ (Total Metal Jacket) semi-wadcutter which delivers 750 fps and comes very close to duplicating factory wadcutter ammo. The bullet shape is quite similar to the H&G #68, feeds perfectly and is very accurate.

I had hoped that #2 would be another alternative for .45 IPSC shooters but this doesn't appear to be the case. Loads tested in a 6" comp gun were not able to make major without exceeding Accurate Arms published data. Although this isn't the last word on the subject, their initial data is a bit conservative and they are testing to see if they can find a safe combination. I'm not particularly hopeful.

My all time favorite though is Accurate Arms #5 which is probably as good a general-purpose handgun powder as there is. It's quite similar to Unique and I use it in

almost everything when I want a bit more velocity but am not trying for warp speed. Until the IPSC power factor was raised it was my choice for .38 Super IPSC loads but pressures are just a bit too high to make the new major levels. It's still a great powder for practice loads.

In the .45 though, IPSC shooters will have no trouble making major. I also like it for moderate cast bullet loads in the .44 and .357 Magnum cartridges. I find myself using it for just about everything that I used to load with Unique because it's cleaner burning and meters beautifully. I've never had a moment's trouble with it in Dillon measures; a place where Unique can be bothersome.

Next in the line is #7 and although Accurate Arms likes it for 9mm loads and it does work well there, I think it will find a real home in the 10mm Auto. To date it's the only powder that can produce the sort of velocities originally claimed for the cartridge at reasonable pressure. Hornady's data for #7 has a maximum load with their 155 gr. JHP that comes very close to 1400 fps from the 5" Colt barrel.

The final pistol powder is #9 which is a slower burning propellant similar to 2400 and 296. It is intended for .44 Magnum loads although it will also work well in .357 and .41 Magnum. It is too slow for most automatic pistol loads although it might work well in those with extra long barrels. I did test a few 10mm loads with it and while the results were spectacular in terms of muzzle flash and noise, velocities were mediocre. Of course that's because it was all burning out in front of the gun somewhere.

Accurate Arms new data booklet has a whole page of new data for #2 with: .32 H&R Magnum, .38 Special, 9mm Luger, 10mm Auto, .44 Magnum and .45 ACP. It also has data for all their other powders including rifle loads. If you write Accurate Arms, Dept. AH, McEwen, TN 37101 they'll send you a free copy.

I'm also eagerly awaiting the release of some new Winchester cannister powders. For a couple of years now Winchester has been using some remarkable powders in their AA shotgun loads that are extremely clean burning and also seem to have less recoil. The fact that shotgun powders often work well in pistols isn't news, but if these new powders perform as well as expected they could really be a boon for the pistol shooter.

Continued on page 100

Remington.

New (Unprimed) Rifle Brass

All Rifle Brass is Remington Brand, except 220 Smith which is Winchester

NOTE: This is not loaded ammunition
Midway pays the postage

Bulk Packed	Per 100	Per 500
17 Rem.....	\$18.50	\$77.25
22 Hornet.....	12.50	46.50
22 Remington Jet.....	12.50	46.50
221 Rem. Fireball.....	16.50	66.00
222 Remington.....	15.00	61.00
223 Remington.....	16.50	66.00
222 Rem. Mag.....	15.75	62.50
22-250 Remington.....	17.95	74.25
220 Swift.....	19.95	84.50
243 Winchester.....	18.95	77.25
6mm Remington.....	18.95	77.25
25/20 Winchester.....	12.50	46.50
257 Roberts.....	18.95	77.25
250 Savage.....	19.95	84.50
25/06 Remington.....	19.95	84.50
6.5 Rem Mag.....	23.25	99.95
264 Win. Mag.....	23.25	99.95
270 Winchester.....	19.95	84.50
7mm Mauser (7x57).....	19.95	84.50
7mm Bench Rest.....	25.50	109.50
7mm/08 Remington.....	19.95	84.50
280 Remington.....	19.95	84.50
7mm Rem. Mag.....	22.95	99.95
30 M1 Carbine.....	10.95	40.95
30 Remington.....	16.75	67.75
30/30 Winchester.....	16.75	67.75
300 Savage.....	19.95	84.50
30/40 Krag.....	19.95	84.50
308 Winchester.....	19.95	84.50
30/06 Springfield.....	19.95	84.50
300 H&H Mag.....	25.50	110.50
300 Win. Mag.....	24.95	106.75
303 British.....	20.25	85.50
32/20 Winchester.....	12.50	46.50
32 Win. Spl.....	16.75	67.75
8mm Mauser (8x57).....	19.95	84.50
8mm Rem. Mag.....	25.50	110.50
338 Win. Mag.....	24.25	104.50
35 Remington.....	19.95	84.50
35 Whelen.....	19.95	84.50
350 Rem. Mag.....	24.25	104.50
375 H&H Mag.....	27.75	119.95
444 Marlin.....	23.15	98.95
45/70 Government.....	24.95	110.95
458 Win. Mag.....	27.75	119.95



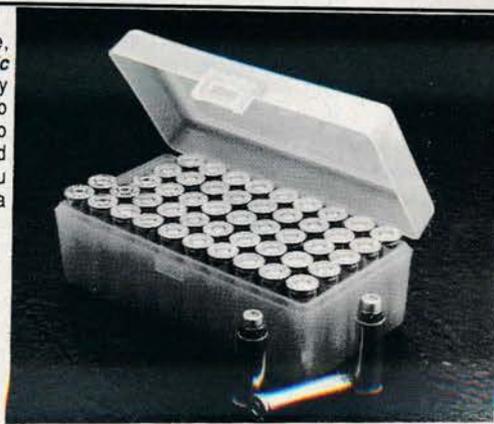
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Recommended for most Reloaders

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Quantity	222/223	380/9mm	38/357	10mm/45 ACP	44 Mag/45 LC
Box of 10	\$14.95	\$9.95	\$9.95	\$9.95	\$9.95
Box of 50	\$68.75	\$34.75	\$34.75	\$39.95	\$39.95

Note: We cannot mix a box of 10 or a box of 50. Each box of 10 or of 50 contains only one size of ammo box.

Remington.

Rifle Bullets

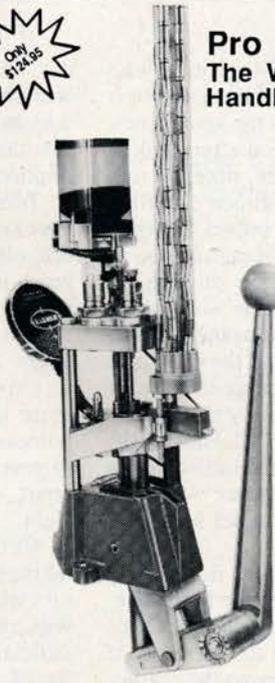
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NOTE: This is Not Loaded Ammunition.

Midway Pays the Postage

Items followed by * are W-W Brand

	Per 500	Per 1000
17 Cal. 25 Gr. HP.....	\$29.95	\$51.95
22 Cal. 40 Gr. SP.....	26.50	47.75
22 Cal. 45 Gr. SP.....	27.25	48.95
22 Cal. 45 Gr. HP.....	27.25	48.95
22 Cal. 50 Gr. HP.....	27.75	50.25
22 Cal. 50 Gr. PSP.....	23.75	42.50
22 Cal. 55 Gr. HP.....	29.25	53.25
22 Cal. 55 Gr. PSP.....	24.75	44.75
22 Cal. 55 Gr. PSP *.....	25.75	46.50
223 Cal. 55 Gr. FMJ *.....	15.95	28.50
243/6mm 80 Gr. HP.....	36.95	67.50
243/6mm 80 Gr. PSP.....	30.75	55.75
243/6mm 100 Gr. PSP.....	34.50	62.75
25/20 Cal. 86 Gr. SP.....	31.50	57.50
25 Cal. 87 Gr. HP.....	34.75	63.25
25 Cal. 100 Gr. PSP.....	34.50	62.75
25 Cal. 120 Gr. PSP.....	37.25	67.75
6.5mm 120 Gr. PSP.....	37.25	67.75
270 Cal. 100 Gr. PSP.....	34.50	62.75
270 Cal. 130 Gr. PSP.....	37.75	68.75
270 Cal. 130 Gr. Br. Pt.....	56.95	104.50
7mm 150 Gr. PSP.....	40.25	73.50
7mm 175 Gr. PSP.....	42.95	78.75
30/30 Cal. 150 Gr. SP.....	38.95	70.95
30/30 Cal. 170 Gr. SP.....	40.75	74.50
30 Carbine 110 Gr. SP.....	25.95	46.95
30 Carbine 110 Gr. FMJ.....	25.95	46.95
30 Cal. 125 Gr. PSP.....	37.50	68.50
308-30/06 147 Gr. FMJ *.....	37.25	67.95
30 Cal. 150 Gr. PSP.....	40.25	73.50
30 Cal. 150 Gr. Br. Pt.....	59.50	109.25
30 Cal. 165 Gr. PSP.....	41.50	76.25
30 Cal. 180 Gr. RN SP.....	43.50	79.50
30 Cal. 180 Gr. PSP.....	43.50	79.50
30 Cal. 180 Gr. Br. Pt.....	61.75	113.95
32/20 Cal. 100 Gr. SP.....	34.50	62.75
45/70 Cal. 300 Gr. JHP.....	54.95	101.50
45/70 Cal. 405 Gr. SP.....	58.50	105.95



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32 ACP	41 Action Express
32 S&W Long	44 Spl/Mag
380 ACP	45 ACP
9mm Luger	45 Long Colt
38 Super	223 Rem.
38/357	30 M1 Carbine (add \$6.40)
10mm Bren Ten	7.62 x 39
41 Mag.	

Extra Shell Plate Carrier.....	\$33.65
Extra Case Feeder.....	16.95
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32 Auto *.....	34.50	62.80
32 S&W Long *.....	34.50	62.80
380 ACP.....	36.25	65.75
38 S&W.....	35.50	64.95
9mm Luger.....	34.50	62.65
38 Special.....	34.25	62.50
357 Magnum.....	36.95	66.95
38 Super.....	35.25	63.85
357 Maximun *.....	46.75	85.00
10mm Bren Ten.....	56.75	104.50
41 Magnum.....	48.50	88.95
44 Special.....	48.50	88.95
44 Magnum.....	48.50	88.95
44/40 Win. *.....	48.50	87.95
44/40 Win. *.....	61.95	112.75
45 ACP.....	44.25	80.75
45 Long Colt.....	48.50	88.95
45 Auto Rim *.....	47.65	86.60



Remington.

BULLETS

Note: This is not loaded ammunition

Midway Pays the Postage

Items followed by * are R-P Brand

	Per 500	Per 1000
25 Auto 50 Gr. FMJ *.....	\$21.50	\$38.25
32 Auto 71 Gr. FMJ *.....	24.60	43.95
380 Auto 88 Gr. JHP *.....	26.80	47.50
380 Auto 95 Gr. FMJ.....	20.95	37.75
9mm Luger 115 Gr. JHP *.....	28.95	52.75
9mm Luger 115 Gr. FMJ.....	23.25	41.75
9mm Luger 124 Gr. FMJ.....	24.25	44.25
38/357 110 Gr. JHP.....	25.50	46.25
38/357 125 Gr. JHP.....	23.95	43.25
38/357 140 Gr. JHP *.....	29.50	53.50
38/357 158 Gr. JHP.....	28.25	51.50
38 Super 130 Gr. FMJ *.....	27.25	48.95
41 Mag. 200 Gr. JHP *.....	41.25	75.25
41 Mag. 210 Gr. JSP *.....	42.25	77.50
44 Mag. 180 Gr. JHP *.....	39.95	73.50
44 Mag. 240 Gr. JHP *.....	43.85	80.95
44/40 200 Gr. JSP *.....	37.50	68.50
45 Auto 185 Gr. JHP *.....	43.25	79.25
45 Auto 185 Gr. Match *.....	43.25	79.25
45 Auto 230 Gr. FMJ.....	37.50	68.55

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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOUB

PROVING YOUR FIREARMS COMPETENCE BEYOND DEPARTMENT'S CERTIFICATION

The typical police department runs its officers through a shooting qualification one to six times a year. If you're on the high end of that or have even more in-service weapons certification, you should grovel in gratitude at the feet of your instructor: he's put you in the top 5% or so.

But suppose, instead, that your badge was issued by one of the many police departments we both know of that only require you to qualify once a year?

You may have come under something else that I have mixed feelings about. It is the trend these days to grade cops on a "pass/fail" basis. The Police Officer Standards and Training Commission in my own state has gone to this system. The rationale is supposedly that if one of your guys who barely qualified gets into a shooting, the lawyers on the other side can't make an issue out of the fact that he was only able to pass by the skin of his teeth.

I'm not thrilled with that. A lot of the police instructors who've bought into this concept have never testified under oath as to the competence of an officer they've trained, in a wrongful death suit. I *have*. My experience is that the more tools I have to work with to prove the officer competent, the more defensible he or she is going to be.

How do we arrange that defensibility? Let's look both at ourselves, and at the officers we're responsible for now or may be in the future.

First, take whatever the state's or department's recommended course of fire is and start shooting it more intensively, *at double speed and even faster*. If you've been using something fairly slow like PPC, doubling and tripling the times makes it a real challenge to combat handgunning under stress. More to the point, it conclusively proves that you or your officer *were qualified to twice the prevailing standard*.

Stop and think: does the chief or sheriff you work for have any other barometer that he can point to when he justifies his budget to those *he* serves, to indicate the performance and competence of his officers? Crime stats are a function of population, conviction rates a function of the court system. But there's one test all cops in your area take regularly, and are judged by the same standard on: firearms qualification. Speaking as an administrative lieutenant, I like being able to sit in front of the community fathers on command and document that our officers qualify to twice the state standard.

With your better shooters, triple speed and then even quadruple speed become a possibility.

Likewise, you can do the standard daylight course in the dark. My department did this in our last qualification, and more than half the officers qualified in poor light *and* at double speed on the 25-yard FBI course. All easily made the cut at standard speed. Any cutthroat lawyer who wants to impugn *their* skill at arms in open court will have to have a professional death wish, because our records on file with the state will make him the laughingstock of the Bar.

If you qualified under adverse conditions, *the record should say so!* Our qualification forms have spaces for noting temperature, light, inclement weather, and listing of any malfunctions or "range alibis" that might have occurred. If my officer qualified with the odds against him or her, let the record reflect it: this supports this person's coolness and judgement under adverse conditions with a gun in their hand.

Take all the private training and all the special firearms and officer survival schools you can. Each certificate is another point in your favor.

I strongly encourage competition with the handgun: PPC, IPSC, pinbusting, even bullseye. Keep a record of the scoresheets the match sponsors send you afterward. If you had a bad performance, note the reasons on the scoresheet. Since the final scores of a match *don't* reflect multiple jams or other problems that caused you to turn in a poor performance through no fault of your own, it might be wise to just throw away your scorecard or turn around and default from the match if the first stage has ruined your score because the gun or ammo didn't work. In anything but a major match, I'll do this: a "DNF" (did not finish) next to my name on the final bulletin does not reflect on my competence when it's introduced by opposing counsel in a court of law.

If, on the other hand, I did poorly because I just shot lousy in the first stage, I'll stay in and redouble my efforts. Coming back from the edge of disaster even if you don't ultimately win shows the character trait of staying in the conflict against

adversity and doing your damndest to coolly prevail and overcome it.

Keep a shooter's log, the way the serious bullseye match contestants do. Not only will it help you to spot problems in your shooting that you can correct, but it may also defend you if a poor performance in a previous shoot is ever brought into court as evidence against you that you were not competent with a handgun under stress.

For many of you, discretionary income and time will militate against getting seriously involved in handgun competition. This doesn't mean that your shooting can't be done for the record. If you're one of those young cops who haven't yet reached maximum pay in grade but have the humongous expenses of a young family, consider videotaping your practice sessions. VHS-type minicams are available reasonably these days, and you'll want one anyway to document the growing up of that young family you're working so hard for. Take it from a father who didn't because he was too busy on the job.

Watching yourself on playback is a tremendous diagnostic tool. It'll work for your officers, too. For your own training, run through some of those tough courses like multiple-speed PPC. Keep the vids on file: they're cheap to store, and one day, they might just prove how fast and straight you can shoot.

In one fatal shooting trial, I had to show that the good guy didn't slowly and deliberately empty his gun into the bad guy, but instead was capable of hitting him with every shot in less than two seconds, as he

did. The videotape we showed to the jury was invaluable in convincing them that this was in fact the case, not the drawn out "torture by gunfire" that opposing counsel implied. The jury found for the good guy.

Take all the private training and all the special firearms and officer survival schools you can. Each certificate is another point in your favor that gives you more authority than opposing counsel and his bought and paid for prostitute "experts" when they wrongfully allege that you weren't competent with a gun. Each of those instructors is also another material witness who can be subpoenaed to testify to your competence and, if all goes well in court, on the fact that what you did was right.

By the way, you should check before taking the course and find out if the instructors who are so willing to take your tuition will, in fact, back you up later before the judicial bench. Several schools have a policy of, "We're terribly sorry, but we don't

Continued on page 101

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A CONTOUR-FIT™ remains fully service-worthy when exposed to temperatures from -80°F to +275°F, long after nylon or leather turn to scrap. There's no stitching to unravel, no seams to come apart, nothing to tear or break.

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Cordura® and other tough nylons can act like sandpaper and wear out your gun's finish — as well as your pants leg. But Pachmayr CONTOUR-FIT™ Holsters leave your trousers alone and pamper your gun's blue, teflon, satin

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LEATHAM'S COLUMN

ROB LEATHAM

LEATHAM CAPTURES THIRD IPSC WORLD TITLE IN MATCH MARRIED BY POLITICS

Only a few short days ago I returned home from the IPSC World Shoot VIII held in Caracas, Venezuela. Much of it is still a blur and as I have yet to receive a copy of the official results and cannot remember all the important details which would be comprised in an article covering a match. I will try to give you a little bit of what it was like to be there.

First and foremost in my mind stands the country of Venezuela and in particular the city of Caracas. Located on the northern coast of South America, Venezuela is but a short three hour plane ride from Miami. Quite a bit closer than Miami is to my starting point of Phoenix, Arizona. The weather was quite nice and cool except for the occasional rains which usually fell in the afternoons.

The U.S. Team arrived in Caracas on Friday, the 9th of September. We had a bit of a delay in customs but were shortly underway to the Caracas Hilton which served as match headquarters. As we arrived sometime around midnight, everyone was more interested in finding their room than anything else so the evening's activities were held to a minimum.

Saturday the 10th was a day for registration and relaxation. There was an air of excitement about as one would expect but there was also something missing. That something was the team from South Africa. While there were many stories flying about as to their whereabouts, the truth of the matter is that they were denied entry to the country. This was indeed a shame as they routinely field some of the finest competitors on the planet and also one of the best teams.

Not wanting to get into the political end of such things, I did not dig. But I found out later that they were told only a few short days before the event that they were to be welcomed and there were no problems, but alas, some bureaucrat somewhere at the last minute ended their attempts before they even started.

This is truly sad. Reminds one of the U.S. Olympic boycotts where U.S. athletes were not allowed to compete in the 1980 Olympics due to government intervention. And while one can argue both sides of the point until you are blue in the face, in the end it is the competitors from all around the world who must suffer for the sake of these decisions, and not those who govern them. Anyway, enough of that speech.

Aside from registration there was no other scheduled event on Saturday and

many took that opportunity to explore Caracas. At this point I must mention that I am not an adventurer and confined my activities through the course of the week to the Hilton and the shooting range with few exceptions.

Sunday morning began the commencement activities and we were hustled off to the range for the opening ceremonies.

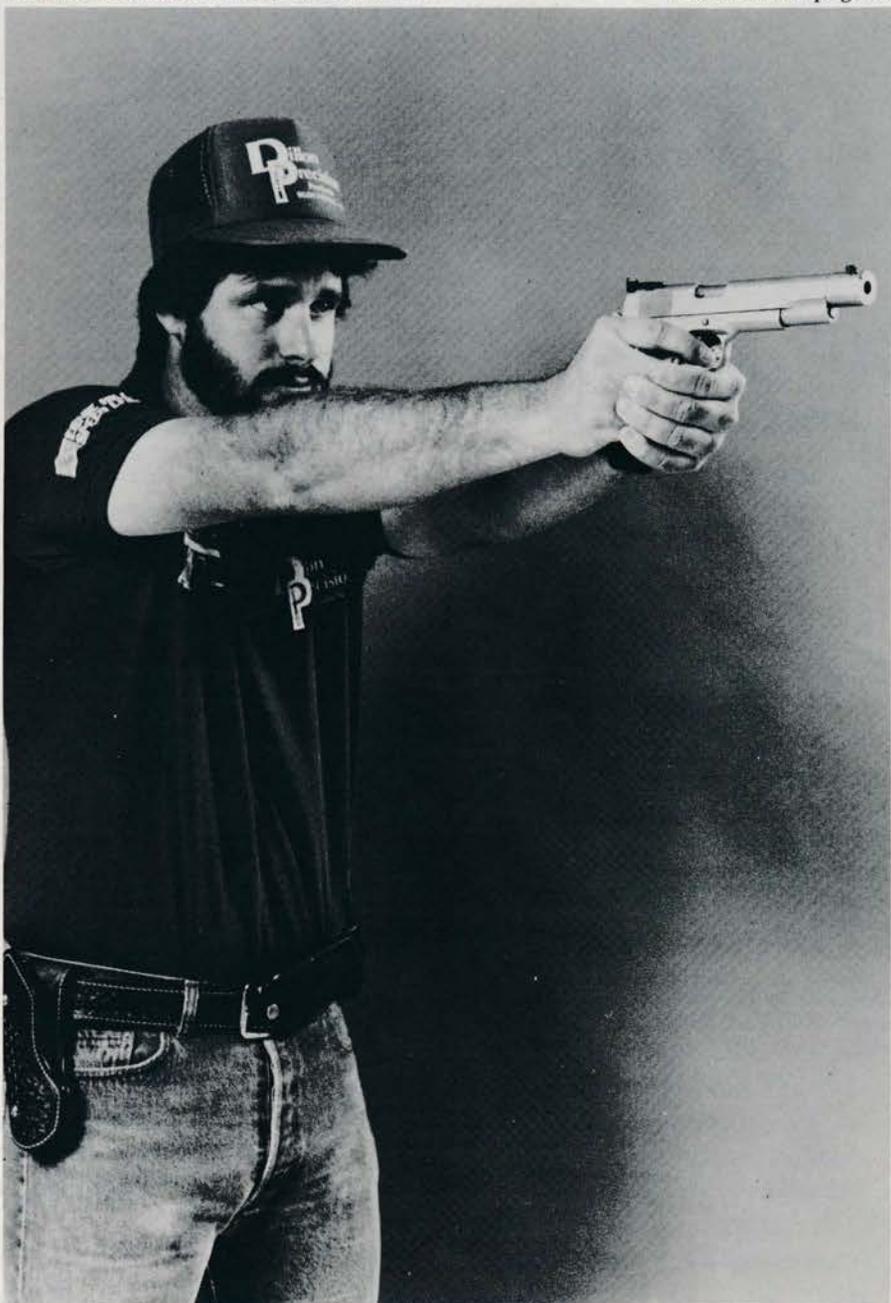
The range itself is located on a military base and is the same facility where the Pan

Am Games were held previously. In front of a grandstand full of spectators, the teams of all the various nations competing were paraded and introduced. After the introduction of the IPSC world president, several individuals responsible for organizing the event and several local officials and military personnel, the teams were allowed to inspect the ranges and get their first glimpse of the course of fire.

This is where the real surprises began. To anyone observant, it was obvious the stages were much more of a controlled exercise than the expected "hose job" we came prepared for. To some this made a bigger difference than to others. Many had spent much time and effort to practice the preliminary course outlines they had received while home; others did not.

Those tuned up for what they *thought* was going to be shot, had a rough awakening. Those of us who simply practiced

Continued on page 82



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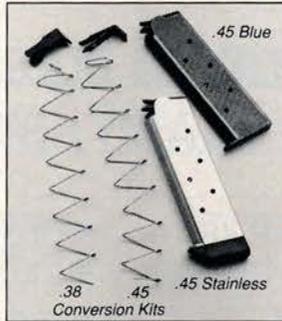
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FOUR MINUTE MASSACRE: THE FBI MIAMI SHOOTOUT

Situation: Eight FBI agents vs. two hardened murderers intent on killing in a grisly battle.

Lesson: Proper tactics, better guns, advanced planning could have saved the FBI agents' lives.

On April 11, 1986, a gun battle took place in Metro Dade County, Florida that would shake the law enforcement community to its roots. Two heavily armed, deeply trained professional criminals would face eight FBI agents, three of them SWAT men, and shoot seven of them before being out down themselves.

Two of the agents died, two were permanently crippled, and in the following months more versions of the Miami Massacre would be circulated than there had been versions of the Gunfight at OK Corral a century earlier. Indeed, it would be a more violent encounter than the famous western shootout. It is estimated that some 30 shots were fired in about as many seconds in Tombstone, leaving three men dead and two seriously wounded. The FBI shootout lasted about four minutes, involved at least 140 shots fired, and took a far more tragic toll in good men's lives.

This writer arrived in Miami three weeks after the gun battle to teach at the Metro Dade Police Academy, and has since been sorting input from that agency, FBI, the Medical Examiner's Office, and other sources. The following reconstruction is a compendium of that information. Noting that many previous accounts have been severely erroneous, including a confusion between which perpetrator fired the fatal shots, it is intended that the following be the most authentic account yet publicly offered of that tragic incident.

The 14-agent rolling stakeout under the command of Supervising Special Agent Gordon McNeill had begun shortly before the tragedy in response to a two-man crime wave centered in the South Dixie Highway area of the Miami suburb that had begun some six months before. McNeill and his team knew that the perpetrators were two white males in their mid-thirties with an affinity for professional-class weapons—.45 autos, AR-15s, shotguns, and high-powered revolvers. They were known to use military tactics and were suspected to be members of white supremacist cults.

In a string of five hits definitely attributed to the pair, several people had been shot, usually execution style, and some killed. They had stolen guns, cars, and over \$100,000 in cash from armored trucks and banks. On two occasions they had shot down plinkers in remote, informal shooting areas for their guns and cars. They had done their last hit in a black '79 Monte Carlo taken from such a sport-shooter, whom they'd shot three times and left for dead.¹

About the only thing wrong with the profile was that suspects Platt and Matix, whose names would not be known until after the gun battle, were not affiliated with any particular organization. They'd met in the army, one with MP training and the other with a Special Forces background. Both had murdered their wives and gotten away with it, and both were accepted by their neighbors as solid citizens. They'd put together a landscaping business as a front to launder their stolen money.

On 4/16/88, their previous strategic planning slipped. Matix and Platt, who fired 750 to 1500 practice rounds a week and who had recently purchased 5,000 rounds of .223 training ammo, had made two mistakes: they kept preying on establishments in the same area, and they were still using the same stolen Monte Carlo that had already been identified by the police.

Matix was driving, Platt in the right front passenger seat of the coupe. Each wore an oversize sportshirt concealing a shoulder-holstered 6" .357 Magnum: the driver's gun was a Dan Wesson, his partner's, a Smith & Wesson L-frame. On the front seat floorboards out of sight were their long guns: a Smith & Wesson M-3000 12-gauge pump gun with extended magazine and a pistol grip instead of a stock, and a stainless Ruger Mini-14 with folding Choate stock and several magazines of .223 ammunition.

It has widely been argued whether or not the agents were outgunned. Of 14 investigators spread out over a

Continued on page 71

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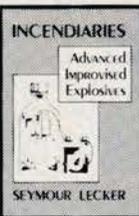


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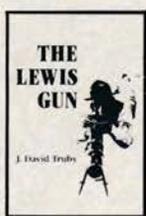
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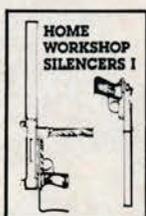
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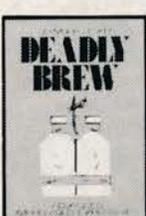
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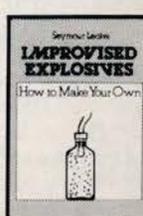
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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN LAWSON

THE AGONY OF TENONITIS: HOW TO FIX VARIOUS FRONT SIGHT BLADES TO 1911

Several readers of this column have called, telling me of their frustrated efforts to mount after-market front sight blades in late model Colt slides. The factory is now installing Combat Elite pattern front blades on all Series 80 pistols. The problem encountered arises from the fact that the new front blade has a wider mounting tenon and alignment radius that will not fit the older slides.

If you mount a considerable number of sights, you will run into at least five different mounting systems on Colts of different ages:

1. The original 1911 front blade with its pin tenon, .058" diameter, centered in a .060" wide alignment radius, staked into a .060" hole from the bottom.
2. The 1911-A1 to early Series 80 front blade, having several shape variations, but all having a .060" x 1/8" tenon, centered in a 1/16" wide 1/4" radius alignment slot, staked from the bottom into a 1/16" x 1/8" tenon socket.
3. The Combat Elite front blade, now used on Series 80's, that has a 1/8" x 1/8" tenon, centered in a 1/8" wide, 1/4" radius (alignment radius), staked from the bottom.
4. Any of the above sockets with a front blade silver soldered in place, with or without staking.
5. The 1/16" x 1/8" tenon front blade arc welded in place.

There is another common width of tenon: The Springfield Armory uses a unique size.

Two of the MMC front sight blades, made by Miniature Machine Co. (210 E. Poplar, Dept. AH, Deming, NM 88030 (505) 546-2151) are, at this writing, available as wide tenon (WT) style plain ramp and high blank configurations. The 1/8" x 5/16" x 5/8" blank can be filed into any required shape and serrations laid out with a metal checkering file, then finished with a small triangular fine cut file.

MMC can also supply the special blades for S.A. slides and they now stock a special wide tenon wedge for their staking tool, suitable for mounting the Combat Elite style blade, using the Gold Cup adaptor to brace the angled top blade during staking.

I know a number of shooters who think that the new wide tenon is the best thing since smokeless powder. If Colt had adopted this stronger mount system right after WW-I, it would have saved three generations of gunsmiths hours of frustration and several tons of silver solder.

Those of you who have had one of the large NM style blades shear off and disappear in the middle of a rapid fire string during a critical match will understand my

sentiments: Finally, front blades with a mounting system that is fast, secure yet easily removed when it becomes necessary to change to a different blade.

If you want to modify the older slides to take the new wide tenon sights, it can be done in the milling machine with a minimum of bother. Center a 1/8" end mill over the narrow slot and carefully enlarge the tenon pocket, using 890 RPM with mist lube, lowering the cutter slowly. Then center a #404 (1/8" x 1/2") keyseat cutter over the slot and make a .031" deep cut to form the alignment radius. All that remains is to square the tenon socket with a needle file of medium cut.

Mounting a wide tenon sight with the MMC staking tool is a bit more involved than securing the small tenon variety. First, apply Loctite stud lock to the tenon and tap it into place. Next, secure the blade in the staking tool with the Gold Cup/Mk IV adaptor under the set screw. Check to make certain that the blade is locked in a perpendicular attitude. Then lightly tap the wedge, which is liberally coated with moly disulphide grease, using a light brass hammer. Break the setup completely and check the progress of your work. Apply more lube and check for signs of tenon galling. If signs are present, apply a bit of moly grease, replace the setup and give another few light taps. Break the setup and check progress again. When the tenon is finally riveted firmly in place, use the shear to cut away excess. This last step could also be done by filing or grinding until the bushing slips easily into place and turns without friction or binding. As you may have surmised, use of the wide tenons puts an end to the "lock it up and pound it in" method of staking.

If you use an arsenal style staking setup, apply Loctite stud lock to the tenon, brace it against an angled insert and begin to rivet over the tenon with the staking tool. If the mushroom favors one side, cant the staking tool and tap gently to bring the bulge back to center, then strike straight down to finish the riveting. You can finish the installation by filing or grinding and polishing until the bushing fits properly.

Brownells new catalog #41 (Brownells, Inc., Dept. AH, Rt. 2 Box 1, Montezuma, IA 50171), cost \$3.50 (refundable) lists some new sights that should be of great interest to most pistolsmiths.

One problem that crops up from time to time is the necessity of replacing a pre-74 S&W K or N rear sight. The size and location of the mounting hole often varies on these

older sights. Two options of Millett Pre-74 adjustable rear sights (white outline and plain blade) are available undrilled for a mounting screw so you can drill it in the appropriate position to custom fit the installation to the weapon.

The Wichita adjustable rear sights are now available in a pre-melted configuration. Smoothly rounded at all of the previously sharp edges and corners, the new model sight should slide smoothly past clothing without snagging, making it even more desirable than before. The Wichita, you may remember, is the adjustable rear sight favored by many pistolsmiths because it was designed to completely fill the existing sight mounting groove on the Gold Cup slide, and the elevating screw is positioned down through the male mounting dovetail, eliminating the necessity for drilling and tapping the slide top for the elevating screw.

The wide tenon (WT) front blades from MMC are listed in this latest catalog, but some of the listed fixed sight sets are only available in narrow tenon configuration. Until they become available in wide tenon, you may want to obtain an extra MMC blank blade and duplicate the supplied blade by filing, applying the appropriate insert, etc.

And finally, the Brownells Power Custom SSR Mounting System listed is a highly versatile, adjustable system that will not only properly locate and guide your drills and taps for handgun sight mounting, but works beautifully for rifles, silhouette pistols and shotguns. The cleverly designed fixture will immediately put a small shop into the sight, scope and electronic sight mounting business. Results should be professional and accurate, if the detailed instructions are followed carefully.

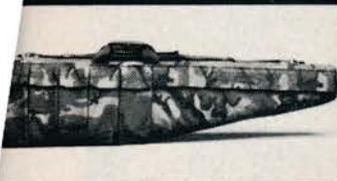


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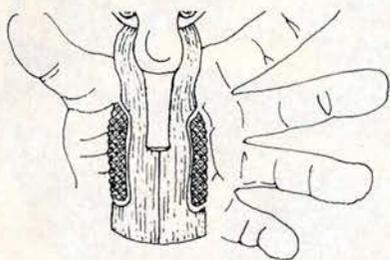
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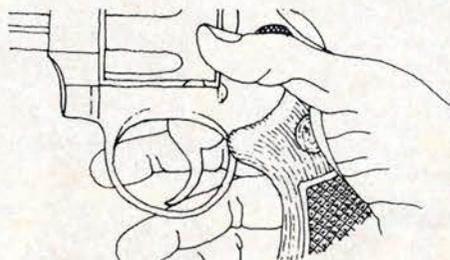
HANDGUNNING HINTS

Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton

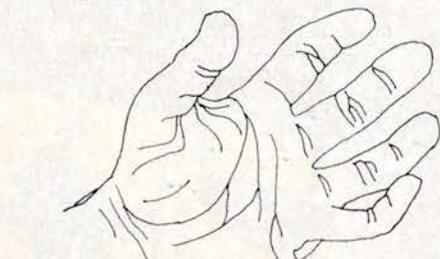
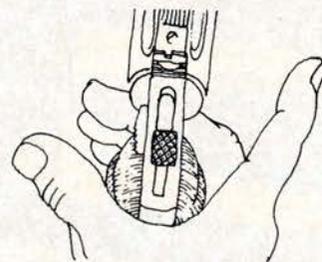
The Two Handed Revolver Hold



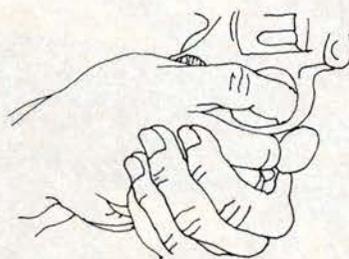
1. Fundamental to any two-handed hold is a good, basic grip in the controlling hand, backstrap deep



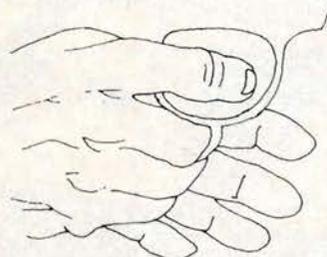
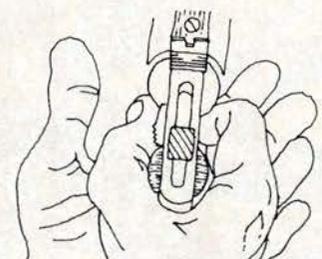
in the central crease, well against the web of the hand.



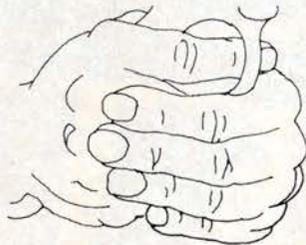
2. Some prefer to support the gun with the off hand. Place the heel of the gun hand in the open palm of the supporting hand and close the support-



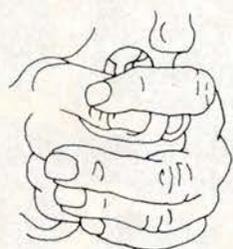
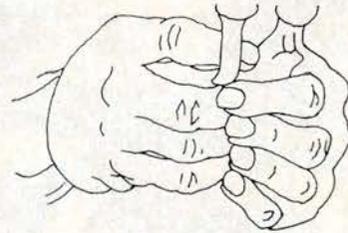
ing fingers around the gun hand. Move the supporting hand as necessary to find the most comfortable position.



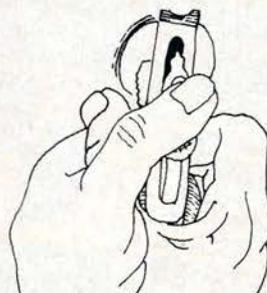
3. Others like to interlock the fingers. A good start is to reach out, putting the base of the off hand fingers on the second knuckles of the gun hand.



Then let the off hand fingers fall into the grooves of the gun-gripping fingers. Always move the off hand to adjust for comfort.

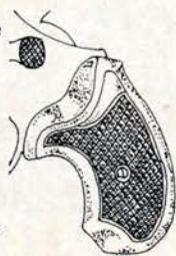


4. Some shooters, particularly users of the interlocking grip, like to put a finger on the trigger guard. This can be quite a reach with some revolvers. Some experts say this can pull the gun during rapid fire.

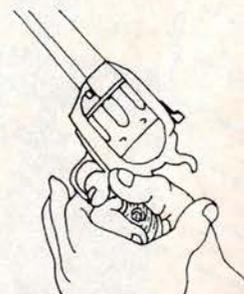


5. Some like to use the off hand thumb to cock the revolver for single action firing. This is not a habit to carry over to pistol shooting, for the rearward action of the slide is sure to catch the off thumb.

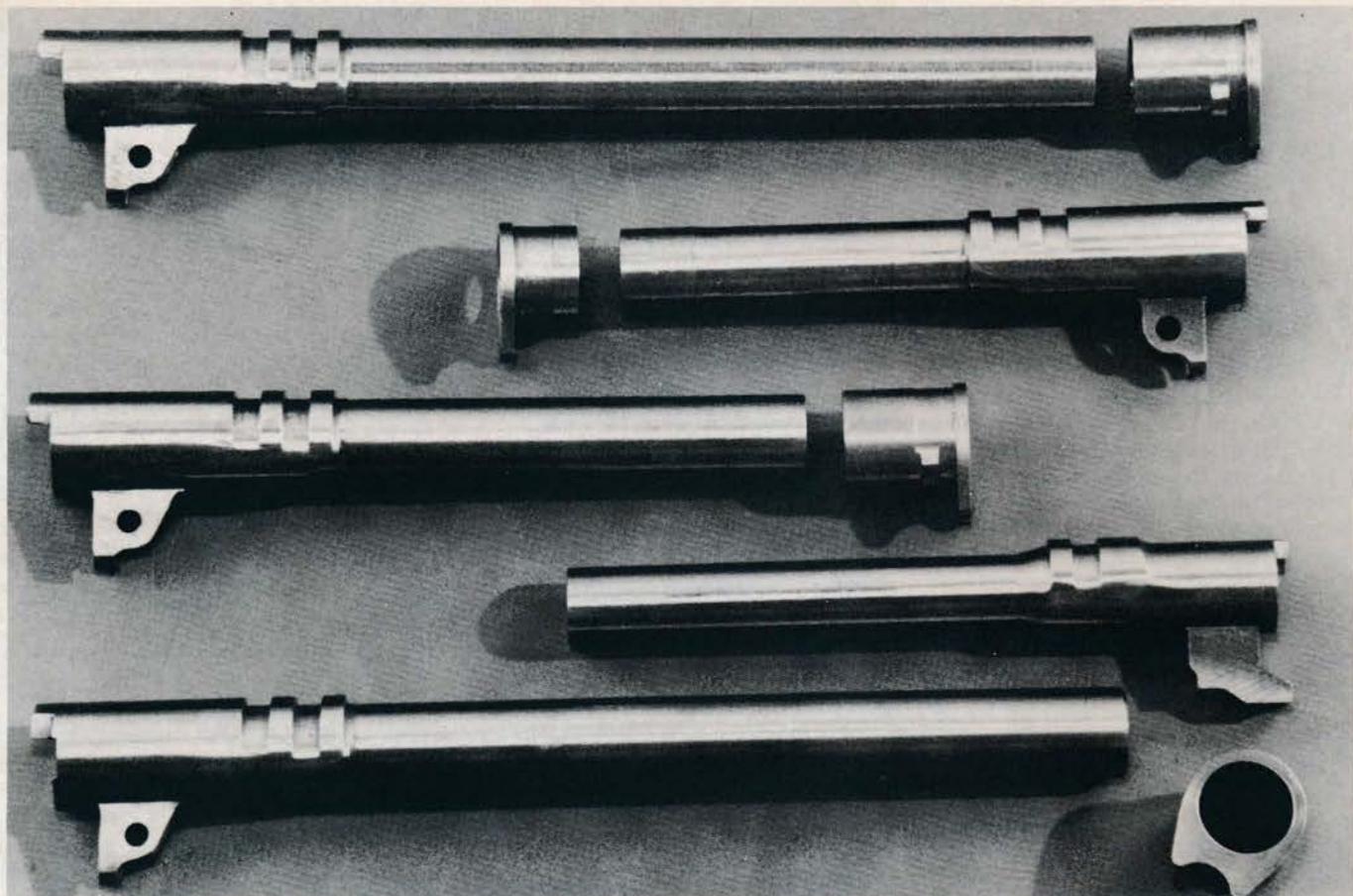
6. While any grips may be used, the larger ones facilitate a better two-handed hold. Some grips even have grooves to spread your fingers for a more solid interlocking style. Some are also made of recoil-absorbing synthetics.



7. Comfort is important in any phase of handgunning for it relieves stress and tension. But you may find you need to re-evaluate the comfort of your hold after shooting. Experiment to find the adjustment in your hold that will best serve you.



© Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton 1989



Five typical match barrels, top to bottom, 7" large profile; Commander .45 ACP; Rock Island National Match; Radom match for pre-war Polish service pistol; 7" large profile .38 Super.

MATCH BARRELS

for semi-auto pistols

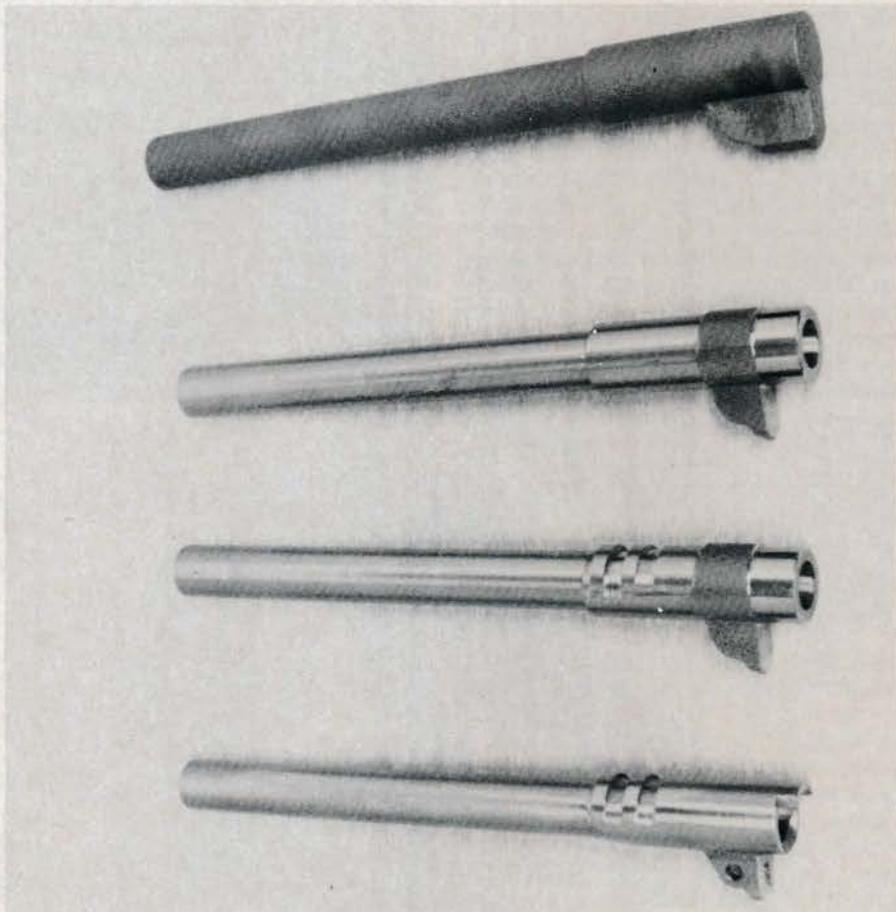
By Jim Thompson

It just happened to you. You took that pretty new automatic out to the range. Man, were you proud!

Your buddy's shoots great. No jams. But yours . . . well, its out-of-the-box condition and especially its accuracy is simply unacceptable to you. You've toyed around with returning the thing and, at the back of your mind, there's a possibility you just might unload the lemon to someone else with less demanding accuracy requirements.

Frustrated and certainly annoyed, you consult with John Q. Pistolsmith who carefully studies the piece, notes that the trigger is fine, the sights are solid, and slide-to-frame fit is better than satisfactory. "What you really need," he tells you, "is a good match barrel."

Now, this can set you back yet another \$200 or more, considering the barrel plus its



From an investment casting to a finished barrel takes several machining steps to cut the lugs and slide stop foot. A match barrel holds tighter tolerances than a standard barrel.

installation, and at the front of your mind is the feeling that you shouldn't really need to spend any more money on a pistol you really felt was too damned expensive anyway. At the back of your mind there's a nagging feeling that maybe, just maybe, the pistolsmith is trying to fleece you out of even more of your hard-earned cash.

Why did the factory pull this on you, one of their most devoted customers? And can this transplant, should you opt to spend the money, really do you any good?

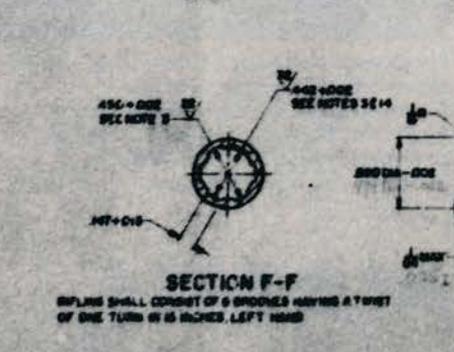
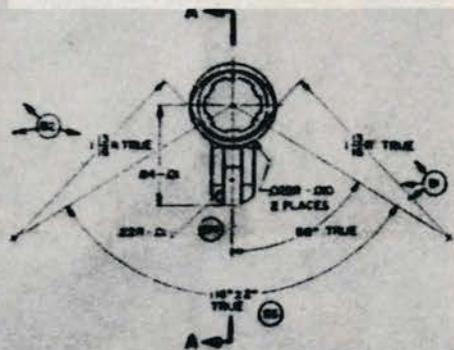
With precision rifles, a competition barrel comes as a heavy blank, honed to a higher standard, measured more precisely, built to tighter tolerances, and generally at least a couple of inches longer than a "sporter" barrel. The gauging, external and internal parallelism of a match rifle barrel (a measure of a rifle's predisposition to shoot in the exact direction of its physical and mechanical thrust line) has become more precise in the 100 or so years since metallic cartridges became popular, but the steps involved in testing remain very similar.

Automatic pistols have not been around nearly so long, have not been taken very seriously as precision shooters for more than 30 years or so, and because of the changing nature of match shooting and the greater emphasis on speed and combat matches, a great deal has changed since the first Brown- ing-Colt pistols.

Whereas the barrels of target revolvers like Colt's classic Officer's Model Target were selected and configured much like precision rifle barrels of similar vintage, and early automatics like Colt's 1903-1905 series were hand-fitted to the individual pistol much like today's National Match barrels, modern production automatics of all kinds emphasize function over precision, based upon the iron-clad truism that nothing irritates a customer more than unreliable machinery. Thus, hoods are cut to provide .008" or more of clearance between barrel and slide, lock edges are rounded, bushing or barrel ferrule clearance is at least .003" looser than required for function, and the link leaves the rear end of

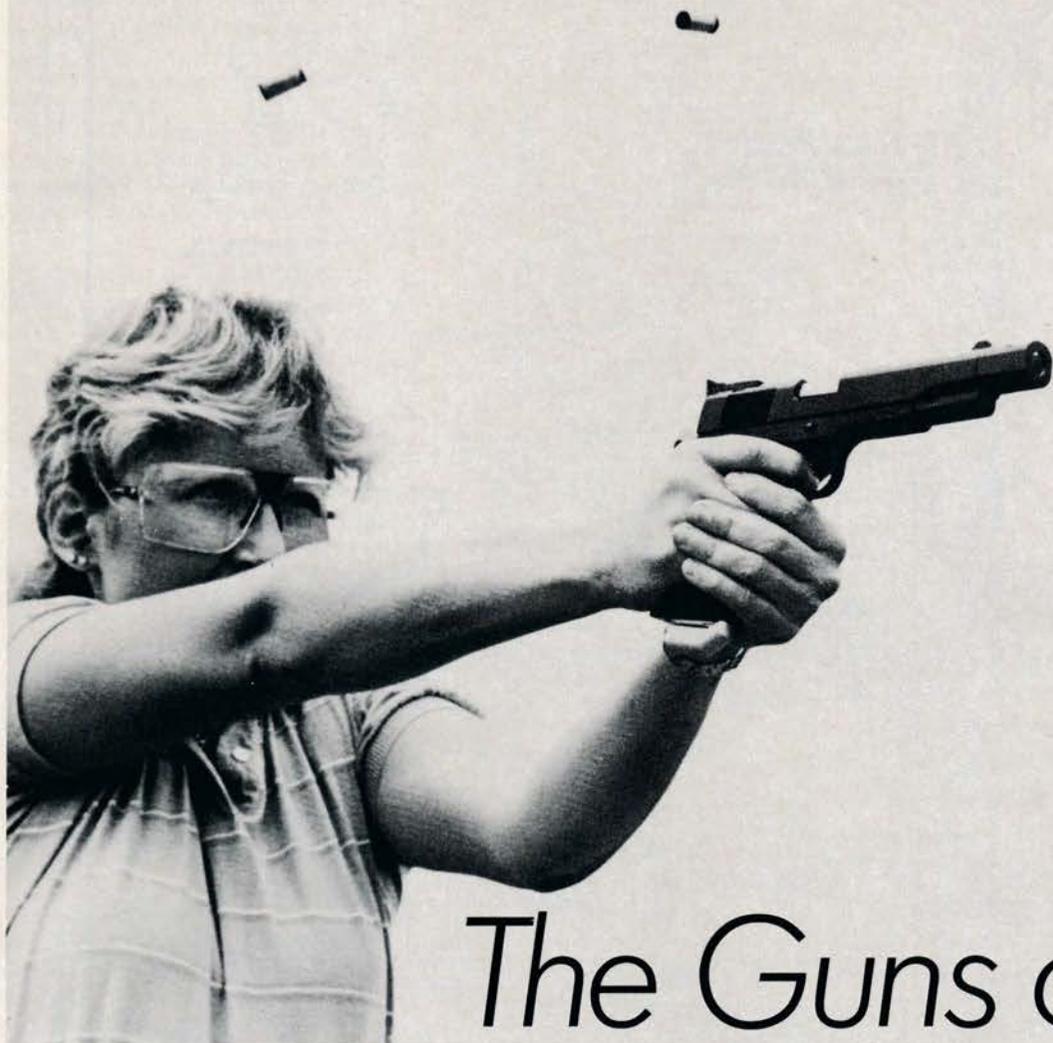
NOTES

1. FINISH PERCEPT AS NOTED
2. ALL EDGES SHALL BE BROKEN .005+.010 UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED
3. DIAMETERS AT MUZZLE SHALL NOT BE LARGER THAN DIAMETERS AT BREACH
4. MATERIAL STEEL, S&W MIL-9-11500 ONLY OR S&W CHROME-NICKEL-VANADIUM
5. HEAT TREATMENT: AUSTEMPER HEAT AT 1540° TO 1600°F QUENCH INTO AUSTEMPERING BATH AT APPROXIMATELY 650° TO 670°F HOLD IN BATH FOR 30 MINUTES MINIMUM. COOL IN AIR. RETEMPER AT 400°F MINIMUM TO ROCKWELL D58 TO 58 B (ALL DIMENSIONS APPLY AFTER HEAT TREATMENT)
6. AREAS TO BE PLATED SHALL BE FREE OF BURRS
7. SURFACES TO BE CHROMIUM PLATED SHALL BE ELECTROPOLISHED TO A MINIMUM DEPTH OF .001 PRIOR TO PLATING
8. BARREL SHALL NOT BE PROOF FIRED PRIOR TO CHROMIUM PLATING
9. NO MECHANICAL METHODS FOR REMOVAL OF CHROMIUM FROM THE BORE PERMITTED
10. APPLY MARKINGS INDICATED MARKINGS SHALL BE LOCATED THROUGH SECTION PORT IN SLIDE WITH ACTION CLOSED
11. FINAL PROTECTIVE FINISH:
 - A. FINISH 12.2 OF MIL-STD-171 ON ALL INTERNAL SURFACES
 - B. FINISH 3.3.1.2 OF MIL-STD-171 ON ALL UNPLATED AREAS, EXCEPT PARAGRAPH 3.3.1.1 AND 3.3.4 OF MIL-P-15232 SHALL NOT APPLY ALL SURFACES SHALL BE COATED WITH A FILM OF OIL WEIGHT PER UNIT AREA SHALL NOT APPLY
12. AFTER PROOF FIRING, CHROMIUM PLATE SHALL BE FREE FROM BLISTERS, RITS, FLAKING, PEELING, AND CRACKS
13. CHROMIUM PLATE AND FORMS S&S OF MIL-STD-171 SHALL TERMINATE ANYWHERE ON THESE SURFACES
14. DIMENSIONS FOR PLATED SURFACES SHALL APPLY AFTER CHROMIUM PLATING
15. THICKNESS OF CHROMIUM PLATING SHALL BE .0025+.0005 AS IS DIMENSIONED AT LOCATION
16. BARREL SHALL WITHSTAND THE FORCE OF ONE GOVERNMENT HIGH PRESSURE TEST CARTRIDGE WITHOUT EVIDENCE OF FAILING AS DETERMINED BY MAGNETIC PARTICLE INSPECTION FOR CRACKS, SEAMS, AND OTHER FLAWS. INSPECTION IS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE GOVERNMENT TEST. BY THE CHROMIUM PLATING TEST ON THE BORE, APPLY MAGNETIC TEST SHALL TO BORE AND BORE TESTING THIS REQUIREMENT
17. BARRELS BEARING V ON FRONT END MUST BEAT UP ON LEFT SIDE
18. MIL-9-11500 APPLIES



Above, a 7" match barrel is measured for flatness and parallelism. Left, feed ramp configurations vary with the pressure of the cartridge with double hoods and supported case heads necessary with hot rounds like the 10mm and .38 Super. Right, a typical .45 match barrel is chambered in a turret lathe. Many match barrel makers leave chambers about .008" short intentionally so that headspace may be precisely adjusted by the pistolsmith.





The Guns of

Tim Brian

By Peter T. Tomaras

Not everyone can afford full-race competition guns. Shooters with a hankering to try the action game choke at shelling out \$1600-\$2000 for the basic tool. More than ever before, there's a need for an affordable competition gun, and Tim Brian has addressed that need. His new Interphase compensator system, first marketed in 1988, makes the affordable competitive gun a possible dream.

To fully appreciate the Interphase, one must first understand the centerpiece of Brian's work, his Phase III compensator system, which employs the principle of the parabolic curve in the expansion chamber. "Curving the interior of the expansion chamber with precision milling keeps the gases flowing smoothly," he explains, "and I can more efficiently direct them where I want them to go."

The Phase III features a single port, which Brian prefers in effect and appearance to the dual ports he once used. It also incorporates a slightly longer exit hole to retain gases in the expansion chamber a tad longer—for more downward thrust.

Brian begins production of a Phase

Three competition auto by shortening the slide one-half inch. The heart of any accurate auto is a match barrel, and Tim fits a Bar-Sto, Clark, Wilson, or Kart barrel to the action. He recuts the bushing relief because the muzzle end of the barrel is threaded for a half inch. He uses short, solid bushings which are rugged and produce optimum accuracy. They also function better than tapered cones with light PPC loads where there is no power factor.

Next he mills the compensator from 4140 steel. He drills and threads a one-half inch hole into it, and cuts the outside to exactly match the individual slide. He goes inside the slide and recuts the bushing locking lug hole. Then he fits a shortened full-length recoil spring guide system and an extended ejector. The finished compensated gun is just 5/8 inch longer than the standard Government Model.

With the port center-forward in the

compensator, the front sight is dovetailed into the rear of the comp which butts up to within four one-thousandths of an inch from the slide. Exquisite mating of comp to slide is a distinctive feature of Brian's guns. Another is their perfect balance. His Phase Threes balance on a finger placed just ahead of the trigger.

Brian presently compensates only autos by Springfield Armory or Colt. The Phase Three system on your .45 ACP will cost you \$625. Add \$75 for .38 Super and 9mm calibers, because of the integral feed ramp. Throw in the cost of the gun itself and the various other refinements a top competitor needs or wants and your investment gets substantial.

To make championship performance available to the budget-minded competitor, he combined the parabolic-curve expansion chamber of the Phase Three with a cost-saving exterior. The resultant god-



The guns of Tim Brian include both customized revolvers and autos. His full-house IPSC auto features his Phase III compensator, Bo-Mar sights, Brown beavertail and handcut checkering. The revolver customized for Bianchi Cup also has a compensator along with a heavy barrel underlug, a bobbed hammer, Hogue grips and an action job.



child is the Interphase, priced a full \$350 less than the Phase Three.

The savings lies in less machine work; the slide is not shortened, and the compensator does not carry the design of the slide extended. A compromise in aesthetics, perhaps, but not in performance. The Interphase job includes a match barrel and an extended ejector.

Not cutting the slide allows the gunowner some interesting versatility. The front sight remains on the slide, which means the compensator and match barrel can be removed, and the original barrel dropped back in. The uncompensated gun can be used for duty, or for the stock gun class in IPSC matches. The shooter basically has two guns in one.

Overdosed on theory, I gathered up some guns and repaired to the range. I started off by firing a stock Gold Cup. Then I fired Phase Threes and Interphases

with major loads, first in .45 ACP, then in .38 Super. Stairsteps to heaven. The reduction in muzzle flip and felt recoil was remarkable.

I was having too much fun to stop. Magazine after magazine, switching from one gun to the other. Steel plates were falling, suddenly I was a better shot. Later I realized I'd gone through a couple of hundred rounds without a malfunction.

Brian's .38 Super shot so sweet I changed my mind about buying a straight Interphase .45 for my first comp gun. Instead, I ordered the .45 *plus* a separate slide and barrel with integral feed ramp for the .38 Super. Now I can plink plates with the Super and switch over—in seconds—to a .45 and bowl over those pins. Two guns in one.

The competitor who wants to challenge for money or trophies, however, needs more than just the comp system. Brian's

Finalist package puts a complete competition pistol within reach of the serious shooter of modest means. In addition to the Interphase compensator system, The Finalist includes: Bo-Mar adjustable sights; extended thumb safety; extractor adjusted; feed ramp polished and barrel throated; ejection port lowered and flared; competition trigger and trigger job with overtravel stop; Commander-style hammer; oversize mag release; mag well beveled; beavertail grip safety; Pachmayr flat mainspring housing; Pachmayr combat grips; and reblued slide.

Cost of the Finalist package on a brand-new gun: \$1195 on the Springfield Armory, \$1345 on the Colt. On a customer-supplied pistol it's \$820. As I said—affordable. Little wonder the Finalist is the hottest item in Brian's custom stable.

Hand checkering and custom finishing—deep blue or hard-chromed—are cosmetic options. The hard-chrome, done in Berryville, Arkansas by Jim Kelley at Metalloy, gives a durable stainless-steel appearance. Brian takes great pride in his hand-polished, rich, dark blue, but believes black sights on a chromed slide gives fast shooters a split-second edge in getting their sight picture.

With Tim Brian's metal serrating and checkering, it's hard to draw the line between craft and art. In applying his considerable metalworking skills to utilitarian features, Brian attains the highest form of his pistolsmithing art.

At the client's option, he'll checker the front strap, the mainspring housing, the magazine release, and the trigger guard. He'll mill flat and serrate the top of the slide, and checker and serrate the rear of it if you like. His hand-cut checkering ranges from 20 to 40 lines per inch depending on location.

The same ingenuity and care goes into Brian's custom revolvers. He offers two packages for Model 10 Smith & Wessons: the PPC Custom and the Action Custom. The PPC begins with a competition-grade action job that delivers a smooth, 8-pound double-action pull. It features a Douglas premium bull barrel to which Brian fits a custom underlug. He chamfers the cylinder, recuts the forcing cone, and installs a ball crane lock for superior lock-up. He bobs the hammer, affixes a deluxe sight rib (Power Custom or Aristocrat), and adds Pachmayr grips.

The Action Custom, "the ultimate" for NRA Action/Bianchi competition, adds two things: the Douglas premium barrel comes with integral compensator, and this package includes optics. Brian presently uses the Jarvis mount and gives clients their choice of Aimpoint, Burris or Tasco scopes. Including a "hand-picked" S & W Model 10, the PPC Custom weighs in at \$825, and the Action Custom at \$975.

Brian's current brochure can be ordered for \$1 from: C. T. Brian, Dept. AH, 1101 Indiana Court, Decatur, IL 62521.



When you have a "full nine" that is the size of a small .380 Auto, you really have something. For a while, there was one—the Detonics Pocket 9, which is no longer made. It was a lovely piece of machinery, and it was expensive to manufacture, a fact that was one reason for its discontinuance. When it was available, it had a substantial price. Now that they're no longer in production, it's even more, if you can find one.

And now, the good news: Around 1982, Dr. Nehemia Sirkis designed a handgun that fits the same cartridge-and-size description, and in late 1987 Armscorp of America began importing it. In the five years that passed during the development of the manufacturing set-up, Dr. Sirkis left the company, and the pistol is now made by Sarius Industries in Israel. It's called the SD9. A true hammerless, striker-fired, the SD9 has a trigger system that is double-action-only. The striker is never cocked until the sliding trigger is pulled all the way to the rear, and the total movement is only $\frac{3}{8}$ of an inch. On the gun I tested, the pull was an even 10 pounds, smooth and quick. On standard targets or combat silhouettes, keeping respectable groups was easy.

The sights are large, square post and square notch, and the dovetail-mounted rear sight can be drifted laterally. Both front and rear sights are low-profile, with no sharp snagging edges. A low flat rib extends the full length of the top of the slide. Except for the tough plastic grips and the trigger, the gun is all-steel, formed and skillfully welded. The barrel and the separate internal breech block are machined from bar steel. The external

Continued on page 88



ARMSCORP SD9

A pocket pistol with the power of the 9mm but the size of a .380.

By J.B. Wood



The manual safety lever, above, in the "fire" position and, below, in the "safe" position.

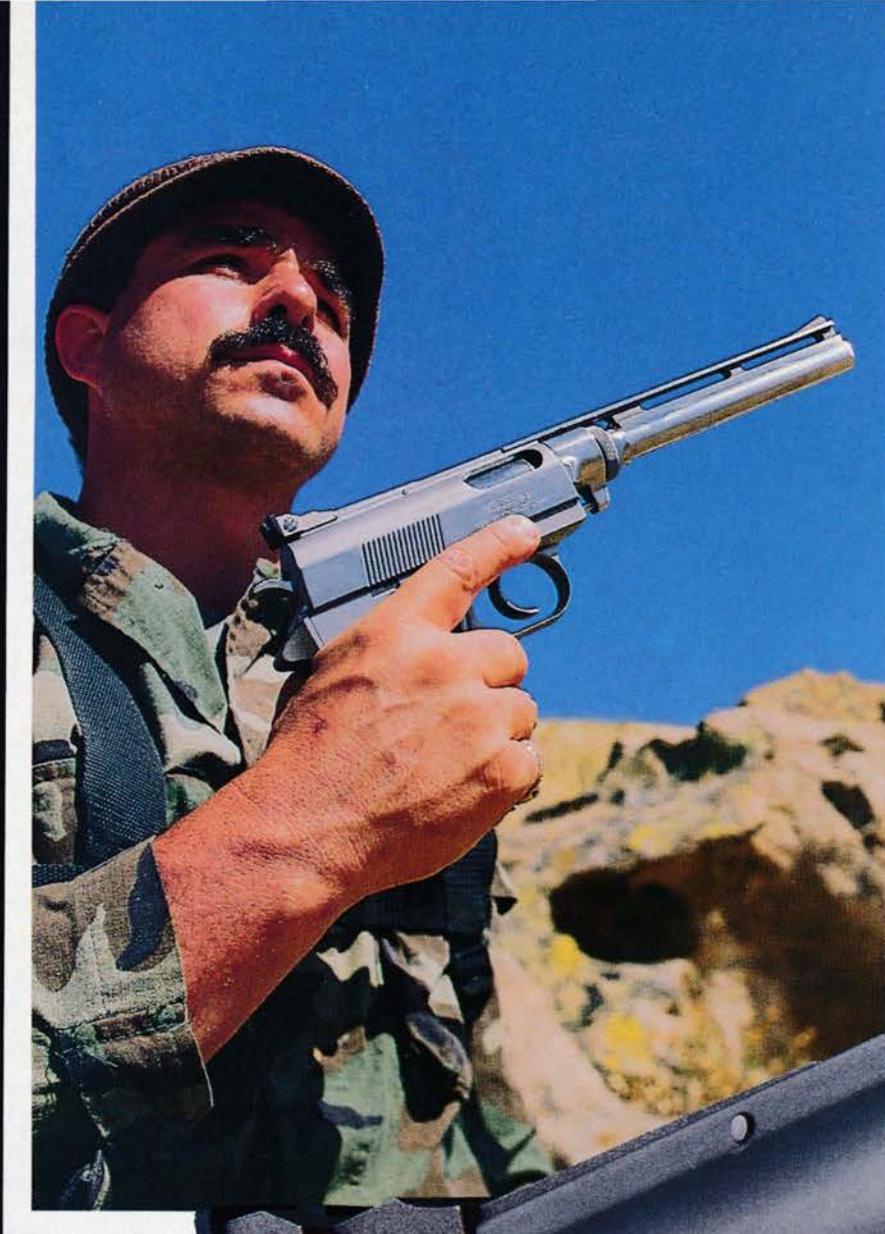


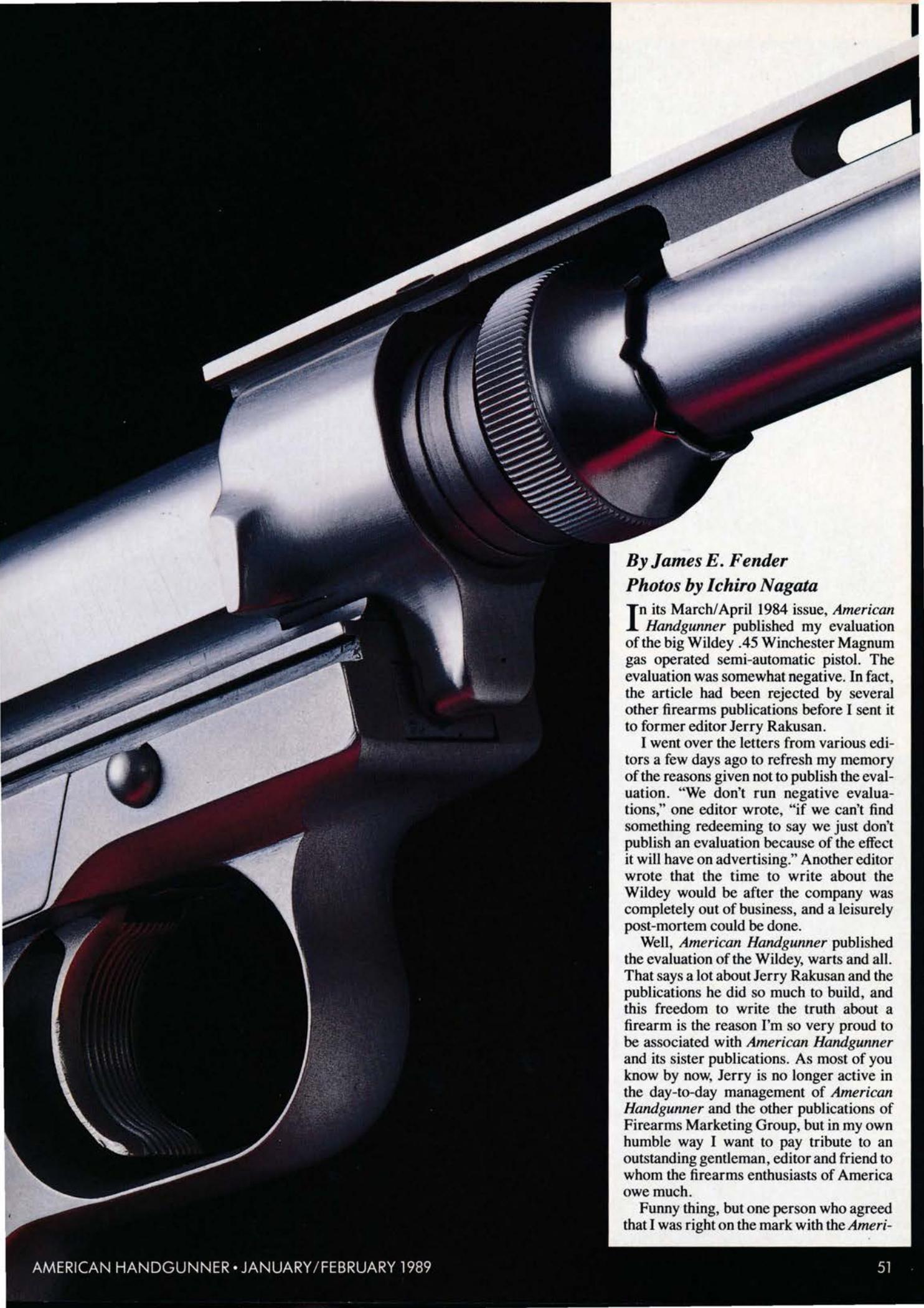
The SD9 field stripped, showing its simplicity. The separate breech block is also easy to disassemble.

WILDEY SURVIVOR!



*The Wildey .475
Magnum gas operated,
rotary bolt auto pistol.
Powerful, accurate. This
incredible gun took a
rocky road to success,
but now the amazing
auto is a reality.*





By James E. Fender

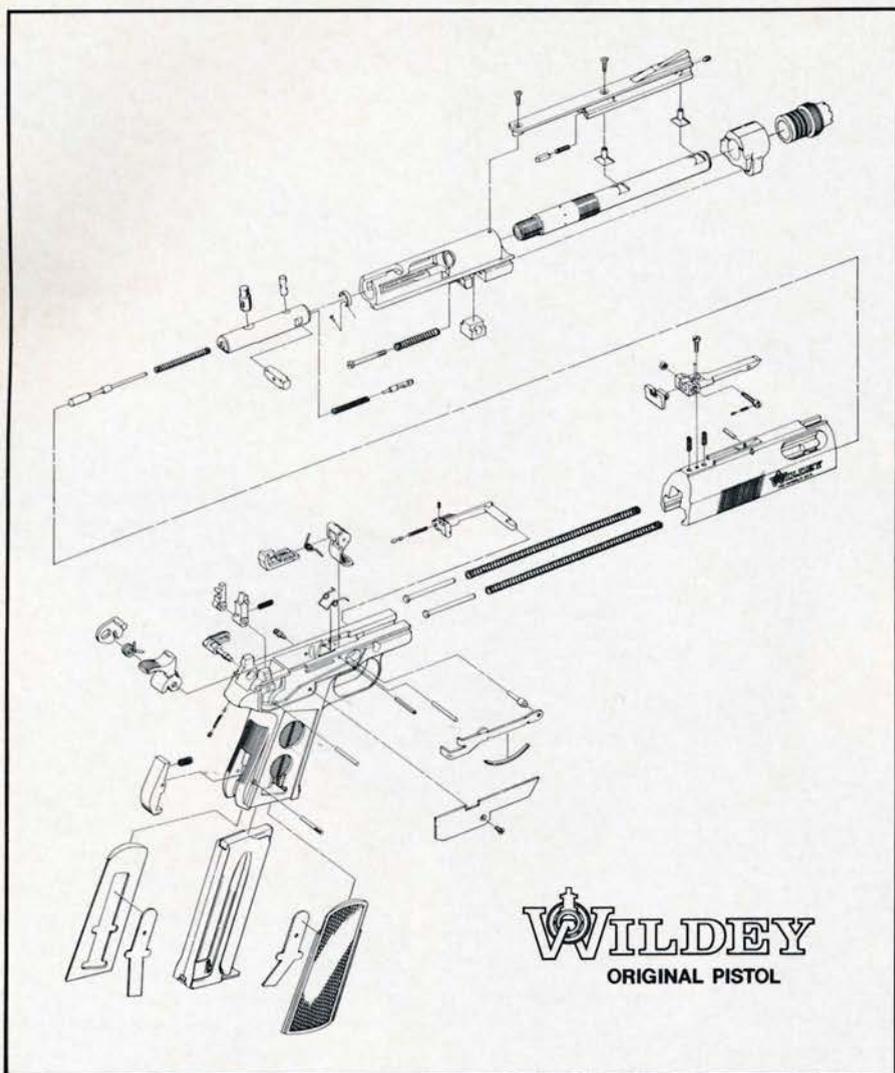
Photos by Ichiro Nagata

In its March/April 1984 issue, *American Handgunner* published my evaluation of the big Wildey .45 Winchester Magnum gas operated semi-automatic pistol. The evaluation was somewhat negative. In fact, the article had been rejected by several other firearms publications before I sent it to former editor Jerry Rakusan.

I went over the letters from various editors a few days ago to refresh my memory of the reasons given not to publish the evaluation. "We don't run negative evaluations," one editor wrote, "if we can't find something redeeming to say we just don't publish an evaluation because of the effect it will have on advertising." Another editor wrote that the time to write about the Wildey would be after the company was completely out of business, and a leisurely post-mortem could be done.

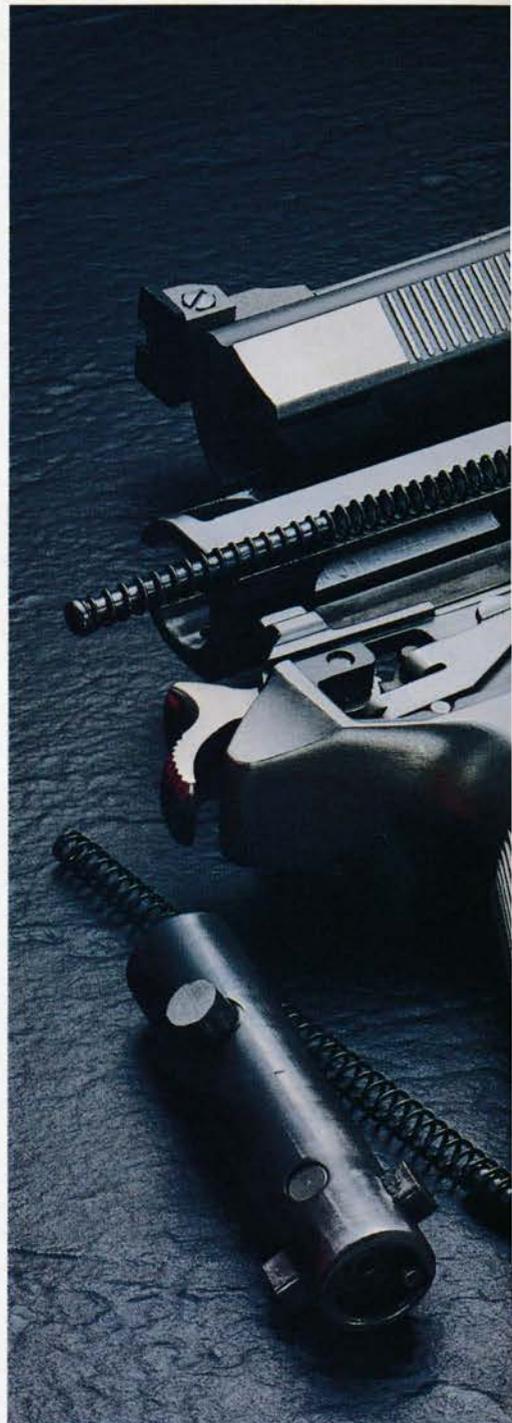
Well, *American Handgunner* published the evaluation of the Wildey, warts and all. That says a lot about Jerry Rakusan and the publications he did so much to build, and this freedom to write the truth about a firearm is the reason I'm so very proud to be associated with *American Handgunner* and its sister publications. As most of you know by now, Jerry is no longer active in the day-to-day management of *American Handgunner* and the other publications of Firearms Marketing Group, but in my own humble way I want to pay tribute to an outstanding gentleman, editor and friend to whom the firearms enthusiasts of America owe much.

Funny thing, but one person who agreed that I was right on the mark with the Ameri-



WILDEY
ORIGINAL PISTOL

Illustrations by
James Babinowski
Wallingford, Connecticut



Twin guide lugs on either side of the hammer jutting up from the frame help position the slide as it glides back and forth on the frame's slide rails. The white outline rear sight is fully adjustable for windage and elevation. The frame's tang, beneath the hammer, is a large "beavertail" style to distribute recoil forces over a larger portion of the hand's web and also prevent painful hammer bite.

can *Handgunner* evaluation of the Wildey was the designer, Wildey J. (Will) Moore, himself. Well, Will Moore has breathed new life into the big bore gas operated semi-automatic he designed, and he is offering this pistol, which he has aptly named the Survivor, in the original .45 Winchester Magnum chambering and an entirely new and interesting cartridge, the .475 Wildey.

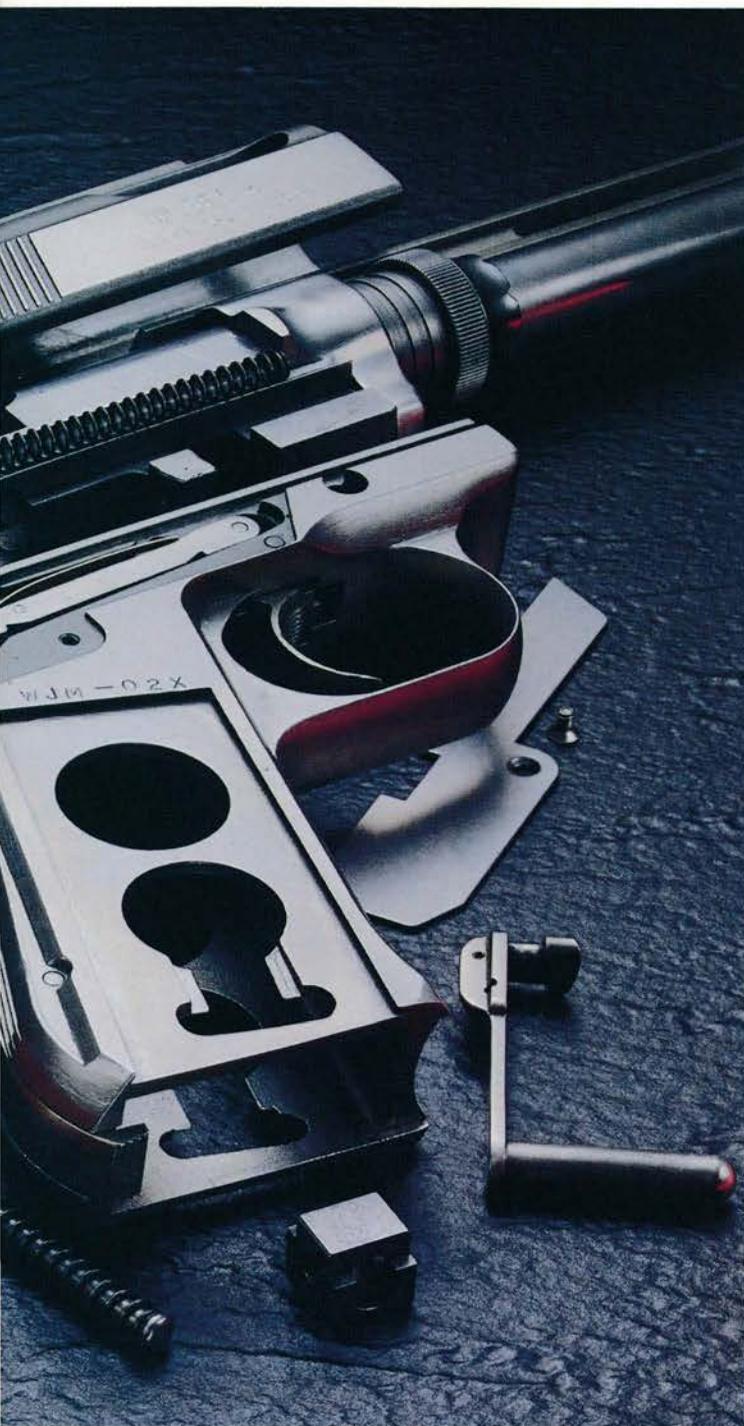
We'll take a look at the .475 Wildey, which for now is essentially a wildcat cartridge, in just a moment. But before we get to that, a look at the travails of the Wildey pistol will give us some idea of just what it has taken to make a new Wildey company a reality.

I've known Will Moore since before I

did my original evaluation of the Wildey, and I've visited his operations in Connecticut at least two or three times a year since 1982 to keep abreast of developments with the company and the pistol.

Basically, Will had an unorthodox design for a gas operated semi-automatic pistol in the Wildey, but he lacked the funding to produce and market the pistol on his own. In order to obtain the necessary financing Will made the decision to sell stock in the original company. There was nothing wrong with this approach, and many small businesses routinely raise capital by selling equity in the form of stock in their corporations.

However, in this particular situation people who had purchased stock in the old



The detail stripped Survivor shows a trigger connecting bar from the pivoting trigger back to the hammer and sear. The trigger bar is covered by a frame sideplate, unlike some less sophisticated pistols with exposed trigger bars.

Wildey corporation wanted to participate in the management of the company. There's nothing wrong with this either since a basic tenet of our American system of free enterprise is that those who invest their money in a corporation as stock holders have the right to assist in the selection of the company's officers.

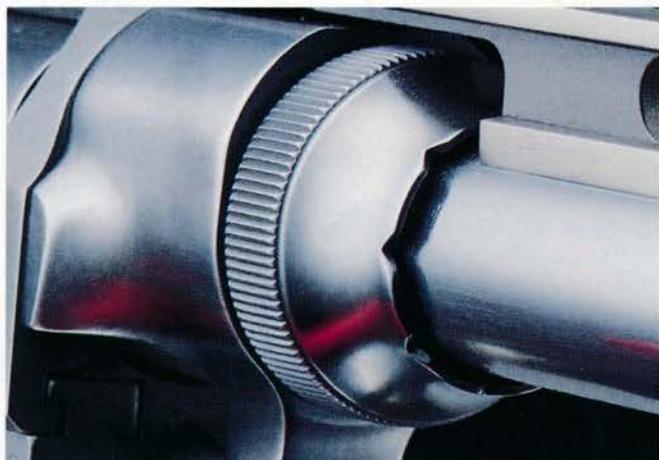
Unfortunately for Will Moore, some of the people who had invested money wanted to take active roles in the production and marketing of the original autoloader even

though they were not shooters or people knowledgeable about firearms. I recall a visit I made to the Cheshire, Connecticut, factory in late 1982 when one of the company's officers told me that he had made a fortune in the manufacturing of cement blocks for the construction industry, and he did not see any difference between the manufacture of cement blocks and handguns.

Will was forced to dilute his holdings in the company to raise working capital at the same time that other people in the company began dictating that various aspects of the pistol's design and production methods had to be changed. However well-intentioned these demands may have been, they had the net effects of dramatically increasing the



A vent rib is solidly attached to the barrel. One lock point is the screw above the muzzle, plus two others.



The gas regulator ring may be adjusted to control the flow of gas that operates the rotary bolt of the Survivor.



price of the pistol and delaying full scale marketing of the Wildey autoloader.

Will's share in the old Wildey, Inc. had been diluted to 25%, and without his knowledge other share holders in the company had formed a separate investment company to wrest operating control of Wildey, Inc. away from him. He was fired as president of Wildey, Inc. in January 1983. The company's new management ran the old Wildey, Inc. into bankruptcy by the end of that year.

The next few years were lean ones for Will Moore and his pistol, but we don't have time to dwell on details of that period. Will Moore never lost faith in himself or his gas operated big bore autoloader, and

Continued on page 89

A 14-inch Thompson/Center Contender is nothing unusual and the shots it fired from a solid benchrest, with Burris scopes powered at 7x and 10x, produced groups of a tight 2½ inches up to 5½ inches which shouldn't be totally unexpected at reasonable ranges. But these ranges were completely beyond anything I had ever been able to call reasonable. We were shooting at small boiler plate targets at a measured 500 meters—not yards, but meters!

Having been a mediocre to average handgunner for a number of years, I have a working knowledge of breath control, trigger squeeze, proper sight picture and mental concentration. But I feel more comfortable with the title of observer rather than any sort of expert, and I remain very skeptical of seemingly outlandish claims until shown to the contrary. When Don Bower first told me of 500 meter groups under a minute of angle, and fired with a handgun, my skepticism level almost flew off the top of the scale.

This same disbelief evaporated after a couple of trips to the range, where I first watched and then tried some shots myself. With one 6mm load from a .244 Bower barrel, I personally produced a 3-shot group with its greatest center-to-center measurement at a flat 4 inches. That might not impress the small but growing group of 500 meter benchrest buffs, but I'll never fail to be impressed with any group that I can produce at 100 yards or more that is under a minute of angle, and a 4-inch group at 500 meters is comfortably under a minute of angle in my math tables any day. And I did it again, and with a handgun yet!

Don Bower and his brother John began experimenting with different loads in the early 1980's. Not satisfied with the challenges at 100 and 200 yards, they began shooting at the 500 meter berm to present themselves with more of a long range challenge.

Currently available cartridges didn't

meet their requirements, so other avenues were explored. The accuracy and strong lockup system of the T/C provided a starting point. Don preferred a rimmed case, but was discouraged with short case life of available loads. Web separation was common after three or four shots. He also wanted to try rifle powders with a slower burn to see if accuracy could be improved. The unresolved economics of cast bullets nagged the two brothers, and thought was given to questioning conventional head-spacing of rounds on the rim and shoulder of the case.

Neither Don nor John can be classified



This 500 meter group vividly shows the accuracy potential of the .264 Bower wildcat cartridge. Hard to believe, that's a 1.125" 3-shot group!

as spring chickens, so when eyesight began hurting iron sight accuracy, optical sights were considered, even though commercial long-relief or intermediate-relief scopes for handguns were not as plentiful as were rifle scopes.

So the quest for 500 meter accuracy began considering case capacity, powder, bullet selection, headspace and scope sights.

If a cartridge were to be centered in the throat of the barrel by just barely engaging the bullet into the lands about .001", and with the only other chamber contact being

Continued on page 101

Bower Ballistics

Caliber	Bullet	Powder	Primer	Velocity
.220 Bower Lightning	55 gr FMJBT	28.0 gr IMR 4064	CCI #250	3140 fps
.244 Bower (6 mm)	85 gr SPBT Speer	31.5 gr IMR 4320	CCI #200	2670 fps
	75 gr HP Sierra	31.2 gr IMR 4320	CCI #250	2800 fps
.264 Bower (6.5 mm)	100 gr HP Sierra	32.5 gr IMR 3031	Fed #210	2620 fps
	120 gr SPBT Nosler	31.7 gr IMR 4320	CCI #250	2260 fps
.284 Bower (7 mm)	150 gr (M) Sierra	36.0 gr IMR 4064	Fed #210M	2296 fps
	130 gr SPBT Speer	34.3 gr IMR 4895	Fed #210M	2410 fps
.300 Bower	150 gr SPBT Nosler	40.2 gr IMR H4895	CCI #250	2360 fps



METER *handgunning*

Three inch groups at 500 meters with a handgun!

By Dick Hess

Photos by Tim Hawpe



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Photo by Roger Andrews

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Circle your answer to question: (Y) (N) (Y) (N)

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Contest void where taxed or prohibited by law. Winners must comply with all federal and local laws. Contest open to U.S. residents only. Employees and agents of Publishers' Development Corp. not eligible. No purchase necessary. Winners will be notified by REGISTERED MAIL on official letterhead.



RUGER SP-101

By Massad Ayoob

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

One rainy fall afternoon in 1981 I was having a drink with Bill Ruger and asked him if he'd ever thought of bringing out a belly gun. "Not likely," he said, "I think that market's glutted at the moment."

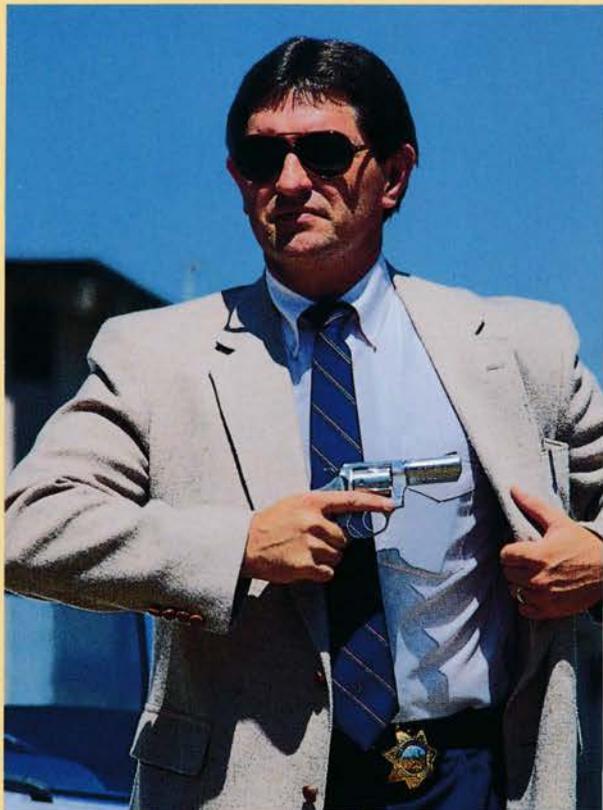
A few years later, however, Bill had reconsidered. I sat in his office at the New Hampshire plant, sworn to secrecy, as I looked over the blueprints for a heavy-duty .38 snubnose. By early 1988, I had testfired a burr-hammered prototype at the Newport factory and been amazed at its controllability with hot Remington + P ammo. By July of 1988, I had a production gun on hand with three-inch barrel.

Before reaching my editor's deadline, I had the chance to put the guns in the hands of about a hundred Lethal Force Institute students, ranging from newcomers to a pair of ten-man, highly advanced pupils in LFI-III courses.

The new hideout .38 is called the SP-101. It is available in 2 1/4" and 3" barrel lengths. The latter registers 26.9 ounces on my calibrated Pitney Bowes scale. This is a bit on the hefty side, but remember, an extra inch of heavy barrel takes up a good bit of that. The 2 1/4" has considerably less weight and will, I expect, account for the bulk of sales. This has certainly been the case with S&W, Colt, Charter and Taurus in the past.

The first thing that hits the average shooter is the "live feel" neoprene grip, a small version of the unit seen on the flagrantly popular GP-100 .357 Magnum service revolver. The soft cushioning of the grip gives an extremely secure hold, and combines with the small framed gun's low bore axis to reduce muzzle jump to an amazing minimum. At the same time, the sting in the hand is eliminated. I find it a chore to shoot + P in a standard-stocked Chief's Special, but it's a delight in the factory-gripped SP-101. The absence of painful recoil was the single attribute most often noted (and with the most exclamation points!) on my graduates' written reviews.

The sight picture is excellent, too. The rear notch is wide open like the old Colt Detective Special, and the front sight is blued, ramped, and serrated. The combination is a glare-free sighting image that's easy to pick up under stress or in subdued light. On our three-inch, the flat plane of the barrel top created the visual illusion of the front sight floating in space between the walls of the rear notch. This does not, however, slow you down in gaining a flash sight picture.



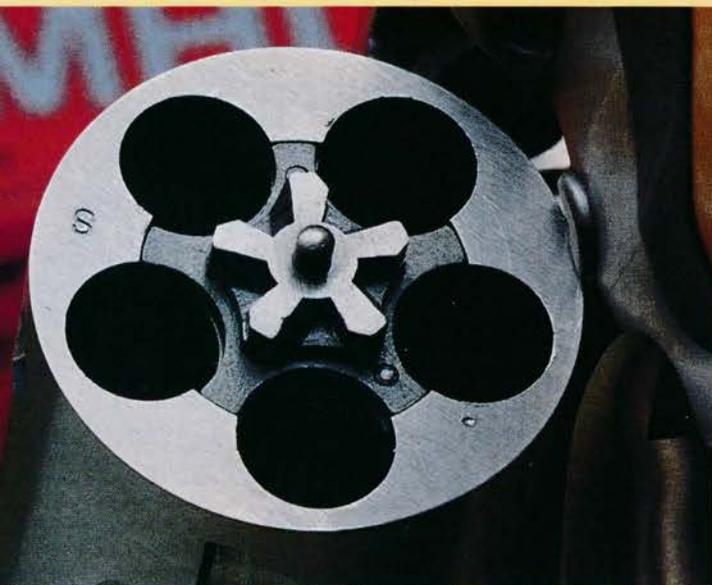
The Ruger SP-101 conceals well in a shoulder holster, yet it's quick to bring into action.



The action is smooth, even and firm without being heavy. A Model 10 Smith would be slicker, but it would also be bigger. Most of our testers judged the trigger more controllable in rapid double-action fire than their small frame Colts, Smiths, Charters, and in some cases, Taurus.

Our test gun has a conventional, serrated hammer spur. This did not thrill the testers, most of whom wrote that they'd opt for a spurless, DA-only hammer, or for a shrouded frame design like the S&W Bodyguard. In fairness, these were not mainstream purchasers looking at buying a snub .38 as their primary protection handgun, but graduates of a course that emphasizes the use of belly gun tech-

The SP-101 sports a barrel underlug which helps kick the weight up to 27 ozs.

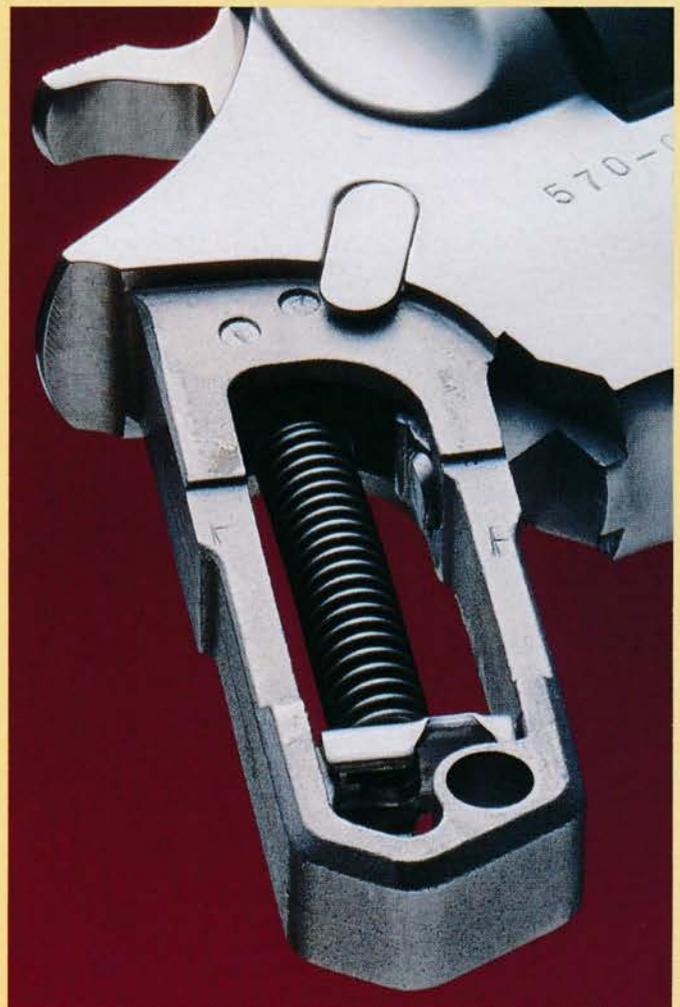


The wee wheelgun is a five-shooter, but with considerably thicker cylinder walls than a Chief, Charter, or Taurus of similar design. The SP-101 follows the course of the Redhawk and GP revolvers: extra thick for extra strength, and engineered for a lifetime of use with the hottest loads of the designated caliber. Picture a cylinder about the diameter of a 6-shot D-frame Colt of Diamondback or Dick Special persuasion, but bored through with five .38 Special chambers instead of six, and you'll have the idea.

The frame is thicker and heavier-duty than the Colt's, however, particularly through the topstrap. The SP-101 would not fit either of my finely-moulded DeSantis and Alessi holsters for Detective Specials, but worked fine in generic rigs. Plan on packing your SP-101 in nylon until the big leathermakers come on line, which should be accomplished by the time you read this.

Accuracy is outstanding with these little guns. It has long been known among experts that a little .32-frame Chief Special can be as accurate as a Model 10; the problem is, there's so little to hang onto that the average person can't line it up steady enough. We're talking the difference between *inherent* accuracy and *practical* accuracy.

The SP-101 has both. At the superb Reinholt range in Winimac, Indiana, veteran handgun expert Jim Reinholt and I were both able to average four out of five hits on a 100 yard IPSC target on demand with the test SP-101. By contrast, I average about two out of five at that distance with one of the little .32-frame bellyguns.



The five-shot cylinder (above left) minimizes bulk in the hideout snubby, yet the beefy chamber walls lend strength and durability. The frame extension (above) accommodates Ruger's subtly rounded rubber-walnut grips. Looking closely, you can see the surface pores in the investment cast stainless steel. Ruger perfected castings years ago, but the raw casting must be scrupulously polished to achieve the shine like that of the frame's sides.

nology as a snag-free deep concealment weapon carried as a hideout or backup.

Prototypes had been handled with a burr hammer like the Colt Commander. The higher echelons finally nixed this idea, feeling that it might too easily slip out from under a thumb and cause a lawsuit. Actually, I rather liked the burr configuration: it would secure on a safety strap but would be much less likely to snag on clothing in a fast draw from concealment than a conventional spur. The burr hammer, I'm told, was the brainchild of Ruger exec Steve Vogel. I'm told Steve and I look like twin brothers, so I'm not surprised that such a good-lookin' man should also be bright enough to come up with a great



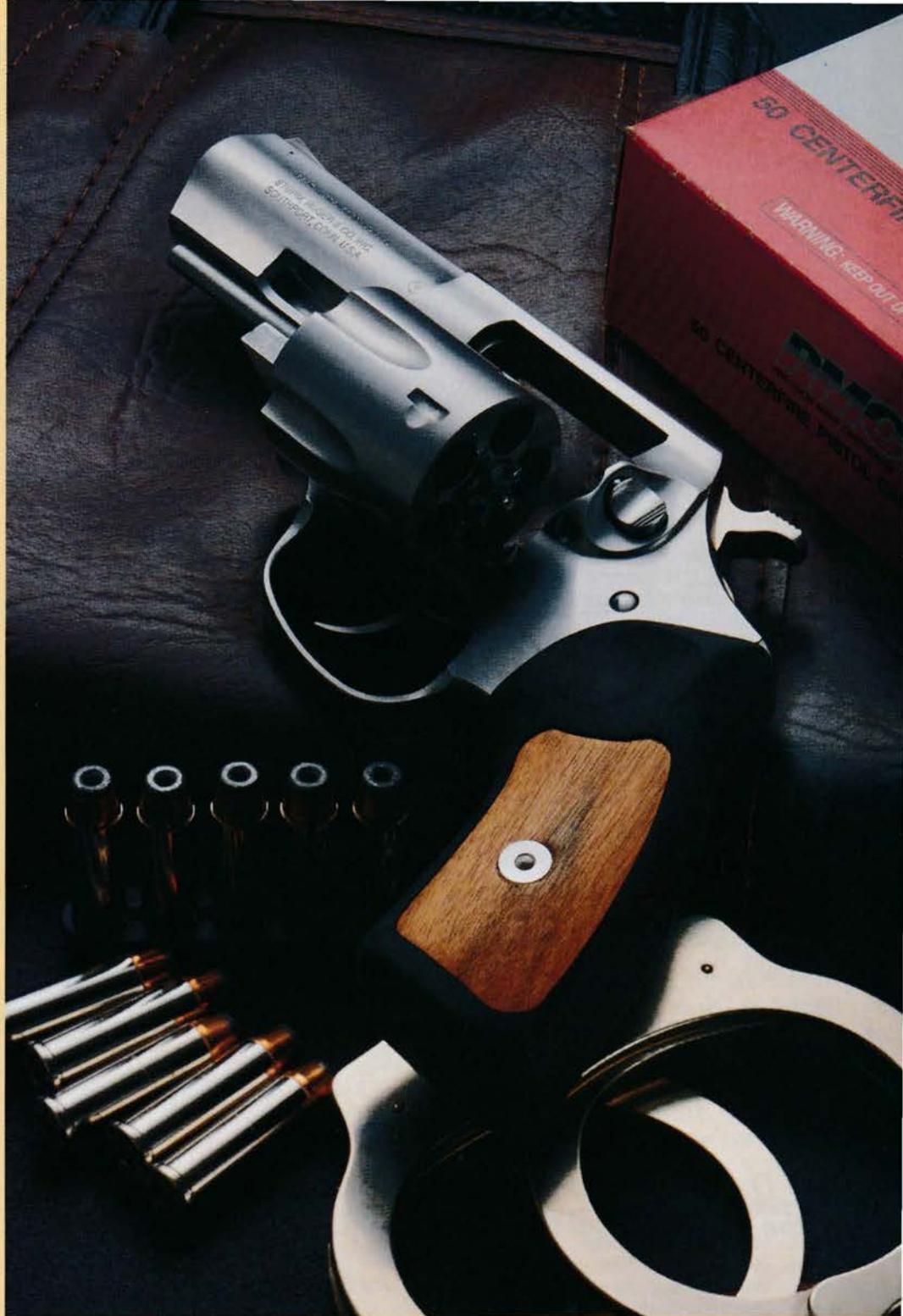
The recoil shield, an as-cast unpolished portion of the SP-101, again shows the porosity of cast guns.

idea.

Down the line, I'd like to see both burred and spurless hammers made optional for this excellent weapon; the precedent for the latter has long existed in the Ruger Speed Six revolver series.

Construction is all-stainless. We ran everything through this gun from factory + P to cops-only + P+ and including handloads that appeared to have verdegri on them. Not only were there no misfires or weapon failures, but the gun digested over a thousand rounds of mixed diet without a cleaning before sludge built up enough to warrant cleaning the gun. For five weeks including rain sessions, it wasn't even wiped down. It sits next to my typewriter at the moment, utterly blemish-free.

While most of us aren't dumb enough to shoot junk ammo in a fine handgun, the fact that it stood up to neglect speaks well of the SP-101. Guns like this tend to be carried close to the body and subjected to all manner of perspiration and other things that turn blue guns brown.



Like all Ruger handguns, the new SP-101 features innovative design, ergonomic thought and, above all, quality throughout. The author, Massad Ayoob, thinks the robust 5-shot belly gun could digest .357 Magnum pressures, but neither he nor Ruger advise it. Nonetheless, it's a remarkably strong gun and +P+ .38 Special is OK.

Suggested retail on the SP-101 is going to be \$370. That's a big bite for a two-inch .38. Consider that the Taurus Model 85 stainless goes for \$253 retail with 2" or 3" barrel, and a stainless Model 60 S&W Chief runs \$357. The stainless Smith Bodyguard 649 slightly outprices the Ruger at \$377.

The Ruger tradition has always been to slightly undersell the counterpart Smith & Wesson product. This pricing marks a departure from that longstanding police market strategy. Bill just says gruffly, "It's a better gun than anything else of its kind. I'm not worried about competitive pricing, because no other product is competitive with it."

Continued on page 99



By Massad Ayoob

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

The first shot fired at the first Bianchi Cup was a Ten at 10 o'clock on the scoring ring, fired from the 10 yard line in Match One, the Practical Event. The hole was made by a 125 grain Federal semi-jacketed hollow-

championship laurels somewhere or other along the line, took the offer at faith and flew to Columbia, Missouri.

And, to none of our surprise, the thing turned out to be real. Ron Lerch, whose previous claim to fame was top place in the IPSC Founder's Meeting shootoff at the same range three years before, won the event.

LAPD officer John Pride makes it two in a row in the tenth annual tournament of champions.

point +P .38 Special, out of the six-inch Douglas barrel of a Ron Power Custom Smith & Wesson Model 15.

I remember that shot well, because I fired it.

Things have progressed considerably from that drizzly May morning to the tenth Memorial Day week of the Bianchi Cup. In the beginning, there had been doubt. One match—Dr. Robert Burgess's shoot in Laramie, Wyoming—had turned out to be a real money tournament, but others such as one staged in Las Vegas had proven to be ripoffs. They were talking \$10,000 in prize money then, and that was big money for pistol shooters. Because Ray Chapman and John Bianchi were involved, about 100 knowledgeable competitors who'd won

Mickey Fowler, who would win the Cup for the next three years straight, came in second after failing to remember to reload a magazine into his Hoag longslide .45 midway through the falling plate event. I came in about 14th, with former national IPSC champ Kirk Kirkham on one side of me and legendary gunfighter and PPC champion Jim Cirillo on the other.

In the decade that followed, the Cup changed considerably. Perhaps the most notable changes are:

*In the mid-Eighties, the Cup ceased to be a "tournament of champions" and was opened to anyone who wanted to come, irrespective of whether they'd won titles before. The cachet of being one of "the best 200 handgunners in the free world" disappeared,



but was not terribly missed. Elitism does not go well with a sport as egalitarian as handgunning.

*In the early Eighties, Brian Enos pioneered the use of the Aimpoint. Today, electronic or optical sights so dominate the sport that no iron sight shooter has made the Top Twenty at Bianchi Cup since the introduction of the glass aiming tube.

*Attempts to alter the basic Cup format were sown on infertile soil. For a year or two, all shooters were required to fire from a standing position, the better to negate the

Twenty for the past few years. Early on, thinking that a 1900 out of 1920 possible points was beyond the scope of human endeavor, John Bianchi offered \$5,000 to any shooter who could blast his way into the "1900 Club." That was not the smartest move John Bianchi ever made. Within a couple of years, the offer had to be withdrawn. So many handgunners had picked up on Action Shooting and gotten their clubs up and running with Bianchi-style barricade ranges, falling plates, and moving targets to practice on, that it swiftly reached the point where

Bianchi Cup, the event that had become known as the "Wimbledon of Pistol Shooting" had taken a deep nosedive. The general consensus was that NRA had screwed up the class act that John Bianchi had put together. Within a year, the Cup format had become an NRA discipline called Action Shooting, and the winner-take-all format had been replaced by the usual Master/Expert/Sharpshooter/Marksman classifications. This would have been OK but for the fact that the only people who had classifications were those who had previously shot the tournament of cham-

BIANCHI CUP X

publicly-perceived advantage of IPSC shooters over PPC and bullseye aficionados. The same people still won, and the rule quickly went back to "any position at any stage."

*For the first four years, the Colt .45 automatic fired from a Weaver stance was the combination that won. For the last six years, a Smith & Wesson K or L frame .38 revolver with weighted barrel and glass sight (five times an Aimpoint, once a Tasco) fired from an Isosceles position was the recipe for Bianchi Cup victory. Similarly, a crossdraw scabbard by Gordon Davis or Bianchi took the first four cups, while Ernie Hill or Ted Blocker style open front holsters on the strong side hip were worn by the champions into the last six winners' circles.

*Each year, the standards of excellence grew higher. The score that won the first Bianchi Cup would not have made the Top

you had to crack the 1900 limit just to make the Top Twenty.

*The biggest single change was the mid-Eighties takeover of the Cup's administration by the National Rifle Association. The assembled body of shooters well knew that NRA was into routine, shoot-for-the-medals type stuff, and considered putting shooters up in military barracks at Camp Perry to be the high point of the year. The Cup shooters, on the other hand, were the fledgling cadre of the Professional Circuit, accustomed to staying at a Hilton Hotel that had "Welcome, Bianchi Cup Shooters" lit up on its marquee.

At this critical juncture, the predictable occurred.

The Downside of the Cup

A year after NRA had taken over the

pions. It skewed the stats for those shooters to an embarrassing degree.

You could be the top action shooter in your part of the country, one of the top 100 in the world, but the rarefied heat of Bianchi Cup competition had put you down into the second quarter of the four divisions of champions, and thus you were labelled "Expert" or "Sharpshooter" instead of "Master." In short, you were a black belt in your own local kingdom, but you'd just been demoted to brown belt or purple belt. It was not surprising that a certain number of former Bianchi Cup devotees all of a sudden felt a dampening of their enthusiasm.

By 1986, the Cup was drawing less than 120 shooters. At least one State Action Shooting Championship that year, the New Hampshire event conducted by Pioneer Sportsmen Club, drew more competitors than the tournament that had become the National NRA Action Shooting Championship.

The word among the insiders was grim. NRA's head honchos figured that getting into Action Pistol had been a bad move. They gave the match one year to make good, and if it kept going down, it wouldn't get another chance. They'd kill it before its tenth year.

The deathwatch was sitting in place.

The Rejuvenation of Bianchi Cup

The year 1987 saw a helluva lot more shooters make the Cup. The word had gone out through *American Handgunner* that this might just be the last year, and anybody who'd been thinking about having shot the prestigious event realized this could well be their last chance.

The Cup came off well. The numbers of shooters flourished again. A cop won it for the first time—LAPD's John Pride—and a new generation of hard-shooting lawmen took him as their role model and figured that if he could prevail in Action Shooting, so could they. Jim Davis, the single individual at NRA most responsible for bringing the Cup back from the dead, did not bask in his glory: he began to set the stage for the Tenth Anniversary Bianchi Cup, and he included categories like High Military and High Junior,



John Pride (left) shows his winning form and his victorious Jarvis-tuned Smith & Wesson 686. He won with PMC .38 Special 158 gr. target loads. There's John shooting from prone at the crucial Falling Plate event. (Above) Kenn Tapp, left, and Brian Enos compete man-on-man in the shootoff for the top 20 finishers.



A delayed blowback, fixed barrel .38 Super from Greg Ferris features a heavy frame extension, Aimpoint sight and muzzle stud for gripping the gun on the Barricades. It's remarkably accurate.

welcome stages that had never before been instituted at the event.

Now, Cup X was set to unfold.

Bianchi Cup Ten In Action

On the old TV show *Wide World of Sports*, you'd hear the music as the announcer intoned, "The thrill of victory . . . and the agony of defeat." At Bianchi Cup, you still hear that music.

You walk to the line knowing that if you do it exactly right, you'll fire 192 shots during an elapsed total firing time of 60 seconds for the Falling plates, 52 seconds for the Barricades, 72 seconds for the Mover, and about 80 seconds for the Practical event. 264 seconds or so seconds, 4.4 minutes of shooting.

And you can win \$10,000 for first place. It can run considerably more than that. Cup Champions have walked away with a stated \$20,000 or more in total prize winnings, including merchandise awards at full retail, because it's kind of hard to win the aggregate without winning or at least placing in the four sub-matches, which also carry their own heavy awards, and then there are the team matches and the side matches.

But look at just the \$10,000. If you win, if you do everything right, that comes out to about \$38 per second of shooting time.

If you fail, you realize that all your practice, and the several hundred dollar entry fee, and your time off work, and your travel cost to Columbia, have all come to naught. Let's face facts: a whole lot more people lose money shooting Bianchi Cup than win money doing it.

Ten thousand dollars. That's what comes back to you as you sit in the cauldron of the Cup with a gun in your hand. That's what you can win if you do everything right.



Heinie .45 ACP



Hoening .38 Super



The match winning S&W M-686

And, to continue the corollary, that's what you lose if you do everything wrong. That, and the estimated \$1,500 per competitor it costs every one of those 200 or so handgunners to come and enter the arena of blistering pressure that is Bianchi Cup.

Why, then, do so many people come to play these odds, odds that don't look good when you compare them on the surface to the blackjack tables of Las Vegas? The difference is, Vegas is luck and the Cup is skill, and if you are good at shooting there is something that lures you, nay, *demand*s you to come and try your hand in this most unforgiving of arenas. Just to see if you can take the heat.

The Crucible

Nowhere is the pressure as intense as at the Cup. When John Pride shot to defend his title this year, the S&W 686 with its heavy Jarvis barrel sleeve and its Aimpoint 2000 scope seemingly immobile at the end of his isocetes stance as bullet after 158 grain PMC bullet found its way into the X-ring. He looked like a machine.

He went through the Falling Plates with a host of tie-breaking followups sledged down, until the white steel disks were falling together like a rippling wave, and he shot a perfect score on the Practical as well. On the Barricades, he started to draw prematurely as he heard the hiss of the pneumatic Action Target system turning the tombstone-shaped cardboard targets. Realizing that this would be a penalizing false start, he threw his hands back shoulder-high, started his draw over as the sound of the other shooters' gunfire echoed in his ears, and incredibly managed to rip all six bullets into the Ten and X rings before the target turned. He finished that one, too, with a perfect score.

Then came the moving target event. John shot perfectly on the early stages. Then, for one instant as he watched the target with the red dot of his Aimpoint superimposed, his index finger autonomically stroking the trigger, the image came to him: *ten thousand dollars!*

Continued on page 83

An advantageous alternative to casting bullets is using ready-swaged lead bullets. High-pressure swaging produces sharp and well filled-out contours, and eliminates hidden bubbles, which affect accuracy.

One top-quality supplier of swaged bullets is the 3-D Company, whose bullets include .356", .358", .430", and .452" diameters. Hardness is equivalent to 5% antimony, enough for most cast bullet uses. The 3-D catalog lists loading data, convenient for the reloader.

3-D supplied several types of .356" and .358" diameter bullets for testing. Weighing 10 148-grain hollow-base wadcutters on a Dillon Eliminator scale showed that actual weight was 148.8 grains, varying less than 1/10 grain either way.

Loading was with a Dillon Model 550B press with the new Powder Measure Fail-Safe Device. Powders and primers were Winchester, as were the 9mm cases. The .38 loads were in 3-D cases. As 3-D did not supply 9mm loading data, it was necessary to work up a moderate load, using Winchester #452AA. Loads ranged from 4.5 grains to 5.5 grains, with 5 grains giving best accuracy, yet no signs of overpressure.

Test-firing was from a Ransom Rest, with the test target at 25 yards. A PACT Precision Chronograph gave velocity and spread, and the infra-red printer made a permanent record of each group. Handguns were a SIG P226, a S&W M52, and a Ruger GP-100 revolver.

Firing several groups with "check ammo," cartridges of known velocity and accuracy, ensured that the equipment was working properly. For the 9mm, this was 115 gr. JHP CCI Blazers. In .38 Special, check ammo was IMPACT 148 gr. HBWC Factory Target Ammunition. All groups were five-shot.

The first test was with the 125-gr. RN 9mm:

	LOAD	VELOCITY	SPREAD	GROUP SIZE
#452AA	5 gr.	1134 fps	12 fps	4 1/16"
		1135 fps	31 fps	2 15/16"
		1144 fps	9 fps	3 7/8"

This is good accuracy with the P226, a police weapon. Also remarkable was the very slight "spread," or difference between the highest and the lowest velocities recorded.

In .38 Special the 148 grain HBWC worked well with 3.4 grains of Winchester #231. 3-D's recommended overall length is 1.167", which leaves a lip of lead at the case mouth. This obstructed feeding in the Model 52's magazines. Flush-seating the bullets and crimping the cases slightly solved the problem.

The first test was with the Model 52. Check-firing had produced groups which averaged .91". This is remarkable, and shows what's possible with new components and tight quality control. Reloads gave these results:



LOAD VELOCITY SPREAD GROUP SIZE

3.4 gr. #W-231	810 fps	36 fps	1 1/16"
	811 fps	25 fps	1 3/16"
	814 fps	16 fps	1 1/4"

These were tight groups, with the group averages were only 4 fps apart. All measured well under 2 inches, but there's no exact correlation between spread and on-paper accuracy. Although the groups did not quite match the superb ones shot with factory ammo, they still were respectable.

The load gave these results in the GP-100:

LOAD VELOCITY SPREAD GROUP SIZE

3.4 gr. #W-231	816 fps	41 fps	1 1/4"
	810 fps	15 fps	2 3/8"
	794 fps	32 fps	1 1/2"

Often, one or more revolver chambers may be slightly tighter or looser, or may index differently. These affect consistency.

3-D SWAGED BULLETS

By Tony Lesce

The next load was the .358 158 grain SWC. This bullet's crimping groove establishes overall length at 1.458" in the .38 Special case. Firing was in the GP-100:

LOAD VELOCITY SPREAD GROUP SIZE

4.0 gr. #W-231	747 fps	16 fps	1 1/16"
	745 fps	46 fps	1 5/16"
	719 fps	26 fps	1 5/8"

Swaged bullets save time and labor over bullet casting. Lead bullets work well for paper-punching, and some use them for hunting small animals, because their moderate velocities don't produce excessive expansion. For best accuracy, velocities should be below 1000 or 1100 fps. Test-firing in several handguns showed that 3-D swaged bullets, because of their consistency, can give very good accuracy.

For a complete catalog, write 3-D, Dept. AH, P.O. Box J, Doniphan, NE 68832 or call 1-800-255-6712 toll free.



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PARTS-BUILT SIXSHOOTER

By John Taffin

The late 1950s were a great time for a teenager interested in handguns. The market was bulging with exceptional values. Colt 1911's could be had for \$15, and there were many double actions available from both Colt and Smith & Wesson at reasonable prices.

I believe I paid \$25 for a Smith & Wesson Model 1917 .45 ACP. Colt Single Actions could be had in mint condition for around \$90 and the same in good repairable condition could be had for \$30-\$50. Of course, a weeks pay for this teenager was \$45!

Like most shooters, I expected the supply to always be there and started accumulating Colt Single Action barrels and cylinders to some day pick up an old Bisley or Frontier Model and restore it with a brand new barrel and cylinder. As the years went by, prices rose rapidly on the old Colts until even a dog would run \$400 to \$500, but I



still continued to pick up a number of barrel/cylinder combinations hoping against hope that someday . . .

Someday never came. The supply of old Colts dried up and suddenly the Colt Single Action itself was no more. And there I found myself with a box full of Colt barrels and cylinders. Kind of like being dressed

up and no place to go. For awhile it was possible to pick up Bisleys for reasonable prices and two sets of .44 Special barrels and cylinders were used to modernize the Bisley Colts.

Just as Colt announced the cessation of regular production of the Colt Single Action Army, help was found for those packrats like myself who have barrels and cylinders but no place to put them. United States Frame Specialists (3667 S. 16th St., Dept. AH, Milwaukee, WI 53207) is now marketing the three Colt Single Action parts that are not available, namely the frame, backstrap and trigger guard.

Not only are they offering frames for sale, but also USFS is covering all the bases with four different frames in three different modes of finish. Frames can be had in the standard Single Action Model; the Black Powder Model, with a transverse screw holding in the cylinder pin; a Flat Top Target Model; and a Sheriff's Model with no

provision for an ejector rod.

All models are available as-cast, polished, or color case-hardened. Prices run from \$110 for a standard, raw Single Action frame to \$220 for a color case-hardened Sheriff's Model frame. All frames are made from 1020 steel.

Each frame includes the recoil plate and the loading gate assembly and can be ordered to accept either old or new style barrel threads. To finish off the frame, the backstrap/trigger guard assembly is available for \$80. Dealer inquiries are invited. USFS also handles all the other parts necessary to assemble a finished single action plus they will provide completed guns on special order.

When I received my standard Single Action frame, I had some difficulty deciding just what barrel/cylinder combination to install. I finally decided on a .45 Colt with a seven and one-half inch barrel and I also decided to go the smart way and take all the parts to a gunsmith for fitting. Shapel's (1708 N. Liberty, Boise, ID 83704) is a third and fourth generation gunshop plus they are one of the few shops in the country that carry a complete line of Colt Single Action parts available over-the-counter or by mail. They probably have that part you've been unable to locate.

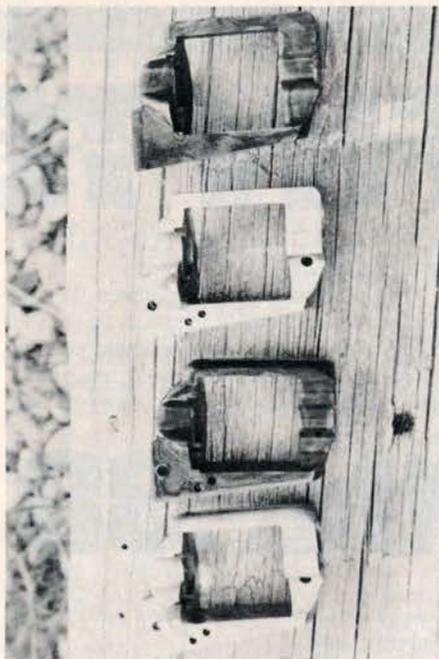
Shapel's has rescued me a number of times and where else can you find a gunsmith that would crawl out from under a pick-up he was repairing on a Saturday evening to fix a gun that I needed for a silhouette match the next day? My USFS frame, barrel, cylinder and a box of parts entered Shapel's under my arm and I encountered my first problem.

They had just received a supply of four and three-quarter inch .45 Colt barrels and now I had a dilemma. Did I want a seven and one-half inch Colt or a more practical four and three-quarter inch packin' length? I opted for the latter and swapped straight across.

Since I wanted to do an article on the USFS frame and the sixgun that could be made from it, and also since they all appreciate single actions at Shapel's, Robert "Rocky" York, one of the gunsmiths, turned the project into a labor of love.

A couple of problems surfaced immediately. The frame was too large for both the hammer and the base pin, both of them wobbling around in their respective places. After building up the sides of the hammer with shims totaling .010," Rocky decided to try another hammer. As it turned out, the frame was not at fault, both parts were well under-standard size and were replaced by Shapel's. This turned out to be a blessing in disguise as Rocky adapted an older hammer to fit, which has a much nicer profile than the current supply of third generation hammers.

In a few days, I received a call that my "Colt" was ready for test firing and I hurried to Shapel's to do the honors. Everything seemed to be okay; the next step was to head for the foothills and really try it out.



Four frames available include Single Action Model, Black Powder Model, Flat Top Target and Sheriff's Model.

Using standard .45 Colt level handloads, the .45 was right on for elevation but shot three inches to the left. A closer examination revealed why. The sight on the Colt barrel had been installed off center at the factory.

I was not real pleased with the accuracy of the USFS .45 until I tried 19.0 grains of

H4227 with the 250 grain cast Keith bullet. This is a 850-900 fps load and shoots phenomenally in another short barreled .45 Colt, a New Frontier with a four and three-quarter inch barrel. At 20 yards, the five shots from the new .45 went in one and one-fourth inches with four of the shots in one hole that measured three-fourths of an inch. It just doesn't get any better than this! Much of the credit must go to Shapel's Rocky King and his tender loving care assembling my new packin' .45.

My "new Colt" is all blue except for the frame which is still in the raw, gray-cast finish. It really looks quite attractive this way, but as soon as we get the front sight adjusted so it is right on the money at 25 yards with the 250 grain cast bullet/19.0 grains H4227 load, it is going to receive an all-blue working finish. The too-thick, at least for my personal taste, rosewood stocks borrowed from USFS will be replaced by plain vanilla walnut. No fancy grips for this .45.

Add a soft cartridge belt of two and one-half inches in width with 15 cartridge loops and a simple holster, Tom Threepersons style, that rides high and exposes the trigger guard and hammer and the project will be complete.

Many sixgunners are going to appreciate the gap that is being filled by the frames, backstraps and trigger guards for United States Frame Specialists. A welcome home has been found for Colt barrels and cylinders.



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TAFFIN TESTS

The big move among law enforcement circles today is for more firepower. Many departments are still armed with six shot .357 Magnum or .38 Special revolvers while the criminal element has taken advantage of all the latest developments and drug traffickers are often armed with high capacity fully-automatic machine pistols.

The situation in the 1920s was quite similar as both bootleggers and bank robbers were armed with Thompson fully automatic "sub-machine guns" while law enforcement agencies were still tied to the .38 Special Colt or Smith & Wesson revolver.

In 1929, Colt recognized the need and rose to the occasion. They did not come up with a new cartridge, but "magnumized" an existing one. The .38 Colt had been around since the turn of the century in the Model 1902 and offered a loading of a 130 grain bullet at slightly over 1000 fps. Colt took the .38 Auto, raised its velocity to

1300 fps and chambered it in the 1911 Government Model.

The new cartridge, christened the .38 Super, was externally identical to the old .38 Automatic and could be chambered in the old guns with what could have been disastrous results. Obviously, lawyers had

great all time success stories but only fairy tales end with everyone living happily ever after.

Three problems worked against the .38 Super:

1) Ammunition. The only shape available was the full metal jacket 130 grain

the .38 Super

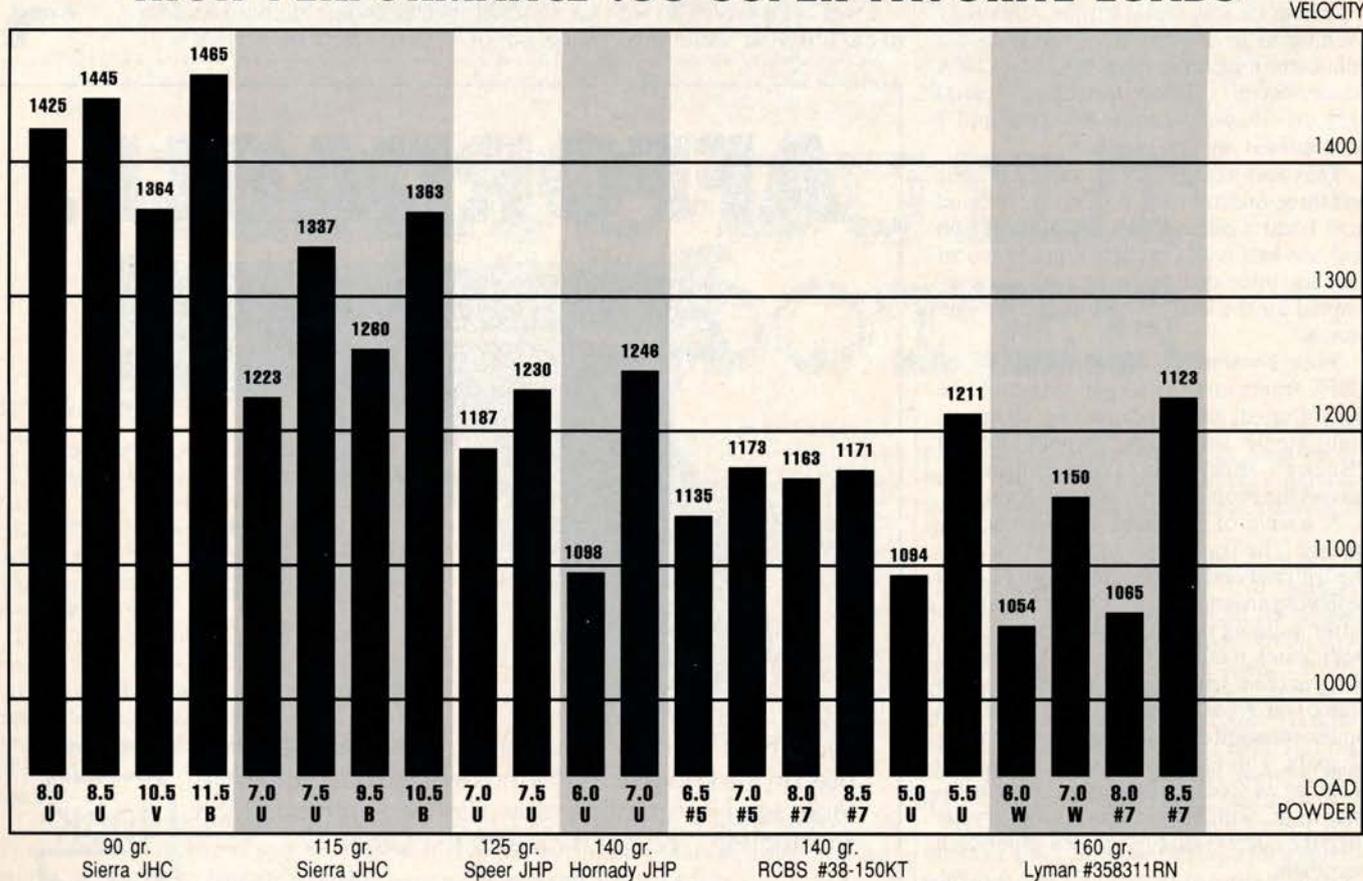
not yet discovered the green pastures of liability suits.

The .38 Super 1911 Colt, with a full magazine of nine rounds and one up the spout, was a vast improvement over the .38 Specials carried by so many law enforcement officers. Now they had the choice of a handgun that would put them on a closer-to-equal footing with the criminal element. The .38 Super should have been one of the

round nosed bullet. It fed reliably but cut through tissue like a needle.

2) Barrels. There is always at least two ways to do anything, the wrong way and the right way. Colt chose to do it the wrong way. Super .38 barrels were chambered so that the cartridge, unlike the .45 ACP which headspaces on the mouth, headspaces on the rim. This sounds great, in theory, as it allows the handloader to crimp

HIGH PERFORMANCE .38 SUPER FAVORITE LOADS



Powders: (U) Unique, (B) Blue Dot, (#5) AA#5, (#7) AA#7, (W) WW540.

All loads were fired from a Colt Commander .38 Super with a Wilson match grade four-inch barrel. Brass used was Winchester; primer was CCI #300. All readings taken as an average between PACT and Oehler 33 chronographs. Neither the author nor *American Handgunner* accept any responsibility for results obtained with this data due to the inherent variations in reloading components and individual techniques of handloading. This data is for information only.

bullets instead of depending on the mouth of the case for headspacing. The problem was that the rim of the case had very little support in the Colt barrels and would often move forward when struck by the firing pin resulting in mediocre accuracy at best.

3) Smith & Wesson. Six years later, in 1935, S&W brought out their answer to law enforcement needs, the .357 Magnum.

The .357 Magnum became one of the all-time genuine success stories nearly killing off the .38 Super in the process. Smith & Wesson had done their homework well, first working with heavy .38 Special loads in the .38-44 Heavy Duty revolver. When the 3½" .357 Magnum was introduced, the FBI and other agencies immediately took to it. General George Patton bought one of the first while stationed in Hawaii in '35 and called it his killing gun.

As a defensive weapon, is the .357 Magnum that much better than the .38 Super? To answer this question, I compared my 3½" Model 27 with my .38 Super Commander as to the guns themselves, ammunition performance, and accuracy.

Fully loaded, the Model 27 3½" x .357 Magnum weighs 45 ounces, the .38 Combat Commander goes 41½ ounces, and if one goes to the lightweight Commander, that drops to 34 ounces. Weight can make a big difference during a long day, so chalk one up for the .38 Super.

The .357 Magnum carries six shots, the .38 Super carries 10, plus repeat shots and reloading are much easier with the semi-automatic .38. Chalk up three more for the .38 Super.

Ammunition selectability certainly goes to the .357 Magnum with dozens of choices available as to the bullet shape, bullet weight, etc. But let's compare apples to apples, and look at performance of like ammunition in the 3½" .357 and the 3.55" .38 Super. The Commander has a 4¼" barrel but .900" of that is the case length of the cartridge itself.

Using factory 125 grain loadings in the .357 gave the following results: Hornady, 1262 fps; Federal, 1244 fps; Winchester, 1287 fps; CCI Blazer, 1220 fps. Winchester 125 grain Silvertips go 1167 fps in the .38 Super, so give the .357 a slight edge, but remember, the .357 carries six rounds, the .38 Super, 10.

Factory ammunition with 140 grain bullets goes 1212 fps (Hornady) and 1226 fps (Winchester) in the .357. Factory 140 grain ammunition for the .38 Super is not available but handloading gives the following without pushing hard. Using either Hornady or Speer 140 grain hollow points over 7.0 grains of Unique in the .38 Super yields velocities of 1224 and 1246 fps respectively. Dead even!

Accuracy has always been a major problem with the .38 Super. Mine would barely stay on paper at 25 yards and if I dropped the .38 Super loads in my Model 27, yep they do fit, I could get groups under two-inches. I finally got to the point of no longer being able to stand the poor performance of the .38 Super and sent it off to Bill

Wilson (Wilson's Gun Shop, Dept. AH, P.O. Box 578, Berryville, AR 72616) and asked that he install a barrel that headspaces on the mouth of the case, rather than on the rim.

The results were gratifying to say the least. My favorite .38 Super load of 150 grain Keith bullet over 5.5 grains of Unique now shoots in the 1¾"-2" range of 25 yards. I can still shoot slightly tighter groups with the .357 but I attribute that to the much better sights on the Smith.

It is easy to reload for the .357—at least we've all been doing it for so long, it seems so. What about the .38 Super? I use Lee Carbide .38 Super dies and find the .38 Super as easy, if not easier, to load for than the .357 Magnum. When using cast bullets there is no crimp to mess with and I set up the seating die so that about 1/32 inch of the bullet shoulder is exposed above the rim of the case. Keith bullets feed flawlessly.

With jacketed bullets, problems sometimes arise in that bullets can be pushed back into the case as the cartridge begins its journey from the magazine, up the ramp, into the chamber. This is especially a problem with the stubby 90 grain bullets. Heavier bullets, having a longer bearing surface, resist this tendency much better. The answer would seem to be a smaller expanding button to give a tighter friction fit.

There are many good bullets available for the .38 Super. Sierra's little 90 grain JHC is explosive on varmints when loaded at 1400-1500 fps. Both the Sierra 115

grain JHC and the Speer 115 grain JHP will safely do 1300+ fps in the short barreled Commander .38 Super using either 7.5 grains of Unique or 10.5 grains of Blue Dot.

For all around use in the .38 Super, I generally prefer Keith style .357 Magnum hard cast bullets, and specifically RCBS's #38-150KT. This excellent semi-wadcutter is sized to .356 and loaded over 5.5 grains of Unique, 8.5 grains of AA #7, 7.0 grains of AA #5, or 7.0 grains of WW540.

Unique has always been my favorite powder for the .38 Super, but some of the action shooters have put me onto WW540 and I have discovered that WW540, AA #7, and AA #5 will duplicate the capabilities of Unique, and do it with less pressure.

The .38 Super has been just barely hanging on for years, but has started to find new life on the action circuit. Competition shooter and fellow *American Handgunner* writer Rob Leatham uses a .38 Super.

Colt has finally seen the light and after nearly 60 years is now chambering .38 Super barrels to headspace correctly on the mouth instead of the rim of the case. Things are looking up for the .38 Super, a good cartridge that has been ignored by too many for too long. The 9mm gets much press and seemingly most of the new innovations in semi-autos. How about a really modern, high capacity handgun for the first magnum, the Super .38?



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HODGDON HS-7 POWDER for IPSC major loads

By Steve Malloy

Shooters have continually discussed powders for the Super. Blue Dot was one of the first used, but I found that lot-to-lot consistency was hard to find, and the Blue Dot does not throw a consistent charge every time in some powder measures. Although I have used Winchester 540, this powder creates more felt recoil. After many experiments, I favor Hodgdon HS-7. The powder produces excellent accuracy, burns clean, and can make IPSC power factor of 175 without a hint of pressure.

I would emphasize, however, that when loading the Super, a person must have access to a chronograph, work the loads up 0.2 gr. at a time, and always look for signs of pressure.

When choosing brass for the Super, the only brass a person can load to major time after time is the Remington nickle +P. The Winchester or Midway brass case must be used for light loads at 1000 fps or less. If

one observes these rules, he should never have a brass problem.

In conclusion, I believe that the Super is the round of the future. Despite what has been said about it, the advantages far outweigh the so-called "faults." Supers offer

cheaper brass (except for +P), and a person can almost shoot 2000 lead Super bullets for the price of 1000 .45's. Add to that extra magazine capacity, ability to shoot lighter loads, and the shooter has about anything he could ask for. 

Hodgdon HS-7 in .38 Super

Charge	Velocity	Pressure	IPSC Factor	
6.8 grs.	988 fps	29,600 CUPS	163	Bullet: 165 gr. Dura-Cast
7.0 grs.	1006 fps	30,300 CUPS	166	Case: Remington +P
7.2 grs.	1034 fps	30,900 CUPS	171	Primer: Federal #100
7.4 grs.	1085 fps	33,100 CUPS	179	Cartridge OAL: 1.270"
				Barrel Length: four-inches

6.8 grs.	988 fps	29,600 CUPS	163
7.0 grs.	1006 fps	30,300 CUPS	166
7.2 grs.	1034 fps	30,900 CUPS	171
7.4 grs.	1085 fps	33,100 CUPS	179

Bullet: 165 gr. Dura-Cast
Case: Remington +P
Primer: Federal #100
Cartridge OAL: 1.270"
Barrel Length: four-inches

Hodgdon's Powder Company Laboratory performed pressure tests on these loads with the cooper crusher method. All loads listed are within safe limits as established by SAAMI. **Begin with the starting load listed and increase powder charge in 0.2 gr. increments watching carefully for**

pressure signs until desired velocity is obtained. Neither the author nor *American Handgunner* accept any responsibility for results obtained with this data due to the inherent variations in reloading components and individual handloading techniques.

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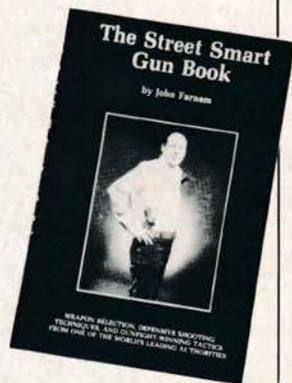
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THE AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 38

5 1/2 mile area of the Dixie Highway in 10 FBI unmarked cars, the eight agents who would emerge from five vehicles to face the known murderers had 12 loaded guns: a 3:1 advantage in weapons and a 4:1 advantage in manpower. We will leave it to the observer to analyze whether the bad guys' Mini-14 was or was not the deciding factor, for no such weapon was within reach on the FBI side. Though the stakeout group was a mix of seasoned field agents and members of the crack SWAT team assigned to Miami FBI, the latter having access to vests that would defeat the .223 the suspects were known to use, and the SWAT members had access to AR-15s, M-16s, MP-5 submachineguns,² and the Remington 870 shotguns that field agents also had access to. The hardware available to the involved agents was as follows:

Three S&W model 459 15-shot 9mm autoloaders (the weapons of FBI SWAT members Grogan, Dove, and Risner); two standard Remington 870 police model 5-shot 12-gauge pump guns; five Smith & Wesson .357 revolvers (a 4" L-frame, two model 66 2 1/2" snubs, two issue model 13s with 3" barrels); and two 5-shot, 2" S&W Chief Specials carried as backup guns. The 9mm's carried issue Silvertips, the revolvers primarily issue 158-grain lead semiwadcutter hollowpoint +P .38 Special loads. Silvertip .357 is authorized by the Bureau only for special circumstances, and it is believed that supervisor McNeill's 2 1/2" Combat Magnum was so charged.

Agents Ben Grogan and Jerry Dove were the first to spot the Monte Carlo. Grogan was a true supercop, former head of Miami's FBI SWAT team and considered the best shot in the command; Dove, his protege on SWAT, was considered a rising star. Grogan advised over the air that they were behind the suspect vehicle on the South Dixie Highway. McNeill, alone in his unmarked Oldsmobile, barked commands into his microphone as he raced to the scene. In moments, Special Agent Richard Manauzzi was behind the chase car, as was the sedan carrying agents John Hanlon and Edmundo Mireles. The final backup car, containing SWAT man Ron Risner and field agent Gil Arrantia, was closing the distance behind them. McNeill, coming the opposite way, cut down a sidestreet hoping to parallel the fugitive vehicle as he heard the chase car broadcast, "We're burned. They've made us as cops. There's activity in the front seat."

Suddenly, McNeill saw the fugitive vehicle coming toward him, and two things burned into his mind: Matix, behind the wheel, had a terrifying intensity of facial expression that made the FBI leader think, "Man on a mission." And beside him, the mustachioed and cold-eyed Platt was showing a magazine into the belly of what McNeill recognized as a Ruger Mini-14.

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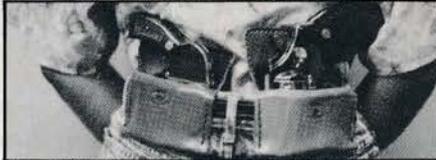
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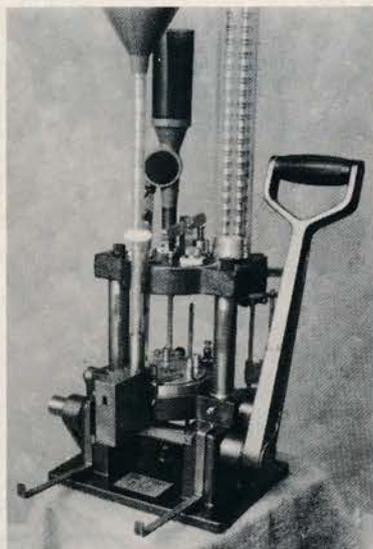
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As he passed the line of chase cars and spun his Olds around to follow, McNeill radioed to the others what he had seen. Fearing that the gunmen could wreak havoc if they got back on the Dixie highway, having moments before pulled onto suburban sidestreets to evade pursuit, McNeill made the fateful decision. He said into the microphone, "Felony carstop! Let's do it!"

The fugitive vehicle is in the front of the deadly parade, the Grogan/Dove chase car behind it, and third in line are Hanlon and Mireles. Hanlon guns his car forward as Grogan and Dove sweep around in front of the robbers, trying to block them, and as he comes abreast of the Monte Carlo he rams it from the side.

Dick Manauzzi, alone in his unmarked, knows his brother agents can be machinegunned in a broadside from their vulnerable position. He draws his S&W revolver and places it in his lap and then, to distract the would-be copkillers, rams them from behind.

The crash is more jarring than anyone expected. The Monte Carlo is broken forward from the grinding steel embrace of the first FBI car and spins out to the left, while Hanlon's car slews out to the right into a gravel area. The collision is so violent that the driver's door of Manauzzi's vehicle is flung open, and he realizes to his horror that the gun in his lap has flown away from centrifugal force.

But before he can worry about his revolver, he sees the expert wheelman Matix spin the Monte Carlo back onto the roadway, heading the way they had come. He knows he has to block him. Manauzzi spins his own steering wheel and hits the gas, ramming the Monte Carlo into a tree off the road on the left hand side. His own vehicle jerks to a stop parallel to them, literally parked side by side, on the left.

Manauzzi sees the guns come up toward him, little more than a carseat away: the gaping bore of Matix' stubby shotgun, the spiteful muzzle of Platt's assault rifle. He throws himself out the door to his left as the thunder of the killers' guns erupts. He feels hot lead bite into his torso and shoulder as he dives from the car, acutely conscious that he'll have to run across the street to find his lost revolver.

The death battle is underway.

Seconds before, team leader McNeill was in the rear of the chase. Now he is in the forefront: with the other cars spun out and Grogan and Dove screaming their white Buick in behind the criminals' wrecked car to block its escape. McNeill in this instant is the only one mobile, and he swings his Olds in to cover the felons' avenue of flight if they go on foot.

As he does so, he comes under heavy fire.

The 23-year veteran lawman has already had time to throw his pistol-rated ballistic vest on over his shirt and tie. But as bullets clang into the steel of his car and shattering glass flies around him, he makes the conscious decision that he won't have time to get

at the Remington 870 in his back seat. His right hand closes on the checkered walnut and Tyler-T grip adapter of his 2½" model 66 as he rolls out the driver's door and sprints to his left, trying to get the bulk of Manauzzi's wrecked car between him and the deafening gunfire that is blasting out of the black coupe right next to it.

Meanwhile, several things are happening at once. The Hanlon-Mireles cruiser has smashed into a concrete wall across the street, and both agents have bailed out. Mireles has a round in the chamber of his 870 and holds the shotgun at port arms as he darts across the street toward his supervisor's position. The driver, Hanlon, has drawn his Smith .357 and put it on the seat beside him before the ramming, but the G-force of the collision has flung it out of reach. He claws his blue, square-butt S&W model 36 backup gun from his ankle holster and, seeing Agent Dove standing alone at the rear left of the white Buick, runs toward the lone brother who seems to need help the most. He cannot see Jerry Dove down by the right front quadrant of the Buick, directing carefully aimed fire from his 9mm at the Monte Carlo. Behind all of them, across the street, the fifth car containing Gil Arrantia and Ron Risner is pulling up into a covering position.

McNeill is now at the left front fender of Manauzzi's car, which is door to door with the Monte Carlo. Both gunmen are trapped in the front seat, driver Matix by the proximity of the FBI car and passenger Platt by the jammed, caved in right door of their stolen car. No more than eight or nine feet away, McNeill hunkers across the hood of the FBI car and opens fire, his bullets pouring into the windshield and driver's window. He fires four shots.

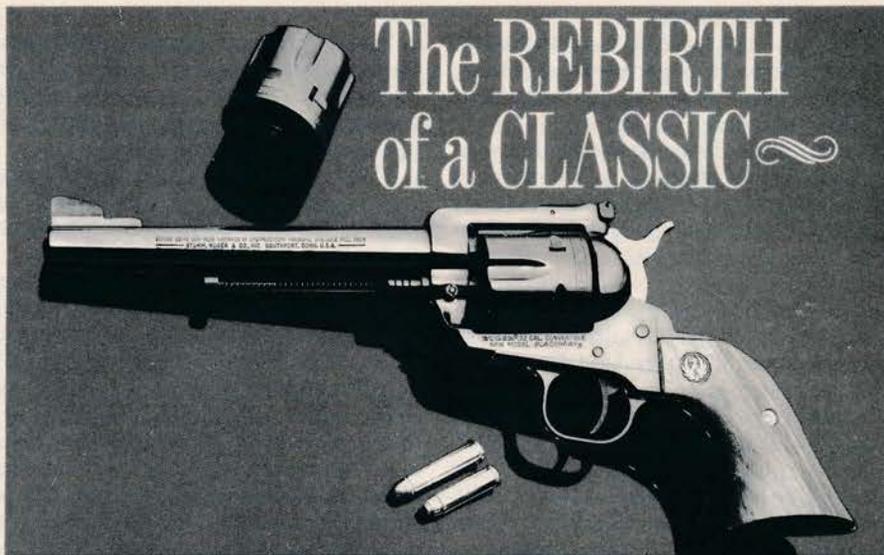
At this moment, Mireles is coming in behind him, his shotgun in firing position. Mireles realizes that his gun is pointed at McNeill's spine, and he has a flashback to his range safety training. He reflexively raises the muzzle skyward and takes his finger out of the trigger guard.

In a second, this action will save both agents' lives.

Now comes the fusillade of .223 fire from the front seat of the black coupe. Platt firing across his own partner's chest, his muzzle almost in his face.

A .223 slug that was homing for the center of Edmundo Mireles' unprotected chest hits instead the left forearm he's just brought up to raise his shotgun. Mireles feels the impact like a sledgehammer and his giant 280-pound body topples backward to the street. He looks down and sees "an arm turned inside out," inches of blood-smears white bone protruding from the torn, bloody flesh, and the thought goes through his mind, "This arm will have to be amputated."

At almost the same time, another shot from Platt's burst catches Gordon McNeill's gun hand. He feels his right arm thrown skyward, looks down, and sees a hideous wound. But he feels no pain, so he brings the gun back down and fires again until it runs empty. Matix jerks in his seat: one of the



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agent's shots has hit him.

His gun empty, McNeill turns and runs to his own car, seeking cover to reload. Mireles, the 870 still clutched in his good right hand, follows unnoticed.

It is perhaps 45 seconds since the first shot, a Mini-14 round triggered by Platt, has been fired. Already two agents are severely wounded, one slightly wounded, one criminal also slightly wounded.

A couple of carlengths away, Grogan and Dove have been firing their S&W 459s, but not yet with effect. Up ahead, Platt crawls out the window of the jammed Monte Carlo's door. At about this time he is hit by at least two Winchester Silvertip 9mm bullets. One enters the region of the armpit, the other biting deep into the pectoral muscle. One of these bullets comes from Agent Risner, who is now down behind his vehicle across the street shooting over the hood: some five carlengths away, he is in the most advantageous position of any of the agents. This is also the farthest distance involved in the firefight.

The other bullet comes from the 9mm of young Jerry Dove. It courses through the lung area of Platt as it mushrooms, and it cuts a vital artery. Blood begins to pour freely from the gunman's chest as he rolls out the window of the Monte Carlo, across the hood of a citizen's Cutlass sedan parked beside it, and down into cover. Meanwhile, Matix has squeezed out the driver's door of the wrecked getaway car, and he unleashes a blast of 00 buckshot at Grogan and Dove to pin them

down.

Risner's partner, Arrantia, is firing from the left driver's door of his vehicle with his .38 Special. When the gun runs dry, he throws himself down on the seat, clawing at his six-round belt pouch to reload.

Platt is behind the cars now, firing rapidly, reloading as he empties the Mini-14. He has multiple Ruger 20-shot magazines and one Federal Ordnance 40-rounder.

Intensely aware that he is under fire, McNeill tries desperately to reload with his one good hand. But bits of bone fragment and gouts of blood from his shattered gunhand have flowed into the chambers and cylinder of his model 66, blocking the fresh cartridges. He has managed to drag four rounds out of his pouch, and he gets two into the chambers. He realizes that his best chance of survival lies in reaching the 12-gauge shotgun in the backseat of the vehicle he's crouching behind, his own. He rises.

A mistake. In front of him, across the roof of the car, looms Platt. There is time for the FBI team leader to see the mocking grin on the gunman's face as he carefully fires the Mini-14 from the shoulder. The hot wind of one hypervelocity .223 bullet goes past McNeill's arm, and there's another breeze and a nick on his ear, and then the hammer blow of the third rapid-fired bullet that slams into his neck.

McNeill spins forward, landing on his back, acutely aware that he is paralyzed from the neck down, though his eyes still see and his ears still hear. The bullet that stunned his

spinal cord has ricocheted off his cervical spine and down deep into his chest cavity. He lies helpless now as the gunfight roars on around him.

McNeill and Mireles are down. Manauzzi is across the street desperately seeking a gun to fight with as he bleeds from his wounds. He will not learn until later that his lost revolver is in his banged-up unmarked car after all.

Risner and Arrantia are across the street, firing at the gunmen. Grogan, Dove and Hanlon are clustered at the white Buick, the first standing in a Weaver stance and firing blindly, the other two kneeling, all focusing their consciousness on Matix who is providing his partner with shotgun cover.

And beyond them all, out of the last three's focus of consciousness and beyond the two covering agents' field of fire, the master killer Platt is bobbing and weaving, closing fast, his reloaded assault rifle ready in his hands.

It is now perhaps one and a quarter minutes into the gun battle. The worst is yet to come.

Jerry Dove has emptied his 15-shot Smith & Wesson autoloader at the gunman and hit him at least once in the K-5 zone. His gun has run dry. He dumps the empty magazine—it winds up on the right front floorboard of his Buick—and reloads with his only spare. He moves around from his position at the right front door to the left side of the Buick, the better to have cover from the shotgunner Matix.



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Ben Grogan stands upright at the left rear of the Buick, firing his 459 at the source of the incoming rounds. The most highly trained combat shooter in the entire Miami office of FBI, he is also myopic, and in the crash, his glasses flew off and lodged under the Buick's brake pedal. One agent hears him shout almost plaintively, "Where is everybody?" A brother agent in the office will say later, "He couldn't see ten feet without his glasses."

Hanlon, armed only with his backup Chief, is down behind the right taillight of the Buick. He is the first to see Platt bob up from behind cover and start toward them. He fires three shots, ducks, emerges again and fires twice more. The Chief is empty now. He crouches down to reload, and Platt opens fire in a cadenced burst.

One bullet whistles past agent Hanlon's arm. The next bites into his hand and courses up the forearm and into the bicep. Hanlon drops and rolls to his left for cover, grabbing the ruined arm and shouting, "I'm hit!" The Chief, its cylinder open midway through the loading process, lies useless on the pavement behind him.

Across the street, Risner and Arrantia have tried to cover their brothers as best they could. Arrantia jerks from the sudden impact as he is hit, but he keeps firing, emptying his Smith & Wesson revolver a second time, then dropping again under the cover of the dashboard to claw for the standard box of fifty spare .38 rounds carried in the glove box of every FBI vehicle.

Risner, meanwhile, has fired his 15th Sil-

vertip and locked the slide back. He has hit Platt once or twice, but the gunman has shown no reaction. As his 9mm runs dry, Risner reflexively goes for the nearest loaded weapon and grabs his model 60 from his ankle holster, firing a lead hollowpoint at Platt. But the distance, he realizes, is too far for a snubby. He puts the .38 away and rams a fresh clip into his SWAT-issue 459.

And, to his horror, he sees Hanlon go down and sees beyond the Buick what Grogan and Dove do not: *Platt is coming for them, ducking and bobbing, the muzzle of his assault rifle pointing toward them.* Risner cannot fire: he is to the left of the Buick and the brother agents are between him and the danger in his line of fire. He screams at the

top of his lungs, "He's coming behind you! He's coming behind you!"

But the other agents don't hear him. Auditory exclusion, an insidiously common effect in firefights, has blocked their perception of shouted warnings.

And suddenly, it's too late.

Platt rounds the side of the Buick, firing rapidly as he comes. He deliberately fires a shot into the helpless Hanlon's groin. The bullet mercifully misses his genitals but enters the trunk at the joint of the pelvis and shatters, sending a vicious snowstorm of projectile fragments through his lower abdominal viscera.

Platt is pulling the trigger of the Mini as fast as he can. Grogan cries "Oh, my God,"

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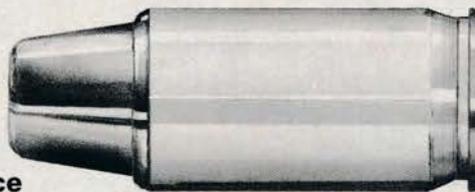


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and goes down, hit multiple times in the torso. He is dead before his carcass hits the ground.

Dove tries to turn to four o'clock from his kneeling position and can't make it: the .223 slugs slam into him and he pitches onto his face. He tries to rise, and Platt leans across the trunk of the Buick—his own blood hemorrhaging all over the car—and shoots him twice in the head. The last thing Hanlon remembers before he loses consciousness is young Dove's head thudding hollowly to the pavement inches from his own face, blood pouring from the giant holes the high velocity assault rifle has blasted through Dove's skull.

Meanwhile, Eduardo Mireles has gritted his teeth against the agony of his bullet-shattered arm and dragged himself behind McNeill's unmarked Olds. With his one good hand, the giant agent raises his Remington shotgun as he falls into a sitting position, his shoulders against the fender, as he brings the gun up and stabilizes it over the edge of the bumper. He sees Platt step coolly over the corpses of Grogan and Dove, and enter the driver's seat of the white FBI Buick. He couldn't fire before because the other agents were in his line of fire, as they were in Risner's. But now . . .

Mireles jerks the trigger. The blast goes low. The shotgun is loaded with 00 Buck, not FBI's trademark #4, but a few .33 caliber pellets rip into Platt's left foot. He shows no more reaction than stepping barefooted onto a hot beach. He closes the door behind him.

No one has taught Agent Mireles to work a

pump gun one-handed, but his ferocious will to survive makes him resourceful. He plants the butt of the 870 on the pavement and braces the gun between his knees as he pumps the action. He ignores the excruciating pain as he swings the fore-end onto the bumper once more, and fires. This blast goes harmlessly into the left front fender of the Buick.

The wounded Mireles repeats the laborious process. Matix has now run to the Buick and jumped in on the passenger side. This time as he steadies the shotgun, Mireles consciously aims for the left nipple of the driver as he fires. He is rewarded with the sight of Platt slamming back against the driver's seat. The buckshot has smashed into his face . . . but it has come in from a side angle, and no pellet has reached his brain.

Again Mireles fires, and again. Why did not Platt and Matix return fire? It appears from scene photos that Mireles' position ideally concealed him from the killers' view and they may not have realized until the end where the hail of buckshot was coming from.

Mireles' fourth blast, and his fifth, blows out the windshield of the Buick. Matix twists in agony as he is hit by the pellets. But he, too, has not yet taken a dynamic, stopping gunshot wound.

It has been approximately two and a quarter minutes since the first shot was fired in the gun battle. Mireles' shotgun is now empty, and he drops it into the street.

And behind the wheel, his face a bloody mask and his life pouring out through a hole

in his chest, copkiller Michael Platt has finally pinpointed his last antagonist. He twists the six-inch Smith & Wesson .357 from its shoulder holster and flings open the door. His right hand won't hold the gun properly, because a bullet believed to be a 9mm from Agent Risner's gun has gone through and through the forearm, so he locks the L-frame in his left hand as he steps from the car and moves purposefully toward Mireles.

The wounded agent Arrantia doesn't see it, because he's still down in the front seat clawing cartridges from the box in the glove compartment to reload his revolver. Ron Risner doesn't see it, probably because he's desperately moving around behind his own car to get an angle where he can shoot at Platt and Matix without hitting Mireles. But a civilian witness sees what happens.

Platt comes out of the car with the long-barrelled revolver in his left hand. He moves catlike toward the car. He has lost a great deal of blood, he has been shot to pieces, and his left foot is no longer intact, and all of this may explain his strange gait. But the nameless witness says that he walked "stealthily" toward the back of the Oldsmobile, where the badly wounded Mireles was slowly turning onto his right side.

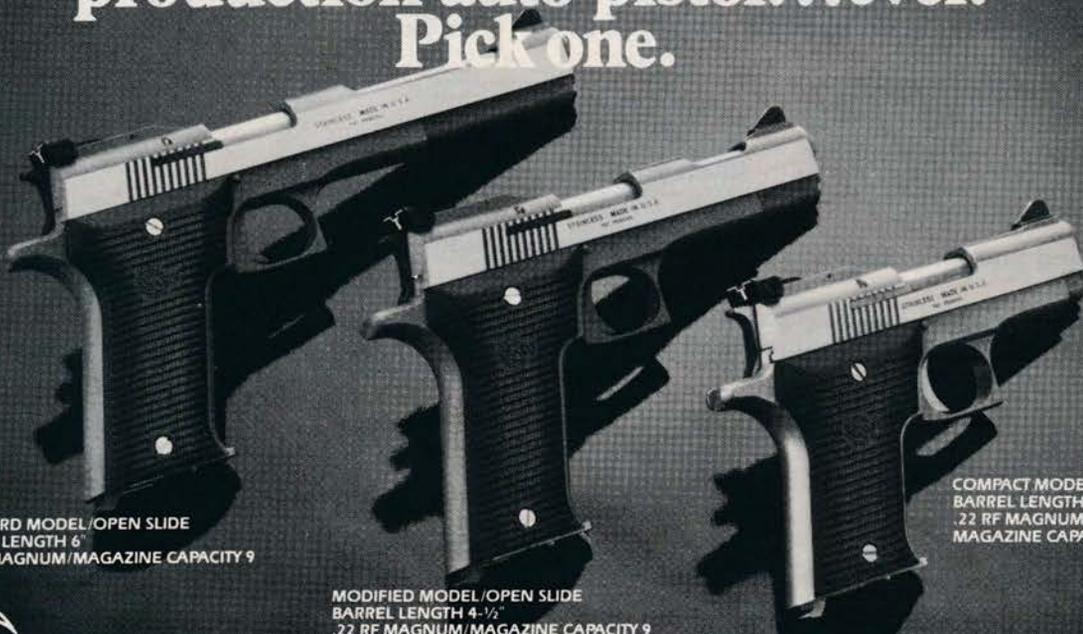
Platt stops, carefully aims at Mireles. And fires. And fires again. And again. Satisfied that he cannot have missed, he turns back and staggers toward the Buick, the still-loaded model 586 in his hand.

But, miraculously, his bullets have not

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touched Mireles. And, in the depths of his pain and his concentration on getting to his feet, Mireles has not been aware that Platt has walked up to within a few steps from him, fired three shots at point blank range, and failed to connect.

All Mireles knows is that his brothers lie dead, and this sonofabitch is about to get into an FBI car and drive away, and upon his soul, Mireles will not let him do it. He pushes himself to his feet, his giant body swaying as the dead left arm hangs loose at his side, dripping blood as his other hand reaches under his windbreaker and closes on the familiar grip of his Smith & Wesson revolver.

Mireles moves forward, leaving his cover, tottering into the kill zone and into the muzzles of the shotgun and the assault rifle he knows are waiting for him.

One of the citizens cringing behind their windows will say that Mireles was "stone-walking" in this last terrible moment. Stiff legged, his bulk swaying like Frankenstein's monster, his bullet-shattered left arm hanging beside him, Mireles drives himself forward toward the two killers, his K-frame Smith & Wesson at arm's length ahead of him.

And, in the last moment of their lives, the murderers see it. Platt comes up with the long-barrel Magnum and Matix reaches for his gun.

But it is too late.

Ed Mireles can feel himself passing out, can see darkness closing in on his vision until there is only a narrow tunnel left. He concen-

trates on the face of the copkiller at the end of the tunnel, and on his front sight, and even in the daylight there is the flash as the Federal 158 grain lead hollowpoint .38 slug roars from the barrel of his gun and into the brain of the murderer Platt.

He sees the gunman jerk, and fires again to be sure, and because the other murderer is in the shadows of the car Mireles stumbles forward until he can see his face before he fires one, two, three times and sees the force of the + P bullets slam Matix against the doorpost.

Now he is virtually on top of Platt, just outside the door, as he fires the sixth and final shot. This bullet, like the five before it, tunnels deep into vital tissue and lodges mushroomed in the gunman's head.

And in the last seconds, his gun empty, Mireles realizes that Ron Risner and the bleeding Gil Arrantia, his gun finally reloaded, have run forward and are beside him as the corpse of Platt tumbles onto the pavement at his feet and the dead husk of Matix slumps against the opposite door. Platt's 586 clatters harmlessly into the street.

Only now does the hero lawman Mireles slump in exhaustion. It has been more than four minutes since the agents initiated the carstop, and according to FBI's meticulous re-enactment later, some 3 minutes 23 seconds from when the first bullet exploded from the barrel of Platt's gun to when the last shot of the firefight entered his dying body.

Two bad guys dead, two good guys dead, five good guys wounded. From the

beginning, the Miami Massacre cried out for answers. Many have been offered. Some have been valid . . . and some have been ludicrous.

Toxicology screen subsequent to autopsy showed that both Platt and Matix were clean of drugs or alcohol. Both men were running on an adrenaline high, knowing they were about to engage in a battle to the death.

Jerry Dove's bullet had, early on in the firefight, inflicted a lethal wound upon Platt. Chief Medical Examiner Joe Davis told me he did not believe Platt could have survived it even if he'd surrendered and been rushed to a hospital. Yet he showed no reaction to that wound and numerous others as he fulfilled his program of fighting to the death, even grinning at McNeill as he shot him down with a bullet or two lodged in his own chest.

It has been suggested by various self-annoyed gun experts that if the agents had been using .45 hardball or 10mm ammo, Platt would have been instantly put down before he could kill the two agents. The fact is, the Monte Carlo was shot to pieces and it is not provable whether or not the bullet had passed through window glass or auto body before it entered Platt's chest. A ricochet-prone hardball .45 slug might have glanced off an intervening surface and not hit him at all, leaving him viable enough to have killed Mireles and theoretically escaped and recovered from his lesser wounds, remaining at large today.

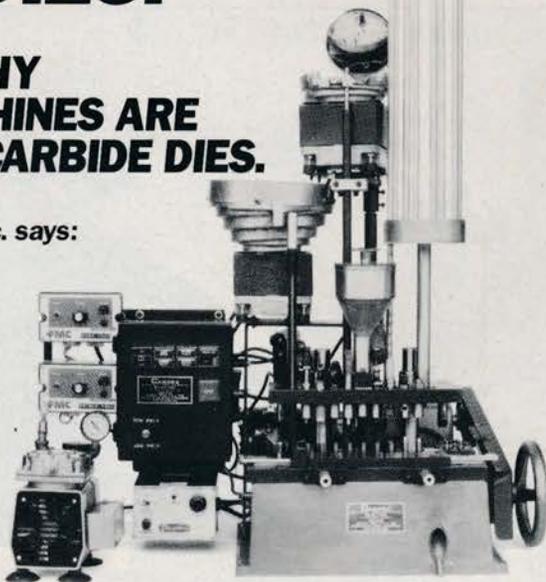
Mireles, who inflicted most of the wounds in the final moments, says, "Matix was hit six times, Platt 12 times, before they died."

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A great many rounds were fired by both sides without effect. It has been suggested that the mostly pistol-armed agents were out of range and thus outgunned by a rifleman. In fact, FBI scene sketches indicate that the farthest distance involved was about five car lengths, which is theoretically easy pistol range. The fact remains that under great stress, a rifle or carbine is easier to shoot than any handgun. Since this incident, a number of agencies have gone to 9mm carbines and .223 assault rifles for patrol functions.

Consider the armor question. Only two of the eight agents involved were protected by any sort of bullet resistant vest, though there was a vest for each agent somewhere in the assorted vehicles. In any case, these were only pistol-rated vests that would not have defeated incoming .223 fire. However, knowing that they were on stakeout for men known to use .223 class weapons, there was no reason for them not to have been wearing Hardcorps type anti-rifle armor that is available in every FBI office that has a SWAT team like Miami's. These bulky vests can be covered by nylon jackets, and in the air-conditioned, unmarked Buicks and Oldsmobiles this would have been no hardship.

Why did eight men have only two shotguns between them, and no assault rifles when every FBI agent is authorized to use a shotgun for such missions, and 38% of the involved agents were SWAT team members with access to more sophisticated weaponry? It has been suggested in print that they had no way of knowing what they were up against.

This is rubbish. Honest Gordon McNeill has stated flatly that they knew *exactly* what they were up against: heavily armed professional criminals who liked to kill with high powered weapons.

This incident showed the rationale of the backup handgun. Two of the eight involved agents carried backup guns, and both wound up using them, one when he lost his primary weapon and one when his primary gun ran dry. It would have saved psychological torment for a third agent to have been carrying one: Manauzzi must have felt tortuous helplessness when he lost his service revolver and had nothing to fight with. Manauzzi was a courageous man—the first to risk his life by closing face to face with the known killers, and the first to come under fire—and we can only wonder whether so brave a man might have been able to stop it with a cylinderful of .38s from a snubnose when he found himself door to door with the gunmen in the first moments of the encounter.

The Miami Massacre gives the lie to the old canard that "a gunfight lasts 2.3 shots." Jerry Dove fired dry both his 9mm magazines, 29 shots, and died with an empty gun; his pistol had also been hit in the slide by a bullet.³ Might a backup gun have permitted Dove, the last of the three at the Buick to be shot, to have neutralized Platt when he loomed over the trunk at point blank range? Grogan had fired multiple times. Both Hanlon and McNeill emptied their guns, five and six shots respectively. Arrantia fired 12 shots and was on his third load at the end of

the fight. Risner fired 15 shots from his 9mm and one from his backup .38 before he reloaded the automatic. Mireles took 11 shotgun and revolver rounds to end the fight. Even Platt went through multiple magazines in his Mini-14 and still resorted to a backup handgun.

One-handed reloading with either hand is a vital police training skill. Two men were failed by not having been so trained, McNeill and Hanlon. Such techniques had existed for years prior to the incident, and an agency that prides itself on being the best trained had no excuse for not having provided such training for its personnel. One hopes that such training will now be provided by FBI.

Ramming cars off the road and swarming them with manpower is not state of the art vehicle stop technique, though it was supposedly FBI doctrine at the time of the incident. If it was necessary to run the Monte Carlo off the road—and it's a bit too much 20/20 hindsight at this point to suggest otherwise—we might consider in retrospect that once it became apparent that heavy weapons were coming up in the front seat, other options existed. There was no reason to believe there was anyone in the Monte Carlo but the two identified murder suspects who were known to have a loaded Mini-14 in the front seat. Before the carstop, McNeill had told his men that a firefight was obviously imminent. The cars that pulled ahead and abreast of the fugitive vehicle contained armed agents in the passenger seats: suffice it to say that when a car must be rammed off the

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road out of control—an act of deadly force—it does not further matter to public safety whether the murder-suspect driver and passenger armed with an assault weapon are dead or alive at that moment.

The agents had to act under exigent circumstances. We cannot blame them for not having attempted other vehicle stop techniques. At the same time, with leisure to prepare for the next such encounter, we may consider whether the pair might in fact have surrendered to a code three, lights and siren pullover. There is no indication in the reports I've seen that this was attempted. Surviving perpetrators in the not dissimilar Newhall Massacre gave indications that they would have surrendered rather than shooting it out if they had been pulled over by lights and sirens in such a manner that they were convinced that the stopping officers had cover and superior firepower. This is no condemnation of the procedure used in the Miami incident, only a consideration for future felony carstops of such potentially dangerous suspects.

From Hanlon and Manauzzi we learn to never unholster the gun and lay it on the lap, between the thighs, or on the seat during a pursuit. Evasive action, let alone the collisions that occur here, can throw the weapon completely out of reach. This dynamic left Manauzzi unarmed and Hanlon less effectively armed. Again, not their fault; they apparently were never taught this.

Of all those present, Benjamin Grogan was the one with the advanced officer sur-

vival and marksmanship skills to have been voted "most likely to neutralize Platt and Matix." An Achilles Heel left him to die helplessly. Those of us who require eyeglasses should, at least when going into known danger, have them fastened to the head with elastic straps.

A bright point in the scenario is a lesson in safe gun handling. When Mireles first ran up behind Hanlon, his conscientiously raising the gun saved two lives. First, it put his arm between his heart and a bullet, and second, it kept the gun from spasmodically going off and decapitating McNeill as Mireles feels it would have if the slug had hit him a second before when his finger was on the trigger and his gun aimed at his boss.

What about choice of handguns? FBI is reportedly going to hi-capacity 9mm pistols two years after the shooting, though that technology didn't do much for Grogan and Dove. On the other hand, it would have made a significant difference to Hanlon and McNeill.⁴ Both stated afterward that when their guns were empty and they couldn't reload due to wounds of the gun hands, "the air and the adrenaline ran out of them." To survive, you have to fight, and to fight, you need wherewithal.

Mireles, who emerged as the hero of the incident, emphasizes the will to survive and the need to believe Dylan Thomas' statement, "Do not go gentle into that good night—rage, rage against the dying of the light!" Mireles also felt the horrid helplessness of an empty gun, and of a two-hand gun in reach with one

hand gone. Does anyone doubt that an 8-shot autoloading shotgun would better have served Eduardo Mireles in the penultimate moments of that savage gun battle?

Hardcorps armor would have saved Grogan and perhaps Hanlon, high-firepower handguns might have better served McNeill and Hanlon, and guns ranging from H&K MP-5 9mm carbines to Mini-14s of their own might have done even more good.

But tactics might have been even more important. Had Grogan and Dove fallen back in traffic instead of staying right behind Platt and Matix when they first identified them, they might not have tipped the killers to what was happening. They could have then coordinated a roadblock takedown with a massive force of FBI agents, Metro-Dade cops, and Florida Highway Patrol that might have been more easily managed, without fear of danger to bystanders. Alas, there is a tendency in law enforcement to close with the offender and lay hands upon him and take him into custody. Sometimes, patience serves the safety of the public and the cops better.

One could spend a 40-hour seminar on this incident, and indeed, from Metro-Dade Homicide to FBI Headquarters, far more time than that has been spent learning from the lessons. The author and *American Handgunner* wish to thank all those who contributed input to this article, in the hope that the sacrifices of these fine, brave men may never have to be repeated.



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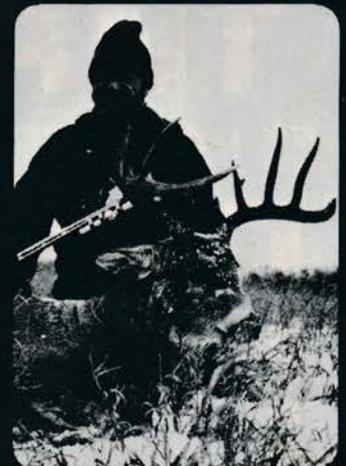
shooting at gun clubs instead of remote wilderness areas? Platt and Matix were not the first to murder plinkers for their guns.

²One other car in the stakeout team allegedly did contain two MP-5s, but did not arrive on the scene in time.

³Less than a year later, a DEA agent's SIG P-226 would be hit by a bullet and disabled in another Miami shootout. The eye focuses on the opponent's weapon, and where the eye goes, the bullet follows—another good reason to carry a second handgun.

⁴Metro-Dade Det. Sgt David Rivers, who led the homicide investigation on this case, subsequently traded his 4" .38 for a hi-capacity Beretta 9mm auto.

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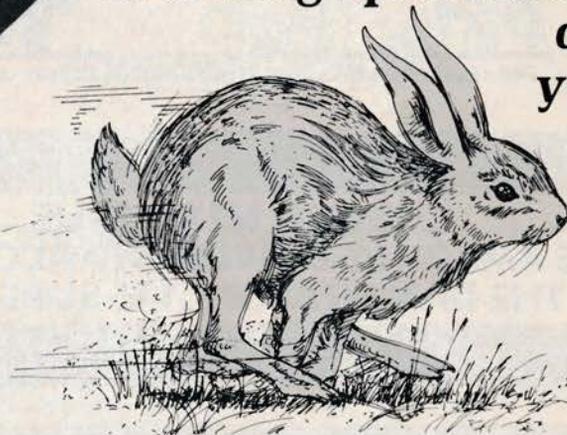
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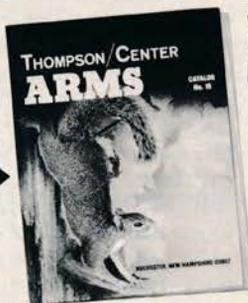
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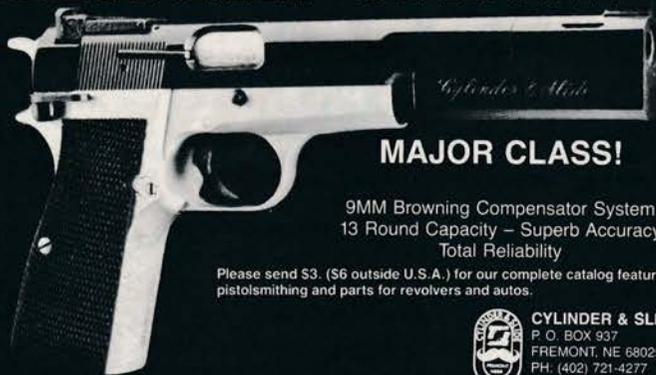
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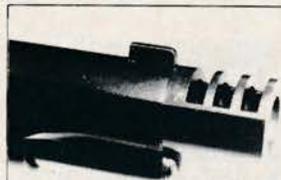
Continued from page 36

basic technique, on the other hand, were ready for nothing in particular, so were ready for anything. This would possibly work to my advantage, I thought.

After a short shooters meeting, the competitors were dismissed and returned to their temporary residences to prepare for the upcoming battle.

The night before a major competition is very interesting. One goes over everything in one's mind. He checks his gun, cleans it one more time, inspects each round he will fire and most importantly, goes over the course outline to make sure he knows each place he will reload, where he will place each foot at each position, which targets he will shoot fast, which need to be shown more caution, figure whether a stage is point-heavy or favors speed, etc. I'm sure no one got to sleep any too early that night as everyone was fully aware the title of World Champion was on the line. And the reigning world champ was no different!

Monday I arose to a beautiful morning and was raring to go. There is something about the first day. No one has yet to fire a



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shot but all the anticipation and calculating would soon turn into something more tangible. Bullets cutting clean holes in fresh paper targets. The smack of jacketed rounds hitting the reaction targets. The roar of the .38 Supers shooting 130 grain and lighter bullets at upwards of 1400 fps.

Yes, the shooting is finally underway and I can relax and do what comes easiest to me. I don't fare too well at all the long speeches and ceremonies but now I am in my element and feel at home like a shark in the ocean.

Many events occurred and I could not tell even a portion of the stories in the space available here. That is the job of the ones who tell the results. All that is history, and through thick and thin, good runs and bad, the match comes to an end. The U.S. Team once again scored a sound victory and I was able to defend my individual title.

World Shoot IX is scheduled for the land Down Under, sometime in 1990. With any luck, all teams will be allowed to compete and the home boys will be allowed one more chance to vie for the title of world champions.

As for the individual title, we will undoubtedly have newcomers to the sport to keep it interesting and of course the old timers like myself will no doubt be there to see if there isn't just one more lesson to be learned. All this makes a match such as World Shoot VIII worth the effort and expense, and permits a sport as young as IPSC to grow and prosper around the world. It takes an incredible amount of work to put on an event of this magnitude and all those involved deserve the admiration and thanks of all who competed. 

The American Handgunner congratulates Rob Leatham on successfully defending his title as IPSC World Champion. Rob has now won an unprecedented three world championships and firmly established himself as the greatest practical shooter in the history of IPSC. In addition to his three world titles, Rob also holds the distinction of being the only four-time United States national champion.

Rob Leatham conducts classes in IPSC and action shooting for all skill levels at his training facility in Arizona. He also travels to ranges across the country when the class size is sufficient. For more information about learning how to shoot from the new IPSC World Champion, contact Rob at Leatham Shooting Institute, P.O. Box 1291, Mesa, AZ, 85201.

BIANCHI CUP

Continued from page 64

His finger convulsed. The PMC bullet went where he'd jerked it, into the "8" ring at 10 o'clock. He clenched his teeth and fought back to control, his automatic zen state gone, firing now with a pure back-to-basics "Hold



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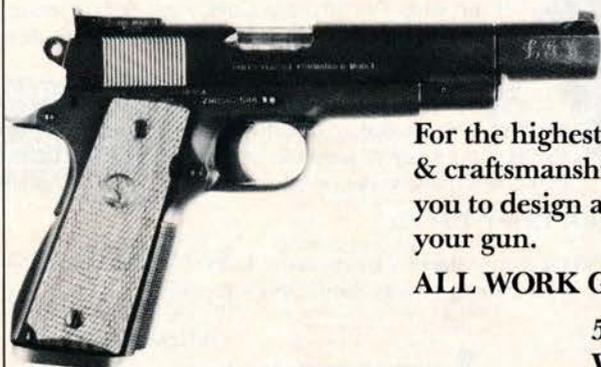
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the dot where it belongs, roll the trigger, keep the follow-through, let the shot surprise you when it goes off, John."

He finished with a 478 out of 480 possible on the mover. The "8" was the only hit he fired that was outside the maximum point ring. John had set a new record: 1918 out of 1920 possible points.

He had retained the Bianchi Cup. In second place was Brian Enos, the hot young gun who'd started the whole trend toward Aim-pointed revolvers. Brian's Frank Glenn Custom S&W .38 ripped out a 1916 that beat the previous record, but the old Border Patrol gunfighter Bill Jordan was proven right once again: As Bill said about something even more serious, "There is no second place winner." No one bothered to ask Enos where his two shots into the eight ring had broken loose from his control, or when, or how.

That was a pity, because the lessons of Bianchi Cup are many and deep. That's why so many of us who don't think we're really going to win, still go and shoot there. To win is to feel the warm balm of victory, but to lose is to learn a lesson you never forget. Ask anyone who has ever lost the Bianchi Cup. He or she can tell you exactly the error, exactly the failure, that killed their dream that year. It is a mistake he or she has probably not repeated since.

The Agony of Defeat. Ted Deacon fired tens and tens of thousands of rounds preparing for the Cup, and he finished in a superb 7th place. Yet he was dissatisfied, because he wanted The Cup itself. Deacon is the best "recoverer" in the action shooting game. I've watched him react to a mover that was started when he adjusted his eyeglasses, draw halfway through the cycle, and still put every bullet in the Ten.

This year, on the barricades, he had a world-class trigger convulsion and jerked a 9mm slug from his Nu-Line Colt into the 5-ring at the easy 10-yard line . . . yet he still went on to finish the demanding course with every other bullet in the Ten and X, for a 475 out of 480. Such a performance is a triumph of human will more significant than shooting perfectly when everything goes right, but because only the competitors care, only the competitors get to be there and see it, feel it, and take the lesson as something for themselves, given them by a brother of the arena.

The lessons are many. Mostafa Selhi of Saudi Arabia was on his way to unseating Mario DiPaolo of Montreal as High International when Mostafa set up on the wrong target during the Barricades and threw six X's into someone else's target. DiPaolo kept his well-deserved International title with a fine 1898.

This writer got a personalized lesson. On the Mover, I shut off my Wolf Ear active hearing protectors, the better to concentrate on the target, and as I loaded my Pro-Pointed Cannon Custom S&W 686 with Federal 158 grain .38 ammo and shoved it into my Ted Blocker holster, the linesman asked, "Any questions?"

"Yeah," I replied, "target goes left to right?"

Looking out of the corner of my shooting glasses, I saw the young range officer bobbing his head up and down as if in the affirmative. I set myself toward the left and waited. Even with the Wolf Ears turned off, I heard the motor start and the hands reflexively started to go for the revolver. I caught myself—as the rules demand—and threw my hands back to the start position.

A long moment followed. No target. I asked myself, "Do they stop the target for a false start? I corrected the damn thing!" Then I saw the target come into my field of view from the right, and disappear behind the left wall I'd been waiting for it to appear from.

I turned to the linesman. "Sir," he said, "I told you it was right to left."

"I want to see your supervisor," I answered.

What had happened was a logical error I can't blame the young man for. I'd asked, "Left to right?" He'd been nodding his head helpfully as he uttered the words I hadn't heard through dead muffs and underlying earplugs: "No, sir, it's right to left."

The chief range officer told me I could shoot the rest of the moving target course and then argue the point. I replied that losing 60 points was as good as losing 480, and I'd rather shoot the whole thing over again if I won the argument than shoot for 420 of them in a state of rage and make up the lost 60 in the flush of having won the protest.

After walking off the line, I consulted the rule book. It clearly said in one place that the targets will start right to left, and in another place that the competitor is responsible for knowing the rules. The year before, I'd lost the entire barricade match because the schedule had been changed at the last minute, and according to the rules, "The shooter is responsible for knowing his scheduled shooting time." When I'd protested in '87, the protest committee had found against me, without bothering to ask any of the several listed witnesses who'd seen me scheduled to shoot an hour later than the subsequently posted time. If I'd lost that, was there any point in arguing this one?

The NRA staffers had apparently seen the light. Several shooters at Cup '88 asked, "Why was Mas Ayoub's shooting schedule posted in giant letters under the welcoming banner this year?" The NRA folks said it was good-natured teasing; I prefer to think it was a tacit admission to their having screwed me last year.

In any case, I did not fire for score on the Mover in '88. Tom Campbell, Frank Behlert, and I were the only three people to have shot all ten Bianchi Cups. Tom's claim to fame is that in nine of the 10, he made the coveted Top Twenty. Mine is that I'm the only one who has shot all ten and placed in both the Top Twenty and the Bottom Twenty.

A Question of Rules

Let me be the first to say that while I feel I was screwed at the '87 Cup, I screwed myself at the '88 event and hold nothing against the match sponsors, not the least of whom is head range officer Ray Chapman, a good friend of

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mine. That said, let me share with you my one serious reservation about the Bianchi Cup National Action Shooting Championships—a certain aroma of poultry feces that surrounds certain aspects of scoring.

*Item: Current National IPSC Champion Jerry Barnhart is vying for the lead when he is called to the officials' table for having ammo that doesn't meet the power limit. The Action Shooting Power Limit must be 158 grain factory police .38 Special load or equivalent. One or more shooters have such ammo that doesn't make the stated requirement on the Bianchi Cup chronographs. Barnhart is using a .38 Super handload that does pass the power line when fired from the six-inch BarSto barrel of his Nastoff Custom Colt . . . but the rules say that it has to meet that limit when fired from a five-inch barrel range test gun.

It does not. Barnhart is disqualified. A few weeks later, he is introduced at another major shoot as the man who got greased and reamed at Bianchi Cup, and Barnhart answers, "I don't recall them using grease."

Yet he will still place first in the Jackpot Shoot side event. He vows to return to Bianchi Cup next year.

*Item: Jim Davis has declared Cup Ten to be "Bring a Buddy to Bianchi Cup Year." He has also executed the brilliant stroke of declaring a High Junior category. I convince a good friend of mine to send his sons, 17 and 15, to Bianchi Cup.

The boys shoot well. One of them runs a very solid 43 of 48 plates in front of numerous spectators, signs his card, and leaves the line as friends of his and his dad's pat him on the back. "430! Damn good score! Way to go!"

"Wait a minute," says the kid, "My score receipt says only 400."

The protest goes in. It lingers for the better part of a day. I hear one of the referees scoff, "How can the kid not know how many targets he shot, 40 or 43?"

I know for a fact that this ref has never fired a shot of Action Pistol in the heat of competition, or he'd know that a newcomer loses count after the first couple of misses. As the tense hours wind on, another referee says, "The kid signed his scorecard. That means he accepted his score. What are we arguing about?"

Those are the words of a man who forgot what it's like to be 15-years-old and have an adult say, "Sign this."

Ultimately, they'll make the right decision. The two boys are eagerly planning for their next time back at Bianchi Cup. But after that, I'm not telling any more of my friends to send their kids to face that kind of BS.

*Item: The shooter has blown his timing a bit, and fired two shots during the Barricades as the targets are turning. The bullets skid across the cardboard, leaving a mark between the 8 and 5 rings. As the scorer marks "5" and "5," the shooter says, "Didn't those shots cross the higher ring?"

"No sir," he is told quite firmly, "the rule is that the score is for the ring where the bullet actually perforates the target." The shooter



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shrugs, and signs to accept his score, the two fives and all. Later, he asks a referee, "When did you change the skidder rule?"

"We never changed it," the referee replies. "Why?"

The shooter tells him, and the ref says, "Those were 8s, not 5s. But they'll stay 5s on your score. When you signed the card, you accepted your score. The rule is, the shooter is responsible for knowing the rules."

The shooter shrugs and walks away. He does not think he'll shoot another Bianchi Cup. He is wondering, if it is his responsibility to know every rule, what the hell the *scorer's* responsibility was when the scorer told him in no uncertain terms that the hits were 5s, not 8s.

Preparing for Cup Eleven

Be hard, be ready, be practiced. For a few months before the '88 shoot, successful defending champion John Pride shot the entire Bianchi Cup once or twice a day every day during the week, then shot a match each day of the weekend to temper himself for the competitive heat. The man he beat in '87, then-defending champ Riley Gilmore, shot the Bianchi Cup every day of his life, even before he had the Team Psychologist and the Team Physiologist.

My own idea of being ready if I shoot the 11th Bianchi Cup will include retaining Columbia's gun-wise attorney Dick Thomas to stand at my shoulder and sue the next SOB I see trying to shaft a well-intentioned competitor.

Seriously, though, the vast majority of Bianchi Cup shoots, and Bianchi Cup shooters, comprise a symphony of the best pistoleros from all the disciplines who come together in the most intense competitive heat that is known in the handgunning world.

You will come face to face with the finest people *and* the finest shooters the sport of the pistol has yet produced—Pride and Rob Leatham, Enos and Gilmore, Barnhart and Bill Roger's and Bill's wife Christie who happens to be the current women's champion, and many more. You'll hear seasoned vets say "This is more pressure than gunfights I've been in," and you'll hear police combat competitors like Ed Duda, this year's high first-time shooter, say "The atmosphere here is so much more relaxed and friendly than the police nationals." You have to be there to understand why these are not mutually exclusive statements.

Know the rule book down pat. Barnhart was not the first to fall prey to a misunderstanding of something in the small print. If no one from NRA can convince me between times that refereeing will improve in '89, I doubt that I'll be there, but tell Tom Campbell and Frank Behlert that I sent you and you can tap into their 20 combined years of Bianchi Cup experience. Like all the heavy hitters, they'll share their expertise and their hearts and their souls with a fellow shooter, which is what I most love about the intense arenas like the Cup.

If you attend, enjoy. Go for the gold.

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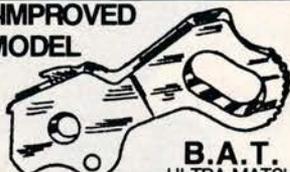
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ARMSCORP SD-9

Continued from page 48

finish is a phosphate-type with a matte surface, very non-reflective.

The wrap-around plastic grip panels completely enclose the grip frame, and although the grip is short, it is very comfortable. The hand-web area is deeply incurved, and the amount of projection at lower-rear is just right. While the frontstrap below the guard will accommodate only two fingers, the protrusion of the magazine floorplate helps to give them a firm hold. The lower front of the guard has a moderate hook, for those who favor that version of the two-handed hold.

At upper rear on the slide there is an indicator pin that emerges when there is a round in the chamber. On the test gun, the end of the pin had been cut to match the rear surface of the slide, and this left a rather sharp point. The test gun was a very early piece, and perhaps they'll round the tip of the indicator in regular production. If not, a few strokes with a small file will take care of this.

The SD9 does not have a mechanical locking system. To keep the action from opening during the instant of high pressure generated by the 9mm Parabellum round, the chamber has a series of fine annular rings. When obturation occurs, the case is gripped by these, delaying the opening until the pressure drops. When the slide begins to move rearward, it is controlled by four concentric recoil springs. The springs are captive on the guide rod, and will not fly out during disassembly.

On the left side at the top of the grip there is a manual safety lever that is easily flicked down to the horizontal off-safe position with the side of the thumb. In on-safe mode, the lever blocks the striker and locks the slide. Actually, with the DA-only trigger system, no manual safety is needed. With a round in the chamber and the trigger forward, the striker is automatically blocked by the cocking arm of the trigger bar, so the gun cannot inertia-fire if dropped.

The SD9 has a large ejection port, and the extractor and ejector are generously-sized and strong. The feed angle from the magazine is relatively shallow. All of these points contribute to reliability, and the test gun certainly demonstrated it. I fired 100 rounds of assorted ammo, including some hollow-points, and it just ate all of them. The loads tried were by Winchester, Federal, and Black Hills Shooters Supply. For a 9mm pistol of this size and weight, the felt recoil was quite light. One of the reasons for this is the excellent grip shape.

The takedown for cleaning is easy, but it has a few unusual moves. With the magazine removed and the chamber empty, a large cross-pin in the frame is pushed out toward either side. The trigger is then held to the rear

to clear the striker lug, and the barrel and slide assembly can be moved off the frame toward the front. Rapping the rear underside of the slide on a firm surface will move the breech block slightly downward, disengaging its top front lug from a recess in the slide.

The breech block and barrel can then be moved out of the slide toward the rear, and the recoil spring unit is easily detached from the underside. Turning the backplate of the breech block in either direction allows its removal, along with the striker spring and guide. The striker can then be taken out, and the extractor can be removed from its recess on the right side of the breech block. It's best to leave the indicator pin assembly in place, unless you're a gunsmith.

Cosmetically, the SD9 is one of the ugliest little guns in existence. But, as grandmother used to say, "Pretty is as pretty does," and this super-compact 9mm does just fine. Fully loaded, it gives eight rounds of 9mm Luger firepower in the size format of a small .380 Auto. The DA-only trigger is a plus feature, and the handling qualities are outstanding.

It's dependable, and the price is reasonable. Is there anything I would change? Yes. The sharp indicator pin, already mentioned. And, I'd change the hooked guard to an out-curve at the front, giving more room for a gloved finger. As it is, though, the SD9 is a perfect self-defense or police back-up piece.



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WILDEY SURVIVOR

Continued from page 53

through the devoted efforts of good friends Linda Zachow and Peter Hylenski, Will was able to keep the nucleus of an administrative and design staff together.

Will had also retained all of his patent rights to the gas operated Wildey design, and during the lean years after being forced out of the old Wildey, Inc., Will Moore cast about for ways to make the design more efficient to manufacture, to enlarge on the gas operating technology in designing an entirely new pistol, and to develop pistol cartridges with improved ballistics. The latter effort resulted in the development of the .475 Wildey Magnum.

Will Moore was constrained in his

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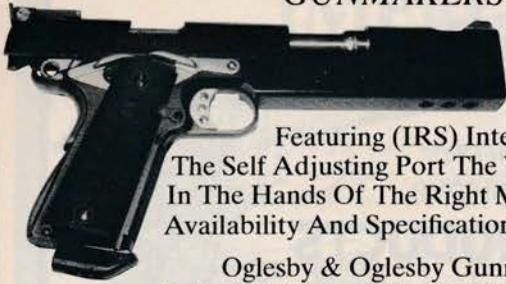
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design efforts by the size of the Wildey magazine, which meant that any new cartridge could not be any longer than the existing .45 Winchester Magnum cartridge. But what cartridge case to use as the basis for a new large caliber pistol cartridge? The .45 Winchester Magnum in essence is a .45 ACP case lengthened by .300" and both cartridges have standard maximum cartridge case diameters of .476 inch.

The .44 Auto Mag pistol cartridge was based on the .30-06 and .308 rifle cartridge cases, and even though the .44 Auto Mag has a longer case than the .45 Winchester Magnum, the maximum case diameter of the .44 Auto Mag is the same as its parent rifle cartridges, .470".

To be sure, the belted magnum rifle cartridge cases offer greater case diameter, but belted cases diameters are too great to fit into the Wildey magazine. In my opinion the belted magnum cases do not offer enough additional case capacity to justify the significant expense of retooling for new magazines and new frames.

So Will Moore turned to the .284 Winchester rifle cartridge case. The .284 Winchester cartridge has the same cartridge rim diameter, .473," as the .30-06 cartridge family, but the cartridge case body is wider, thus making the .284 a "rebated rimless" cartridge case.

The .284 was the first commercial American cartridge to use this configuration, though there were earlier English and German rebated rimless cartridges, with the most widely known being the .425 Westley Richards cartridge.

The .284 has a maximum case diameter of .500" as compared to the .30-06 family maximum case diameter of .470," and while we are not talking of large volumetric differences, these differences can be substantial in pistol cartridges.

Filling cartridge cases with water to the top of the case then carefully weighing the water is a commonly accepted method of computing volumetric capacity. Thus, the .475 Wildey Magnum, which is the .284 Winchester cartridge case cut to 1.198" (the same length as the .45 Winchester Magnum), has a volumetric water capacity of 27.7 grains.

The .44 Remington Magnum cartridge case holds 24.9 grains of water, and the .44 Auto Mag holds 26.2 grains of water. Clearly, then, the .475 Wildey Magnum has greater capacity.

The overall length of the loaded .475 Wildey Magnum cartridge is the same as that of the .45 Winchester Magnum, or 1.600". As we'll see a little later on, it is important not to exceed that overall length. Of course, you can't make a .475 Wildey Magnum cartridge case merely by cutting down the .284 Winchester. Once the .284 case has been cut down the case must still be inside neck reamed. Forming the .475 Wildey Magnum is no more difficult than forming any other wildcat cartridge, and easier than most since no fire-forming

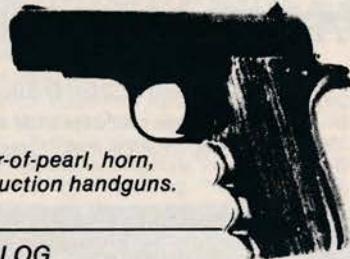
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operations are necessary. Case forming dies and reloading dies are available from RCBS and Wildey, Inc.

Any chance that .475 Wildey Magnum cartridge cases will be available commercially in the near future? I spoke with Will Moore as I was putting the finishing touches on this article, and Will was engaged in serious negotiations with a major cartridge case manufacturer to bring out commercial cases in 1989. I'm confident that we'll see commercial cases available from Wildey, Inc. this year.

Bullets are available from Barnes Bullets of American Fork, Utah. Currently only 250 grain bullets suitable for use in pistols are available, but as the .475 Wildey Magnum matures I'm confident that bullets will be offered by other sources.

Okay, so how does the .475 Wildey Magnum perform? Does the Survivor function more reliably than the Wildey I evaluated in the March/April 1984 issue of *American Handgunner*? Let's address the second question first.

The .475 Wildey Magnum Survivor I have been shooting is much more functionally reliable than the .45 Winchester Magnum Wildey I previously evaluated. That's not to say that the Survivor is 100% functionally reliable. The Survivor has some eccentricities which can make shooting this big pistol an exercise in frustration. However, it was much easier to overcome these eccentricities in the .475 Wildey Magnum and establish reliable operation than it was in the earlier evaluation.

These "eccentricities" (I prefer that term rather than the term "problems") center around getting the gas metering system. Until you get the proper amount of propellant gases regulated to operate the slide reliably, clearing any malfunction is an exercise in frustration due to the heavy spring resistance which must be overcome when operating the slide manually.

However, I was able to get the Survivor's gas regulating system functioning reliably within 15 rounds, whereas I had never achieved reliable functioning with the .45 Winchester Magnum.

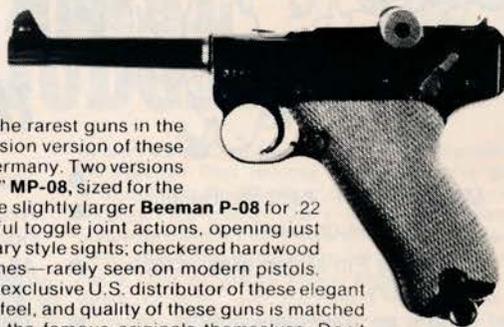
If you don't get reliable slide operation you have to keep adjusting the gas regulator one detent at a time, one shot at a time, until you achieve reliable operation.

In the earlier *American Handgunner* evaluation of the .45 Winchester Magnum Wildey autoloader, I had commented that I had not achieved the accuracy I knew the Wildey was capable of producing. The Wildey has a barrel which is held rigidly to the frame. There are no toggles or links which have to lock into alignment to establish a barrel-to-frame relationship. The Wildey locking system is just like that of a semi-automatic rifle since it is accomplished by a cylindrical bolt. In short, there are less variables in the design of the Wildey, and that theoretically should create the parameters for greater accuracy.

Such proved to be the case. I've had five range sessions with the .475 Wildey Mag-

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num since I had only 30 cartridge cases and, of course, had to head back to the reloading bench after shooting the ammunition I had loaded. The first two range sessions were devoted to getting the gas system regulated properly with the three different loadings used, and I really did not get around to firing for accuracy until later in the evaluation program.

The research conducted thus far by Will Moore and his chief engineer, Peter Hylenski, indicate that Olin's 296 powder is probably going to be the powder of choice for the .475, so I loaded with this powder exclusively.

Powder charges recommended to me were 29, 30 and 31 grains of 296, and the bullet used in all cases was the Barnes 250 grain jacketed solid point. I tried both magnum large pistol and magnum large rifle primers, and the magnum large rifle primers seemed to work better for me.

This is as good a time as any to point out that I have not done as much work with the .475 Wildey Magnum as I would wish. There are a lot of other powders I'd like to try, and I'd like to see if I obtain significantly different results by using some stainless steel bushings which Dick Casull gave me some years ago which permit magnum small rifle primers to be used in large primer pockets.

There is a lot of work remaining to be done with this cartridge, and in many respects this report to the readers of *American Handgunner* is only a preliminary one. However, I think that we have enough data to draw some valid conclusions about the .475 Wildey Magnum cartridge.

Okay, so what about the accuracy? My best five round group measured less than one inch center-to-center. Normally I like to fire a 10 round group, but since I was loading the .475 Wildey Magnum magazine with only five rounds I thought that a five round group would be demonstrative of the autoloader's potential.

All groups were fired at 25 yards, and I most definitely did not achieve the five round group with all holes touching on the very first accuracy test. Going into the accuracy testing, once functioning difficulties had been overcome, I was recording five round groups substantially less than two inches on centers. The trigger of the .475 Wildey Magnum Survivor was considerably better than the trigger of the .45 Winchester Magnum I had evaluated for the March/April 1984 *American Handgunner*. However, the sights on the .475 were standard Wildey; adjustable, but without any inserts in the front sight.

I must say that I surprised myself when I shot the sub one-inch group. I was hurrying to perform some velocity testing over my Oehler 33 Chronotach before a threatening rainstorm broke. I was paying much more attention to making sure that the bullets were going over the skyscreens, and had to look twice through the spotting scope after I had finished the five shot string to make sure my eyes were not play-

ing tricks on me.

I did not duplicate that remarkable (for me) group on a subsequent testing session, but as is so often the case with large calibers, both rifle and handgun, they prove to be remarkably accurate.

If the shooter rigs a scope on the Wildey Survivor I believe accuracy such as I achieved with open sights will be the norm rather than the exception.

I prefer not to list extensive velocity figures at this time because I haven't done the extensive testing of various powder/bullet combinations to obtain what I believe are realistic results. As I mentioned earlier, the only powder I've used has been Olin's 296. The 31 grain charge weight pushing the 250 grain Barnes bullet produced velocity readings in the 1580 to 1650 fps range.

Peter Hylenski at the Wildey factory in New Milford, Connecticut, tells me that the 31 grain charge of 296 produces slightly over 1700 fps on the Oehler 33 the factory uses, and the difference between the velocity readings I obtained and those obtained at the factory certainly fall within the range of permissible variations. Those readings, by the way, equate to some 1600 ft/lbs of energy at the muzzle, so the .475 Wildey Magnum certainly has adequate energy for any game animal you could realistically want to hunt with the Survivor.

I did encounter one anomaly with the 31 grain charge which must engender caution. The 31 grain charge of 296 is a compressed load when the 250 grain Barnes bullet is seated to the correct overall length to function through the magazine. Remember that the .475 Wildey Magnum, like all cartridge cases designed to be utilized in semi-automatic handguns, uses a taper crimp to hold the bullet in place rather than the roll crimp commonly used on revolver or single-shot pistol cartridges which produce heavy recoil.

I experienced no problems when firing loads of 31 grains of 296 which I had recently assembled. However, I had received a partial box of .475 Wildey Magnum ammunition which had initially been shipped to another evaluator. I had noticed that some of the bullets in this box appeared to protrude further out from the cartridge cases than did my handloads. I had loaded my cartridges so that the middle of the cannelure was even with the mouth of the case.

The cartridges I received would not fit into the magazine without binding in the magazine body, but I really did not pay any attention to this factor since this particular day I was interested in obtaining some velocity readings.

The first shot locked the action in the partially opened configuration—and locked it tightly! Curiously, the cartridge case was ejected normally and revealed absolutely no indication of excessive chamber pressures. I discussed this situation with Will Moore and it was his opinion

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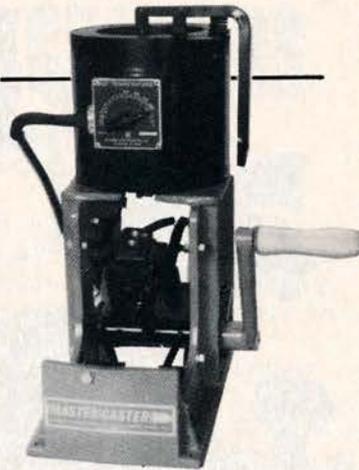
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that since the 31 grains of Olin's 296 is a compressed charge of powder, over time the compressed powder will move the bullet forward in the case. The cartridge which I fired apparently had the bullet protruding far enough from the case to jam tightly into the barrel's leade, with resulting highly elevated breech pressures when the powder was ignited.

The Wildey autoloader handled the increased pressures without a bobble, which speaks very highly of the pistol's mechanical integrity, though the increased pressure did "freeze" the action. If a roll crimp could be used this situation would not occur, but since the taper crimp must be used to preserve adequate headspace for the .475, and indeed, any other rimless pistol cartridge, additional care must be taken in reloading for the .475 Wildey Magnum when using compressed powder charges.

The compressed powder charges themselves present no problem; the problem arises when the overall length of the cartridge exceeds 1.600."

I'm going to continue to reload for the .475 Wildey Magnum, but when I assemble a load in which the powder is compressed I believe I'll use a sealer between the bullet and the neck of the cartridge case to insure that the bullet will not move forward in the case. I'll also be watching the overall length of the .475 Wildey Magnum cartridges whenever I load them to make sure that the 1.600" length is not exceeded.

In this regard, the magazine makes an excellent gauge to ensure that this length is not exceeded — if the cartridge will fit into the magazine without binding in the body of the magazine, it will be the proper length.

When factory loaded ammunition is available and sealers are used during the loading process this anomaly should never recur. Remember, though, that it is always the shooter's responsibility to insure that any handloaded ammunition is appropriate for the firearm in which it will be fired.

I liked the Survivor. I think it has a future. Will Moore never lost faith in his pistol. This design got quite a boost when the producers of *Death Wish III* decided to feature the .475 in that Charles Bronson movie. And while Will Moore is quick to credit the movie with "putting the Wildey on the map" I like to think that Will Moore's unswerving belief in this pistol and his desire to make it available to American handgunners would have breathed new life into the design in any event.

When last I talked with Will Moore he gave me the figures for the back orders he's received for the Survivor, both the .45 Winchester Magnum chambering and the .475 Wildey Magnum chambering. I can't reveal those figures since they are business-sensitive, but there is a market for this pistol, and a large one.

There is no relationship between the "new" Wildey, Inc. located in Brookfield,

Connecticut, and the "old" Wildey Company which was located in Cheshire, Connecticut, and later in upstate New York. While the "new" Wildey, Inc. cannot perform any warranty work on the Wildey autoloaders sold by the predecessor firm, it can and will provide repair services and replacement parts for Wildey firearms already in the field.

Will Moore has a lot of ideas which will be of interest to American handgunners. He will be introducing his "Ringmaster" design at a future date, but only after he has thoroughly worked the kinks out of the system. I've fired this autoloader and when it is ready for its debut you'll read about it first in these pages. The Survivor will continue in the Wildey line up. Will Moore had acquired the stocks of parts from the defunct Wildey Company, and subcontractors are furnishing the components which Wildey, Inc. needs to satisfy all the back orders it has received.

There are some interesting cartridges which will be introduced later. One which I'm particularly interested in seeing will be the .357 Peterbilt, brainchild of Will Moore's design engineer, Peter Hylenski. The Wildey is back . . . and it really is a Survivor.

For more information, write to Wildey, Inc., Dept. AH, P.O. Box 475, Brookfield, CT, 06804.

MATCH BARRELS

Continued from page 45

the slop accumulates at the rear of the barrel—as it is inclined to do in Browning-style automatics where the barrel must drop—poor accuracy is greatly magnified downrange.

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bility. That is why, even with the most precise barrel installations, smoothness is at least as important as tightness and rigidity.

National Match barrels, as shipped, generally will not fit a pistol directly, and are not intended to. Irv Stone's Bar-Sto barrel, fitted to its own precision bushing and swinging link, comes closest, but usually requires some touches to the hood and a slight bit of work on the topside locks for setup. Bill Wilson's, Jimmy Clark's, and the Kart units require considerable work, and Wilson's go considerably beyond the ancient Rock Island specification in leaving latitude for precision fit. Some manufacturers offer "fat profile" units of .591" or over full forward minor diameter to indulge the whims of truly creative smiths. Different as they may look, these are all National Match barrel units.

There are smiths who accurize semi-autos by welding up and milling and filing stock factory units. This seldom saves the consumer much money, and there is some suspicion that the welds are not as stable as a tube born of a solid forging or bar stock, and that the trimming process introduces additional fatigue to the unit. One smith I encountered in the middle of such an operation explained that his customer steadfastly refused to allow a match barrel to be installed, complaining that he already had a new barrel and, besides, such a unit would not be "original." It is, however, far more common for the accurizing process to include a new match barrel unit.

Some smiths will even contemplate using the Series IV Colt spring collet bushing, tweaking and fiddling with fit. However, smiths who've had just one of these babies break inside the slide will seldom recommend the units again, and most especially will not retain the system with a massive match barrel. They prefer the solid, Commander-style bushing.

Other smiths, whether in compensated IPSC guns or more conservative National Match guns, prefer the largest gross barrel dimension available, and some will dispense with the bushing altogether, using instead a tapered barrel to fill the bushing well (about .725" maximum diameter, before taper) or welding, silver soldering, pinning, screwing, or otherwise securing a tapered sleeve on compensated units to eliminate the bushing entirely. The barrel's mass, just as in a target rifle, helps to spread heat and, in semi-autos, soaks up a lot of chatter and vibration. Recoil springs can be considerably lighter because of increased barrel weight. With some of the units used on heavy compensated pistols, especially using light Gold Cup slides, the action is quick, yet the actual wear on the pistol is much reduced by the barrel's tendency to ease and retard the initial violence of the recoil action.

In terms of delivered accuracy, some smiths quote two-inch 5-shot groups at 50 yards from a machine rest as their minimum standard for a full-house match gun. A few smiths maintain they can retain this standard for hundreds of rounds with a sufficiently heavy barrel. Yet I've seen the Bar-Sto barrel,

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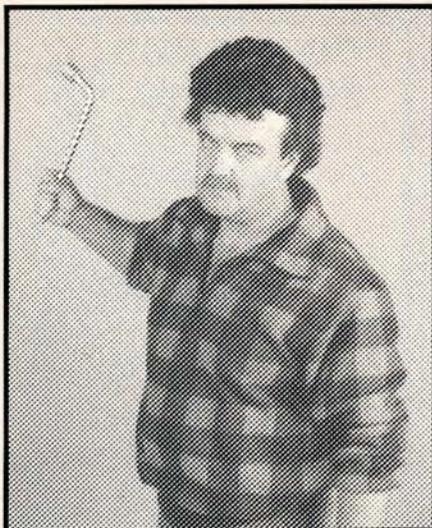
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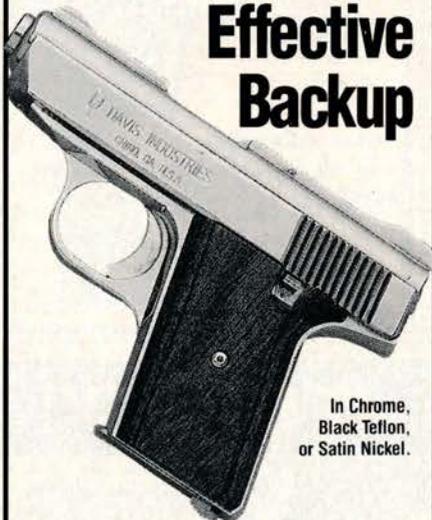
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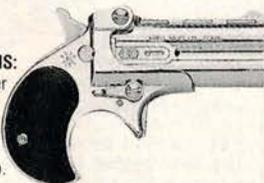


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lightest of the current offerings in gross weight, win matches against heavier-tubed pistols, and have come to the conclusion that a sufficiently high level of quality machining can make up for a lot of alleged philosophical inadequacies in approach.

Many smiths—Bill Laughridge of Cylinder and Slide, for example—insist upon a truly cylindrical breech area to fill the slide well and guarantee a precisely centered firing pin.

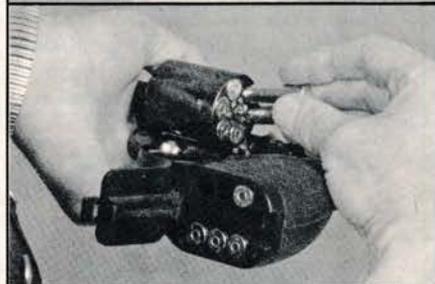
Some smiths test each and every barrel for Rockwell hardness. Ed Brown likes his match barrels 40+ on the "C" scale, and my conversations with him indicated he'd much prefer units he installs to be even harder. Most smiths disagree, figuring 32-40 on the "C" scale close to ideal.

Hardness determines a unit's dimensional stability, but high figures can and do make a pistol barrel brittle. High pressure rifle barrels, by contrast, generally run 18-22 hard in their chamber areas, making for a very tough surface that seldom cracks. The 4-16 stainless steel commonly used in pistol barrels tends to gall at hardness levels below about 32, and some manufacturers have had cracking problems near 40 on the "C" scale. Yet, Irv Stone's Bar-Sto units, made from bar stock rather than the forgings which predominate the industry, tend to be very durable in the neighborhood of 42 on the "C" scale. 17-4 PH, used in some of Bill Wilson's units, is a very tough material which machinists and some smiths dislike because of its tendency to tear up tools and bits, is an entirely different matter, for once installed, it seems to function durably and well over a fairly large hardness range. The same is true of the 4130 and 4140 carbon steels commonly used in match units by Kart and Wilson.

In choice of materials, though, there is at least as much variation in a pistolsmith's arts and tastes as in surface contours. Some prefer not to use stainless, others refuse to use anything else. One thing all agree upon, though, is that stainless is far easier to clean. And all the smiths I've talked to will likewise agree that it is important to clean any match tube for optimum performance. Even stainless steel, while very corrosion resistant, won't function as well in filthy condition, and abrasive particles left in the bore will cause erosion as surely as salts in a carbon steel barrel, albeit less obviously.

One also encounters differences in chamber and leade setup in match barrels. Customarily, in the Rock Island tradition, match barrels are delivered with intentionally short chambers and minimum leade. This way, the barrel can be headspaced to mate precisely an individual slide setup, throated to deal with hardball if necessary or set up to handle only soft H&G #68's with minimal "jump" to the rifling. Some, however, come from the factory set up for hardball, particularly in .45 caliber.

Time was only Colt-inspired match barrels were available, but this has changed. The Czech 75 and its clones, the Browning Hi-Powers, the S&W 9mm's, and the Beretta 92 can now be fitted with precision "fin-



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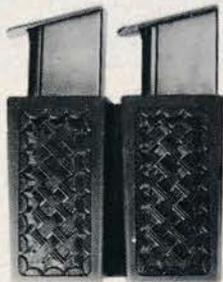
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gerprinted" barrels from several sources. Another good candidate would be the Walther P-38, which, like the Beretta, does not drop vertically during lockup.

One-piece compensated units, wherein the compensator for Colt-style pistols is a fixed part milled from the original forging, are beginning to show up, and these recoil-reduction devices may soon replace the laboriously hand-crafted units smiths like Jim Boland have used for years. Such units are expensive to install, but the extra bucks are well spent.

Considering that the match barrel is in many ways almost raw material—trying to leave the smith room to perform a function analogous to the old saw about sculpting an elephant by removing all non-elephantine parts from a heap of clay—close study of the manufacturing techniques brought me to the conclusion that the key word on the metal-moving end of this business is the same as on the installation end and the functional end—*consistency*.

Some 30 milling and lathe operations go into a modern match barrel. Most tolerances are $\pm .001$ ". Even bushings, manufactured to match the barrel, must be constructed in such a fashion that the smith need not spend the remainder of his life removing metal on straightforward National Match guns.

Roundness, concentricity and parallelism requirements are checked on finished units. CNC (Computer Numerically Controlled) cutting machinery is carefully programmed to assure consistency and assure that subtle angles and contours are precisely cut.

One thing most machinists and many smiths will confirm is that properly executed, honed and polished to about a #8 R.M.S. finish, most any bore cutting technique can work very well. Broaching, button rifling or hooking a bore can all yield excellent results. Twist rate, typically anywhere from one turn in 16" to one turn in 12" on .45 match barrels, makes only nominal difference at ranges out to 25 yards, and then mainly in relationship to very specific bullet weights and designs. Even groove numbers and depths, about which so much has been made over the years, makes little difference *if design execution is meticulous*.

I ran a series of tests myself, using .45 ACP barrels executed at a twist rate of one turn in 12", with groove numbers from 3 to 7, varying in depth but all carefully honed and lapped, and noticed no serious accuracy variations with bullets from 185 grains to 230 grains. Even from the Ransom Rest, deviation amounted to less than one would expect from one box of ammo to the next, and followed no "pattern" at all.

The reality of the modern automatic pistol match barrel is quite simple. The ones I have tested have all performed much better than factory "service" units. As I used to think after watching Jim Boland do things I was sure were impossible for customers, in ways I was *sure* couldn't work, then noting how well the pistols performed—good pistol-smiths are genuine artists. They don't all follow the same approach, and often disagree.

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RUGER SP-101

Continued from page 61

If the test summaries filled in by my students are any indication, he has nothing to worry about. A significant majority said they liked the gun better than their present snub .38s and would buy one. An even greater majority said they'd buy one if it was made in .357 Magnum.

Here we have my one pet peeve with this revolver. There's no doubt in my mind or the mind of the Ruger engineers I talked to that this little gun will stand the gaff of Magnum pressure. I all but got down on my knees to Bill Senior, but he didn't feel there'd be a market. "If I should be persuaded in the next year or two that there is a market for the small .357, of course, we'd reconsider," Bill concedes.

For now, no official test has been done confirming the gun's ability to withstand Magnum Force, so it goes without saying that neither Sturm, Ruger & Co. Inc., *American Handgunner*, nor particularly Mas Ayob suggest that you ream out your SP-101 .38 for the Magnum round. We all likewise advise that you stick to SAAMI pressure standards in your .38 Special loads. In any case, the .38 Special length cylinder and frame would not close and fire with a cartridge longer than a 125 grain .357 of factory configuration. The whole gun would have to be lengthened a tenth of an inch for the Magnum chambering to be feasible.

What about deliveries? Bill, Sr. is still stung over the situation with the 9mm P-85. The Ruger *Pistol of '85* was not, as of mid-1988, yet readily available.

Quite apart from a backlog of 90,000 orders, many of them from police, the P-85 production line at the new state of the art Arizona factory was held up more than once at Bill's command because he wanted to make one more perfectionist revision in the design.

The SP-101 is produced at another Ruger plant and its implementation was no impediment to the P-85 project. Nonetheless, Bill made the decision not to release the test weapons to the firearms press until the new guns were already in distributors' and dealers' possession. He knows that it was the loyal, individual American handgunner who made him and his company successful, and he regrets the P-85's premature introduction and the bad feelings it caused. At press time (August '88) Bill assured me that SP-101s were rolling off the line at a steady pace.

The little gun has a good feel to it. In a tradition begun with the Redhawk, the frame dips down behind the trigger guard far enough to provide an "integral grip adapter" rest for the critical middle finger. That, plus the low bore line and the excellent grips, helps create a "feel" that makes this gun a

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winner, even before you look at the underlying quality and magnificent "shootability" for a gun this size.

Will it supplant all other snub .38s? Frankly, no. I'll still go with the Airweight Bodyguard by Smith & Wesson as the most practical deep-concealment .38 Special belly gun on the market today. But for a primary .38 shortie, to be used in a belt or shoulder holster or as a home or store defense gun, I think the rugged new Ruger's easy adaptability to shooting powerful ammo effectively under stress makes it the "best of the breed" at this writing.

Its combination of compact size with service-revolver handling characteristics makes the Ruger SP-101 the logical inheritor of the late, lamented Colt Detective Special's mantle as the best all-around small frame .38 Special. It will be with us for a long time, and will help Ruger drive even deeper into the self-defense revolver market.

The little revolver is a big winner.



HANDLOADING

Continued from page 32

From time to time I think it's helpful to vent some of the things that really bug me. Not in the hope that they'll change, but simply because I know I'll feel better. High on the list of my pet peeves are shellholders.

I have a little parts cabinet on my loading bench and one drawer is just about full of shell holders. They were made by just about everyone, for I usually took what I could get when I needed it.

They all have one thing in common, there's no way in hell you can tell what cartridge it's for without trying one because they all use a different numbering system. So a Redding #1 which is for .45 ACP is not the same as an RCBS #1 which fits the .38 Super or a Lyman #1 which is for the .38 Special. The few times that there is similarity between two manufacturers is purely an accident and once they're out of the package you can't tell by looking who made it.

Well, that's not quite true for I can spot Redding's by the knurling that makes them so much easier to get out of the tool.

Several manufacturers now offer shellholder kits that contain the most popular sizes, Lee furnishes one with each set of dies and Redding has a neat little post in their die box where you can store the shellholder. Most loading manuals helpfully publish a chart so you can tell what's what, but isn't there a better way?

Instead of numbers why not use a uniform system of letters? It wouldn't be hard to come up a logical system whereby everyone's shell holder "A" fits the same case and so on.

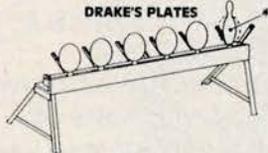
And another one: An editor once accused me of, "spouting platitudes," like "work up carefully" and "adhere to pub-

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lished data and be careful." I am guilty, with good reason.

Once I wrote about a guy I called "The Headstamp Eraser" whose .44 Magnum cases bear no trace of the original markings after a couple of reloads. I am sure everybody thought I made that one up, but the guy wandered up the other day carrying a new Desert Eagle .44. I had the chronograph set up, and it was obvious what he wanted. "What's your load," I asked? "Blank-blank grains of 296." What's the bullet weight?" "240 grains."

Well folks, the amount of 296 he mentioned was more than two grains above the hottest load I'd ever heard of. I wonder if his feelings were hurt when I wouldn't shoot it? Moral: One man's platitude is another's badly needed warning. (A fool's gun is soon parted. Editor)

COP TALK

Continued from page 34

get involved in that sort of thing." Others will testify for you . . . at \$125 or more an hour. A school should have the policy of offering a man's instructors for material witness testimony on a friendly subpoena basis if he is criminally charged or civilly sued. That has been my own policy since I established Lethal Force Institute, and we're made good on it four or five times now. No court has yet held against any of our graduate officers.

Remember, departmental qualifications were designed around the lowest common denominator of police shooting skill. If you fit the criterion, I don't think you'd be reading this magazine.

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500 METER

Continued from page 55

at the sides of the case and the rim rather than the shoulder, would accuracy be improved? If the cartridge shoulder were to be crimped back .003", would case life improve if most of the expansion occurred at the case shoulder rather than at the web? What about case capacity in relation to powder type and amount used?

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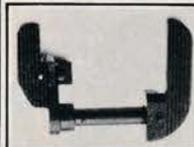
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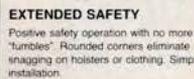
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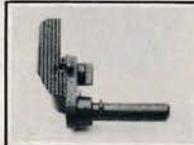
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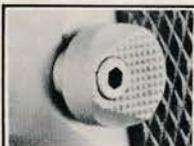


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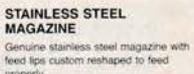
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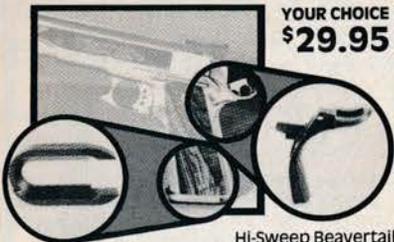
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large magnum rifle primer. All else came out positive, including different bullet weights and calibers.

Case capacity in relation to powder type and bullet weight was resolved by necking down a .225 Winchester rimmed case for the .220 Lightning and a .307 Winchester rimmed case for the other calibers being fired. A case shoulder slope between 28 and 30 degrees seemed to work out best for allowing the right amount of case capacity and case expansion. This assumption is based on an average of 50 loads per case in several calibers without experiencing any separation at shoulder or web. And this remarkable case life is spread over lots of shooting throughout a four year period.

Building proper powder loads is a tedious, repetitious procedure at best, to say nothing of frustrating along the way. Keeping safety in mind always, Don built his loads in small increments of 0.2 grains or less at a time, which included careful inspection of case and primer and chronograph checks for each round fired.

Initial loads were well under recommended maximums. While some loaders spread the gospel that rifle powders never should be used in pistols, it would seem reasonably logical that 10 to 14 inch barrels available in the T/C Contender are long enough to allow the right powder and charge to burn completely within the length of the barrel, and at the same time, perhaps offer a longer burning time through the length of the barrel to provide a longer and smoother push to the bullet.

If the proper ratios of case capacity, powder characteristics, bullet weight and bullet bearing surface work together with compatible barrel twist and optical sighting gear, consistent accuracy without maximum velocity would seem to have a chance downrange. Bower's results seem to bear out these hypotheses in a spectacular way.

Some of the Bower-developed wildcat loads are shown in the accompanying table, and include some five different calibers. Bower designed a single stage reamer which provides uniform shoulder slope and room for the bullet to engage the rifling in the barrel throat. Powder and bullet combinations listed work well for both Bower brothers. They both agree that others could probably duplicate accuracy with other bullets and powders and going through the same procedures for working up loads. But if anyone betters their results, they both are most anxious to hear about it.

Many of the pistol scope features desired by both Don and John have been developed by Burriss in conjunction with many suggestions and requests from the brothers. Rapid adjustment target knobs, choice of reticles and scope strength to withstand the wallop of rifle loads in handguns are the end products of Burriss engineering and manufacturing skills, making them a top provider of handgun scope variety and quality in today's marketplace.

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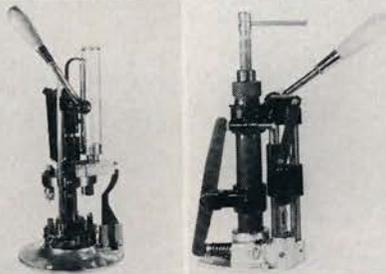
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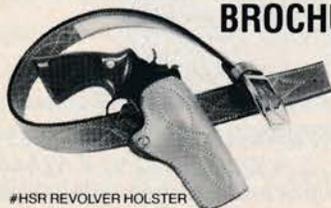


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mentation with cast bullets, and John Bower came up with his own mixture of lead, antimony and tin to produce a gas-checked projectile of considerable hardness. I did not perform any hardness tests, but suffice it to say that with no bullet lube whatsoever, no lead fouling of bores was encountered with John's cast bullets, yet downrange accuracy was consistent with manufactured jacketed rounds. And no, I don't have John's formula. You'll have to try to dig it out of him yourself. He wouldn't tell me.

I tried a few hand-held dry-fires, and I tried one and even two hand stances, but I soon found that accuracy would be sadly absent if I touched off any rounds like this. My side-to-side wobble would easily produce a terrible horizontal oval group of the 15-foot variety at 200 meters, let alone 500 meters.

The benchrest was a logical and much appreciated way to go. Don dreamed up a neat little benchtop support which allows elevation adjustment both at the bottom of the grip and up front under the forearm. Rough elevation is achieved by either moving a front adjustment screw up or down or, in one of the earlier models, sliding the front rest into a higher or lower slot. Fine-tuning is then made by lifting the back of the bottom of the grip forward or back or by a combination of the two adjustments until you've got the crosshair or dot where you want it.

Other competitors at the range also used various configurations of sandbags. One handgun was fitted with a Harris short bipod mounted backwards under the forearm, so innovation has its biggest opportunity here. It should be noted that both the Bower brothers wear glasses, but they both seem to take turns winning matches with the gear they've developed.

Aside from testing by observing results, I also inspected primers and cases for flattening, cratering, cracking or distortion. Nothing. I did a few chronograph tests with factory ammunition. A Federal 7x30 Waters 120 grain BTSP slug fired from my T/C Contender's 14-inch barrel averaged 2513 fps through a PACT chronograph, where the 1988 *Shooter's Bible* listed the cartridge at 2700 fps. As the factory listing was likely taken with a 20+ inch rifle barrel, the 14-inch T/C barrel results appeared to be about right.

The table shows the results of each Bower load tested, using the same PACT chronograph, convincing me that any loads I didn't test were most certainly in the ballpark and could in no way be described as "hot" loads. In fact, Don Bower found that accuracy for many loads decreased as maximum recommended velocities were approached.

From all shooting observed and done myself, I failed to note any significant variation from cold versus warm barrels after the first shot. Possibly the relatively short barrel (compared to a rifle at least) didn't

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have time to whip or vibrate differently before the bullet was safely on its way to the distant steel plate, but this is merely a guess on my part and in no way represents any scientific breakthrough or claim by anyone. There just wasn't any apparent effect on shot-to-shot accuracy, for whatever the reason.

Crosswind and changes in light proved to have the most significant effects on consistency. The wind invariably caused a horizontal group spread, and lower light meant higher hits. A good coach quick enough to pick up these changes in conditions minimized even these potential group-busters.

John coached me into providing a new eye for a full sized ram silhouette after my first shot missed slightly left when the wind eased off for a moment. John advised to hold the same sight picture as the wind picked up again, and the dark eye appeared in the proper place on the white-painted ram's head.

I was truly impressed, but it wasn't at all amazing. These guys simply know what they are doing and what they are talking about. And I'm not talking 500 yards, but 500 meters, or approximately 546.8 yards. The car odometer indicated over 0.3 miles driving from the firing point to the targets downrange.

Without the excellent target definition provided by the Burris scope, the targets were tiny white smudges against the neutral gray of the berm. That was probably because I wear glasses too.

Don Bower is firmly convinced that less bullet surface bearing against the rifling improves accuracy, as with a boattail. It also might involve better passage through the air. Whatever the ballistic reasons, Don had trouble finding commercial boattails for one particular load, and wishes that a greater variety of factory bullets would become available before too long.

"The bullets in 6.5 millimeter are really few and far between," said Don. "We could get a lot of mileage from a 105 grain and a 125 grain boattail soft-point."

I'm pretty sure that he wants these bullets so that he and his brother can continue to dominate the long range pistol matches, but don't tell him I told you. In spite of their fierce competitiveness, both Bower brothers are generous with information and assistance, so if you don't ask them any questions, don't say I didn't advise you otherwise. If I've stirred up a bit of interest, controversy or whatever, the place and person to write is:

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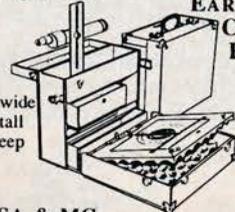
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BOOK REVIEWS

Any competitive rifleman will tell you of the importance of: temperature, light, wind, mirage and background—but how many erstwhile handgunners consider those factors? The metallic silhouette shooter who would like to score that "perfect 40" in this lifetime had better consider them!

Since you cannot control any of the aforementioned variables, what good is the knowledge of them? Record keeping (Oh No!!).

Oh yes. Comprehensive record keeping can change your hit ratio by at least 25 to 30% moving you from "by guess and by golly" conjecture to an educated assumption. Loose-leaf binders pose a problem—loose leaves. High tech or not, you'd look a little silly and be more than a little uncomfortable hauling around your Apple II personal computer in an Alice Pack. So, what's the alternative?

The handy-dandy Silhouette Data Book available from Triangle Reloading Bench, 18904 Fuller Heights Road, Dept. AH, Triangle, VA, 22172, for the munificent sum of \$4.50 plus postage. Each page, (white for chickens, yellow for pigs, green for turkeys, and azure for rams), double side printed, is broken down into the following segments: distance (50M, 100M . . . etc.), category (class—unlimited, freestyle, standing, whatever), zero (elevation and windage), corrections (elevation and windage), date, gun, caliber, place, hour, temperature, target color (aw c'mon!), background, light and mirage. There are also three small segments: one for sight picture, and two small clocks for wind and light direction.

The largest section mimics the IHMSA scorecard with two target images having a superimposed crosshair and circle that provides a handy reference point for your spotter. It also has in this area a section for windage and elevation corrections made during firing. Although why the windage corrections would be designated WG is beyond me?

Last but not least, my favorite section, the receptacle for numerous and varied four-letter words—the remarks section.

All of this information (whew!) is easily kept in a 6" x 8" notebook printed on heavy paper giving one page for loading data, another showing the various target dimensions and two pages of directions as to the use of the (many) aforementioned sections.

My personal favorite statement from the directions is No. 28, "Record during firing the direction of the shot fired." The symbol would indicate a 2 o'clock shot. **MAY OR MAY NOT HIT TARGET DEPENDING ON HOW BAD . . . cute!**

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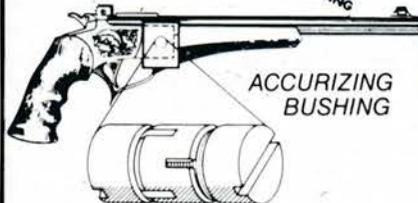
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VIDEO REVIEW

Introduction To Metallic Reloading and Bullet Casting 25 Minutes Color/Sound VHS; Newly Produced videotape program. Shooting/technical content (scale of 1 to 5): 4. Order from: Lyman Products, Middlefield, CT 05455. Retail price: \$34.95

Lyman continues its century-old tradition of presenting solid, clearly communicated shooting information. This program is composed almost entirely of new reloading and bullet-casting videotape coverage. Gimmicky video effects are held to a minimum, but there is much use of captions and subheadings on screen for graphic clarity. The only exceptions to new footage are bonus sequences of exciting hunting action.

There is one amusing sidelight, when an excited hunter ejects his rifle casing after a spectacular kill—and then seems to step on it as he heads for the downed animal. Still, it had done its job.

Presentation is solidly technical throughout, useful to any new or intermediate reloader. It also has value for the experienced reloader in using as a teaching/familiarizing medium working with our beginners.

Perhaps the main reason that this video doesn't get a full '5', is that the reloading setup shown is somewhat unrealistic. It is a squeaky-clean bench in its own room of the house. Given the population density of this country now, this reviewer would have liked to have seen a nod toward apartment-dweller reloading layouts, as well as some actual "lived-in" shop examples.

Naturally—and this is not meant as a criticism—the bench shown is populated with brand-new Lyman equipment. There are good marketing-info reasons for showing it, I know. But, many of us older reloaders will remember our beginning shop, composed of motley gear, in cellars, barns and garages that would have been uncomfortable if we hadn't loved what we were accomplishing.

Perhaps a scene showing an older reloader teaching a younger one might have added to the motivational content of this video.

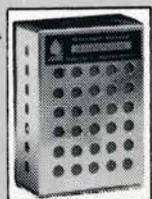
Sure, they have to pitch the fine Lyman line of products, but it's right for the job and very complete as always. Lyman again shows us that it has the capability to produce shooting/reloading information in any editorial medium. This reviewer would like to see Lyman—or somebody equally credible—produce shorter, equipment use-specific videos that each go in-depth on one reloading operation or one type of tool. This video is a good overall survey until such a library of units comes along:

Whit Collins

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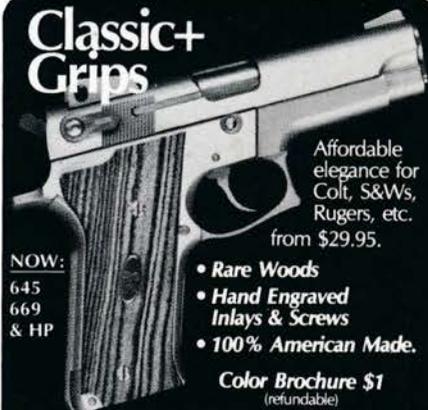
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INDUSTRY INSIDER

CAMERON HOPKINS

BYE BYE CORPORATE RAIDERS, HELLO SHOOTERS— QUALITY IS BACK AT S&W

Titanium is marvelous. Named for the giants of Greek mythology, the Titans, it is much stonger than steel, yet much lighter. Titanium is impervious to rust. It is the stuff of the space shuttle and fighter jets and surgical instruments. Listed in your Periodical Table of Elements as Ti, Titanium is an element, not a compound like steel. Gun designers have known about titanium's remarkable properties for years, but no one has been able to figure out how to machine a gun from the tough element at anything remotely approaching a reasonable cost. Until now.

Prototypes of a new titanium revolver, based on the proven Smith & Wesson lockwork design, have reached the offices of *American Handgunner*. A six-inch .357 Magnum, configured like an L-frame, weighs only 25 ounces compared to 46 ounces for a six-inch 586! Our prototype was badly out of time and shot horrible "groups" at 25 yards, patterns on the order of 10-inches. From a sand bagged rest!

The gun is said to go into production soon, but until we can verify that production models are available, we'll refrain from giving further details. The company is asking for pre-paid orders, cash up front on a gun unseen. That, I think, is not quite cricket. Visions of Bren Ten spring to mind, so I'll wait and see if guns appear on dealers' shelves before I reach for my checkbook. The asking price, incidentally, is \$595.



Just when you think you've seen everything in handguns, along comes this. The Calico M-900 from **American Industries** features a laser sight backed up by an Aim-point sight, a 100 round rotary magazine, a muzzle brake and a collapsible butt stock. It's chambered in 9mm Luger.

What's in name? Oh, about \$250 million according to **Beretta USA**. The Italian gunmaker is suing General Motors for calling one of the car models a Beretta. "We plan to stop General Motors from using Beretta, our company name, on a line of cars. The unauthorized use of the Beretta family name for a line of cars is an affront," said Robert Bonaventure of Beretta USA.

What nerve! Imagine naming a car after a gun! But wait, it's not the first time. Dodge has a little compact called the Colt and— turn about's fair play— **Colt** named a gun after a car, the Mustang.

And speaking of names, it seems Rambo is kicking up a legal fuss over **Colt** putting "Sly Stallone" as the serial number on a pistol featured in an ad promotion for the Colt Custom Shop's "heirloom model." The heirloom model allows a purchaser to order a special serial number and, according to the muscular actor, Colt used his name without his authorization. Stallone is suing for \$3 million.

Readers of *Industry Insider* learned about the new **Smith & Wesson** pistols last issue, but the mention was understandably brief and vague because the only sample I had touched was a bit of a stolen kiss. Now I have shot one and handled one and learned thoroughly about the new generation of Smith autos.

Yes, the earlier report was accurate about ergonomic changes to render the 9mm and .45 pistols more "pointable." Sure enough, the frame has been subtly improved and a new one-piece grip gives a drastically better "feel" to the guns. The new Smiths feel like SIGs.

In all, there are 23 separate design changes in what S&W is calling the Third Generation guns. Best of all is the incredible transformation of the once-lousy

double-action stroke to what is now, I think, nothing short of a fantastic factory trigger. Gone are the snags and drags, the grittiness and roughness. The new triggers are remarkably smooth and consistent throughout the DA pull.

S&W attributes the new triggers to a whiz-kid of an engineer by the name of Kevin Foley and also to a new computerized trigger analysis machine. This contraption, invented in-house by S&W, shoots laser beams into the trigger mechanism to diagnose areas for improvement. Sophisticated electronic measuring devices attach to the gun in several places and show the trigger's stroke on an oscilloscope, another aid in refining design changes to improve the trigger. The result is an astonishing DA trigger, better than a custom tuning could achieve on the older guns.

As impressive as the new generation is, I was struck by the attitude of the people at Smith & Wesson. No matter the fancy trigger computers or the new CNC production machines or the new Zeiss electronic measuring devices or the new system of quality assurance, it is people who make guns. And people who care about guns, good guns, are all that really matter.

The people at S&W have withstood the ravages of four company presidents in five years as the company changed hands from corporate owner to corporate owner. Bangor Punta, Lier Seigler, Fortnum Little— all mega-huge conglomerates gobbling up small companies and milking them before passing them on. Then came the refreshing news of longterm stability and commitment from the new owner, Tomkins of Great Britain.

Appointing the capable and resourceful Steve Melvin as president and pumping a sizeable chunk of investment capital into S&W, Tomkins mandated that the people of S&W may once again return to their cherished goal of quality. No more bottom-line-means-all. Make good guns, says Tomkins.

And making good guns is what the people at S&W know best. Strapped by corporate decrees from previous owners, S&W was forced to crank up the production line to maximum capacity and beyond. Now the people are excited that, finally, a parent company is permitting the prestigious old firm to return to its roots of making quality firearms.

You'll see and feel the difference in the new generation pistols. But remember, it's not so much the state-of-the-art computers and machines, it's the people at S&W who turn cold steel warm.



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