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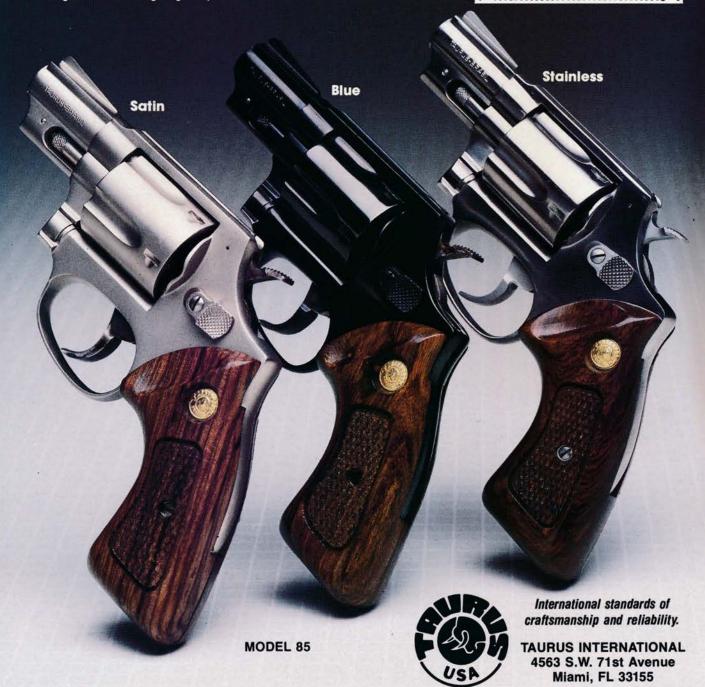
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zi. The very name symbolizes the ultimate in

compact firepower.

Without a doubt the Uzi is one of the most widely-known and respected firearms in the world. When U.S. interests are threatened; when an embassy is under siege; when an American airliner is hijacked; when a special unit is deployed on an "unusual" mission; then you'll see special weapons-and Uzis will

Now, for the first time, the general public has the opportunity to own a commemorative Uzi. But this opportunity is available to only 1500 arms collectors in the world, as that is the strict edition limit.

Presentation Grade

The American Armed Forces Commemorative is unlike any other Uzi ever made.

· For the first time ever, this Uzi is mirror polished and blued to a gloss black presentation-grade finish (field-grade Uzis are simply painted black).

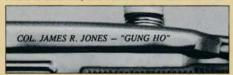
• 24-Karat Gold gleams off 17 components: maga-

zine release, pistol grip bushing, barrel ring nut, sear and trigger pivot pins, trigger, four stock screws and nuts, cocking knob and two sling keepers.

• Patriotic American symbols and inscriptions are

emblazoned in 24-Karat Gold across the receiver and top

plate, further declaring this to be a special Uzi.
• For years the factory has fitted only folding metal stocks to Uzis. But, this Uzi is fitted with a furniture-



To personalize your Uzi your name and/or motto can be engraved on the reverse of the receiver.

finished wooden butt stock, like on rare, early, militaryissued Uzis.

· The pistol grip and horizontal foregrip shine with a special, black, heavily-textured finish-symbolic of unconventional, often-mysterious operations associated with the Uzi. This further sets this Uzi apart from any

tool, Certificate of Authenticity and firing instructions. Awesome Firepower

Each Commemorative Uzi fires the readily-available 9mm ammunition the same as issued to our American armed forces.

This Uzi is made by I.M.I., the official maker of the Uzi and supplier to the governments of the U.S., Germany, Israel and the Netherlands, to name only a

Limited Edition; Only 1500

For the first time ever, the special serial numbers "UZI 001" through "UZI 1500" will be used. Yes, only 1500 will be made—a small limited edition by any standard! The important "firsts" embodied here and the low edition limit, coupled with the great interest in Uzis, are your assurance of future value. This Uzi has all the



Karat Gold plated

The wooden butt stock is fitted with a domed, gold-plated cloi-sonne enamel medallion honor-ing "The American Armed Forces Around the World." A second enamelled inlay—a gold and black "U.S." military medallion—is inletted in the rear grip.

sight adjustment

earmarks of being one of the most collectible firearms

Because this Uzi fires in the semi-automatic mode, no special submachine license is required to own one. Anyone who can own a regular hunting rifle can own this. And because this Uzi actually fires, it could be called upon to defend your home and family.

Satisfaction Guaranteed

The American Armed Forces Commemorative Uzi is available exclusively from The American Historical Foundation. To place your reservation, simply call our Member Services staff, toll free at (800) 368-8080, return the Reservation form, or visit. Once your reservation is received, we will help coordinate delivery through your

Protect and display your Uzi in the optional American Walnut Display Case. It may be wall mounted or displayed on table or stand. Lined with military-green velvet, it is fitted with a locking acrylic-glass lid to protect your Uzi against dust and unauthorized handling.

local firearms dealer. If you have an FFL, send a signed copy, and your Commemorative will be delivered directly to you. With your reservation, you will be made a Member of the Foundation.

Your satisfaction is guaranteed or return within 30 days for a full refund.

This landmark Uzi provides a permanent connec-tion between you and the American troops on duty around the world protecting our liberties. A work of art in gold, steel and wood, it is a reliable, firing firearm, which the experts are already calling a "major landmark" in arms collecting.

| RF | SF | RI | JAT | CIO | N |
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- ☐ Please also send the optional Walnut Display Case at \$195.
- My payment in full is enclosed (\$2195 per Uzi; Display Case, add \$195).
- ☐ Please personalize my Uzi, at \$25 and send the Personalization Request Form.

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AMERICAN

HANDGUNNER

MARCH/APRIL 1989

Vol. 13, No. 74

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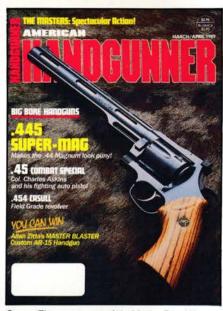
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Cover: The most powerful .44, the Dan Wesson .445 SuperMag. Photo by Ichiro Nagata.

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The \$64.00 question

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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 featues 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.

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

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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.

SPEAK OUT

Achtung! Combat Pen Pal Wanted

I am now a member of the German military and a police shooter. We shoot also combat. As a fan of this sport I had write letters to combat shooter in Austria and Switzerland. I will write letters to combat shooter in the USA, too, I would thank

over shooting, guns, etc. To my person: I'm 24 years old, policeman and my ad-

> Uwc Weber Fluggenstr. 8 8000 Munchen 19 West Germany

you for giving my address to a combat shooter which will write letters with me

Man In The Field

In Mr. Bill Copenhaven's letter which appeared in your Nov/Dec 1988 issue, he states: "The need for a handgun in a modern military organization is so trivial . . . Although handguns are fun for various military teams in inter-service morale building, their tactical importance to the average soldier is zip."

Everyday U.S. Coast Guardsmen are conducting drug interdiction boardings at sea. At the very least these boardings can be equated with an officer making a random highway stop, and occasionally "high risk" boardings can be the equivalent of a SWAT team serving a drug warrant.

The tactical importance of a modern, high-capacity handgun in federal law enforcement is anything but trivial. Let's start thinking about the man in the field and get on with issuing a modern hand-

> Lt. Jim Morrison, USCG Corpus Christi, Texas

Cops Can Shoot

This is in response to a letter from M.J. Guy (Jan/Feb 1989) in which Mr. Guy alludes to the fact that cops can't shoot straight and obviously shouldn't be trusted to carry high capacity semi-autos.

The first thought that pops to mind is: did Mr. Guy have a recent unpleasantness with the law? If not, does he always lump diverse groups of people into molds that fit his view of the world?

Not all citizens or cops shoot like the top shooters in IPSC, but, Mr. Guy, I would stack up my department against any agency you care to choose, or against you and your buddies.

Bring your checkbook or cash. See you on the range.

> Kyle C. Caffey Deputy Sheriff Larimer Co. Sheriff's Dept. Ft. Collins, Colo.

National Geographic

The first time I read Handgunner magazine, the photography is what got my attention.

The second time I saw a Handgunner magazine, I decided to subscribe. The photographs made me feel like I was actually holding the gun in hand for close examination.

I don't think it would be far fetched to call Handgunner magazine the National Geographic of the gun world.

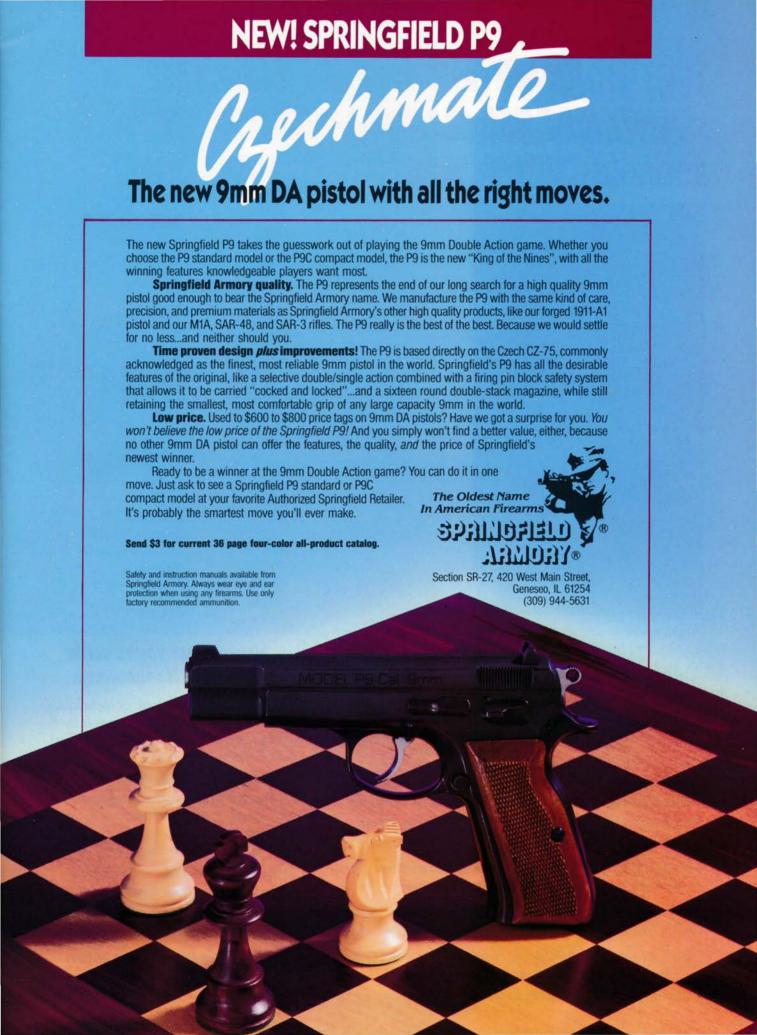
> Thomas B. Barsby Lodi, Calif.

I'd like to be sure, once and for all. What does PPC stand for? I thought I had found the answer in your magazine's Conversation With A Champion with John Pride. You defined PPC as Practical Police Course.

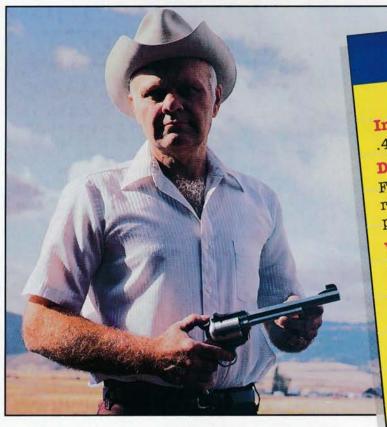
So I was confused when I read in a Guns & Ammo that PPC stands for Prac-

Continued on page 10





WHY AN OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HANDGUNNER READS AMERICAN HANDGUNNER:



Dick Casull

Inventor:

.454 Casull cartridge.

Designer:

Freedom Arms .454 Casull revolver, the "world's most powerful revolver."

Winner:

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You would think a serious inventor like Dick Casull reads American Handgunner just to stay on top of the latest handgun design trends.

And one might also suspect that he uses the handloading information in each issue to develop and test his own more powerful loads for the .454.

While it is true that Mr. Casull does read American Handgunner to stay in the forefront of handgun design technology it's also true that he reads it for another more important reason.

Like so many other "handgunners," Dick Casull reads American Handgunner for enjoyment.

Every issue helps him and thousands of other "handgunners" like him enjoy handgunning even more.

If an Outstanding American Handgunner like Dick Casull enjoys reading American Handgunner, don't you think you would too?

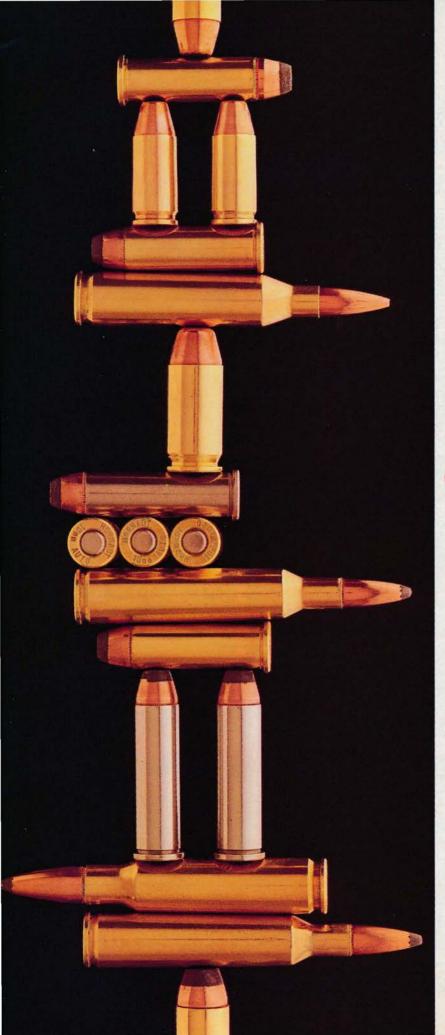
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Write Hornady for a copy of our latest catalog. Include \$1 and receive our 40th Anniversary Commemorative Poster!

Continued from page 6 tical Pistol Course.
So what is it, guys?

Erroll Bickford Springdale, Ark.

According to Pat Loveday, assistant manager of police competition at the National Rifle Association, PPC stands for Police Pistol Combat. However, The Complete Manual of PPC Shooting by Fred Romero says that PPC stands for Police Pistol Course. As a curious sidelight, whenever we write PPC on our word processors here at Handgunner, the computer spits out that PPC is misspelled, it should be PCP. Whoever wrote the program must have been a hophead!

Latest on M-9

I learned of your interest in the Army's M-9 and XM-10 programs through your article on the subject which was presented in the September/October 1988 issue of the *American Handgunner*. I note that you will follow the new round of testing closely and keep your readers informed of the results.

Therefore, enclosed is a press release issued by Congressman Brooks at the close of his hearings on September 15, 1988 which I think might be the latest on the subject.

Gilbert L. Martin Springfield, Va.

CATASTROPHIC FAILURES OF ARMY'S NEW BERETTA HANDGUN REVEALED IN HOUSE HEARING

Serious safety and quality flaws in the Army's new standard handgun, the 9 mm Beretta, were outlined by the General Accounting Office (GAO) at a hearing today before the Legislation and National Security Subcommittee of the House Committee on Government Operations.

The GAO, reporting the findings of an investigation requested by Committee Chairman Jack Brooks (D-Tex.), disclosed that the pistol is experiencing catastrophic slide failures in the field which have resulted in serious injury to military personnel. In addition, GAO disclosed

other quality problems, such as frame cracks, which along with the slide failures, could cost the taxpayers millions of dollars to fix

"Today's testimony confirms once again that the 9 mm procurement is in trouble," Chairman Brooks stated. "Clearly, after expending enormous amounts of time, money and manpower, the Army finds itself saddled with yet another failed weapons system," he continued.

Rear Admiral Robert H. Ailes, Deputy Commander for Weapons and Combat Systems, confirmed that aside from cracks in the gun's frame and slide failures, in the Navy's experience, the Beretta has sustained severe corrosion problems. During a February 1988 training exercise in Alaska, the Beretta became totally inoperable after four days exposure to the elements.

The Committee also heard from a Navy officer who sustained injuries during a July 14, 1988, training exercise when a Beretta slide failed. When asked by Chairman Brooks if he would feel comfortable using the Beretta in the future, the officer stated, "I'd rather have a weapon with no history of failure"

This hearing was the second in a series of oversight reviews by the Subcommittee on the Army's handgun procurement. In June of 1986, the Committee reviewed the contract competition which resulted in an award to Beretta. The Committee found that after seven years and two false starts, the Army was left with a procurement where most of the world's leading arms manufacturers were eliminated or withdrew from the competition. At that time, GAO testified that the 75 million dollar procurement was seriously flawed and that one competitor, Smith & Wesson, was unfairly eliminated from the competition. As a result, the Committee issued a report recommending that the Army cancel the contract with Beretta and recompete the balance of the 9 mm requirement.

Congress, through the appropriations process, subsequently directed that DOD conduct a new competition for the follow-on procurement of 9 mm handguns. The Army's first attempt to recompete the contract failed, when all the vendors, except

Beretta, either refused to enter or were eliminated from the competition.

"Apparently, the Army believed it could once again blatantly favor Beretta," Brooks said. "At the Committee's urging, Secretary of the Army John Marsh terminated that effort and directed that a new competition be held which would be fair and equitable to all companies."

Edward P. Boland (D-Mass.), Ranking Majority Member of the House Appropriations Committee, who also testified today, alluded to the Army's handgun procurement as "a sorry spectacle that thoroughly deserves the harsh light of inquiry that this panel turns on it today." Mr. Boland concluded that the Army's record "argues strongly, in my view, for removing the program from the administrative control of the Army. . . .

Silvio O. Conte (R-Mass.), Ranking Minority Member of the House Appropriations Committee, stated that in the case of the 9 mm procurement, "we find an example of nearly everything gone wrong on a procurement program and I think we ought to use this example as a way 'not to do it.'" Mr. Conte agreed with Congressman Boland that the procurement should be taken away from the Army.

George E. Dausman, Army Deputy Assistant Secretary for Procurement, admitted to the quality and safety problems plaguing the pistol. However, he continued to defend the procurement and asserted that corrections to the problems are at hand.

Admiral Ailes concluded his testimony by saying that the Navy doesn't intend to buy anymore Beretta handguns from the current procurement and will satisfy its requirements through the new recompetition.

"It is incredible that after almost a decade of effort and the expenditure of millions of taxpayers' dollars, the Army has been unable to successfully field this relatively simple weapon. This weapon, I might add, is virtually the same technology as that developed and deployed by the Military in 1911—the Colt .45. The American people and taxpayers, not to mention our service men and women deserve a better deal," Brooks concluded.

Continued on page 13



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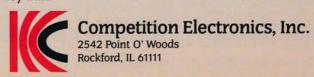
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Continued from page 10

Members of the Subcommittee, in addition to Brooks are: John Conyers, Jr. (D-Mich.), Stephen L. Neal (D-N.C.), Barney Frank (D-Mass.), Robert E. Wise, Jr. (D-W.Va.), Ben Erdreich (D-Ala.), Gerald D. Kleczka (D-Wisc.), Frank Horton (R-N.Y.), Robert S. Walker (R-Penn.), Beau Boulter (R-Tex.), and Donald E. "Buz" Lukens (R-Ohio).

.45 Fan

In your Jan/Feb issue I found the letter from Mr. Bonaventure of Beretta USA to be of tremendous interest. The overall impression that I picked up from his letter was his surprise that anyone would dare question the Beretta Company's word as to the overall durability of their 9mm military pistol.

Mr. Bonaventure goes on to state that over 1,000,000 weapons have been produced using this slide design. Now, while this general statement is true, Mr. Bonaventure fails to mention that the vast majority of said weapons were produced in calibers vastly less powerful than 9mm Luger, i.e. .22 Rim Fire, .25 ACP, .32 ACP and .380 ACP. He also fails to make it clear that the vast majority of these weapons, 70% at least, were sold on the open market and not to the military.

To make this more clear, you have to realize that the average individual who buys one of these weapons will not put

5,000 rounds through the weapon in his or her lifetime. At most the average, person might fire a couple hundred rounds a year in the weapon.

Even the police aren't that much better. Most of them have to qualify once a year with their weapon and fire a set number of rounds. Even at this increased rate of fire, it could be 15 to 20 years before the weapon reaches the 5,000 round mark. The military on the other hand might well put 5,000 rounds through a given weapon in a single month!

I have but recently retired from the military, 22 years U.S. Army as a Light Weapons Specialist and Survival Instructor. I have seen, handled and fired Colt Government 1911's that have had in excess of 100,000 rounds put through them, with only their barrels and springs being replaced over the years.

I have on seven occasions used the Beretta as a test weapon during my survival course at Bragg. While I cannot honestly say that the weapon was a complete failure, I can state that under genuine survival conditions the weapon was less than satisfactory when compared to the older 1911 and 1911A1 systems when it comes to durability and, most importantly, useability under the most adverse conditions.

I freely admit to the world in general that I am a .45 fan and that I consider the 9mm, in its Full Metal Jacketed military form, to be borderline useless. But, I understand the reasons given by the "Pow-

ers That Be" for changing from the .45 ACP to the 9mm Luger and I accept them.

Where I fall out with the "Powers That Be" is in the weapon that they have chosen. When Mr. Bonaventure can show me a Beretta 9mm pistol that has survived 100,000 rounds being put through it with only minimum parts replacement as has my personal 1911, then I will accept the Beretta as a superior grade weapon.

Until then, don't call us, we'll call you.

James A. Ellison Bolingbrook, Ill.

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#2850 GameKing .35 Caliber, 225 Grain SBT

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INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

DAVE ANDERSON

SPEED RELOADS WITH S&A MAG CHUTE, VIC MAG RELEASE BECOME CONSISTENT

he speed reload was one of the techniques developed in the early days of practical pistol competition, and it continues to be a part of the practical shooter's repertoire. Smooth, fast and consistent reloads result primarily from learning proper techniques, but autopistol shooters can also benefit from three popular gun modifications. These are: (1) magazine base pads, (2) mag chutes and (3) extended and/or enlarged mag releases.

The purpose of base pads is not, as some believe, to cushion the impact when an ejected magazine hits the ground. Rather, it is to ensure that the mag is positively seated and locked during a speedload. Pads should be a quarter to a half inch thick and securely attached to the magazine base. They're easy enough to make, and I've seen pads made from leather, old inner tubes, and brass. The very popular Shaw pads are made of hard plastic, attach with two self-tapping screws, and cost only about \$9 for a six-

Mag Well.'

A lot of people, though, wanted to achieve the same results without the time and expense of custom work. Mike La-Rocca came up with his Rock-Well funnel for the 1911 pistol, in which the funnel is made in one piece with the mainspring housing. Fitting to a stock 1911 is simply a matter of replacing the mainspring housing with the Rock-Well unit.

to U.S. shooters, calling the result "Joe's

Two other popular units are the Shaw

| | Stock gun | With Mag- Guide | Time saved | With Speed Release | Time saved |
|---------|--------------|--------------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|
| Steve | 2.22 | 1.52 | 0.70 | 1.46 | 0.06 |
| Ken | 2.27 | 1.93 | 0.34 | 1.92 | 0.01 |
| Jamie | 2.99 | 2.59 | 0.40 | 1.90 | 0.69 |
| Tony | 2.45 | 2.18 | 0.27 | 1.37 | 0.81 |
| Dave | 2.22 | 1.64 | 0.58 | 1.41 | 0.23 |
| Average | 2.43 | 1.97 | 0.46 | 1.61 | 0.36 |

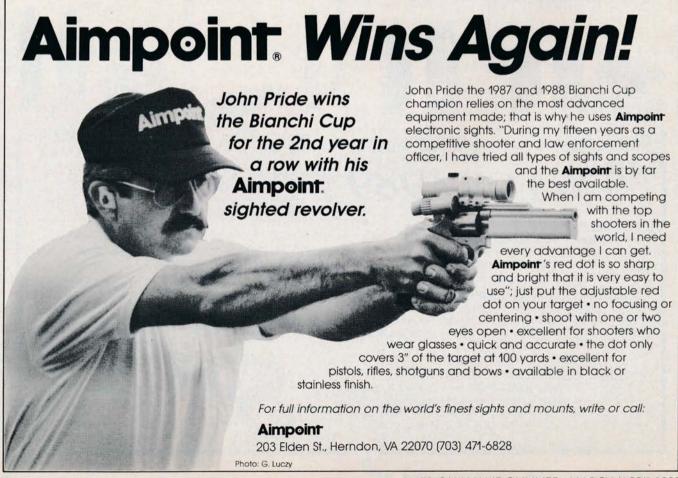
pack.

For many years, a popular modification on 1911 pattern pistols has been to bevel the edges of the mag well, making it bigger and easier to hit during a reload. In the early '80s, South African pistolsmith Dale Guthrie developed a technique of heating the base of the pistol's frame and driving in a wedge-shaped bar, forging a humongous mag well opening that was just about impossible to miss. Pistolsmith Jim Stroh began offering a similar process

stainless steel funnel and the Rogers EZ loader, which are held in place by the stock screw bushings and the stock panels. These are an excellent value but are a bit less convenient in that the stocks must be removed should one wish to get at the gun's lockwork.

The third modification, the oversized mag release button, allows the mag to be released without shifting the shooting grip. Those with average size or smaller

Continued on page 81



SHOOTING STAR MAGS CHOICE OF CHAMPIONS

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|----------------------|---------|------------|
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| 8rd—.45 Stainless | 22.50 | 24.50 |
| 10rd—.38 Blue | 21.95 | 23.95 |
| 10rd—.38 Stainless | 27.95 | 29.95 |
| 7rd—.45 Blue | 13.50 | 15.50 |
| 7rd—.45 Stainless | 16.50 | 18.50 |
| 9rd—.38 Blue | 13.95 | 15.95 |
| 9rd—.38 Stainless | 17.95 | 19.95 |

| Conversion Kits—(adds 1rd to standa | rd mags) |
|-------------------------------------|----------|
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COP TALK

MASSAD AYOOB

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH THE REVOLVER IS MERELY A MATTER OF SELF-CONTROL

In the early 1980's, when Ray Chapman and I began teaching Advanced Officer Survival to cops, there was a little question routine we went through. "How many of you carry semi-automatic service pistols on duty?" I'd ask, and if we had an audience of 200 lawmen, maybe 20 would raise their hands. I'd then follow with "How many would like to?" 150 or more hands would rise.

That was then, this is now. Things have changed quickly. The autoloader is the coming thing in police service. Even so, the majority of the nation's police still

pack cylinder guns.

One bellwether is the State Police. North Dakota and New Mexico seem about to switch to the S&W automatic, and Georgia State Patrol has just approved the same technology. The SIG-Sauer has captured Massachusetts, Michigan and Arizona. Beretta 9mm pistols are carried by the troopers of Connecticut, Florida, Wyoming and Maryland. The Heckler and Koch auto is the sidearm of the state police departments of Utah and New Jersey. Illinois, of course, has carried the S&W 9mm since 1967.

That's about 13 out of 49 (Hawaii has no state police per se), and in many parts of the country, at least the same protection exists: the US cop is still more likely to pack a wheelgun than a selfloader. As Ray and I had long since noted in our classes, many sixgun-equipped cops longed for square duty guns instead of round ones, and seeing many agencies around you switch to the gun you wanted can only exacerbate that negative morale factor.

I'm seen as a proponent of the auto pistol for cops. In the last decade, Bill Jordan and I did a point/counterpoint thing on police handguns, he taking the revolver and I supporting the auto. More recently, John Pride of LAPD defended the revolver while I opted for the police auto in an American Handgunner "CrossFire" column.

Within 18 months, John had not only foresworn his duty .38 for a 9mm but was teaching his whole department how to make the same switch.

As I sit here wiping the smug look off my face, I have to tell you that I'm not one of those who believes that God carries an autoloader. It's not the right gun for every policeman. If I were placed in the shoes of Captain John Cerar, head of NYPD's Firearms and Tactics Unit, I would defend the traditional service revolver as vociferously as he does.

He's responsible for training close to 30,000 cops who, after basic training, only shoot a couple of times a year. The more sophisticated handling skills an auto pistol requires are poorly served by that limited a supervised familiarity. NYPD now allows the auto only to elite Emergency Services Unit (SWAT) and undercover narcotics personnel, both of whom are budgeted for much more training with firearms due to the hazardous nature of their duties.

There are also a number of true gun experts who favor the sixgun for its reliability and its raw power output. The fact is, a well-built wheelgun can take any bullet shape of the designated caliber that you can stuff into it, and that's by no means true of many of the autopistols now in use by police, usually designed a generation ago. Similarly, no semi-auto round in police use can equal the pure shocking and stopping power of the 125 grain semijacketed hollowpoint .357 Magnum service revolver cartridge.

This last point deserves a bit of discussion. Separate studies of actual gunfights by myself and Detroit homicide investigator Evan Marshall independently reached the same conclusion: the 125 grain .357 hollowpoint was more likely to stop a gunfight with one shot than any other round in use.

I find the best .45 auto load, CCI's Speer Lawman 200 grain JHP, comes close—but I've only got 20 cases on file with it, and Evan has about 26.

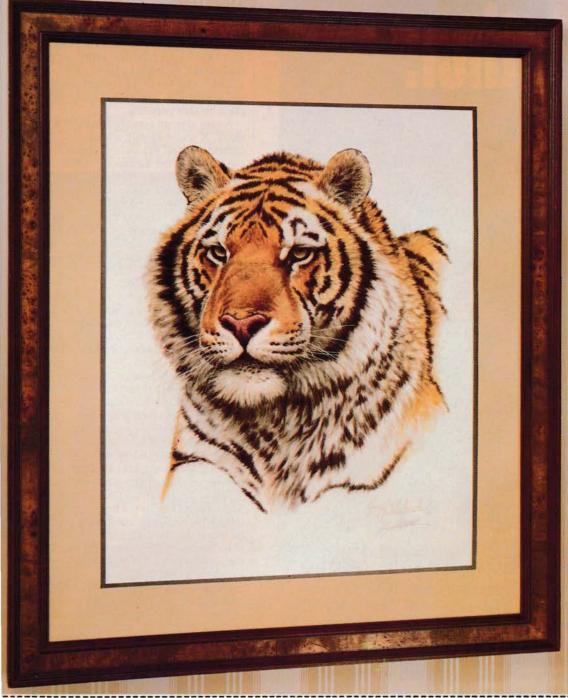
The +P+9mm comes close, but fewer than 20 people have ever been shot with it.

That "magic" .357 load has logged over 220 shootings in one department alone, and no suspect solidly hit with it has ever returned effective fire against an officer of that department. The Desert Eagle sportsman's pistol notwithstanding, the .357 Magnum is a revolver-only proposition for practical daily carry.

A sixgun-equipped officer who'd rather have an automatic is a little like the small officer who'd like to be a big bruiser: he's got to learn to live with the equipment he's got. Whether it was nature or the police chief who decreed that you'd have less than you'd like to fight with, your only logical alternative is to learn to minimize your weaknesses and emphasize your strengths.

In streetfighting, the smaller officer learns to go more rapidly to his baton, to

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take advantage of his usually greater speed and flexibility to overbalance and throw an opponent, to create distance and force the other man to extend himself into the officer's sphere of power. Similarly, the revolver-armed cop facing a high-volume firefight reaches more decisively for his shotgun (if he has one), and does not worry about any false confidence that might stem from a 16-shot auto pistol.

Knowing himself likely to be outgunned in a shootout with coke dealers who carry high-capacity autoloaders as trademarks, he makes a point of conservatively using cover and concealment to the maximum, giving himself time to

place his shot perfectly.

A case in point occurred recently in Arizona. A scumbag with a semi-auto 9mm carbine opened fire on a revolver-armed cop. He filled the air around himself with brass and the air around the cop with lead, but none of his wildly-sprayed bullets took flesh. The patrolman cooly levelled his .38 Special revolver and put a couple of bullets in the boiler room, killing the assailant. The punk had theoretically outgunned the cop—but the skillful blueshirt had "outmanned" his opponent. Here we have a basic truth of life.

The term "gunfight" is a misnomer. Guns don't fight. Men fight. It's the man who wins, and in this case, the man who knew his low-tech equipment overpowered the man who put all his faith in a

high-tech bullet hose.

Style and technique are more important than tools. Another case in point occurred in Florida: a cop who'd finally been issued the 16-shot 9mm he'd long argued for, responded along with a partner who'd been perfectly happy with his revolver and a bit resented having to carry the new technonine. They were tracking a homicidal gunman armed with a high-powered rifle.

When the encounter came, the cop who'd been begging for firepower had his chance to use it: he sprayed all 16 9mm bullets at the criminal and never touched him. The wheelgun-oriented cop played the auto the way his career had taught him to play his revolver: make every shot count. He fired twice, hitting the gunman once in the leg and once in the chest, killing him outright. Another cop who knows him swears that with his familiar sixgun, this officer would have put them both in the center X-ring.

Know your equipment, play to its strengths and away from its weaknesses. On my own time, I prefer to carry an automatic. When breaking in new cops, whom we issue revolvers, I carry an identical Smith & Wesson .357 Magnum.

The fact that I don't have an automatic on that night is extremely low on the list of things I worry about as the rookie and I wheel the cruiser out of the police parking lot.

SILUETAS

JOHN TAFFIN

TAKE THE PUNCH OUT OF A DOMINATOR WITH GUNNER'S CHOICE RECOIL TAMER

There are days when it really does pay to live right. When is the last time that someone stepped up to you and said, "I have an estate to settle and one of the items is a .45 Automatic. One hundred dollars and it's yours."

The first thought in such a situation is that the gun is hot and the man is trying to turn a quick \$100. But this time, it was on

a Sunday morning at church and the fellow was a long-time church member and Sunday school teacher. Chances were close to certain that everything was on the up and up, plus his business *really was* settling estates for his bank's customers.

I, of course, purchased the gun sight unseen. After all, how often does one find a Colt 1911 for \$100?

As it turned out, it was even better than expected. The Colt, though pitted on the frame, was in otherwise good condition and according to the serial number was made prior to WWI. Too old and too soft to be fully accurized or made into an action gun, but a good shooter as it was. And as it turned out, destined for a greater purpose.

My good fortune continued at the Outstanding American Handgunner Awards Banquet as my door prize number was drawn and I received any Pachmayr Dominator unit of my choice. The Dominator, consisting of a barreled action in .223, .44 Magnum, .35 Remington, and 7-08, needed only a Colt 1911 grip frame to make it into a complete single shot long range handgun.

I have a .223 Contender, .44's belong in revolvers, and my custom .375 JDJ Con-



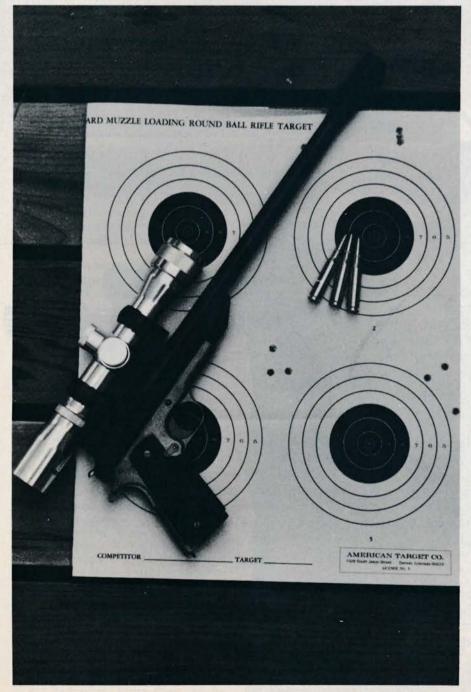
tender was way above the factory .35 Remington, so the only logical choice left seemed to be the 7-08. Logical from the standpoint of an Unlimited Silhouette Pistol that would also double as a hunting gun.

It was only after my order was sent to Pachmayr that I realized what I had gotten myself in for. Since I had done considerable testing of the Wichita single shot pistol in 7mm International Rimmed, and since Wichita had a grip frame identical to the 1911 Colt, and since the Wichita was punishing to shoot with full house loads, and since the 7-08 was capable of delivering the same bullet as the 7 International Rimmed at 400-600 fps more muzzle velocity, and since . . .

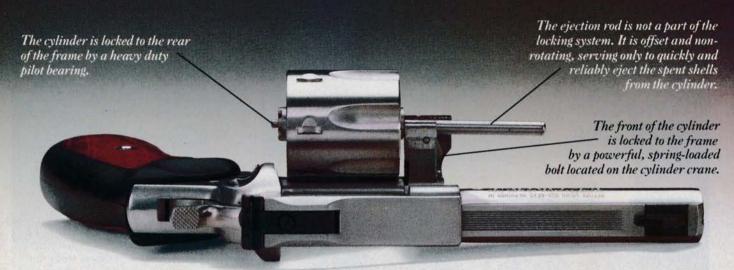
Well, the picture started to unfold, and it was a picture of pain. I really don't mind reasonable recoil and never back away from the hard kickers. Recoil is not the problem with the Dominator. It is the constant pounding to which the 1911 grip safety subjects the back of the shooting hand between thumb and trigger finger until it is raw. Each individual shot is not necessarily a problem, but the continued buildup finally gets to a shooter.

Recoil is mostly between the ears, not in the hand, and it can be conquered by keeping the right mental attitude. But when that recoil gnaws away until the hand is bleeding, the mental loses out to the physical. The 1911 grip, as comfortable as it is, just was not made for heavy kicking handguns.

The week that my 7-08 Dominator ar-Continued on page 83



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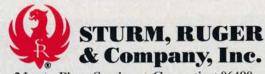
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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

BUCKEYE .32 CALIBER CONVERTIBLE RUGER BLACKHAWK IS GOOD PLINKER

A limited edition Ruger Blackhawk convertible .32 Magnum/.32-20 Winchester is a new gun I bought from Buckeye Sports (Dept. AH, P.O. Box 6060, Canton, OH 44706). I've been shooting it a bit with the .32 Magnum cylinder with the excellent Federal lead and jacketed ammo.

It's a neat small-game gun capable of being handloaded to considerably higher velocities than factory offerings. I haven't shot the .32-20 yet because I didn't have enough ammo to make it worthwhile.

Don't bother looking for the Buckeye Ruger .32/.32-20 on your dealer's shelf unless he is a Buckeye customer. This is a first edition with a Buckeye "leaf and buckeye" inscribed on the topstrap. Buckeye, a large distributor of firearms and accessories, purchased the first year's production from Ruger and sells the guns only to dealers who buy regularly from Buckeye.

At first it felt a little heavy on the Blackhawk frame. However, in the long run I think the additional weight may pay off in the field with more hits than a lighter gun could produce.

The 6½ inch barrel balances very well for me. Interestingly, both Federal 85 grain jacketed and 95 grain lead loads shot to exactly the same point of impact at 25 yards.

I was surprised at the accuracy I got straight out-of-the-box with a fresh barrel. After only a cylinderful, the barrel settled down and produced outstanding accuracy. The trigger definitely needs work (what factory trigger doesn't these days?) but shooting offhand at 25 yards at two inch Targ-Dots, I had only four shots out of the dot in 36 rounds. That's about as good as I can do with any gun!

At about 175 yards it was easy to keep four out of five on the end of a 55 gallon drum. In case you think the .32 Magnum is a real pip-squeak, every hit penetrated the end of the drum.

The smaller Dan Wesson .32 Magnum is also an accurate revolver. Mine shoots in the same class with the larger Ruger and maybe a little better with some ammo. Both make fine small-game guns. The .32 Magnum is best reserved for squirrel, rabbit and groundhog even if the cartridge is handloaded on the warm side with Sierra or Hornady jacketed bullets.

The .32 Magnum or .32-20 just aren't powerful enough for deer even if your great-granddad did kill one with the .32-20 way back when. Enjoy these .32s for

what they're best at— plinking and small game hunting.

Obviously, a good .22 is hard to beat as a small-game gun. In essense, any caliber can fill the role of a small-game gun as long as the gun is adequately accurate. Most guns are accurate enough if the shot is close. But one of the most important aspects of a small-game gun is that it shoots where the sights are set. My advice would be to buy a small-game gun only if it has adjustable sights. I've had a few fixed sight guns that shot to point of aim, but not many.

Turning to news on the bullet scene, Sierra's new 300 grain jacketed .44 Magnum bullet should be in your local gun shop now. The prototypes of this slug that several people tested last summer were very accurate in every gun tried.

The production bullet will differ slightly from the prototypes, so reloading data isn't worth giving at this point. But the prototypes gave groups of about *three* inches at 100 yards with my Ruger Redhawk and a Mk. V sight. This shows the potential of this new Sierra slug!

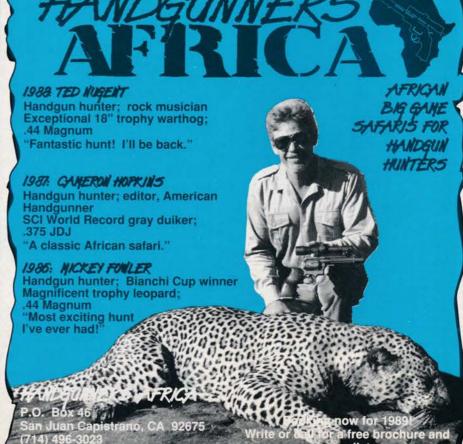
The 320 grain cast bullet for the .44 has given the caliber a new lease on life for big game hunting. Obviously an outgrowth of the original lead heavyweight, the Sierra jacketed bullet cannot be driven as fast as the lead bullet. However, heavy .44 bullets are becoming widely available.

Freedom Arms has one that is quite good and a heavyweight Barnes bullet is still out there. The Barnes has been around quite awhile, but it's never become very popular. Others have made 300 grain bullets with more or less—usually less—success than the original SSK 320 grain lead bullet.

The 300 grain Sierra bullet is definitely worth trying and I predict they'll become very popular. One major ammunition manufacturer has been interested in producing a 300 grain factory load for a few years and the new Sierra slug may get this started.

Phil Johnston, Handgun Editor for Gun Week has recently completed his book Successful Handgun Hunting (\$21.95, Shooting Sports Press, 4912 Arden Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55424). I'm not going to review the book for space reasons, however, the book seems to me to be aimed at the beginning handgun hunter or the guy thinking about getting Continued on page 101

SUNNERS COL



HANDLOADING

CHARLES E. PETTY

NEW GIZMOS FROM DILLON ELIMINATE **POWDER BAR, PRIMER LEVEL TROUBLES**

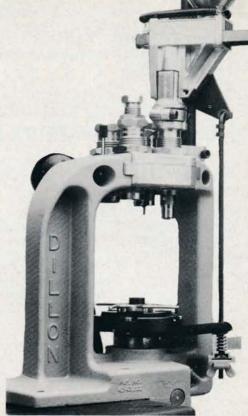
For some time now, I've enjoyed watching the fast track growth of Dillon Precision and over a relatively short time they have brought progressive reloaders to the masses. Of course I'm speaking primarily of the Dillon 550 which has become a workhorse in my loading setup; so much so that I now have

One is set up for small primers and the other for large, so I don't have to fool with changing primer systems. I use them often and much of the data that I've published over the years has been cranked out on the Dillon.

But as much as I like the 550 it did have some shortcomings. The biggest, at least as far as I was concerned, was that you had no way of knowing when you were about to run out of primers. More than once I discovered it only when I saw powder begin to accumulate around the shell plate. I know, you're supposed to feel the primer going in, but I also know that it's easy to overlook when you're on a loading binge.

The other problem has been the occasional tendency of Dillon's powder measure to stick. All it took was a little graphite buildup or a stray grain of powder in the wrong place and the slide would lock in the drop position. If you didn't catch it you could have a whole bunch of ammo that went pop instead of bang. It plagued Dillon too and over the years the powder measure has gone through a number of changes directed at solving the problem. But any time you rely on a spring to return the powder bar it doesn't take much going wrong to screw things up bigtime. In fact, I focus my eyes on the powder bar every time I load. I also tend to clean the measure frequently and rarely have trouble, but lots of folks do.

So the good news from Dillon is a pair of neat products that solve both problems. And, just like most everything else from Dillon, they're clever little gadgets that do



Dillon device prevents double-charge.

the job well, and economically. Dillon calls them: "Primer Early Warning System" and "Powder Measure Fail Safe De-vice." Both are standard equipment on the new Dillon 550B or can be ordered as retrofit kits for the 450B and 550 presses. I've just installed the retrofit kits on both of my 550s.

The primer early warning system is one of those simple little ideas that probably left the folks in Scottsdale wondering why they hadn't thought of it sooner. The whole thing consists of a small, battery powered buzzer that is tripped by the weight of a plastic rod that follows the primers down the magazine. One of the things I did was to make such a rod for my 550s so I could see when primers were low, but the Dillon idea saves you the trouble of having to watch something else.

All you have to do is listen for the buzzer that sounds when there are three or four primers left in the magazine. Since the Dillon's primer tube will hold more than 100 primers, you can simply refill the tube when the buzzer sounds. Or, if you're ending a session, you can watch for the primers to run out.

Installation of the primer warning system is extra simple. All you do is slide the little buzzer gadget over the primer magazine and install the rod. No tools or disassembly is required.

The powder measure retrofit kit does require a bit more work but anyone who has already assembled and adjusted one of the 550s won't find it any bother at all. The powder measure upgrade is a bit Continued on page 85



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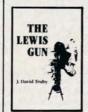
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Combat mind-set, trigger control, tactical residential architecture, nuclear war-these are some of the provocative subjects explored by Jeff Cooper in this illustrated collection of essays. Cooper, a combat pistol shooting master and the nation's foremost instructor of defensive weaponcraft, squarely faces the facts of modern life, and concludes that the armed citizen is the correct answer to the armed sociopath. He insists that the Age of The Wimp is not our destiny. To that end, To Ride, Shoot Straight, and Speak the Truth focuses primarily on shooting-technically, socially, sportively and historically. Learn why knowledge of personal weapons and skill in their use are necessary attributes of any man who calls himself free. 51/2 x 81/2, hardcover, illus., 384 pp.



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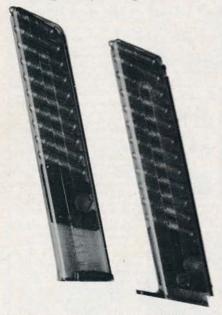
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PISTOLSMITHING

JOHN LAWSON

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There are two major categories of sharpening stones: natural and manufactured. Natural stones are quarried, cut and ground to finished shape. Manufactured stones are made from several kinds and grades, or granulations, of abrasives, such as silicon carbide, aluminum oxide, novaculite, borazon and diamond

These man-made "stones" may be designed for hand-held use, as bench stones or to be used under power in bench or hand grinders.

Other useful categories of abrasives are rubber bonded wheels and cylinders, cloth or paper backed abrasives and dry powders that are imbedded into lead or bronze laps by rolling the dry powder between the formed lap and a steel or iron plate. with aftermarket parts, sights, scopes or optical devices and for smoothing actions as well as preparation for applying a new finish to the completed project.

I have a small, one-man shop, but three toolpost grinders, three bench grinders, three hand grinders, and two polishing and buffing grinders are in daily use. I also have two flexible shafts that are used once in a while for special grinding applications in remote locations. Another bench grinder and a spare hand grinder are kept in my reloading room. And finally, in a bottom drawer, are the rough castings for a Quorn tool and cutter grinder that gets an occasional few hours of attention when things get slow.

But, that still isn't the entire inventory of grinders. The precision honing machine next to my milling machine is a very

Every shop has a profusion of hand stones, but very few can boast that their hand and bench stones are in the best condition.

Probably, after hand and bench stones, the most familiar form of grinding is in a pistolsmith's lathe using a tool post grinder, or in centerless grinders and surface grinding machines.

Unlike a cutting tool, that can move or rotate in only one direction to remove a portion of the workpiece surface, abrasive stones can be moved in any required direction without degrading the keenness of the surface. The principle of a cutting tool is that a chisel-shaped edge compresses the material of the work's surface, then shears away a chip or ribbon. Using a file or a cutter in a backward manner will immediately blunt the cutting edges.

Use of an abrasive stone in the same application has an advantage: Many sharp abrading surfaces of a particular size and composition, usually bonded together by glue, ceramic clay or rubber, constantly fall away during use, presenting new sharp surfaces to the work. While these new surfaces have occasionally to be trued with a diamond or a special truing device, it is not anywhere close to the chore that re-grinding and honing a cutter can be.

The processes of grinding, honing, lapping and polishing literally wear away a portion of a workpiece by a combination of friction and scraping action of the abrasive substance.

Pistolsmiths use these processes constantly in fitting or re-fitting handguns precise slow speed grinder that finishes parts to sizes of split ten-thousandths with a surface regularity of three to five micro inches. Honing parts with this machine results in an imperceptible side-shake fit with a surface like a sheet of glass.

Honing is a power process. Internal mandrels that expand in a controlled and even fashion as the machine's control wheel is turned are fitted with stones of varying grits down to polishing grades. Honing will make a slightly irregular hole, i.e., one that is barrel shaped, funnel mouthed, crooked or rough, into a spoton sized bore with a glasslike surface.

Hand lapping will smooth bores, but it will seldom correct the above mentioned faults. A split lap, having some method of expansion once it is grinding internally, and usually of bronze or brass is used in many shops to finish cylindrical bores. The abrasive is imbedded in the lap's surface by rolling against dry abrasive powder or by the application of a paste or slurry.

External honing may be done in a lathe or honing machine. The part to be honed is chucked and an external hone is fitted with a special V shaped stone and a bronze V guide. A very accurate screw handle applies pressure to the stones as honing oil plays over the surface of the work. Both internal and external honing require that honing oil be pumped onto



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the work ahead of the stones. The purpose of the oil is to carry away the fine pieces of abraded work and particles of stone that wear away.

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Every shop has a profusion of hand stones, but very few shops can boast that their hand and bench stones are in the best condition. There is a knack to using a hand stone: It must be carefully prepared when it is first used by soaking in a reasonable amount of honing oil or kerosene. Some workers use plain water with excellent results. Keep a small amount of oil, kerosene or water on the working surface to carry away the particles and keep the stone cutting properly. If you neglect the lubrication, the stone will load up and not cut properly. On the other hand, too heavy a pressure may groove the stone's surface or cause it to glaze.

When a stone has been in use for a time, it should be cleaned thoroughly with kerosene and a wire brush, then re-oiled lightly. Never leave your stone in any liquid for very long. An occasional stroke against a large piece of flat steel that has been lightly oiled after cleaning will help maintain a true flat surface.

Wheel cutters should be trued with a diamond or a hardened steel trueing device before each use. Use a firm, but moderate, pressure and make absolutely certain that the guards and work guide are in their proper positions. Never leave a gap between the wheel face and the work guide larger than absolutely necessary for wheel clearance. It is fatally—and I use the word advisedly—easy to jam a tool between a wheel face and a too loosely set guide, with often disastrous results.

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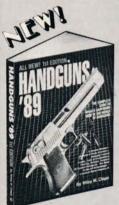


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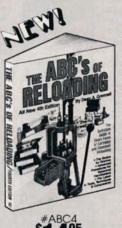
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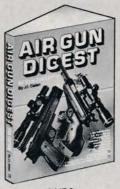
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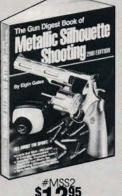


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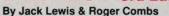
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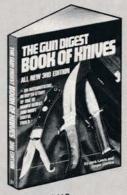




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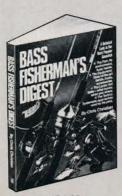
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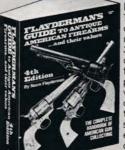


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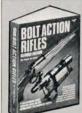
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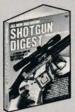
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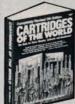
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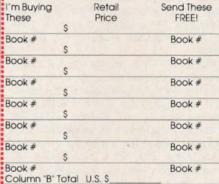


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GUN LEGISLATION THE NRA

J. WARREN CASSIDY

NRA HELPS GEORGE BUSH WIN BIG, BUT MARYLAND LOSS IS NOT CATASTROPHIC

We are pleased to introduce a new column on firearms legislation to appear regularly in each issue of American Handgunner. The new column, Gun Legislation: The NRA Report, will be authored by several prominent leaders from the National Rifle Association of America, the foremost progun organization in the country. Writers will include Wayne LaPierre, Executive Director of the NRA's Institute for Legislative Action; James Baker, Governmental Affairs director; and Ted Lattanzio, director of State and Local Affairs. We are proud to feature in the first column the words of another of our column's regular writers, Executive Vice President of the NRA, J. Warren Cassidy.

While the Maryland handgun ban law serves as a national alarm as to what can happen, the National Rifle Association of America does not believe the law will spread like a disease to other states. Voters in one state are not influenced by the actions of a legislative body in another. As a former mayor, I know first-hand that local attitudes will always prevail.

Maryland is one of only seven states without a constitutional provision guaranteeing the right to keep and bear arms. And although NRA activists will be on the lookout this year for bills to ban the manufacture and sale of handguns, such measures would have a tougher time in other states. The NRA is confident our members and the public would beat back similar campaigns elsewhere.

Maryland voters were swayed to retain this law by what the lawmakers claimed the law *intended* to do, rather than by what the law actually said. With the law set to take effect in 1990, the NRA will work this year to correct the numerous errors lawmakers have conceded the law contains. We will work to see that the law is "fixed" as Maryland legislators promised.

Measuring political victories for gun owners, Maryland was the exception to NRA in November elections:

*The NRA is especialy proud of its work to help George Bush win his way into the White House. We invested heavily in radio ads, bumper stickers and mailings attacking Michael Dukakis' political track record against law-abiding firearm owners. And we can't recall a presidential candidate who so proudly used his support of gun owners' rights as a major campaign theme as did President-elect Bush.

*With NRA support for the Nebraska Sportsmen's Rights Committee, Nebraska became the forty-third state to guarantee its citizens the right to keep and bear arms. In a statewide referendum, voters adopted a constitutional amendment by almost a two-to-one margin.

*A tough anti-crime measure, backed by the NRA, is now law in Oregon. We helped a citizen's group, Oregonians Against Crime, pass a state question to deny probation, parole or temporary leave to violent, repeat felons. Voters approved the measure by more than threeto-one.

*Fifteen NRA-endorsed U.S. Senate and 120 NRA-backed Congressional candidates are starting new terms in the 101st Congress to help protect sportsmen's rights.

*Four governors and dozens of other state candidates also backed by the NRA are beginning new terms in state govern-

ments across the country.

Supporting these campaigns was expensive. But the cost of freedom is never cheap.

Whether it was the millions of dollars we supplied to try to overturn the handgun ban law in Maryland, or a \$200 contribution to a certain state representative's reelection bid, every expense is important when it comes to protecting the rights of firearm owners.

NRA members and other honest gun owners do not contribute money for us to put in the bank to earn interest. They make donations so that we can channel the funds exactly as we did in the recent elections: To try to repeal an inequitable and unenforceable handgun ban in Maryland, to guarantee firearm rights in Nebraska, to keep repeat offenders in Oregon behind bars where they belong, to help elect a pro-gun president, and to support a host of other national and state candidates.

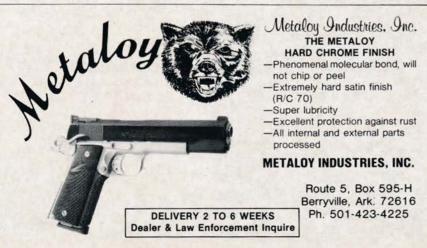
One likely piece of fallout from Maryland will be the hesitancy of politicians to take on pro-gun forces when they see the popularity loss that Maryland Governor William Donald Schaefer suffered by backing the state's handgun ban. Even though he was a popular governor until this vote, almost half of the state's voters disagreed with him on the need for such a ban. We are confident they will disagree with him in his anticipated reelection bid next year.

The people of Maryland fought the combined might of the political establishment and Maryland's news media, which openly campaigned for the handgun ban. After seeing the valiant effort to try to repeal the law via statewide ballot, I have nothing but the deepest respect and admiration for those who tried to keep the Free State free.

This year, the NRA will work to block any new measures in the states that wrongfully restrict lawful access to firearms. We also will start firearm rights campaigns in the seven states lacking the constitutional provision for this important part of American tradition.

We believe the handgun ban law in Maryland could prove beneficial if it gets the attention of firearm owners nationally. And the NRA may ask for your help this year if symptoms of this disease pop up elsewhere.

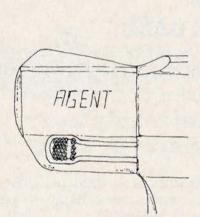
Mr. Cassidy is Executive Vice President of NRA, an avid hunter, and a longtime firearms advocate. The NRA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to supporting your right to keep and bear arms through its lobbying, education and promotional programs. Membership is \$20 per year and includes a subscription to The American Rifleman or The American Hunter. For more information, please write to the NRA at 1600 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, DC, 20036.



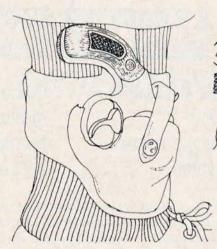
HANDGUNNING HINTS

Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton

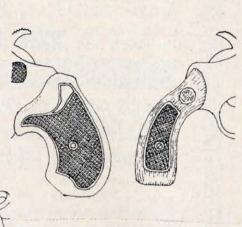
Attitude and Learning the Bellygun



1. Beginning shooters may find that the snub nosed revolver presents special problems in learning to fire it.



2. It's a potent pop in a small package. 3. A beginner may want to replace the



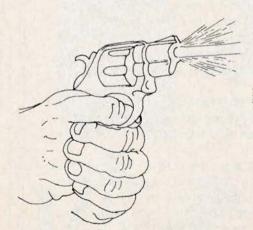
factory grips with fat, after-market grips to absorb recoil and improve control of the gun. After you've mastered the bellygun, you can reinstall the factory grips to regain the concealability that has given this weapon its nickname.



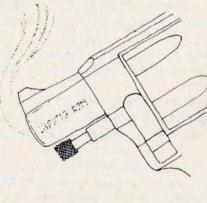
4. It is important to shoot this gun with 5. Adopt a positive, even defiant, confidence. Apply the principles of karate and extend the gun to push the and recoil. Your attitude will diminish bullet through the target.



attitude to the effects of muzzle flash their effect.



6. Two hands work well. Choose an aggressive stance until you have thoroughly mastered the gun.



7. Keep your fingers away from the end of the muzzle and out of the way of cylinder flash.



8. Develop a strong, positive attitude in learning to shoot the snubnosed revolver. You'll be rewarded with a fun plinker and a good friend in the night.

@ Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton 1989

The AYOOB FILES

A REACTIVE SHOT: THE MARK BRANHAM CASE

Situation: Someone's beating the tar out of you. You reflexively reach for your gun. You shoot your attacker.

Lesson: You drew and fired instinctively. Can a reflexive response to deadly force be held against you? You bet!

On March 8, 1988, the somber voice of Judge Donald Mullins rang through the Circuit Court of Buchanan County, Virginia. "We have to look at this situation within the parameters of the law that has been developed throughout these centuries that protect each and every citizen of our nation," the judge was saying, "and the greatest concept of all in our law is, number one, that a man or woman is presumed to be innocent of any crime for which they are charged until the state proves beyond a reasonable doubt each and every element of the crime for which they're charged."

Judge Mullins continued, "That is a very heavy burden, but it is placed there to protect the individuals of our nation, and under the rules that we have to go by, I cannot see any evidence whatsoever to prove, beyond a suspicion, that it may not have happened the way the Defendant said it did, and that evidence has to go far, far beyond that, and therefore, I'll find the Defendant not guilty."

"Not guilty." Those longed-for two words ended one of the most brutal ordeals ever suffered in an American court by an armed citizen who had fired in self-defense. Mark Branham, the young defendant, had gone through four court proceedings including three full-blown trials, charged with Murder and Manslaughter. He had faced a special prosecutor paid by the family of the deceased, heard two false ballistics reports entered into evidence by the state, and at one point had been judged by a jury that included a friend, a relative, and a co-worker of the dead man. His case had become a cause celebre among pro-gun activists.

Branham's nightmare was the exception to the rules of justice. What happened to him will happen to few other armed citizens who pull the trigger in self protection. But one element of the trial, never fully developed, still holds the potential to destroy the lives and careers of police officers and citizens alike who drop the hammer in defense of their lives.

It is a chilly, late November evening in the steep hills of Hoot Owl Mountain, a neighborhood outside the town of Grundy, Virginia. Mark Branham, 27, is preparing for work.

An ex-cop who now works as a sergeant for a security firm, he has adjusted to civilian life. He is resting in preparation for his third shift job when two gunshots echo from the darkness in the hills above the home he shares with his elderly, deaf father.

Branham snaps upright, alert. The possibility of poachers crosses his mind, but he dismisses it almost immediately. More likely, he thinks, a hiker has become lost or injured himself on the steep and slippery hillside and fired a couple of signal shots.

Branham dresses to investigate. Because he does not really anticipate any sort of violent encounter, it never occurs to him to don his Second Chance vest, grab some spare ammo, or unlimber his scoped Remington .30-06 autoloader or any of the other powerful rifles and shotguns from the gun case. He does, more out of habit than anything else, take his service revolver.

The gun is a Smith & Wesson Combat Magnum, Model 19-3, with four-inch barrel. It used to be his police service revolver, and he's spent money getting it right. The action is smooth and glassy, the sights are high visibility Millets, the finish by Armalloy gives it a stainless look, and the low-profile walnut grips are by Art Jewel.

For controllable recoil and muzzle flash, he has chosen 110 grain .357 semi-jacketed hollowpoint ammo by CCI-Speer. The usual six rounds are in the chambers as he tucks the revolver into his right hip pocket.

On the way up the hill, he stops at his pickup truck for his multi-cell police-style flashlight. He leaves the Remington 870 12 gauge riot gun; there seems no need for it. He continues on up the hill.

Continued on page 73

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Je were set to get a perfect picture. The target was a can of green pea soup found on the back of the shelf with a date that was at least three years past its limit. As I lined up the sights on the soup can set on a stand at 25 yards, I waited for my partner to let me know when both he and the Pentax were ready. The plan was

Barreled Contender for the .32. In addition, a number of smaller companies specializing in single-shots also chamber for the .32 Magnum, and Charter Arms offers a five shot .32. All .32 Magnums will also accept the shorter .32 Smith & Wesson Long cartridge.

Dan Wesson and Ruger .32 Magnums

of H4227 give a muzzle velocity of 1216 fps and will put five shots into five-eighths of an inch at 25 yards and one 11/8 inch at 50 yards. Using 9.5 grains of #2400 ups the velocity to slightly over 1400 fps and gives 11/4 inch groups at both 25 and 50 yards. Accurate Arms magnum powder, AA#9, is perfect for the .32 Magnum

to get a shot of the soup can being blown off the stand and hopefully to catch it in midair. I expected a small entrance hole of .32 caliber with maybe a one-inch hole exiting the back of the can.

The signal was given, the little .32 was fired but I was not ready for what happened. I had been leaning on the spare tire of my red Bronco for a rest and, as I looked around, the Bronco was now red with green splotches. We could not find the can anywhere. What we did find were very small pieces of tin and lots of green gunk everywhere, all that was left of the original target.

That was my introduction to what I had heretofore considered somewhat of a toy. The sixgun was the Ruger Single-Six chambered for the then-new .32 H&R Magnum. From its 91/2" barrel, the 85 grain hollowpoint reloads were attaining a muzzle velocity of 1500 fps and were explosive to say the least.

Since that time, I have referred to the .32 as the "Mighty Mouse Magnum." This was a real Magnum by anyone's standards! Harrington & Richardson, before they disappeared from the scene, combined with Federal Cartridge Corporation to provide a viable addition to the hand-

gunner's world.

The first .32 Magnums were chambered in various Harrington and Richardson revolvers. I have absolutely no experience with H&R .32's nor do I know how many were made or are out in shooter's hands. All of my experimenting with loads has been with .32 Magnums from Ruger, Dan Wesson and Thompson/Center. All loads listed are safe in these firearms. THEY MAY NOT BE SAFE IN HARRING-TON AND RICHARDSON OR CHARTER ARMS REVOLVERS. Proceed accordingly.

Ruger is presently offering two models for the .32 H&R Magnum, the Single-Six and the Bisley; Dan Wesson's offering is their .357 Magnum sized frame chambered for the .32 Magnum; and Thompson/Center chambers the 10" Bull

use .32 caliber barrels in the .311-312" range as are most barrels for .32 Smith & Wesson Long revolvers, while T/C Contenders use .30 caliber or .308" barrels. This has not been any problem as .312" 85 grain Hornady and 90 grain Sierra Jacketed Hollow Point bullets perform exceptionally well in the tight T/C Contender barrels. This allows the use of the same load in either the Contender or Ruger or Dan Wesson revolvers without sacrificing accuracy.

Reloading the .32 Magnum is as easy as any of the other bigger Magnums, .357, .41 or .44, and like its bigger brothers, the harder the .32 Magnum is pushed (within reason), the better it seems to shoot. Most of my reloading for the .32 Magnum is done with either #2400, AA#9, or H4227 as they have proven to give high velocities and excellent accuracy.

Reloaders do not have many jacketed bullets to pick from for use in the .32 Magnum. Hornady's 85 grain Jacketed Hollowpoint and Sierra's 90 grain Jacketed Hollowpoint have both been designed specifically for the .32 Magnum and are both capable of outstanding accuracy in either the T/C Contender or the Dan Wesson .32 Magnum. Both of these guns and bullets are excellent choices for either IHMSA Field Pistol or NRA Hunter Pistol.

At 50 yards, Dan Wesson's eight-inch Field Pistol wearing a 5X Burris scope, will put five 85 grain Hornadys into oneinch. The load is 10.5 grains of H4227 for 1188 fps. Sierra's 90 grain offering with 9.5 grains of #2400 for 1199 fps will cluster five shots into one and one-eighth inches at 50 yards. These are examples of outstanding accuracy for both revolver and bullet and both loads are perfect for Field/ Hunter Pistol shooting.

Switching to cast bullets, NEI's beautiful little 100 grain Keith SWC is also capable of excellent results in the eight-inch Dan Wesson. I have three loads for this bullet that are real favorites: 10.0 grains

with 9.5 grains giving a muzzle velocity of 1350 and puts five shots into three-fourths of an inch at 25 yards and one-inch at 50 yards.

These results all classify the .32 Magnum as a genuine tack-driver by anyone's standards. It should be emphasized that all groups were shot using a Burris 5X LER scope; I certainly can't shoot groups this tight with iron sights.

Switching to the T/C Contender, testing is almost monotonous. With a Pro-Point Scope mounted on the 10-inch bullbarrel, accuracy from the .32 Magnum Contender is the finest I have ever experienced with any handgun using conventional revolver cartridges. Sixteen loads were tested for accuracy with both the Hornady 85 grain and Sierra 90 grain Jacketed Hollowpoints. Four powders were used: 8.0 and 9.0 grains of #2400, 9.0 and 10.0 grains of H4227, 9.0 and 10.0 grains of AA#9, and 5.0 and 6.0 grains of Unique, and velocities ran from 1227 with 5.0 grains of Unique and the 90 grain Sierra to 1758 with the 85 grain Hornady and 10.0 grains of AA#9.

The results? Two loads shot into threeeighths inch, five into one-half inch, one into five-eighths, five into three-fourths, one into seven-eighths, and only two loads failed to shoot under one-inch!

For the big bore Magnums, .41, .44 and .454, I rarely ever load down. If I want less power, I go instead to a .44 Special, or .45 Colt. If I want less than this, I drop down to a .45 ACP or .44-40. This is not the case for my reloading of the .32 Magnum. The littlest Magnum is perfect for fun loads, the low powered quiet loads that will kill pop cans just as surely as fullhouse Magnum loads. For these loads Speer's swaged 98 grain hollowbase wadcutter is a natural.

Too soft for high velocities, but loads of 500-800 fps will not only provide many an afternoon of cheap shooting, they also make excellent grouse loads in big game country. And they are perfect for beginning shooters, especially youngsters who are eager to please but perhaps a little afraid of recoil.

Using the T/C Contender, either 2.6 grains of WW231 (820 fps) or 2.5 grains of Herco (695 fps) drive the little hollowbase wadcutter into one small hole at 25 yards, plus the Herco load will do one and onefourth inch in a very easy packin' Ruger short barreled Single-Six.

A new cast bullet designed specifically for the Ruger .32 Magnum is LBT's (Lead Bullet Technology, P.O. Box .357, Dept. AH, Cornville, AZ 86325) #314115. This is a gas checked flat-nosed bullet that casts out at 120 grains and is designed to utilize ultimate case capacity in the .32 Magnum Ruger. A lot of bearing surface rides outside the case and loaded rounds will not chamber in either the Contender or Dan Wesson .32's. With this bullet and 10.0 grains of H4227, velocities are over 1100 fps and will give one-inch groups even with the hard to shoot short barreled Ruger .32 Magnum.

The .32 Magnum has been ignored by many handgunners. Quite of few of my acquaintances look down their noses with disdain at such a small cartridge. They are missing out on a lot of fun shooting, but I have noticed that once they shoot the smallest magnum, they are hooked on its accuracy and pleasure.

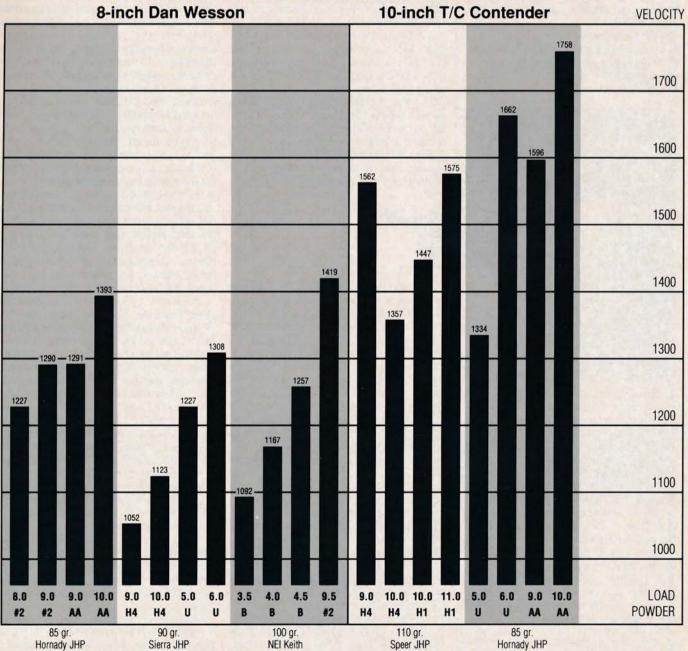
The .32 fits well in between the .22LR and the .357 Magnum. Even though I am

a confirmed big bore shooter. I really like the .32. Virtually no recoil, it can be handled by even the most recoil sensitive person. Ear protection should be used for all handgun shooting and it is mandatory for the .32 Magnum as full power loads especially are ear-splitting.

The .32 Magnum in any persuasion is not a big game cartridge. But for pleasant summer outings in desert or foothills around my home, the four and fiveeighths Ruger is a natural and whether in the Dan Wesson or Thompson/Center Contender, they don't come any better for short range silhouetting

than the .32 Magnum.

HIGH PERFORMANCE .32 MAGNUM FAVORITE LOADS



Powders: (#2) #2400, (AA) AA#9, (H4) H4227, (U) Unique, (B) Bullseye, (H1) H110.

All loads were assembled with Federal .32 H&R Magnum brass, CCI #550 primer and the bullets shown. All loads were fired over PACT and Oehler 33 chronographs. Neither the author nor American Handgunner accept any responsibility for results obtained with this information due to the inherent variation in reloading components and individual handloading techniques over which we have no control.

LEATHAM'S COLUMN

ROB LEATHAM

LEATHAM WINS FIFTH NATIONAL TITLE IN IPSC MATCH DEVOID OF CONTROVERSY

can't figure it out. Something has to be wrong. The 1988 United States Practical Shooting Association's IPSC National Championship is history and I can't remember one bad thing, one negative comment about the match that was of any consequence! (There's always a whiner, but sniveling doesn't count. I mean serious complaints.)

Now don't get me wrong. I don't mean to imply that every other national championship has sucked raw eggs, but this one was remarkable because I can't ever remember one where I wasn't a witness to,

bickering from the organizers when they had some tricky rule interpretation. When several shooters were found lacking in the chronograph of ammunition, the match officials gathered, cogitated and decided. They stuck to their decision, even though it was rather controversial. (They opted to round-up the power factors obtained with the chronograph. A 174.6 factor, for example, was roundedup to 175, the minimum for "major caliber" power factor.) You may not agree with their decision, but at least they stuck to it and didn't waffle.

The match officials, from the humblest target taper to the Chief Range Officer, did an outstanding job of assisting the shooter through the courses of fire. One really did feel like the officials were there to help instead of just standing around waiting to give you a penalty.



or heard about, someone who wronged someone, or at least thought he had.

Where were the standard smears? "The course of fire's not realistic." (As if that was significant in a sporting event anyway.) Where were the battalions of babies bleating and crying? "Those gamey .38 Supers aren't fair! Mom-meeeeeee!" (Maybe Jerry Barnhart's victory with a .45 ACP last year quieted those cry babies down some.) How about that pathetic old lament? "It's not fair for revolvers." (You suppose the wheelgunners might have discovered that revolvers can't compete anyway, and just didn't show up?)

Maybe it was something else, something more important than any of these rather insignificant little gripes.

I think what is finally happening is something that is extremely beneficial to both the shooters and the organizers— I think everyone is starting to grow up a bit!

Yes, there were problems that cropped up, but they were handled professionally and quickly. You didn't hear a bunch of

The shooters themselves appeared to be catching on too. They didn't seem to waste as much time "making ready" before shooting. Some guys have the most annoving little rituals they go through before they'll indicate they're ready to start. Checking their zodiac signs, dubbing on sight black, lathering up with rosin, reciting their mantra and probably consulting their gypsy palm reader. Most individuals appeared ready when it was their turn, something that makes a match run much smoother for everyone.

And when was the last time you shot a major tournament where they didn't lag behind? When was the last time you actually shot through ahead of schedule?

When a disastrous scoring error was discovered in the final results, thanks to Mike Plaxco, the officials didn't try to pull Watergate II. No coverups, no excuses. Just fix the problem, and sorry about that.

I applaud the entire USPSA organization, the staff of the hosting PASA gun club and each and every range officer who held a watch or taped a target. Bravo!

So what does it all mean? Well, it appears we as a sport are finally getting through some of the teething problems of growing up. Things get complicated, quick, when a shooting sport that begins as a grass-roots, club-by-club movement turns into a major national organization

complete with a board of directors, a corporate charter, a set of bylaws and some 100,000 shooters across the nation. This is good, of course. We're growing. More members, more matches, more interest, more sponsors who are quickly catching on to the marketing potential of the media coverage our sport of practical shooting generates.

Look around you, you're in the middle of the fastest growing handgun sport in the country, a sport that pioneered the concept of "professional handgunning" and sowed the seeds of "shoot for loot" to sprout The Masters, the Bianchi Cup, the Steel Challenge and others. It's here, folks, in IPSC shooting, that it's happen-

Now is a good time for everyone involved in IPSC to start taking this pastime more seriously. We have a long way to go and plenty more problems to iron out, but we now appear to have the common sense neccessary to begin dealing with those troubles and elevate this sport further to the place of prominence it deserves.

If the 1988 Nationals is any indication of what is possible, then it indeed looks good for the future.

As for the match itself, it was another close fight between the perennial Top Guns plus a few newcomers who appear to show promise for the future.

All the Big Names put in a good performance with Mike Plaxco, fifth place, coming off a year of semi-retirement to shoot as good as I've ever seen him. The methodically consistent Brian Enos shot a good, solid match to place third. Last year's winner, Jerry Barnhart, just managed to edge out Brian to place second.

So there are your second, third and fifth place finishers. The missing pair from the Top Five are myself and a gentleman from the northeast, Mark Mazzotta.

Mark shot on a different squad than me and therefore did not shoot the various stages of the match in the same order as me, which makes things interesting. After two days of shooting, Mark had more points than anyone but, remember, all stages were not created equal. A stage is weighted according to the number of rounds fired, so a six-round stage counts for one-third as many points as an 18round stage. It's all very complicated and, to further muddy the water, the relative values of the various stages are not calculated until the end of the match.

So it appeared that Mark was in the driver's seat in the early going. Then came the Standard Exercises, the single largest point-value stage of the match.

Mark shot the standards before me, which creates the sometimes-unfavorable situation of playing catch-up because I already knew what score Mark had shot. Luckily for me, Mark had a little trouble and shot what would turn out to be his softest score of the match.

I, on the other hand, managed to squeak out a relatively good score to gain a considerable lead.

At this point I had only two small (i.e., low point-value) stages and one big pointer left to fire. The first was what's called an "assault course" with the shooter sprinting from position to position, firing at multiple targets through windows, doorways and hallways. I shot a second place score on this stage, losing ground only to Jerry Barnhart who shot this stage superbly.

With only the two small stages left on the last day of the match, things were looking pretty good for the kid. No one could bump me out of first place except me. Knowing this, I approached the final stages determined to simply shoot solid scores- no razzle-dazzle, just don't blow

When I was called to line, I noticed I was more nervous than usual. Shucks, it's just my fifth national championship on the line! I gauged my state of nerves as an indicator of potential disaster, and used that to determine my pace: smooth and controlled. I knew the importance of every shot I was about to fire. I just tried to relax as much as possible and I just fired as though this was just another stage.

The smoke cleared and I heaved a sigh of relief. No dinged hostages, no dropped shots, no blow out. I could relax, now the work was up to the statisticians. A wave of calmness washed over me as I knew, regardless of my finish, I had shot a good, solid match and not blown out anywhere.

This is the kind of performance I strive for because I know that if I am beaten, I have done my best. I have nothing to be ashamed of. It doesn't matter if you're a national champion or a D class shooter, if you've shot to your personal best, you've won.

Well, no one managed to shoot significantly better through the match than me and I regained my title and added Number Five to my national championships. Good of Number Five is special to me because of the support shown by my family, sponsors, supporters and fellow shooters.

And what happened to Mark? He finished third, which is an excellent performance as be beat many Big Name shooters. He is a rising star, a force to be reckoned with in the future.

Who knows, maybe next year I can add Number Six if I get lucky. See you there.

Rob Leatham is currently teaching the techniques of shooting that have made him unquestionably the greatest practical shooter in history. Five national championships, three world championships, Bianchi Cup champion, Steel Challenge champion, SOF Three-Gun champion and too many regional, state and local crowns to count. Classes are currently forming, and private tutoring is available by special arrangement. For more information, write to Leatham's Shooting Institute, P.O. Box 1291, Mesa, AZ, 85201.

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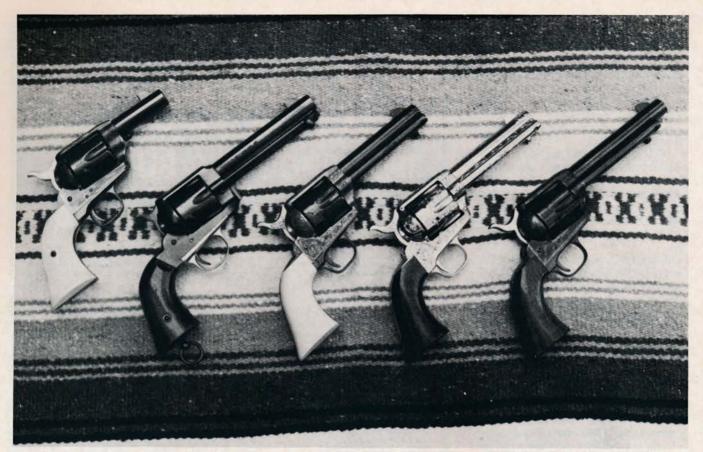
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Cimatron's SIXGUNS

Authentic replicas of Colt Peacemakers and Remington singleactions, possibly the most glamorous, nostalgic handguns in history.

By John Taffin

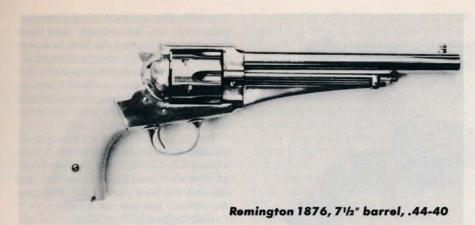
Twas a sad year, 1981, for those among us who love the single action revolver. After more than 100 years of production, the Colt Single Action, Model P, Thumbuster, Equalizer, Peacemaker, or whatever reverent name can be ascribed to it, went down for the third and final time.

The old Colt started life in 1873, and stayed in continuous production until 1941 when a combination of worn-out machinery, war time demands, and waning interest among shooters who had by now discovered the excellent Colt and Smith & Wesson double action revolvers and semi-automatics, all forced the cessation of production of the Colt Single Action Army Revolver.

Shooters, like all groups of people, always want most that which they cannot have. So due to the demand of a whole new generation of shooters who had discovered the Single Action revolver mainly through western movies on TV, Colt resumed production of the Single Action in 1956. The "new" Colt was basically the same as the original 1873 Model.



Firing the Sheriff's Model with three-inch barrel, the author found this packin' pistol a pleasure to shoot in .45 Long Colt.



All of the Cimarron sixguns are faithful reproductions of the original hoglegs. Author Taffin, an unabashed lover of single-actions, says the Uberti-made revolvers are exceptionally well-made.

Much of the machinery used was still some of the old equipment used nearly 100 years before and, as it wore out, the Colt SA was removed from production again in the 1970's until new tooling was completed, and the third generation of Single Action's surfaced in the mid-Seventies.

But due to rising costs, Colt SA's with old style leaf springs cost more than twice as much as a Ruger SA with modern "unbreakable" coil springs. The Colt was destined to be removed once again from production.

The Colt Single Action was prettier, but the Ruger was stronger, cheaper, and available in both .41 Magnum and .44 Magnum, in addition to the Colt chamberings of .357 Magnum and .45 Colt. The Classic Colt Single Action is now a thing of the past except for those willing to go through the Colt Custom Shop which still offers a limited number of Single Actions with a starting base price of \$1000!

At one time the glamorous Colt was available with any barrel length, with or without ejector rod housing, blue, blue and case hardened, or nickel finish, plain or engraved, and a choice of grips from plain walnut, gutta percha, staghorn, fancy wood, pearl or ivory. Colt Single Actions ran the gamut from work-a-day plain blue and case hardened no-nonsense .45's up to profusely engraved models that never left their fancy presentation cases.

The Colt is gone from regular production, but thanks to Cimarron Arms (9439 Katy Freeway, Dept. AH, Houston, TX 77024, (713) 461-4748), sixgunners still have a supply of "Colt-style" replicas that are every bit as good looking as any Colt's ever produced. Plus a further gap has been filled by Cimarron's replica Remington Single Actions as well.

All of Cimarron's offerings come from the Italian factory of A. Uberti and, yes, I know what you're thinking: Spaghetti Western! For years, western movies have been cursed with both good guy and bad guy alike carrying Single Actions not of the Colt persuasion, but there on the screen bigger than life itself—Single Actions with those glaring brass backstraps and trigger guards. For an old traditionalist and western movie buff like myself, this ruined what might have actually been a good movie.

Now thanks to Cimarron Arms and head







41







All of the Cimarron sixguns are available in a variety of calibers, from the .22LR to the big .45 Colt. The Buckhorn Model is available in .44 Magnum. Many, like the 1890 Remington (above) display remarkable accuracy. From top to bottom, Peacemaker; Sheriff's Model; Artillery Model; Peacemaker; Remington 1890.

man Mike Harvey, all of this has changed. Mike took over the company from Allen Firearms, and his goal has been to import Single Actions which, though still replicas, are as close to the original as possible. The fact that he sells them as fast as they are imported attests to his success in offering a product that single action buffs can take to their heart.

For the past few months, I have had the pleasure of working with eight replicas manufactured by Uberti. Six of these were supplied on a test basis by Cimarron Arms and the other two are my personal 1875 Remington replicas. Tests guns are as follows:

Colt Replicas, all in .45 Colt:

Sheriff's Model 3", blue and case hardened, one piece walnut stocks, with extra



ivory micarta checkered two piece stocks.

Artillery Model 51/2", blue and case hardened, one piece walnut stocks, marked in the 1870's military style.

Peacemaker Model 7½" barrel, blue and case hardened, one piece walnut grips, Civilian Model, no military markings.

Engraved Model 43/4", nickel finish, one piece walnut stocks.

Engraved Model 43/4", blue and case hardened, one piece ivory micarta stocks.

Remington Replicas:

Model 1875 7¹/₂", nickel finish, ivory micarta stocks .45 Colt.

Model 1875 7½", nickel finish, ivory micarta stocks, .44-40.

Model 1890 51/2", blue, walnut stocks, lanyard ring, .45 Colt.

Remington replicas are available only as cataloged in blue or nickel finish, calibers .357, .44-40, and .45 Colt. Model 1875's are available with 7½-inch barrels while Model 1890's are only offered with 5½-inch barrels.

When it comes to the Colt replicas, choices are almost unlimited. All of the Cimarron Colt-style line is offered under the "Cattleman" designation. These are basically the same models that have been imported down through the years by such firms as Navy Arms, Iver Johnson, and Allen Firearms. They are also available in a Cattleman Target Model with adjustable sights and a larger framed Buckhorn Model chambered in .44 Magnum with both fixed sighted and adjustable sighted models available.

Cimarron has taken a giant step forward in upgrading the line and offering models

other than the standard brass-blue-case hardened finish. All Cimarron Colt-style replicas are available with either the standard or blackpowder frame. The standard frame model, or post-1890 Model, features the half moon style ejector rod head and spring loaded cross-pin cylinder pin retainer. The latter is found on all Ruger single actions and all Colt Single Actions in both the second and third generation series.

The blackpowder designation does not mean that they are suitable only for blackpowder loads, though many traditionalists use them strictly with blackpowder. This frame, which I find the most desirable, has the full circular, or "bullseye" ejector rod head and the cylinder pin is retained by a screw that enters the front of the frame, just hammer. For some unknown reason, this model has been designated *Outlaw* and is marked "1890 OUTLAW model-CAL. 45" on the right side of the barrel. Authentic 1875 and 1890 Remingtons have no markings on the side of the barrel, and since only 2,000 1890's were manufactured originally, I doubt very much that they were particular favorites of outlaws. Since Mike Harvey is being very careful to provide authentic Colt style replicas, I expect he will also "fix" the Remingtons.

Leather is no problem with either the Colt or Remington style replicas. They both fit holsters made for the Colt Single Action perfectly. Even when tried in some of the safety strap fitted Tom Threepersons/Elmer Keith

Continued on page 103



Original military markings (above) are preserved for traditionalists. The engraved models (left and below) feature graceful scrolls from deep, handcut engraving in the Uberti factory of Italy. A pair of nickel plated Remington 1875 sixguns (bottom) point well in hip shooting exercises.



like the old blackpowder Colts.

And the choice does not stop here. All models are available with standard blue or "charcoal blue," also known as "fire-blue," finish. The latter is a true blue, not a modern blue-black finish, and the test guns furnished in the three-inch Sheriff's Model and the 5½-inch Artillery Model both featured the unusual, and rarely seen, charcoal blue finish.

The 5½-inch Artillery Model is of particular interest because of its attention to detail. Like all of the Colt replicas, the caliber designation is marked on the left side of the barrel as all pre-WW II Colts. Modern Colts are marked "COLT SINGLE ACTION ARMY .45 COLT;" pre-war Colts simply said ".45 COLT." The left side of the one-piece walnut grip is marked with the military inspector's initials, the left side of the trigger guard is marked .45 CAL. The serial number, 0002, is marked in four places: on the cylinder, bottom front of the frame, on the trigger guard, and on the bottom of the butt.

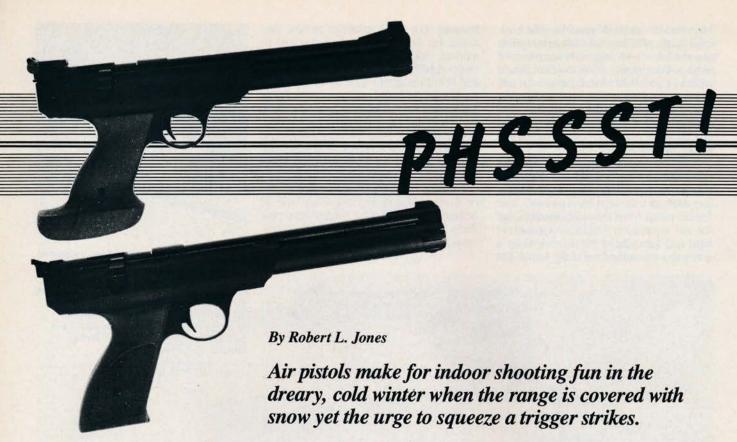
To keep the authenticity, Italian proof marks are hidden under the ejector rod housing. Like all of the Colt replicas, the case hardening looks as good as any case colors on Colt's.

In addition, the cylinder locks up *tight*, and the cylinder-gap is held to a minimum. Altogether a thoroughly eye-pleasing and good shooting sixgun and one that literally reeks of nostalgia.

The Remington 1890 replica is also an exceptionally good looking sixgun with its charcoal blue finish, authentic brass trigger guard, and case hardened loading gate and







Tom is a dedicated pistolero. He goes to his range for practice at least twice a week, and dry-fires regularly between live practice sessions. During the season, he competes in a match nearly every weekend, and his scores climb steadily as the season progresses. The practice time is paying off—he wins his share of matches. When he doesn't win, he usually knows why not: loss of concentration during the pressure of rapid-fire in one match, and maybe plain old fatigue during the last stages of another.

He is realistic about his weak points—he doesn't blame equipment when concentration is at fault, or blame ammunition when he blows a shot. He vows to practice harder to correct these faults. He's doing all he can, right?

Wrong. He's missing a training tool that could be a huge benefit to him. Along with the matches, the live practice, and the dryfiring, he should be shooting an air pistol regularly.

An air pistol? Ha! Everybody knows an air pistol doesn't go BOOM!! Or even Bang! Merely, phssst, with an innocent crack as the pellet hits the backstop. No noise, no smoke, no recoil—shooting an air pistol doesn't have anything to do with shooting the big guns.

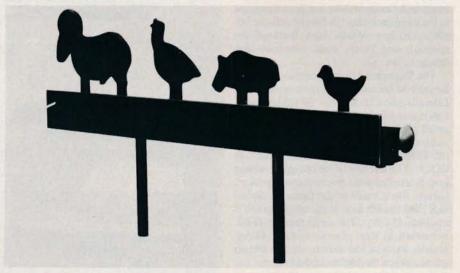
Maybe not—but it can have everything to do with *learning the techniques* that make one successful at shooting any handgun. An air pistol's lack of noise and recoil, which at first thought might make it seem unrealistic for practice, are the very points which make it valuable as a training tool. Here's why:

In learning a skill as complex and demanding as pistol shooting, one must ignore the forest, and get down to the trees—in other words, study the techniques *one at a time*. Any shooter who is honest with himself can

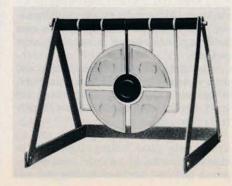
isolate his weak points. Once they're isolated, they can be eliminated. To see how it's done, let's look at some of the fundamentals common to all forms of pistol shooting.

Sight alignment: right off the bat, let's look at one that makes you scoff, "Why, I've got my sight alignment down so well that it's

instinctive." Do you? Do you really *know* why you left a plate standing during your last match, or why you shot a 6 during the rapid-fire? Or, you may be thinking, "This doesn't apply to me—I use an Aimpoint." All right—if you have Aimpoints on every handgun you own, right down to the little snub you keep in



Crosman has several plinking targets for airgunners, like the knockdown silhouettes and the bullseye divided into swinging quadrants. Both are fun and safe, with proper backstops and proper gun handling.



your nightstand—then skip this section. If not, let's look at it.

The key to sight alignment is focusing on the front sight. We know the human eye can only focus on one thing at a time, and for a pistol shooter, the one point of focus must be the front sight. Yet it is easy to fall into the habit of shifting your focus from the front sight, to the target, to the rear sight, and back to the front. This habit is especially easy to acquire if you're shooting one of the disciplines in which the target falls over, swings, leaps off the table, or disintegrates with a solid hit. And once acquired, the habit is hard to break. But to achieve any consistency in shooting handguns, the focus must be solidly riveted to the front sight.

Dry-firing helps build proper sight alignment, but an air pistol makes the practice even better, because it gives an immediate check on results. Try it like this: after one of your regular dry-firing sessions, switch to an airgun and try 20 shots with *only* sight alignment in mind. Let your grip and stance come

Setting Up a Practice Range

Finding an area to practice with an airgun shouldn't be difficult. Almost anywhere will do, as long as you can control the access to the area when you're shooting. An airgun is not a .44 Magnum, but even a .17 caliber pellet could do some damage. Don't let it happen to you.

For air pistol, you need 10 meters for the flight of the pellet. Ten meters is 33 feet. Add a foot for the backstop, and a minimum four feet where you stand—that's a total of 38 feet. Measure a string 38 feet long, and try the possible areas in your home—basement, rec room, hallways, attic—any area where you can control access. You need good lighting in the target area, and the shooting area—dim light between the areas is all right. Try to

avoid moving streams of air, like air conditioners, fans, or heat ducts.

Once you find the area, you need a backstop. Crosman sells a handy pellet stopper made of steel for about \$25. Or you can easily make your own. A box about a foot thick crammed full of tightly-crumpled newspaper makes a good backstop. You can tape your targets to the box. Move around on the face of the box so the pellets won't pile up and rebound. When one side gets chewed up, turn the box around and use the other side; then scrap the box and start another.

If you shoot paper targets, one backstop will be enough. For metal targets, make up enough backstop-boxes to form a semi-circle around the target area and catch any ricochets. A floor pad and a canvas or plywood top for the area will catch any pellets that go astray.

Another handy item for your practice area is a bench or a small table to hold your pistols, pellets, targets, scorebooks, timers, and any other gear you use. Use the gear that you normally use for your type shooting—the more realistic you can make your practice sessions, the better.

Once your practice area is ready, set yourself a schedule for practice, and stick to it. Score yourself in practice just like you would in a match—and be sure to record your scores. Watching your scores improve is one of the best incentives to keep practicing. Finally, keep track of how your practice affects your performance on the firing line. Make your practice pay off—win.

like you do during dry-fire. Check each shot to make sure it went where you called it.

Remember, calling your shots is not just a technique for beginners, nor is it a guessing game. The ability to accurately call your shots proves you are focusing your attention on the front sight, where it belongs.

Grip and stance: let's look at these two fundamentals together, and see how an airgun helps with them. One point to keep in mind: don't change your grip or stance to accommodate the airgun. Do it the other way around—use the airgun to help refine your grip and stance. Adding an airgun to your arsenal won't affect your grip any more than alternating between a revolver and an autoloader—which we all should do for the versatility we learn by doing so. A one-gun man is at a distinct disadvantage in many situations.

As in the sight alignment practice, switch to the airgun after a dry-firing session. Use your regular stance. Try a few shots with the airgun, and notice how your balance feels. Then, at your next live practice session, right after shooting a string with your regular gun, pick up the airgun and shoot a few times.

Did your balance change? If it changed very much, you may be over-compensating for recoil, or leaning into the recoil. Heaven forbid you should get too far into this habit, and the horrors it leads to—anticipating the

naturally, and concentrate your attention on keeping the sights in perfect alignment. Consciously focus your vision on the front sight. Between shots, let your eyes unfocus in order to rest them. With each shot, bring your focus back and really bear down on the front sight. See how much concentration you can bring to one point? You can nearly stare that sight off the barrel. That is the method for considering points of technique one at a time. Now change to a fresh target and try ten shots for a group. Get your grip and stance solid before you begin, then forget about them and concentrate on the sight alignment. Don't change your grip during the stringyou can operate everything about an airgun with your off hand. With each shot, get your sight alignment perfect, and keep it there while you move the sights to your aiming point and get the shot off. Call each shot, just

Muddled figures and confused writers have plagued the .357 Herrett. Four different sources cite four different chamber dimensions. So the author asks

WILL THE REAL .357 HERRETT PLEASE STAND UP



By Tim Johnson

For more than 14 years the .357 Herrett has carried the stigma of a temperamental brute. The gun writing profession is, to a degree, responsible by its failure to represent the big Herrett as a *true* wildcat. Colonel George C. Nonte Jr. once described a wildcat as "Any cartridge not standardized within the shooting industry or not standardized domestically within the Sporting Arms and Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI)." The late Colonel further explained, "The most common form of wildcatting consists of necking the case down and increasing its powder capacity and thereby increase velocity and energy."

At its inception during the early '70s there were no "standard factory loads" that had comparable performance to the .357 Herrett. Compared to the nominal ballistics of the .357 and .44 Magnums, it was awesome! Even today, in the blasé Eighties, velocities in excess of 2000 fps are the exception rather than the rule. Unfortunately, any item sold to the general public preceded by that magic word the as in: the fastest, the most accurate, the most powerful, suffers at the hands of the uninitiated. Such has been the case with the .357 Herrett.

My first experience with the big Herrett was at an unsanctioned silhouette match in 1978. One erudite competitor was using this chambering in his 10 inch T-C. His thermonuclear handloads vaporized the targets as his muzzle blast lit the sky. Being an ingenious fellow, he had designed a special tool to pry the greatly expanded brass from his Contender. About the only thing this shooter lacked was a primer catcher to retrieve his grossly flattened primers as they fell from their pockets. Undoubtedly, this person (if he still lives) is working up 3000 fps handloads for his 454 Casull.

At the other end of the spectrum are those shooters who attempt to use the .357 Herrett as an oversized .38 Special – neither should be emulated!

To further complicate matters, most expert opinion is replete with vagaries. The consensus of published data gives the impression that case manufacturing for the .357 Herrett is as elementary a procedure as mak-

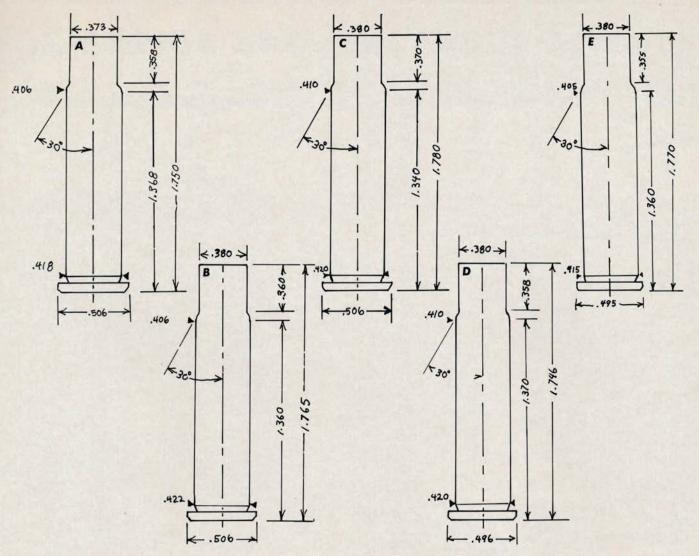
Above, a .30-30 case prior to being reformed to the .357 Herrett case, right. As far as wildcats go, the forming operation is fairly easy, but the trick is in finding the "right" .357 Herrett dimensions for your gun, as the author explains.

ing cases for the 7mm TC-U, with the addition of a case trimming operation—it is not! Correct headspace is mentioned, yet seemingly the solution is to have the proper "snap." Mystically, the way to achieve that proper "snap" is to feel it.

Adding to the complexity of case manufacture is an interesting array of standard dimensions, none of which happen to agree with my barrel's chamber measurements. Referring to the cartridge diagrams, it becomes rather obvious that the .020" difference from shoulder to rim combined with the greater overall length of cartridge case C would not only preclude easy insertion into the chamber that formed case B, but also may constitute a dangerous situation if such insertion was achieved. It would be inadvisable to shoot

.357 Herrett cartridges in any Contender other than that which fire formed the cases.

The first order of business in manufacturing cases for the .357 Herrett is to determine the exact chamber dimensions of your Contender-not Bob Milek's, Stan Trzoniec's, Speer's, mine, but yours. By determining these exact dimensions, you can avoid the manipulation of your sizing die by the "quarter turn, eighth turn-try em and see" routine, often recommended as the method to achieve "zero headspace." In simplistic terms, zero headspace in the .357 Herrett is achieved when the resized and trimmed case abuts the shoulder of the chamber on the one end, and the base of the case abuts the breech face on the other. Excessive case stretching and misfires can result if the



case is not supported fore and aft as previously described. Misfires are wasteful and inconvenient; reloading stretched cases is potentially dangerous because a blown case head or ruptured case can result.

An easy way to avoid these counterproductive results is to make a chamber cast.

Case forming, previously a tedious hit or miss operation, is now a simple eyeball procedure. Inside and outside lube a .30-.30 (or .375 Win.) case, place it in the shell holder of your press, stroke the handle and the resizing die will perform the necking up (or down) operation. Set the sized case next to the chamber cast and adjust your sizing die until the round ridge on the resized case is parallel to the shoulder of the casting. Having achieved this, snug the hex screw on the die's locking ring. Now measure the casting from rim to case mouth and make note of that figure. Use a lathe type case trimmer to trim the resized brass to the previously noted figure.

When the proper case length has been achieved, reassemble the Contender, chamber a case and (I hate to say it) "snap" the action shut. If this proves impossible, rotate the case 90° and again "snap" the action. The case should still offer some resistance prior to the action locking shut. Try one more case

through the die, case trimmer, and pistol action to make certain of your settings. Once positive that your settings are correct, tighten the hex screw on the locking ring.

Now you are ready for some production work. Trim and resize at least 120 cases so that even if you lose a few in resizing or fire forming (I lost only one to the resizing die out of 175 cases), you will still have at least 100 cases. Of special interest to you "thrifty" (i.e. broke) types-contrary to instructions given by all sources of information - is the fact that I used once-fired .30-.30 cases, not virgin brass, with no ill effect. Run all resized and trimmed cases through the action using the 90° rotation procedure prior to priming, charging, and bullet seating steps. Thoughts of a high primer setting off a charged case, in a partially closed Contender, is an unsettling idea, so do run those cases through the gun

Prime, charge and seat the bullets and you are ready to fire form. Fire forming is the easiest step in manufacturing brass for the .357 Herrett. My fire forming load is 26 gr. of 2400 under a 125 gr. JHC slug torched by R-P primers. This load is 5 grs. lighter than the maximum load listed in Speer's #10 using 2400 and 125 gr. bullets. It does give the folks at the range a bit of a start to hear the Herrett bark and see an eight inch blue-orange flame

Here are five different .357 Herrett cartridge drawings with differing case lengths, neck lengths, shoulders. A) from "Tips on Handloading the .30 and .357 Herrett" by Bob Milek. B) Speer #10 Reloading Manual. C) author's data. D) Bill Sanford's data. E) Skip Bogley's data. You will need to make a chamber cast (see page 109) to determine the proper .357 Herrett dimensions for your gun.

erupt from a 10 inch T-C.

Other than fire forming, this load is totally useless in my gun. At velocities in the 2000 fps range, the jacket tears, peels back to the cannelure and flies off the core like a discarding sabot. These 125 gr. Sierra Sportsmaster JHC bullets were designed to expand at 1000 fps or less. To expect satisfactory performance, at Mach 2+, is a bit unrealistic.

After fire forming, tumble the cases clean and inspect the case mouth and shoulder areas for hairline cracks. Also check for case head expansion and for signs of a dark ring around the primer. If such a ring exists, check

Continued on page 108

HANDLOADING THE .445 SUPERMAG

| CAST BUL | LET LOADS | | | CAST BULL | ET LOADS | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| BULLET Sierra | POWDER CHARGE | VELOCITY | GROUP+ | BULLET SAECO 260 | POWDER CHARGE | VELOCITY | GROUP+ |
| 220 grain Silhouette | 34.0 grs. H4227 35.0 grs. H4227 36.0 grs. H4227 39.0 grs. WW680 40.0 grs. WW680 36.0 grs. H110 37.0 grs. H110 38.0 grs. H110 39.0 grs. H110 | 1629 fps 1679 fps 1705 fps 1656 fps 1660 fps 1671 fps 1734 fps 1736 fps 1786 fps | 1.00" 1.25" 1.25" 1.25" 2.50" 2.50" 1.50" 1.75" | 260 grain Silhouette | 32.0 grs. H4227 33.0 grs. H4227 34.0 grs. H4227 35.0 grs. H4227 37.0 grs. WW680 38.0 grs. WW680 39.0 grs. WW680 40.0 grs. WW680 | 1560 fps 1654 fps 1648* fps 1625* fps 1515 fps 1540 fps 1577 fps 1621 fps | 0.50" 1.75" 1.00" 2.50" 0.75" 0.75" 0.75" 3.00" |
| Speer | | | | NEI #295 290 grain | 32.0 grs. WW680 | 1424 fps | 1.50" |
| 240 grain Silhouette | 33.0 grs. H4227 34.0 grs. H4227 35.0 grs. H4227 36.0 grs. H4227 37.0 grs. WW680 38.0 grs. WW680 39.0 grs. WW680 31.0 grs. H110 32.0 grs. H110 34.0 grs. H110 35.0 grs. H110 36.0 grs. H110 | 1551 fps 1609 fps 1683 fps 1713 fps 1544 fps 1555 fps 1626 fps 1450 fps 1489 fps 1519 fps 1527 fps 1542 fps 1642 fps | 1.25" 1.25" 1.25" 2.00" 1.50" 1.25" 1.00" 2.00" 2.375" 1.50" 2.00" 1.50" | .429GC SSK #310.429 300 grain | 33.0 grs. WW680 34.0 grs. WW680 35.0 grs. WW680 36.0 grs. WW680 29.0 grs. H110 30.0 grs. H110 31.0 grs. H110 32.0 grs. H110 33.0 grs. H110 34.0 grs. H110 | 1468 fps 1549 fps 1559 fps 1551 fps 1439 fps 1439 fps 1493 fps 1602 fps 1604 fps 1694 fps | 0.625" 2.25" 1.25" 1.00" 2.50" 1.75" 1.75" 1.375" 1.50" 2.50" |
| | 37.0 grs. H110 38.0 grs. H110 | 1656 fps 1719 fps | 1.75" 1.50" | 3.4 | 33.0 grs. WW680 34.0 grs. WW680 35.0 grs. WW680 | 1498 fps 1562 fps 1607 fps | 1.625" 2.00" 2.00" |
| Hornady 265 grain Flat Point | 29.0 grs. H4427 30.0 grs. H4227 31.0 grs. H4227 32.0 grs. H4227 33.0 grs. WW680 34.0 grs. WW680 35.0 grs. WW680 29.0 grs. H110 30.0 grs. H110 31.0 grs. H110 | 1456 fps 1513 fps 1578 fps 1617 fps 1398 fps 1437 fps 1503 fps 1344 fps 1414 fps 1450 fps | 1.25" 1.50" 1.50" 1.125" 1.50" 1.50" 2.50" 1.50" 2.00" 1.25" | Barrel Length: Brass: IHMSA Primer: CCI #2 Temperature: 6 | .445SM 200 | | 1.00" 0.875" 2.50" 1.25" 1.25" |
| Sierra 300 grain | 32.0 grs. H110 | 1191 fps | 1.25" | 11000000000000000000000000000000000000 | resent the center-to-cen | | ent of three |
| Flat Point | 33.0 grs. H110 34.0 grs. H110 35.0 grs. H110 36.0 grs. H110 37.0 grs. H110 29.0 grs. WW680 30.0 grs. WW680 31.0 grs. WW680 32.0 grs. WW680 33.0 grs. WW680 34.0 grs. WW680 35.0 grs. WW680 | 1199 ps 1225 ps 1252 ps 1252 ps 1325 ps 1412 ps 1188 ps 1222 ps 1276 ps 1310 ps 1361 ps 1453 ps 1472 ps | 1.25" 1.25" 1.25" 1.25" 1.50" 2.00" 1.75" 1.75" 1.75" 2.00" 1.375" 1.00" | *Velocities are A heavy roll cri PRIMER COMPLoad: 35.5 grs. CI #200 Large CCI #250 Large CCI #350 Large (Accuracy was | ds from a hand-held sa actually lower with a he imp is not possible with ARISONS . WW680 and Sierra 2 Rifle Primer: e Rifle Magnum Primer: e Pistol Magnum Primer unaffected by switching | ndbag rest. eavier powder these full-cape 50 gr. JFP 1409 fps 1402 fps 1415 fps | charge. |
| NEI #260.429 260 grain | 32.0 grs. H4227 | 1576 fps | 2.00" | BRASS COMPA | RISON 5. H110 and 250 gr. Sie | erra JFP | |
| 200 gruin | 33.0 grs. H4227 34.0 grs. H4227 37.0 grs. WW680 38.0 grs. WW680 39.0 grs. WW680 | 1660 fps 1710 fps 1612 fps 1636 fps 1716 fps | 1.50" 2.50" 2.625" 2.00" 2.00" | New Brass: Once Fired Bra Twice Fired Bra | ss: | 1602 fps 1615 fps 1706 fps | 2.125" 1.250" 1.50" |

.445 SUPER-MAG



By John Taffin Photos by Ichiro Nagata

The .357 SuperMag chambered in the Dan Wesson heavy frame revolver is generally regarded by experienced silhouetters as the finest revolver cartridge for long range silhouetting.

The SuperMag concept was a simple one. Instead of going to a big bore for silhouettes, stretch the .357 Magnum case to 1.610" and use 180-200 grain bullets at the same muzzle velocities attained by the .357 Magnum using 158 grain bullets.

Though the concept was simple, carrying it out was not.

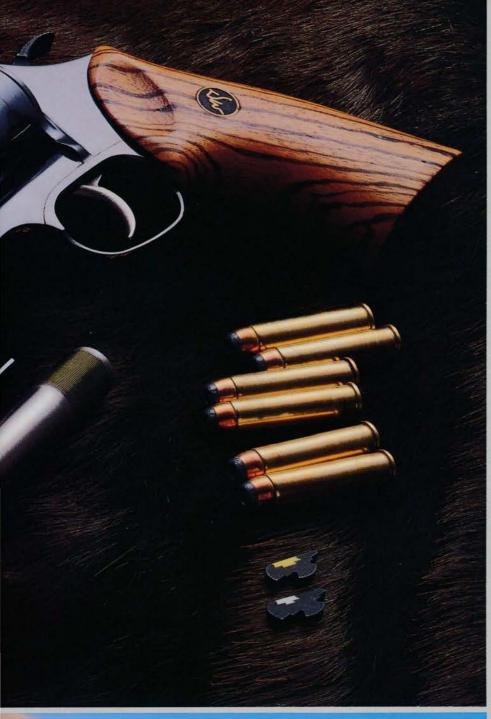
It was more than a matter of chambering an existing revolver for the new cartridge—stretching the case to 1.610" also meant elongating revolver frames and cylinders. This is no simple task and certainly required a large investment in time, money and engineering.

Many silhouetters had found the original Magnum lacking in knockdown power on stubborn, 60 pound rams. When the weather conditions were wet and cold or a strong wind was coming against the back of the targets, the .357 also met its match

in many a pig. The .357 SuperMag gave big-bore knockdown power with small-bore recoil.

When the .357 SuperMag from Dan Wesson first appeared on the scene, more than one wildcatter was waiting with reamers in hand to do one thing: Turn it into a true big bore.

The largest number of these were turned into .44 SuperMags, and I had the privilege of doing extensive shooting of one such wildcat, the .44 UltraMag. The .44 UltraMag used .444 Marlin brass cut to 1.620". This brass is larger in diameter than .44 Magnum brass, so it was swaged





and turned on a lathe until it matched .44 Magnum dimensions. The reason, of course, was to also allow the use of the shorter .44 Magnums in the same cylin-

My good friend Lew Schafer created the .44 UltraMag and by careful reloading we acquired the following muzzle velocities, in temperatures of 20-25 degrees, using a six-inch barrelled Dan Wesson revolver:

200 gr. Hornady JHP 220 gr. Sierra FPJ Silhouette 1670 fps

240 gr. Hornady Jacketed Silhouette

1596 fps 1495 fps 265 gr. Hornady FFP 305 gr. Cast Gas Checked Bullet 1589 fps

At the time, only the 265 grain and 305 grain bullets were chronographed in the same revolver with the eight-inch barrel installed and like loads gave an increase of 110 fps to the 265 Hornady and a mere 13 fps to the 305 grain cast bullet. All loads were assembled with WW680 powder and CCI #350 Magnum Large Pistol primers with the 305 grain cast bullet giving five-shot groups of less than half an inch at 25 yards.

Barrels for the .44 UltraMag were standard Dan Wesson .44 Magnum barrels but because the SuperMag frames used different threads, eight-inch .44 Magnum barrels were cut to six-inches and rethreaded, and ten-inch barrels went through the same process to become eight-inch barrels. This accounts for the lack of testing with a ten-inch barrel.

For the past five years, the various .44 SuperMags, based on either .444 Marlin or .30-40 Krag brass, have been regarded as illegitimate sons of the .357 SuperMag. Now, thanks to the combined efforts of Dan Wesson and Elgin Gates of IHMSA, the illegitimate son has received its birthright and been welcomed into the family. The newest of the SuperMag family of cartridges has been dubbed the .445 SuperMag by its creator, Elgin Gates.

Gates tells of designing the SuperMag line of cartridges nearly 15 years ago with seven parent SuperMag cartridges being designed: .357, .375, .414, .445, .455, .505, .610. The .357 and .375 SuperMags are now well established, the .445 is scheduled to be available through regular channels as you read this, and if all goes according to plans, the .41 SuperMag-

The Dan Wesson .445 SuperMag revolver features the interchangeable barrels that have become something of a Dan Wesson trademark. The top-notch accuracy for which Dan Wesson is justly renowned is in large measure attributed to the interchangeable barrel's capability of holding an extremely tight barrel/cylinder gap. Of course the Dan Wesson matchgrade barrel tubes don't hurt either! The .445 SuperMag should make a tremendous impact on the handgun hunting scene, especially those who seek the larger and more dangerous



The Dan Wesson grip stud (above) houses the mainspring and provides a stable stirrup for the wood stocks. The .445 SuperMag (above right) dwarfs a petite .44 Magnum cartridge. The Four-Forty-Five is simply a lengthened .44 Mag case. One of the reasons for the strength of the Dan Wesson (below) is its massive cylinder that provides plenty of meat between the chambers.

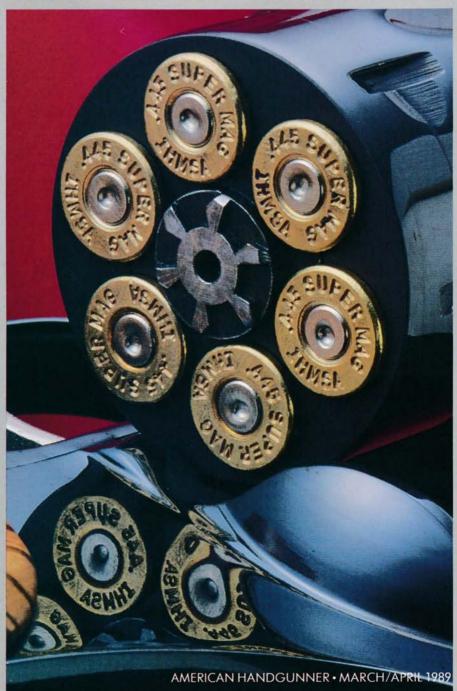
the .414—will also be in my hands for testing as this goes to print.

After communication with both Elgin Gates and Bob Talbot, chief engineer at Dan Wesson, I was scheduled to receive one of the prototype Dan Wesson .445's, a small lot of the first brass and a set of Redding .445 SuperMag dies. Upon the arrival of the .445 SuperMag from Dan Wesson, I was very pleased to find not only a blued ten-inch Dan Wesson .445 with Zebrawood grips, but also an extra eight-inch barrel in the Heavy Barrel configuration along with a pair of the newest Dan Wesson "gripper" style one-piece wood grips. As it turned out, the extra grips were vital to the testing project. From the serial number on my test gun and matching barrels, 003, this is the third gun out of the factory, after the original stainless .445's sent to IHMSA.

As a starting point for loading for the .445 SuperMag, I went back to the loading data for the .44 UltraMag and also compared the capacity of the .445 SuperMag brass with the wildcat .44 UltraMag brass. The brass for the .445 SuperMag seems to be "stretched" .44 Magnum brass and is not as beefy as the wildcat brass made up from either .444 Marlin or .30-40 Krag brass. So even though the .445 had more case capacity than the wildcat .44 UM, I decided to play it safe and not increase powder charges at the beginning.

Firing the new .445 for the first time gave me a sensation that I had never really experienced before with a Dan Wesson production revolver: recoil. Dan Wessons







The "windows" in the barrel shroud reduce weight on the mighty Dan Wesson in order to meet the IHMSA weight restriction of 4 pounds.

chambered for .357 SuperMag, .375 SuperMag, .41 Magnum and .44 Magnum all weigh in the neighborhood of four pounds and one is likely to get fatigued from trying to hold them offhand much quicker than getting bothered by recoil.

To be legal for IHMSA silhouetting, the .445 SuperMag has to meet a required weight limit of four pounds and both models, the ten-inch regular barrel and the eight-inch heavy barrel, weigh in just about one ounce under the legal weight.

Even at four pounds, recoil with the heaviest loads is substantial and continued firing off sandbags, just as with the .357 and .375 SuperMags, is brutal. Extensive blast comes back at the shooter.

Since the .445 provided for testing was still at the prototype stage and since this is the first Dan Wesson to ever provide substantial recoil with top loads, a few minor problems surfaced. All of these have been shared with Bob Talbot and he assures me that all can easily be remedied and none will occur with production .445's.

At about the 20th round fired through the new Dan Wesson, I got hit in the face with something and my first thought was: "This thing is coming apart!"

Looking to see what was missing, I was relieved to only find that one of the grip medallions had come out, and after looking around the area to no avail (and experiencing a sinking feeling realizing that I had to send the .445 to American Handgunner for color photography), I found the medallion in my shirt pocket where it safely resided throughout the rest of the testing time.

But that's why the cover photo shows a Man Desson revolver. I stuck that pesky medallion in upside down!

Arriving home, I cleaned the Dan Wesson, pressed the medallion back into place and then noticed that the Zebrawood grip had cracked on the left side right below the cutout for the abbreviated backstrap

of the Dan Wesson revolver. I shared this concern with Talbot relating that perhaps the Zebrawood grip just would not handle the recoil of the .445. He was way ahead of me on this one and had already discovered that some grips were even cracking as the grip screw was tightened. Turns out that the outside supplier of Dan Wesson grips had bedded the Zebrawood grips in the latest shipment incorrectly and this problem has been corrected. After the Dan Wesson returned from its photography session, I did the rest of my testing with the walnut finger groove grips installed.

Removing the barrel nut and shroud of the ten-inch barrel, I discovered that a vital part was missing. The roll pin that protruded from the front of the frame and served the purpose of entering a corresponding hole in the shroud seemed to be gone. This would mean that unless the barrel nut was torqued up extremely tight, both the shroud and the front sight could move left or right as the gun was fired.

Upon closer examination, it was found that the pin was not gone but had retreated into the frame. My gunsmith cut a solid pin from a piece of drill rod and made it long enough to seat completely into the hole in the frame and still protrude the proper length to mate with the hole in the shroud. Problem solved. Talbot assured me that this was not normal and someone had simply got carried away and drilled the frame hole too deep. A minor problem easily corrected.

A more serious problem that surfaced was totally new to Talbot. No one other than myself had experienced it, and it only happened with 300 grain bullets. Apparently at this point in time, I was the only one who had tested the .445 with 300 grain bullets. A number of times, the cylinder bolt would unlock under recoil and allow the cylinder to rotate backwards. Again, I stress that this only happened with 300 grain bullets.

I suggested to Talbot that the answer would probably be a stronger bolt spring. He felt the problem was probably a bolt that did not seat fully into the locking notch of the cylinder, but whatever the problem, he assured me that this would be taken care of before the .445 goes into regular production.

It seems every new venture has pitfalls and this project is no exception. The first lot of brass turned out to be too soft and resulted in sticky extraction with higher loads and another phenomenon developed in that the more the brass was used the better it got. By the third firing, the brass had been worked sufficiently enough that without changing powder charges or primers or bullets, pressures dropped and velocities went up.

Elgin Gates assures me that the minor problem with the brass has also been taken care of and only the early lots give this problem. Simply a matter of changing the recipe slightly. This problem will also be taken care of by the time the .445 is

Continued on page 98

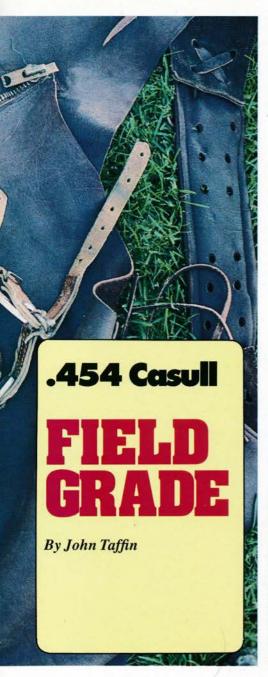
Tack Driving .445 SuperMag Loads

(Sub-One-Inch 25 Yard Groups)

| Bullet Charge | Velocity |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| Sierra 220 FPJ 34.0 grs. H4227 | 1629 fps |
| Speer 240 Sil. 39.0 grs. WW680 | 1626 fps |
| Sierra 300 JSP 35.0 grs. H110 | 1427 fps |
| SAECO 260 GC 32.0 grs. H4227 | 1560 fps |
| SAECO 260 GC 34.0 grs. H4227 | 1648 fps |
| SAECO 260 GC 37.0 grs. WW680 | 1515 fps |
| SAECO 260 GC 38.0 grs. WW680 | 1540 fps |
| SAECO 260 GC 39.0 grs. WW680 | 1577 fps |
| NEI 295 Keith 33.0 grs. WW680 | 1468 fps |
| NEI 295 Keith 36.0 grs. WW680 | 1561 fps |
| SSK 310 29.0 grs. H110 | 1469 fps |
| SSK 310 30.0 grs. H110 | 1522 fps |



The Field Grade .454 Casull from Freedom Arms (lower gun, above) is mechanically identical to the Premiere Grade, but it sells for over \$300 less. The savings comes from cosmetics—the Field Grade has less hand polishing and Pachmayr grips instead of hand fitted walnut. It is still "the world's finest revolver" capable of exceptional accuracy and devastating power. Options are available on the Field Grade, as the author discusses in the text. Dick Casull (left) invented the .454 Casull cartridge and designed the Freedom Arms single action revolver. His design genius is reflected in the fact that no other gun maker dares chamber the massively powerful .454 cartridge—only Casull's design can withstand the chamber pressures, which can reach a whopping 60,000 psi.



The world's finest single action revolver now comes in a less expensive version but with the same gnat's eye accuracy and bone crushing power of its luxurious cousin, the Premier Grade.

Like so many sixgunners before him, Dick Casull has carried on a love affair with the Colt Single Action that goes back as far as he can remember. During the 1950s, many old and used but repairable Colt Single Actions were available for \$50, a very reasonable price. The economics of the situation combined with the passion for the old Colt led the young gunsmith to begin experimenting with the Single Action.



A preference for the .45 caliber soon developed as it proved to be a much better killer on game than the newer .357 Magnum. Casull played with the .44 Special for awhile, but when Winchester brought out solid head .45 Colt cases to replace the old folded head, or "balloon style" brass, the .45 Colt became the main thrust of his experimenting.

The Colt Single Action .45 is a big bore sixgun with very thin cylinder walls. To Casull, this meant little or no margin of safety when using heavier-than-standard factory loads. The old folded head cases, which started the idea that still erroneously persists to this day that .45 Colt brass is weak, had given way to stronger brass, but the guns themselves were still relatively weak.

Casull bulged a number of cylinders working with what he considered a good cartridge, the .45 Colt. The wall thickness between the chambers was simply too thin.

As he went further using frame-mounted firing pins to handle the higher pressures that were being worked with, cylinders and top straps blew, and ignition problems developed. A five shot cylinder would be necessary to realize the full potential of the .45 Colt cartridge.

Five shot cylinders were made up using 4140 steel, cutting them as close to the frame as possible. That is, the cylinders were made as large as possible and still fit the Colt frame cylinder window. The geometry of the Colt had to be changed, of course, to have the action work as a five-shooter instead of the traditional sixshooter.

Using the first five shot cylinders, loads utilizing the 250 grain cast bullet attained muzzle velocities of 1300 fps. This is real close to .44 Magnum performance. Casull, who was still in his early twenties at this time, wanted more.

Heat-treating and metallurgy were studied until a way was figured to heat-treat Colt Single Action frames to 40 Rockwell without warpage. Using specially-built P.O. Ackley .45 caliber 1:24 twist barrels, the five-shot Colts were now capable of 1550 fps with 250 grain bullets. This was in 1954 before the advent of the .44 Magnum. The results were gratifying but Casull felt that there was little margin of safety. He wanted power, but he wanted to do it with an adequate safety margin.

By now, .45 Colt primer pockets were being reamed to accept rifle primers and ignition problems were overcome with duplex and triplex loads. This was before the availability of H110 and WW296, which make duplex and triplex loads

unnecessary.

The Colt Single Action had been taken as far as possible. In the search for more power and above all adequate safety, the answer would have to be to build a new frame. Starting from scratch, Casull built frames from 4140 steel and five shot cylin-

Continued on page 86

You Can Win A

A specialized custom handgun for the Long Range Event of The Masters combines a low recoiling, flat shooting cartridge with a 20-shot repeating action. Allan Zitta's creation is an AR-15 chopped into a 6.5mm x .223 Master Blaster.



TO ENTER CONTEST: Use a postcard (no envelopes) and follow sample. Send to AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, Dept. H3, POB 880409, San Diego, CA 92108-0009. Mail before April 1, 1989

Limit 1 entry per household.

"HOW OFTEN DO YOU PARTICIPATE IN A SHOOTING ACTIVITY?" (Including target practice, hunting, plinking, competition, etc.)

- (A) More than once a week.
- (B) 3 to 4 times per month.
- (C) 1 to 2 times per month.
- (D) Less than once per month.

| HOM MAR/APR 1989: |
|---|
| Name |
| Address |
| City, State, Zip |
| Circle your answer to question: (A) (B) (C) (D) |
| f I win, please ship my gun through: |
| Dealer |
| Address |
| City, State, Zip |
| Phone () Store Hours am pr |
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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.



A cclaimed as "unique" by some and "brilliant" by others, the Master Blaster is truly the latest advancement in competition shooting technology. Master Blaster is a custom conversion of a Baston AR-15 receiver into a highly specialized handgun for accurate long range shooting.

Master Blaster was created specifically for the Long Range Event of the prestigious Masters tournament (for details of the match, see page 58). The unique rules of the event presented a challenge for gun designer Allan Zitta and Master Blaster is the result. It gives a shooter a high magazine capacity coupled with precise accuracy.

A full-floating match barrel is attached to the receiver and runs 12 inches from breech to muzzle. A compensator, or muzzle brake, is available to help stablize the gun. A custom trigger job is performed to give Master Blaster a smooth, light let-off. The trigger weighs three pounds and is very crisp thanks to an ingenious modification system that changes sear engagement. An over-travel screw is fitted to the trigger. Both hammer and trigger have over-sized, precison-fitted stainless steel pins.

Master Blaster weighs 41/4 pounds in-

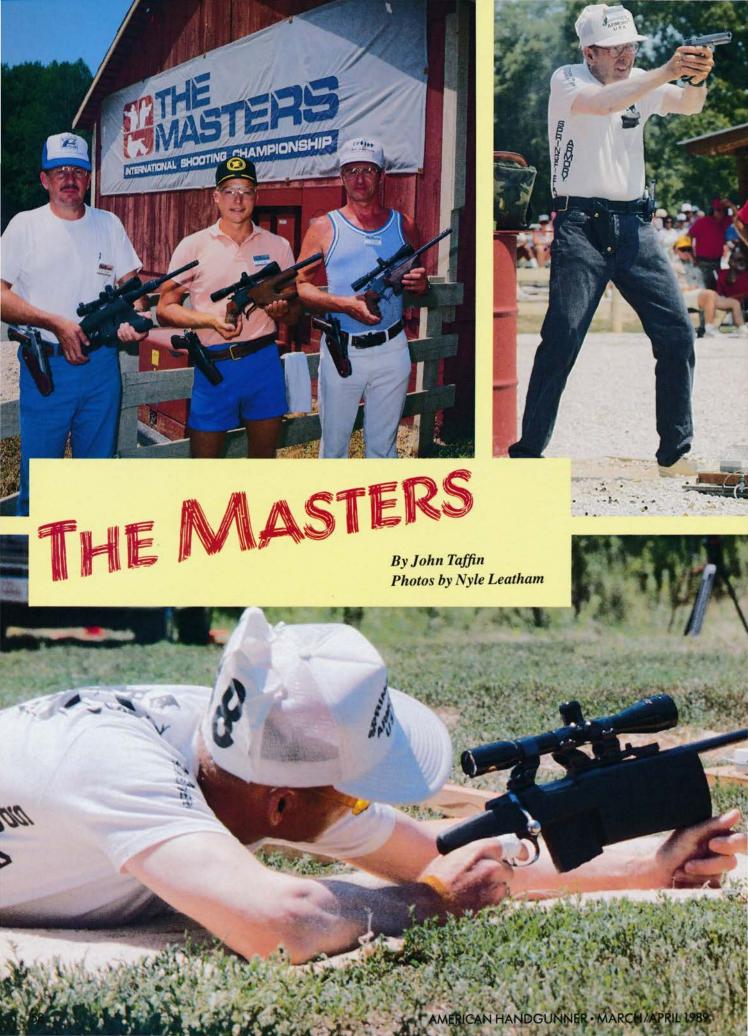
cluding scope bases. A skeletonized hand guard protects the shooter from burning his hand on a hot barrel. The grip has been altered from the standard AR-15 configuration to a 12 degree angle, the same as a Colt 1911 pistol's grip angle. The stocks are hand carved from a laminated piece of presentation wood.

The gun is manually operated by retracted the operating rod handle to eject the fired round and chamber a fresh round from the magazine. Allan Zitta has perfected a semi-auto version of Master Blaster too.

Calibers available include .223, 6mm/ .223, 6.5mm/.233 and 7mm TCU. The Giveaway gun shown here is a 6mm/.223 which is the .233 case necked up to 6mm.

Master Blaster is a modular design with interchangeable upper receivers available. You can simply switch upper receivers to change to a whole new caliber, barrel length or sighting system. The Master Blaster comes complete with a hard carrying case. Master Blaster sells for \$1295 without sights.

For more information, contact Allan Zitta at 74 Garden Street, Dept. AH, Feeding Hills, MA 01030.

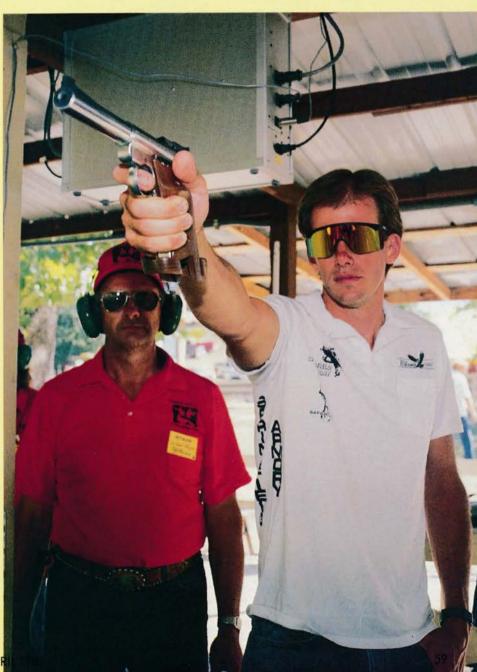






Kenn Tapp (below and left) trounced all comers to take the title of 1988 Master. He beat top-ranked IPSC shooter Brian Enos (low right) who placed second. The Masters pushes a gunsmith to the limits to design specialized guns for certain events. Here (far left) three contestants display some of the more exotic hardware for the demanding Long Range Event. The Precision Event (above) asks shooters to hit deviously small targets, 1.77" wafers, at 25 and 50 meters. The Action Event (far right) has targets that are considerably easier!













Robertta Geer (far left) is a top IPSC shooter who performed well in the Action Event with her Springfield .38 Super. In the Top 16 Shoot-Off (above) the 1986 Master Wayne Bowker slams down an Action target while his opponent, IPSC top gun Mike Plaxco, waits for his turn. The Long Range Event (right) gave shooters limited elbow, or foot, room to hit the falling plates 200 meters away. Those menacing little Precision targets (low left) are as easy to hit as threading a needle with baseball gloves. Some shooters (inset, low left) aren't bashful about who buys their ammo!

"I was workin' too much and shootin' too little so something had to give. Since it's been too hot to work, I quit."

The strategy worked! Kenn Tapp, a 56-year-old roofing contractor from Winchester, Kentucky, got down off the roof to get ready for The Masters. He is now \$16,420 richer and humbly wears the widely coveted title of The 1988 Grand Master.

The keys to success for The Masters have been discovered. Both the 1987 Grand Master, Allen Fulford, and the 1988 Grand Master, Kenn Tapp, share four characteristics in common.

They both won The Masters at age 56. They are both from the South.

They both quit work to prepare for The Masters—Allen retiring, and Kenn taking time off.

But above all, both are genuine allaround nice guys and crowd favorites.

One might think that The Masters is a young man's game. Not so. The average age of the top three shooters is 49, and the average age of all shooters is somewhere

in the 40's. Two of the top three shooters are in their latter 50's. This is a game of skill, speed and perseverance, not necessarily youth.

The road to The Masters for Kenn Tapp did not start yesterday. Kenn has been a shooter since the 1950's when he started shooting bullseye. He has always been a handgun hunter, enjoys shooting black powder rifles and pistols, competes in IHMSA silhouette and IPSC, and has twice won the Second Chance.

Kenn says the key to success is "to hang in there, getting better and progressing each year, and never give up."

This year's Masters, the third annual match, hosted 225 shooters from 40 states and four foreign countries. Of those 225 hopefuls, 79 registered as Professionals, a category that is based on past performances at any handgun tournament. Any shooter that has finished in the top 25% of a major tournament, or has won \$100 or more in prize money, is considered a professional.

The remaining 146 shooters were

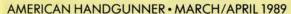
classed as Sportsman, and were granted the unique opportunity of shooting beside such well known competitors as Brian Enos, Rob Leatham, Jerry Barnhart, John Pride and Riley Gilmore. One Sportsman, Lee Edwards, is now a Professional thanks to shooting into the Top 16, besting Leatham, Gilmore, and Barnhart in the process.

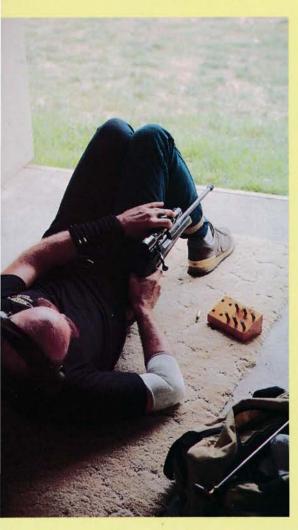
What is The Masters? A unique shooting tournament combining the precision of bullseye shooting, the speed of action shooting, and the long range characteristics of silhouette shooting.

The score of the top shooter in each category is assigned the value of 100 and every other score is measured as a percentage of the top score. For example, if the top score in Long Range is 30, it becomes "100" and a score of 15 would be considered "50" since 15 is 50% of 30.

The three scores are totaled and the shooter with the highest aggregate is The Grand Master.

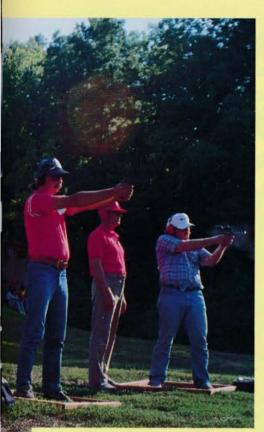
Kenn Tapp scored 87.5 in Precision, 87.5 in Action, and 100.00 in Long Range











A Long Range shooter (far left) in a modified Creedmore stance. Three "Best of the Worst" (above) shooters compete in a daily shoot-off for \$1000 cash. Those eligible have to finish at the bottom of the day's standings. The Wall of Fire (above right) is a spectacular grand finale. Rob Leatham ignites the gasoline targets with his assault rifle. Exploding targets (low right) are used in the "Best of the Worst" shoot-off. The firing line (below left) of the Precision Event.



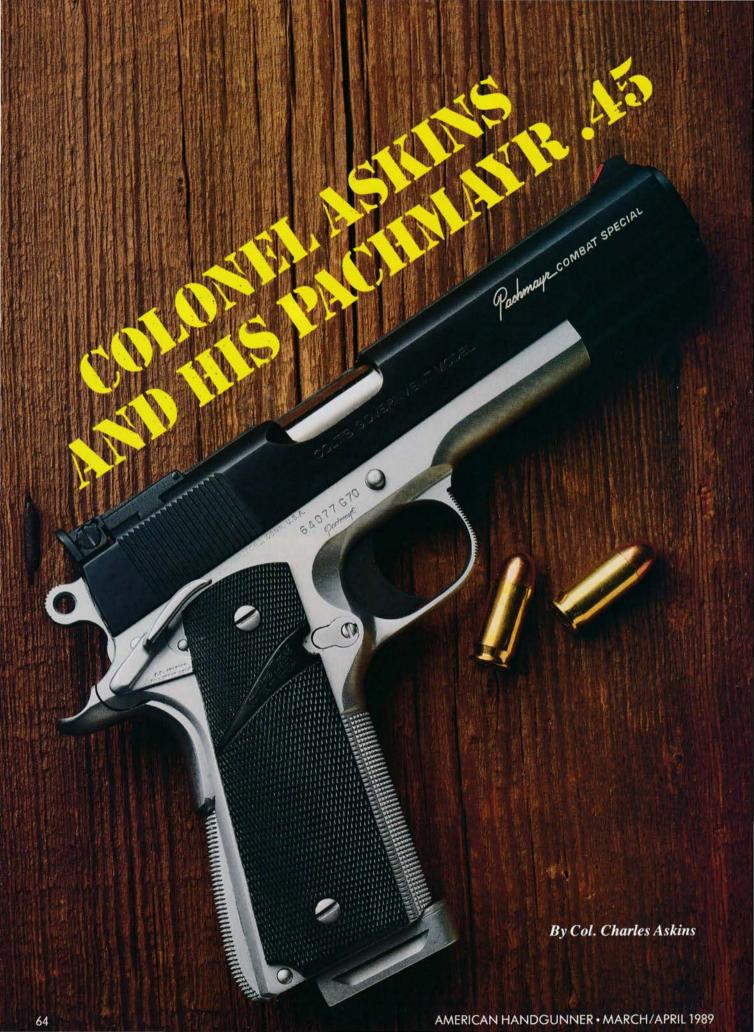


for a total of 274.99. Because of the builtin tie breaker system, Tapp did not win the Long Range event, coming in second. Sounds easy, right? Wrong! The Masters is the toughest handgun tournament ever devised and a rundown of the events will illustrate this. There are three events, Precision, Action and Long Range with each competitor shooting only one event per day.

For a complete Course Of Fire descrip-Continued on page 68

GUNS AND GEAR OF THE TOP SIXTEEN

PLACE SHOOTER **ACTION EVENT** PRECISION EVENT LONG RANGE EVENT Colt .38 Super High Standard 1. Kenn Tapp Sako 7 TCU (Burris 7x) 2. **Brian Enos** Springfield .38 Super Clark Ruger XP-100 7BR (Tasco) 3. John Farley Colt .38 Super S&W M-41 T/C .30-30 (Burris) Vance Schmid 4. Colt .38 Super High Standard XP-100 7 BR (Tasco 4x30) 5. Wayne Bowker Springfield .38 Super S&W M-41 (Aimpoint) XP-100 7 BR Dennis Crocker 6. Colt .38 Super Fiocchi-Pardini Sako 7 TCU 7. Al Sinclair Colt .38 Super High Standard T/C 7 TCU (Burris) 8. John Pride S&W 9mm S&W M-41 French Sako 7.62x39 (Burris 6x) 9. Howard Roe Colt .45 ACP S&W M-41 T/C 7x30 (Leupold 4x) 10. **Bobby Carver** Clark .38 Super Clark Ruger Sako 7 TCU (Burris 7x) Allen Fulford 11. Clark .38 Super High Standard (Aimpoint) Ultra Light Arms 7 BR Lee Edwards Fiocchi-Pardini 12 Colt .45 ACP XP-100 7 BR (Burris 7x) J. Michael Plaxco Fiocchi-Pardini (Aimpoint) Ultra Light Arms 7 BR 13. Springfield .38 Super Wayne Warren Colt .45 ACP S&W M-41 XP-100 7-08 14. 15. Riley Gilmore S&W M-15 .38 Special Walther GSP XP-100 7 BR (Tasco 4x) 16. Mike Kanazawa Clark .38 Super **Buckmark (Pro-Point)** T/C 7x30



The first .45 Model 1911 made up for me by Frank Pachmayr was actually tuned up by J.D. Buchanan. Now this ranny was Pachmayr's best mechanic and I suspect he taught old Frank a lot of things. Buck went on later to establish his own shop and all my guns went over his bench. He is dead now but he was a real geewhiz. There have been a succession of my .45 autos through the Pachmayr Gun Works since that one.

George Parker, lifelong amigo and pardner, gave me an old and muchly battered Model 1911. I shipped this old crutch out to Frank and when it came back I packed it on the African Invasion, the invasion of Sicily and the brouhaha on Omaha Beach.

Among other live targets I knocked off four Arabs with the pistol. These bastards were given to creeping into camp and trundling off the boys' barracks pokes. I shot these rascals at close range and just for the hell of it gave each thief several rounds.

It was a revelation to me to see how the old 230 grain issue bullet would penetrate the human carcass. Without a single exception on these Bedouins, the bullets passed plumb through. I seriously doubt the brand new 9mm service round will do as well.

I journeyed up to the National Matches, Camp Perry in 1935, and fired the National Individual Pistol Championship. The best I could do was to finish 10th. The pistol I had was an old issue crutch and these old jobs were looser than a Tunis City whore. The next year I had another Model 1911 and this baby had been through the Pachmayr tune-up shop.

I managed to knock off the national championship that year. I attribute the improved performance to the Pachmayrtuned handgun.

I gave this forty-five to George Parker because I wanted him to get acquainted with the wizardry of the Los Angeles master. Parker kept the pistol for many years finally losing it in Hermosillo, Sonora, during a dust-up down there.

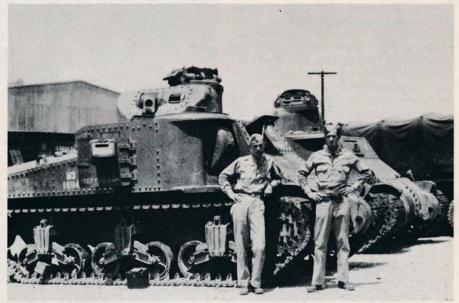
I have a new Model 1911 from Frank right now. It does not have the history nor yet the glamor of some of the earlier guns but it is a real goin' jesse sort of shooting iron.

We've always held to the notion that

you cannot drop the trigger under four pounds or the hammer will follow the slide down. Pachmayr put an exceedingly sweet three pound let-off on my pistol. The hammer has never yet followed the slide down. Maybe it will tomorrow, but so far it has not. I am happy with it.

Frank pulls the new style short trigger out of my gun and installed the old obsolete long trigger. He grooved it just to make it feel more secure. He replaced the arched main spring housing with the old style flat job, and stippled it.

The slide has been tightened and lapped into the receiver so that there is utterly no slop, neither laterally nor yet



These jazbos were part of my command of a tank recovery unit in North Africa during World War II. I had good fun in that war.



This is my Pachmayr Combat Special today. It's not the original one I took to war, but it's still a fine pistol that pleases me greatly.

horizontally. The barrel is specially selected from Bar-Sto and the barrel bushing was machined by the shop. The barrel link is made several thousandths longer so that the barrel snugs up in the recesses in the top of the slide with utterly no tolerances.

Because I am left-handed, Frank moved the safety over on the right side of the receiver and the slide stop is repositioned to the left side for this old portsider.

The sights are Bo-Mar movable both ways; the front post is one-eighth inch and sports a red plastic insert. There ain't no white outline around the rear notch and I don't want one.

This pistol goes everywhere I go. I never step out of the casa without it. One of these fine evenings I'll have the good luck to find some laddy-o wheeling the family auto out of the carport and I'll give this latest Pachmayr-tuned Model 1911 a good workout. It would be living up to a fine pedigree of fighting forty-fives I've carried into combat.

Lon Parker was a U.S. Border Patrol officer who rode the International Line between the towns of Lochiel-Naco,

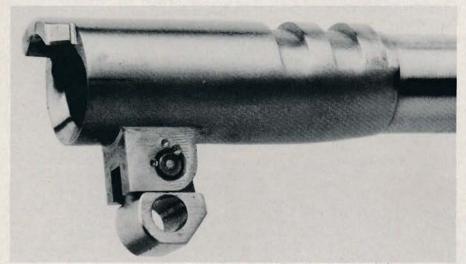
Arizona, a distance of about 60 miles and one of the hottest spots on the entire U.S.-Mex frontier. Lon had a partner, Robbins Reddick, and the two operated entirely on horseback. Parker was 27 years of age and he had been in the Border Patrol two years. The BP is a Federal agency and was created by an act of Congress in 1924. The year of interest to us is 1932, April to be exact.

Lon Parker was one of a numerous clan, there were more than a hundred of the tribe in Santa Cruz County, the entity across which he rode a weekly patrol. Among others of the family was George Parker, a cousin and another Border Patrolman. This ranny was my closest amigo for the small period of 60 years.

At the time of our story he was stationed at Ajo a good many miles to the west of Lon Parker. They had little contact although they sometimes got together and exchanged signals. Lon was the older of the two by a couple of years and both had been in school together. There was an enduring friendship quite apart from the fact that they were first cousins.



Poor old Juan Lopez has just waded the Rio Grande after walking miles out of Sinialoa. Now he's nailed by some young studs from my old Border Patrol.



Frank Pachmayr came up with this "wide link" for the 1911. It stabilizes the barrel better, and makes the groups tighter than a miser's fist.

During the period of interest Lon had ridden on patrol by himself. Reddick, his partner, was on crutches as the result of a pony falling on him. Rather than ask for a substitute, Parker had set off alone. The patrol was a two-day affair, normally, and he planned to pull in at a line camp the first day, spend the night and ride on in to Naco the next day.

Bare miles out of Nogales, a steaming hotbed of smuggling activity, he struck the trail of seven horses coming across the U.S.-Mex border. Parker built to the sign at a fast trot.

For five years I rode 150 miles across the south end of New Mexico on precisely the same kind of mission and when I cut the track of seven ponies I could reasonably expect that about two contrabando were herding five loaded caballos. Lon Parker probably concluded the same thing.

After two fast hours on the sign, Parker

rode up on the pack animals but there was only one smuggler with them. He pushed his hoss up against this Marichi and with his .45 Auto cocked and aimed at the coyote's throat he said, "Donde esta su companero?" (Where is your partner?")

At about that time the missing smuggler shot Parker just above the cantle of the saddle. He had laid back behind a big sajuaro, let the Border Patrolman pass and then shot him in the back. The bullet missed the spine but tore up a kidney and passed out through the belly.

Parker did not lose his seat in the saddle. Without turning to see where the gunman was, he shot the smuggler in front of him in the throat. He then turned and emptied the .45 Auto in the direction of his ambusher.

He fell from his horse and died hours later. When he did not report in for two days, the Border Patrol put two of its riders on his sign and they found him and



Hook up, buckos! I was in the Airborne and we didn't tolerate any nonsense when it was time to hit the silk.

his horse. Parker had died hours after he was hit. His horse had strayed only a short distance. The smuggler lay where Lon's bullet had caught him in the throat. The bullet had penetrated the neck and severed the spine, he was dead before he hit the ground.

George Parker was as well acquainted, virtually, in Nogales, Sonora as in Nogales, Arizona, and he journeyed over on the Mex side and commenced to nose about. The coyote who had killed Lon

was the hero of the hour—he had killed a hated Federale, one of the *cabrones* gauchopines who made life miserable for self-respecting contrabandistas.

Parker learned the first night he was in Nogales that the killer's name was Fausto Villarobledo and that he was shacked up with a whore in the Calle San Fernando, drank every night in the Cantina Toledo and was in the employ of Gabriel Arredondo, who was not in Nogales but was down in Caborca.

George called me—I was in El Paso—and said, "Come on over I need your help." I knew about Lon's death and I had a pretty good idea why Parker had called me. I was on hand the next day.

"I know the chief bartender in the Cantina Toledo real well. I have slipped him fifty pesos and enough knockout drops to fell an elephant. When Villarobledo comes in this evening, he is going to drop these pills in his second round of tequila en las piedras. When he drops off to sleep our barkeep is going to have him packed into the backroom. We'll drive up in the alley and load him aboard my Ford." Parker had one of the early Model A Fords; it had a jump seat behind which opened up to make a sort of mother-in-law seat. It closed down tightly and we proposed to pour out killer into the compartment.

It was a good plan, certainly a simple one, but our killer got coy on us. He suddenly quit the Cantina Toledo and commenced to play the field. He drank in this bar, drank in that one, and even changed whores. George Parker, who knew half the questionable characters across the border, kept up with his doings.

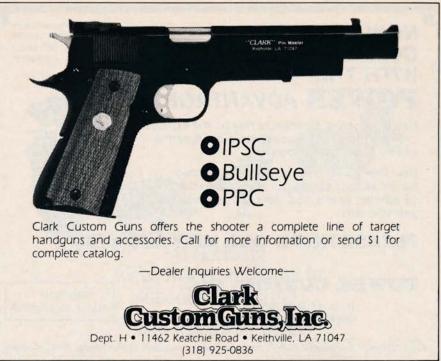
When he swapped whores that was his undoing. George went to see this babe—her name was Floritacita (the Little Flower)—and she was really steamed over the boy friend's deceit.

Parker offered her fifty pesos if she would set him up. "Con mucho gusto" (With much pleasure) she assured my old amigo.

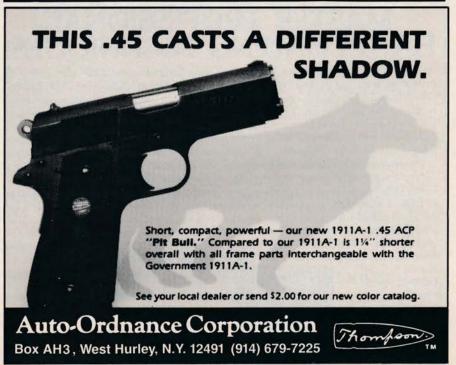
Two nights later the phone rang in the Hotel Sonorana where we were awaiting this very call. "El cabron esta aqui in la cama mia," said the voice over the line, "El chingon esta mas borracho que nadia" she continued.

Parker turned to me a big grin on his face and he said, "The little gal has got him, he is drunk as a skunk." We loaded up in the Model A Ford and journeyed over to the Calle San Fernando and pulled up in front of the whorehouse. We went inside and carried this murderer out to the car. It was about 11 in the evening and the street was filled with idling *campesanos*. We raised the jump seat, poured our man into the compartment and slammed down the cover.

Floritacitas had accompanied us. Parker had paid her the fifty pesos two days before but with a magnanimity which bespoke his considerable satisfaction he pulled out another 50-peso note and Continued on page 90









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THE MASTERS

Continued from page 63

tion, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Roy Jinks, Esq., Match Director, The Masters, 2100 Roosevelt Ave., Springfield, MA 01102.

Especially if you are a silhouette shooter, consider the Long Range course of fire. Both NRA and IHMSA Silhouetters shoot five targets all the same size and at the same distance, fired in groups of five in 120 seconds. The Long Range event at The Masters uses varying sized targets at different distances to be fired in less time, without a spotter, and no time to adjust sights. Five full-sized animal targets in two minutes as compared to 10 small circles at two distances in one and one-half minutes. Tough!

An optical sight is allowed in only one event of the three, and most shooters opt for a scope in the Long Range Event.

Although The Masters is mainly a handgun tournament, this year four long gun events were held. Two Shotgun Events, pump and auto, and two Rifle Events, iron sights and optical sights, are now part of The Masters.

Handgunner columnist Rob Leatham took first place in three of these events and third in the fourth, auto shotgun, which was won by Rob Griggs. Perhaps someday a true three gun champion will be selected at The Masters as everything needed to select a Handgun-Rifle-Shotgun Champion is there.

he Masters is supported by a strong I tripod with all three legs equally important and removal of any one of the three and the whole event would collapse.

One leg is made up of sponsors who put up most of the prize money, nearly \$200,000 this year, which is awarded to the competitors. The top 40 Professional shooters and the top 50 Sportsmen take home money in amounts ranging from \$6,000 down to \$50. The Grand Master is awarded \$10,000.

Plus the top 10 shooters in each event, both Professional and Sportsman, receive money amounts from \$4,500 down to \$135. In addition to all of these prizes, there are awards given in each Daily Shoot-off and the Top Sixteen Shoot-off. This is definitely a high money, high class tournament!

Smith & Wesson and Remington Arms are co-sponsors. Smith & Wesson not only contributes money, but also people like Roy Jinks who is the Match Director and it is obvious that a great deal of time and planning goes into this event each year. Sherry Collins, also of Smith & Wesson, mans the Press Room and does a superb job of keeping everyone informed of the latest developments.

In addition to these major sponsors, each event is financially supported by other industry members. Remember the

names of those who support handgunners; without their generous financial contributions there would be no Masters.

That totals \$156,000 from the shooting industry to support the shooting sports! Remember these sponsors and support them as they support us, the shooters.

Some individual examples of top cash awards are \$10,000 for The Grand Master; \$6000 for the top Professional, \$3000 for the top Sportsman; \$4,500 and \$2,250 for the top Professional and Sportsman respectively in each event.

Brian Enos, coming in second overall, took \$6000 plus \$4,500 each for two first places in Action and Long Range. That's \$15,000 for three days of handgunning!

The second leg of support of The Masters is the local people, more than 400 strong, who volunteer their services for the entire week of The Masters. Major support comes from PASA (Pike-Adams Sports Alliance). PASA Park, as it is called, located just outside, Barry and 30 miles from Quincy, is a most picturesque shooting park in the rolling hill country of Illinois. This is not just a shooting tournament, it is a community event, almost a county fair with thousands of people just coming out to enjoy the park, visit industry displays, and also see some of the best handgun shooting available anywhere.

PASA does not have just 400 members—much support comes from the community at large. Civic groups, church groups and boy scouts all served as volunteers. Even the mayor of Barry attended the match every day. Local people—well-trained, enthusiastic, always helpful and always friendly—make The Masters run like a precision piece of machinery. Like the Rolex watch won by Kenn Tapp and donated by Rolex.

Local people like Jerry Wilcox, who was at the entrance every day providing information and directions.

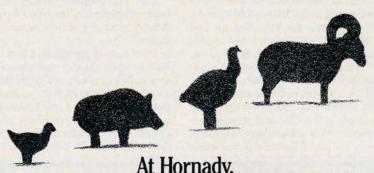
Local people like Bob Lee, Russell Hunter and Marlin Corey who provide shuttle service to the parking lot high on the hill above the shooting area. Local people like Paul Kurtz, who served as range officer as I shot the Action Event, and calmed this writer in my first-ever action competition.

There is another side to Illinois besides Morton Grove, and the other side of the coin is people like those of the Pike-Adams area who strongly support gun ownership and the shooting sports.

The third equally important leg of support of The Masters tripod is the shooter's themselves. This is a true Pro/Am tournament with two thirds of the competitors being amateurs, or more correctly, "Sportsman."

This is a shooting match that brings out the best pistoleros in the country, but it also attracts the average guys and gals who spend their vacation rubbing elbows with the top shooters, and maybe, just maybe, actually beating one of the professionals.

Yes, The Masters is full of famous



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handgunners, but it is also shooters like beautiful 17-year-old Kelly Whaley, who wore a shirt that said "Sponsored By Dad." She told me that she used Dad's reloads in her Model 586 and Remington XP-100 7BR.

The Masters is family shooters like Howard and Cinda Roe of Missouri. Howard shot into the Top Sixteen and Cinda admitted that Howard did all the reloading while she took care of the lawn.

And The Masters is friends who journey together like Dan Hrinko, Rob Ripple and Butch McCort who came from southern Ohio and took part in every event including the rifle and shotgun action events. "We came here to shoot every way we can!" Rob did a creditable job in The Action Event using a K-frame Smith & Wesson converted to .32 H&R Magnum.

The Masters is the proud mother-in-law I sat next to as she cheered her favorite son-in-law onto victory.

And The Masters is even the young boys who fished in the pond between the Action and Long Range areas while dad

The Masters provides audiences with a view of some of the best shooting available anywhere and a real highlight for this writer, being a long time sixgunner, was the show put on by Jerry Miculek of Louisiana. Jerry used a revolver in the Action Event, a stock Smith & Wesson Model 27 .357 Magnum with a 83/8" barrel. The old

time sixgunners, like Elmer Keith and Ed McGivern, always maintained that a good sixgun, operated by a good sixgunner, could be shot faster than a semi-automatic.

Miculek proved this to be true as he recorded the fastest single run in the Action Event, drawing from the holster and knocking down five targets in 2.2 seconds! His shots were so fast that they almost sounded like they were coming from a semi-automatic that had gone full auto. His total time for all 45 targets, fired in groups of five starting with a holstered revolver, was 27.32 seconds, the fourth fastest time recorded in the Action Event.

Brian Enos performed what many would have said would be impossible. Enos, 32-years-old from Mesa, Arizona, won two of the three events! An amazing

The Action Event was owned by Enos with a total time of 24.33 seconds, and a new long range record of 37 targets was set by Brian who is now both the fastest action shooter and also the most accurate at long range. Two dissimilar disciplines and he won them both.

Had Enos shot an average score in The Precision Event, he would have walked away with the title of Grand Master. As it turned out, he came in second to Kenn Tapp. Brian Enos-a force to be reckoned with in future Masters Tournaments.

Last year's Grand Master, Allen Ful-

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ford, finished eleventh this year. But he took first place in The Precision Event with 24 of the 45 tough targets going down to his ProPointed Clark High Standard.

Top Sportsman in this year's Masters was Lee Edwards with an aggregate of 220.15, good enough to put him in the Top Sixteen and twelfth overall, and promote him to Professional. Behind Lee, in 19th place, was Sportsman Ron Cook.

Individual Sportsman honors went to Jerry Varner (Precision) with a 20 targets down; William Roberts (Action) total time 30.46; and Long Range was taken by Ken Large with an excellent 32 targets knocked over.

Delores Williams took home the money as top female competitor and Richard Harris collected the prize money as Top Junior. Coming from the Cayman Islands, Leslie John Franklin took Top International honors.

On the last day of The Masters, The Top Sixteen Shoot-Off is held. The top sixteen shooters face off in pairs, shooting Precision, Action or Long Range until only one shooter is left. The event is determined by the luck of the draw, and based on the best two out of three for each pairing of shooters. Two hours and fortyone matches later, it ended exactly as it should.

The Grand Master, Kenn Tapp, also won The Top Sixteen Shoot-Off by registering a sizzling 1.63 seconds to take all three targets in The Action Event. He was promptly dumped in the ceremonial pond by the rest of the shooters.

he guns used by Kenn Tapp for The Masters were, as he described them to me, "the best available."

For the Precision Event, Tapp used a 7" Model 106 High Standard .22. In the Action Event, Tapp's choice was a Paul Rice built Colt .38 Super from an Ernie Hill Holster and using 170 grain Sierra bullets.

For the Long Range Event, Tapp used what must be the ultimate Masters Long Range pistol, a Nu-Line Guns built Sako short action, 12 shot, with a 14" barrel, chambered for the 7TCU. In addition to the rear grip stock, this gun also had a forearm that was at least four inches in depth from top to bottom, allowing excellent support with the non-shooting hand. Tapp chose to use a scope in this event, a 7X Burris IER, mounted with Weaver rings and bases. The rings were of the seethrough type allowing instant use of iron sights just in case anything went wrong with the scope.

Tapp not only prepared for The Masters, he was also prepared for any emergency.

I found the top guns to be quite interesting. Here are some statistics:

PRECISION: Of the top sixteen, five chose Smith & Wesson Model 41's; four went with High Standard; three with Fiocchi-Pardini; two with Ruger; and one each with Browning and Walther GSP. Four chose to exercise their optic right in this event with two each going with Aimpoint and Pro-Point.

ACTION: Of the top ten, eight used .38 Supers in the Action Event; one used a .45; and one used a 9mm. Only one of the top sixteen, Riley Gilmore, used a revolver and his choice was a custom S&W Model 15 in .38 Special. Of the top sixteen Action shooters, nine used Colt .38 Supers; three used Colt .45 ACP's; one used a Smith & Wesson 9mm; and one used a Smith & Wesson .38 Special. None used optical sights, and all but one used reloads.

Leather-wise, eight went with Hill Leather; five with Safariland; one with Gordon Davis; and one with Blocker.

LONG RANGE: The top choice of the top sixteen in the Long Range category was the Remington XP-100 with six competitors going this way. Four used a Sako bolt action; four went with T/C Contenders; and two used bolt actions from Ultra Light Arms. Twelve of the sixteen used scopes—seven choosing Burris, three going with Tasco with Leupold and Redfield each chosen by one of the top sixteen.

The ingenious exotic guns show up in the Long Range Event. In addition to Tapp's "double sixgun," guns of note were John Pride's French-built Sako chambered for the 7.62x39 holding five rounds, with a front grip stock and the



trigger well forward.

Dennis Crocker also used a Sako, built up by Nu-Line Guns, in 7TCU with a front grip stock that wrapped under the off hand.

The top sixteen Long Range guns numbered 10 single shots, six XP's and four T/C's, and six repeaters—four on Sako actions and two by Ultra Light Arms.

Fourteen were 7mm's of one kind or another and two were chambered in .30 caliber.

Of the top sixteen shooters, four were law enforcement officers and finished in third, fourth, eighth and sixteenth places.

I attended The Masters mainly to cover this prestigious event for both American Handgunner and Guns. That was my main objective. A second objective was to thoroughly enjoy myself and meet as many new people as possible. Both of these objectives were attained. I also went to shoot, and I thought I was ready. I was not.

I really went to school, so to speak, by shooting in The Masters and I learned, boy, did I learn!

For the Precision Event, my choice was a Smith & Wesson Model 41 with 7½" barrel. Before leaving Idaho, I had been shooting the 41 fairly well. Both Winchester and Federal target ammunition was practiced with, but I had to switch to

Remington High Speed .22's as the target ammo shot high even with the rear sight bottomed out. The last practice shots fired at 25 meters before I left home resulted in four of the five in the 1.77" bull. I was ready!

Sure, I was!

I fired Precision on the first day and did not take the time to visit the practice range to see if my 41 was sighted in. You guessed it. I shot beautiful groups below the targets. My point of impact had shifted eight inches. Wait 'til next year!

The Action Event was fired on the second day. This was entirely new to me as I had never before fired a match with falling targets. My gun was a Wilson Accu-Comp LE in .45 ACP. A fantastic piece of machinery that would certainly do the job. For a holster rig, I went with the Ernie Hill outfit.

The Action Event is fired in three stages of 15 shots each, fired in groups of five. The targets, again, are falling plates. It was not until the first phase of the third stage that I realized what I was doing. Since I had never before fired falling plates, I was shooting a target and waiting for it to fall before I went to the next one! A practice guaranteed to give slow scores. I learned. Wait 'til next year!

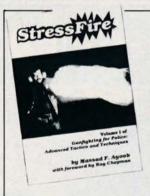
The Long Range Event was fired on day three and this was where the choice of handgun really became difficult. I did not know what I would be using until the week before The Masters. I seriously considered a revolver, but opted for a single-shot because of the necessity of shooting both 100 meter and 200 meter targets without any sight adjustment.

A number of different single-shots were tried and I finally settled on a 10" T/C Contender in 7x30 Waters with a 1½x4X Burris scope. My load consisted of the 120 grain Hornady HP over 32.0 grains of H322 ignited by CCI #200 primers.

The T/C performed beautifully, but I simply could not aim and fire quickly enough, never getting off more than six of the 10 shots required in 90 seconds. I always thought I was a fast silhouette shooter, but there is a vast amount of difference between five shots in two minutes and 10 shots in 90 seconds. I learned. But this will be the hardest to correct. Wait 'til next year. Maybe.

The Masters left me both impressed and humiliated. Impressed by the quality of the tournament and the efficiency of the staff, both from industry and volunteers, and the beauty and facilities of PASA Park. Humiliation came from my scores. But I came away uttering the battle cry of scores of other shooters: "Wait until next year!" The Masters is truly the great divider.

There is a place for you at The 1989 Masters. For information contact Roy Jinks, The Masters, P.O. Box 2208, Springfield, MA, 01102.



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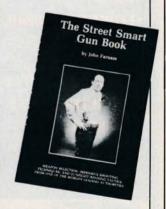
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THE AYOOB FILES

Continued from page 34

Soon, he spies a familiar figure. It is his next-door neighbor, Burton Owens, 61. Owens is holding a heavy miner's lantern. Branham relaxes. No problem.

The men begin talking. Owens explains that he has shot and killed a cat. "A wildcat?" Branham's question is eager. Seeing no long gun in sight, he assumes the older man has killed a lynx with his revolver. A hunter himself who has often stalked game with Owens, Branham knows his neighbor to be so good a shot that he kills squirrels and other small pot animals firing one-hand, offhand, with his long barrel Smith & Wesson .38 Special.

Owens replies that it wasn't a wildcat he shot, just a housecat. Branham asks why. Taking the comment as judgmental, Owens raises his voice and begins a tirade about how Branham and his father don't show him sufficient respect.

That's enough for the young ex-cop. He has smelled alcohol on Burton Owens' breath, and will state later that he has long known that the man can be violent when he's liquored up.

Mark Branham now makes the mistake that is nearly his last. Rising to leave, he turns away from his longtime neighbor and says, "It don't look like you need any help here."

Burton Owens growls back, "You never been any help to me in your life!"

And swings the heavy miner's lantern.

It crashes into Mark Branham's skull and he goes down from the impact, sliding toward the bottom of the hill. His flashlight flies from his hand, coming to rest in the frozen leaves and casting an eerie white glow over the death battle that is to follow.

As Branham falls Owens is on him, raining blows. Some are with the lantern, whose lens breaks from the repeated impact; some are believed to be from the still-loaded revolver he used to shoot the housecat. It is a blue steel, five-inch Smith & Wesson Model 10.

As they roll downward together, the Combat Magnum slips from Branham's hip pocket and somehow comes under his hand. He grabs it and lashes out at his antagonist with it, yelling, "What's wrong with you?"

They are still clubbing each other, overhand. Branham's skull is deeply dented, leaving him with permanently impaired vision, recurring headaches that will last for years if not the rest of his life, and lacerations that will take from 50 to 70 stitches to close, depending on which doctor and emergency room nurse has the best memory.

But his own clubbed Smith & Wesson is making itself felt. As the underside of the revolver strikes Owens' head and skids off, the edges of trigger guard, frame, bar-



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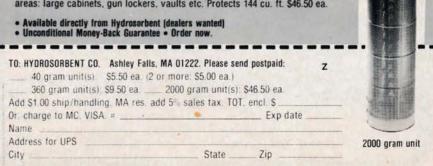
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rel, and ejector shroud leave multiple cuts and contusions with each pass. A total of 17 injuries are inflicted in track patterns consistent with four to five blows from Branham's gun, some of them breaking underlying bone.

Yet the grizzled ex-coal miner is not deterred. And now Branham, who knows Burton Owens still has to have the gun he killed the cat with, hears him utter the most chilling words the young man has ever heard in his life.

"You son of a bitch, I'll kill you!"

There is no conscious thought. The training he has had with the gun takes over as Branham faces the imminence of his own death.

He fires one shot.

The 110 grain semi-jacketed hollow-point bullet roars out of the Combat Magnum's barrel. It tears through Burton Owens' clothing and enters his left armpit toward the rear. It tracks straight through across the chest, stopping at the corresponding point toward the rear of the right armpit, inside the body. Mushrooming as it went, it has inflicted terrible damage, side-to-side.

Burton Owens slumps to the ground. He lies still. The Smith & Wesson Model 10 lies at his feet. Two chambers are unloaded, two contain spent cartridge casings from the cat shooting, and the other two contain live Winchester-Western 158 grain roundnose lead .38 Special rounds.

Mark Branham staggers to his feet, trying to see through the red haze and the excruciating pain of his head injuries. Blood pours freely from his bludgeoning and pistol whipping injuries as he stumbles down the hill toward the lights of the nearest dwelling, the small house behind his and his father's where his sister lives. As he staggers toward the light, trying to stay conscious, his blood soaks into his clothing and runs down onto the Smith & Wesson that is still in his hand.

He makes his way into the house, picks up the phone, calls for the sheriff and the ambulance.

B urton Owens is dead. Mark Branham is alive. The first stage of Branham's survival is over. The second, and in many ways the more brutal stage, is yet to come.

The case of Commonwealth of Virginia v. Mark Branham could fill a good-size book. Because this column deals with the dynamics of self-defense shootings more than those of trial law, we'll discuss the three trials as briefly as possible.

The first judge who heard the case threw it out, finding no probable cause to believe Branham had done anything wrong. But the Owens family hired a special prosecutor, one Mickey McGlothlin.

In American jurisprudence, the concept of the Special Prosecutor exists to prevent unusually powerful defendants from twisting justice. When a judge or a

President must be investigated, a Special Prosecutor is appointed who is immune to the great power and influence the accused has over the justice system.

The Special Prosecutor is an advocate of justice, not of one or another biased party; indeed, that is the role of *any* sworn prosecutor. If, for instance, Sam Ervin had been hired by the Democratic National Committee, the public would have been so outraged that Richard Nixon might well be Secretary of State today.

McGlothlin, paid by the dead man's family, won an indictment and Branham was tried in the court of Judge Nicholas Persin in Buchanan County. On the jury were a friend, a relative, and a former coworker of Burton Owens. This unbelievable situation owed to an anomaly of Virginia law called "the oath of impartiality." It dates from Colonial days, when the population was too sparse to find 12 jurors who didn't know one or another party, and a judge would ask the potential veniremen something like, "Do you swear to set aside your biases and prejudices and render a fair and impartial verdict in the matter now before you?" Such a question had been posed to these three jurors.

The shooting investigation had been horribly botched. The body had been left for hours in a non-temperature controlled van. Owens' clothing, never fully tested for ballistic residue, was returned to the family and later destroyed save for his

jacket. No photographs were taken during post mortem, and the crime scene photos "didn't come out."

A test by the state's ballistician, to determine distance, used hot 125 grain .357 ammo, which has much more muzzle blast and flash than the mild 110 grain Speer. Judge Persin threw that test out.

Nonetheless, the jury found Branham guilty of involuntary manslaughter. This is a patently improper finding for an intentional shooting, but the judge allowed it to stand. Branham remained free on bail pending the appeal, and in February of '87, the higher court overturned the decision and remanded it for a new trial.

This time, the state's ballistician used Speer 110 grain, but a different lot from that involved in the shooting: ball versus flake powder, with completely different residue patterns. The same medical examiner who testified that the wound track had gone straight across the body sideways now swore under oath that Owens had been "shot in the back."

The prosecutor who had previously argued that Branham had gone up the hill with malice in his heart and murdered a helpless Burton Owens, now admitted that Branham might have acted in self-defense but insisted that he had used excessive force, ergo committing manslaughter.

The second case went to the jury in the afternoon, and it was later learned that the jurors had stopped deliberation that evening with the majority voting for "not guilty." The jurors went to their homes that night, and the following morning, deadlocked with nine voting to *convict*, and three holding out for not guilty. Judge Persin declared a mistrial.

Defending Branham was a bright, capable, dedicated lawyer named C. Eugene Compton. I worked on the defense team as an expert witness and as a strategy consultant. As the third trial loomed, I had to agree with Compton that something frightening was happening in the jury pool. While I normally prefer a jury to a judge, I suggested to Gene that it might be time for a bench trial. He and Mark agreed.

In March of 1988, Judge Persin having admitted that he'd formed the opinion that Mark might have used excessive force, the third trial went on submission before Judge Donald Mullins, with both sides agreeing to forego a jury proceeding. Mullins found him not guilty.

During the second trial, the prosecution had hinted at, but never fully developed, a strategy of implying that since justifiable homicide is an affirmative defense reserved for an intentional act, Mark's statement that he had fired reflexively without consciously making the explicit decision to shoot Burton Owens meant that he was ineligible to claim justifiability.

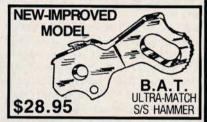
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ment community, had the strategy succeeded, would have been enormous and chilling. As Walt MacDonald wrote in the newsletter of the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors, such a decision could have changed the face of survival training as we know it. A caselaw precedent saying that a conscious decision had to be made before the act was taken would violate the very principle of training as opposed to education.

Education is the transfer of intellectual knowledge. Training is the programming of an automatic physical response. Though a civilian at the time of the shooting, Branham had had police training, and similar training is available to non-cops through such institutions as API, Chapman Academy, Defense Training Inc., ASAA, and LFI. Like any crisis management training-cardiopulmonary resuscitation, for example—this training is designed to make the legally armed person capable of reacting instantaneously to life-threatening danger.

In such a deadly scenario, the defender has perhaps one to three seconds to make his decision. That is not time enough to come to terms with an issue so awesome as the taking of a human life. This is why training brings the student through the decision making process beforehand, so that when murderous danger is recognized, the Good Guy can react instantaneously through an autonomic response.

Fortunately, the prosecutor who was paid by interested parties to secure a conviction was unable or unwilling to articulate his hinted argument that Mark Branham's reflexive response to the homicidal assault he was undergoing was not justifiable because it was not consciously intentional. The fact is, like every cop and every API or LFI student, Mark had made the conscious decision beforehand that he would use lethal force in defense of his life should he ever be murderously attacked, and that he willingly, voluntarily, and intentionally took the training knowing that it would condition the kind of response that it did.

Had the prosecutor made a stronger attempt to mount the case, our side was ready. Prestigious instructors from ASLET (the American Society of Enforcement Trainers) IALEFI (the International Association of Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors) were prepared to testify on Mark's behalf that his reflexive, trained response was both necessary and appropriate, ergo, justifiable.

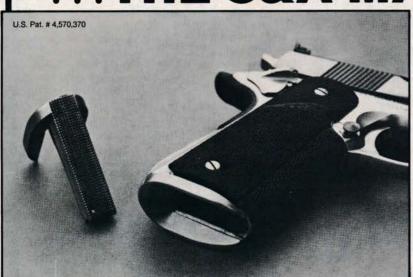
ark Branham suffered severly from M post shooting trauma in the wake of this incident. Quite apart from his serious physical injuries, he felt branded with the Mark of Cain as an accused murderer. He had lived next door to Burton Owens

since he was six, and the man was like an uncle to him. To have such a man turn on you and try to murder you, and to be forced to slay him instead, is a devastating psychological experience. Neither Mark nor I doubt that if the attacker had been anyone but his lifelong neighbor, Mark would have shot him much sooner than he did. As it was, his hesitation to shoot a man he perceived as an old friend caused him to suffer severe injuries and nearly be killed. Only at the last, when Owens articulated his intent to kill him, did Branham finally shoot. The delay had, in the coldly tactical sense, been his second deadly error; the first had been turning his back.

One might argue that the first error was going up the hill at all. We defended that on the following grounds: a gunshot in the hills of Hoot Owl Mountain is not as out of place as in a backyard in Pasadena. Branham thought it might have been an injured hiker's signal shot. Trained as a cop, it was second nature to him to investigate. In retrospect, though, calling the police would have been a good idea, though his failure to do so in no way indicates culpability for the shooting.

I arranged for Mark to get counseling from Dr. Walter Gorski, the dean of the post shooting trauma psychologists. Mark would say later that Dr. Gorski's wise counsel literally saved his life in the despondent days after the guilty verdict. This aspect of managing a shooting's

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aftermath is all too often neglected.

Mark's successful appeal and followup were made possible through the generous donations of the Second Amendment Foundation and the readers of American Handgunner and its sister publication, GUNS. SAF established the first defense fund after another gun rights organization said they weren't interested. The \$1,000 donated by SAF's Alan Gottlieb, coupled with the donations of members, paid for the appeal. Donations from Handgunner and GUNS readers contributed greatly to the preparation for the third, and ultimately successful, trial.

When you're not a cop, you stand alone if you are accused wrongfully after a self defense shooting. I urge everyone who keeps a defensive handgun to belong to the Second Amendment Foundation, 12500 NE Tenth Place, Bellevue, WA 98005. We on the defense team can never adequately thank the SAF members and readers of AH and GUNS for their contributions to this worthy cause.

M ark Branham's life will never be free of this tragedy. Those on the other side mention archly that the only accounts of the shooting come from Mark himself, since he was the sole survivor. That is true, but his account is supported by every shred of fact evidence in the case, which is more than can be said for the multiple, self-contradictory fantasies put forth by the hired prosecutor. Judge Mullins, in his statement of acquittal, said for the record some things that will ring true for any survivor of a battle to the death:

"We've got to understand the circumstances that existed on this evening. The description of the wound that the Defendant received on that evening, I think, is very critical to this case.

"I don't think that there is any evidence whatsoever except that he was struck by the first blow . . . with the light that Mr. Owens had. It was a severe blow. The physical evidence of that blow fits hand in glove with what the Defendant says happened to him after that blow. That he was knocked down; he was semi-conscious, and when he tried to get up again, he was hit again. In that state it doesn't take much to overcome a person, and during the whole transaction there, that the defendant says maybe covered two minutes forty-five seconds, he said, that's no time at all to recover from the severe blow that he received at the onset of this altercation. You can't demand of a person in that condition to remember specifically, vividly, everything that went on there, but he's done a good job of trying to relate what he recalls transpired, and what he says is supported by the Commonwealth's evidence.

Though Mark Branham went through hell after pulling the trigger, there is no real question that his swift, trained reaction saved his life that cold night on the



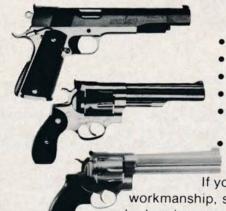


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ALPHA PRECISION, INC. Dept. A Route 1, Box 35-1, Good Hope, Georgia 30641 (404) 267-6163. hillside. Had he not put the gun on routinely even though he didn't think the shots signalled trouble, it is likely that he would have come down off Hoot Owl Mountain in a body bag.

Had it not been for concerned gun owners—and for the diligent, financially sacrificial efforts of attorney Gene Compton—he might today languish in prison, wrongfully convicted in the wake of a self-defense shooting. The lessons his ordeal left us are many.

PHSST!

Continued from page 45

shot. Use the airgun's lack of recoil to learn how you handle recoil.

Another way the airgun can benefit your grip and stance is to help you build endurance. With the emphasis on speed in many of today's events, we tend to forget how uncomfortable a contorted stance can be, because we're not in it very long. Use the airgun with your regular stance for a long series of slow-fire. Do you have a kink in your back after 30 minutes? Do your knees feel like someone planted ice-picks in them? Hot wires in your neck? Cramps in your hands? Analyze the aches and pains—why are you getting them? Are they necessary for a solid stance, or are they coming from some distortion in your stance?

Used intelligently, the airgun can help you get more comfortable. You may find that some pain is inevitable. But shooting the airgun for long strings can help you minimize it, and build your endurance while you're doing it

Trigger control: without debating the merits of the various methods of causing a handgun to fire, let's look at how an airgun can help you with whatever method works best for you. First, an airgun is cheap practice. Second, the airgun lets you work on your trigger control without the distractions of noise and recoil. Third, the lack of distractions helps you coordinate your trigger control with proper grip and exact sight alignment.

Trigger control should be practiced both ways: in isolation, and in conjunction with the other fundamentals. In dry-fire, single-action, try resting the butt of the gun against your bench, then squeeze the trigger as slowly as you can. When you learn to feel every tool mark on your hammer, trigger, and sear during one squeeze, you're going slow enough. If you shoot double-action, learn it the same way. Become intimately familiar with everything going on inside the gun by what you feel in the trigger.

Then, still in dry-fire, put the trigger control in with the other actions. Prove to yourself that you *can* move the trigger without disturbing perfect sight alignment, and that your grip lets you move the trigger straight back, with no side motion.

Next, go through the same process with

the airgun. This gives you all the benefits of dry-firing, plus a hole in the target to help you gauge the effectiveness of your practice. Focus your concentration the same way you did with the sight alignment practice, only this time concentrate on the trigger. Try this exercise with all your guns. Even in target guns with exceptional triggers, you will find that each of your guns has a distinct trigger personality, and that you can become intimate with all of them.

Have these exercises sold you on the benefits of practicing with an airgun? You now have a burning desire to own one, right? Wait one more minute before you rush out and buy one. Let's take a quick look at what's available. Choosing an airgun for practice is not too difficult, since there are not many models with the necessary accuracy at a price you can live with. The choice mainly boils down to how much you want to spend, and how the different models feel to your hand.

The lowest-priced airgun with good accuracy is made right here in the USA-the Daisy Model 717. Daisy makes three models, all of them similar: they are single-pump pneumatic pistols with side-operating pump levers, .177 caliber, and weight about three pounds. They have good balance-they sit back over the web of your thumb, and feel only slightly muzzle-heavy. The 717 has decent adjustable sights, thumbrest grips, a fair trigger, and very good accuracy for its cost of \$64. With just a bit of smoothing on the trigger, this gun can shoot very well.

The Daisy 747 has an adjustable trigger, a Lothar Walther barrel, and fine accuracy for \$120. The top of the Daisy line, the 777, has walnut thumbrest grips, a fine single-stage trigger adjustable from one to three pounds, and micrometer click match sights. Its rear sight is adjustable for the width of the notch. The 777's accuracy makes its price tag of about \$225 seem cheap.

Crosman built a gas gun until about 1984 that delivers fine accuracy at a decent price. Their Mark II single-shot pistol had adjustable sights, an adjustable trigger, and thumbrest grips that felt very good in your hand. In 1984 it sold for \$60. Each CO2 cartridge will give you about 100 shots on low power in this gun, so the cost of the gas won't break you. If you can find a Mark II still on the shelf, it will do you well for a trainer.

The imported airguns start at \$127 for the Beeman Model HW70. The HW70 is .177 caliber, and weighs 2.4 pounds with adjustable sights, hooded front sight, and thumbrest grips for right or left hand. It delivers 440 fps velocity, and very good accuracy.

RWS makes three models that fit the average shooter's budget. Their models are all .177 caliber, with micrometer rear sights and two-stage adjustable triggers. They have lifetime warranties. The RWS Model 5G has a tunnel front sight, is well balanced, and shoots better than you would believe possible for a gun that costs \$130. The RWS 6G uses a double piston pneumatic system to produce less recoil. The 6G sells for \$225. Both the 5G and the 6G can be had in left-hand models.

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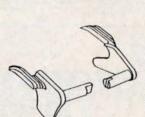
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The RWS Model 6M has everything the 6G does, plus a barrel shroud and fine walnut grips. Its rear sight has an adjustable notch plate, and its front sight is adjustable for width. The 6M sells for \$290.

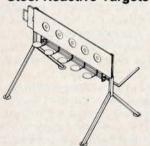
From here on, it's Olympic-class guns with gold medal prices. If your pocket is deeper than the average, take a look at the RWS Model 10, the new Crosman/Skanaker, the Walther CP2, and the Feinwerkbau Models 2 and 65. They are guaranteed to make you drool all over your Mercedes.

All of the guns discussed here have one thing in common: the only expense you face is the gun itself. The cost of one box of .45 ammo will buy you about 4,000 match-grade pellets. Gas cartridges and paper targets are cheap. If you like metal targets, you can buy ready-made silhouette animals and swinging targets scaled down for 10-meter airgun.

Try an airgun. Whatever type shooting you do, from plinking to combat, an airgun and a thorough review of the fundamentals can help you improve. And since air pistols only require ten meters (33 feet), you can probably fit a practice range into your living space, so that you can practice day or night, rain or shine.

There's one more major benefit to practicing with an airgun: not even your closest neighbor need know what you're up to. You may practice all you like, and be completely discreet (some might say downright sneaky) about your practice. Then, the next time you beat your arch-rival, you can think

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to yourself, "Yeah, you clown, what you don't know...," while you look him right in the eye and say, "Well, I'm trying this new powder-bullet combination."

INSIGHTS INTO IPSC

Continued from page 14

hands especially will find mag change times reduced. These oversize releases, though, must be carefully tested by the shooter since with some holsters, and some shooting grips, the mag can be released accidentally.

Two products I've been testing recently are the Smith & Alexander Mag-Guide and the VIC fixed grip speed release. The Mag-Guide is similar in concept to the LaRocca design, with the mag funnel and mainspring housing in one piece. It's available in either arched or flat versions, in blue or stainless steel, to fit 1911 style pistols and the Colt Officer's Model.

The housing is nicely checkered at 20 lines per inch, and the sample I had fitted and functioned properly on four different 1911 pistols. Quality of this item is first rate in every respect, and it's a good value at \$69.95. Smith & Alexander's address is Box 835790, Dept. AH, Richardson, TX 75083

The VIC speed release replaces the standard button magazine release with a flat steel bar that extends back into a special dished out portion of the left stock panel. It allows the shooter to release the mag without shifting his shooting grip; just hit the release anywhere and the mag is gone.

The unit comes with a replacement catch lock, the release itself, and a set of stocks. Two grades are available. The standard grade, at \$59.95, includes walnut stocks made by Herrett's. The presentation grade includes kingswood stocks made by Craig Spegel, and costs \$79.95.

Workmanship on both grades appeared to be very good, but the dark wood and striking grain of the kingswood stocks was certainly more attractive. The prototypes had fine-line checkering, but Pete Viceroy, president of VIC International, indicated that production versions will have slightly coarser checkering which he feels will provide a more secure grip.

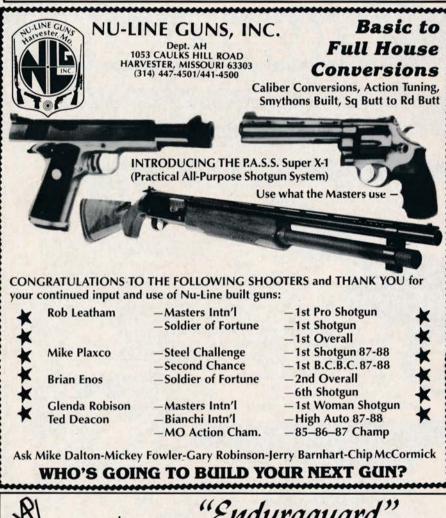
This unit was also tried on four different pistols, with no problems in fit or function. The left stock panel has the little "lip" on the top edge to support the safety plunger tube, which is a standard feature on Colt pistols but is missing on some replacement stocks. The right panel has a relief cut for the popular Swenson Ambidextrous safety. The address is VIC International, 18056 Ledgepoint Place, Dept. AH, Strongsville, OH 44136.

With two speedloading accessories at hand it seemed like a good opportunity to find out just how much was gained over a



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stock gun. Enlisting the aid of four shooting buddies, I had each of us do a series of 10 reloads with a Colt Gold Cup. Except for a Colt wide grip safety, this gun was completely stock, with a non-bevelled mag well, short mag button, and strong catch lock spring.

The Mag-Guide was then installed and a second series of 10 reloads completed by each shooter. Finally, for the third series, the VIC speed release was fitted.

For each reload the shooter would fire one shot at an IPSC target seven yards away, reload, and hit the target again. Time between the two shots was measured with a Pro-TNT timer. The table shows each shooter's 10-reload average.

In addition to being slower, times with the unaltered gun were much more inconsistent. Every shooter had one or two "wrecks" that really bumped up the average. The mag chute really helped improve consistency.

For example, looking at my own figures I found that with the stock gun the single best time was a 1.56, while the worst was a 3.20. With the mag chute the best time was a 1.46—not all that much faster—but the worst was a 1.80. I calculated the standard deviation (a statistical method of measuring consistency) of each series and found that the mag-guide resulted in reloads that were twice as consistent as the stock gun. The guide not only gives faster reloads, it virtually eliminates the bad ones.

The benefit of the speed release varied more from shooter to shooter, and seemed to depend largely on hand size. Those with oversize hands didn't improve much with the speed release, though they didn't do any worse either. The ones who did benefit, though, really benefitted. Two of the shooters improved their times by .7 to .8 seconds, which is a considerable reduction off of times that were already fairly good.

Speaking of the times, some readers may think these times aren't particularly quick. When I started into IPSC, quite a few years ago, timing was done with a stopwatch, and almost any competitor of consequence would modestly admit he could do a one-second reload any day of the week. I haven't heard this claim in quite a few years—not since accurate electronic timers like the Pro-Timer and the PACT become widely available.

It's one thing to do a few reloads and remember only the good ones, but when the bad ones are included in the average these times are actually quite good.

Earlier I mentioned that extended/enlarged mag releases can cause problems with some shooting grips. To my regret I found that I was one of those who have a problem. I grip the gun with the left wrist a bit ahead of the right, and the base of the left thumb pressed against the left stock panel. Almost invariably I would accidentally press the speed release and dump the magazine. Steve had this happen to him once or twice, while the other

shooters had no problems whatsoever.

These accessories provide a worthwhile improvement in reloading time. Magazine chutes, especially, are one of those nice things that provide a benefit and have no drawbacks. Extended mag releases will really help some shooters, but I must stress the importance of thoroughly testing the unit to ensure it won't be released accidentally, either in the holster or in the shooting grip. Inadvertently dumping the mag halfway through a string would be annoying in a match. I bet it would be downright irritating in a gunfight.

SILUETAS

Continued from page 19

rived, I just happened to stop by Intermountain Arms, a local sportshop, and was admiring some of the lightweight mountain rifles that they specialize in building. These are synthetic stocked rifles, all fitted with recoil reducers. Thinking of my soon-to-be-painful Dominator, I asked gunsmith Ron Schermerhorn, "Ever put recoil reducers on handguns"?

Yes, they had just started experimenting with a recoil reducer called the Gunner's Choice on Contenders and showed me a video tape of hard kicking single shots being fired both with and without benefit of the Gunner's Choice. The results on the video tape were impressive as they fired both aided and unaided Contenders in front of a grid to show the amount of muzzle rise. There was a definite reduction in the rise of the muzzle with the use of Gunner's Choice. They had never tried the apparatus on a Dominator but asked that I bring it in and they would see what could be done.

Because of the barrel diameter of the 7-08 Dominator, it took awhile to get a Gunner's Choice of the proper size, so while Schermerhorn was waiting, he took a draw file to my old 1911 frame getting out as many pits as possible, then satin nickled the frame, and fancied things up a bit by finishing the hammer in bright nickle. When assembled, the whole outfit is very pleasing to the eye and the satin nickle of the Colt frame contrasts nicely with both the dull black of the Dominator unit and the black rubber Pachmayr grips I installed.

The Gunner's Choice Recoil Reducer is an add-on that requires the barrel be threaded on the outside, and the three inch length of the Gunner's Choice adds two and one-half inches to the barrel length. This means that a barrel that is already at the length limit for silhouetting of any kind would need to be trimmed by two and one-half inches before this particular recoil reducer is installed.

My Dominator 7-08 looked good and the Gunner's Choice looked like it cer-

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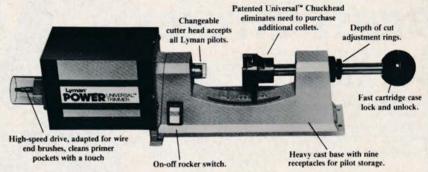
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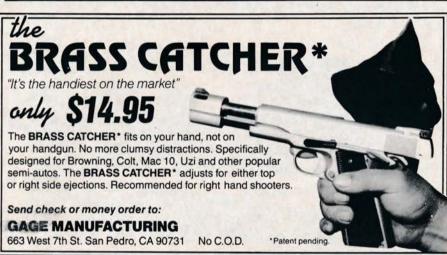
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tainly would do the job with its four rows of recoil reducing holes running around the axis of the barrel. The claim is that a .378 is reduced to .30-06 level and a .30-06 handles like a .243 with the Gunner's Choice installed on a rifle. Would it do the job on the 7-08 Dominator?

I set-up a sandbag rest, loaded a 140 grain Remington factory load in the shell holder rim of the Dominator's action, closed the bolt, flipped off the safety and slowly squeezed the trigger. At this point I was more interested in what would happen to the back of my hand rather than sighting in the 4X scoped Dominator.

Upon firing, the barrel of the 7-08 lifted gently and there was absolutely no pain to the back of my hand. In fact, I had experienced less felt recoil than when firing the regular 1911 Colt! I fired again. And again. In fact, I ran through 200 rounds of reloads from 100 grain hollowpoints up to 162 grain boattails, and the result was always the same. No painful thump on the back of the hand.

Just to make sure, I unscrewed the Gunner's Choice and tried a factory 140 grain round. The result? A thump to the back of the hand that raised a pronounced red mark as well as a definite smack in the palm. Not brutal, but noticeable. A recoil that would work on the back of the hand during a long string of fire until a blister or broken skin appeared. The Gunner's Choice really did a job by keeping this from happening!

Accuracy of the 7-08 Dominator proved to be excellent. I'm sure much of the accuracy that was attained was due to the fact that I could concentrate on the shooting and not be concerned about getting thumped everytime I pulled the trigger. Using various handloads, I experienced numerous 100 yard three shot groups in the one inch range, and one beautiful three shot group with all bullets touching and measuring 7/16"! Very few rifles will do this, or maybe I should say that I cannot shoot a rifle this good even from sandbags.

The Gunner's Choice certainly does not reduce muzzle velocity as Remington factory 120 grain hollow points clocked out at 2800 + fps over my PACT PC, and factory 140's hit a shade over 2600 fps. Those are pretty impressive figures from a handgun and makes the 7-08 an excellent choice for silhouetting or game in the deer-antelope category.

Intermountain Arms welcomes inquiries concerning the Gunner's Choice installation on rifles or handguns. Their address is Intermountain Arms, Attention: Ron Schermerhorn, 105 East Idaho Ave, Dept AH, Meridian, ID 83642.

I'm sold on the Gunner's Choice as it allows the use of full-house 7-08 loads for the flattest possible trajectory with no strain, no pain.

If you have an Unlimited gun that is providing more recoil than is manageable in 40, 60, or 80 round strings of fire, or if you have watched your wife, son, or

daughter wince every time they pull the trigger and you have finally realized they are not willing to disappoint Dad and say they are hurting, installation of the Gunner's Choice can pay back big dividends.

HANDLOADING

Continued from page 22

more complex but it's one of those elegant ideas that doesn't do anything at all unless the powder measure sticks.

A small bracket is installed underneath the shell plate to engage a rod that runs down from the powder measure. To install the rod you must replace the bell crank on the powder measure with a new one, but if you've ever taken the powder measure apart for cleaning it's no more trouble than that.

The rod then engages the bracket beneath the shell plate and, on the down stroke of the press, it will pop the powder slide back into position if it should happen to stick. If the powder measure doesn't stick, you'll never notice it.

Of course all the new 550Bs will come with all this, but owners of 450B or 550 presses can purchase the retrofit kits for \$15 each or you can get both for \$25. Both is the way to go. Just call Dillon's handy toll free number 1-800-421-7632.

nother interesting item is a Lyman A product that ought to be a part of everyone's loading bench. One of the things that amazes me about reloading is the blind faith everyone seems to put in their powder scale. They assume it's right. You know what ass-u-me means, don't you?

The product I'm talking about is a simple set of weights that allow you to verify the accuracy of your powder scale. I don't mean to malign anyone's powder scale and I've never tested one that was off when it was new, but we all know that loading benches are messy places and it's easy as pie for something to get bumped in the clutter. If that something happens to be your powder scale, the consequences can be serious. But, unless you check the scale, how will you know?

Lyman has had the check weights in their catalog for a couple of years now, and I surely must have been one of their first customers, for I ordered a set just as soon as I heard of them. For years I had been using an old set of analytical balance weights to check my various scales. They were, of course, in grams, but I had a table of the comparable weights in grains taped to the box. My practice, then and now, is to set the zero and then use a weight that is close to the maximum charge I'll be using that session to verify the scale. If it's a real long session, or I happen to bump the scale during loading, I'll check it again.



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FIELD GRADE CASULL

Continued from page 55

ders from 4150 steel. Parts were engineered as needed and the .454 Casull, then labeled the .454 Magnum, became a reality. During the 1960s a number of .454s were built and also Ruger Super Blackhawks were converted to five shot .454s.

A number of promoters tried to start production of the .454, but Wayne Baker was the only one to stick with it. Plans for a factory in Freedom, Wyoming came together in 1979 and in 1983 the first fac-

tory produced .454 was sold.

From 1983 until 1988 The Premier Grade .454 Casull has been sold by Freedom Arms chambered in .454 and, for fanciers of the .44 Magnum and the .45 Colt, a small number have been made in each of these fine calibers. Because of the cost of production, the Premier Grade Freedom Arms Single Action has slowly inched its way up to \$1095. Most shooters, who appreciate the quality built into each .454 Casull, understand the need for such a high price, but if there were only some way to get the price down!

The staff at Freedom Arms went to work on ways to lower the price without sacrificing quality. In 1987, I was privileged to see the un-announced and un-named "new" Freedom Arms .454 and asked what I thought. "It will outsell the original!" I opined.

To bring the price down, Freedom Arms has done three things, none of which sacrifices quality in any way.

Instead of the highly polished finish found on the Premier Grade, The Field Grade carries a bead blasted finish. This eliminates many hours of careful polishing which in turn cuts the cost significantly.

All Premier Grade Casulls are furnished with a special laminated grip that is meticulously hand-fitting to the frame. This takes time and costs money. The Field Grade version is furnished with bolt-on Pachmayr grips. Another cut in the total cost.

The last change is the rear sight. A special base adapter is fitted to the frame to accept Ruger rear sights and the third significant savings occurs. Add them all up and the total savings is \$300 giving the Field Grade a retail price of \$795, which is right in the ballpark with two other stainless handguns, the Python and the Gold Cup.

I've received many inquires about the Field Grade and the number one question is: "What did they change on the inside?" The answer is nothing. Not one thing. No mechanical changes have been made whatsoever.

The .454 Field Grade is identical internally, and fitted as precisely as the Premier Grade. Cylinders are still line-bored, that is each cylinder is locked in place in the frame it is mated with before it is chambered. This results in a near perfect barrel/cylinder chamber alignment at the time the gun is fired.

Barrel/cylinder gaps are held under .002". The test Field Grade I have has an even more tightly chambered cylinder than my Silhouette and Packin' Pistol .454s. The same barrel stock is used. All internal parts are the same. The only difference is the finish, the grip, the rear sight – and the price.

Actually, the finish on the Field Grade is much more conducive to hunting than the bright, highly polished finish of the Premier Grade and turns out to be a finish that many stainless steel handgun owners would pay extra to obtain.

For those who may not be familiar with the .454 Casull, the gun itself is a traditional five-shot single action that is loaded and unloaded by placing the hammer at the half-cock notch and rotating the cylinder by hand and ejecting the empties one at a time and replacing them, also one at a time, with loaded rounds. When carried fully loaded with five rounds, the Casull utilizes a hammer safety that engages when the hammer is placed in the safety notch. Being a single action, the hammer must be cocked before each round is fired.

The Field Grade, at least at this time, is available in four versions. It can be had in .454 Casull chambering only with adjustable sights with a choice of 43/4", 71/2", or 10" barrels, all retailing for \$795. One fixed sighted version, again only in .454, is available, in 43/4" length only, retailing for \$725. To me, the latter would be the ideal packin' pistol for any outdoorsman who carries a handgun for the express purpose that it may have to be used some day on something big, mean, or nasty. An outfitter or guide could pack one of these high on the hip in a properly designed holster, hardly noticing that it is there and yet have instant accessability to a potent package of power.

My test Field Grade .454 is a $7\frac{1}{2}$ " version with a few options. Since I find the Pachmayr grips a trifle large for my hand, and also prefer the traditional look of a standard single action grip, I went the route of ordering black micarta grips fitted to the Field Grade. They look extremely attractive when mated with the subuded bead blasted finish of the stainless steel .454.

Since all Freedom Arms Single Actions come with a heavier than desirable trigger pull for this long-time Single Action sixgunner, I also ordered an action job with the trigger set at three pound. Finally, I prefer the standard Freedom Arms sights and went this way instead of with the Ruger





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MTM Molded Products Company P.O. Box 14117 • Dayton, Ohio 45414 • (513) 890-7461 rear sight that is standard on the Field Grade. The Premier Grade rear sight has been changed positively and now carries a deeper notch than I prefer for precise shooting.

With the options I ordered, I feel that this 71/2" Field Grade .454 Casull is about as close to perfection as one can get in an all-around single action revolver. No it is not the ticket for action shooting, nor would it be the first choice as a self-defense handgun. But for tough outdoor service and for ultiamte power in a 52 ounce portable package, this is it.

Other options available from Freedom Arms for the Field Grade .454 Casull include scopes, scope mounts and rings, special silhouette sights, express sights, and colored insert front sights. Contact Freedom Arms (Dept AH, P.O. Box 1776, Freedom, WY 83120) for a complete list of options and prices. Dealer inquiries are invited.

Pressures for the .454 Casull factory loads and some reloads will run to 60,000 CUPS and more. The loads worked up by Dick Casull in the 1950s and 1960s utilized standard .45 Colt brass and #2400 powder. The original .454 brass was nothing more than .45 Colt brass lengthened from 1.285" to 1.385". Now we are at the third generation stage of .454 Casull brass, and keeping with Dick Casull's desire to have as great a safety margin as possible, FA .454 brass has now been made heavier in the web area and uses small, instead of large, primer pockets.

The Field Grade .454 performs exactly the same as its more expensive counterpart, The Premier Grade. Superbly. With the right load, groups will run one-inch or less at 25 yards and long range accuracy is excellent. This is one revolver that will definitely outshoot the iron sights it comes

equipped with. I have fired well over 300 different loads through the .454 Field Grade, some of which are published herein. Freedom Arms manufactures three jacketed bullets for the .454 and loads are listed for each. These three designs all have .032" copper jackets and are designed for the deep penetration that big game hunting demands. Freedom Arms bullets are a 240 jacketed hollow point, and a 260 and 300 grain jacketed soft point. All perform well in the .454 Field Grade with a few favorite loads emerging.

The factory 260 grain load clocks out at 1874 fps from the 71/2" Field Grade .454 and I come close to this with 1810 fps from 36 grains of H110. The factory loaded 300 grain jacketed soft point clocks out at 1681 fps, and my handload of 33.0 grains of H110 yields 1717 fps. These are heavy loads and recoil is stout!

Because of the cost of the Freedom Arms jacketed bullets, I cannot see any point in using them in plinking loads.

All velocities are measured with both a PACT PC and an Oehler 33, and the average taken. Velocities are normally within 20 fps of each other on the two clocks.

Since the PACT skyscreens require a twofoot spacing, and the Oehler screens are set up to work at a four-foot spacing, it is a simple matter to mount both sets of screens on a single bar and check them against each other.

For lighter jacketed bullet loads in the .454, I turn to Sierra's 240 grain JHC, Hornady's 250 grain JHP, or Speer's 260 grain JHP. These .45 Colt bullets have lighter jackets than the Freedom Arms .454 bullets and will work best at velocities around 1600 fps or less.

The .454 Field Grade is a natural for cast bullets if they are chosen and loaded wisely. Some 240-260 grain cast bullets will not perform as well at the higher speeds as they lose accuracy when pushed too fast. Different guns react differently, so experimentation may be necessary.

A long-time popular 255 grain cast bullet with the .45 Colt, and one that works well also in the .454, is Lyman's #454424 designed by Elmer Keith back in the 1920's. Its longevity attests to its popularity. For a heavy load with this bullet, I like either 25.0 grains of #2400 or 36.0 grains of WW680 for 1600 fps. For a "mild" load, I go with 16.0 grains of WW540 for 1280 fps and no unburned powder granules to work their way into the tight fitting parts of the Freedom Arms single action revolver.

My favorite, and most accurate, loads with the .454 7½" Field Grade are all assembled with bullets in the 300 grain weight range and up. There are a number of excellent heavyweight bullets from NEI, Lyman, and SSK. NEI's contributions are both "Keith-style" bullets and because of nose length when used in the .454 require crimping over the front band. Hensley and Gibbs is now working on a Keith heavyweight .454 bullet that can be used in .454 brass and still be crimped in the crimping groove.

The NEI bullets are #310.451 and #325.451. The first three numbers give the approximate weight and the last three indicate the caliber. For the 310 grain bullet, I prefer 18.0 grains of #2400 (1230 fps), 21.0 grains of #2400 (1450 fps), and 25.0 grains of H110 (1500 fps). These are not full house loads but are plenty for most shooters and most chores. DO NOT TRY TO BUILD HEAVYWEIGHT FULL HOUSE LOADS WITH #2400, NOR LIGHT LOADS WITH WW296 OR H110. Either practice can be dangerous.

For the slightly heavier 325 grain Keith bullet, I like 21.0 grains of H110 for a mild, pleasant shooting, 1225 fps, or 26.0 grains for a bull-busting 150 fps. Both of these bullets shed their velocity very slowly, and when started at 1500 fps, will still be traveling at nearly 1200 fps at 200 yards. That kicks up a lot of down-range energy.

The heaviest practical bullet for the .454 is also one of the best and certainly one of the most accurate. This is SSK's #345.451 which drops a 340 grain bullet with my hard-casting mixture. Start at 22.0 grains of H110 for 1200 fps and go all the way up

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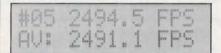
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to 32.0 grains of H110 for nearly 1800 fps and all the recoil I want.

Lyman's heavyweight .454 bullet is #454629, and is a 300 grain, flat point, gaschecked design that is available only from Freedom Arms. This too is an exceptionally accurate bullet and as been specifically designed to withstand the high velocities possible with the .454 Casull. My starting load for this bullet is 26.0 grains of WW296 for 1400 fps and I stop at 32.0 grains of WW296 for 1700 fps.

Prices of manufactured goods always seem to be going up or quality is being cut. Or both. It is refreshing to find an arms manufacturer offering what is probably the best factory revolver ever made, cutting the cost 27%, and doing it without sacrificing quality.

The Freedom Arms revolvers, both Premier Grade and Field Grade, are being discovered by more shooters each day. Be prepared to wait awhile for delivery. You'll be glad you did. It's worth the wait. As the old advertising slogan use to go: "Ask the man who has one."

COL. ASKINS' .45

Continued from page 66

passed it over. I thought the little *puta* was going to kiss him.

"What do yah wanna do with him," I asked, "hang the bastard?"

Parker shook his head, "We're gonna take him right back to the place on the line where he crossed before he killed Lon. An' I'm gonna kill him right there."

We drove through the outskirts of Nogales and onto a dirt road which ran parallel to the International boundary. In twenty minutes we swung northward and came to the Line. It is marked with concrete markers but no fence. "This is where the sonsofbitches crossed," George growled.

There were no houses, no habitation, only the open desert with the Chiracahua Mountains in the distance on the Arizona side.

We unloaded and Parker opened the jump seat. I had heard some movement in the compartment for some miles and I wasn't surprised to see our killer raise bolt upright in the back seat. And he came up shooting!

We had carted him out of the casa de las putas as dead drunk but the bastard had sobered up enough to know he was distinctly in trouble. We hadn't searched him when we dumped him in the jump seat and that was an error.

He got off a shot at Parker—he was facing the driver's side—and I shot him three times with the .45 Auto. He pitched out of the car on his head. George walked over to him and shot the killer three times as he lay on the road. His revolver was a .32 Iver Johnson, and Parker took it with

him as a sort of memento of our carelessness.

When I got back to El Paso the Little Bride said, "What were you doing in Arizona all that time? You and that awful George Parker must have been playing around."

I nodded my head sagely and replied "Yep. That's right, Babe, playing around really sums it up."

A good many years later after fighting WW-II and becoming wealthy as a successful rancher/farmer, my old buddy Parker developed cancer and took out his pistol and shot himself. A real he-man, that one!

B ack in El Paso, we moved, the Better Half and me, to an out-station in the desert. We were 20 miles from El Paso and three miles from the U.S.-Mex frontier. It was a horseback station and my partner and I rode across a 150 miles of desert to the Arizona line. It took us six days to go over but we always managed to come back in five long, hard rides.

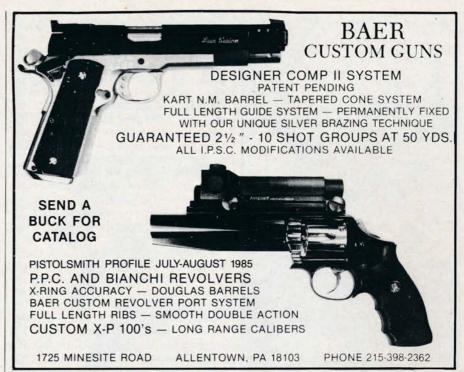
I was the best pistol shot in the Border Patrol and on this station I had time for practice. I won the pistol championship of Texas (although I was living in New Mexico) five times, the state championship of Arizona once, of Oklahoma once and New Mexico a single time. I took the Border Patrol national team to the Camp Perry Matches and we shot a three-way tie with the Los Angeles Police and the U.S. Marines for the National team championship. I won the National Individual Pistol Championship. This is one of only two matches staged by the U.S. Gov't-all the other competitions are staged by the NRA. The National Individual is limited to the .45 Model 1911 pistol.

During the 10 years I was a member of the Border Patrol I banged off 334,000 pistol rounds and for half the time I was the Chief Instructor of Firearms for the whole bloody service.

But I digress.

The Rio Grande, which meanders through El Paso, not only serves as an international boundary but also separates the border hamlets of El Paso, Texas and Juarez, Chihuahua. It was a handy avenue for a tremendous amount of smuggling. The coyoteros transported liquor during the days of the Volstead Act and then carted back booty from burglaries and robberies on the gringo side. After Prohibition went out the contrabandistas fetched over marijuana and, to considerably lesser extent, cocaine.

One evening, lying on the levee across from the standpipes of an old long unused water filter system, we saw nine hombres take to the stream on the Mex side. It appeared they were going to hit the U.S. bank about 50 yards below us, so we moved down river and awaited them. When they topped the levee we halted them and there was pandemonium for sure! The smugglers dropped their loads





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and some ran back for the Rio Grande, others bolted into the settlement on our side and the leader of the gang held fast.

I approached this bastard and in my hands I had my old Remington Model 11 autoloader, crammed with 00 buckshot. Frank Pachmayr had put an extension on the magazine which ran right out to the muzzle and this gave me a reserve of fire which sometimes proved quite advantageous. At any rate, I ran up to the *jefe* of this nefarious bunch of rascals and I pointed the old auto shotgun at his midriff. I got a mite too close and this scoundrel grabbed the barrel and gave the gun a hell of a jerk. He thought to catch me unawares and expected to get my shooting iron.

I held the gun in my left hand, pulled the trigger at the same time and the nine big buckshot pellets neatly entered the bandit's right eye. While the point of entry was pretty smooth, the back of his head was somewhat of a mess. As a matter of fact there wasn't much of it left. The charge lifted the outlaw off his feet and pitched him at least six feet away. He was almost thrown back down the levee on the river side.

It wasn't three months after that when I found myself in a similar situation. I guess I was just too impulsive—I got too close to another gang of smugglers and the top dog got hold of the barrel of the selfsame old Remington Model 11 and tried to jerk it out of my grasp. I pulled it back smartly and pulled the trigger and this time the load of buckshot took him right above the left knee. They cut his leg off at the City-County Hospital at midnight.

J erome Hill, a sort of rookie in the Border Patrol who had barely served his six month probation, was killed at the east end of Cordoba Island. Hill had raced a pair of smugglers from the willows in the old river bed to a house known to be habitually used by the runners and as he approached the back door he was gunned down by one of the smugglers who saw him approaching.

This called for retaliation.

Cordoba Island wasn't an island at all. Once upon a time it had been all in Mexico and then the Rio Grande on a spring rampage had changed its channel and left Cordoba high and dry. The old river bed, no longer flush with the turgid waters of the International stream, promptly grew up to an extremely dense growth of willows and other brush. And just as rapidly the two square miles of what amounted to a jutting thumb which protruded into the town of El Paso, was taken over by smugglers. They built a hundred shacks hard against the willow boundary. And there the contraband to be lifted across the International line was fetched from neighboring Juarez, stored in a shack and trundled across once night had fallen.

There was no chainlink fence, no illumination, nothing to slow up nor impede the contrabandistas. Usually they had a

cohort on the U.S. side who had a shack quite near the old river bed and it was the matter of only minutes to whip the load of liquor or marijuana from the Cordoba side to the American refuge. Later on a car would pull up to the shack and the stuff would be stored aboard and wheeled the hell outta there.

This was the situation that had gotten Jerome Hill killed. He had a partner—no Border Patrolman worked alone—but the companion officer was not with Hill when he loped along after the smugglers and got a bullet through his heart.

The BP in those days had one Mex officer, Pedro Torres, and old Pete was sent over the river to nose around and find out who had killed Officer Hill. In three days Torres came back and he had the whole scoop. The smuggler was a hero in contrabandista eyes. He had killed a hated Federale. He was Alberto Holguin, a regular runner and more than that a pistolero. He usually signed on with the jefe of the liquor smugglers to go along as gun guard.

After a week, our boy Torres had made good progress. He had bribed a smuggler to hire Holguin to guard a load of marijuana he was going to smuggle across Cordoba Island and into a shack at the foot of Piedras Street. There was a trail, more properly a dirt road which ran from the Mex side of the island directly through its center to a shack against the American side. Midway, or thereabouts, there was an old windmill. Torres impressed on his stooly, a *cholo* named Bustamante, that the smuggler gang must pass on the east side of the old mill. This was agreed upon and all was set.

Three of us, Adamson, Dale Evans and myself, crossed through the willows, and moved in the first darkness of the night to a spot within 30 yards of the windmill. Cordoba Island had been farmed at one time but since it had gotten so hot as a smugglers rendezvous the farmers had given up. We sat down in a dense stand of mesquite and cactus where we had the mill and anybody who passed would be silhouetted against the lights of Juarez town. The gang was supposed to move about nine o'clock. We were in position by 7 p.m.

I had my trusty old Remington Model 11 autoloader with a Pachmayr magazine extension. It held nine rounds altogether. Jack Adamson had a 351. Winchester auto rifle with 10-shot clip. This was in the days before Tommy guns and while the old .45 submachine gun was in existence, the Border Patrol had not been issued the gun. Only the Army had them. Dale Evans had another .351 auto and like his cohort Adamson it held a 10-shot clip. A second 10-shot magazine was taped to the first. All he had to do once he ran dry was to swap ends and he was again ready for business.

"How we gonna keep from shooting this stool pigeon?" Evans asked. I replied, "He ain't supposed to be with the smugglers. He is playing like he is the big jefe and is waiting in the shack near the old river bed," I explained. It was tiresome waiting and while I didn't smoke both the older boys did, but I put a taboo

on the cigs.

We had scarcely gotten well situated when things began to liven up. Six rowdies came up from the Rio Grande side and went into ambush just beyond the mill. This was not according to plan and I began to have some grave doubts about our stoolpigeon. "Looks like those bastards are waitin' for us," I whispered to the boys. Both nodded.

By 9 p.m. ten more cholos came up the trail. This made 16 in all. We could count them against the lights of Juarez and while only three had long guns-either rifles or shotguns-the others, I felt sure, had handguns. The last gang moved down from the windmill about 30 yards and disappeared into the mesquite. It was pretty obvious we were being set up. So far none of the covotes had any loads neither of liquor nor yet marijuana. They were in place solely to run up a good tally on the hated federales.

I got to my feet and motioned to the others. We commenced a slow and most meticulously quiet retreat. I didn't mind odds of maybe two or three to one, but sixteen cabrones was a bit too much. The Border Patrol was licked. Bested. We silently slunk back across the Int'l line.

Ninety days later Holguin was killed near the smelter in north El Paso. Here the border was no longer the Rio Grande but struck off across the desert toward Arizona. He was acting as gun guard for a band loaded with grass. Bustamante, who had doublecrossed us, lasted about a month in Juarez and was shot by a gringo. The gunman, according to the U.S. Consul in Juarez, said he had the report from the jefe of the Mexican Aduana. 'Seguramente era un gringo," the chief of the Mex Customs claimed.

had been in the Border Patrol for a decade and during those same years had been a soldier with the Texas National Guard. The 36th Infantry Division was the Texas outfit and when WW-II got cranked up I was delighted to go to duty. There was only one hitch. Brig. Gen. Julian Hatcher, an Ordnance officer, full time active regular officer and an enthusiastic handgunner who knew something of my pistol victories, wrote me and asked if I would accept a First Lieutenant's commission in Ordnance. I had been an infantryman up until then and was a first sergeant, but the thought of getting a commission never left any doubt in my mind. I wrote General Hatcher and told him I would be delighted.

Almost before you could say "Ready, Aim, Fire" I was on my way to North Africa ostensibly to back up the II Army Corps which landed around Oran in Algeria. The French weren't any too happy to see us but we didn't give a damn. We loaded up and commenced a longish

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ington is a trademark registered in the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office by Remington Arms Company, Inc., Model XP-100 is a trademark of Remington Arms Com-pany, Inc., Wilmington, Del. 19898. march toward Tunisia.

The krauts were falling back slowly from the pressure of the British Eighth Army and it was pretty obvious they were going to wind up in Tunisia. I was part of the 14th Ordnance Company and very shortly sliced off a 24-man platoon and marched up near Medigez el Bab to support the 18th Regimental Combat Team. The 18th was part of the 1st Infantry Division and needed Ordnance support. It was a good detail.

We were a mile or two behind the 18th in an olive grove. Shop was set up and everybody went to work. I took my favorite driver, a rascal named Jenkins, and we went off on an extended scout. In no time at all we found an Arab and he was herding a gaggle of pigs, about 50-60, and these porcine brutes were all as fat as only a young shoat can get.

I hauled forth the Pachmayr .45 Auto and with three well placed rounds had as many pigs thrashing on the ground. Jenkins and I threw the carcasses in the jeep and set sail for camp. The Arab herder stood with his mouth open offering neither complaint nor approbation.

We had then been eating C-rations for three months and the boys hailed the fresh pork chops with shouts of delight. In about a week the cooks reported that all the pork roasts, steaks and chops had gone the way of all flesh.

Back Jenkins and I went to where we had found our pigs. They were maybe a mile from the first site but we ran them down. Out came the .45 M1911 and with three well placed shots, each round right behind the ear, we were again in pork steaks.

About three days after this trifling episode I got a priority message from the old colonel who commanded the 18th Combat Team. "Come to my headquarters," the message read, "At once!" I felt pretty sure I wasn't going to be promoted and I was just a little queasy about the summons, but I lost no time in reporting to the Old Man. He was really a hell of a nice old Joe, Corbin by name, and a regular Army officer.

"You been shootin' some Frenchman's pigs?" he inquired without any preliminaries. "Yes sir," I said and looked him right in the eye, "my boys needed the fresh meat." The Old man smiled and shook his finger at me.

"We've got to get along with these froggie bastards," he admonished. "I think maybe you'd better let up on that one." That was the last of our pork chops.

The American Army found after a few months of combat that we had no unit within II Army Corps specifically designed to go out on the battlefield and retrieve shot up tanks, mobile artillery, and even general purpose vehicles. A provisional outfit was organized from bits and pieces of both equipment and men and it fell to my good lot to be given command of this battlefield recovery company. I couldn't have been happier if I'd been

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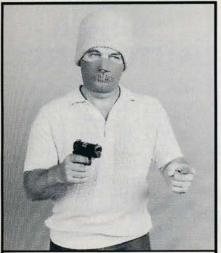
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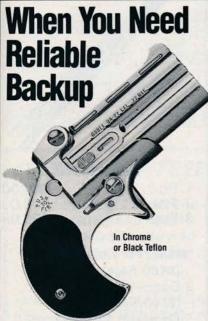
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I did most of the battlefield reconnaissance and once I'd found the busted up M-3 tanks I'd go back and get my crew with wreckers and tank transporters and fetch in the bullet-punctured scrap iron. I had a freedom of movement which was unequalled by any trooper in the whole bloody outfit.

One day an order came down from II Corps headquarters to go up to the front above Gafsa and fetch back a whole battalion of 90mm AA guns. Some jerk had set up the AA guns in a pass in the mountains and had gotten the battalion too close to the kraut 88s and brought the force under fire. The anti-aircraft joes had taken it on the lam. Ran off and left not only their weapons but their transporters as well. We were ordered to move up and retrieve such of the artillery as was worth removal. "The 88 rounds are still coming in," the order ended on that cheerful note.

We borrowed generously from the other units of II Corps support forces and with wreckers and transporters on the road we shoved off for the scene of action. When we got close to the battlefield I could see the AA guns in all manner of disarray. Some were still attached to their transporters, some had been partly set down in firing position and there wasn't an artillerman anywhere in sight.

I pulled up at the front of our column and motioned the first vehicle, a 10-ton wrecker, to follow me. I drove out on the battlefield and looked back. The column had not moved. I whispered the jeep around and went back.

"What tha' hell is the matter with you?" I asked the driver of the big wrecker. He was a big sulky bastard and his co-driver was hunkered down in the seat until I could hardly see him.

"I ain't goin' out there," he told me. The 88 rounds were still coming in, but not too many.

I stepped up on the running board of the wrecker, unholstered the old Pachmayr .45 and stuck it in the driver's ear. Not gently let me assure you. "You sonofabitch, I'll give you just three seconds to get this vehicle in motion. If you aren't under way in that time I am going to kill you."

My bully boy dropped the big wrecker in gear and it started to move.

I waited for the Corps Judge Advocate to put me under arrest and try me for threatening to kill an enlisted man, but I never got his summons. The wrecker driver wasn't out of my outfit, he belonged to another outfit. I never saw him again.

Later on we were bivouaced at the head of Kasserine Pass. The krauts had kicked hell out of the British together with the troops we had with their Eighth Army and we were in the top of the Kasserine gathering up the pieces. The 1st Sgt. came to me and said the boys were complaining



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because the Arabs were stealing into camp and filching their barracks bags. "Put out more guards," I instructed the sergeant. This didn't seem to help.

What the kooks would do was to crawl into camp, hook a barracks poke over a bent arm and then crawl out to the nearest brush. After a day or two of scouting the situation it became obvious to me that these thieves always entered from the side and departed from that same flank. The bags were heavy and left a considerable trail. I took up a position in some heavy bush within bare feet of the trail.

About an hour after darkness had set in I heard a pair of the worthies making their way through the brush and cactus. Within a quarter hour they had returned, outward bound. They had gotten to their feet by the time they reached my hideout and had the barracks bags over a shoulder.

I stepped out in the trail at a distance of maybe six feet and killed them both with a single shot each. The old Pachmayr .45 was working that eve.

The guard shouted for the corporal of the guard and that worthy turned out his reserve and they came slowly and cautiously into the area. They found the two dead Bedouins, complete with barracks pokes, but no indication as to how they had met their untimely end. As long as we remained in that bivouac there was no more pilfering.

The African War was over finally and Rommel, who had fought so skillfully, had been evacuated to the Reich and his people were all surrendered. They were instructed to move all their wheeled vehicles into a gigantic holding area about 30 miles south of Bizerte. This they did and there must have been no less than 30,000 vehicles. I had to go have a look.

The kraut command car, a most practical little vehicle, was held separately from the troop carriers, tank transporters and buses. I had some designs on this command car and went to inspect the long line. I was immediately struck by the fact that a single Rommel stalwart was moving from one car to the next and after he raised the hood he would systematically beat the distributor to flinders with a big ballpeen hammer he carried. I did not much like this.

I walked up behind this big Hun, whipped out the old Pachmayr .45 and put one of the 230 grain slugs through his kidneys. He screamed like a banshee and others *soldaten* in the vicinity came rushing to his aid. I stuck around the rest of the afternoon but I never saw any more pillage of the captured fleet.

We had leaped the Rhine and were on the high road to Berlin, or so we thought. There was still a good deal of hard fighting and one fine day we entered the small hamlet of Esch. Now I was one of the best pillagers in the U.S. Army and I was continually on the lookout for a good Merkel over/under scattergun. In Esch I saw a most promising villa and I stalked inside, leaving my jeep and driver

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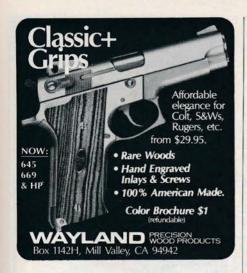
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waiting in the street. I searched all the rooms and it was obvious this house had been pretty thoroughly looted. Whether by our people or the retreating krauts, I don't know.

I moved down in the basement and about that time I heard light footsteps above me. I did not think it was my driver so I tiptoed up the stairs, went to the back door and there stood a Wehrmachter in full combat gear, rifle in his hands and a light pack on his back. I broke the door open a crack and challenged him, "Drop your rifle and put up your hands." Whether he understood English or not was beside the point. He whirled on the door, his rifle held hip-high and turned loose a quick shot.

I shot him full in the chest from 30 feet with the pistol. It did not drop the man, indeed it scarcely staggered him. He turned to run and I put a second round into his back, the bullet penetrating the light pack on his back. That folded him. He wasn't dead so I called out for my driver and we loaded him—he was a big kraut-on the hood of the jeep and trundled him back to the first of our aid stations. I kept the Mauser.

Later on, and this time in Bad Wildungen, we had gotten up with our first elements and there were Germans all around us. The krauts were in full retreat and we were sure they would soon give up Bad Wildungen but this time they did not. My driver and I ducked into an old bakery and when it got too hot we skated down through a conduit and wound up in what appeared to be an old storage warehouse. The firing was heavy outside.

The first thing I knew a kraut soldier moved in off the alley and commenced to nose around among the packing boxes. It appealed to me that he was probably a deserter and was looking for a place to hide. Stay doggo until the Ameis arrived and then surrender. He got too close to Papalexiou and myself and I raised up above a big packing case and shot him in the throat.

I had deliberately shot him just below the chin so he would make no outcry. This joker was packing an old Schmeisser MP 41 with the wooden stock. My driver pulled the body behind some packing cases and covered it over with dunnage. I picked up the Schmeisser and, noting the magazine was stuffed to the hilt, I kept it beside me.

We reached Kassel and orders were not to advance any further. The Ruskies were coming. In brief months we were ordered stateside and told to prepare for the Pacific. The Big Bomb put the kibosh on those plans.

The war had been, so far as I was concerned, really good fun. I had given the .45 M1911 a thorough wringing out and it had performed most satisfactorily. A while later I had it in Vietnam and again it had done outstanding service. To this day the pistol is never out of reach.

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.445 SUPERMAG

Continued from page 52

into regular production.

Loading the .445 brass for the first time, I followed my normal procedure of full length resizing all brass, in this case with the Redding carbide full length resizing die. Brass came out with a nice burnished look, ready to be neck expanded, primed and loaded. That first batch of brass was fired, and after being tumbled clean, I started to full length resize the .445's again.

Trouble. The Redding die raised a very sharp belt at the bottom of the brass. As the brass was being resized, brass was seemingly being pushed ahead of the tight carbide sizer and winding up as a ridge that prevented the sized brass from entering the chamber of the Dan Wesson .445.

My first thought was that the die had just been made too tight, so I went to some .44 Magnum dies I had on hand. The same thing happened with both Redding and RCBS .44 Magnum carbide sizing dies. Now what?

I had a batch of fired brass and could not resize, which meant that they could not be reloaded. Rescue came in the form of my old set of standard RCBS .44 Magnum dies. I did not relish the idea of having to lube all the cases, but the .445 brass was rolled on the lube pad, run through a 20-year-old .44 Magnum sizing die and the cases dropped easily into the chambers of the .445.

The mystery was solved when it was learned that Dan Wesson, rather than slow down the project by waiting for the .445 reamers, had chambered the prototype .445 with standard .44 Magnum reamers that were simply moved deeper into the chambers. The result was a chamber that was just enough oversize at the back end to allow the tight .445 SuperMag dies to push excess brass ahead of the carbide sizing ring.

This problem has also been taken care of and all the cylinders of the .445 SuperMag are now being cut with the .445 reamers and the cylinder on my test gun is going to be replaced by Dan Wesson. I can't really fault Dan Wesson on this one. Most new guns are announced and then it is months, even years, before anyone sees one. Dan Wesson just tried to do everything to speed up the process as much as possible and get the guns into the hands of the writers and testers so all problems could be taken care of before the regular production began.

he .445 SuperMag is a high pressure L cartridge and will allow higher muzzle velocities than most .44 Magnum bullets are designed for. I stayed with the silhouette type .44 Magnum full metal jacketed bullet and even at this, one of the bullets tested did shed at least part of

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its jacket and leave it deposited on the back of the barrel. Care should be taken in bullet selection for high velocities.

For silhouette loads—that is, muzzle velocities from 1400-1600 fps-any of the excellent .44 Magnum bullets from Hornady, Sierra and Speer should do the job. But higher velocities and higher pressures demand bullets with heavier jackets.

Heavy jacketed bullets for .44 calibers are just starting to appear with .44 bullets with .032" jackets available from Freedom Arms (P.O. Box 150, Dept AH, Freedom, WY 83120). These bullets are available in a 240 grain hollow point, and both a 260 grain and 300 grain flat point. These bullets should be just the ticket for full house loads in the .445. Sierra also has a new experimental 300 grain jacketed soft point bullet and this bullet was used as part of the testing for the .445 SuperMag. It proved to give excellent accuracy at high velocities, and for 300 grain jacketed bullets we are talking velocities from 1300-1500 fps.

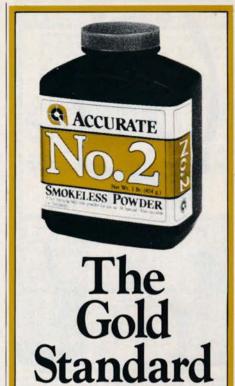
Reloading for the .445 SuperMag, except for the problem that developed with the oversize fired brass and tight carbide sizing die, is as normal as loading any of the straight-walled pistol cartridges. Since there is very little loading information except that being generated by the writers and since no pressure data has been published, I stayed with the conventional powders: H4227, WW680, and H110

Winchester 296 can be substituted for H110, and I may try #2400 in the future but as it is faster burning than the powders used, I will move forward with it very carefully. A new powder that has given excellent results in some other cartridges tested is Accurate Arms # 1680. Preliminary tests with this powder results in both lower pressures and less muzzle flash than other powders for the same comparable velocities plus it is very clean burning. Should be a good powder for the .445 SuperMag.

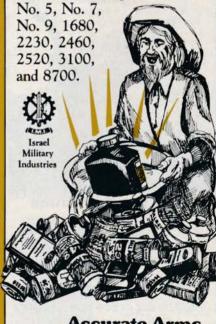
After firing more than 800 rounds through the .445 SuperMag, my preference is for 220 to 260 grain bullets and H4227 or WW680 for silhouetting and 300 grain bullets and the same WW680 plus H110 and WW296 for full-house hunting loads.

A project such as this one—testing both a new revolver and a new cartridge—is especially interesting as one really does not know what to expect. It is really fly-by-the-seat-of-the-pants reloading and a matter of using past experience to come up with starting loads. Considering this fact, the .445 SuperMag, both gun and cartridge, came out looking exceptionally good.

A total of 83 different loads were tried, 49 with jacketed bullets and 34 with cast bullets. To save time and get in as many different loads as possible, groups were shot with three rounds instead of the conventional five or six. Shooting three rounds of two different loads and using all six chambers gave me two 3/4" groups so



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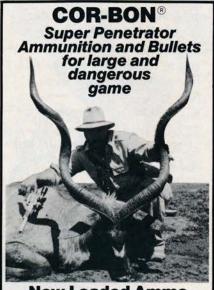




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there was no worry about getting unreliable results because of one chamber that shoots to a different point of impact than the others. I have more than one sixgun that does this and that chamber has been identified and always rides empty.

Of the 49 jacketed bullet loads, 45 went under two inches, 32 went 11/2" or less, 18 shot into 11/4" or less and three got down below the magical one-inch mark. These are excellent results especially when one considers that at no time was the barrel allowed to be conditioned to a particular load and loads were fired one right after the other in rapid sequence. All were fired with the ten inch barrel and from a leather padded sandbag rest.

Switching to cast bullets, accuracy was even better. Of 34 loads tried, 26 went two-inches or or less, 16 shot into 11/2" or less, 12 tightened up to 11/4" or less, nine went one-inch or less, and five cast bullet loads shot into 3/4" or less. Again, loads were fired for groups in rapid succession without allowing the barrel to become conditioned to any particular load. The only concession made was that all jacketed bullets were fired together and all cast bullets likewise.

Like the Dan Wesson .44 Magnum tested in a previous article in American Handgunner, the .445 SuperMag gave better accuracy with gas checked bullets than with plain base bullets. In the .445 SuperMag, I suspect that this is a function of velocity rather than a particular barrel. I have found the same thing to be true with the .454 Casull. Many plain based cast bullets pushed much over 1500-1600 fps will result in unacceptable accuracy.

The 260 grain SAECO silhouette bullet with a gas check shot extremely well with groups going into less than one-inch using either 37.0, 38.0 or 39.0 grains of WW680* for muzzle velocities of 1515 to 1577 fps. But even with this bullet, when the chronographed loads hit 1600 fps, accuracy dropped off significantly. The same thing happened using this bullet with some loads of H4227, so at this point at least, I would assume that this silhouette bullet would perform best when muzzle velocities are held under 1600 fps.

The accompanying loading table gives all 83 loads and their accuracy, but for the reader's convenience the sub-one-inch loads are listed separately. It is my contention that any well-made revolver should shoot into one-inch or less at 25 vards within a reasonable number of factory or handloads being tried.

These accuracy results are particularly gratifying as a great selling point of the .445 SuperMag will be its versatility. It will double as a silhouette revolver and also as a primary hunting gun. Both chores should be performed admirably because, even with my limited testing, the Dan Wesson .445 will shoot 220, 240, and 300 grain jacketed bullets as well as 260, 295, and 300 grain cast bullets all with acorn-picking accuracy.

Continued on page 102



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HANDGUN HUNTING

Continued from page 21

started in handgun hunting.

However, the experienced handgun hunter will still enjoy it - I know I did! A great deal of space is devoted to equipment in addition to how, what, when and where to handgun hunt. Johnston covers handloading, sights, the history of handgun hunting, attitudes of hunting guides to handgunners and a variety of provocative topics. In short, this is one that I'm not the least reluctant to recommend.

If you recall the Handgun Hunters International limited edition Contender in the new wildcat caliber .338 Woodswalker, you'll be interested to learn that Dennis Lawrence was the first to take an animal with the cartridge. He took a nice Barbadow ram at about 80 yards with a 210 grain Nolser bullet at about 2,400 fps. Conversely, I've carried the .338 Woodswalker around a bit and never shot anything. Some guys have all the luck!

Good news, bad news-conditions in Africa seem to be deteriorating with increased poaching, higher prices and less game, but South Africa seems a pleasant surprise as an exception. South African safari hunting seems to be getting better and better all the time. If hunting in Africa is one of your dreams, wake up and do something about it 'cause it ain't gonna be around forever. It's getting more and more expensive- some outfitters sting you for \$1000 per day— and it's harder and harder to find a quality hunt.

I have a line on a reputable safari firm called Handgunners Africa and a few other possibilities and I'll probably get together a specially discounted "group rate" for the summer of 1989. If you're seriously interested (i.e., ready, willing and able to put down a deposit) and are prepared to spend in the neighborhood of \$7,500 for a safari, air tickets, hotels and everything, then drop me a line at Handgun Hunters International P.O. Box 357 Mag, Bloomingdale, OH 43910 (or call 614-264-0176). You'll be joining a group of fellow handgun hunters for an absolutely first-rate safari with considerable savings for "buying in quantity."

I have not personally hunted with Handgunners Africa but the US agent is none other than the editor of this magazine and I know I can trust him. He's hunted there three times. The record there is outstanding with the SCI World Record leopard taken on its hunting lands, several handgun category world records taken there and a slew of other fine trophies.

I've got to get this firmed up soon, so if you're interested give me a call. Particularly for the first time African hunter, this is a great opportunity.



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Continued from page 100

That is a lot of solid performance from one revolver.

I have revolvers, including other Dan Wessons, that shoot cast bullets but not jacketed, and vice-versa; I also have revolvers that shoot either heavy bullets or regular bullets well, but not both. The Dan Wesson .445 handles all four types of bullets, jacketed, cast, regular weight, heavy weight.

Before receiving the .445 SuperMag for testing, my two biggest concerns were accuracy and recoil. In the accuracy department, the concern was whether or not the large capacity of the .445 brass could be used with less than full house loads—more specifically, silhouette loads. Recoil, no matter how seasoned the shooter, can become a real problem with the 40, 60, or 80 round silhouette matches.

With regular .44 Magnum revolvers in the three pound weight range, I normally prefer loads not over 1300 fps with 240-250 grain bullets for silhouetting. With the the four pound weight of the .445 SuperMag, it seems to me that I can go to 1500-1600 fps with the same bullets and not experience any more felt recoil. The .445 SuperMag delivered bullets at this velocity with excellent accuracy.

As a hunting handgun, I expect the .445 to be at its best with bullets in the 300 grain range and the .445 delivered excellent accuracy with both cast and jacketed bullets in this weight range. Recoil, while heavy, is not going to hurt anyone especially with the well designed Dan Wesson factory stocks. I fired a minimum of 200 rounds each test session with no soreness in my shooting hand.

A few cautions are in order. Number one: ALL LOADS LISTED ARE TEST LOADS AND NOT NECESSARILY RECOMMENDED. Both the Dan Wesson .445 SuperMag revolver and the .445 cartridge are brand new. More time and more rounds fired are both needed before "standard" loads start to evolve.

Number two: DO NOT EVEN THINK ABOUT TRYING TO MAKE THE .445 SUPERMAG INTO A .454 CASULL. They are completely different revolvers and just the fact that the .454 has a five shot cylinder and the .445 has a six shot cylinder should make a thinking shooter realize that they cannot be treated the same. The .445 SuperMag fits directly in between the .44 Magnum and the .454 Casull. I'm satisfied with that.

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CIMARRON SIXGUNS

Continued from page 43

style of holster, such as Bianchi's Lawman or Lawrence's #120, both models fit snugly and allow the strap to be fastened when desired.

All Colt style Models are also available in nickel finish and with a choice of A, B, or C engraving. The basic retail price for either standard blue or charcoal blue finish, in either regular or black-powder frame style, is \$369-or \$631 less than the basic price of a Colt Custom Shop Single Action.

Available calibers are: .22LR, .22 Magnum, .38 Special, .357 Magnum, .44-40, and .45 Colt. Personally, I cannot see the use for any caliber in these Colt style replicas except .44-40 and .45 Colt. Remington replicas are chambered in .357 Magnum, .44-40, and .45 Colt. Same personal preference as to caliber applies here also.

Okay, they look good, how do they shoot? All models were shot extensively except the two engraved models, which were used only for photographs. I did not feel it proper to take advantage of Harvey's willingness to supply so many test guns by firing his two show-piece guns. Each of the Colt style replicas chambered for .45 Colt were fired with eight different loads and chronographed with my PACT PC.

Most fixed sighted single actions, whether they be original Colts or replicas, may or may not shoot to point of aim. My test battery of Cimarron Arms Single Actions are no exception. They are neither better nor worse than Colts that I have experienced. All models shoot high with 250-260 grain bullets at 800-900 fps. All models, except the Sheriff's Model, were right-on for windage; the threeinch Sheriff's Model shot high and a few inches left for me.

Everyone sees sights differently and someone else who sights and holds differently may find the sights spot-on or farther off. That is why nearly all modern handguns have adjustable sights. All models shoot closer to pointof-aim when lighter, 200 grain bullets are used and, in fact, the 51/2-inch Remington replica was right on the money using 200 grain Speer SWC's at 995 fps.

All original Colts and Remingtons were equipped with "battle sights" which compensated for the natural tendency of most shooters to shoot low, hence these replicas still have the same sights. It is no difficult undertaking to adjust fixed sights. The best situation is that in which the sights are too high, allowing the gun to shoot low. Then it is just a matter of filing the front sight down until the

proper height is reached.

With sights that are too low, allowing the gun to shoot high, the job is a little tougher but not impossible. Extra metal can be welded to the top of the front sight and then filed to shape or the sight can be gently squeezed in a vise and made a little taller. A vise can also be used to bend the sight slightly for those sixguns that shoot right or left.

All of the Cimarron replicas shot well with

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most loads that were tried. They will stay under two inches at 25 yards when I am careful and do my part. The Remington 1875 Models have the V-style rear sight and inverted V front sight but both will shoot one-inch groups with selected loads. The Remington 1890 replica has better sights and comes close to exhibiting target pistol accuracy; ditto the 5½-inch Colt replica.

I am very surprised at how well the short barreled Sheriff's Model shot, especially with Federal factory loads. This nineteenth century version of a modern snub-nosed revolver is a no-nonsense defensive sixgun that would serve well even today as a personal protection handgun. Certainly when loaded with 250-260 grain .45 Colt bullets at 800 fps it would be way ahead of any .38 Special or .380 load. Slow to operate? Maybe, but it is amazing how fast one can get with a Single Action and a little practice.

I like modern big bore adjustable sighted revolvers that will shoot 250-300 grain bullets accurately.

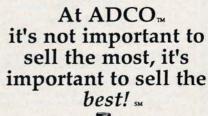
Cimarron Arms Single Action replicas, be they Colt or Remington style, are well-made, well-finished, good-shooting, traditional type sixguns. During the course of firing, I broke two bolt springs on the Colt replicas. This could be avoided by placing a thin nylon washer under the retaining screw, thus affording a cushion. A better solution might be to plan to replace the rather soft bolt springs with a Colt bolt spring. Surprisingly, my 1875 Remington replicas have been in service off and on for eight years, fired with a lot of blackpowder loads, and have never experienced a broken spring.

I like modern big bore adjustable sighted revolvers that will shoot 250-300 grain bullets accurately at muzzle velocities of 1500 fps or more. Dan Wesson, Freedom Arms, Ruger and Smith & Wesson all provide such revolvers in .41, .44, and .45 calibers. However, there are times when I prefer a more sedate style of revolver that is easy to pack and, even though classified as a big bore, is gentle to shoot and perhaps even takes me back to the long gone past.

It might be possible to cook over a desert or mountain campfire packing a modern Magnum revolver. But somehow both the food and the times seem better when a traditional—spelled .45 Colt—Single Action is riding at the hip or packed in the waistband. The Cimarron Arms Single Action fills this need and fills it well. I'm heading for the mountains in the morning; should I take the 1890 Remington, or the Artillery Model, or the Sheriff's Model or . . . ?



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THE CASE OF THE "NEWSSTAND NEUROTIC."

10:57 a.m.

Suspect enters Bill's Books & Magazines on 5th and Main and immediately proceeds to magazine rack where he picks up the last copy of GUNS Magazine.

11:03 a.m.

Two unidentified males enter store, also proceeding directly to magazine rack. Suspect nervously peers over shoulder, obviously disturbed by their arrival.

11:04 a.m.

Witness sees one of the unidentified males reach for magazine rack. Suspect obviously mistakes sudden movement for an attempt on his copy of GUNS. Suspect reacts by assaulting both men with a rolled up magazine.

11:16 a.m.

Suspect flees the scene and is quickly arrested for needlessly magazine whipping two innocent fishing enthusiasts.

12:43 p.m.

Suspect confesses to criminal acts.
His reason? Nothing was going to
come between him and the only
magazine he trusted for the latest gun
and shooting sport information.
He wanted the facts . . . just the facts.
He wanted GUNS Magazine.

1:05 p.m.

Suspect is released on his own recognizance promising to never frequent newsstands again and agreeing to subscribe to GUNS instead.





Avoid the newsstand neurotics. Use the adjoining order card or write to P.O. Box 85201, San Diego, CA 92138 to order your own subscription to GUNS Magazine today!

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.357 HERRETT

Continued from page 47

your decapping pin for looseness and to ascertain if it is bent. This ring is indicative of primer leakage and is due to an enlarged flash hole. Should you fall victim to such an unfortunate event (an enlarged flash hole), discard all of your cases, replace the pin and start over. Again, this unpleasant situation (trashing your cases) is for safety purposes. If gas leakage shows on a fire forming load, an extreme leak will occur using these cases at the higher pressures of maximum loadings. If none of the aforementioned defects exist, you will have in excess of 100 cases from which to tailor your handloads.

Before discussing powder charges and bullet performance, the reader should be made aware of an alternate method, and base cartridge, from which .357 Herrett cases can be produced. IHMSA competitors have taken to reforming .375 Winchester brass to the .357 Herrett, on the premise that the .375 case is stronger than the .30-.30. So instead of a necking *up* operation, resizing the .375 case is a necking *down* operation.

Rather than subject the reader to a theoretical discussion of reloading procedures that I do not use, I contacted William Sanford, an International Class competitor, who uses both the .30 and .357 Herrett in metallic silhouette. Taking into consideration that the .357 Herrett is relegated to IHMSA's Unlimited Category, the bastion of the esoteric high-tech-bolt-gun, to use a 10-inch Contender and still be competitive speaks well of Bill Sanford's expertise. Bill put me in contact with another silhouette shooter, Skip Bogley, in Maryland. Our chamber measurements (refer to the diagrams) not only differ from each other, but also differ from those of the other reputable sources mentioned.

The general consensus among silhouette competitors is that loading manuals usually advise powders having too fast a burning rate for optimum performance. My guess would be that the people who develop those suggested loads have a viewpoint of advising powders and charge weights that not only operate at a safe pressure level, but also achieve almost complete combustion within a given barrel length. An opposing viewpoint would be to load those powders and charge weights that give a good loading density (i.e. little airspace) at a safe pressure level. The absolute maximum velocity may not be reached, but a good level of consistency can be. This consistency translates into accuracy.

The powders most often recommended for the .357 Herrett range from Blue Dot and 2400 on the fast side to H-4227 and Norma 200 at the slow end. Bill is currently working with Reloader-7 and MR-223 (now marketed as 2230). To be totally objective, I would consider SR-4759, IMR-3031, H-322, BLC-2, Norma 201 (the manufacturer even advises its use in 30-30 cases), WW748, MR2460, H-335, 2230, 2460, IMR-4895, H-4895 and IMR-4064 to all merit consideration as *possible* propellants for the .357 Herrett.

The versatility of the Thompson Contender, chambered for rifle-based cases, is both a pleasure and a problem. The pleasure is derived by not being restricted to three or four powders, and the problem is that from Blue Dot to IMR-4064 there are no less than 28 possibilities. Prior to the utilization of any loading data, the reader would be well advised to adhere to the following precepts. Reduce all powder charges by at least 10%, but do not *over reduce* ball powders (especially WW-296). Excessive or dangerously high pressures may result.

All data concerning powder charges for the .357 Herrett (this included) should be considered as totally subjective information that may not be successful in your Contender. Referring to the case diagrams should make the reasoning behind the above statement perfectly clear. Do not cross reference loading data for .357 Herrett using .30-.30 Winchester cases with data using the .375 Winchester case as a base case. Be aware of and read pressure signs such as: cratered or flattened primers, thinning brass just above the case head, and the worst signs like sticky extraction and primer pocket stretching. If you doubt the seriousness of this advice, consider Thompson Center's statement regarding wildcat Contender chamberings: "Failure to follow proper procedure can result in serious injury and/or death to yourself or others." This is the single strongest statement ever issued by any firearms manufacturer regarding the use of its product, and it is well founded.



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How To Make A Chamber Cast

Agood chamber cast will produce an exact model of your Contender's chamber. Cerrosafe, a special low melting point alloy, available through Brownell's, Inc., Rt.2, Box 1, Dept. AH, Montezuma, Iowa 50171, is the metal used by gunsmiths to make a chamber casting.

An alternative to Cerrosafe is optical blocking alloy. It has a lower melting point (120°F) than Cerrosafe (150°F) and is normally used to affix lenses to steel blocks so that they can be ground and polished.

The following steps will produce an accurate chamber casting using optical blocking alloy (Cerrosafe may require additional steps):

- Remove the barrel and thoroughly scrub it with either Hoppe's #9 or Shooter's Choice.
- Run clean, dry patches through the barrel from chamber forward until they emerge clean.
- Use a bore mop of a larger (45-.410 shotgun) caliber to dust the chamber with powdered graphite.
- Next, create a plug of patching material and insert it from the muzzle back until a point 3/8" to 1/4" above the chamber has been reached.
- Cold bullet moulds cast wrinkled, air pocketed bullets; similarly, cold chambers will produce inferior chamber casts. Therefore, preheat your oven to 175° and allow the gun barrel to warm on the top rack.
- While the barrel is warming, heat the blocking alloy on the stove (a small can will suffice) until it liquefies. Set an electric range to the low heat setting and a gas stove to a flame of 3/4" until the alloy melts.
- Reduce the heat to a ½ inch flame on the stove or warm setting on an electric range to prevent boiling the alloy.
 - Find a stable, flat surface in the kitchen prior to removing the barrel from the oven.
- Use a potholder to remove the now-warm barrel from the oven and turn the barrel breech end up.
- Pour the liquid metal into the chamber allowing a small bubble of alloy above parallel to allow for shrinkage.
- Balance the barrel, muzzle down, on the stable surface until cool—at least half an hour. Once the barrel has cooled and the metal has solidified put it in the freezer for 15 minutes until frosted.
- Remove the barrel from the freezer and insert a steel cleaning rod and jag in the barrel from the muzzle end and tap out the chamber cast and patching material with a wooden block

The best feature of using optical blocking alloy as a casting material is its forgiving nature if you botch it. Simply pour the alloy back in the can and remove it from exterior and interior surfaces by running hot tap water over the barrel and wiping the excess alloy off with a paper towel. This casting operation, if properly executed, will result in a perfect duplication of your chamber showing: case dimensions, freebore and rifling. Although it sounds a bit difficult in print, the entire process can easily be completed in one and a half hours, most of which is cool down time.



357/44 B & D

CONVERSIONS

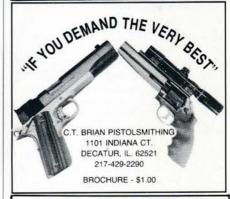
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INDUSTRY INSIDER

CAMERON HOPKINS

COLT LOSES CONTRACT FOR M-16 RIFLE WHILE SPRINGFIELD GAINS .45 MARKET

olt Firearms lost the M-16 rifle contract to Fabrique Nationale, the Belgian maker of the famous Browning Hi-Power and FN-FAL battle rifle. Colt bid \$477 per M-16 against FN's \$420. It is no secret that Colt has been hanging on by its fingernails, staying alive in large part thanks to the government M-16 contract. But Colt has other troubles too.

Now that the UAW strike has dragged into its third year, the factory continues to have severe labor problems. The bitter negotiations with the union broke down again just as this is being written. There is no end in sight for the acrimonious labor dispute.

The Colt handgun line is so small that a different barrel length on a King Cobra was touted in 1988 as a "new model." Colt has the King Cobra, the 1911 series of autos, the Mustang .380 and the Python. That's not much of a line compared to Smith's 42 models and 121 model variations.

The loss of the M-16 contract leaves Colt to survive in that great big cold world of handgun manufacturing without a crutch. The virtual Colt monopoly on the .45 auto pistol is eroding with sales sagging. Yes, the Springfield Armory bonanza of marketing brilliance has severely bitten into Colt's former lock on the 1911 Government Model, according to Insider sources.

I suspect that Springfield has taken at least 30% and perhaps as much as 50% of Colt's market share of the 1911. In 1986, Springfield produced 2,749 Government Models, but already in 1989 the aggressive firm is back-ordered for some 28,000 pistols.

Claiming that there have been no new handgun designs in 90 years, Piranha International is seeking investors for its proposed new Piranha auto pistol with a "hesitation blowback" action. (Really? The Glock 17, the H&K P-7, and the Korriphila all qualify as innovative new designs.)

The Piranha incorporates a "new" magazine in front of the trigger guard-

Mauser Broomhandle, circa 1896. The "new" pistol also features what the maker calls "a much-modified, upside down Borchardt-style toggle"- Borchardt-Selbstladepistole, circa 1893.

Uh yeah, a new pistol. But that's not all, get a load of the hype in the prospectus sent out to potential investors:

"A problem for amateurs in the gun world is the cleaning and dismantling of their gun. . . They don't know how. The Piranha operns [sic] like a clam shell. The parts may be removed in thirteen seconds. ... The Piranha literally cleans itself while

That I'd like to see. The Amazing Automatic Bore Brush and Hoppes Dis-

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No doubt there's some beach front property in Oklahoma available too. But wait, it gets better:

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If you have a safe place to shoot tracers, i.e. no danger of fire, you can have a blast shooting those red-streaking rounds from Atlanta Discount Ammo. Handgun tracer ammo is hard to find, but blazing away- safely!- in the dark with tracers adds a whole new dimension of fun to plinking. Ten rounds of .45, .38 Special, .357 Magnum and 9mm cost \$6.90 and 100 rounds go for \$64. You can order by phone with a credit card at (404) 446-2429. (Check your local laws. I understand tracers are illegal in some jurisdictions, probably because some politician defined a tracer as a nuclear warhead!)

It's now four years since Ruger's Pistol

of 1985 was introduced to American handgunners, and I still don't see a P-85 in local gun shops. The word I get is that the Ruger 9mm auto was plagued with accuracy problems and that Irv Stone of Bar Sto Precision, the renowned barrel maker, was consulted to remedy the sloppy groups. Ruger has submitted the P-85 to the new round of military tests for a pistol and that too slowed things down. But still, four years!

And along those lines, yes we have no .41 Action Express. Neither FIE nor Action Arms, the two makers of CZ-75 clones for the .41 AE, have guns for the hot auto pistol cartridge. If they bottled wine like some of these guys sell guns, we'd just now be popping the cork on a

tasty '75 vintage.

If you're thinking about a new comp gun, hold off. A revolutionary new compensated 1911 is on the horizon, and I promise it won't take forever to get one. Rob Leatham shot a prototype of a new Wilson Accu-Comp at the 1988 IPSC Nationals. The design is a quantum leap forward in compensator technology and promises to obsolete everything that's out

Its radical new design is more effective at reducing recoil and muzzle jump, Leatham told the *Insider*. Look for a preliminary report on the new Accu-Comp in the next issue's coverage of the IPSC match.

The .454 Casull is an exceptional cartridge, but what would you think of a double-action .454 revolver? An Insider source tells me he's working on a custom conversion of a revolver (he won't say what, but I'll bet it's a Redhawk) for the potent round.

A limited run of 5,000 stainless steel Model 625 revolvers from Smith & Wesson is coming. Chambered in .45 ACP, the gun features a five-inch barrel with a heavy underlug, K-frame roundbutt grip and soft Pachmayr combat stocks. The front sight is a serrated ramp. It's got a smooth, narrow trigger and adjustable rear sight.

Notorious anti-gunner Carl Rowan skated free on charges of possessing an illegal handgun, which he had used to shoot a kid taking a late-night dip in his pool, when the jury deadlocked 9-3 for acquittal. The outspoken, gun-hating columnist will not face a new trial.

Which reminds me of a joke: What do Minnesota Fats, Willie Mosconi and Carl Rowan have in common? They're all great pool shooters!

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