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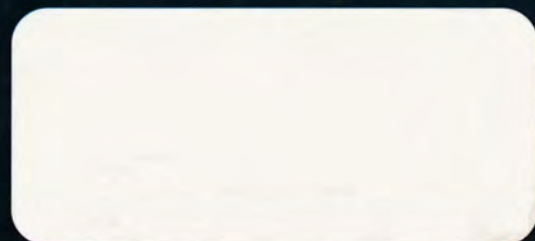
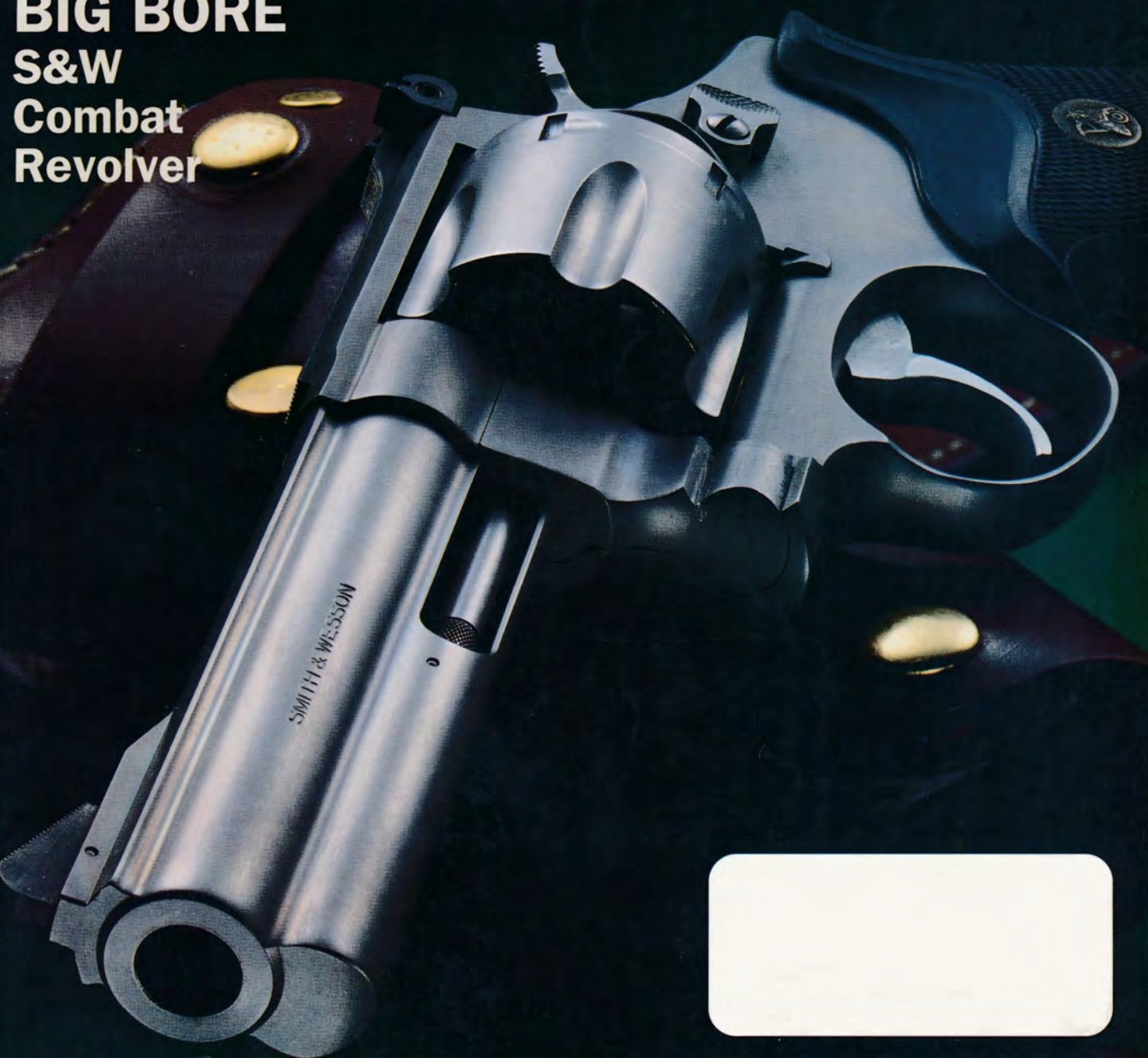
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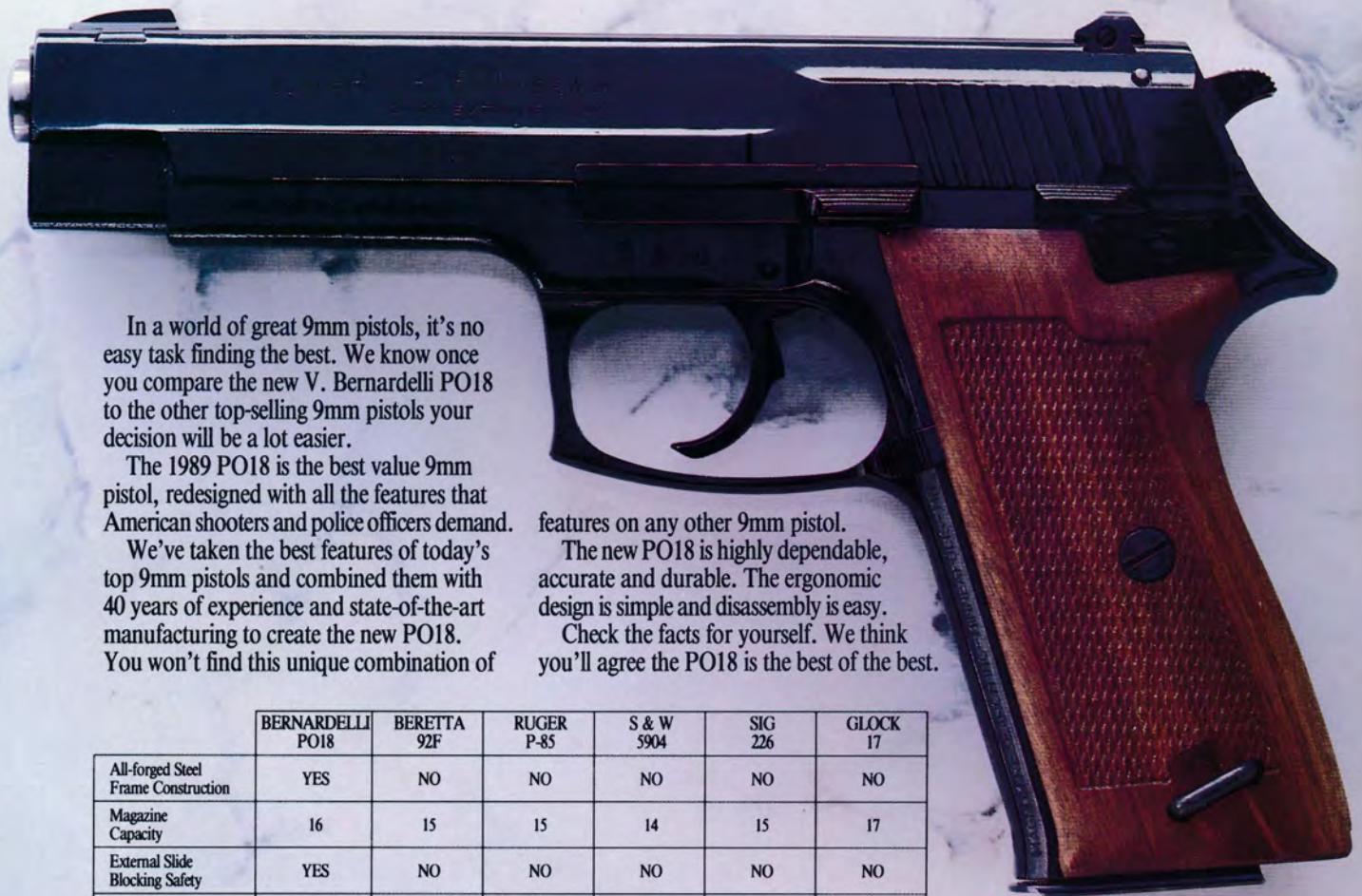
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Firing Pin Block Safety	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Trigger Disconnecting Safety	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Reversible Magazine Release	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
Screw Adjustable Sights 3 Dot System	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO
Squared Off Trigger Guard	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Suggested Retail Price	\$499	\$596	\$357.50	\$526.50	\$742.50	\$511.60

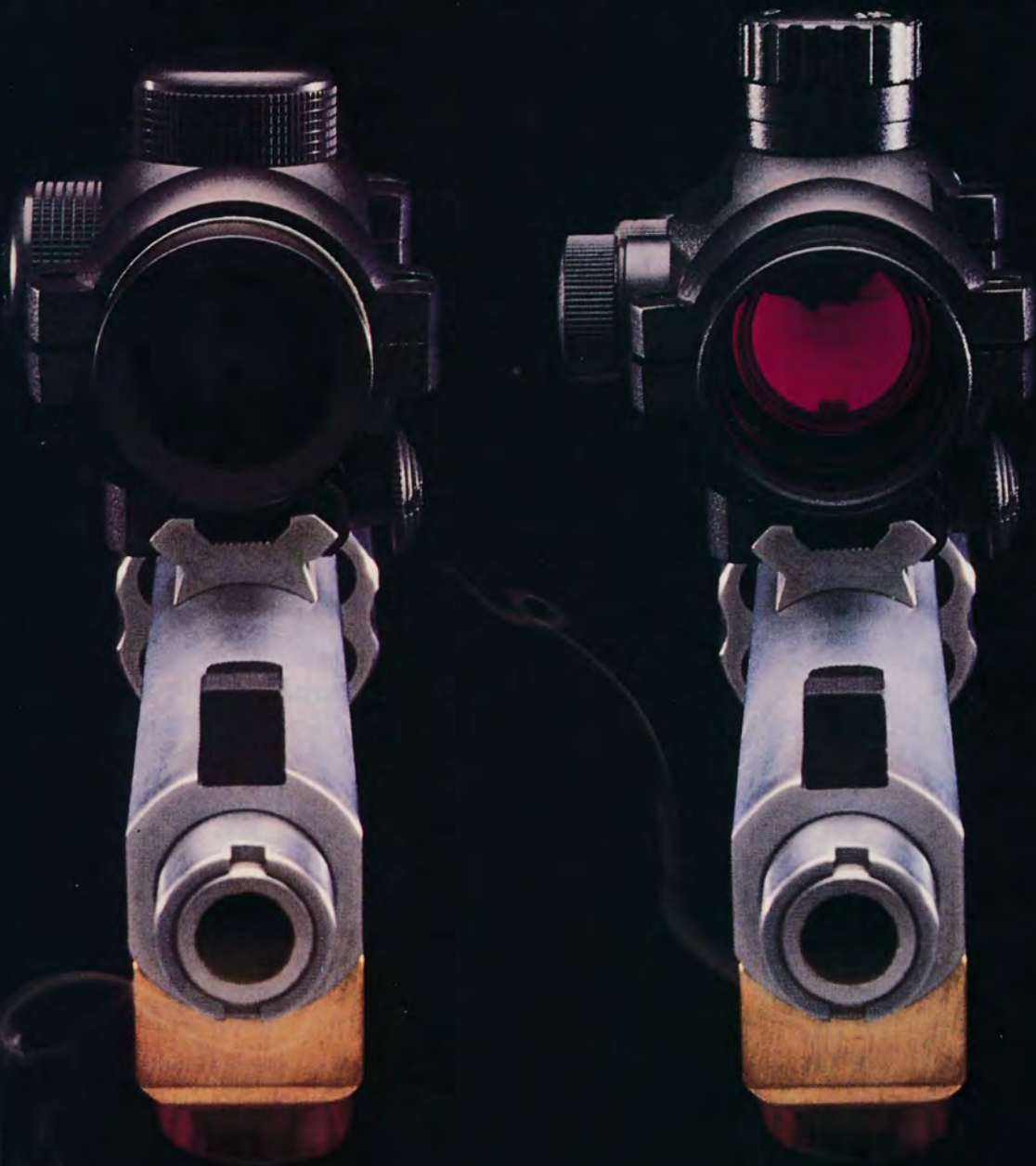
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S&W's daring new Model 625, a stainless steel "custom" .45 Auto Rim that comes with all the goodies. Photo by Ichiro Nagata.



AMERICAN HANDGUNNER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1989

Volume 13, Number 78

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Ruger Not Anti-Gun

Twice in the September/October American Handgunner, you printed that "Bill Ruger has called for a ban on large magazines." One reader even announced his boycott of Ruger products.

So that the record is clear, regulation of only the very largest capacity magazines is the official position of the Sporting Arms & Ammunition Manufacturers Institute (SAAMI) as one part of an alternative plan to fight the "good gun-bad gun" approach which recent laws and regulations have taken.

These companies include: Browning Arms Co., Federal Cartridge Company, Hercules Incorporated, Hornady Manufacturing Company, The Marlin Firearms Company, O.F. Mossberg & Sons, Omark Industries, Remington Arms Company, Inc., Smith & Wesson, Thompson/Center Arms, Weatherby Inc., and the Winchester Division/Olin Corporation.

We are opposed to *any* gun ban, imported or domestic, and we are continuing to fight these measures. If our substitute had been supported and adopted, the law-abiding shooters of America would still be able to own all firearms now banned from importation, and there would be no proposed domestic "bad gun" list.

Limiting the semi-automatic firearms to 15 shots before changing magazines would certainly have been preferable to the alternative, which for the first time in history actually finds us with a brand-specific gun ban. It is difficult to envision how this substitute infringes our Constitutional right for any lawful purpose, including self-defense and defense of our liberty.

Of course criminals, not guns, are the real problem, but we ignore a media-inflamed non-shooting public at our peril. The ban on "assault weapons," statistically insignificant in crime, demonstrates what can happen if we allow the other side to set the agenda.

We urge your readers to think about this, and to remind them that we are on the same side! No person is a stauncher supporter of the honest citizens' right to keep and bear arms of his or her choice than Bill Ruger.

Stephen L. Sanetti
General Counsel

Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc.

Editor's Reply: The following is the unedited text of Mr. Ruger's letter to members of Congress from which our quotations were extracted in the Sept/Oct issue.

March 30, 1989

Dear Senator

We sincerely hope you read the enclosed information concerning semi-automatic firearms. It is particularly important that the topic be addressed in a rational manner, with respect for the rights of all concerned.

We offer these comments to you in a constructive fashion to assist you in understanding the situation.

We have had forty years of experience

with the firearms market, and we believe that our technical expertise as well as our market insights can prove useful on this topic.

As a reasonable industry leader, we believe we have a good deal to contribute in this matter, and we trust that you will take these comments in the spirit of cooperation and constructive dialogue with which they are intended.

FACTS TO REMEMBER WHEN CONSIDERING "SEMI-AUTOMATIC" FIREARMS LEGISLATION

1. All that "semi-automatic" means is that some of the energy generated to pro-



Since radar displays only one number, the operator has the responsibility to decide which vehicle is being clocked.

Why radar makes mistakes. How to protect yourself.

It's hard to believe, but traffic radar does not identify *which* vehicle is responsible for the speed displayed. It shows only a speed number. The radar operator must decide who to blame.

How radar works

The radar gun is aimed at traffic and it transmits a beam of invisible radar waves. Moving objects reflect these waves back to the radar gun. Using the Doppler principle, the radar calculates speed from the reflected waves. But there's a problem.

The best guess

Remember, these reflections are invisible. And truck reflections can be ten times stronger than car reflections. How can the operator know for sure which vehicle is responsible for the number?

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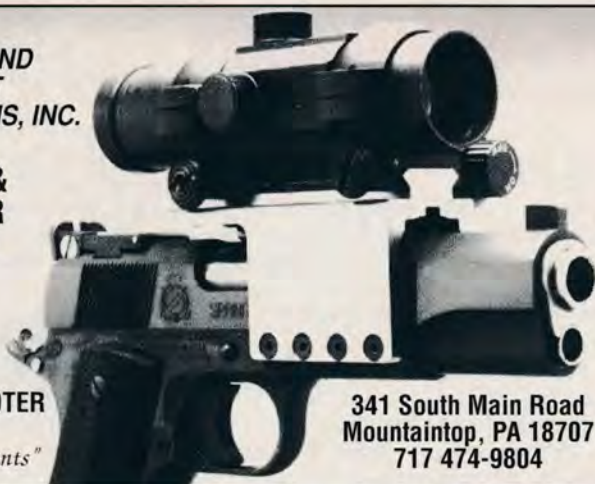


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pel a bullet is used to recock and reload the rifle for the next shot. Each shot requires a separate pull and release of the trigger.

2. Semi-automatic firearms have been in widespread use in this country since 1905. It is estimated that between 20-30 million have been made. Obviously, they have a legitimate place in the sporting rifle field and are *not* only used by criminals. Sturm, Ruger has manufactured over 4,000,000 semi-automatic firearms since 1949.

3. Semi-automatic firearms are legal to hunt within 48 states, as long as their magazine capacity is limited to five shots. .22 caliber semi-automatic rifles holding up to 20 shots have been the most popular type of small bore rifle for the last 30 years. The most popular shotguns for duck hunting have been semi-automatics for at least this long. All recognized pistol target matches have been dominated by semi-automatic pistols since before World War II.

4. True "assault rifles" are large capacity military weapons which can be switched to *full* automatic ("machine gun") fire by the push of a button. They have always been strictly regulated as machine guns by the Federal and State government.

5. What are now being termed by some as "assault rifles" are actually semi-automatic only versions of the above military weapons. They are a recent phenomenon, being imported in quantity for less than 10 years. They retain the military appearance and large, protruding, high capacity magazines of their military predecessors.

6. THEREFORE, TO DEFINE "SEMI-AUTOMATIC FIREARM" AS SYNONYMOUS WITH "ASSAULT WEAPON" IS AKIN TO DEFINING ALL "HATS" AS "HELMETS," OR ALL "VEHICLES" AS "TANKS."

7. Viewed objectively, the concern today as it relates to illegal misuse of firearms should be viewed as one of *fire-power*, rather than trying to define the type of firearm from which the bullets emanate. To do otherwise is to risk confusion and ensnaring many legitimate firearms in the attempt to separate "good" from "bad" in a most arcane area.

8. A semi-automatic firearm with a limited magazine capacity is actually not much different from a functional standpoint than a manually operated firearm. Operating most rifle actions manually, whether they operate by the flick of a lever, bolt or slide, takes about a second.

9. The best way to address the fire-power concern is therefore not to try to outlaw or license many millions of older and perfectly legitimate firearms (which would be a licensing effort of staggering proportions), but to prohibit the possession of high capacity magazines.

10. As stated, most semi-automatic
Continued on page 13

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Collector's Limited Edition

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Second Amendment to the Constitution, 1789

To arms collectors, hunters, shooters and Americans proud of their independence, the Right to Keep and Bear Arms is the most precious freedom we have!

But now, in this, the 200th Anniversary Year of the Second Amendment, that important right is under attack from the liberal left more than ever. To memorialize our firearms freedom and to show the world just where we and our Members stand, The American Historical Foundation is proud to present a major landmark in firearms collecting. This is now available, for a limited time to arms collectors and their fellow citizens who are proud to show they agree with the Founding Fathers of America. Serial No. 1 of the Deluxe Museum Edition has been presented to the NRA Museum in Washington, DC.

The .44 Magnum was selected because of its famous, long reign as the world's most powerful handgun. And the Dan Wesson was chosen because it represents the ultimate in American six-shot revolvers. It is the biggest: at 15" overall, with a 10" barrel, it weighs four pounds. With its removable barrel, adjustable-stop trigger, front-mounted cylinder latch, replaceable front sight and deeply machine-broached rifling, it is the most advanced. These features have helped Dan Wesson revolvers win the IHMSA Silhouette Championships for the past seven years, taking 52 of the top 70 finishes since 1981.

Bill Jordan Trooper Grip

Everything about the Second Amendment Commemorative .44 Magnum is special. This is the first commemorative .44 Magnum ever issued with a custom-fitted burl walnut Bill Jordan Trooper Grip, made by the respected company of Herretts.

From a collector viewpoint, this is destined to be an important classic. It is the first .44 Magnum commemorative with full coverage of elaborate gun art. You can select from two limited edition models: the Deluxe Museum Edition and the Collector's Edition.

Deluxe Museum Edition of 750

The Deluxe Museum Edition is the first .44 Mag-

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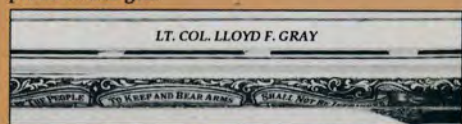
Matching serial numbers for both the Deluxe Museum and Collector's Editions can be reserved if you act promptly.

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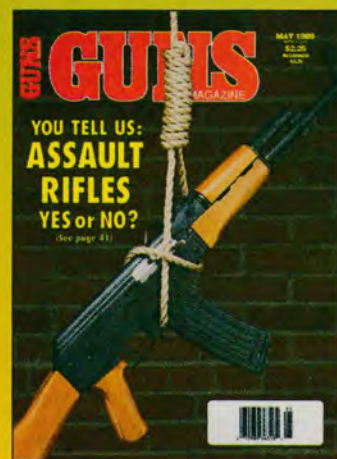


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hunting rifles come with 5-shot magazines. Many older and collectible semi-automatic rifles (obviously little used in crime) made prior to 1954 had up to 10-shot magazines. Conventional pistols come with 15-shot magazines, and many .22 caliber semi-automatic rifles hold up to twenty .22 long rifle caliber cartridges. Strict regulation of magazines of greater capacities than these would respect the rights of citizens and at the same time reduce the firepower of the so-called "assault rifles" to that of ordinary rifles.

11. By a simple, complete and unequivocal ban on large capacity magazines, all the difficulty of defining "assault rifles" and "semi-automatic rifles" is eliminated. The large capacity magazine itself, separate or attached to the firearm, becomes the prohibited item. A single amendment to Federal firearms laws could prohibit their possession or sale and would effectively implement these objectives.

12. Regulating large capacity magazines seems the best way to respect the rights of *everyone*—the hunter, target shooter, collector, and the general public—while depriving the drug lords of firepower. And it is precisely in an atmosphere of near panic that we must be the most vigilant to preserve the fundamental freedoms of law-abiding citizens who are *not* contributors to the urban drug wars in any way.

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Gun Books

In this current fuss over restrictive gun laws, I think we're missing a bet elsewhere.

Most libraries are on the inter-library loan system. This allows a small library to obtain a book that it does not own. When the request for a book goes through channels, the librarians usually check the book for possible acquisition.

So I have been using the loan-request, as well as recommendation forms, in several local libraries to load up the system with requests for all my favorite authors: Skelton, Askins, Cooper, Jordan, Keith, Wolfe Publications, etc.

As I see it, we win two ways. Them old boys gave us plenty good writing for years, and they need the extra sales. And every book we can get our library to buy may help bring one more youngster to our side.

Folks, if every one of you put in two requests a year for gun books (even if you own 'um) it would help a lot.

Alan D. Moulton
Mesa, Ariz.

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North Georgia College, Dahlonega, Georgia
Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky
McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana
Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi
University of Missouri, Kansas City, Missouri
Canisius College, Buffalo, New York
St. John's University, Queens-Staten Island, New York
Youngstown State University, Youngstown, Ohio
Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville, Tennessee
Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas
Midwestern State University, Wichita Falls, Texas
Pan American University, Edinburg, Texas
George Mason University, Fairfax, Virginia
Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, Virginia
West Virginia University, Morgantown, Virginia
University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming

There are also 15 schools which offer scholarships for women. These are:

University of Alaska, Fairbanks, Alaska
University of Southern Florida, Tampa, Florida
North Georgia College, Dahlonega, Georgia
Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky
McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana
North Western State University of Louisiana, Natchitoches, La.
Delta State University, Cleveland, Mississippi
Canisius College, Buffalo, New York
St. John's University, Queens-Staten Island, New York
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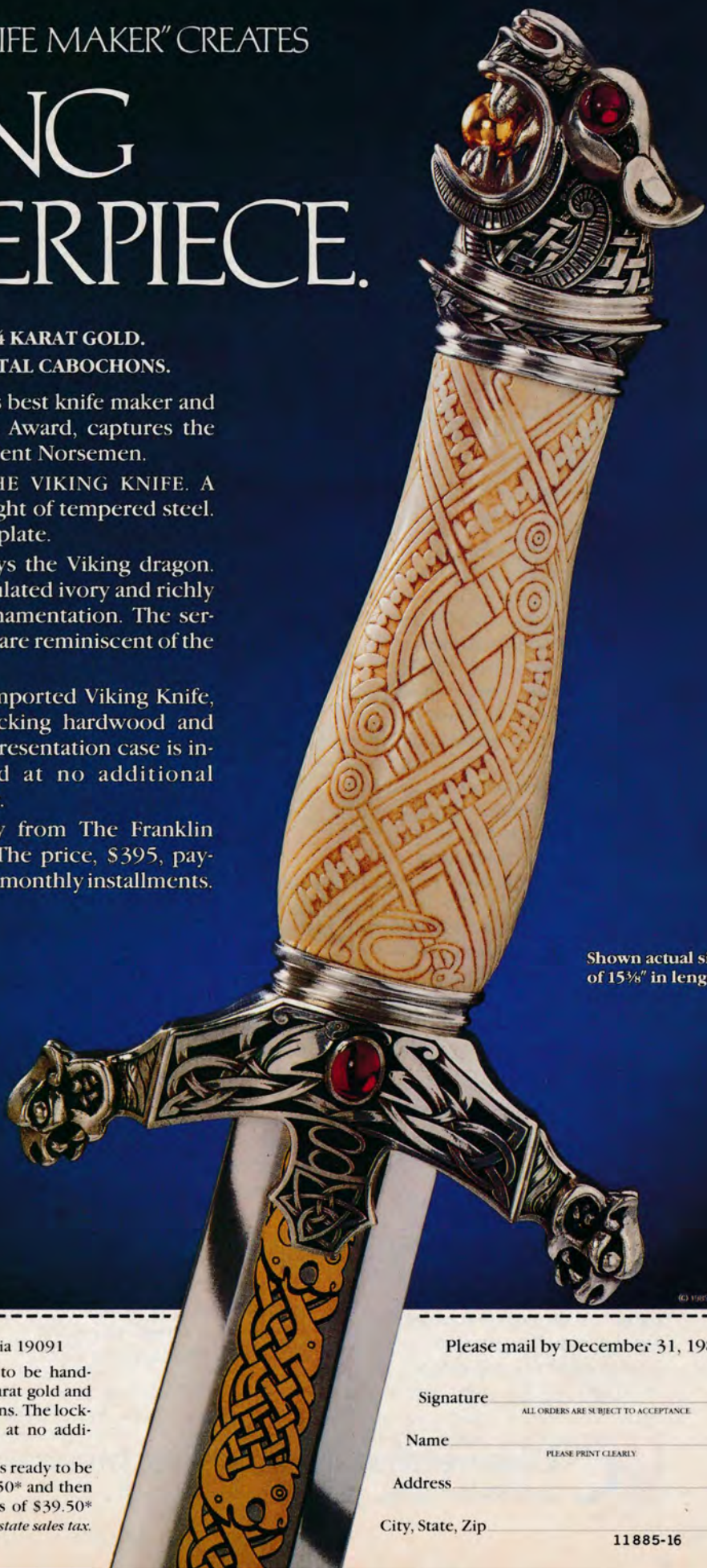
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HANDGUNNING HINTS

Bennett Viken and Robin Sutton

A Quick Survey of Revolver Grips

Your revolver's grips will determine a number of crucial features — from the speed of your follow-up shot to the amount of recoil you feel.



1. There are many styles of revolver grips available from the factory and in the aftermarket. One has generous grooves for your fingers. This type of grip lends itself to a good, solid two-handed hold.



2. Single action revolvers, often called *hoglegs* by oldtimers, have a unique design that enables the gun to slide naturally in the hand to abate recoil.

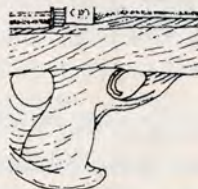


3. Target grips are wider and more hand-filling. The additional width spreads recoil across the hand and separates the fingers for good two-handed holds.

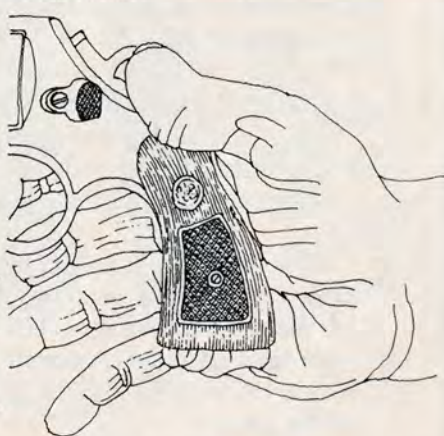


4. Revolvers designed for concealed carry come with skinny grips allowing you to keep the gun well hidden. But recoil will be harder and more sharply focussed.

5. Fancy grips come in all styles. Although they are primarily intended to enhance the gun's beauty, many of them are also functionally excellent.



6. Specialty guns, such as long-range, heavy-caliber ones, are usually supplied with large grips. In antique guns, an undamaged set of grips is welcome.



7. Whatever the style of your grips, the proper hold is essential. In every hand there is a natural break where the thumb's *adductor pollicis* muscles rise from the palm. To find this break, close your hand partially and lay a pencil in the fold. This is where you should place the backstrap of your

revolver. The curvature of the backstrap has been designed to follow this natural break. When you've placed the gun in position with the backstrap resting in the fold of your palm, close your fingers around the grips. You've taken the first step in developing a consistent reliable hold.

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The AYOOB FILES

PARKING LOT SHOOTOUT: THE VOLLINK INCIDENT

Situation: A car rams yours from behind, and you step out to look at a cocked Browning Hi-Power.

Lesson: The balance of .45 vs. 9mm is important than that of training versus range.

The pistol is a Colt-style 1911A1 semiautomatic, .45 caliber, produced by Ithaca during the WWII era. Few GIs from the early '40s would recognize it now, though. The grips are aged ivory, the magazine is a commercial Colt, the frame has been stippled by a gunsmith for a solid hold, the thumb safety has been extended for easy access, and S&W K-frame micrometer sights have replaced the tiny little rear notch the gun was issued with.

It is one of millions of Colt .45 automatics and similar pattern guns, but it is also different. It is what some collectors call a "blood gun," a pistol that has been used to take human life. The premium they pay for a blood gun is negotiable. But the owner of this pistol sneers in contempt at anyone who would offer him an enhanced price for this weapon. He regrets that he had to take life with it. At the same time, he is aware that without this gun he would have been dead meat mouldering in the ground for several years now.

This gun is not for sale, because this gun saved its owner's life when another man tried to shoot him to death. During the agonizing and almost inevitable aftermath of any self-defense shooting, the man who pulled the trigger to save his life gets put through the wringer. Part of the wringer for this one citizen was the deposition questioning by the attorney hired by the dead man's family, which was bringing a civil lawsuit against him for "wrongful death." This particular episode no longer exists in the written record, says the man who pulled the trigger of the .45, for reasons that seem obvious.

When they found out that the man who killed the deceased was a gun owner, IPSC shooter and NRA member, the lawyers must have licked their chops. They asked him, he said, the following question:

"Wasn't that your favorite pistol?"

"Well," the citizen answered, "it's the one I've had the longest."

"No," the lawyer sneered, "I mean, isn't that your favorite pistol?"

The citizen paused for only a moment before he answered, "It is now."

"Strike that from the record," cried the attorney for the plaintiff.

January of 1983 was cold and bitter in Michigan, as it almost always is. Jim Vollink, a husky guy with a beard and a perm, had bundled himself inside a fur coat when he got into his pickup truck to go to the family homestead for a day to visit his folks.

In that wide-open country, unlike the urban/suburban sprawl of Madison Heights where he dwells himself, he can relax and kick back and do things like shoot gallon milk jugs with one of his guns.

That's why he packed the Ithaca .45 and the ammo in his zipper bag that he put behind his front seat when he drove up there.

But when you're 40, you know your parents ain't gonna be around forever, and when they're in a mood to talk and reminisce, the recreational pistols stay in the back seat. If they were golf clubs, they'd stay there too. Love is more important than sport.

The pistol, which Jim keeps in his Madison Heights apartment as his loaded home defense

weapon, won't leave its shoulder holster that's tucked inside the gym bag because the reunion with the family doesn't leave time for recreation.

Before he knows it, he has run out of time. Jim Vollink hugs his family good-bye and heads back toward home.

The drive is long and dark and lonely. Jim is tired and hungry. He is within striking distance of home when he sees the familiar Burger King.

Vollink flips the turn signal and glides toward the fast food restaurant. He doesn't know that it's going to be perhaps the most fateful decision of his life. He'll not get to consume that burger and Coke. What he'll taste instead in the next few minutes will be the most bitter thing that has ever been forced down his throat.

The Shoot-Out Unfolds

Vollink is not alone in that place. There are many witnesses. Some are in cars in the same drive-up line, some are the Burger King employees. What they tell the investigators later will corroborate the story of the tired man with the beard and the curly hair and the fur coat who, when the encounter is over, will come running up to the window yelling for them to call the police.

The testimony of these many, unrelated witnesses is so overwhelming that the prosecutor will look at all the evidence and will publicly announce that his decision not to press homicide charges against Vollink was made after investigation showed that the killing that took place was done in self-defense.

There is one more person in that parking lot. He drives in behind Vollink. In his waistband, butt forward on the left hip, is a nicked Browning P-35 Hi-Power automatic loaded with Remington 115 grain jacketed hollowpoint cartridges, 13 in the magazine and a 14th in the firing chamber, the modern long-style hammer resting down on it in what a devotee of the "modern technique of the pistol" would call Condition Two.

And as this armed man enters the parking lot of the Burger King behind Jim Vollink, he is literally on a collision course.

The man with the Browning is named Joseph Burkowski. He is a white guy, 22, from Warren, Michigan. He has carried a gun since he was 18, and his father will later say proudly what an excellent shot he always was.

Burkowski is also under the influence of alcohol, not enough to be fishface drunk or even enough to slur his words, but he clearly feels no compunctions about demonstrating his power.

The previous Wednesday, Burkowski had been arguing with an auto shop employee. He opened his coat to expose his pistol, then looked darkly at the employee and said, "I'm down to thirteen."

Continued on page 21

pace.set.ter | 'pās-,set-ər |

1: one that sets
pace for another

2: one that takes
the lead or sets an
example 3: the GLOCK



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222 Remington	15.00	60.95
223 Remington	16.50	65.95
222 Rem. Mag.	16.40	66.05
22 PPC (Sako Brand)	74.25	346.50
22-250 Remington	17.95	74.25
220 Swift	20.70	87.70
243 Winchester	18.95	77.25
6mm PPC (Sako Brand)	74.25	346.50
6mm Remington	19.25	80.70
25/20 Winchester	12.80	48.70
257 Roberts	19.25	80.70
250 Savage	20.80	87.65
25/06 Remington	20.80	87.50
6.5 Rem Mag.	24.20	104.85
270 Winchester	19.95	84.50
7mm Mauser (7x57)	20.80	88.20
7mm Bench Rest	26.65	114.40
7mm/08 Remington	20.80	87.95
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7mm Rem. Mag.	24.20	105.15
30 M1 Carbine	10.95	41.20
30 Remington	17.35	71.05
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35 Remington	20.80	87.65
35 Whelen	20.80	87.50
350 Rem. Mag.	25.20	109.45
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25 Auto *	7.95	34.40
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380 ACP	8.80	36.50
9mm Luger	8.80	36.50
38 Special	8.40	34.90
357 Magnum	8.70	36.95
38 Super	8.80	36.70
357 Maximum *	10.50	46.75
10mm Auto	11.80	56.80
41 Magnum	11.75	51.30
44/40 Win. *	13.25	61.95
44 Special	11.75	51.30
44 Magnum	11.40	49.95
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45 Long Coll.	11.40	49.95
45 Auto Rim *	11.25	48.85

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# OP-508	10mm/45 ACP	\$9.95	\$39.95
# OP-507	44 Spl/Mag.	\$9.95	\$39.95
# OP-505	222/223	\$14.95	\$68.75
# OP-509	243/308	\$17.40	\$78.40
# OP-510	270/30-06	\$20.65	\$94.80

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Model 1088

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Remington.

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22 Cal. 40 Gr. SP	6.55	28.15
22 Cal. 45 Gr. SP	6.55	28.15
22 Cal. 45 Gr. HP	6.55	28.15
22 Cal. 50 Gr. HP	6.65	28.90
22 Cal. 50 Gr. PSP	5.75	25.95
22 Cal. 55 Gr. HP	6.95	30.45
22 Cal. 55 Gr. PSP	5.20	25.75
22 Cal. 55 Gr. PSP *	5.20	25.75
22 Cal. 55 Gr. FMJ *	4.50	17.50
243/6mm 80 Gr. HP	8.60	38.50
243/6mm 80 Gr. PSP	7.20	31.80
243/6mm 100 Gr. PSP	7.95	35.95
25/20 Cal. 86 Gr. SP	7.35	32.95
25 Cal. 87 Gr. HP	8.85	39.95
25 Cal. 100 Gr. PSP	7.95	35.95
25 Cal. 120 Gr. PSP	8.95	38.30
6.5mm 120 Gr. PSP	8.95	38.60
270 Cal. 100 Gr. PSP	7.95	35.95
270 Cal. 130 Gr. PSP	8.95	39.10
270 Cal. 130 Gr. Bronze Pt.	13.95	62.10
7mm 150 Gr. PSP	9.50	41.95
7mm 175 Gr. PSP	9.95	44.45
30/30 Cal. 150 Gr. SP	9.20	40.25
30/30 Cal. 170 Gr. SP	9.55	42.40
30 Carbine 110 Gr. SP	5.95	26.70
30 Carbine 110 Gr. FMJ	5.95	26.70
30 Cal. 125 Gr. PSP	8.95	38.75
30 Cal. 147 Gr. FMJ *	8.30	37.25
30 Cal. 150 Gr. PSP	9.50	41.70
30 Cal. 150 Gr. Bronze Pt.	13.85	61.90
30 Cal. 165 Gr. PSP	9.75	43.10
30 Cal. 180 Gr. RN SP	10.10	45.10
30 Cal. 180 Gr. PSP	10.10	45.10
30 Cal. 180 Gr. Bronze Pt.	14.25	64.40
7.62x39 123 Gr. FMJ (IMI)	7.95	37.50
32/20 Cal. 100 Gr. SP	7.95	35.95
45/70 Cal. 300 Gr. JHP	13.65	57.10
45/70 Cal. 405 Gr. SP	13.90	60.30

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	Per 100	Per 500
25 Auto 50 Gr. FMJ *	4.95	21.50
32 Auto 71 Gr. FMJ *	5.35	24.50
380/9mm 88 Gr. JHP *	5.75	26.50
380/9mm 95 Gr. FMJ	5.05	22.05
9mm Luger 115 Gr. JHP *	6.65	28.95
9mm Luger 115 Gr. FMJ	5.40	24.80
9mm Luger 124 Gr. FMJ	5.40	24.80
38 Super 130 Gr. FMJ *	5.95	27.25
38/357 110 Gr. JHP	5.50	25.50
38/357 125 Gr. JHP	5.40	24.80
38/357 140 Gr. JHP *	6.70	29.50
38/357 158 Gr. JHP	6.90	29.95
41 Mag. 200 Gr. JHP *	9.15	41.25
41 Mag. 210 Gr. JSP *	9.35	42.25
44/40 200 Gr. JSP *	8.50	39.10
44 Mag. 180 Gr. JHP *	8.60	39.95
44 Mag. 240 Gr. JHP *	9.90	43.85
45 Auto 185 Gr. JHP *	9.30	43.25
45 Auto 185 Gr. Match *	9.30	43.25
45 Auto 230 Gr. FMJ	9.20	41.45

Continued from page 19

Asked what he meant, Burkowski stated flatly, "I just used a bullet on you."

Burkowski had purchased a GMC four-wheel-drive vehicle from the same dealership and had trouble with it. It was in the shop now and Burkowski was driving a loaner vehicle. He had told the manager that he was doing everything possible to "tear up the J-2000" that he had been loaned until he got his own car back. This would be the vehicle he would ram Vollink's car with tonight.

And now Jim Vollink is in line for the drive-up window. Burkowski's car pulls up behind his, moving strangely. The car stops with a squeal of the tires, then moves forward jerkily in fits and starts, each time accompanied by the shriek of squealing rubber.

And then, impact.

Vollink is jolted by the crash. He reaches to his side for the cane that he sometimes needs to walk. He doesn't need it to walk now, but he does feel the need for something reassuring in his hand.

He walks back to the J-2000, which is still touching his bumper. "What's the matter," Vollink asks the driver, "is there something wrong with your driving?"

"No! I didn't run into your truck! I didn't do anything!"

"Could you back up?" Vollink wants the vehicles separated so he can assess the damage.

The J-2000 moves back about three feet with another jerky movement accompanied by another tire squeal. Then from behind the steering wheel comes the agitated voice that says, "You'd better get back in your truck! You don't want to mess with me! I'm bad trouble and you're nothing but a punk to have that stick in your hand!"

Perhaps emboldened by his own words, Joseph Burkowski steps out of the car and faces Jim Vollink. "Damn it, you shouldn't mess with me," cries Burkowski. "I'm bad news!" Then Burkowski's left hand pulls back his coat, a gesture he has made familiar to others, a gesture of menace.

And Jim Vollink sees the gun.

9mm vs. .45

He recognizes the wide butt of a high capacity 9mm. It occurs to him that the gun is probably a Browning or a Smith & Wesson model 59. And a thought goes through Vollink's mind: "This man is not a professional with guns."

Vollink, stalling for time, asks the obvious. "You heeled?"

Burkowski recognizes the street slang for "Are you armed with a gun?"

He replies with something like "Yeah, I'm heeled — I got the Nine, the big bad Nine." Vollink does not quite remember the exact words.

"You get back in your truck," Burkowski tells Vollink, and Vollink



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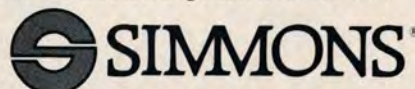
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backpedals until he reaches the still-open door of his pickup.

There are now perhaps only eight or 10 feet separating the two.

Perhaps even then it could have ended without bloodshed. Vollink remembers wanting only to get out of this alive, without trouble. But then the stakes are raised.

Vollink sees his antagonist reach into his belt cross-draw, take out the Browning in his right hand, then reach up and cock the hammer with his left thumb. The left hand falls away and the pistol in Burkowski's right hand is aimed directly at Vollink's chest, cocked and ready to fire.

Vollink flips his cane into the cab and reaches into the pickup for his gym bag. The Ithaca .45 is on top, in its shoulder holster, hammer down. Vollink's right hand closes on the familiar gun and he rips it from the leather, his gun-hand thumb earing back the hammer.

And Joe Burkowski fires.

The bullet whips past Vollink's head, through his curly hair it seems. He will remember that sensation for the rest of his life in dreams and flashbacks. From this moment on, the incident goes into a hellish slow motion for Citizen Vollink.

His right side to the gunman as he is coming back out of his truck, Vollink feels too off-balance to take a Weaver stance. He thrusts the .45 out in front of him in just the right hand, takes an instant to verify a flash sight picture, and fires.

He does not perceive a reaction. Instead, there is another shot, like a pop, and in the slow motion terror of the tachypsychia effect there is time for Vollink to think that it can't be his own gun making that tiny sound, it has to be the other man firing again, and Vollink pulls the trigger two more times.

And the opponent with the gun is still standing there.

Vollink cannot believe it. All his life as a gun owner he has been conditioned to trust the "legendary stopping power" of the .45 automatic. Yet the man he has just fired multiple shots into is still standing there facing him, with a pistol still in his hand.

Stunned, Jim Vollink actually glances down at his pistol, as if to say, "What's wrong with you?" The interval is only a fraction of a second.

But when he looks up again, the suspect is down on the pavement. He has moved no farther than three feet from where he was shot.

Vollink runs to the drive-up window, shouting for the staff to call the police.

What happened next is reported this way by responding officer Bogusz of the Madison Heights Police. "I walked across the front of Burger King (west to east) toward the drive-up window side of Burger King. As I turned to walk south towards the back of Burger King I

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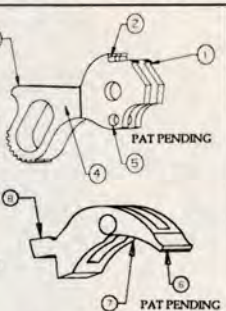
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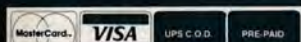
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observed the suspect walking towards me (north). He motioned me towards him and we ran to the back of Burger King (south east corner) where the victim was lying. We asked the suspect (he was not a suspect at the time), "Who shot him?" The suspect replied, "I did."

"He began reaching into his left coat pocket. Myself and Officer Allen immediately told the suspect to 'freeze,' he did so and I told him to put his hands on the roof of the car (I believe it was the victim's car). Upon searching the suspect I removed a handgun from his left coat pocket. The suspect was informed he was under arrest and was handcuffed..."

Vollink would remember that the cops treated him decently, that one officer even hesitated to handcuff him until Vollink said, "Go ahead, don't risk your job by violating procedure on my account." At the stationhouse he was offered cigarettes and coffee.

Suddenly, he excused himself to go to the men's room. He barely made it there before he was seized by violent, wracking nausea, and then passed out.

Shortly after he had revived, he learned that the man he had killed had been a police officer. And the bile began to rise again in his throat.

Gunfight Analysis

Joseph Burkowski had been a reserve deputy with an area sheriff's office. He had been fired from a previous police department. Cops would come forward to say that Burkowski was "trigger-happy." Police would announce that Burkowski's "former associates indicated he often used his gun to intimidate and scare persons."

The wrenching crisis for Citizen Vollink was that he, too, had been a cop in a former life. He had served a decade with the Madison Heights PD before becoming sufficiently burned out with the constant witnessing of man's inhumanity to man that he had taken a leave of absence due to stress two years before the shooting.

With the badge, he'd turned in the right to carry concealed: while some Michigan communities are free about granting CCWs, Madison Heights is not among them. Vollink had possessed only a target permit at the time of the shooting, which is why his pistol was in the gym bag instead of on his person.

The target permit did not cover a loaded pistol in luggage. Vollink explained that the .45 was his home defense gun, usually kept loaded, and that it was an oversight that it had not been unloaded before being placed in the bag. The authorities accepted this, and no charges were brought on the possession of the loaded pistol in the vehicle.

The first headlines read, "Ex-Cop Kills Reserve Deputy." By the time it was over, you'd have to turn well past the

Continued on page 28

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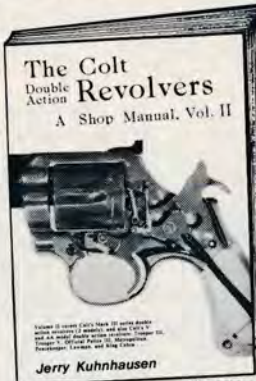
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Henry Deringer of Philadelphia knew that many 19th Century American men felt more comfortable going armed, but weren't up for concealing horse pistols in their well-tailored waistcoats. That's why his itty-bitty .41 caliber percussion single-shot became such a success. Indeed, the instrument became so popular that its name soon became generic, like "xerox" or "frigidaire" or "scotch tape." By the last quarter of the 19th century, "derringer" (spelled with a second "r") had become synonymous with a small, last-ditch personal weapon of the hideout variety. A century or so later, the term "mini-derringer" would even be applied to tiny .22 rimfire revolvers.

A popular phrase of the '80s follows a movie title: *That Was Then, This Is Now*. Derringers were then. Snubby .38 revolv-

olver of Gay Nineties design.

The short-barrel, small-frame .38 Special revolvers and the hi-tech .380 autos of today will trounce a two-shot derringer about as soundly as the Porsche will outrace the nag, in any equivalent test of capability. Even a good .25 auto like the Beretta Jetfire is a better choice. I'd take a Jetfire or a .22 rimfire Iver Johnson TP-22 or Walther TP-H over *any* derringer in any caliber, simply because the small bullets are likely to hit under stress, and whatever you manage to send out of your derringer's muzzle, isn't.

Let's start looking at why the derringer became obsolete.

Many derringer pistols are accident prone. Many of the cheaply-made clones of the Remington O/U derringer will go off if dropped. Weight balances to the

Shop was the first to document cases of High Standard .22 Derringers carried in wallet holsters which accidentally discharged. Apparently the weight on the pistol in the hip pocket was, with constant carry, enough to bend the safety components out of line.

Poor Hit Potential. It isn't just that derringers are notoriously inaccurate. It isn't just that no derringer in history has even won a pistol match.

The problem is, at the seven yards (21 feet) that are generally considered the close range parameter for gunfight training, derringer pistols tend to be hopelessly inaccurate. There is the rare derringer that shoots well, but most will send one barrel's bullet wide of the mark in one direction, and the other barrel's bullet cattywampus in another direction equally

DEBUNKING

DERRINGERS

By Massad Ayoob

Believe it or not, some people actually carry derringers for self-defense. Learn why a derringer is an excellent weapon for your attacker to use, not you!



ers, compact .380 autos, and if you must, .25 automatics are now.

Yet the derringer breed continues, primarily in the form of the Remington pattern superposed single-action. Some of the copies made today exhibit good workmanship. Calibers range from .22 Short to .44 Magnum, .223, and .45-70. Derringers are safer than ever, what with cross-bolt safeties to mitigate the classic "derringer accident" of going off if dropped, and double action pistols constructed with the same thought in mind.

What scares this writer is, *some people are actually still carrying derringers for personal defense.* In a world where the armed criminal you face is likely to be armed with nothing less than a revolver or semi-automatic pistol, and quite possibly a shotgun or assault rifle, that strikes me as a little like hooking up an aging horse to an obsolete buggy and accepting the challenge of a Porsche driver to a drag race. In fact, the drag race is a better deal: at least you and Old Paint just get humiliated instead of getting killed, as you almost certainly will if you pit a 2-shot derringer against even a 6-shot .38 re-

rear, meaning that when they fall out of your waistband or whatever, they roll over in midair, and the hammer hits the floor hard enough to shear or slip past the half cock notch, firing the gun. At this moment, the characteristic tumble of the derringer is such that it is pointed somewhere between your stomach and your groin. Numerous "dropped derringer" incidents have resulted in everything from instant death to, shall we say, a rather radical vasectomy.

Most of the recent-production derringers have some sort of safety catch, usually a crossbolt. I can live with a design that locks the firing pin, but not one that merely blocks the hammer from hitting an inertia firing pin, since the right angle of drop can still cause the weapon to discharge when it falls to a hard surface.

Another approach to safety was the double action derringer, which has been produced by at least three different manufacturers, starting with High Standard. The most compact and popular of the double action derringers, the High Standard still wasn't 100% for safety. Gunsmith Bill Laughridge of Cylinder & Slide

far from where each was aimed.

It would be neat if we could go with the old theory that a "belly gun" like a derringer is only going to be used at a range of a couple of feet, so accuracy doesn't matter. Unfortunately, we good guys don't have the choice of where and how the shootout would go down. If we did, we would (a) arrange not to have a shootout at all, or (b) manage to be 300 yards away from the opponent and holding a .300 Weatherby Magnum rifle at the time the confrontation took place.

Given the fact that the opponent's sudden and unpredictable action is what causes us to reach for the defensive pistol in the first place, the inaccurate derringer limits our options. If the bad guy knows enough to take cover, we now have a very small target to shoot at before he pulls the trigger of the sawed-off shotgun he has aimed at us, and a derringer is not the gun to be betting your life on if you've got to hit that small target, or die.

Slow Operation and Poor Trigger Control. I can't, in all honesty, call this a separate problem, but rather, a subcategory of the derringer's notorious poor accuracy

and lousy hit potential.

The typical Remington-pattern derringer requires you to cock a hammer against a hard spring before you fire the first *or* the second shot. This would be bad enough with a single action Peacemaker-type revolver, but is much worse with the derringer, because its tiny grip gives you no leverage to hold the gun steady as you thumb the hammer back one-handed. Then, the recoil rolls the gun up in your hand and you have to sort of flip the whole pistol forward to re-grip before you can cock it for the second and last shot.

Because derringers of this single-action type have "spur triggers" instead of triggers with trigger guards, the manufacturers wisely produce them with very heavy trigger pulls. When you've got a 20 ounce gun and ten pound S.A. trigger pull, it's safe to say that something is going to give and the muzzle of the gun will be jerked sideways by the finger pressure in any stress shooting situation, greatly reducing the chances of the gun still being aimed at its intended target when the shot goes off.

Even Double-Action Derringers Are Nearly Impossible to Fire Effectively. Such guns were designed by people who well understood that the Old West-style derringers were notorious for going off by accident. Therefore, double action derringers were engineered to, first and foremost, be invulnerable to an accidental pull of the trigger. Here, a 16 to 20 pound trigger pull is the norm, not the exception, and some are even heavier. With a tiny grip that gives your hand little to hold onto, the gun can't be steadied against the heavy trigger stroke, as can a good double-action revolver or autoloader. Hence, we have the same inaccuracy problem caused by a different dynamic.

I've shot most of the current derringers, double and single action, including the TEC-38. None can be shot as accurately or as rapidly as a good .380 auto or .38 snub *or* pocket size .22/.25 auto.

Let me put it this way. I've shot against the top competitors on the circuit today, men like Rob Leatham and Tom Campbell and Mike Plaxco and John Shaw and others. I would be very comfortable challenging any of them to a big-stakes money match of pistolcraft skills in which they had the derringer of their choice, and I had the lowest-priced .38 Special revolver or 9mm auto on the market. An El Presidente, say, or a Cooper Assault Course. I don't think any of those fine shooters, all of whom will read this, would take up that challenge. If carrying a derringer means that you, a world-class pistolero, can be outshot by a damn gunwriter, what does that tell you about what carrying a derringer can offer you for odds against a street-smart, armed criminal aggressor?

Do derringers guarantee that you'll get killed if you carry one? Not necessarily. One rich man's son, armed with a .22 Magnum High Standard derringer, sur-

Continued on page 84



Berreta Model 21, .22 LR



Iver-Johnson TP22, .22 LR



S&W Bodyguard, .38 Special

Continued from page 24

front page to find the story. "Prosecutor Clears On-Leave Cop in Slaying of Man."

For Jim Vollink, the incident would not go away so easily.

He would have sworn that he had fired three shots, and his opponent, two. Investigation would show that the 9mm bullet that passed so close to Vollink's head was the first and last shot fired by Burkowski.

The second shot Vollink had heard, the one that sounded like a "pop," had in fact been his own .45 auto fired reflexively. Vollink had triggered four shots, though the newspapers would say that it was five.

The Remington 115 grain fired by Burkowski that launched the gunfight travelled a considerable distance and smashed an illuminated plastic sign well behind Vollink.

Vollink was also using Remington jacketed hollowpoint ammunition in his .45, the 185 grain load. One of his bullets missed.

Of the three defending shots that connected, one entered the chest and went through the heart, exiting the back and smashing into the cement block wall behind.

Burkowski apparently turned in an agonal response not seen by Vollink, who was trying to hold his flash sight picture,

when the second 185 grain projectile caught him high in the left side, traversed widthways through both lungs and the heart, and exited the right side of his torso.

The turning motion apparently continued, because the third bullet had entered the back and exited the front according to Vollink.

Yet, at the time, Vollink's perception was that the bullets had had no effect because the man was still standing there. It could be that, in the dim light and with his visual focus on the gun trying to hold the quick sight picture, Vollink missed subtleties of his opponent's movement and only perceived that he was still upright, which witnesses agree he was.

"I went through all the stuff you talk about," Jim would tell me later, "Tunnel vision, depressed hearing, tachypsychia, all of it." The depressed hearing, which is called auditory exclusion, is particularly common and accounts for why Jim thought the third shot fired in the gunfight was the opponent's instead of his. He recalls thinking quickly that the "pop" sound couldn't possibly be his own .45 fired without ear protectors, and had to be emanating from his opponent.

In fact, the more excited and stressed out you are, the less likely you are to hear your own gunfire. Hunters have long been familiar with the phenomenon. In one homicide case I am presently work-

ing, most witnesses close enough to the shooting to feel danger describe the 9mm pistol shot as a "pop," while those who didn't feel danger and didn't even know what was going down until they heard the shot, describe the report as a "bang" even though they were further away.

The officer who fired that shot was uncertain at the time whether he'd even discharged his weapon.

No pistol hits like a lightning bolt, not even a .45 automatic. Jim was using the brand of hollowpoint that was always the most likely to feed, but the least likely to expand in flesh, though Remington has since modified their 185 grain bullet and we are hearing of more effective expansion.

All three of his bullets passed completely through his opponent, and fortunately, were backstopped by the cement block wall behind the man. The Remington hollowpoint, even at the time of Vollink's shootout, was and is still less likely to overpenetrate than is GI 230 grain ball.

The Remington JHP will usually stay in the body better than half the time, Vollink's incident being something of an exception, while hardball will generally exit the body about three-fourths of the time. Vollink has since switched to Winchester Silvertip ammo for his defense .45.

Continued on page 30

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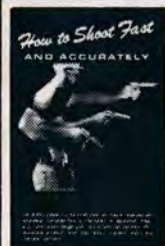
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It has long been observed in the shooting of both men and animals that when the being just seems startled or shows no reaction, an exit wound will probably be found. The bullet has gone in one side and out the other, merely bumping the organism on its way through.

But when the man or the animal jerks violently at the impact as if punched or kicked, a spent bullet will generally be found inside the body. A bullet that stays in expends all its energy within the target organism and generally evinces distinctly more "shock effect."

The overpenetrations in this shooting may well be the reason the stunned defender thought at first that his bullets were having no effect, when in fact they were almost immediately lethal.

Remember too that Burkowski succumbed to heart shots, and the heart shot neutralizes the organism by the dynamic of shutting off the supply of oxygenated blood to the brain. It may take up to 14 seconds for that shutoff to result in unconsciousness and collapse, even if the heart has been completely destroyed.

Another learning point comes from the other side of the gunfight. If Burkowski, reputedly an expert shot, was still on his feet after three torso hits from a .45 and with his Browning still in his hand, why did he not get more shots off?

A nickel-plated Browning magazine was found on the ground next to the

body, separate from the pistol itself. Vollink believes that pressure of Burkowski's hip bone against the magazine release button of the pistol inside his belt had caused the magazine to slip just slightly out of position — not enough to activate the Browning's characteristic disconnect safety and prevent the chambered round from being fired, but enough that the recoil of the first shot dislodged the mag completely, ironically fulfilling Burkowski's threat of a week earlier of being "down to thirteen," but with the 13 9mm cartridges lying useless on the ground.

This writer suspects another possibility. Vollink says he saw Burkowski bring his left hand up to the pistol and cock the hammer with his left thumb. That movement, done rapidly, could have brought the "drumstick" of the left thumb against the left grip panel of the Hi-Power hard enough to trip the magazine release button, even despite the added thickness of the Pachmayr grips on Burkowski's 9mm.

Those who carry pistols with magazine disconnect safeties should make certain that the part has a heavy spring in place to prevent accidental drops. The removal of the disconnect safety itself tends to be frowned upon by the courts, and my own experience in such matters is that prosecutors will make much of the fact that "the defendant was so reckless and wanton in his disregard for human life and safety that he actually discon-

nected a safety device on his pistol."

Gunfight Aftermath

Jim Vollink today is a security guard. He still has his target permit and still has his .45; he used that gun to shoot the Second Chance match this year, where he also worked behind the scenes for match director Rich Davis.

When criminal charges were dropped after investigation, Vollink faced a civil suit over his shooting. "Ironically, it was my auto insurance company that paid for my defense, since it stemmed from an auto accident," Vollink remembers. "They settled out of court for a very small amount of money."

He went through typical post shooting trauma. "One of my girlfriends said 'bye-bye' because of the shooting," he recalls sadly. "The dreams will get you. I've lost count of how many times I've relived the shooting in my sleep. But in the dreams, my gun doesn't work. The altered perspectives scare you. I never felt recoil, and even the shots that I knew were mine sounded like little 'blaps' instead of explosions. The whole thing was probably finished in two and a half seconds, from his first shot to my last shot, but it seemed like forever."

"I'm not happy I shot him," Vollink says flatly. "I wish it had never happened. But I'm glad I'm alive, and I'm glad it didn't happen to some rookie who couldn't handle it."



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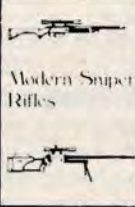
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Eagle Industries "Shaw Bag"

Every handgun owner who actually shoots his handguns needs a few accessories in addition to the gun itself. Even the tin can roller needs, at a minimum, a supply of ammunition plus eye and ear protection.

Competition shooters have their own special equipment requirements, as do handgun hunters and police officers. For organizing, protecting and transporting this equipment nothing beats a well-designed and constructed range bag.

Protecting the gear against damage is

a primary function. Like a lot of shooters I don't worry about normal finish wear from handling and use, but I'll brood for days about nicks and scratches caused by carelessness (especially from what the editor calls the Ultimate Crime, clunking two guns together and damaging both at once).

On a more serious level, sights can be knocked out of alignment, while precision equipment such as binoculars, chronographs, and electronic timers can be damaged or ruined.

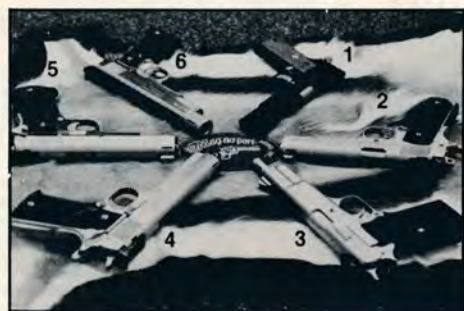
A range bag also ensures that all the required equipment is kept together and readily accessible. There are few things more irritating than driving an hour to the range, with maybe a couple of hours of daylight left, only to find that the staple gun or earmuffs have been left at home. Or breaking an extractor or losing a grip screw at a match a thousand miles from home and not having spares available. (Actually the only parts that ever break or get lost are those for which you *don't* have spares. I think it's some kind of immutable law.)

There are a number of manufacturers producing range bags at present, in a surprisingly wide range of sizes, styles, and prices. A representative sampling is listed below. Unless otherwise noted, all are constructed of 1000-denier Cordura nylon. ("Denier," so I'm told, is the number of threads per square millimeter, and Cordura is a registered trademark of the E.I. DuPont Co.)

Also, except as noted, all are equipped with high quality, heavy duty YKK zippers. Prices are suggested retail as this is written but of course are subject to change. Listing is in alphabetical order.

Eagle Industries Unlimited

Eagle is another big outfit, and their 24-page catalogue lists a wide range of products, including gun cases, gear bags,



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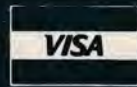
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They make the original Professional Shooter's Bag (item code SPS) which was designed with the assistance of top competitor John Shaw, and which has been a favorite with competitors for years. It is a two-part system, with an outer bag measuring 17 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 7 1/2 and an inner bag measuring 16 x 8 x 7.

The outer bag is similar in design to the Shooting Systems bag, with one large outside pocket and two small ones. The inner bag has two zippered compartments, each of which has a padded, removeable gun pouch. This is a handy feature; when returning from the range one can just slip the pouch with the gun inside out of the bag and put it away in the gun safe. It also makes for easier cleaning when the pouches get gunked up with gun oil and sight black.

High quality materials are used (Cordura nylon and YKK zippers), and construction is well done, with double rows of stitching along the zippers and extra stitching at strain points.

Suggested retail on this bag is half that of the Shooting Systems bag at \$69.95, and at that price it would be unreasonable to expect the same detailing. For example, interior seams aren't finished with seam binding; the corner seams on the inner bag are not turned inside for a neater appearance; and the center of the inner bag is divided into three compartments by sewn-in dividers, rather than velcro-adjustable ones.

None of these things compromise utility or durability, and it appears the company's goal was to offer the best possible quality at a reasonable price.

For the shooter who wants a bag that can be customized to suit individual needs, Eagle offers the Deluxe Pro Shooter's bag (item code DPS) at a list price of \$104.

Both bags come standard with a web shoulder sling and are normally stocked in black, with other colors available on special order. All Eagle products carry a lifetime guarantee.

Galati International

Activate Arms of Rochester, New York distribute two range bags under the Galati trademark. The Pro-Shooter bag has virtually identical design features as the Eagle Standard Professional Shooter's Bag.

The Super Range Bag is a one-piece design, measuring 18 x 12 x 8 inches, with two padded outside pockets for handguns. One of the pockets is divided in two and has web loops to hold autopistol magazines. The large central compartment can be customized with velcro-adjustable cloth dividers.

These bags are an excellent value. Complete with shoulder strap, each lists at a remarkably low price of \$39.95. Both have a design feature I like, a sheet of

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heavy plastic material beneath a foam-padded nylon cushion on the bottom of the main bag. This serves to protect the contents if the bag is dropped onto a rough surface.

These bags are made in South Korea where labor costs are relatively low, one of the reasons for the modest price. Materials and workmanship appear to be very good, though perhaps not quite the equal of some of the others.

The cloth appears to have a bit coarser weave, and to be a bit stiffer, than Cordura, but nonetheless it seems to be very strong and abrasion-resistant.

Construction was properly done, with double stitching and reinforcing where necessary. The only area where they could use improvement is in the zippers. Those on the main compartment had no brand names and were noticeably less smooth than the YKK zippers on other bags.



Galati Int'l

The zippers on the handgun compartments were smooth enough but their ends had not been sewed properly so if you're a bit careless (which I was) it's possible to run the zipper tab right off the track (which I did), though it was easy enough to fix.

But buying a Chev and then complaining that it's not a Cadillac is unfair. These are good, well-built bags that could sell for 50% more than they do and still give honest value for the money. At the suggested retail price they're a bargain.

Tritek Corp.

Tritek is a progressive and innovative company with a line of high quality nylon products. Their product line is not as broad as Shooting Systems or Eagle, but they make long gun and handgun cases, travel and flight bags, camera cases — and if you need a good case for your electronic keyboard or portable FAX machine, Tritek makes those too.

Their multipurpose bag (item code TKB03) lists at \$42.90 and measures 12x9x8. It has a cushioned bottom panel on the main compartment plus a pocket (with velcro closure) built into each side of the compartment interior. The outside has a full-length zippered pocket on each side.




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Beretta U.S.A.

The walls of this bag aren't padded, so for handgun protection I'd suggest you add the model TKG01 pistol case (\$23.30). This is a well made, compact case that's just the right size for a comp'd 1911 or 4" L-frame Smith. It fits perfectly inside one of the interior pockets of the main bag for range trips and can also be used for storage in the gun safe, or in a locked suitcase when travelling.

For the shooter who wants a trim, compact case to carry a number of handguns it's hard to beat the model TKG03 pistol case (\$72.70). This case is 21" long by 12" high, and is only 2 1/2" thick (empty).

Four handguns can be stored in padded, built-in compartments in the interior, and the closed zipper tab can be padlocked to a sewn-in D-ring for security (padlock not supplied). A full-length padded outer pocket is big enough for a scoped XP-100 or T/C Super 14. The case can be fully opened to lay flat on the shooting bench.

These products are made of a fabric called "Ballistic II" nylon, which the makers describe as a space-age material with special weaves and coatings. It's an attractive material with a brighter, richer sheen than that used by some of the other makers. It's available in black only.

Workmanship is first-rate in every respect, with seam binding used on the edges of the pistol cases and all stitching

properly done and reinforced. Tritek unconditionally guarantees its products, not just for the lifetime of the original owner, but indefinitely. Can't do much better than that.

Shooting Systems

This company, formerly Assault Systems, makes a huge range of nylon products, including cases for handguns and long guns, a full line of holsters, travel and luggage bags, shooting jackets, police duty rigs and web gear, and plenty of other items — the full catalog runs to 28 pages and costs \$2.

The range bag is listed as part number RBB, presumably for "range bag, black." It's a two-part system, with an insert bag for the handguns that fits inside a larger outer bag. Overall dimensions of the outer bag are 18x11x10 inches. It has a full-length expandable zippered compartment on one side and two smaller pockets (one open, the other zippered) on the other.

The insert bag measures 18x9x8; it has two heavily-padded, zippered handgun compartments. Each compartment can carry two handguns, separated by a removeable, padded divider. At the range, these dividers can be removed and used to provide a clean, soft surface on which to place guns not in use — or they can be used as elbow pads when shooting from a bench.

The central portion of the inner bag can be used to store other equipment, and it can be customized to suit different needs by means of velcro-trimmed nylon dividers.


Quality of this bag, both in materials and workmanship, is outstanding. The material used is called ballistic nylon, one of the heaviest and strongest nylon cloths available. I understand it's rated at 15 oz. per square yard, vs. 11 oz. for Cordura.

Zippers seemed to be exceptionally smooth-working. There was also ample evidence of high quality workmanship. For example, the interior seams of the main bag are neatly finished with seam binding, which not only looks good but adds strength. The inner bag has the seam edges on the inside, which isn't necessarily any stronger but does give a more finished, attractive appearance. All strain points are reinforced and double sewn.


This isn't a cheap bag, with a suggested list price of \$140, but it is a superb product and the price is commensurate with the quality. It comes complete with a padded web carrying sling, and it carries a lifetime guarantee.

Umberger's Custom Pistol & Ammo

















My first reaction on examining this line of products was that they had to be designed by an experienced shooter, one who understands the requirements of



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shooting competitors.

At the top of the line is the "Competition Pistol Bag," designed by Wayne Umberger for IPSC shooters. This is a large capacity bag, 18x12x10 inches in size. The main compartment is lined with hard closed cell foam for increased protection and to help the bag keep its shape.

A pistol pouch is built in to each inner wall, the pouches closed by velcro straps. There's a full-length zippered pocket on the outside of the main compartment on one side and two smaller pockets on the other side, all three of them heavily foam-padded.



Umberger's Custom Bags

For IPSC use this bag is just about the ultimate, and it has a lot of design features IPSC competitors will appreciate.

Take the elastic magazine loops; there are six sewn to each of the two inner gun pockets, and they keep those carefully tested match mags clean, organized and protected. Or the removeable hardboard bottom panel; it protects the contents should the bag get dropped on a rough surface, yet can be quickly lifted out when cleaning the bag.

I like the two smaller outside pockets — the PACT Mk.III timer/chronograph goes in one, the accessory printer in the other. The big main compartment and the full-length outer pocket provide ample room for all the leather gear and accessories anyone could possibly need.

The best of materials are used, and they're put together the way the Romans used to build stone bridges. Everything is made about twice as well and twice as strong as it really needs to be.

Umberger uses double stitching where single would be adequate, and triple stitching where other makers use double. D-rings and zipper tabs are of nickel-plated metal.

One customer told Umberger that he loaded 25 handguns into one of these bags (evidently at that point he ran out of either space or guns) and the bag handled the weight with no problems.

These bags are handmade to order, in black, blue, red, international orange or

coppertone brown, and carry an unconditional guarantee on material and workmanship. Price with shoulder strap is \$109.50.

For those who don't have quite so much gear to carry Umberger also offers a more compact range bag (14x9 1/2 x 6 1/2), and he's recently introduced the Deluxe Range Bag, which is the compact model with two additional foam-padded pockets on the outside, one on each side. These list for \$52.50 and \$64.50 respectively, with an optional sling for either costing \$20.

The Deluxe bag provides adequate carrying capacity for almost any purpose in a trim, manageable size.

Other products include both soft and hard-sided pistol cases, the "Cup Revolver System" that organizes ammo and speedloaders for action shooters, and a neat little ammo bag that's partitioned to handle both live ammo and empty brass. All offer the same high quality construction and materials.

W. Waller & Son Inc.

The Waller Range Bag is a somewhat different design than some of the other makes. Instead of being a soft-sided pouch, it is a rectangular case built around hard, closed-cell padding. The zippered lid swings open to provide full access to the main compartment interior (21x9x9).

Inside are six padded, velcro-tipped dividers (two full-length, two 12" long, and two 4" long) that provide unlimited flexibility in custom-fitting the interior. The semi-rigid main compartment has additional storage space fitted on the outside; a flat document pocket on the back, a small non-padded pouch on each end, and a full-length padded front pocket.

This case was designed for maximum versatility and can be adapted to a wide



Waller Range Bag

range of uses. For instance, inside the front pocket are six elastic loops that can hold pistol magazines, but are also just right for holding 35mm film cans.

The Waller bag would make an excellent camera case, paramedic's kit bag, travel case — as the maker says, the uses are limited only by your imagination. It should admirably suit the needs of hand-

gunners from any of the shooting disciplines.

I found that because of the case's long dimensions it's necessary to take a little care to equalize the load when packing. If all the heavy items — e.g., guns and ammunition — are at one end, the case will nose-dive when picked up.

Outer material is Cordura, the interior lined with smooth Oxford nylon. The bottom is heavily reinforced, and has three large rubber "feet" on the outside to prevent slippage and further protect the bottom.

As for workmanship and detailing — well, I rate the Shooting Systems and Umberger bags as "10's" so I'd have to call the Waller case a "10-plus."

Every seam is welded and inside bound; there isn't a crooked stitch or so much as a loose thread. It really is a beautiful piece of workmanship. List price with shoulder sling is \$140, and anyone seeing it would agree this is fair for this level of craftsmanship.

Waller also make an accessory ten-mag pouch (\$22) and a most interesting pistol case called the "Soft Safe." These have a two-ply aluminized heat/fire protection shield. Company president Bog Schwartz advised that he designed these at the request of some state police officers.

Evidently it is something of an occupational hazard when working highway patrol to have the police car rear-ended, sometimes resulting in fires, with resulting damage to any spare guns carried in the trunk. These heat-shield cases give some chance at least that the guns will come through unharmed. They come with a keyed integral lock for \$39 (9x12) or \$46 (9x18).

All Waller products are unconditionally guaranteed. The range bag is available in black, grey, navy, and red.

Which Bag For You?

Which of the above bags to choose depends on your requirements and your budget. For carrying several handguns in a flat, compact case the Tritex TKG03 can't be beat.

The Waller range bag is the most versatile, while for the IPSC or action shooter the Umberger Competition Bag provides the ideal combination of carrying capacity, design features, quality, durability, and price.

I'd rate as "best buys" the Eagle Pro-Shooter's Bag; the Galati International (either model); and the Umberger Deluxe range bag.

The three best bags, not considering price, I would say are the Shooting Systems, Umberger Competition bag, and the Waller range bag.

If you're still toting your gear to the range in a cardboard carton or an old toolbox, give one of these range bags a try. You won't regret it.



RUMOR OF S&W 645 FAILING IN GUNFIGHT IS FALSE, SAYS SHERIFF

I had just walked into the briefing room when one of the cops said, "Lieutenant, there's a message for you." I turned as Sergeant Bob Wunderlich handed me a note marked, "Urgent information."

A call had come in to the department from a concerned Federal officer in California. He had just read an article in the professional journal *Police* written by Chief of Police Cameron Harbison and myself on why our agency had, after thorough study, chosen to adopt the Smith & Wesson Model 4506 service pistol.

The article had mentioned that our research had shown several cases where a bad guy got a cop's safety-locked S&W service pistol away from him but couldn't make it fire, yet had shown no documented cases where a cop had been unable to protect himself or a brother officer or citizen because he'd forgotten or failed to release the safety catch.

The caller thought he had one. He stat-

ed that he'd been told of an incident in Sand Point, Idaho where two fugitives shot it out with a U.S. Forest Service agent and a Bonner County deputy.

Supposedly, the Forest Service man was fatally shot at the opening of the encounter and the deputy tried to return fire but was unable to, owing to a failure to release the safety catch on his Smith & Wesson service automatic.

In due course, I got back to the concerned agent, who stressed that what he had heard was second or third hand. I thanked him for the information and, as soon as we rang off, I called the Sheriff's Office of Bonner County.

I had the good fortune to reach the high sheriff himself, Chip Roos, who is one of those rare law enforcement chief executives whose own background includes a specialty in the service firearm.

Roos, whose own personal handgun is a SIG P-226, welcomed the opportunity

to dispel several rumors that had arisen from the tragic incident.

There was a manhunt, Roos explained, in severe cold and snow so deep that the deer were dragging their bellies on the surface. That meant that to properly distinguish one track from another, the follower had to be right on top of it instead of off to the side.

The deputy and the forest service officer were coming over the crest of a hill at dusk when the fugitives sprung the ambush.

The forest ranger was armed with a Model 66 Smith & Wesson .357 revolver that never cleared the holster, and with the Ruger Mini-14 .223 that was in his hands as the encounter broke.

The ranger was unable to effectively return fire and as he rolled for cover, two 00-buck pellets from one gunman's shotgun blast caught him in the lower back and ranged up into his heart and lungs.

The deputy returned heavy fire with a Remington 870, but firing downhill, most of the pellets went high. Dropping his empty pump gun, the deputy drew his service pistol, attempted to fire, and realized that his gun was silent. He jacked the slide, tried again, then rolled into cover without having fired a pistol shot amidst a hail of criminal fire from the twin Browning Hi-Power 9mm pistols now being employed by the two criminals.

By the time the surviving police officer got his gun working, the shootout was

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over and the two perpetrators had fled. Both were later captured, one with a severe shotgun wound of the leg. They are currently awaiting trial for murder.

Did we have here an indictment of the Smith & Wesson service automatic? Not at all. The deputy's gun, according to official reports, was a Taurus PT-92 AF 9mm semi-automatic!

For that matter, we don't have an indictment of carrying guns "on safe," either. Sheriff Roos tells me that the involved deputy now believes that his hands, covered with insulated gloves against the cold, caused him to apply trigger finger pressure to the concave front of the Taurus' trigger guard instead of to the trigger itself.

Subsequent testing by Sheriff Roos — including torture testing that involved condensation and deep cold and ice inside the trigger springs — did not keep the Taurus pistol from firing its 15 9mm Winchester Silvertips as fast as the trigger could be pulled.

No one can say that the deputy himself froze. His response when his partner was shot by surprise, was instant and devastating: after his first return shotgun blast, no other bullet touched a police officer, and the two suspects were the ones who finally retreated, one badly wounded by shotgun fire. The deputy's response was positive and properly aggressive, the sort of response I'd want my own partner to have if I was wounded and down.

But, Lord, did the rumors surface. Sheriff Roos tells me that in one local agency that was about to adopt the SIG P-226 service pistol, a politician walked into a top cop's office and slammed down a copy of the Idaho Statesman newspaper and said, "This is the kind of new pistol you want!?! It says here that a cop was killed because an auto pistol didn't work!"

The sheriff had already heard the rumors linking the S&W autoloader to the death of a policeman. The truth, explains the sheriff, is that the only Smith & Wesson at the gunfight scene was the Model 66 Combat Magnum revolver that was never deployed from the murdered ranger's holster. No malfunction occurred with any of the guns employed at the scene: not the 12 gauge shotgun and two Browning P-35s employed by the bad guys, nor the Remington, Ruger, Taurus, and S&W firearms of the good guys.

The Sheriff has no plans to remove automatics in general or the Taurus in particular from service after this incident. I agree on that point too.

The sheriff stipulates that S&W autos carried by his deputies be worn safety "off" while my own agency strongly suggests they be carried safety "on," but that's neither here nor there.

Perhaps the cruelest rumor after the forest ranger's death was that he had been killed by the "friendly fire" of the Bonner County deputy he was partnered with. Completely untrue, says Sheriff Roos: the

buckshot pellets that killed the officer were .33 caliber "double-aught"; the round issued to Bonner County deputies is the distinctively heavier (.36 caliber pellet) "triple-aught" buckshot.

Fact: we still don't have a documented case of a slide-mounted safety on a double action pistol causing a cop's death or injury in a case where he or she would not have taken the same wound if the safety had been off.

Fact: the lawman in this case had already taken his death wound well before the backup deputy even went for his pistol, being too preoccupied in returning fire with his shotgun after the first cop went down.

Fact: all incidents you hear about may not be exactly what they seem to be, once you start investigating what actually happened.

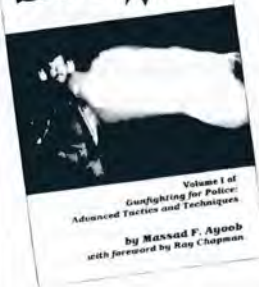
I'll continue to carry my department-issue S&W .45 service automatic "on safe," and so will the men and women who work with my agency.

Before I close, I want to thank the agent who called this case to my attention, not because he gave me a subject for a magazine column, but because he cared enough about the safety of his brother and sister police officers to call attention to the information he'd received, and to put things in motion for it to be checked out and for the true story to be told.

God bless cops who care that much.



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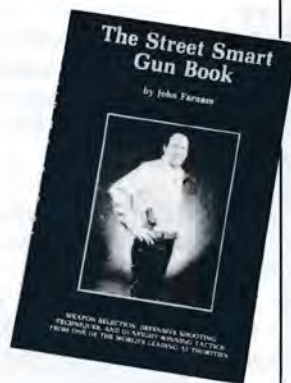
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Our pistol team had been on the range most of the afternoon, testing equipment and loads in preparation for the upcoming league matches. My job that afternoon had been to check weapon accuracy potential on my machine rest and to check the accuracy of loads with my chronograph.

I was ready to break the routine, so I brought out a GM Colt that had been modified for bullseye competition, but had all of the modified parts except the Micro sights replaced with original stock parts.

I loaded two magazines, five rounds of commercial 185 gr. target loads each, and handed the pistol to our top scoring shooter. His 10 round slow fire string grouped in a six-inch circle around the X, with three flyers lower left.

"That's not a very accurate pistol," he said, returning it. I hurried back to my bench and installed the modified trigger with overtravel screw, sear and hammer that reduced the stock 6 lb. pull to a crisp 3 1/2 lbs. I reloaded the magazines and handed the weapon back to the shooter. His second string cut the group in half, with no flyers.

"The accuracy is excellent," was his evaluation of the changes. Actually, the accuracy was identical; only the human factor of a lighter, cleaner trigger pull was different.

My last changes were to install a fitted target quality barrel and bushing and a set of oversize target grips. The shooter's third group was slightly smaller than the second, but his assessment of the pistol was "300% better than original configuration."

When I tested the pistol on the rest with and without the target barrel and bushing, the results were to bring group size from a 4" circle to a 1 1/2" group. The final group that I fired that day through the target barrel was a very hot proofing load. Five shots went into one ragged hole.

That proof load documented the pistol's accuracy potential beyond any shadow of doubt. But, a pistol or revolver can't be more accurate than the loads fired through it. It would be uncomfortable and dangerous to fire proofing loads as a regular diet.

Many years later, I deduced that proof level loads settle a pistol frame into the machine rest's rubber holding inserts

quickly and to a uniform position that can't be shifted by further shots. Light target loads move the frame more slowly, but eventually the shifting stops. Until the frame is properly bedded, there is no point in shooting groups for record.

It's important to define "proofing load," as opposed to a "pressure proof load." A pressure proof load would be a barrel testing load, fired by a special breech attached to the barrel, and in the normal scheme of things, only performed by the manufacturer.

A pistolsmith would choose his proofing load a few tenths higher than the normal level the pistol is designed to digest, as a test of the mechanism's ability to withstand that inevitable heavy load inadvertently fired by the shooter. (Heavy loads are usually caused by powder bridging in a measure, user error when setting a measure or scale or the sudden introduction of a random case with much reduced water capacity.) Whatever the cause, spring tensions and parts strength should be such that there is no damage to the mechanism.

I also hasten to add that I have equipped my machine rest with a long choke cable trigger release mechanism, so that I can fire my proofing level loads from a safe position, out of the potential kill zone of shrapnel.

I have never had an accident of this kind, but long ago I decided that while proofing is necessary to establish the soundness of new parts, pressure levels should be well below the primer cratering point and safeguards against the effects of potential problems are only common sense.

I came to this conclusion shortly after I had a pistol loaded with hardball fire unlocked in my hand. It was a most unpleasant experience, caused by a broken firing pin spring that had allowed the point to wedge forward and slam fire the primer before lockup. A freak accident, to be sure, but anything is possible when you handle hundreds of different weapons each year.

If you guessed that the firing pin spring is foremost on my checklist of parts function, you'd be correct.

Each genre of handgun that a pistolsmith improves, modifies or repairs should be tested with a uniform load of known velocity and accuracy. This, of course, requires the use of a chronograph and machine rest, both of which have

been essential acquisitions for pistolsmiths for many years. Their use, together with the accurate ammunition, establishes equipment accuracy potential, as opposed to the human factors and skill level of the shooter.

It is necessary to make the separation so that options in the human factors area can be evaluated. One example of a condition that might set a pistolsmith looking for the wrong things would be hammer bite. Nobody suffering from hammer bite is going to shoot his best string. Knowing the accuracy potential of the weapon, he can look for the cause without waste motion. And, bobbing a hammer or installing a wide grip safety are easy.

One more use of the chronograph is to determine whether the load being used is sub-sonic or super-sonic. The speed of sound at sea level altitude, at 29.53" barometric pressure and 59° F, in 78% humidity is 1120.27 fps. (The speed of sound decreases as altitude increases or the air gets denser and colder.)

The reason the sound barrier is so important in pistol function testing is that many loads used today are in the area just above the speed of sound and depending on ballistic coefficient of the bullet used, it could transition to sub-sonic during flight to the target.

A pistolsmith's reasons for handloading are different. We can't buy the loads we need off the shelf somewhere.

The transition to sub-sonic is always accompanied by a trajectory discontinuity. If the target is positioned within this transition, weapon accuracy may be suspect, when the problem is ammunition deficiency. So, choose your test loads with care and make certain that they are either sub- or super-sonic all the way to the target, for accurate results in your machine rest testing.

A pistolsmith's reasons for handloading are different from those of a shooter or ballistic experimenter. We can't buy the loads we need off a shelf somewhere. It is often convenient to load large quantities of a certain test load, so a progressive loader may be used.

Make certain that the powder measure is changed after the run of test cartridges is loaded, and paint the heads of the test cases with red paint as a warning that they are not your regular loads. You certainly wouldn't want to shoot any long strings with proofing loads.



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S & W J Spring Kit	\$ 8.60
Beretta 92 Spring Kit	\$12.95
SIG-SAUER P226 Spring Kit	\$ 9.60

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C/E Pro-Timer III	\$225.00
C/E Chronograph	\$129.95

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Wichita combat Sight	\$57.95

Books

"You Can't Miss" by John Shaw	\$ 9.95
"Shoot to Win" by John Shaw	\$11.95
"Combat 45 Auto" by Bill Wilson	\$11.95
"Hallocks 45 Handbook"	\$11.95
"Combat Handgunnery"	\$14.95

Accessories

Chapman Screw Driver Kit	\$19.95
IPSC Target Pastors	\$ 3.50
Lyman Brass Gunsmith Hammer	\$11.70
Lyman Compact Screw Driver Kit	\$22.45
Phelps Dillon 450/550 Case Feeder,	
Freeloader & Adaptor	\$139.95

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Ernie Hill Fas-Trac Holster	\$99.00
B.A.T. Ultra-Comp.III Kit 45 ACP	\$289.95
Eagle 9 Shot Mag	\$27.95

TAFFIN TESTS

In 1900, Germany's Georg Luger patented his improvements on the technically correct, but clumsily carried out, Borchardt pistol.

This proved to be a transition model chambered in 7.63mm Mauser that was followed in 1902 with the introduction of the 9mm Parabellum cartridge and the first pistol to chamber it, the Model 1902

York City distributed the 9mm Luger, many of which carried an eagle on the receiver and are now known to collectors as the American Eagle Lugers.

The 9mm Luger remained in production in Germany until 1942 when it was replaced by the Walther P-38, a "modern" double action semi-automatic. The last, and some would say the best, handgun design of John Browning was the P-35 9mm, the Browning High Power.

This was the first of the high capacity nines holding 14 cartridges and

it was accomplished with a grip that was, and is, comfortable to most hands.

In the 1950's, the U.S. Military started overtures of interest in a new lightweight sidearm resulting in the production of the lightweight Colt Commander in 9mm and .45 ACP and the Smith & Wesson Model 39 9mm. The Military stayed with the old 1911 Government Model and the new Colt and Smith designs became popular with civilians and law enforcement per-

sonnel alike.

I have no intention of dredging up the old 9mm vs. .45 ACP battle. This one has been fought on reams of paper for decades by those more knowledgeable than I, all of which has probably resulted in the changing of not one single mind on the subject.

Besides, comparing the 9mm to the .45 ACP is another example of the old "apples and oranges" comparison. If one really wants a true picture of the 9mm, it should be compared with others of the same caliber, namely the .38 Special, .38 Super, and the .357 Magnum.

The Speer Reloading Manual Number 11 gives a pretty good comparison of the four medium bore cartridges as it contains loading information for all four using 125 grain jacketed bullets. The maximum velocities listed are .38 Special/1074 fps, 9mm/1259 fps, .38 Super/1299 fps, and .357 Magnum/1602 fps.

These velocities were measured with five-inch barrels in the two semi-autos

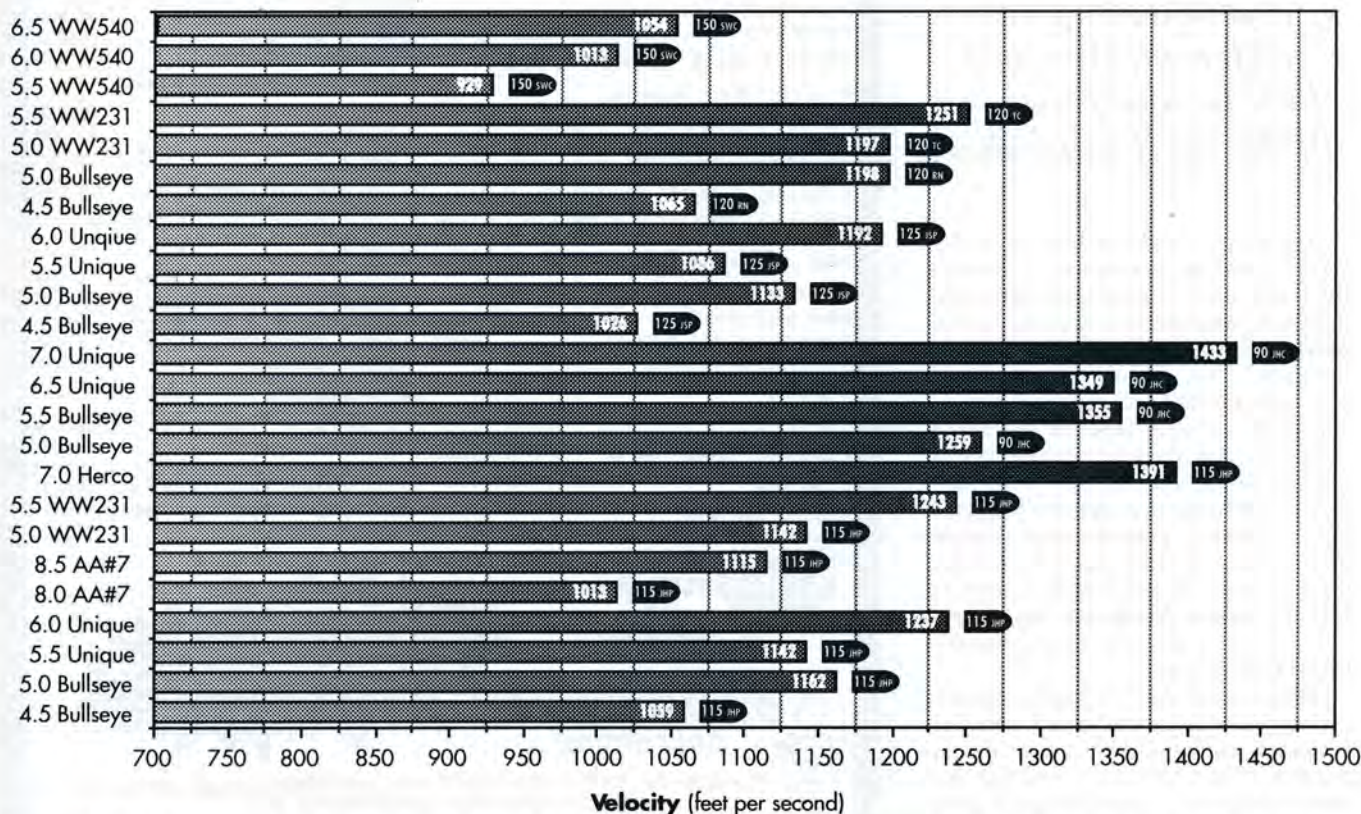
the 9mm

Luger.

In 1904, the German Navy adopted the Marine Model 1904, and in 1908, the Luger and the 9mm were adopted by the German Army as the Pistole Modell 1908 or P-08. Note that the 9mm, which is enjoying so much popularity as a "modern" cartridge, actually pre-dates the .45 ACP that it has replaced in the U.S. Armed Forces.

During the 1920's, Stoeger's of New

High Performance 9mm Favorite Loads



Approach all handloading carefully by reducing charges listed by at least 10% and working up cautiously. Neither the author nor *American Handgunner* can accept responsibility for results obtained with this information due to the inherent variation in reloading components and individual handloading techniques.

and six-inch barrels in the revolvers, so it should be a fairly valid comparison. That places the 9mm quite a bit above the .38 Special, and just barely behind the .38 Super.

All of us are controlled to some extent by our past and I am no exception. My first encounter with the 9mm Parabellum was in 1955 in Elmer Keith's Sixguns. Elmer reported how as a lad he had witnessed a shooting involving the 9mm. A railroad cop spotted a rider of the rails coming down off the top of a boxcar and the railroad cop, who saw him only from behind, decided that he had a wanted criminal in his sights and proceeded to empty his 9mm Luger into his back.

After absorbing all those rounds, the large black man slowly turned as he held onto the ladder on the side of the railroad car, drew a .45 Colt Single Action from his waistband and killed the misinformed cop with one shot.

Elmer then related how the man lived long enough to take care of his business affairs before he died.

Granted, the 9mm ammunition used was probably military ball and not modern jacketed hollow point style, but the story remains part of my past and always biases my look at the 9mm.

My first contact with the .38 Super was by reading Jeff Cooper in the late Fifties and being enthralled by his mention of the .38 Super as a beautiful trail gun. So, naturally, I began with and still have a real liking for the .38 Super. Had the two cartridges been interchanged in the two stories, my feelings would probably be different.

The only gain of the .38 Super over the 9mm is in case capacity which allows better use of bullets in the 140 to 160 grain weight range.

My first 9mm handgun was the Smith & Wesson Model 39 followed by the Colt Commander. Neither of these saw much use-- not because they weren't good guns but because the 9mm cartridge was such a pain to reload.

By that time I had made a great leap forward and acquired tungsten carbide sizing dies for resizing most of my handgun cartridges and it was goodbye to the old lube pad, except for the 9mm. Since the 9mm is slightly tapered, it would be some time into the future before anyone offered a tungsten carbide sizing die. In my frustration and annoyance with the messy lube pad, both 9mm's were traded off. I wish I had them back.

These days reloading the 9mm is much easier with the addition of a Hornady Titanium Nitride sizing die that allows the 9mm brass to be resized without lubrication. That takes care of one major obstacle to reloading for the 9mm. But there are others.

The 9mm is a very short cartridge of about three-fourths of an inch in length which turns out to be a mite too short for my fumbling fingers to handle very effi-

ciently, the .38 Super at about nine-tenths of an inch being the lower limit for my enjoyable handling during reloading.

If one happens to have the hands of a pianist, there is no problem; with hands like two bunches of bananas, there is a significant problem.

The 9mm has the distinction of being the medium bore cartridge that has the most different guns available to chamber it and also probably the greatest number of different manufacturers of both guns and ammunition. Therein lies another problem.

A lack of real standardization leads to quite a variation in rim thickness, neck thickness and case length of 9mm brass. This is one cartridge that demands separation of brass by headstamp.

The 9mm is also a temperamental cartridge requiring careful reloading and experimenting to find the best load for each particular gun. It also has an undeserved reputation for inaccuracy when, in fact, it is often compared out-of-the-box to tuned semi-automatics of other calibers. Fit a niner with a good quality barrel like a Bar-Sto and it will begin to sit up and sing. A nicely accurized 9mm can at least equal a tuned .38 Super.

In the bygone days, I always had trouble finding loads that would feed reliably through the Colt Commander or Smith & Wesson 39. Not so with one of the new breed of 9mm's. The Ruger P-85 feeds everything, and while it is not nearly so elegant as either the earlier Colt or Smith & Wesson, it gets the job done with acceptable accuracy and 100% reliability.

By acceptable accuracy, I'm talking three to four-inch groups at 25 yards with some special loads getting down close to the two-inch neighborhood, all acceptable for the main purpose of the 9mm which seems to be a defensive pistol.

The Super has one major advantage over the 9mm in that it can make major for IPSC shooting while the 9mm has to really be pushed hard to be rated as a major caliber (bullet weight times velocity equalling 175,000). The 9mm has so little case capacity that heavier bullets will often bulge the sides of the brass case if they are seated deep and refuse to fit in the magazine if they are seated out.

Favorite loads for the 9mm include 115 grain jacketed bullets from Sierra, Speer and Hornady loaded over 7.0 grains of Herco which for those in the know is the powder for loading the 9mm.

According to my double chronograph set-up consisting of a PACT PC and an Oehler Model 33, these three bullets with the aforementioned 7.0 grains of Herco clock out at 1391 fps, 1387 fps and 1369 fps respectively and have proven to be among the most accurate loads in the Ruger P-85 I am presently using.

For a practice bullet, Zero's 115 gr. FMJ over the same charge goes 1378 fps and shoots just as accurately. It is easy to see that there is not a penny's worth of

difference with these four bullets.

For slightly milder loading of the same bullets, I have experienced good accuracy with 6.0 grains of Unique at around 1250 fps, 5.5 grains of HP-38 for around 1175 fps, and 8.5 grains of AA #7 for around 1100 fps. All of these loads are in the two-inches at 25 yards neighborhood with the Ruger P-85.

Another good load for the 9mm consists of Sierra's 90 grain Jacketed Hollow Cavity over 7.0 grains of Unique for 1400+ fps. While I have not used it as such, I would expect this load to be a good close range bunny bopper and rodent radiator.

Good cast bullet loads for the 9mm, at least for the Ruger P-85, are a little more difficult to find. My best results have been with the Lyman #356402 weighing right at 120 grains and used with 7.5 or 8.0 grains of AA #7 for 1050 to 1100 fps. This is a very mild load that is perfect for killing tin cans, rocks, sticks, etc. A pleasant way to spend a lazy day.

My favorite cast bullet for the 9mm is RCBS's #38-150KT which is actually intended for use in the .38 Special or .357 Magnum, but when sized to .356" finds itself being used in many of my .38 Super and 9mm reloads. When seated to a depth to allow functioning through the magazine, which in my Ruger P-85 is just below the crimping groove, a slight bulge is raised in the walls of the brass. Using either 6.5 grains of WW540 or 4.5 grains of Herco gives over 1000 fps with this bullet and good accuracy.

For me, the 9mm is basically a medium bore plinking gun. I certainly would feel much better with it as a defensive weapon than my little five shot Chief's Special, and it is definitely a step up for those law enforcement personnel that have been saddled with .38 Specials.

While I would not feel hopelessly undergunned defensively speaking with a 9mm, it would not be my first choice, nor even second, or third, or fourth. If I found myself in a situation in which it had to be first choice, I would do three things: 1) load it with 115 grain Jacketed Hollow Points at 1400 fps 2) make sure my insurance policy was paid up 3) Most importantly, pray a lot that I never had to use it.

I do find the 9mm somewhat intriguing and while I have no intention of trading in my big bore sixguns for high capacity wonderlines, I would like to someday have two other 9mm semi-automatics. One would be the aforementioned compact niner and the other would be a custom Luger with an eight to ten-inch barrel and adjustable sights. Please don't ask me why.

I have learned two major things about the 9mm. First, it is not as good as its supporters would have us believe, and perhaps even more importantly, it is not as bad as its detractors, many of whom are my dearest friends, would also have us believe.



.375 JDJ

HANDGUN HUNTING'S HARDEST HITTER

By Mark Hampton



Quality hunting trips are becoming more expensive every year and many of our hunting seasons seem to be getting shorter and shorter. If you're a handgun hunter, it only makes sense to choose a gun and cartridge combination that will perform reliably and efficiently when the moment of truth finally arrives.

Whether I'm stalking elephants in the famed Zambezi Valley or hunting white-tails on my own farm, I keep turning to one particular cartridge I can depend on 100% of the time, the .375 JDJ.

Beyond any shadow of a doubt, the .375 JDJ is the greatest all-around handgun hunting cartridge available today. Period.

Boy, that's a mighty strong statement, but if you'll give me half the chance, I'll prove it.

First of all, let's clear the air concerning some terminology I've used. Webster defines *greatest* as beyond the average or ordinary. That's no problem, the .375 JDJ is anything but average or ordinary.



The author took this magnificent bull elk with his .375 JDJ Contender from SSK Industries. He argues that the .375 JDJ is the most versatile hunting handgun cartridge. It's a working gun, but the lavishly engraved SSK Handcannon (L) proves that a serious gun can be rendered a work of art by the right hands. This gun was auctioned off to benefit Safari Club International.

Secondly, when I refer to *all-around*, I'm talking about being able to hunt any species of game from prairie dogs to elephant. Granted, that's a pretty big order to fill for one cartridge, but nothing the .375 JDJ can't handle.

After taking several dozen species of big game including elephant, Cape buffalo, rhino and lion, as well as whitetail, mulies and elk, I have at least some basic knowledge of what the .375 JDJ is capable of doing.

Before we go into the capabilities of the .375 JDJ, let's first examine a little bit of its history.

Back in 1978, J.D. Jones, the mentor behind SSK Industries (721 Woodvue Lane, Wintersville, OH 43952, (614)-264-0176) envisioned a handgun cartridge capable of handling any hunting task. The do-anything type.

A cartridge that would be effective beyond 100 yards, capable of taking a whitetail buck in your back forty or a Cape buffalo in Africa, and not requiring any special loading techniques such as

fireforming, trimming or any other boring, time-consuming tasks--that's what J.D. wanted.

Based on the very strong .444 Marlin case, the .375 JDJ is a simple-to-make wildcat designed for the Thompson/Center Contender. In addition to Contenders, it has since become fairly popular in custom Ruger No. 1s, Ruger No. 3s, TCRs, and Contender Carabines.

Reloading for the cartridge is very straight forward. Simply run a .444 Marlin case through a .375 JDJ full-length sizing die, fill the necked-down cases with your favorite load and you're ready for the hunt. No fireforming or trimming is required.

The .375 JDJ is a docile and predictable cartridge that can be loaded to maximum performance with new brass. Due to the large case capacity with a low chamber pressure, case life far exceeds many other wildcats. I have several that have been loaded dozens of times without any signs of case fatigue. The .375 JDJ is simply and quickly loaded with a two die

set, and allows you maximum time in the field or on the range rather than sitting at your loading bench working.

After experimenting with this cartridge a great deal and talking with other handgun hunters who use the .375 JDJ, it appears that H-4895 and 2520 are the propellants of choice with medium and heavy weight bullets. These powders give excellent accuracy with most bullet weights. In short barrels, they're clean burning powders, too.

Other powders in the medium burning range such as RL-12, WW748, IMR-4895, H-322, and IMR-4064 work well, but I keep going back to H-4895 and 2520 for my loadings.

One of the criteria for making the .375 JDJ so versatile is the wide selection of quality bullets available. The same bullets are used with any of the .375 caliber rifles.

The 220 grain Hornady is probably the best deer hunting bullet and when sighted-in three inches high at 100 yards, it hits about three inches low at 200 yards.



Several avid handgun hunters use this bullet for mule deer, antelope and larger animals with glowing results.

Using 50 to 52 grains of newly manufactured H-322, the 220 grain flat point Hornady leaves the barrel around 2250 fps. It readily expands on deer-size animals at 250 yards yet at close range does not disintegrate on impact. It's a fine choice for medium sized game.

Hornady's 270 grain spire point is the most popular bullet for this caliber and makes ideal medicine for large game such as elk, moose or bear. The 270s are accurate and penetrate very well, usually exiting elk on broadside shots. My favorite load is 52 grains of 2520 which gives the 270 Hornady 2075 fps, and is extremely accurate in my gun.

Speer's 285 grain Grand Slam is quite good also. The 270 and 300 grain Hornady roundnose soft point bullets are great when ranges are short. The 300 grain Sierra BT is a great long range target bullet, but its expansion characteristics are not suitable for the .375 JDJ impact velocities.

Specialty bullet manufacturers such as Cor-Bon and Swift produce quality .375 caliber bullets that have proved themselves time and time again in the field. The 300 grain FMJ (solid) from Hornady at 1950 to 2000 fps is used mostly for large dangerous game and usually penetrates the heads of elephants completely, exiting the massive skull on side brain shots. It's a tremendous bullet and if there is a better solid made for the .375 JDJ, I'm not aware of it.

When the 300 grain solid is pushed by 46 to 48 grains of H-4895, you can tackle any critter on earth. I've used this bullet several times and used it to take the only rhino I'll ever shoot. Broadside at 60 yards, the bullet hit the rhino right behind the shoulders taking out both lungs and actually lodged in the thick, tough skin on the opposite side. That's a fair amount of penetration. When the bullet was recovered, there was no deformation and it looked brand new except for the rifling marks.

I've examined other 300 FMJ Hornadys taken from Cape buffalo and elephant that looked identical. They usually exit from Cape buffalo on broadside shots unless both shoulders are hit.

Accuracy is phenomenal, especially when you consider the size of slug you're launching. Inch and a half groups at 100 yards are common, and half-inch groups

300 grain Hornady FMJ

Powder	Charge	Velocity
H-322	42.5 grs.	1900 fps
H-4895	46.0 grs.	1900 fps
IMR-4064	48.0 grs.	1900 fps
WW-748	51.0 grs.	1900 fps
AA-2520	48.0 grs.	1950 fps

case: Remington primer: Federal #210 seating depth: bullet .030" from engaging rifling

270 grain Hornady Spitzer

Powder	Charge	Velocity
AA-2520	52.0 grs.	2080 fps
H-322	45.0 grs.	2000 fps
H-4895	48.0 grs.	2000 fps
IMR-4064	49.5 grs.	2000 fps

case: Remington primer: Federal #210 seating depth: base of bullet flush with base of neck

220 grain Hornady Flat-Point

Powder	Charge	Velocity
IMR-4198	39.0 grs.	2100 fps
H-322	51.0 grs.	2250 fps
H-4895	52.0 grs.	2200 fps

case: Remington primer: Federal #210 seating depth: base of bullet flush with base of neck
Powder and powder charges may be used with 235 gr. bullets also.

Master engraver Giuseppe Forte embellished this SSK Handcannon with deep-relief game scenes accented with flourishes of Germanic scrolls. The left sideplate shows a Cape buffalo glaring through a tangle of African thorn bush. The right sideplate depicts a magnificent Greater Kudu looking furtively back over his shoulder.

not uncommon. If you experiment with different loads, you will probably come up with tighter clusters. Don't be surprised when you witness better groups out of the .375 JDJ than from your favorite deer rifle.

As a hunting cartridge, the .375 JDJ is impressive. Larry Kelly and Lucky Nightingale have probably taken more big game, including Africa's Big Five, (rhino, elephant, Cape buffalo, lion and leopard) than any two hunters I know. Both have used the .375 JDJ as their main caliber. Their accomplishments have truly shown that handguns are legitimate sporting arms.

Regardless of what you're hunting, the .375 JDJ is the kind of cartridge you can count on when the opportunity of a lifetime presents itself. Just because it delivers a big slug, don't think for one minute it's a short range only proposition.

While hunting in Zimbabwe a few years back, I witnessed a 350 yard shot on a bushbuck, an animal about the size of our whitetail deer. The shooter was J.D. Jones and, no, it wasn't a "luck shot."

Blackie Sleeve used a Hornady 220 grain Flat Point to harvest his trophy blackbuck from 200 yards. On a recent South African safari, well-known handgun authority Hal Swiggett claimed his record-class blesbuck from 300 steps using Hornady's 270 grain Spire Point.

These factual statements are not made to advocate that anyone should shoot game from long range. All these hunters I've mentioned shoot many rounds through their guns, along with being well-disciplined, dedicated, experienced handgun hunters. They employ a high quality scope, shoot from a good rest when possible, know when not to shoot, and know exactly where the bullet will strike at various yardage.

The bottom line is, the .375 JDJ is capable of making that 200 yard shot, if the shooter does his part.

Don't expect the do-it-all .375 JDJ to knock down everything in its tracks instantly, especially deer-sized or smaller game, when using bullets such as the 270 Hornady. On broadside long shots at thin-skinned, relatively small game, the heavy soft points will not perform radically and simply punch a neat hole from one side through the other. The end result is quickly fatal, but it does not give the spectacular knockdown you may witness with the higher velocity, 220 grain bullets.

By now you probably think it takes some kind of masochist to shoot this handcannon. Not hardly. Recently, I was told of a youngster, Kelley Taylor, who celebrated his 14th birthday by taking Africa's Big Five with an SSK Contender in .375 JDJ. I also know of a woman who has taken a lot of game with her .375 JDJ.

The SSK Contender, when set up

properly with Pachmayr grips, SSK Arrestor Brake or Mag-Na-Port, and the added weight of a scope, is easily controllable and surprisingly quite pleasant to shoot.

My own .375 JDJ is set up with a T'SOB full-length ventilated rib scope mount, which adds a little more weight, along with a quality 4X Bausch and Lomb scope, and I find it easier on my hands than a factory Ruger Super Blackhawk with magnum loads.

SSK Industries can customize the complete gun to your exact specifications, ready to go in the field. Should you prefer just the barrel for your existing Contender frame, they can handle that as well.

I do suggest their T'SOB base mount, if you plan on using a scope. I've owned several, shot thousands of rounds using them, and haven't had one failure. SSK puts out quality merchandise. If you have a problem with anything just call (614) 246-0176, and they will make it right.

The all-around .375 JDJ is a superb performer and delivers prairie dog accuracy with elephant hunting power. So, just because an elephant or rhino hunt is not in your foreseeable future, don't disregard the .375 JDJ. It's a mighty fine deer and antelope hunting round as well. After all, that's why it's the greatest all-around handgun hunting cartridge.



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HANDGUN HUNTING

J. D. JONES

**A HUNTER'S VIEW OF A BULLET AS
 A 'KINETIC ENERGY PENETRATOR'**

A bullet correctly defined is a *kinetic energy penetrator*. Its type may be varied but as long as it is a bullet it is classified as a kinetic energy penetrator—as opposed to a shaped charge, squash head or long rod penetrator.

The ultimate job of any bullet is simply to penetrate the object of its attention. When a bullet cannot penetrate the object, the object has overmatched the bullet.

When the bullet penetrates completely, the bullet has overmatched the object. Overmatching the object shot should be the goal of any cartridge-bullet design.

For a handgun hunter this is doubly important: if the target overmatches the bullet, then the target object frequently is merely wounded, not taken cleanly and humanely.

Essentially a bullet penetrates because it is a solid object moving at a relatively high velocity. Some of the factors determining its ability to penetrate are its momentum, energy, impact velocity, shape, deformability and resistance of the target object.

Bullets normally used in handguns can be categorized in relatively few types. The simplest is the ordinary soft swaged alloy bullet consisting of lead and a small amount of antimony—say one to two percent. This is the type bullet normally found in factory lead roundnose .38 Special ammunition. It is useful for a wide variety of jobs. The soft swaged alloy bullet is usually reasonably accurate, ballistically efficient and inexpensive to manufacture. Because of its low velocity and nose configuration coupled with reasonable sectional density, it is a reasonably good penetrator in many mediums such as flesh or car bodies unless reinforcing braces are struck.

Often accused of overpenetration, its shape is frequently changed to incorporate a flat or blunt nose to increase wounding ability and cut down on penetration somewhat. This shape often incorporates a hollow point to enhance expansion, wounding ability and further reduce penetration.

A bullet that does not deform can be expected to penetrate well while a bullet that deforms badly will usually also penetrate badly. Bullets that are long in relation to their diameter usually penetrate better than those short in relation to their diameter.

Since the waxed naked lead surface of

the bullet is generally limited to velocities of under 1,000 fps, the same relatively soft bullet is encased in a thin jacket made of gilding metal to enable it to be driven to much higher velocities while retaining shape while traversing the barrel and increasing accuracy over that attainable without the jacket.

A soft lead bullet may alter its shape drastically in the barrel if it is not strong enough to resist in barrel stresses. This is also true of overstressing jacketed bullets such as using a 158 grain HP designed for a .357 Magnum in a .358 Winchester rifle.

Some bullets can actually emerge from the barrel in the shape of a wadcutter. Others flare the base as they emerge from the muzzle. Usually, a bullet that has deformed appreciably in the barrel will suffer drastic accuracy problems.

Some of them actually disintegrate in mid-air after leaving the muzzle. This is frequently seen as a gray smoke cloud at the point of disintegration. If the bullet comes apart in the barrel, it is merely a spray of metal from the muzzle.

Core of the Issue

The jacket of a bullet and alloy of the core can very drastically alter its performance on impact. Generally speaking, a hollow pointed, soft cored bullet with a tapered or serrated jacket will afford fast expansion and somewhat limited penetration.

A good example of this would be the Remington semi-jacketed hollow point revolver bullets or the Winchester Silver-tips. These are relatively weakly constructed bullets designed to expand at relatively low velocities.



A jacket may also be made of copper tubing—simple water pipe—filled with lead or a lead alloy to make a bullet. Its core may be bonded to the jacket to prevent core-jacket separation such as in the case of the COR-BON bullet.

The nose may also be closed and a hard lead alloy core inserted to afford a very tough bullet to enhance penetration by resistance to deformation. A small flat on the nose seems to aid straight line penetration by reducing yaw.

Other variations of this type bullet are common. Fifteen years or so ago I used to drill the famous KTW bullet (made from what is loosely termed architectural bronze) base out and fill it with welding rod made from a tungsten alloy to bring

Continued on page 50

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Continued from page 48

the weight up as much as possible.

Larry Kelly used this bullet in the .44 Magnum to successfully take buffalo and elephant in the mid-Seventies. It is now illegal to use the tungsten core in a bullet in the US, but the basic design is still available in the Trophy Bonded Bullets "solid" design which uses a lead insert to bring the weight up. This is an excellent design... if properly made.

Other variations suited for high performance single shot handguns include bullets such as the famed Nosler Partition bullet which has an actual partition of metal separating the front and rear halves of the bullet.

The front half is purposely designed to be weak in most calibers—.375 excepted—to enhance expansion of the front half of the bullet if not blowing it off completely while the rear half holds together to continue penetration. This is an excellent design. It is a viable bullet in the more powerful single shot pistols such as the JDJ calibers in custom T/Cs or in custom XPs in rifle calibers.

A variation of this design is that of the current Jensen bullet which has a solid copper base extending about two thirds of the bullet with a lead core inserted in the front and a sharply tipped plastic nose to provide a ballistically efficient shape combined with positive expansion at low velocities and a basic core that will not

disintegrate.

This is similar to the Nosler Ballistic Tip which is really a hollowpoint with a ballistically efficient windscreen that also aids expansion.

Cast Bullets for Revolvers

If we are concerned with simple penetration of animals it is very very difficult to better the performance of the simple hard alloy cast bullet in revolvers.



Any home bullet caster can find an easily obtained alloy such as wheel weights which may be tempered to provide a very tough bullet capable of substantially higher velocities at the same pressures as is possible with jacketed bullets which will also be very resistant to deformation.

Bullet weight can be increased with cast bullets easily without having to pay the same penalty as in jacketed bullets in reduction of powder capacity of the case.

Generally speaking, a cast bullet of the same weight of a jacketed bullet over identical powder charges will show a velocity increase of a minimum of 125 fps over that of the jacketed bullet. Powder charges under the cast bullet may normally be increased giving additional velocity increases over that attainable with jacketed bullets.

My .44 Magnum bullet design weighs about 320 grains. Any good 7.5 inch barreled 44 can safely give it around 1400 fps which has been proven to give enough penetration to kill even an elephant. It has also successfully taken Cape buffalo and rhino as well as a large variety of other animals in the moose-bear size category.

Further increasing the weight in a short cylindered .44 to 350 grains seems to reduce penetration somewhat while the 350 provides substantially better penetration in cartridges as the .445 Super Mag and .444 Marlin in T/Cs.

Sierra 300 gr. .44 Bullet

The new Sierra jacketed 300 grain .44 bullet is a good step in the right direction. It is superbly accurate. I've recorded numerous revolver groups of around three inches at 100 yards with it in my

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comfort of home, with your own gun. Here's how QUICK SKILL works:

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tuned revolvers. It has a 6% antimony core and conventional thin jacket.

I consider it a good bullet for deer, pigs and small bear. The bullet simply isn't tough enough to resist breaking up on the bones of big animals. I broke them up on kudu (elk size antelope) and warhog (not very big, but big boned) in Africa this summer on shots that I feel would have completely penetrated the animal if made with a proper hard cast 320 grain bullet.

This does not mean the Sierra is a poorly designed bullet—it simply means it should be used on objects the bullet overmatches—not on targets that overmatch the bullet. This is the sensible way to select a bullet.

The 300 grain Sierra should be excellent on raking shots on most medium game animals where a conventional 240 grain HP would give poor performance. On broadside shots the hollowpoint, if it expands, will blow the bigger hole but may not pass all the way through the animal. I've had several failures of this type with the .44 Magnum in the last few years.

Myth of "Energy Dump"

The argument of a bullet staying inside the animal and "dumping" all its energy inside the animal just doesn't wash. That energy is expended to a great extent in deforming the bullet. The por-

tion transferred to the animal is negligible.

As an illustration simply shoot whatever you have into a 50 pound sandbag and see how far the bullet moves it. Or dump one into a downed animal the next opportunity you have. The impact of a bullet into a dead animal is scarcely noticeable.

Bullets do not "slam an animal down," backwards or any other way unless you are talking about terrific overmatches such as high velocity rounds on prairie dogs.

Speaking of medium game (deer-antelope-pigs) and normal calibers you may on occasion get a spectacular animal reaction to the bullet but never much of a physical animal reaction caused by the kinetic energy of the bullet.

I once shot a gemsbok—a magnificent African antelope—dead center through the lungs with a .375 JDJ only to have it start running and kicking like a bucking horse for about 100 yards. Those kind of spectacular reactions are the animal's reaction to the bullet; not a physical reaction actually caused by the bullet's strike.

The various 7mm pistols have a reputation for very erratic performance on game. In my opinion, their performance is not erratic at all.

When a bullet constructed for pistol or low velocity rifles is used results are gen-

erally satisfactory once 7 TCU ballistics are exceeded or ranges are kept very short. When bullets constructed for 7mm Magnum impact velocities are used in pistols the results are predictable too. No expansion and very small wound channels resulting in lost animals is to be expected. This also applies to any other caliber too.

Strong jacketed rifle bullets must be matched to the cartridge and game closely or they simply won't work well.

Solids

In something like the .375 JDJ (when used on large boned animals) it is frequently desirable to use a "solid" such as the Hornady FMJ which is designed to resist deformation when striking very large bones. It has a strong alloy core and clad steel jacket which is very strong. Its blunt round nose tends to penetrate in a straight line and it seldom gives any problems.

My biggest problems with this bullet is not being able to shoot one animal because of another behind the one I want. I've seen this bullet fired from the .375 JDJ penetrate both shoulders, including the bones of an Asian buffalo, and kick up a 20 foot high dust cloud when it hit the ground behind him. The buffalo weighed in the area of 2200 pounds—about 600 pounds more than an average Cape buffalo.



NEW JACKETED BULLET LOADS FOR IPSC SHOOTING WITH .38 SUPER

Within the last couple of years there has been an alarming trend in .38 Supers. I'm not sure where it began, but some shooters started using 124 to 130 gr. jacketed 9mm bullets trying to make "major" power factor with them (bullet weight X velocity = 175,000).

The reason for the switch to jacketed bullets was a good one for the smoke generated from cast bullet loads can sometimes obscure the sights and make the range look like a Civil War battlefield. Regrettably the velocities needed to make major with these light bullets simply can not be attained without exceeding reasonable pressure levels.

Some loads tested exceed the accepted maximum pressure of 35,700 CUP by over 10,000 CUP.

There have been instances of ruptured cases and a few injuries not to mention the poor guns that positively take a beating. You name it and it has happened to the guns. The breech face is battered and, since primer leakage is a fairly common event, there has been erosion around the firing pin hole in the slide that leads to more problems.

One event that seems to be fairly common is the shearing of primer metal by

the firing pin. The way this happens is that the gun begins to unlock before the firing pin has retracted back into the slide. If you look at a case where this has happened you can spot it right away for the firing pin dent will be elongated and, very often, there will be telltale brass showing where the firing pin has pierced the normal plating on the primer.

In extreme cases, little bits of primer metal get into the slide and can disable the gun by interfering with firing pin movement.

The only reason shooters have been able to get away with the light bullet loads is that most of the bullets used are 9mm with a .355" diameter while the barrels run from .356" to 0.357". The under-size bullets have helped hold pressures down some, but not enough.

Marty Liggins of Accurate Arms is quite emphatic on the subject of these bullets and states, "Jacketed bullets lighter than 140 gr. can not be used for major loads in the .38 Super without exceeding safe pressures."

New Jacketed Bullets

Still, there is a real attraction to using jacketed bullets in certain circumstances and all is not lost. Two new bullets may solve the problem. C-P Bullets has a 150

gr. jacketed roundnose and Speer has a 147 gr. truncated cone in their TMJ construction. TMJ stands for totally metal jacketed and the process plates a copper jacket onto a lead core.

Tests of some loads using these bullets have shown pressures right around 34,000 CUP. This is higher than I'd like to see it, but safe as long as the loader takes some precautions.

Let's begin by defining what we want to accomplish. To barely make the 175 major power factor you must have a velocity of 1167 fps with a 150 gr. bullet and 1190 fps for one that weighs 147 gr. But obviously you don't want to take a chance on variations and most shooters load to higher velocities.

A power factor of 180 is a good compromise and should be adequate for most variations caused by temperature differences. A 180 power factor requires 1200 fps for the 150 gr. and 1224 fps for the 147 gr. Speer bullet.

The only way you can load to these levels is by paying careful attention to all the components in the load and testing them in your specific gun.

We all know that there are variations from gun to gun but the differences can be substantial. As a part of this test I fired the same load in three different guns and found a difference of as much as 30 fps in average velocity between them.

The bottom line is that you can't take my word for this; you have to test and work up carefully in your pistol. The loads that I've developed have been safe in the guns in which I have fired them but that is absolutely no guarantee that they will be in any other pistol.

C-P "Elite" Bullet

Credit must be given to C-P Bullets (1814 Mearns Rd., Dept. AH, Warminster, PA 18974) for providing a starting point with their "Elite" 150 gr. jacketed round nose bullet. It is a conventional style but in a rather unusual weight.

John Rickover of C-P Bullets recognized the need for something that would allow major loads with jacketed bullets and was very aware of the problems associated with trying to push light bullets to major velocities. He has developed loads that have been pressure tested using Accurate Arms #7 that provided the starting point for this study.

Heavy 9mm Bullets

A fairly recent development in another area, the 9mm Luger, is likely to have an effect on things that we can do with the .38 Super. Right now there is a lot of interest in heavier than normal bullets in the 9mm Luger.

The current rage among law enforcement agencies seems to be Winchester's subsonic 147 gr. JHP 9mm Luger round. Federal has one in their Hydra-Shok line of premium ammunition. It would not surprise me to see announcements of

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other component bullets in this weight range.

As I was beginning to work on the project I had the good fortune to visit the Lewiston, Idaho home of Speer bullets. While I was there I happened to notice a rather unusual bullet on a desk. When I asked about it I was told that it was an experimental 147 gr. 9mm bullet made by their TMJ process.

I was able to prevail upon The Good Ol' Boys to furnish some of them for testing and, by the time you read this, they should be available.

There are a few other possibilities that I haven't tried yet and I'm sure others are coming, but the important element is that the diameter be in the 9mm Luger range of .355". There are plenty of .38 Special bullets in the 158 gr. weight range but those are usually sized .356-.357" and would lead to high pressure.

Case Expansion

One of the best indicators of pressure levels in rifles is to measure expansion of the case in the web area right in front of the extractor groove. This can be useful in pistols too.

New .38 Super cases from Remington and PMC were used for most of these tests. The normal diameter of new cases runs around .380" to .381" and when fired I have found expansion of as much as .009" depending upon the specific gun.

Of the three guns used in these tests, two have the fully supported chamber barrels and one has a standard barrel. Surprisingly, there was no difference in case expansion with the standard barrel.

Obviously, any gross bulging of the case is an indicator that the load is too hot and there's another thing you can look for. Fired cases have an expansion ring that is usually visible and you can tell at a glance if there are problems. If you can see bulging in the area of least support that's trouble and I think it's a great idea to carefully inspect each and every case that is used for a major load every time it's reloaded.

It is also important to adjust the sizing die to resize as much of the case as possible.

Primers

One of the best things to come from all the work involved in this article has to do with primers. John Rickover of C-P bullets told me that he had been using small rifle primers in his major loads and I've done quite a bit of testing to compare loads with both small pistol and rifle primers.

We all know that rifle primers contain more primer mix or a hotter mix to ignite the slower burning rifle powders so it would be logical to think that you would get higher velocities if you use a rifle primer in a pistol load. Such is not the case.

I compared identical loads where the

only difference was the primer and there was no *significant* difference in velocities. The key word here is significant for the velocities of loads using rifle primers were usually a few fps faster, but there were also cases where velocities were either the same or just a bit slower.

All this proves that we're getting adequate ignition in the first place.

The real attraction to using small rifle primers is the fact that they have a thicker cup and are more resistant to primer flow than conventional pistol primers. Comparing the condition of fired primers of both types shows that the rifle primers are less flattened and have little or no evidence of flowing back into the firing pin hole. To me this is a significant advantage and safety factor.

It is widely assumed that the thicker cup of rifle primers makes them difficult to ignite with the energy available from pistol firing pin strikes, but I have never had a misfire with any of the three test guns and no change in firing pin spring or other modification is needed.

Still, as with any departure from accepted practice it is wise to thoroughly test your gun with rifle primers, if you chose to use them, before the first match.

Best Powder Choice

It will come as no surprise to most of you that Accurate Arms #7 seems to be the powder of choice for major velocity

loads in the .38 Super. This is especially true when you're using jacketed bullets.

One of the reasons #7 is so popular is that we have a lot of experience, and pressure tested data to back it up. I do not, however, think it's the only choice. Powders such as Blue Dot are certainly capable of major velocity loads but the fact that many IPSC shooters use presses with slide type powder measures, strongly favors the use of a ball type powders.

Of those, Accurate Arms #7, Winchester 540 and Winchester 571 have been used with some success. We are very definitely engaged in a balancing act between powder burning rate, velocity and pressure.

If the powder we select burns too slowly we won't be able to achieve the needed velocity. If, on the other hand, it burns too fast we will exceed safe pressure levels before we reach the needed speed. You can probably get there, but only at the expense of too much pressure.

Blue Dot seems to be the slowest powder that will work in the .38 Super and Winchester 540 is about the fastest. Both Accurate Arms #5 and Winchester 473 AA are too fast for major loads although they would work well enough for lighter practice loads.

Hodgdon HS-6 and HS-7 are similar to Winchester 540 and 571 respectively, but I have not seen any data using them.

Continued on page 108

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minimum charge weights and less recoil. Magnum owners choose Hercules Blue Dot® for silhouette shooting. Hercules Unique® is the all-purpose choice for handgun versatility. Your enjoyment of the sport is our target. For a free copy of *Hercules Reloaders' Guide*, see your dealer, or write: Hercules Incorporated, Product Information, Hercules Plaza, Wilmington, DE 19894.



Ernie Hill's FAS-TRAC

*A radical new
speed holster for
action shooting*

By Dave Anderson

Photos by Ichiro Nagata

Erne Hill Speed Leather has become so much a part of the IPSC and action shooting scene that one sometimes forgets how relatively few years these products have been on the market. Ernie Hill holsters first started to show up in late 1984, and really came to the attention of the IPSC people at the 1985 U.S. Nationals.

Within a year it seemed that every second shooter was wearing a Hill rig, and by 1987 one could attend a match and find nine out of 10 competitors using Hill leather. Such dominance is astonishing, for holster choice tends to be a highly personal thing, and for any one brand to become so dominant was unprecedented.

IPSC competitors want a holster that will retain the gun during vigorous physical activity; that allows a fast draw; and that will stand up under heavy use.

Drawing (no pun intended) on his experience as world fast-draw champ, and the experience of IPSC shooters, Ernie Hill came up with his Model 666. This incorporated a heavy steel liner that kept the holster from getting mashed flat when the shooter went prone, top and bottom screws to dial in virtually any degree of retention, and a low-cut front opening to minimize the amount the gun muzzle had to be raised before clearing



leather.

And he introduced his number coding for various holster rakes: a "0" rake meant the muzzle was vertical, #1 was raked slightly forward, #2 was for an appendix carry, #3 was a crossdraw.

This model was soon replaced by the Model 666F, which had similar features but included a new innovation — a leather covered steel "fender" connecting the holster to the belt.

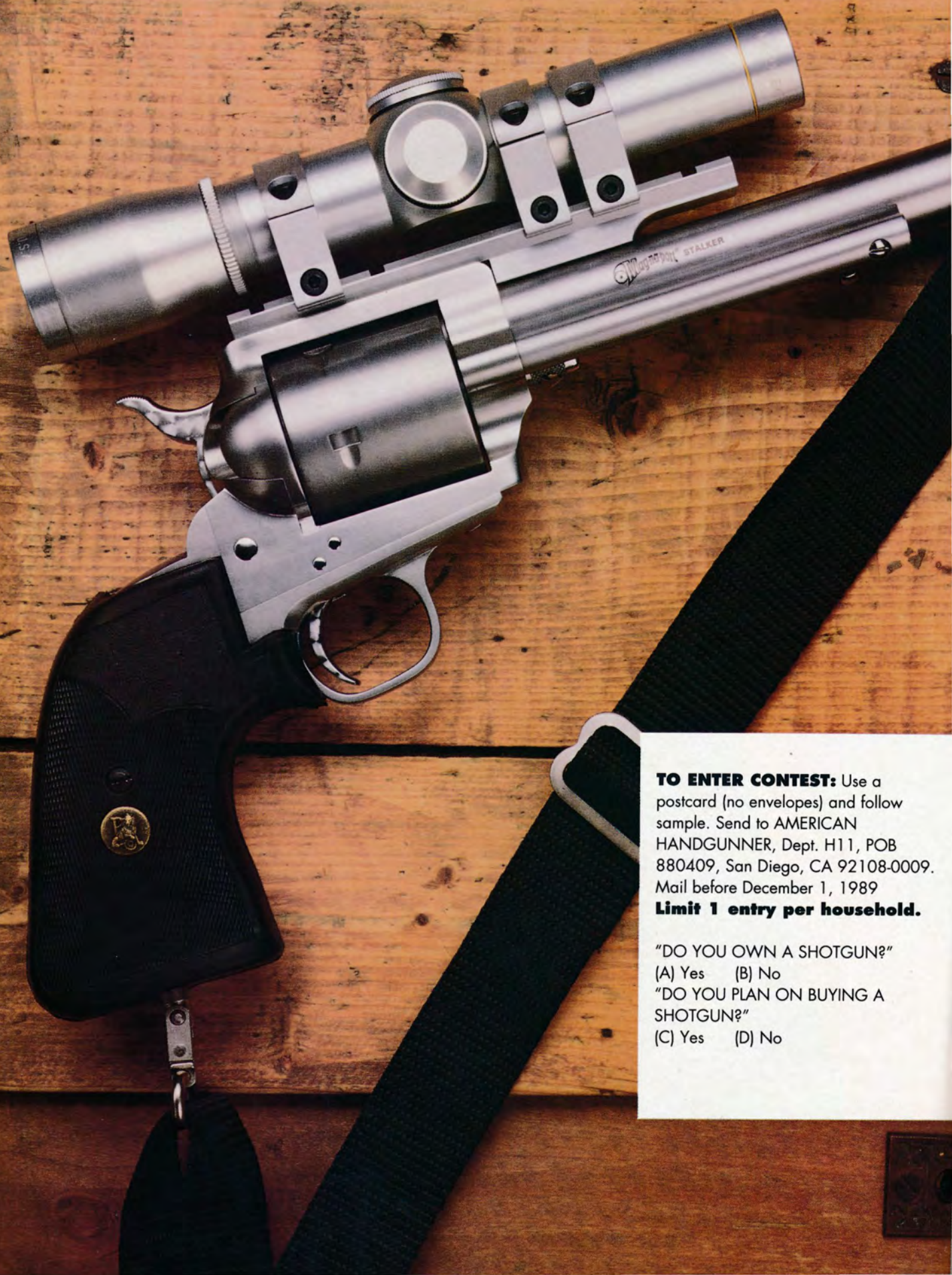
This moved the holster out from the body a little, allowing easier access to the gun butt and a more consistent draw. It also made it possible to vary holster rake just by changing fenders. If a shooter found a #1 rake wasn't quite right, he could buy a new fender at nominal cost rather than a complete new holster.

Competitors are more concerned with utility than appearance, but it certainly didn't hurt that the 666F was an aesthetically pleasing holster, with clean, trim lines, and made with the finest materials and workmanship.

I recall reading once of a big-league ballplayer (I believe it was in *Ball Four* by Jim Bouton) who was asked why he was so insistent on having his uniforms perfectly tailored. He replied, "I just play better when I know I look bitchin' out there." For some

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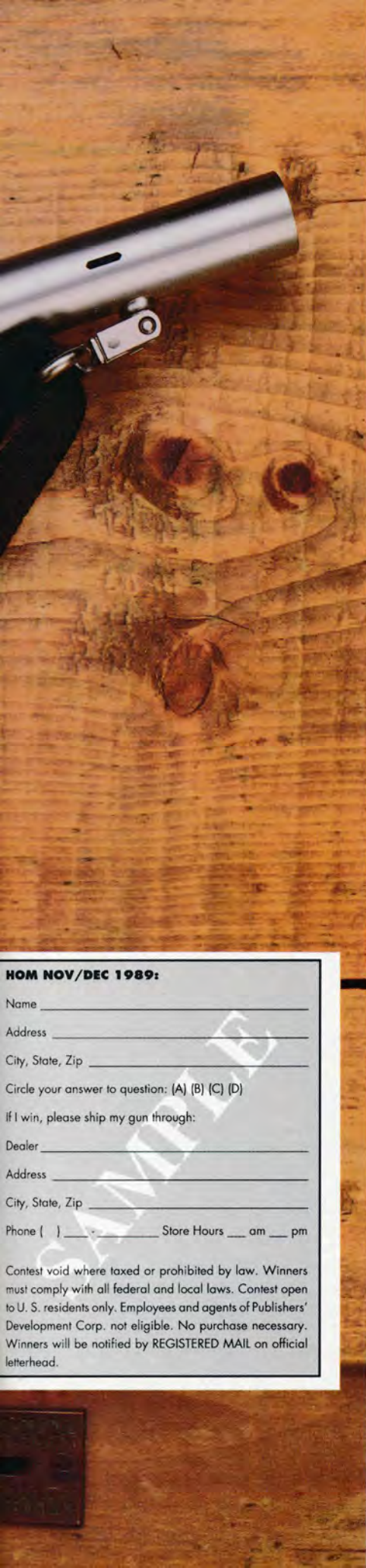
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Mag-na-port Arms specializes in handguns, although the firm that has become synonymous with "recoil reduction" also plies a lively trade with rifles and shotguns. But handguns, and specifically hunting handguns, have long been the favorite of Mag-na-port.

The custom shop of Mag-na-port Arms is staffed with some of the finest pistolsmiths in America. The Stalker is a fine example of the Mag-na-port custom hunting handgun at its best.

The Stalker was originally conceived on the Ruger Super Blackhawk, but the enormous popularity of this revolver "designed by hunters, for hunters" has expanded the Stalker to include a customized S&W Model 29 and Ruger Super Redhawk. Now a new Stalker joins the line up.

The Mag-na-port "Casull Stalker" is based on the Freedom Arms single-action revolver, widely hailed as the "world's finest revolver." Mag-na-port's skilled gunsmiths receive the Casulls from Freedom Arms when they are about 80% finished and then the custom gun specialists go to work. The barrel is cut to 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " which handgun hunters have found to be the ideal compromise between maximum velocity and best balance.

Naturally the barrel is Mag-na-ported about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ " behind the carefully crowned barrel. Because of the tremendous power of the .454 Casull, the Mag-na-porting is actually the style usually used on heavy-kicking rifles. Consisting of four patented ports, the Mag-na-port process includes two trapezoidal ports and two oval ports 180° apart and the other two 45° apart on either side of the barrel.

Independent tests conducted by H.P. White Laboratories have shown that Mag-na-porting reduces "free recoil" by over 20%. Neither muzzle velocity nor accuracy are affected by Mag-na-porting.

The Casull Stalker is treated to a deluxe action job that slicks up the trigger for a smooth and crisp let-off. The trigger and hammer are both jeweled and polished. All screws and pins are brightly polished for smoother functioning, a "hidden" attention to detail that characterizes the fine workmanship of Mag-na-port's pistolsmiths.

A Leupold 2x scope is securely attached to an SSK three-ring T'SOB scope base to withstand the pounding of the potent .454 Casull cartridge.

Sling swivel studs are fitted to the barrel and frame for convenient carry by the handgun hunter. The Casull Stalker is handsomely refinished with Mag-na-port's "velvet hone" finish. Pachmayr grips round out the package.

Mag-na-port carries the .454 Casull Stalker in stock, ready for immediate delivery, as the gun is shown here. Major credit cards are accepted on the \$1,375.00 Casull Stalker. Other Stalker conversions start at \$885.00. (Prices include the gun itself, not just the custom work.)

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PACT Mk III Timer and Chronograph

By Charles E. Petty

Photo by Ichiro Nagata

The development of accurate electronic timers is, for practical shooters, on a par with the compensator. In the beginning we had to practice and compete at the mercy of a stopwatch, and the man operating it. The blink of a range officer's eye could be the difference between a good stage and a disaster. The sound actuated timer eliminates all of those nightmares and when that rather basic accomplishment is coupled with modern, computer based technology, you can learn, sometimes painfully, how badly you blew that last draw or reload.

The PACT (Practical Applied Computer Technology) MK III timer is the latest in the evolution of these gadgets and is so sophisticated that it will do everything but whistle Dixie and I have no doubt that, for a few dollars more, it could do that too.

The heart of the unit is one of those neat little microprocessors that used to occupy a whole room in first generation computers. The development of microchips makes it possible to have, in a five inch square box, more computer power than some of the early mainframes.

Practical shooters expend prodigious amounts of ammunition, time, and money in the pursuit of improved skill and a timer is an essential training tool. We are also forever wedded to the "power factor" and must test our ammunition to see that it makes major.

The MK III is both an excellent timer and a superb chronograph and it's all in the same box. The programming of the MK III's memory chip is the real significant accomplishment for it is intended to furnish just about any information you would want or need: whether its measuring shooting times or the speed of your bullet. What better gadget than one that performs both functions? What differentiates the MK III from other timers and chronographs is the keyboard that allows the user to enter information into the computer's memory and also gives the user the option of selecting, from the menu, a variety of timer or chronograph functions. The computer's sophistication allows the use of a 32 character alphanumeric LCD display that presents a two line readout that does not depend upon using number segments to form letters.

When you turn it on the computer "wakes up" in the timer mode and all you have to do to begin timing shots is press "GO". There is a random delay of 2 to 3.5 seconds before the beep indicates the beginning of the timing cycle. The LCD will then display the shot number, time interval between the last two shots and total elapsed time.

Everything is stored in the computer's memory and a simple press of the "RVW" (review) key lets you go through all the stored information one step at a time. Reviewing allows you to time your draw and the interval between every shot. If there was a reload or movement involved somewhere in the string you could find out how long that took as well.

Each press of the "RVW" key advances the display one step until you reach the end of the stored data. Pressing "GO" erases all the data and starts another timing cycle.

Continued on page 87

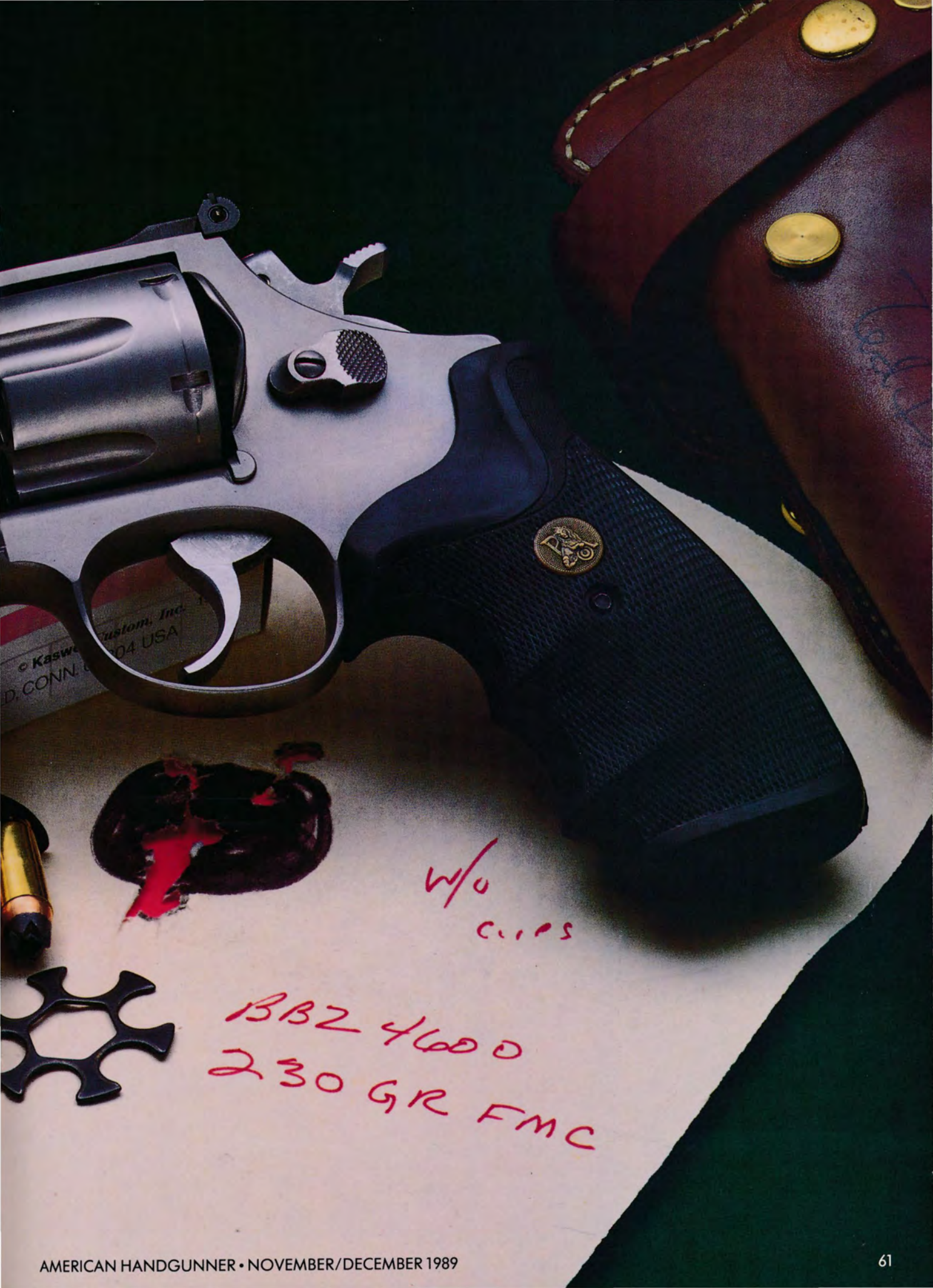


STAINLESS THUNDER

By John Taffin

Photos by Ichiro Nagata





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w/o
cups

BBZ 4600
230 GR FMC

In 1916 it was obvious to all but the most naive that the United States would soon be at war. Smith & Wesson, in conjunction with Springfield Armory, began working on a .45 caliber revolver that would fire the government handgun cartridge, the rimless .45 ACP (Automatic Colt Pistol). Once the United States entered World War I, the doughboys would need sidearms and it would be impossible to provide enough Government Model Colt 1911 semi-automatics to supply the demand.

Smith & Wesson was able to adapt their Second Model Hand Ejector, normally chambered in .44 Special, .45 Colt, .38-40, and .44-40, to fire the rimless .45 ACP by the ingenious use of half-moon clips that each held three rounds. This not only allowed the revolver designed for rimmed cartridges to fire rimless cartridges, but also allowed for much faster reloading provided, of course, that the clips were loaded beforehand.

More than 150,000 S&W .45 ACP revolvers were issued to the troops during the War To End All Wars. As the hostilities waned and Smith & Wesson went back into peacetime production, the 1917 .45 donned civvies in the form of a bright blue finish and checkered grips when it was offered to the shooting public as a commercial model.

With both military surplus and commercial revolvers, it was only natural that the next step would be a cartridge that could be used in these fine old sixguns without the use of clips that could be lost or misplaced. The result was the Remington .45 Auto Rim cartridge, a .45 ACP with a fat rim that supplied the headspace normally provided by the .45 ACP clip.

Many career soldiers, with a fondness in their heart for a good sixgun, held onto their .45 revolvers even after the production of the .45 Colt Government Model allowed supply to fall in line with demand. General Mark Clark was one who carried the .45 Smith & Wesson revolver in two world wars plus numerous other altercations.

EVOLUTION OF THE MODEL 25

After World War II, the design of Smith & Wesson revolvers was modernized to the present short action replacing the older, and some would say smoother, pre-war "long" action. In 1950, the old 1917 .45 received a ribbed six and one-half inch barrel, a micrometer rear sight, a post front sight, and began winning matches as the 1950 Target Model .45.

Within a very few years, the 1950 Target Model received a heavy bull barrel and became the 1955 Target Model, later known as the Model 25 in 1957. Until recently, this version was still available as the Model 25-2.

The 1917, the 1950, and the 1955 .45 sixguns are now gone from the Smith & Wesson lineup, but the .45 AR revolver is a concept that will not die. In 1988 it came back to life as the "45 Cal. Model 1988". Credit a savvy Bill Jensen of Smith & Wesson with the rebirth of the .45 Auto Rim sixgun.

In talking with both S&W marketing department's Sherry Collins and shooting sports specialist Tom Campbell, I was informed that the new .45 is just one more variation on the basic theme at the Smith & Wesson factory, which is to give the shooting public the guns that we want.

PERFECT DEFENSE GUN

The 1988 .45 Auto Rim, or Model 625-2, came about as Jensen's idea to provide revolver shooters in both IPSC and bowling pin shooting with the best possible revolver for the job. In carrying this out, Smith & Wesson may have also provided what may possibly be the best defensive sixgun to come around in a long time.

There are many things right about this revolver showing careful thought before it was built. The caliber is right for its designed purpose as the .45 ACP is the cartridge for all types of action shooting and defensive purposes. No other big bore cartridge is available in so many different loadings, nor so widely accepted and respected.



The full moon clip allows rimless .45 ACP cartridges to be extracted by the revolver's star. The clip also provides proper headspacing. Remington's .45 Auto Rim cartridges can be chambered without the clip thanks to the rim that replaces the extractor groove on the ACP case.







San Fernando police officer and IPSC Combat Master Mike Dalton finds the new 625 to be an excellent weapon for self-defense. The 5" barrel is well balanced for instinct shooting thanks to the L-frame underlug. Of course the .45 is a proven manstopper too.

No falderal on this sixgun. Both hammer and trigger are standard style, not the cumbersome wide "target" type, and the trigger is smoothly finished to allow the finger to slide over the face of it in fast double action shooting.

The sights are plain black, no white outline rear, nor yet a bothersome red insert in the front ramp to cause the gun to shoot to different points of aim according to the available light.

Now it really gets radical. For the first time, an N-frame revolver is available with a five-inch heavy L-frame style barrel with a full underlug plus the added bonus of a rounded K-frame style butt. Both of these factors combine to provide even less felt recoil than is normally experienced by the mild shooting .45 ACP or .45 AR loadings.

With these two factors, the 625-2 becomes more than a competition sixgun; it in fact becomes a revolver that comes as close to perfection as this writer has ever experienced in a defensive sixgun.

The heavy barrel, the mild recoil combined with the fight stopping capabilities of the long proven .45 ACP, the round butt which allows those with small hands, both male and female, to handle the large N-frame Smith & Wesson big bore revolver, and the satin stainless finish, all

The loaded full moon clip is faster than a speed loader to recharge a revolver.





The smooth trigger aids double-action shooting, an improvement over the serrated wide trigger on the Model 25 Target.

add up to a first class fighting handgun.

Now add in the capability to use full moon clips with six rounds of .45 ACP ammunition making the fastest possible speed loading, and it is easy to see how popular this sixgun is going to be in law enforcement circles.

That is the good news. The bad news is that Smith & Wesson originally announced that only 5,000 of these revolvers will be made. That would be a major mistake from a company that has not been making mistakes lately.

Rumor already has it that more will be produced. Let's hope that it's true.

SOME MODIFICATIONS

One does not have to be much of a prognosticator to see the 625-2 being modified to make it an even slicker defensive sixgun. The rear sight can easily be rounded to prevent it snagging on clothing or jacket linings.

The barrel just begs to be cut to three or four inches or somewhere in between for those who want the fastest possible

draw out of a high-riding hip holster. Combining this with a top quality action job that emphasizes a smooth double action pull, the resulting man-stopper would provide a nearly perfect fighting handgun for those who still prefer sixguns over those "upstart" semi-autos.

I said there are many things right about this revolver. Not supplying it with the normal factory, overly large, blocky N-frame grip is a major step forward. This .45 sixgun is fitted with Pachmayr round-butt finger groove grips, the "Gripper." A vast improvement over the standard factory stocks.

But, I do not believe that finger groove grips belong on a sixgun designed for fast work. When my hand hits the grip, I want whatever position I get to be right. This is not possible with finger groove grips.

Grippers are perfect—in some calibers actually mandatory—for the hard-kickin' Hand Cannon Contenders from SSK. They also are great for deliberate shooting with long barreled revolvers be it in silhouette competition or hunting, neither of which calls for fast shots from the leather.

A better choice would have been the Pachmayr round-butt K-frame standard grip. I have such a pair of Pachmayrs on my Mag-Na-Port round-butt Model 29 and trying to install them on the 625-2 proved they were slightly too small. It is my understanding that this will soon be remedied and Pachmayr will be providing round butt grips to fit the N-frame.

Since my round butt Pachmayrs would not fit the 625-2, I picked up a pair of Pachmayr Compacs and again found the same problem. They were too small for the round-butt N-frame, their installation leaving about one-fourth of an inch of the backstrap exposed for its entire length.

Now what? I sent out a call for help to BearHug Grips (P.O. Box 25944, Dept. AH, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80936. 1-719-598-5675).

Knowing how quickly I both wanted and needed the grips, BearHug supplied them in a few days, then called me with

instructions on how to apply the finish which was sent in a small bottle, saving me about a week's waiting time.

The grips supplied by BearHug are smooth walnut with an open backstrap, filled in behind the trigger guard and front strap, and at my request, not cut for a speedloader but simply thinned down on the left grip to allow the fast use of full moon clips. These grips feel good, help me to get the big .45 sixgun on target fast without searching for unnecessary finger grooves, and the plain walnut simply looks good on the satin stainless finish of the 625-2.

HOLSTERS FOR THE 625

Now that I had the .45 sixgun properly rigged for fast shooting, good leather was needed. Not such an easy task as holsters for five-inch heavy barrel revolvers are not standard fare. I called Wilson's Gun Shop and Bill directed me to the Prezine Mfg. Co. (formerly Rogers Holsters, 1736 St. Johns Bluff Rd., Dept AH, Jacksonville, FL, 32216) and in a little over a week I had a com-

Continued on page 103

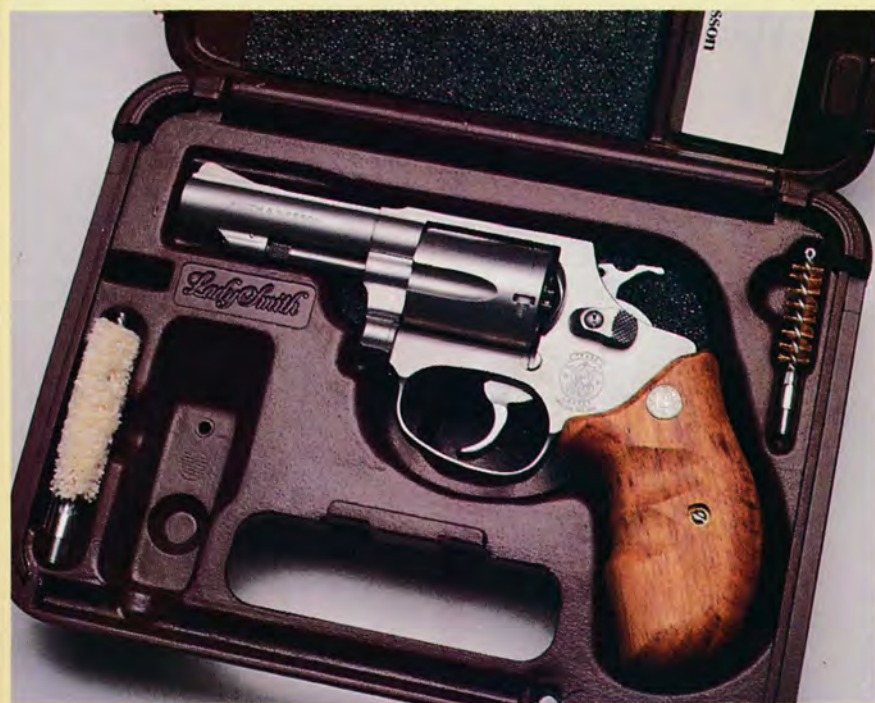


*Smith & Wesson gives a facelift to the Model 60
and dubs it LadySmith.*

.38 SPECIAL FEMME FATALE

By Massad Ayoob

Photos by Roger Andrews



LadySmith comes attractively packaged in a plastic (Morrocan leather embossed) purse. It's basically a Chiefs Special with smaller grips, an enlarged front sight and two coils nipped off the rebound spring. Still, it's selling like designer dresses in a Spring Sale Special to the fastest growing segment of the shooting public, women.

Smith & Wesson's 1989 reintroduction of the LadySmith name was the handgun news of the year. Sherry Collins, S&W's media liaison, saw the gun become national news when the Conde Nast syndicate of women's magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* refused to carry ads for the new "woman's gun."

The firm wisely put some money into market testing. The profile showed a huge, untapped market of women who had seriously been considering the purchase of a protection handgun but hadn't really known how to go about making the choice.

Simultaneous with the introduction, S&W set up a tollfree hotline (1-800-331-0852) that women could call for information on the dealers and shooting classes nearest them.

The market research had shown the majority of women more comfortable with the simpler design of a revolver, and with something that would fit small hands.

However, they also wanted a gun powerful enough to more than discourage a rapist. The choice seemed obvious: the J-frame Chief's Special, the firm's classic five-shot .38 Special on a stretched .32 frame.

The original Ladysmith of 1902-1921 had been an even tinier .22 rimfire. Legend has it that the firm's head honcho, something of a Puritan, became flustered when he learned that prostitutes had adopted the Ladysmith as their gun of choice, and promptly discontinued it. Other historians say that it simply fell by the wayside due to lack of sales. In any case, I expect the LadySmith of 1989 vintage will be with us for a while.

The gun is available round-butt only, in either conventional blue steel Model 36 configuration, or in the stainless Model 60; the choice of two-inch or three-inch barrel is available in either.

Skeptics sneer that the gun is merely a plain vanilla Chief's Special with a new name laser-engraved on the side. Actually, that's not quite the case. Engineering on the new gun shows some subtle but important improvements that, I hope, will carry over into other models of the Smith revolver series.

Ms. Collins furnished a pair of LadySmiths for testing, both Model 60s, a two-inch and a three-inch. The former had slender grips of an attractive, smoothly polished



"pressed wood substance" which strongly resembles rosewood. The longer version came with oversize, actually, man-size, finger groove grips that resemble a knock-off of the Sile aftermarket product.

Finish on both stainless .38's was a glare-free satin matte, which on the Lady-Smith is demurely called a "frosted" surface.

Edges on the surface of the trigger are very slightly rounded to prevent pinch. A few years ago S&W stopped putting the sharp striations on the trigger surface of the J-frame guns and, thankfully, they've kept them off. Those sharp grooves, we discovered on the LFI training ranges, were guaranteed to create a weeping blister on a woman's hand by the second day of intensive shooting. On a man's hand, it was usually the third day. The trigger surface of the new guns is pinch-free.

The Inside Story

Those at home with the inside of a revolver mechanism will be intrigued to learn that the trigger return spring is two coils shorter. This lightens the pull considerably and does not detract a whit

from reliability of firing.

This news will raise the eyebrows of anyone who graduated from the Smith & Wesson Armorer's School since 1984. The instructors since that time taught that removing any coils from the trigger return spring was verboten.

Interestingly, prior to '84 the removal of a couple of coils from that spring had been suggested as virtually standard procedure at the Armorer's School.

What happened was a high profile 1983 shooting that went to trial in 1984, in which a Miami police officer shot and killed a man who was turning on him and reaching for a gun. The shooting triggered a race riot, and the powers that be decided to charge the involved officer with manslaughter.

The prosecutor found a gun designer who stated under oath that, since two coils had been amputated from the trigger return spring of his Smith & Wesson Model 64 standard issue service revolver, the gun had been rendered "more lethal with greater firepower."

The defense team shot that down in court — I among others testified that

lethality has nothing to do with trigger pull, and that the lighter spring returned the trigger more slowly, thus reducing firepower — and the wrongfully accused officer was acquitted.

However, the management team at S&W then was not the one that's running things now. In the mid-'80s, my experience was that S&W would sell a cop in trouble down the river in a heartbeat. Naturally, the firm at the time disavowed any knowledge of ever having recommended the spring alteration.

Fortunately, under new owner Tompkins Ltd., Smith & Wesson is guided by a completely new management team chaired by president Steve Melvin. The trigger spring modified for maximum performance is back.

(You still aren't supposed to clip coils yourself, of course. The new spring is factory produced in the shorter length, and that makes all the difference, don't you know.)

Also improved were the sights. Three-inch Chiefs have for some time had the desirable 1/8" blade that was all but impossible to see in anything but ideal



One of the trickiest problems women face when they choose to carry a means of self-protection is how to discreetly carry a gun. A purse is too slow, and it's not always within reach. It's best to carry a self-defense gun on your person which requires a new twist in a lady's wardrobe selection. A loosely fitting sweater is good for slipping over LadySmith tucked into the waist. A baggy shirt (R) might hide a lady's figure, but it also hides LadySmith. Armed and alive is better than stylish and dead.

light. My test two-inch LadySmith is the first I've seen with the good $\frac{1}{8}$ " sight, and I sincerely hope this modification will one day be carried over to all the snubby J-frames.

Ladies On LadySmith

Naturally, what women think of the gun is more important than what men think about it. For weeks I carried the two-inch around to classes and matches to get feedback from ladies who fit S&W's purchaser profile. Among the comments:

Dorothy (firearms instructor): "It feels nice, but it's a little small for me. I got rid of my last Model 60 because I liked the feel of the (Colt) Detective Special, and the sixth shot. I think I'll stay with my DS."

Jennifer (lawman's lady): "I love it. It fits my hand perfectly and after the first couple of shots, I hit every plate I fired at. Consider mine on order."

Belinda (wife of S&W armorer): "It's cute, and a couple of years ago I might have bought one. The all-steel frame is a little heavy for me, though. I've gotten used to my Model 37 Airweight Chief, and I guess I'm spoiled, but I'll stay with the Airweight. Pretty grips, though."

Elizabeth (cop's daughter): "The action's smoother than on my .22 Kit Gun. The grips stink, though. It twists in

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SWAMP ANGEL

A pocket pistol from the bygone days of riverboat gamblers

By J.B. Wood

When you think of the romantic days of the Mississippi stern-wheelers, many images come to mind. This colorful time conjures visions of a lean gambler in a white suit and wide-brimmed hat, a tight smile below his thin moustache, as he pushes a stack of chips to the center of the table.

And, of course, a .41 Rimfire derringer up his sleeve, for those occasions when the deck proved to have more than the standard number of aces.

But wait: the gun wasn't always up a sleeve, and quite often, it was not a derringer. A sheath-trigger revolver in a vest-pocket was frequently the choice, though the cartridge was sometimes the same. The revolver offered three or four more rounds than a derringer, and it was almost as easy to conceal.

It also had better inherent pointability, a thing of some importance at across-the-card-table ranges.

The .41 Short Rimfire cartridge had, by today's standards, a decidedly puny performance. In the original load, it used a 130 grain outside-lubricated bullet and 13 grains of black powder, and the cases were copper.

The round was first manufactured around 1860, introduced with the Moore derringer, which was later made by National Arms Company, and then by Colt.

The most well-known gun that used it was the Remington Double Derringer, made from 1866 to 1935. Remington discontinued the cartridge during World War II.

In spite of its low performance figures, the .41 Short Rimfire often proved adequate in settling serious disputes at the point-blank distances involved. There are many cases on record of single-round fatal shots. Its main value in self-defense, though, was probably as an unfired deterrent—the muzzle-end of a .41-caliber handgun is a sizeable hole.

A recent question from a reader made me think again about the .41 Short Rimfire in general, and one revolver in particular, the Swamp Angel. When I answered the question about its origin, I also noted that a few years ago Navy Arms had imported a small lot of the ammunition, but that it was no longer available. This proved to be an error.

Encountering a Swamp Angel also brought back memories of one of my first repair jobs. Around 1947, I made a cylinder hand spring for one of these guns, and I thought the name was interesting. In its time, the sheath-trigger revolver was known for fanciful names—"Avenger," "Bonanza," and so on—but "Swamp Angel" seemed to especially recall the Mississippi delta and the steamboat. I decided that if I ever came across another one, I'd

like to have it to keep, even though I'm not a collector.

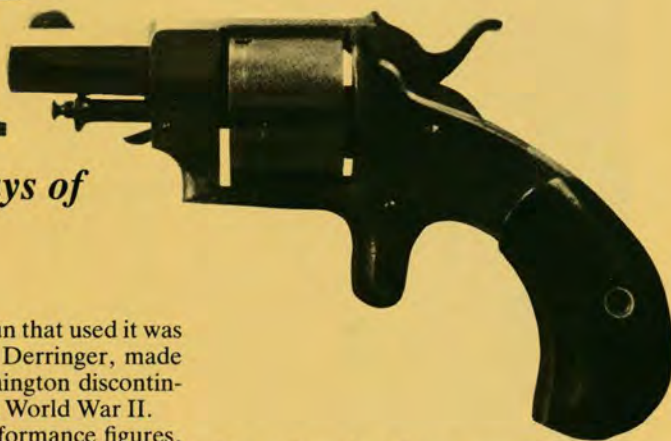
Now, thanks to my friend Frank Nicholson of California, I own one. When I received it, it was in basically good condition, except for some light surface rust and two broken springs, the ones powering the cylinder hand and the cylinder stop. I made the springs, buffed off the rust, and the Swamp Angel was back in operating condition.

Naturally, I wanted to shoot it. What if, I wondered, there happened to be a box of .41 Short Rimfire left on a back shelf at Navy Arms? I called Val Forgett, and got a pleasant surprise: not only did they have them, they are still regularly available!

After obtaining the ammunition, I decided to find out whether the Swamp Angel was capable of any accuracy, beyond across-the-table distances. The sight system could best be described as minimal. The front sight is a semi-circular blade, and the rear is a simple V-notch in the frame, in an upswept projection at the rear of the topstrap. The trigger pull, though, proved to be surprisingly good—a crisp three pounds.

I figured that the maximum distance should be about twenty feet—not yards—and I fired from a casual rest. On a standard pistol target, the Swamp Angel delivered several good groups, the best measuring just 2½ by 2½ inches. The groups were high, about two inches above center. This is not unusual with derringers and small revolvers of this type. Perhaps it was assumed that they would be fired "early," as soon as the barrel cleared the edge of the table. The felt recoil was moderate, as expected. I would compare it to a .32 S&W round fired in a slightly larger revolver.

With a 1½ inch barrel and fixed sights, the accuracy was surprising. The bore is in very good condition, with deep rifling, and the lead bullet apparently stabilizes well. The nice trigger pull also helps. Could the riverboat gambler place his



Forehand & Wadsworth's Improved Terror, Bull Dog and Swamp Angel.

.38 Cal., 5 Shot.



THE TERROR, 6 Shot.....	32 Cal.	Rubber Handle and Oct. Barrel,	\$4 50
THE BULL DOG, 5 Shot.....	38 "	" " " " "	4 75
THE SWAMP ANGEL, 5 Shot.....	41 "	" " " " "	5 00



shots, even across the room? You can bet that he could.

The Swamp Angel was made in Worcester, Massachusetts by Forehand and Wadsworth. Sullivan Forehand and Henry Wadsworth were in business from 1872 to around 1902, and this revolver dates to the earlier years of that period.

There was also a five-shot in .38 Rimfire called the "Bull Dog," and a six-shot in .32 Rimfire, the "Terror." In the catalogues of that time, the .32 sold for \$4.50, the .38 for \$4.75, and the .41 Swamp Angel for \$5.00. Barrel lengths varied, from 1½ to 4 inches.

Similar guns by other makers could be bought for as little as \$1.75. So, even though these Forehand & Wadsworth revolvers were not on the same market level as a Colt or a Smith & Wesson, they were

a cut above the rest. The design was excellent, with no small or delicate parts that might be prone to break. The blade-type springs that power the hammer, trigger, cylinder hand, and cylinder stop are easy to replace.

The cylinder base pin latch is powered by a vertical helical coil spring. If it ever weakens, it is accessible by taking out a screw in the forward underside of the frame. Depressing the latch lever upward very slightly allows the removal of a separate ejector rod from the center of the hollow base pin. Pushing the lever further releases the base pin to be taken out, freeing the cylinder for removal.

The shape and angle of the hammer spur is perfect for easy single action cocking, and the spur and the trigger are cross-checked. Whether the hammer is at rest or cocked, there is no opening in the top

of the frame to admit dirt.

The cylinder stop recesses are located between the chambers, in the heavy web, so the chamber walls are not weakened by the notches. While the bird's-head grip has room for only two fingers on the frontstrap, the shape and swell of the frame and grips provide a good hold.

All things considered, it's a well-engineered little revolver. If it were made today, of modern steels, and in a centerfire chambering, it would probably do well in the market.

In general, the sheath-trigger revolvers have just begun to be "discovered" by the collectors, and prices are very moderate. This will likely change in a few years. Much of collecting is based on an appreciation of history, and guns such as the Swamp Angel are an important part of firearms Americana.



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Lemoine Wright
1989 Bianchi Cup
champion



BIANCHI CUP '89

By Cameron Hopkins

Photos by Nyle Leatham

The fire of determination sparkles in the eyes of Yoko Shimomura, the 1989 Ladies Bianchi Cup Champion. Dedication she has, such intense devotion to shooting that you might even say it's zealous.

We've all heard about the perseverance and dedication of the top shooters, the handful of competitors who are driven by a desire to win and shoot thousands of rounds of practice to achieve their goals. But forcing yourself to drag out to the range when you're tired and not really up for it and would really rather go home to your easy chair and the Raiders game is nothing compared to the dedication of Yoko Shimomura.

I've covered all the major shooting matches for five years as editor of *American Handgunner* and I've seen quite a few success stories that would inspire anyone to admire the sacrifice and dedication of the winners. But I've never seen anything like the commitment that this soft-spoken Japanese lady puts into her shooting.

First of all, you can't even own a handgun in Yoko's native land of Japan.



Yoko Shimomura,
1989 Bianchi Cup
ladies champion





Photo by Ichiro Nagata



Three days of intense shooting brought the cream to the top for the Top 20 Shoot-Off which Rob Leatham won.

That's a major obstacle right off the bat! So what do you do if you live in Japan but your dream has been to compete in the Bianchi Cup? Most people would keep on dreaming the impossible dream. Not Yoko.

First, she quit her job. And if you've heard much of anything about the Japanese work ethic and corporate loyalty you would appreciate that quitting a job in Japan is not like switching employers here. A better analogy for our Western culture is divorce — quitting your job in Japan is a big deal, about as significant a

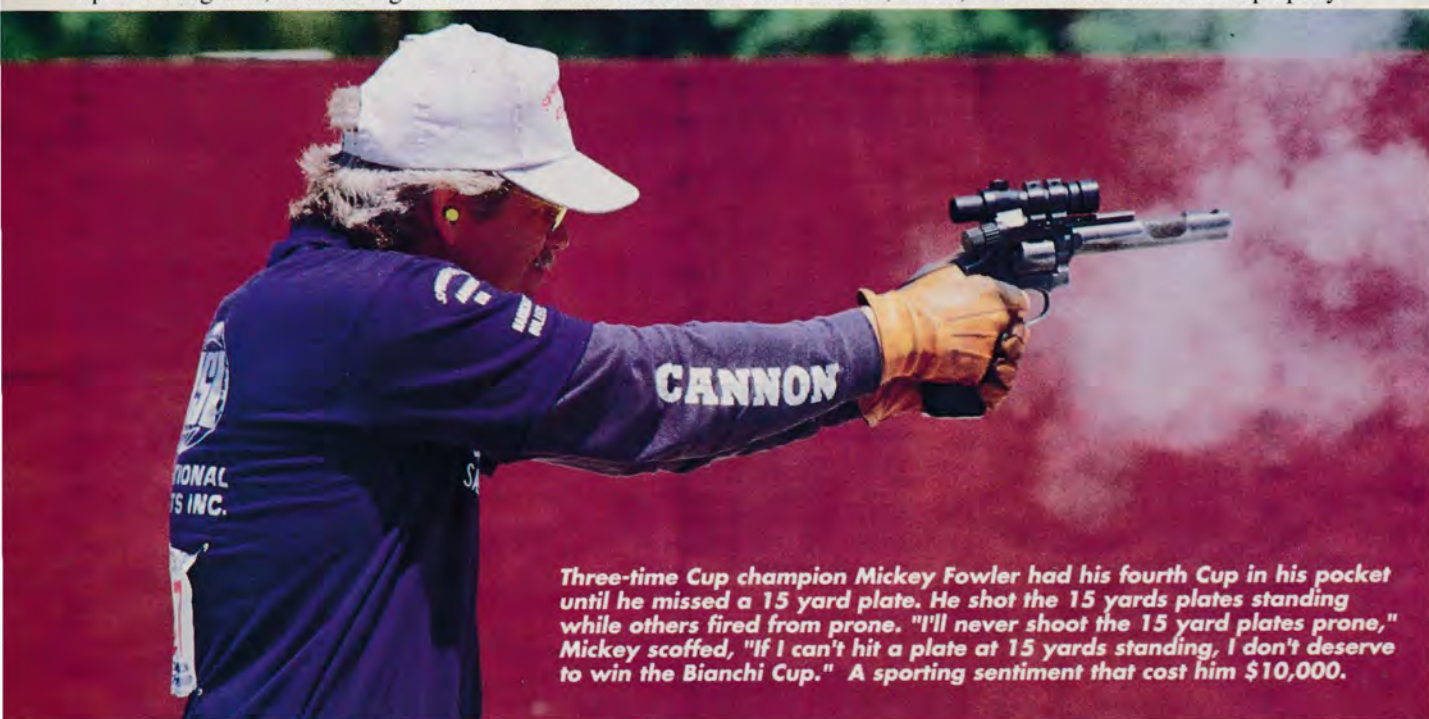
decision as a divorce is in our culture.

So Yoko quit her job and her husband, Yasu, quit his job too. They moved to America in December to live here temporarily through the Bianchi Cup when they would return home after Yoko's dream of competing in the Cup came true.

They sold most everything they owned to finance the six month stay in America. With the money they would live frugally because most of the cash had to go for a gun and practice ammo for Yoko. J.M. Custom of San Jose, Calif.,

built Yoko a specially-designed gun to specifications drawn up by Yoko's friend and *Handgunner* photographer Ichiro Nagata.

Petite in stature, Yoko doesn't have the brute strength to hold the typical four-pound Bianchi-style revolver. Ichi designed a lightweight revolver for her with a six-inch barrel plus one-inch of skeletonized compensator. It's a Model 65 Smith fitted with Hogue grips and an Aimpoint 2000 scope. The gun kicks more than a heavier gun would, but at least Yoko could hold it properly.



Three-time Cup champion Mickey Fowler had his fourth Cup in his pocket until he missed a 15 yard plate. He shot the 15 yards plates standing while others fired from prone. "I'll never shoot the 15 yard plates prone," Mickey scoffed, "If I can't hit a plate at 15 yards standing, I don't deserve to win the Bianchi Cup." A sporting sentiment that cost him \$10,000.

So she quit her job and sold her belongings, but soon it became apparent that the funds would run short. She made a deal to trade her custom gun to a commercial reloader in exchange for practice ammo, but she could keep the gun through the Cup.

In six months, having never shot a real gun before, Yoko fired 45,000 rounds of .38 Special wadcutters. Three-time Bianchi Cup champion Mickey Fowler volunteered to coach her and practice with her. He let Yoko have the run of his training facility, ISI, that he and his partner Mike Dalton operate as one of the foremost shooting schools in the country. Mickey's voluntary private lessons would have amounted to several thousand dollars in ISI tuition, but he saw the gleam of determination in Yoko. This is one special student, he thought, no charge.

Prior to coming to America, Yoko had fired air guns for 20 months nonstop in preparation for the Bianchi Cup. Japan has the "Japan Air Soft Bianchi Cup" which is shot with toy guns firing little plastic pellets and Yoko placed 15th overall out of 150 shooters and won top lady in this "pretend Cup."

The other 149 competitors contented themselves to have shot the Air Soft Bianchi Cup and went home happy. Not Yoko.

Then came the real Cup with live



John Pride, Top Cop this year, won the '88 Cup with the same Jarvis Custom L-frame that he shot in '89. He shoots factory PMC .38 Special 158 gr. loads.



Christie Rogers takes the holster retention test in which she jumps 18" from a flat-footed vertical leap. If the gun falls out, adios!

ammo and real guns and real targets and real competition. Christie Rogers, wife of holster designer Bill Rogers, won the top lady in 1988 and it was said that Christie was shooting better than ever. Besides, Christie had shot under the intense glare of the Cup's pressure umpteen times. It was Yoko's first and only Bianchi Cup.

At the real-live Cup Yoko fired a very respectable score of 1882-129X beating second place lady Lorna Pavelka by a comfortable 12 points. Christie Rogers lagged behind in third with 1831-108X. You've never seen a happier little bundle of energy than Yoko Shimomura!

Yes, Yoko won the ladies title of the Bianchi Cup. To many it would be a great accomplishment, but to Yoko it was more than very, very special. It was literally a dream come true.

Champions Return

Of the six men who have together won all 10 of the coveted sterling silver Bianchi Cups, only one did not compete in Cup XI. Ron Lerch, who won the first Cup in 1979 after Mickey Fowler forgot to reload his Colt .45 pistol during the Falling Plate Event thereby losing a sure-win, did not compete.

For the first time since the third of his unprecedented three-in-a-row victories, Mickey Fowler returned to the Cup after a five year hiatus from competition. Ever

the consummate competitor, Mickey was favored by many observers to roar out of retirement with his John French customized S&W revolver and win the match.

Brian Enos, the inquisitive shooter who pioneered the use of electronic "red dot" scopes when he won two Cups back to back in '83 and '84 with an Aimpoint on his S&W Model 10 revolver, is a perennial favorite at the Cup. He was here to vie for the championship.

Considered by many to be the greatest IPSC shooter in history, Rob Leatham won the 1985 Cup and he was back to try and win his second. This year he would shoot again with the same gun he used victoriously four years ago, a Frank Glenn customized .38 Special Smith & Wesson revolver.

Riley Gilmore took the roses in 1986 and propelled his sponsor Tasco to the forefront of competitive optics that year. Shooting a custom S&W revolver from Tulsa Firearms, Riley returned to captain Team Tasco in the 1989 Cup.

The only cop to ever win the Cup, John Pride of the LAPD won the '87 and '88 Cups with an essentially "stock" S&W L-frame Model 686. Gunsmith Bill Jarvis had slicked up the action and added his Jarvis Barrel Weight and a set of Pachmayr grips, but other than that and the Aimpoint scope on top, the gun is box-stock. No match-grade barrel, no

customized "stabilizer wings" for the Barricade. John Pride was back to try and equal Mickey Fowler's record of three Cups.

A Few Good Men Shoot the Cup

And so Bianchi Cup XI opened with six out of seven returning champions, not to mention a number of other contenders who would be seeded highly on any bookmaker's odds board.

For the first time in Cup history, teams from the armed services would compete. The army sent their Blue and Grey teams led by one of the greatest marksmen this country has ever produced, Captain John McNally. The Marine Corps dispatched a team at the last moment — after all, you just can't let those army guys run away with the Cup! The Coast Guard also sent a team of marksmen.

The hot topic of discussion among the civilian shooters concerned the service teams. Well aware of how the service teams totally dominate the Camp Perry National Matches, the action shooting crowd anxiously anticipated how well the uniformed bullseye shooters would perform at this match which, for a bullseye shooter, is most unorthodox.

I shot the Practical Event in the same squad with Marine Corps Sgt. William Bethards and, after we shot, I asked him



John Pride's quasi-stock Smith 686 has a Jarvis barrel weight underlug, an Aimpoint 2000 sight and an action job. In the esoteric world of Bianchi Cup "race guns," this is pretty plain Jane. Pride won the '88 Cup and always places highly showing that it's the shooter, not the gun, that wins matches.

GUNS AND GEAR OF THE TOP 20

Place	Name	Score	Gun Make & Model	Caliber	Holster	Scope	Gunsmith
1	Lemoine Wright	1914-152X	S&W M-586	.38 Special	Ernie Hill	Burris	DFW Custom
2	Gib Niswander	1914-145X	S&W M-64	.38 Special	Rogers	Tasco	Andy Cannon
3	Rome Gutierrez	1914-144X	S&W M-10	.38 Special	Ted Blocker	Aimpoint	Don Kehoe
4	Ray Gray	1914-142X	S&W	.38 Special	Safariland	Tasco	Hunter Custom
5	Ross Carter	1913-165X	Colt GM	9mm Luger	Ernie Hill	Tasco	Bill Wilson
6	Herb Conly	1912-153X	S&W M-10	.38 Special	Rogers	Tasco	Bill Wilson
7	Brian Enos	1912-150X	S&W M-10	.38 Special	Safariland	Tasco	Frank Glenn
8	Mario de Paolo	1912-147X	S&W M-681	.38 Special	Ernie Hill	Tasco	M.C. Harlton
9	Edward Deacon	1911-163X	Caspian 1911	9mm Luger	Ernie Hill	Burris	Nu-Line Guns
10	Allen Fulford	1911-145X	S&W	.38 Special	Safariland	Tasco	Clark Custom
11	Donald Henrico	1910-154X	Ruger Security Six	.38 Special	Safariland	Tasco	Dubbs
12	John Pride	1910-153X	S&W M-686	.38 Special	Safariland	Aimpoint	Bill Jarvis
13	Curtis Shipley	1910-150X	S&W M-10	.38 Special	Safariland	Tasco	Mike Kanazawa
14	Rob Leatham	1910-147X	S&W M-686	.38 Special	Safariland	Tasco	Frank Glenn
15	Wayne Bowker	1910-147X	Springfield 1911	.38 Super	Safariland	Aimpoint	P. Liebenberg
16	Mickey Fowler	1908-158X	S&W M-10	.38 Special	Ted Blocker	Aimpoint	John French
17	William Clemens	1908-151X	S&W M-686	.38 Special	Rogers	Tasco	Greg Ferris
18	Paul Liebenberg	1908-149X	Colt 1911	.45 ACP	Safariland	Tasco	Pistol Dynamics
19	Ed R. Duda	1907-145X	Manurhin MR-73	.38 Special	Rogers	Tasco	factory box-stock
20	Vincent Anderson	1907-138X	S&W M-19	.38 Special	Ernie Hill	Burris	Joe Hayes

just how tough it is to get onto the Marine shooting team. "Hey, I like to shoot. What would be my chances if I joined the Marines and asked to shoot for a living on the team?" I wondered. "Oh, about 300,000 to one," the friendly sergeant replied.

He went on to explain that shooting trials are conducted throughout the Corps to find the very best marksmen. The winners of the trials then go on to compete among themselves to pick the *creme de la creme* for the team. If that's not enough of a culling procedure, there are psychological tests to see if a champion marksman has the right mental stuff to compete at the international level.

The Quantico-based sergeant said that all he does, eight hours a day, 365 days a year, is shoot. Shoot and take lessons on shooting. Shoot and undergo psychological therapy to improve his mental game of shooting. The Corps has sent him to every top shooting school — Jeff Cooper's API, John Shaw's MSS, Mickey Fowler and Mike Dalton's ISI. Doctors specializing in nutrition determine the diet of these elite marksmen. "We're good shooters alright," said the Marine with characteristic bravado, "but we've never done this kind of shooting before. We don't draw a gun from a holster in bullseye, you know. We've had exactly eight days to practice for this match. We don't have a set of falling plates, no mover and no barricades. We should have proper practicing gear for next year, but this year my only goal is to not drop my gun and to learn!"

This year's Cup turned out to be just what the sergeant predicted, a learning experience for the service teams. The Top Service award went to Army Blue Team member Jimmie McCoy with a very respectable 1896-133X.

(Interestingly enough, Sgt. Bethards said that even if he won the \$10,000 first prize he couldn't keep the money. He competes in ISU international amateur shooting and the prize money would lose him his amateur standing. Who gets the



Ichiro Nagata, our Photographer Extraordinaire, competes at Bianchi Cup every year where he is a perennial threat to win the Falling Plate Event. This year he took his laurels vicariously by training Yoko Shimomura to victory as the Ladies Champion.



Lemoine Wright's winning revolver custom made by DFW Custom Guns.

money? The Corps, of course, said Sgt. Bethards!)

Splish, Splash, Bang, Bang

Torrential rains flooded the Chapman Academy range periodically throughout the three-day match. The Falling Plate range was not properly graded so parts of the range filled with pools of ankle-deep water, which made for a rather wet experience when you shot from prone.

Those who shot the plates in the rain sloshed off the range dripping like soaked terriers. The distraction of shooting with wet hands, water-spotted glasses and saturated clothes clinging to your body made for lower than usual scores on this demanding event. Who knows if the rain

Continued on page 110

TARGET SETTERS ARE THE UNSUNG HEROES OF SILHOUETTE: THANK EM!

The target setters did not show up so you will have to set targets," was the statement aimed in my direction by the Match Director.

Normally I would have just laughed and responded with a "Be serious!" and prepared for a day of shooting, but how could I refuse when the Match Director was my wife?

Having often said that I wouldn't set targets for \$100 a day, now I was being forced into not only setting targets but also doing it for nothing!

How could I refuse? After all, my wife had given up many of her Saturdays to spot for me over the years and, if there was time, do a little shooting herself. But she always saw to it that my shooting came first. Now she was Match Director and she needed my help.

Target setters had been signed up and scheduled, at least we thought so. But it was simply one of those many situations in life that occur because of misunderstandings or crossed wires or some equal-

ly obnoxious reason and it left me with only one choice. Set targets.

So I rounded up the kids of a few shooters to set the chickens and turkeys, found a fairly good-sized boy to set the pigs, and I found myself left with the wonderful task of setting rams.

The sun was hot and after a few hours I was convinced that the sun felt seven times hotter than it ought to be. The rams kept getting heavier and heavier and I was getting more and more frustrated. I was about to the point of being ready to fight anyone that said a word.

I even found myself rooting for friends that I had shot with for years. Not to do well, but to miss. Then I wouldn't have to set all those targets again. My attitude was really getting bad, but it did change and finally I found myself really learning something that day.

"Why is it taking those target setters so long?" How often have you thought, or perhaps even said, that as you restlessly waited to fire your second string of tar-

gets?

"Those guys were working pretty fast this morning, why are they so slow now?" we think, or say, as we anxiously await the chance to put down another five in a row for a perfect 10 turkeys.

"I'm doing so well but they are so slow that they are going to break my rhythm," we scowl as it seems forever for those target setters to make it back in.

"We timed them this morning and it was taking only two minutes for them to get all the targets set, why is it taking so long now?" We know they are taking at least 10 minutes now, and then we time them and find that they are all the way up to a grand time for setting targets of two and one-half minutes even after working for six hours straight.

By the time I had finished setting targets for six hours, I was tired, dirty and had a miserable headache. And then my wife says to me: "Aren't you going to shoot?"

Shoot? She had to be kidding! I was in no shape to shoot. I would just be wasting ammunition. But she insisted and I succumbed. Would you believe I shot the best revolver score I had, or have, ever shot in 10-plus years of silhouetting?

I laid down with my Ruger .357 Maximum and cleaned the chickens in spite of my tiredness. My shots were all over the little birds, but I got all 10.

Then came the pigs, and I'm still figuring I'm just wasting ammunition, but in



The Rebirth of a Classic

Buckeye Sports Supply announces the introduction of a New Model Blackhawk Convertible chambered in the legendary .32-20 and .32 Mag. For the first time since WWII, an American made .32-20 revolver will be available.

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Buckeye Sports Supply, Canton, Ohio



spite of my splitting headache, all 10 go down, albeit it very sloppily, as once again I am all over the targets. A head shot here, a tail shot there, a foot shot there, a hump shot here, but all 10 little piggies went down.

"Wait a minute," I say to myself, "If I can just settle down, I could finish with a pretty good score." My attitude adjustment was rewarded that day. I missed only one turkey on the first bank, one ram on the second bank, and wound up with my highest revolver score, a very satisfying 38x40.

But the most important thing that occurred that day was not my recorded score, but the fact that I finally learned to appreciate the really important people in silhouetting. If you have been shooting silhouettes for very long, and if you are above average, shooting in AAA or International Class (IHMSA) or Master Class (NRA), then you have probably knocked down enough targets to reach five digits in totalling all targets.

Ten thousand, or more, and every one of those targets had to be picked up by someone else, usually youngsters trying to earn money for their youth group, scout troop, or simply trying to help mom or dad out by serving as a target setter.

When was the last time you, or your shooting friends, or I for that matter—personally, as a silhouette shooter, not expecting the Match Director to do it—went up to each target setter, introduced yourself, asked them their name, shook their dirty target setting hands, and said, "Thank you. Without you I could not shoot silhouettes."?

When was the last time we bought a cold Coke or Pepsi for each target setter as the sun got hotter and you, like me, waited under a cover in the shade while the setters had to be out in the sun fighting heavy targets that get plenty warm when the temperature starts heading up into the 90 to 100 degree range?

At the other extreme, what could be more miserable than setting targets when there is a foot of snow on the ground, and it is raining and it is 32 degrees, and it is cold? Colder than the proverbial witches heart.

And target setters, most of whom are teenagers, never seem to be able to look ahead and prepare for such conditions. They even show up in tennis shoes and without gloves in winter weather.

Without a doubt, target setters are the most important element in silhouetting. Let them know it at the next match.

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

And there are the others also. The match director for one. Usually a serious silhouetter eventually finds himself (or herself) in a position that requires that he makes it possible for others to shoot.

If it is a large club, the match director may be able to find someone else to run

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the range for the day. More often than not, the poor slob who wants to help others enjoy the sport must be the first one there, the last to leave, and the one who also runs the line all day.

Ever wonder why your club has had so many match directors in its short history? Don't even wait for the next match. Call your club's match director, and really shock him by volunteering to run the range all day so he can enjoy a day of shooting.

Spotters. What kind of silhouette records would have been set over the last 12 years if we did not have good spotters? Take a good look at the spotters at the next match. Here you find a young kid trying to please mom or dad by giving up his weekend so he can do something that will give real pleasure to the shooter in the family.

Maybe the bug will bite and the young spotter will become a shooter, but right now he just tries to do what makes his parents happy.

Over here we have the normal spotting situation—the luckless wife carrying all kinds of equipment, including encouragement, to help her husband do something he really enjoys. Many times she can't understand what is so great about all this, but she wants to do something with and for her husband.

Ever notice how many really good shooters always seem to have a wife that is helping them, calming them, and at the same time cheering them on?

And once in awhile, the tables are turned and the wife is the shooter and the husband is the spotter. Quite often the man finds his wife has better coordination and actually shoots better than he does

and they become a shooting/spotting team.

Somebody has to keep the records and line up the shooting positions and there they are in the stat house. Our stat house is an old 10 foot travel trailer, hot in summer, cold in winter. But there she is trying to keep everything straight and keep everybody happy. Another wife doing a job basically because her husband is a silhouetter.

Remove all the wives from silhouetting, even those who are not shooters themselves, and silhouetting would come to an abrupt halt. Go to any local match, and there they are, spotting, registering shooters, keeping records, returning score cards.

Go to Raton to take part in an NRA National Match and you find them in the stat house keeping everything running smoothly. Over to Idaho Falls for an IHMSA International Match, and there they are again, doing whatever is necessary to make the system work.

If you are reading this and your wife is not a shooter, what are you going to do to really let her know how much you appreciate the way she is willing to give her time for your sport?

What is the name of that new restaurant she said she would like to go to, but you are always too busy? Forget whatever you are too busy at and take her out and tell her how much you really recognize everything she does to help you participate in your sport.

Many people have put in untold hours to make silhouetting the sport it is today. My late friend Elgin Gates literally spent the last 12 years of his life promoting and working for silhouette shooters. Bert Stringfellow, the present president of IHMSA has served as vice-president and president since 1977.

There have been many shooters that have gained no little fame as silhouetters. I think of Josie Engle and the records she set in the early days of silhouetting. Lon Pennington has done some amazing things with silhouette pistols and I will always remember witnessing his performance at the 1987 NRA Nationals. And there are many, many others.

There are those who have worked with the development of new guns, new cartridges and load development. I am pleased to be part of a group that has done this consisting of people like Phil Briggs, David Bradshaw, Elgin Gates, Bill Bartram and Joe Wright.

All of these have been important. Without guns, cartridges, shooters and administration, silhouetting would not exist.

But first and foremost, we as silhouetters owe a major debt of gratitude to all the target setters, match directors, spotters, stat workers and wives that are the real powers that make silhouetting a success. Let them know it.



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RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS DETERMINED BY BUREAUCRATS IN MARYLAND

It's time for handguns to face the music in Maryland. The handgun ban law was passed just about one year ago and bears some reflection.

The Handgun Roster Board is in place, and it has already scrutinized a long list of handguns. As we at the NRA expected, few handguns have been rejected under the "Saturday Night Special" law enacted last year. Fortunately, an NRA member serves on the board.

The following tongue in cheek version of Maryland's new "Second Amendment," now circulating, sums up the disgruntled attitude of gun owners who resent Annapolis' invasion of their basic rights:

"A well-regulated militia, being a serious inconvenience to a bureaucratic state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall be determined by nine political appointees."

So far, the nine have followed the letter of the law, by allowing the facts to be presented rationally and have operated as cleanly as one could have hoped. We at the NRA predicted that,

Our real concern is not for this year or even next...but what about down the line when there is a new governor? And new appointees?

Early in this past legislative session, the governor came out with the proclamation that there would be no new gun laws. Wrong! Despite the political heat created by the campaign, the governor again requested last minute legislation and supported a waiting period on "assault" rifles.

Then there's Maryland's attorney general, Joe Curran. He had hoped the Board would have omitted hundreds of guns. Despite his objections, the Board actually approved a firearm that has the prosecutor highly peeved — the "controversial" Glock.

The Glock, as you well remember, was the subject of intense congressional debate last year when the anti-gun crowd claimed it was made entirely of plastic and undetectable by security screening devices.

The NRA went to great pains to prove the Glock was indeed primarily made of steel and was readily detectable. But, this isn't enough for the attorney general and his anti-gun cronies, who are still upset.

Since the Glock controversy on Capitol Hill, the firearm has been adopted by many law enforcement agencies,

including the Washington, D.C. Police Department. But this endorsement of what is truly a technically superior firearm still falls on deaf ears in some circles.

If the plastic issue doesn't sink the Glock, the semiautomatic fracas may well step in and do the job. Proposed semiauto bans could dropkick the Glock right out of the reach of peaceful and honest citizens.

Anti-gunners are gnashing their teeth.

Of course police and military would still have access to the firearms, which leaves law-abiding private citizens in the state our founding fathers struggled to circumvent: a police state, I think it's called.

In summary, events in Maryland have proceeded as we expected. The Board has moved cautiously, aware that sweeping bans would initiate a new furor that neither it nor the governor would find politically attractive.

Anti-gunners, primed for a clean sweep of practically all handguns in Maryland, are gnashing their teeth, incensed that legislative powers are

resisting blanket bans on every firearm they find unattractive. In other words, all guns— long, short, semiauto or otherwise.

We won't know all the implications of the Maryland handgun ban for many years. In just a few years the memory of this bitter debate will have ebbed, legislative intent will have been forgotten, and the present democratic spirit on the Board will have eroded into the tired old bureaucracy we find all too familiar.

That's when the specter of state control over firearms will really rear its ugly head. And we'll be ready. The real danger is the precedent setting action of banning any sacrificial firearm and calling it a "Saturday Night Special." Then we're stuck with a media created imaginary thing that is actually defined.

It is possible that the board will have to pick and choose a class of these make believe firearms that originated as some headline writer's daydream. And that, my friends, is how we ban guns in America.

As the former Chairman of the Maryland Committee Against the Gun Ban recently said,

"It's still a bad law!"



Richard Gardiner is Director of State & Local Affairs for the National Rifle Association's Institute for Legislative Action. The NRA is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the shooting sports and protecting the right of the people to keep and bear arms. Annual membership is \$25 and includes a subscription to either The American Rifleman or The American Hunter. Join today by calling the NRA's tollfree hotline at 1-800-468-6666. MasterCard and Visa are accepted. Join today and receive an NRA Shooter's Cap!

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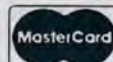
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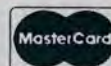
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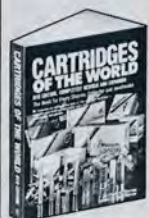
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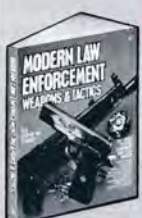
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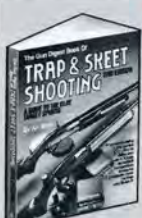
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DERRINGERS

Continued from page 27

vived a kidnap attempt when he fired one bullet each at his abductors and killed them both. It was close range, and he was very fortunate. Usually, a derringer is only likely to let you walk away from a killing situation if you're a murderer shooting an unsuspecting victim. John Wilkes Booth became history's most famous "satisfied Deringer customer" when he used one to assassinate President Abraham Lincoln.

Are Mini-Revolvers Derringers? The tiny .22 rimfire revolvers by Freedom Arms and North American Arms, known and advertised as "mini-derringers," are in fact not "derringers" at all. They are itty-bitty revolvers. They're about as slow



Colt PocketLite .380 beats any derringer by author's estimate.

to operate for the first and subsequent shots as a classic derringer, they just have more of those low-power shots to throw.

Better Choices. I presently own four derringers: a C.O.P. .357, a Lord and Lady Commemorative set of Colt .22 Short single shot derringers, and a High Standard .22 Magnum that I won in a pistol match some years back. I actually carried the latter for a while. Then I noticed that on the range, neither barrel hit where I wanted it to. I started doing some simple math, and it came out like this:

With a double action revolver, cops in gunfights only hit with one of every four shots they fire. Therefore, even without considering the poorer hit potential caused by a light gun's rough, heavy trigger, a 2-shot derringer arms me with only a 50% chance of hitting a suspect even once anywhere on his body. And that's generously allowing the hard-to-shoot double-action derringer the same hit potential as a slick revolver. On the average, given *two* opponents, it's quite likely that one will have to take the other to the hos-



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pital after he kills you. When you go to the thumb-cocking derringers, the hit potential situation gets even worse.

What about the tiny revolvers that call themselves "Mini Derringers?" Well, you're doubling the firepower since you can carry four rimfire cartridges safely in their five-shot cylinders. But you're also cutting power: even .22 Winchester Rimfire Magnum is a big step down from .38 Special.

Still, mini-derringers have been used successfully on the street. One Los Angeles woman used one in .22 Magnum to kill a rapist at contact distance. In a Western state, a scumbag who'd sneaked one through a metal detector shot down an unsuspecting security cop with one, nearly killing him. In Chicago, a .22 Short revolverette used by an off-duty patrolman neatly bagged a mugger: as the suspect was running away with his badge, wallet and .38, the cop shot him in the back of the head with it. The tiny bullet entered the back of the head and ricocheted off the bone, passing between skull and scalp until it exited the forehead. The criminal heard the shot, felt the slap on the back of his head; when he reached up to his forehead and touched what seemed to him to be an exit wound, he screamed and fainted. He was in handcuffs when he



Detonics compact .45 auto isn't so big to fit in a "derringer-size" pocket.

woke up with an Excedrin headache and a need for a few stitches.

The third incident was a fluke. The cop might have done better with a rock. The second showed something we've known all along, that small caliber guns work well in the hands of cowards attacking innocent people caught off guard. That has very little relevance to the instrument's effectiveness in fighting off an enraged assailant stoked on adrenaline. Only in the first case, the death of the rapist, did the mini-derringer succeed. Its tiny size made it not only available, but available by surprise, and the woman shot the attacker in the center of the chest. Her performance was what made the gun's performance. She'd have done the same with a 9-shot Beretta .25 auto.

When you start going to bigger caliber derringers, you start losing that extreme portability that worked for the LA lady and was the *raison d'être* of the derringer in the first place. Your big Remington pattern derringers are heavy and clunky. Even the two best derringers on the market today, the double-action .38 Specials known as the BJT and the TEC-38, are heavier than a Chief's Special Airweight

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I had two students who were carrying BJTs as backup guns, and got them both into light .38 revolvers, a Colt New Agent and a Smith Bodyguard Airweight to be specific. Both found them just as easy to slip in their side pockets, and both shot much better with the revolvers under stress. They kept their derringers as plinkers.

Several more use the mini-derringer revolverettes. For these professionals, the baby revolver is a second gun worn when they wouldn't normally be able to conceal backup in plainclothes, and sometimes, a third gun. That makes sense. *The important thing is, it's unwise to use any kind of derringer as a primary defense handgun.* That should be the minimum .380 auto or 5-shot .38 Special.

**Why stop there?
One firm is offering
"derringers" in
high power rifle
calibers.**

One of my staff instructors, Denny Reichardt, carries an ingeniously concealed .44 Magnum derringer of the Remington pattern. A bear of a man who shoots thousands of .44 Mag rounds a year, and a marksman of Bianchi Cup quality, he can get away with it. Few others can efficiently utilize such a gun, and remember, for Denny it's a second or third weapon.

There's no reason not to own derringers. They're fun. My gun collection includes little single-shot .22 Colt derringers made as commemoratives, and even a four-barrel COP in .357 Magnum, which I purchased so 20 years later people would believe me when I told them someone had actually marketed such a stupid gun. I've got a little High Standard .22 Magnum that I won at Second Chance and actually carried a couple of times for backup, when I was young and foolish. It, and my two or three revolverettes, are fun to shoot.

Why stop there? One firm is offering "derringers" in high powered rifle calibers. You can shoot them on the Fourth of July in jurisdictions where they don't allow fireworks. Not only that, but the recoil is guaranteed to increase your testosterone.

For fun? Sure. For anything serious, though, I think the derringer pistols fall squarely into a category Jeff Cooper established years ago, although he was talking about something else at the time: "It's a nice weapon for your opponent to be armed with."



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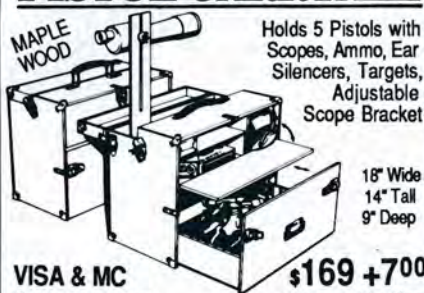
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PACT MK III

Continued from page 58

If you're working on fixed-time events you can establish a "PAR" time through the keyboard. I've used this feature for practicing bullseye timed and rapid fire as well as IPSC timed standard exercises. It's just the thing for the fixed-time events of the Bianchi Cup and the Masters.

You can also program the timer to give you cues known as "Keyed Beeps" that will sound at specified time after a specific shot and this feature in conjunction with the auxiliary jack to trigger a moving target or other device.

The timer can also be programmed for "Benchmark" beeps, say one per second, to help learn a shooting cadence.

There's also a key with the label "CST GO". CST stands for Comstock and if you're practicing a series of events which are scored together Comstock-style, you may use this key to restart timing without erasing previously recorded data. Remember, pushing "GO" erases everything.

The Mk III is the only chronograph I know that lets you set the screen spacing without opening the box.

The MK III has two plate jacks in the rear that can be used for man vs. man events.

The MK III can also provide a printed record of timed events. A small battery powered printer is an available option and the timer dumps its data to the printer without having any connection between the two. It works on infrared light, much like your TV remote control. This is an especially useful feature in matches for it will provide a hard copy of everyone's results to eliminate potential errors in data transcribing and to keep a permanent record of practice times so you can chart your progress.

\$49 Chronograph

For an additional \$49 you can also have your MK III be an absolutely dandy chronograph. After all, chronographs are nothing more than high speed clocks and almost all the circuitry needed for timing bullets is already there. On the back of the Mk III are jacks for plugging in skyscreens and everything else is handled through keyboard entries.

The MK III is the only chronograph I know of that lets you set the screen spacing without opening the box. The com-

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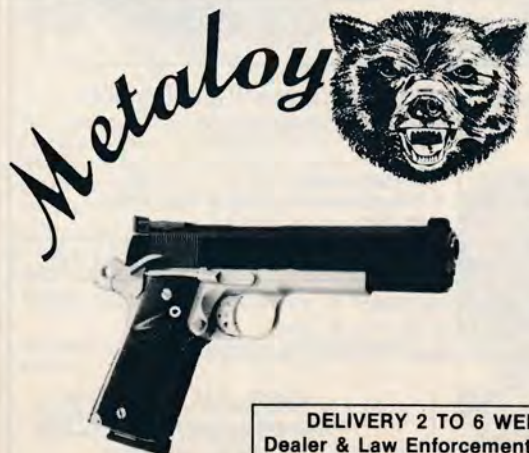
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The largest source of error in chronographing is an error in measuring screen spacing and this feature goes a long way to help eliminate errors.

When chronographing, the display shows the shot number, velocity for that round and a running average of the velocities. If you wish, it will show you the power factor. All you have to do is enter the bullet weight and the power factor will be displayed instead of the running average. When you're through shooting a string, pressing the "RVW" key will give you statistical information. The first push of "RVW" will give you the HI and LO velocities, the next will give you standard deviation and coefficient of variation. This term, abbreviated CV is a useful statistical tool that relates the standard deviation to the average velocity and expresses the result in percentage terms. The lower the CV the better.

PACT has also spawned something of a debate by offering another statistical parameter, Mean Absolute Deviation, in addition to standard deviation.

Their contention is that mean absolute deviation, abbreviated MAD, is a more meaningful term than SD because it is not affected by the number of shots in the string. I do not claim to be a statistician and rarely pay much attention to either of them. If the extreme spread is small then you know the SD and MAD will be too. Some people swear by statistics while others swear at them, but the MK III has them if you want them.

The MK III was the first chronograph

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at a reasonable price to have the convenience of a printer. For anyone who chronographs many loads this feature is worth its weight in gold. I never realized how much time I wasted writing everything down and since my chronograph sessions tend to be marathon events, the time saving is immense.

If you don't test many loads or merely want to be sure you're still making major, you may not want a printer, but if you are doing any serious load development you'll love it. All you have to do is push the "PRNT" key and start loading magazines.

I've been using a MK III for over a year now and although I have several other chronographs it is almost always the one I use.

Although I know it's accurate, my reason for the choice is much more mundane. The Mk III beeps to let you know that it has recorded a velocity and this saves time too for you don't have to look at the display while shooting.

When the string is printed out all I have to do is jot the load information right on the tape. In the rare event that a weird velocity shows up you can edit it out by going through the review sequence and then print out another tape. This doesn't happen often but it's handy to be able to edit flaky results if they do show up.

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New PACT Skyscreens

PACT's standard skyscreens have proven themselves to be reliable over the years I've been using them, but they have recently introduced a newer version known as the MKV that takes advantage of the latest technology to provide a screen that is even better.

The MKV screens use a lens to focus light on the detector and the result is a bigger "sweet spot." The lens is a rectangular piece of plastic that was designed by an optical engineer to provide a 35° angle of coverage. With the standard screens you had to be pretty precise and make sure the shots went right over the middle of the screen, but the new ones have much greater latitude.

I've also found that you can shoot higher over the MKV screens and still get accurate readings. Anyone who chronographs and says he hasn't shot a screen is either lucky or lying and being able to shoot six to eight inches over the screens is comforting. The PACT screens aren't horribly expensive, but I hate to shoot them anyhow.

The new screens come with a rigid diffuser and aiming guide that is the neatest arrangement I've seen. One of the things that plagues all chronographs is changing light intensity or bright direct sunlight and most have some sort of diffuser arrangement that goes over the screens to minimize this effect.

PACT's design is completely rigid and the base of the diffuser slips into a slot on the skyscreen body. These are sturdy pieces of 16 gauge steel with a translucent piece of plastic across the top. Even though they are rigid, the diffusers are not overly bulky and shouldn't be a problem in transportation or mounting. Some other styles are such a hassle to use that I routinely have left them off, even at the expense of a flaky reading now and then.

Purchased alone the MKV screens are \$45 a pair complete with diffusers or, if you purchase them with a MK III timer/chronograph the bring the cost of the Chrono-Mod to \$69. If you happen to have one of PACT's earlier chronographs the new screens will work on them as well. They're worth every dime.

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Is The Clock Right?

One of the questions that's logically asked about timers and chronographs deals with their accuracy. How do we know they're right?

Outside an electronics laboratory there isn't an easy way and the easiest method I've found is to simply use two or three chronographs to measure the same shots. They never agree exactly on the individual shots, but the average of ten or more shots will give you a good idea.

This is the method that I've used over the years as I've evaluated most of the chronographs on the market and it's pretty rare to find the averages varying by more than a few feet per second.

I will also occasionally shoot a couple of strings of "reference ammo" to see if the velocities agree with prior results. In my case I have some .22 Match ammo that I use for this purpose. A carton of .22 ammo will last a long time used this way and is an economical way to confirm that your chronograph setup is still telling the truth.

PACT guarantees that their chronographs are accurate within 0.5% and this small variation is lost within all the other variables of gun and ammunition.

The MK III is powered by a single 9 volt transistor radio battery and battery life is remarkably long considering the complex electronics it powers. Alkaline batteries are a must and I've found that chronograph readings get strange just before the battery dies and a new one almost always corrects the problem.

Two other clues to are a change in the tone and level of the beep and the display gets dim. Always have a spare, fresh battery handy because they always die at the most inconvenient time.

I think it would be a simple matter for PACT to include an indicator of impending battery death and this is the sole criticism I can level at their product.

For shooters who don't chronograph often the MK III probably is overkill, but for a serious IPSC shooter it's an economical alternative to owning a separate timer and chronograph.

The basic PACT MK III sells for \$279 and the installation of the "Chrono-mod" adds \$49 or \$69 to the total and includes a pair of your choice of skyscreens. The handy bracket that lets you use a camera tripod to mount the screens is \$24.

The unit comes with the printer driver installed, but the printer itself is another \$125. All that adds up to a pretty good chunk of change if you get everything, but this is top of the line gear and you get what you pay for.

It is backed by a 30 day return policy and a lifetime warranty against defective parts. The only time you'll have to pay for repairs is if you break it yourself. And, as you might expect, PACT makes buying one of their products easy. Call 1-800-PACT INC.



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There has been more interest in the 10mm Auto than anything of recent memory. The cartridge was designed for the ill-fated Bren Ten but when that project ended up spending more time in the courts than in production, the cartridge sort of dried up and almost went away. But when Colt announced that they would chamber the venerable Government Model, known as the Delta Elite in 10mm, everyone began to get interested again.

The 10mm suffered from either lack of guns, or lack of ammunition if you happened to have a gun. Until this year Norma was the only source of ammunition and there were

virtually no components available. The 10mm bore size (.40 caliber) isn't really new, but there isn't anything else on the market that will do, so all of us who wanted to play with the cartridge had to wait.

Fortunately the wait wasn't too long, for Colt's decision sparked some aggressive research by Hornady and they were the first U.S. firm to market both components and factory loaded ammunition. Sierra followed very quickly with a couple of bullets and the long awaited PMC ammunition is now available. Midway Arms now offers reasonably priced brass. In short, we have gone from famine to feast.

But, as with anything that's hot and new, the availability of loading data lags behind the availability of the products. This is, regrettably, a normal situation for the majority of published loading data is in hardbound books and you simply can't bring out a new edition every time something new comes along.

This situation has been especially troublesome with the 10mm because it is touted as a real hotrod cartridge which gives magnum performance to an automatic pistol. Well, it does, but only at maximum or near maximum loads and a source of safe, pressure tested, loading data is absolutely vital for this sort of handloading.



The 10mm is the hottest new pistol cartridge today. The Colt Delta Elite fires the fast-stepping 10mm in a variety of bullets from 150 grains up to 200 grains.



ACCURATE ARMS 10mm LOADING DATA

TEST GUN: COLT DELTA ELITE

BULLET	WT.	PRIMER	CASE	POWDER	START VEL.	MAX VEL.
SIERRA	150	W-W	NORMA	AA #2	6.4 1074	7.1 1220
HORNADY	155	W-W	NORMA	AA #2	6.3 1040	7.0 1180
CAST	168	W-W	NORMA	AA #2	6.1 1049	6.8 1193
HORNADY	170	W-W	NORMA	AA #2	5.9 1005	6.5 1142
SIERRA	180	W-W	NORMA	AA #2	5.6 924	6.2 1050
CAST	200	W-W	NORMA	AA #2	5.4 896	6.0 1018
CAST	168	W-W	NORMA	AA #5	6.5 1002	8.0 1247
HORNADY	170	W-W	NORMA	AA #5	7.9 1040	9.3 1196
CAST	200	W-W	NORMA	AA #5	4.4 799	5.2 918
NORMA	200	CCI 300	NORMA	AA #5	7.3 1094	8.2 1197
NORMA	200	CCI 300	NORMA	AA #7	10.0 1189	11.3 1265
CAST	168	W-W	NORMA	AA #7	(REDUCE 10%)	12.0 1350

CAST BULLET TARGET LOADS

SAECO 048	200	W-W	NORMA	231	4.5 925	5.0 975
SAECO 048	200	W-W	NORMA	BULLSEYE	3.8 870	4.2 940
SAECO 045	168	W-W	MIDWAY	452AA	4.0 880	6.0 1070

Again, Hornady has led the way and, with their permission, we are printing their complete data sheet. It is a great starting point, but you can be sure labs at all the major component manufacturers are cranking tools like crazy to broaden the available information. Accurate Arms has also given permission and their data is included as well.

In the rush to get this information to American handgunners I haven't been able to test each and every load, but I've been working with the cartridge for about three years and have shot a ton of it. I've learned that there are a few powders that seem to do really well and I've concentrated on those. But before we get into a bunch of data, I'd like to give you a look at the available components and equipment.

All the major manufacturers have loading dies, including carbide sizing dies. I have used Redding's for most of my loading. They are installed on a Dillon 550 and that combination has churned out thousands of rounds so far. I've also been using a set of Hornady's new titanium nitride coated dies with good results. Regardless of which brand you like, I don't think you'll have any trouble finding dies.

Both Hornady and Sierra have three 10mm jacketed bullets in their lines. Hornady has 155 and 170 grain jacketed hollowpoints and a 200 grain FMJ while Sierra has 150 and 180 JHPs and also a 200 grain ball. The lighter bullets seem to be the most popular right now due to the fact that you can get some pretty

impressive velocities.

The earliest Norma 170 grain ammo delivered close to 1400 fps from a five-inch barrel but everyone now agrees that that was simply too hot and 1300 fps is about the tops for the 170 grain bullets. The lighter 150 and 155 grainers can be pushed that high at true maximum charges. In fact, if you happen to be using a six-inch barrel as I did for some of these tests, 1450 fps isn't impossible. That's pretty impressive speed but I think cooler heads will find that 1300 fps with the light bullets is a practical max. Unless you chronograph them you can't tell the difference in recoil or noise between one going 1300 fps

HANDLOADING

THE 10mm Auto

By Charles E. Petty

and the maximum load. I've also found that accuracy tends to deteriorate a bit with the maximum loads. I guess that's the price you pay for firewalling.

The majority of my work has been with the lighter bullets from Sierra and Hornady and I think they're all just dandy. The 150 Sierra and 155 Hornady are the obvious velocity champs and using Hornady's data for the 155 grainer is fine for the Sierra 150. Velocities are just a tad higher with identical charges, but not enough to make a real difference. Accuracy seems to be identical too and both shoot extremely well.

With the middleweight 170 and 180 grain bullets recoil is noticeably heavier at comparable velocities, although both are quite accurate. Until better data is available for the 180 grain Sierra, I'd suggest reducing Hornady's 170 grain data by 10% and working up carefully.

Marty Liggins of Accurate Arms has a lot more experience with the 180 grain than I do and his recommendation is the same. Liggins reports that his maximum charges with the 180 slug run about 95% of the 170 grain Hornady data and he too cautions to work up carefully.

Of the available bullets, I have less experience with the 200 grain offerings and honestly wonder if they will be particularly popular. While it is possible to load them up to around 1100 fps, recoil becomes a problem.

Continued on page 98

10mm LOADING DATA

BULLET: 155 GR. HORNADY JHP
CASE: HORNADY
PRIMER: WINCHESTER LARGE PISTOL
C.O.L. 1.260"
TEST GUN: COLT DELTA ELITE
SOURCE: HORNADY

VELOCITY FPS

POWDER	1050	1100	1150	1200	1250	1300	1350	1400
W-W 231	5.8	6.1	6.5	6.9	—	—	—	—
UNIQUE	6.6	6.9	7.3	7.7	8.0	—	—	—
HERCO	—	7.1	7.5	8.0	8.5	8.9	—	—
800-X	6.9	7.5	8.1	8.7	9.3	9.9	—	—
AA-5	8.1	8.4	8.8	9.2	9.6	—	—	—
HS-6	8.4	8.9	9.3	9.8	10.2	10.7	—	—
HS-7	9.1	9.7	10.2	10.8	11.3	11.9	—	—
BLUE DOT	—	10.0	10.5	11.1	11.6	12.1	12.7	—
AA-7	9.7	10.3	10.9	11.5	12.1	12.7	13.3	13.9

BULLET: HORNADY 170 GR. JHP
CASE: HORNADY
PRIMER: WINCHESTER LARGE PISTOL
C.O.L. 1.260"
TEST GUN: COLT DELTA ELITE
SOURCE: HORNADY

VELOCITY FPS

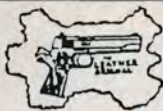
POWDER	1000	1050	1100	1150	1200	1250	1300	1350
W-W 231	5.2	5.8	6.2	—	—	—	—	—
UNIQUE	6.2	6.6	7.0	7.3	—	—	—	—
SR 4756	6.8	7.2	7.5	—	—	—	—	—
800-X	6.7	7.3	7.8	8.4	9.0	9.5	—	—
AA-5	—	7.9	8.4	8.9	9.4	—	—	—
HS-6	8.2	8.6	9.0	9.4	9.8	10.3	—	—
BLUE DOT	8.1	8.6	9.1	9.7	10.2	10.7	11.2	11.7
HS-7	8.9	9.3	9.8	10.3	10.7	11.2	—	—
AA-7	9.3	9.9	10.5	11.0	11.6	12.2	12.8	13.4

BULLET: HORNADY 200 GR. FMJ
CASE: HORNADY
PRIMER: WINCHESTER LARGE PISTOL
C.O.L. 1.260"
TEST GUN: COLT DELTA ELITE
SOURCE: HORNADY

VELOCITY FPS

POWDER	850	900	950	1000	1050	1100	1150
W-W 231	4.4	4.7	5.0	5.3	—	—	—
SR4756	5.0	5.2	5.5	5.7	—	—	—
UNIQUE	4.9	5.2	5.5	5.9	—	—	—
800-X	—	5.5	6.0	6.5	7.0	7.5	8.0
AA-5	6.3	6.7	7.2	7.6	8.0	8.4	—
BLUE DOT	—	6.7	7.1	7.6	8.0	8.5	8.9
HS-6	6.6	7.0	7.4	7.8	8.2	—	—
HS-7	—	7.8	8.2	8.7	9.1	9.5	—
AA-7	—	7.9	8.4	8.9	9.5	10.0	10.5

NOTICE: DUE TO THE VARIABILITY OF GUNS AND COMPONENTS NEITHER AMERICAN HANDGUNNER, HORNADY MANUFACTURING, ACCURATE ARMS NOR THE AUTHOR CAN ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE USE OF THIS DATA. IT IS INTENDED SOLELY AS A GUIDE AND SHOULD BE USED WITH CAUTION.



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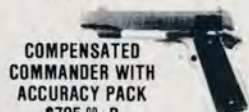
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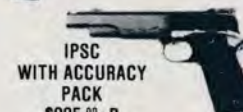
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LADYSMITH

Continued from page 71

your hand when you shoot it. I'd like one, but I'd put new grips on it as soon as I got it."

Stock Grips Must Go

I have to echo Elizabeth's sentiments. The grips bite the big one. The ersatz rosewood is great right up until you shoot the LadySmith: the smooth-polished surface allows the fingers to slide quickly into position. At the first shot, of course, it twists in your hand even if you're shooting wadcutters.

The oversize model is, if anything, worse. Made of a nondescript wood allegedly grooved for slender female fingers, the grooves in fact fit a male hand well. Built up at the back, the stocks force the web of the hand out away from the frame. This design does an excellent job of extending trigger reach, and in the average or larger hands, feels great.

Unfortunately, the petite female hand is about a digit shorter than the average male's and requires a gun with shorter, not longer, trigger reach. When testing prototypes of the LadySmith at the factory before introduction, my partner Rick Devoid and I showed S&W exec Rich Mackney a grip we thought was a better compromise.

This is the Craig Spigel Boot Grip, which is cut to the rear of the frame to allow a short trigger reach, yet has a palm swell and fill-in behind the trigger guard to give excellent support even in +P shooting.

Mackney liked the concept, but found that custom maker Spigel could not furnish enough for the production line. (You can get them, though, at about \$50 a pair from Rick Devoid, Tarnhelm Police Equipment, 67 1/2 Rumford St., Dept. AH, Concord, NH 03301).

Note that the women queried above were from law enforcement families and all had extensive experience with two-inch .38s. Frankly, the staff of an enthusiast's magazine does not have a good handle on raw beginners, and that's who this gun was marketed at. Actually, though, the feedback from women experienced with this genre of weapon was positive.

Perhaps I should have gone down to the Rhododendron Society and yelled, "Hey, anybody wanna try this revolver?" I just felt that what little feedback I got before the SWAT team came and dragged me away would be less than relevant. For newcomers ladies who do choose the LadySmith, I think better grips would be the first order of priorities. This was borne out in subsequent shooting. If handgun professionals had trouble with the factory-furnished grips, where would

this leave a lady with her first-ever revolver?

Shooting LadySmith

Lacking a black lace thigh holster, I threw the two-inch LS into a De Santis-made SFAS (super fast ankle scabbard) and wore the little beast for a few weeks.

I wish the hammer had been made spurless because it snags frequently the way it is designed. The only rationale for leaving the spur on is precision single action target shooting.

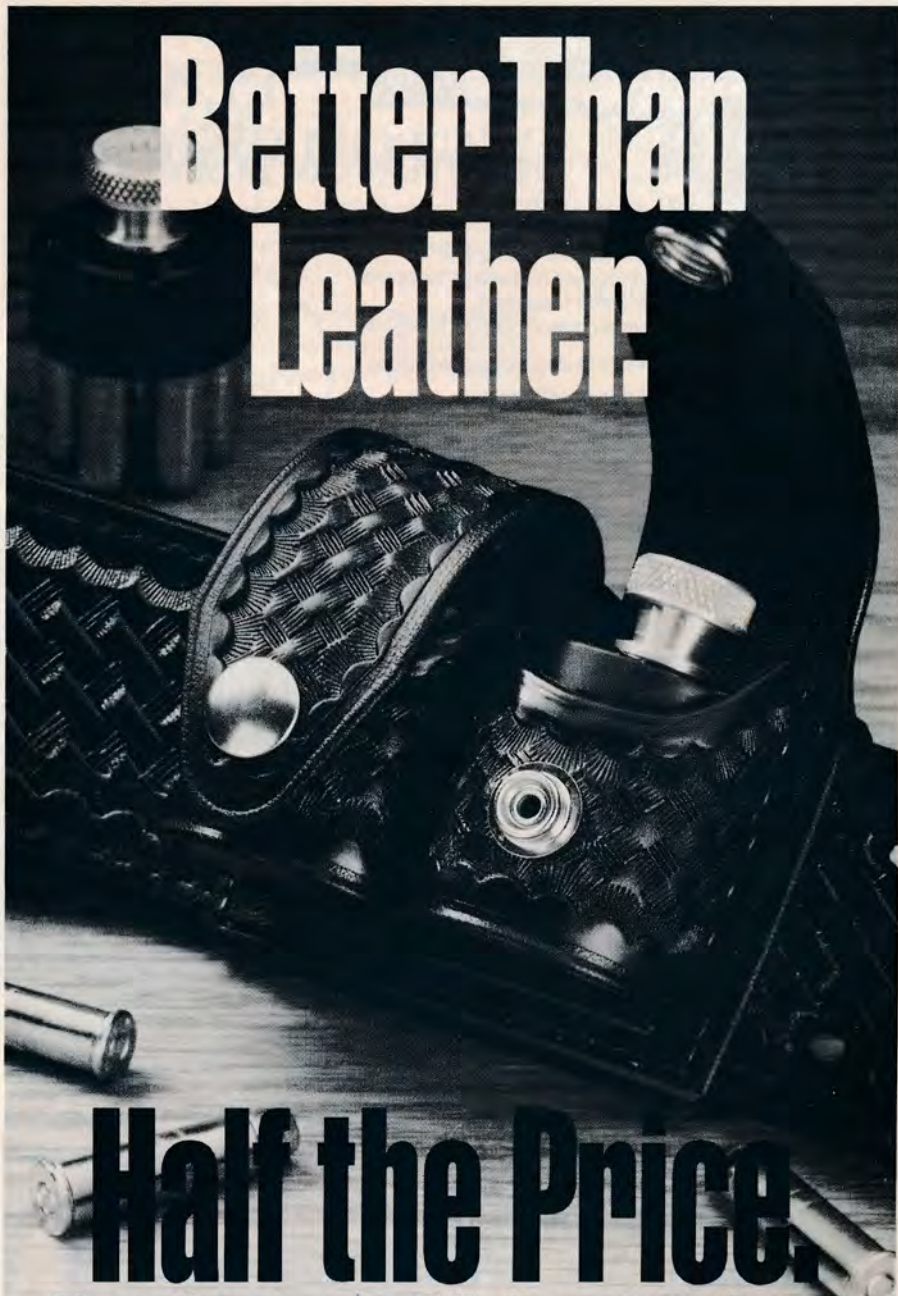
This is contra-indicated with a two-inch J-frame, and with a first-time user there is a strong tendency to cock the revolver for intimidation of an opponent, thanks to the role models of the silver screen. In real life, of course, that poor tactic leads to unintentional shootings or false accusations thereof.

I really wish S&W had chosen the shrouded-hammer Bodyguard version of the Chief as the basis for the LadySmith, but let's face it, the Bodyguard is ugly and visual appeal was part of the market package.

Initial testing showed that both guns shot to the right. At 50 yards, the two-inch was off the target completely and the three-inch put four in the paper bad guy's left arm and the fifth onto the target board. Fifty paces is, of course, a bit far for any snubby and particularly for the target purchaser of the LadySmith: rape attempts by definition take place at or near contact distance, and a home defense shot is generally fired at a range the length of a hallway or less.

At seven yards, the three-inch was much closer to center and even the two-inch stayed in the X-ring, albeit at 2

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o'clock. Both grouped nicely, thanks in large part to the ease of manipulation of the lighter double action trigger, and to those much-improved sights.

On falling plates of eight-inch Bianchi Cup diameter, Kentucky windage would be required with the short one much beyond 10 yards.

I shot a match and a qualification with the wee wheelgun. At the Riverside Gun Club in Hudson, Mass., they have a "New York Reload" match in which you face nine falling plates of assorted sizes with your primary gun loaded with six, and a backup gun of snub .38 or .380 auto persuasion. When the first six are fired you dump your primary and go to your second.

I used the LadySmith to back up my custom Colt .38 auto, and nine shots later had beaten Mike Carmony's record on the course by $\frac{1}{4}$ ths of a second. (Mike will be back; stay tuned.)

Still, I'd been using light wadcutters. Even then the slick ersatz rosewood grips had twisted irritatingly in the hand. With +P, they were hopeless, and the sharp edges at the bottom bit painfully into my hand. The following day, I unbolted same and cannibalized a pair of Spiegel Boot Grips from a Bodyguard Airweight.

With these, I was able to shoot a police qualification course clean, 250 out of 250 in "qual" mode though it would have been too many points down for comfort using the competitive scoring rings. As it was, I had to hold below the bad guy target's liver to put the shots in the sternum area from 15 and 25 yards on the FBI Tactical Revolver Course.

But the Spiegel grips had made a world of difference. I was now comfortable stoking the frosted Model 60 with FBI loads, specifically Federal 158 grain lead semiwadcutters +P hollowpoints. The nasty recoil was now at least controllable, and it was giving .45 hardball-class stopping power on the other end.

Good Back-Up Gun

I drew from the pocket of my black leather jacket during that qualification, if only to cling to one pathetic shred of masculinity while shooting a lady's gun. Yet I have to say, I'd much rather carry a LadySmith than a standard off-the-shelf



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I also have to underscore the advantage of the 1/8" front sight and proportionally wider rear notch. A near-deadline phone call to S&W netted the information that for the time being at least, the superior fixed sight design will be exclusive to the LadySmith, and other J-frame two-inch .38s will continue with the obsolete narrow front blade. The 1/8" version is so superior to the 1/10" that you almost have to shoot one against the other to appreciate just how marked the difference is.

I may be a ballistic transvestite for carrying a LadySmith as backup, but if I wasn't going back to my custom-made mini-revolver in .357 Magnum when this test is completed, I'd keep the LadySmith as my ankle gun. Its good trigger is factory produced and not the product of a shop specializing in the "custom gunfighter special," and that can help you in the courtroom aftermath of something ugly.

"LadySmith" also lacks the connotation of "Rambo Signature Model" when, as often happens in courtroom aftermaths of justifiable homicides, combat semantics comes into play.

A whack of an armorer's rabbit to bring the excellent, improved sights into line, a hammer-bob, and the addition of a decent pair of grips, and the LadySmith would be a backup gun any 200-pound, hairy-bellied harness bull could love. I can testify from personal experience that wearing it does not make you want to put frilly underthings beneath your uniform. Unless you were doing that already.

Indeed, my weeks of carrying a LadySmith convinced me that you've got to be really secure in your masculinity to own one, because you'll take a merciless ragging from your buddies.

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and adding grips like the Spigel or the Pachmayr Professional Compac at point of purchase, any version of the Lady-Smith should superbly fulfill its intended purpose.

The approximately \$40 increase in price of the LadySmith compared to the regular Chief is taken up largely in the Morocco-style, lockable case, which is a handy thing to have. The better sights and trigger pull are the icing on the cake, and make the LadySmith in fact an excellent value in a small frame .38

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RELOADING 10MM

Continued from page 93

I really don't see much attraction with the possible exception of silhouette loads or perhaps for IPSC, although I expect the lighter bullets will be popular there as well.

But the biggest question of all in loading the 10mm is what powder to use. Among those listed in Hornady's data, Accurate Arms #7 is the velocity leader and is the only powder tested so far to deliver 1400 fps with the light bullets while remaining under the

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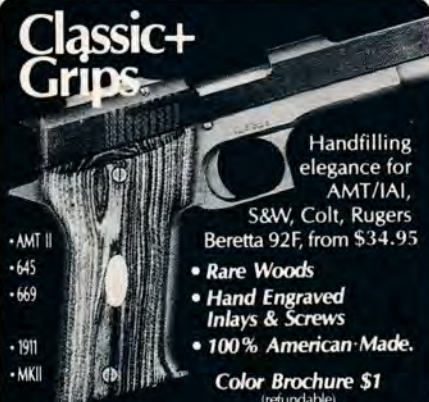
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37,500 psi pressure that has been determined to be maximum. The reason, according to Ron Reiber, Hornady's ace ballistician, is that the loading density is just right.

Hornady's testing included a number of powders that are not, for one reason or another, shown in their data. Some of the faster powders simply reach peak pressures before they achieve the higher velocities that many shooters will want. If you examine Hornady's data which is arranged in fastest-to-slowest by burning rate, you can see that higher velocities are only reached by the slower powders.

They stopped with AA #7 because things begin to fall off with anything slower. I tried some AA #9 and the results can best be described as spectacular. The muzzle flash was awesome, but velocity was mediocre because most of the powder was burning in the air. In any case, you'll see that the majority of loading data uses ball type powders. This is good news for users of progressive presses.

You'll also notice that a lot of my work has been with Accurate Arms powders. The main reason is that they have performed extremely well. If you wish to load maximums, Accurate Arms #7 is the powder of choice for it delivers the highest velocities at reasonable pressures. Accurate #5 is an excellent choice for moderate loads and is among the most consistent powders I've tried. It isn't uncommon to have extreme velocity spreads of 10-15 fps with moderate (1200 fps) loads.

I've also had good results with Winchester 452AA in light cast bullet loads. Good old Unique would probably be my next choice among flake powders, although it doesn't meter quite as well in progressive tools. If you're using a conventional powder measure, it does nicely.

All the velocity data is based on the five-inch barrel of the Colt Delta Elite, but I have shot many of these loads in the Springfield Armory Omega with a six-inch barrel and the LAR Grizzly which also has a six-inch barrel. The extra inch has a small, but significant, effect on velocity which averages about 50 fps higher.

About the only tricky thing in loading the 10mm Auto is seating depth. From the dual perspectives of function and chamber pressure, seating depth is important. We all know that pressure increases with greater seating depth and at the magnum pressures of the 10mm this can be critical. For this reason, Hornady's engineers recommend that overall loaded length be kept between 1.240" and 1.260". If the overall length exceeds 1.260" there is a good chance that the rounds will bind in the magazine.

In fact, I've encountered this even with Norma factory hollowpoints. The Norma bullet has a wide, blunt nose that can touch the inside of the magazine. I haven't had this trouble with Colt magazines, but have encountered it when using both Springfield Armory and Wilson 10mm magazines. It can happen with almost any bullet if you let overall length stray over 1.260". An overall

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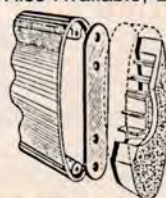


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length of 1.255" to 1.260" will accommodate most bullets and it is desirable to keep the length as long as practical to help keep a lid on pressure.

Most of the loading data available has been developed using Norma brass and there is a question about the interchangeability of data among the four different case makes now available. Marty Liggins, ballistician at Accurate Arms, has just completed pressure testing of identical loads in all four cases and reports that pressure in Midway brass runs about 5% higher than other cases. He advises shooters to stay below 95% of the published maximum charges when using Midway cases. He reports that pressure in Norma, Hornady and PMC brass was virtually identical and these three may be used interchangeably as long as due care is used in working up to maximum charges.



HILL HOLSTER

Continued from page 54

of us it takes more than a nice holster to look bitchin', but any little improvement helps.

Whatever the reasons, the 666F caught on like no other before. "Old Faithful," as Ernie Hill calls it, has been used by more competitors, and won more matches, than any other. If there was ever such a thing as a "Holster Hall of Fame" the 666F would get my vote.

A Better Mousetrap

Nothing is so good it can't be improved though, and competitors and designers were soon looking for ways to take the holster's best features even further.

One of the key features was the ability to vary holster rake. Competitors were finding that seemingly minor adjustments in the holster position could make a big difference in getting a solid shooting grip on the gun, making for a smoother and more consistent draw.

Some shooters found that they couldn't get quite the angle they wanted — a #1 might be too straight while a #2 had more rake than necessary. It was possible to modify a fender to get a "1 1/2" rake, but it seemed that a system offering a finer range of adjustments would have merit.

Another key feature was the very low-cut front opening. The 666F required the gun to be lifted about 2 3/8" before the muzzle could start moving forward. Fast as this was, it appeared there was scope to reduce this amount and pick up even more speed, provided it could be done without compromising gun retention.

These were the areas in which competition holster designers began concentrating their efforts.



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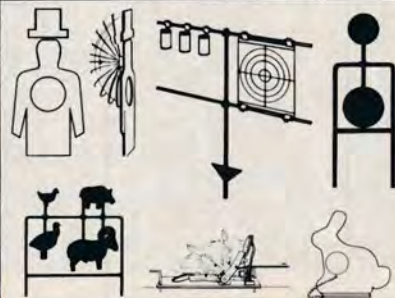
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Other New Holsters

Ted Blocker's Custom Holsters came up with the "Thunderbolt Convertible" model with a matching gear-tooth arrangement on holster and fender that allowed rake to be easily adjusted. A slot in the fender allowed the holster to be moved up and down, and it is as far as I know the only model that allows both height and rake to be readily adjusted. Construction of the holster pouch itself is conventional, requiring the gun to be lifted 2 1/4" before it is clear.

Another ingenious designer, Bill Rogers, was working with Safariland on designs that would reduce the distance the gun had to be raised, while still offering adequate security. The "Combat Assault" model retained the gun by a molding at the ejection port.

It was replaced by the current "Final Option" model, incorporating a "lock block" that retains the gun at the base of the trigger guard, and allows any desired level of tension to be dialed in. The front of the holster is virtually open, and the gun need only come up about 1 1/4" before it can start forward. Holster position and rake can be adjusted, though this requires the thermoplastic holster loop to be heated until it softens, then molded to the desired shape.

Hill's New Fas-Trac

Ernie Hill, meanwhile, was far from resting on his laurels. At the Dallas SHOT Show in January, 1989 he introduced his new Fas-Trac holster, and judging by the overwhelming demand for it from competitive shooters, it appears Hill has another winner on his hands.

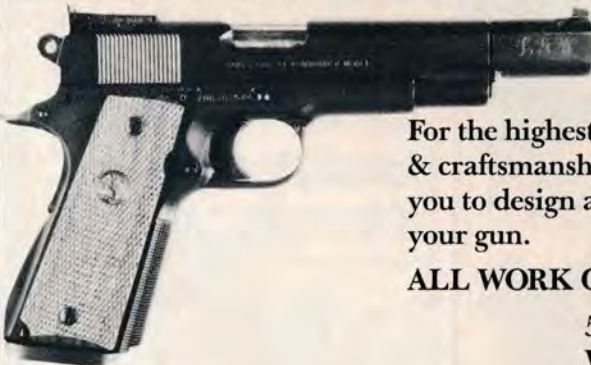
The Fas-Trac's features start with the "Angle-Lok," matching gears on fender and holster that allow quick and easy adjustment of rake. In concept it's similar to the Blocker TC, but in execution it is quite different.

The Blocker gear is quite small in diameter (3/8") with relatively coarse teeth that adjust the rake in 15° increments. The Angle-Lok is 1 1/2" in diameter with twice as many teeth, permitting adjustment in 7.5° increments. The large diameter makes for a very solid attachment of holster to fender, with no feeling of looseness or flexibility.

The front of the holster was opened up even further to speed the draw, and to retain the gun securely Hill introduced another new feature — a nylon muzzle plug built into the toe of the holster, which fits inside the bore when the gun is holstered.

As before, there are top and bottom tension screws. Adjust the bottom screw for the degree of security needed — from none to "can't get it out of the holster" — and snug up the top screw to prevent any sideways motion of the gun. On the draw, lift the gun up just one inch and it's free and ready to move forward. Is it fast? Believe it.

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A New Twist

With the Fas-Trac, Hill introduced another new twist, literally. His fast draw experience had shown him that if the gun is in line with the target as it sits in the holster, it can come out and straight up on target faster. But since most IPSC and action shooters wear the gun forward of the hip, if the holster is parallel to the holster belt loop the gun actually points at an angle to the target — to the left, for a right-handed shooter.

So Hill just gave the steel-lined fender a twist of about 20° where it forms into the belt loop. Now with the holster worn on the strong side, just over the front pocket, the gun is lined up right on target. For a shooter who likes the gun further forward or back, it's possible to twist the fender slightly to suit.

This would seem to be quite enough for one holster, but Hill wasn't done yet. Some owners of the 666F had complained that their beautiful new holsters were getting scraped by the gun — by the slide stop on one side, and by the slide stop pin on the other.

This type of wear is perfectly normal with any holster and is no cause for alarm. Nonetheless, Hill listened to his customers and made the Fas-Trac's lines even trimmer and leaner than the 666F's. Now the gun's projections don't touch leather at all, and obviously can't cause wear.

The test holster, after several hundred draws, could still pass for brand new.

The Angle-Lok and the muzzle plug are made of special plastic moldings, suited to their specialized purposes. Such parts are relatively inexpensive, though the tooling to make them isn't.

The holster and fender are made in typical Ernie Hill fashion: of heavy-gauge steel, the best leather, and unsurpassed workmanship. Stitching is tight and even, at six stitches per inch on the holster, seven on the fender. All edges are properly burnished, basket stamping is neat and attractive, and the surface finish shows no flaws.

There are other holster makers whose products equal Hill's in quality, but none who are superior. The Fas-Trac provides every feature needed in a competition holster: gun retention, adaptability, rock-solid construction, and speed second to none.

With the Fas-Trac Ernie Hill has taken the best features of the classic 666F to their limit, and added a few more for good measure. When I bought my 666F I thought it would be the last competition holster I'd ever need, but now it stays home in honored retirement while the Fas-Trac goes to the range.

Suppliers of practical shooting accessories should have the Fas-Trac in stock, or you can write Ernie Hill Speed Leather, 3128 S. Extension Rd., Dept. AH, Mesa, AZ 85202, or call (602)-831-1919.



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STAINLESS THUNDER

Continued from page 65

petition holster much like the Safariland Final Option but designed for a revolver.

This is a suede leather lined, fully molded holster, designed with optimum speed in mind. The 625-2 comes out of the Prezine holster quickly, but it's also secure and stays put until the shooter wants it to come out. Fast.

Since the 625-2 is also excellent as a duty/defensive sixgun, a call went out to El Paso Saddlery (P.O. Box 27194, Dept AH, El Paso, TX 79926) for a belt holster for the 625-2.

"Are you familiar with the new 625-2?" was the question I posed to El Paso's genial owner Bob McNelis.

"Familiar? I'm shooting one in IPSC. Do you know where I can get another one?"

There's a man after my own heart!

Within a few minutes, I had ordered a basket weave Tortilla, El Paso's answer to the pancake, as my packin' rig for the 625-2.

How often have you read that .45 Auto Rim revolvers could be used with .45 ACP ammo without half-moon clips? Don't believe it!

El Paso did it right on this holster. The basket stamped pattern is finished in a rich chocolate color and furnished with a full suede lining. The Tortilla rides high and tight to the body providing both comfort and security for the relatively heavy Smith & Wesson .45 (42 ozs. with BearHug grip installed, 45.5 ozs. with Pachmayr Gripper in place).

A quick move of the hand and a snap of the thumb-break security strap and the 625-2 comes into action fast. I like the Tortilla so much that I have already ordered another from El Paso leather.

SO HOW'S IT SHOOT?

Okay, the Smith & Wesson 625-2 feels good, looks good, mates up fabulously with custom grips and custom holsters. It is fast out of a competition holster and carries quite well in a packin' holster. All this adds up to exactly nothing if it doesn't shoot. Rest assured, it shoots. And shoots very well indeed.

The first shots through the 625-2 were with iron sights and .45 ACP factory ammunition from Federal, CCI, Winch-

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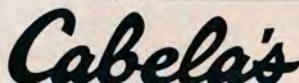
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ester and Hornady. Most groups were in the two and one-half to three-inch range. Just barely acceptable, certainly nothing great.

To remove the variable of aging eyes plus a short barrel, an Aimpoint 1000 scope was mounted using a B-Square no-gunsmithing mount. This mount requires removal of the Smith & Wesson rear sight, addition of an adapter that taps into the recess at the rear of the top strap when the sight is removed, the tightening of two screws, and the mounting of the Aimpoint. It sounds simple, and it is. The whole shebang is accomplished in about two minutes by someone even as naturally fumble-fingered as I am.

The addition of the Aimpoint red dot scope made things a little more interesting with groups coming down to the two-inch neighborhood, and I really got excited when Federal 185 grain Match .45 ACP ammunition placed six shots into one-inch at 25 yards. Now we were really getting somewhere!

How often have you read that the .45 Auto Rim revolvers could be used with .45 ACP ammunition without the use of the half-moon, or the newer full moon clips? When .45 ACP ammunition is used in the .45 Auto Rim revolvers, the mouth of the case theoretically butts up against the shoulder in the cylinder.

Don't believe it. At least not for anything more serious than shooting tin cans.

Without the clips, I experienced one or two misfires in each cylinder full using the softer Blazer aluminum ammunition and I am assuming either that it simply slid forward over the shelf in the cylinder as the firing pin hit the primer, or the Blazer aluminum case is a mite short for the chamber of the Smith & Wesson .45. This would allow the case to move forward as the firing pin hits the primer.

With other brands of ammunition, accuracy without the clips was good, but not really outstanding except for the Federal Match ammo.

Then full moon clips were pressed into service. Viva la difference! Every group shrunk in size, some to half the size of groups without the clips, except for the Federal .45 Match ammunition. It shot groups that were one-fourth inch larger with the clips! Interesting, what?

These tests convinced me that any serious use of the 625-2 and .45 ACP ammunition requires the use of half- or full-moon clips. It is a nuisance to pick the fired ACP brass out of the cylinder anyhow as the extractor does not pick up the empties as there is no rim to catch. As an extra added bonus with the use of clips, it is impossible for one fired case to slip under the extractor star as often happens with rimmed cartridges.

A full-moon clip of .45 ACP's loads fast and unloads fast and positively. For defensive use, it would be foolish at the least, and dangerous at the most, to use the 625-2 with .45 ACP ammunition

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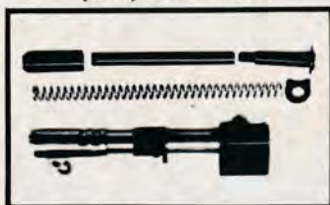
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without clips.

The results obtained firing .45 ACP ammunition in the 625-2 three different ways are shown in the accompanying chart, using iron sights without clips, then an Aimpoint without the use of clips, and finally using an Aimpoint and full moon clips.

.45 AR HANDLOADS

The next step in the testing process was to try some favorite .45 ACP handloads using jacketed bullets but with .45 AR brass. The 625-2 is going to be used a great deal by competition shooters, many of whom will use speed loaders and .45 AR brass.

Some of these loads went down pretty close to the tack-drivin' one-inch group size and even the heavyweight Sierra and Speer bullets, designed for the .45 Colt at 240 grains and 260 grains respectively, shot well. The Hornady 250 grain jacketed hollow point .45, another excellent bullet for the .45 Colt, could not be used as it would not chamber in the tight cylinder of the Smith & Wesson when the crimp groove was utilized. More on this a little later.

Results with jacketed bullet handloads in the .45 Smith & Wesson sixgun are shown in the accompanying chart.

Now it was time for the real test of the Smith & Wesson 625-2. Any handgun that is going to be shot a lot—and this big-bore sixgun is going to be shot a lot—must be capable of handling cast bullets unless the shooter has either an unlimited supply of jacketed bullets or an unlimited supply of cash to purchase said bullets.

Yes, it is the cast bullet that is still king when it comes to doing a lot of six-gun shooting.

Favorite cast bullet load combinations were assembled for use in the 625-2 and I ran into my first problem with the Smith .45. Over the years I have learned, and it has sometimes been a hard lesson to learn with much time spent pulling bullets, that one does not load a whole batch of ammunition without trying loads to see if the intended handgun will actually accept them.

Nothing can be taken for granted when assembling ammunition even though one would expect loads that have been used for years in the Model 25 Smith & Wesson would also work in the 625. Not so!

Plans were made, on paper, to load Keith bullets crimped in the crimping groove and using .45 Auto Rim brass. These had worked well in the past and my plans called for the use of the Lyman #452423, a 240 grain semi-wadcutter and #454424, a 260 grain semi-wadcutter. The .45 semi-wadcutters were run through the lubri-sizer and as I got ready to load them, a little voice very strongly urged: "Better try 'em!"

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	IRON SIGHTS†	AIMPOINT‡	AIMPOINT*
FEDERAL 185 FMJ MATCH	2 1/4"	1"	1 1/4"
FEDERAL 230 RN	3"	2 1/2"	2"
BLAZER 185 TMJ MATCH	2 1/2"	2 1/2"	2"
BLAZER 200 JHP	1 1/2"	2"	1"
CCI LAWMAN 200 JHP	2"	2 1/4"	1 3/8"
WINCHESTER 185 ST HP	2 1/2"	2 1/4"	1 3/8"
WINCHESTER 230 RN	2 1/2"	2"	1 1/4"
HORNADY 230 FP	4"	2 3/4"	1 3/8"
HORNADY 230 RN	3"	3"	1 3/4"

*Half moon clips used †No half moon clips

JACKETED BULLET LOADS

BULLET	LOAD	MV/FPS	GROUP SIZE
SIERRA 185 JHP	8.5 UNIQUE	1080	2"
HORNADY 185 JHP	8.5 UNIQUE	1032	2 1/4"
SPEER 200 TMJ	5.5 WW231	690	1 1/4"
SIERRA 240 JHP	7.0 UNIQUE	913	1 1/2"
SPEER 260 JHP	6.0 UNIQUE	823	1 1/2"

CAST BULLET LOADS

BULLET	LOAD	MV/FPS	GROUP SIZE
LYMAN #452460	8.0 AA #5	867	1 1/4"
(200 GR. SWC)	10.0 AA #7	902	1"
	6.5 UNIQUE	902	1"
	5.5 WW231	831	1"
	5.6 WW452AA	985	1 1/2"

H&G #68 6.0 WW231 923 1 1/4"
 (200 GR. SWC) 7.5 UNIQUE 1089 1"
 BRASS: REMINGTON .45 AR PRIMER: FED #150 GROUPS: 6 SHOTS @ 25 YDS
 SCOPE: AIMPOINT 1000/B-SQUARE MOUNT

I loaded the first round with the #454424, and the loaded round which dropped into my Model 25-2 and seemed to rattle around a bit, would not chamber in the 625-2. Switching to the #452423, which was specifically designed for the .45 Auto Rim, gave the same results. The loaded round would not chamber.

My last hope for a heavy SWC bullet would be the Lyman-Thompson #452490GC. The first round was loaded with the gas-checked 250 grain semi-wadcutter, and voila, success. This excellent bullet has a front band that is small enough to allow it to fit the chambers of the 625-2, albeit quite snugly. And it proved to be a good choice for the 625-2 with 7.0 grains of Herco giving a muzzle velocity of 929 fps and putting six shots into a three-fourth inch group at 25 yards. That is great shooting for a big bore six-gun with cast bullets.

Both 8.0 grains of Herco, at an even 1000 fps, and 13.0 grains of #2400, at a very slightly faster 1017 fps, shot into one and one-fourth inches, six shots at 25 yards.

The Keith .45 Colt 260 grain bullet #454424 could be used by crimping over the front band in AR brass and 7.0 grains of Unique gave a satisfying 900+ fps with six shots going into one and three-eighths inches. Note that all of these loads eclipse the long standing benchmark load of the .45 Colt/255 grain bullet by 50-150 fps. That makes the 625-2 .45 AR into a viable close range hunting handgun for deer and black bear, as well as an action shooting and defensive sixgun.

Also quite satisfying were the results obtained with Speer's 250 grain swaged semi-wadcutter. This bullet is very soft and just does not work with every load/powder/gun combination. Happily, this bullet loaded over 6.0 grains of Unique and crimped in the crimping groove, for slightly over 750 fps, results in an accurate, mild shooting, easily assembled defense and small game load.

Loads assembled with the swaged Speer .45 having muzzle velocities above 800 fps caused excessive leading.

Long-time favorite cast bullets for use in the .45 ACP have been Lyman's #452460, Hensley & Gibb's #68, and RCBS's #45-201KT. All three of these semi-wadcutters weigh at the 200 grain mark and usually are excellent performers in .45 ACP semi-automatics and proved to do the same in the .45 AR revolver. In fact, of 14 loads tried, 13 went into one and one-half inches or less, six shot into one-inch or less, and one load, using Lyman's #452460 and 6.0 grains of WW231, made a six-shot group of one-half inch center to center. Astounding accuracy for a big bore six-gun especially when one considers how far the bullet has to jump in the cylinder before it ever reaches the forcing cone and the rifling.

Accuracy with cast bullets was so

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good, so far above my Model 25-2, that I called Smith & Wesson to ask Tom Campbell whether or not the barrel specifications had been changed. His reply was that the barrel was cut the same as those supplied on the Model 25-2 but there was a reason for the accuracy. The chamber throats of the 625-2 are held to .453". What this means is simply that the cast bullet does not have to swell up in the cylinder and then be swaged down again when it hits the rifling. The result? Much better cast bullet accuracy.

Results of cast bullet loads used in the 625-2 are shown in the accompanying chart.

The 625-2 is one of the best ideas to come out of the Smith & Wesson factory

The 625-2 is one of the best ideas to come out of the Smith & Wesson factory in many a moon. My unsolicited advice is "Don't Stop!"

in many a moon. The only problem that I experienced with the firing of somewhere between 1500 and 2000 rounds was the tendency of the ejector rod to back out making it difficult to release the cylinder and swing it out for unloading and loading. A little Loc-Tite judiciously applied should solve this problem.

After nearly 2000 rounds, the single action trigger pull continues to be very good and the double action pull, though smoother than it was at the start of the testing, still needs the benefit of an action job to smooth it out a bit more for fast, accurate double action shooting. Backing out the mainspring screw results in a much lighter DA pull but at the expense of removing tension on the mainspring, a trade-off which can lead to misfires.

My unsolicited advice to Smith & Wesson is "Don't stop". The 625-2 should remain a production gun in both blue and stainless options. And why just in .45 AR chambering? Bring out models in .357 Magnum, .41 Magnum, .44 Magnum, and .45 Colt. A lot of sixgunners are going to appreciate the concept of the 625-2 and perhaps even more so if it is available in their particular favorite caliber. One Smith & Wesson distributor has already caught the fever and is offering stainless .44 Magnum Classic Hunters with five-inch barrels.

A sixgun that does one job well is a success. The 625-2 is a triple threat with the ability to perform well as an action shooting revolver, a defensive sixgun, and a hunting handgun. Even at a retail price of \$535, that makes it a bargain by anyone's definition.



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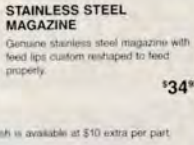
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HANDLOADING

Continued from page 53

Seating Depth

We all know that the depth of the bullet in the case has an important effect on pressure. The more or less standard overall length for .38 Super ammo is 1.280" and I have come to consider this as the *minimum* especially since the heavier bullets take up more case capacity.

Depending upon the type of bullet, the magazines you use, and the individual chamber in your gun, you can seat bullets out further than this to help hold pressures down.

I found that it was possible to load to an overall length around 1.290" and still have reliable functioning. The limiting factor seemed to be the magazine. With the roundnoses of the C-P and Speer bullets I was able to seat them out until the nose barely cleared the front of the magazine and still have complete reliability. This is something that everyone will have to try for himself, but spend the time to check it out and seat bullets as long as possible in your equipment.

Testing Super Loads

For this series of tests I used three different guns. The first was my old standby Wilson Accu-Comp which has fired countless thousands of rounds.

I also have an old test gun that was built with one of Wilson's barrels but does not have a comp. Finally, I was able to borrow one of the new Wilson Super Grade guns equipped with his new double chamber compensator.

Three guns, all shooting the same ammo, have given me a fair perspective on the variations that will be encountered from one gun to the next. There were, of course, variations. The spread from the "slowest" (my old Accu-Comp) to the "fastest" (the new Wilson Super Grade) was about 30 fps.

Ammunition was loaded on a Dillon 550B and charges were checked every 10 rounds. Charge weights varied by no more than plus or minus 0.1 gr. All shooting was done at temperatures between 80-90 degrees and reported velocities are the average of three 10-shot groups measured at 10' from the muzzle and not corrected to muzzle velocity. The chronograph was a PACT Mk. III timer/chronograph.

Conclusions

To sum up, I think loads that factor 180 are good for most weather and altitude conditions. There may be the rare occasion of extremely hot weather or high altitude that might require a change in loads, but generally these should work.

A velocity of 1200 fps is required for the 150 gr. bullet and it takes 1224 fps for the 147 gr. weight. Although you

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wouldn't think that there would be much difference in the charges required to make major with the two different bullet weights, when all the smoke had cleared you can use 0.2 gr. less Accurate Arms #7 with the 150 gr. C-P bullet.

Based on my tests in three different guns, with three different makes of brass and two different primers here's what I'm going to use.

With the 150 gr. C-P FMJ: Remington or PMC cases, Federal Small Rifle primer and 9.2 gr. Accurate Arms #7. This load produced velocities that averaged between 1185 and 1200 fps in the three guns.

With the 147 gr. Speer TMJ: Remington or PMC cases, Federal Small Rifle primer and 9.4 gr. Accurate Arms #7. This load produced velocities between 1200 and 1220 fps in the same three guns.

With the new Winchester .38 Super brass velocities were essentially the same and I would not hesitate to use Winchester cases if I knew they were of the new type.

The 9.4 gr. load has been pressure tested and found to produce pressures around 34,000 CUP. This is a *maximum load* and should not be exceeded. And, since there is such a variation among guns, I strongly recommend that you begin working up with charges that are reduced by 10% and increase them in no more than 0.2 gr. increments until you find the load that's right for your gun.

I feel that it is important to recognize the advantages and limitations of jacketed bullets for major loads. Yes, they reduce smoke, but only at the expense of higher pressures, shorter case life, and possibly more rapid wear on the gun. Of course they also cost a lot more.

Finally a couple of other loads. I haven't limited the testing to Accurate Arms #7 although it is the only powder for which we have pressure test data for these loads. Two others that I've tried are Winchester 540 and Winchester 571. Using the 150 gr. C-P bullet, a charge of 7.9 gr. of W-W 540 produced an average velocity of 1206 fps. in PMC cases with Federal Small Rifle Primers. Winchester 571 required a charge of 8.7 gr. with the same components to produce 1200 fps velocities.

Both of these charges are *maximum* and should not be exceeded. Remember too that there are differences in guns and while they certainly appeared safe in my guns you should work up to them carefully.

After testing a bunch of rounds, my feeling is that, while you can make major levels with jacketed bullets, it isn't something I would want to do every day. Pressures are right at the top and case life is short. Unless there's a compelling need, stick with lead bullets.



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BIANCHI CUP

Continued from page 77

didn't contribute to the "ten thousand dollar jerk" that cost one shooter the match?

What is it about Mickey Fowler and the Falling Plates? In 1979 he entered the annals of shooting trivia as the answer to the question, "What is the most expensive brain fade ever in competition?" He neglected to insert a fresh magazine in his Colt .45 when he had the match in the palm of his hand. Five missed plates resulted as Mickey discovered to his horror that his slide was locked back over an empty magazine after the first shot.

Now in 1989 the Plates return to haunt Mickey Fowler again. On the last day of the match, Mickey was the only contender with a perfect score so far. The plates are taken for granted at this level of competition, so everyone was looking to Mickey's performance on the Moving Target to see him cement his fourth Cup victory. (Mickey went on to shoot a brilliant 478 out of 480 on the Mover, which would have given him a solid win in the match, except for those plates.)

It was at the 15 yard line, the second plate of the first bank of six to be precise, that a bullet inexplicably flew over the top of a plate. Miss. Miss? Mickey Fowler miss a 15 yard plate? An audible sigh went up from the gallery of spectators.

You could tell from the cadence of his shooting that Mickey was as shocked at the miss as the crowd was. He was shooting rhythmically on previous banks of plates, but there was a pregnant pause after that miss, and then a blaze of gunfire and ringing plates as Mickey vindictively knocked over the remaining four of the bank.

He nailed the rest of the plates for 47 out of 48, but it's safe to say that those 10 points represented by the one missed plate were worth \$1,000 a point. I went to a movie with Mickey (*Pink Cadillac* with Clint Eastwood, don't bother to see it, "thumbs down") the evening of The Plate and he explained what happened. "I felt my grip relax just at the split second that the hammer was falling. The gun slid high in my hand and the bullet went over the top of the plate. I guess it just wasn't meant to be," said the remarkable marksman.

When Mickey dropped that plate, the whole picture changed. Instead of one man out in front with an untouchable score, the entire field opened up to encompass five or six men with scores good enough to win. In fact, the top four positions tied with identical scores, the placing determined only by the tie breaking X-count.

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Lemoine Who?

The score-watchers in the crowd frantically shuffled through their notes when the race became open again after Mickey crashed and burned on the final turn. Allen Fulford, the 1988 winner of The Masters, was looking very good, but then he lost 12 points on the Moving Target. Jerry Barnhart, the 1987 IPSC national champion, was looking strong until he shot a six X's in a beautiful cluster on the Barricade Event. Six X's what's wrong with that? On the other guy's target!

Kenn Tapp, winner of the '88 Second Chance and '88 Masters, was shooting well until he drew his .38 Special revolver from his holster on the Falling Plate Event and was promptly disqualified. Unsafe draw? No, Ken's revolver was fitted with a spring-loaded monopod, a steel leg that popped from the gun's frame for a support in prone shooting. The NRA official ruled that the clever gizmo constituted an "artificial support" and DQ'd Kenn. (Quite right too, that's a good call from a Bianchi ranger officer. The Bianchi officials have made some horrendously bad calls in past Cups, but this was a solid ruling. Kenn was trying to be just a little too inventive, which is a shame because he's such a good shot that he doesn't need a monopod to hit plates from prone.)

While these past champions floundered, a "nobody" from Texas was calmly shooting a winning score.

And what of the other past Bianchi champions? John Pride lost two precious points on the "safe stage" of the Barricade Event and a few more on the Practical Event, plus a couple on the Mover. Riley Gilmore shot a sensational record score on the Barricade with only three X's off a perfect score (480-45X) but then went on to drop too many points on the Mover and Practical to win his second Cup.

Brian Enos and Rob Leatham both succumbed to the Moving Target, without question the toughest stage of the four-stage match. The Mover was more tricky than usual this year because the rain apparently caused a glitch in the pulleys and cables along which the R2-D2 target travels. One of the mechanisms developed an annoying tendency to slow down and then lurch forward again on its 60' traverse across the range. That's easily enough to cause a 10-shot to hit the 8-ring, or worse.

But while these past champions floundered, a "nobody" from Texas was calmly and methodically shooting a score that would, after the "\$10,000 plate", hold up to be the winning score. A classic dark

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horse emerging from nowhere in the final furlong, Lemoine Wright squeaked past three other shooters with the same score to win by X-count with a 1914-152X.

Lemoine Who? was the name that swirled through the crowds when the winner was eventually determined. It was several hours after the original scores were posted that Lemoine Who? was mentioned — the original scores declared a chap named Gib Niswander as the 1989 Bianchi Cup champion. (Gib shot a 1914-145X and took the award for Top Cop after the scores were corrected.)

Lemoine Who? is actually Lemoine Wright, a competitive handgunner who specializes in NRA Action shooting. Only one other of the seven champions in the history of the Cup has specialized in Action shooting — 1986 champ Riley Gilmore. Of the remaining champions, Ron Lerch, Mickey Fowler, Brian Enos and Rob Leatham are primarily IPSC shooters who compete in several other disciplines as well while John Pride is primarily a PPC shooter who dabbles in other handgunning sports too.

The Bianchi Specialist

Lemoine Wright describes himself as an Action shooter. "That's my primary game, Action shooting," the Texan said.

This was Lemoine's third Cup: in 1987 he placed 63rd overall with a score of 1840 and won 2nd place in the Sharpshooter class; in 1988 he ranked 15th, now promoted into Master class, with a score of 1903. All of Lemoine's shooting accomplishments are in his discipline of Action shooting and include '89 Texas Action Shooting state champ, '88 Bauer Bros. Tin Cup champ and '88 champ of Action shooting of the Dallas Pistol Club.

The talk among the top shooters is that Lemoine's victory is a sign of the times — the day of the "shooting specialist" has dawned. In just the very recent past, a good all-around shooter like a Mickey Fowler or a Rob Leatham, could win any match on the professional circuit and could compete at a high level in all of the disciplines.

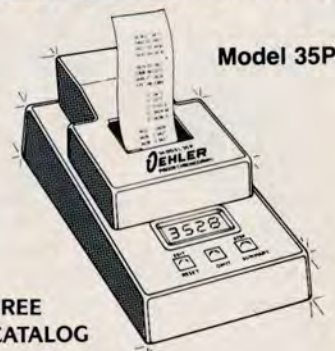
But today's scores are so much higher and the caliber of competition so much better that the day of the generalists may be over. Rob Leatham might have won the last Triple Crown ever. (The Triple Crown is winning the three "biggies," the Steel Challenge, Bianchi Cup and IPSC Nationals. Only two men have ever done it, Rob and Mickey Fowler, but Rob won his Crown in a single year while Mickey won his matches in separate years.)

What do we mean by "shooting specialist?" A competitor who shoots primarily only one discipline. Lemoine practices Bianchi, Bianchi and nothing but Bianchi twice a week, 300 rounds each session, from February through March. In April and May he picks up the pace to practicing every day.

Lemoine has never competed in the



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Steel Challenge, no IPSC matches and he's never fired in a bullseye match. Absent from every Masters competition, Lemoine concedes that he is interested in trying this one.

Contrast that specialist to a generalist: Lemoine strokes nothing but a double-action revolver trigger in the first half of the year while, in the same months, Rob Leatham has shot the Florida Invitational IPSC match, switched to a different gun and load to compete in the Steel Challenge and then converted from an auto to a revolver to get in a month of wadcutters before Bianchi Cup. Immediately after the Cup, of course, the wheel-gun goes back into hiding for another year while he gets cozy again with his Wilson Accu-Comp .38 Super for a few IPSC matches before swapping that for an XP-100 and a Ruger Mk. II .22 auto for the Masters.

But this does not mean to say that the all-around shooter is necessarily handicapped. In fact, only two out of 11 Cups have been won by specialists (Riley Gilmore in '86 and Lemoine this year). The talk about specialists actually first surfaced when Riley — who practices Bianchi virtually every day of the year — trounced the field in '86 and pioneered the "weak hand, right side" barricade technique that is now fairly standard among the top shooters. "The days are over when I can just pick up my revolver and get in a few weeks of practice," Rob Leatham observed, "The scores are much higher and there's a bunch of guys now who shoot nothing but Bianchi. I'll start shooting a bit of Bianchi all year long now, you can't stay rusty for eleven months and expect to compete with these guys."

Six Down

Lemoine Wright's winning score of 1914 is six points off a perfect 1920. That translates into a total of 192 shots and Lemoine fired 189 of them into the 10-ring. Only three rounds in three days of the most pressure-intensive match on the pro circuit strayed into the 8-ring.

One of his 148 grain wadcutters inched out of the 10-ring at the 35 yard line of the Barricade Event. "This year the Barricade was the problem. I'd drop two points almost every time I'd shot it (in practice)," explained the 29-year-old native of Irving, Texas.

The other two bullets deviated from the path set by 3.7 grains of WW 452AA on the Moving Target Event. Lemoine was distressed to see one shot fly awry at the 15 yard line. "Can't be dropping no points at 15," Lemoine rebuked himself. The remaining bad bullet missed the 10-ring at the 20 yard line of the Mover. Lemoine aced the tougher 25 yard line of the Mover.

The Practical Event, said Lemoine, takes some concentration but he routinely

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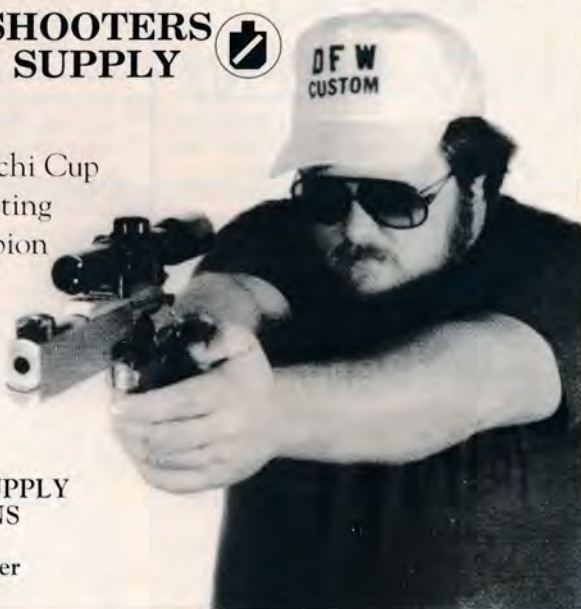
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cleans it in practice. The Falling Plate Event is, well, not much of a challenge. "It's getting to be kinda an automatic perfect score on the plates, but you can't take em for granted. The plates are still a lot of pressure and the further back I got, the shakier I got. I knew I had to clean the plates in order to maintain my standing," said the 11th Bianchi Cup champion.

The father of two lovely kids, 5-year-old Kindal and 2-year-old Ashley, Lemoine is an avid deer hunter. He hasn't missed a season of Texas whitetail hunting in 15 years straight. But the scoped rifle stays in the rack during May—he has another little toy that goes to Missouri.

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Lemoine won the match with a Smith & Wesson Model 586 blue-steel .357

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Magnum, but he fired his .38 Special handloads in the magnum's cylinder. The revolver is fitted with a Shilen match barrel and gunsmith Jim Simmons of DFW Custom milled an effective compensator, one large port, at the end of the six-inch Shilen tube. The barrel is slab-sided with a heavy underlug fitted beneath.

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Lemoine puts it more simply: "Best damn holster out there!"

Tips From the Winner

How is that this dark horse who's never won any national-level match, can come out of nowhere and beat such Shooting Greats as PPC Grand Master John Pride and three-time Bianchi Cup champ Mickey Fowler? Lemoine has only been competing in Action shooting for three years and his best previous Bianchi finish was 15th.

Ah, the miracle of modern TV. "The best advice I can give," confides the champ, "is to watch the top shooters. Get the video tapes or see them in person. Watch the top shooters, 'cause they're doin' it right."

Lemoine explained that he learned about the "weak hand, right side" barricade technique from watching Riley Gilmore's performance on a Lenny Magill Productions' video tape of Bianchi Cup VIII. He also said he learned a lot of technique from watching Rob Leatham on a number of shooting tapes.

He's also a big believer in mental conditioning, something else he learned from Riley Gilmore. He bought a subliminal persuasion tape from Gateway Research dealing with confidence, which he listens to religiously. He also uses a mental training tape on relaxation and visualization put out by Riley Gilmore.

He also pays attention to his shooting, not other people's shooting. "I make it a point to never check the scoreboard. I watch my scores only," Lemoine said.

Lemoine will be back in 1990 to try to make it two in a row. *American Handgunner* will be there too.



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GLOCK, COLT AND SMITH BATTLE TO WIN FBI'S NEW 10mm AUTO TEST

For the first time in half a century, the G-Men are adopting a new handgun. The FBI is evaluating 10mm Auto pistols from **Smith & Wesson**, **Colt** and **Glock** to select a semi-auto 10mm pistol to replace the currently issued 3-inch S&W Model 13.

Requirements of the new FBI gun call for a semi-automatic pistol chambered for 10mm holding at least 10 rounds in the magazine, double-action, and equipped with ambidextrous safety.

The Bureau's 10mm specifications call for a down-loaded version of the Ten with a 180 gr. JHP at 950 fps.

The Bureau was unprepared to comment on the 10mm test or the reason(s) for the specified down-loaded ballistics. A spokesman in the office of public affairs said that no one knowledgeable on the matter was available at press time.

When the FBI adopts a semi-auto pistol in 10mm, the ramifications to the nation's law enforcement community will be enormous. First, the "controversy" of the semi-auto will be silenced as the Bureau's decision will legitimize the semi-auto.

We have already seen numerous departments switch from revolvers to autos—LAPD, Miami PD—but the trade-in has always been hotly debated. The stamp of approval from the nation's most prestigious law enforcement agency will lend tremendous credibility to the semi-auto as a service handgun.

Secondly, the upstart 10mm Auto will be legitimized. Those departments that daringly switched to autos almost universally picked the 9mm Parabellum. You can bet your writ of habeas corpus that when the Bureau goes with the Ten, so will hundreds of other local and state police agencies.

There's no question that this is the second biggest handgunning story of the decade. Only the military's decision to arm the troops with the **Beretta** 9mm overshadows the significance of the FBI adopting a 10mm Auto. With any luck the FBI test will be completed by the next issue of *American Handgunner* and we can report the results then.

Speaking of 10mm, Arcadia Machine and Tool, better known by its acronym **AMT**, has moved down the road from Arcadia to Irwindale, Calif., and changed its name to **IAI** (Irwindale Arms Inc.). Along with the move comes a new gun, the *Javelina* chambered in 10mm Auto.

Harry Sanford, the designer of the dis-

continued .44 Auto-Mag Magnum, has turned to his Longslide .45 to adapt it for the potent 10mm Auto. The result is the Longslide 10mm known as the *Javelina*.

The gun would be good for handgun hunting, which hasn't escaped Harry's ken. The *Javelina* has "Hunting Model" stamped on the right side of the slide. The 10mm *Javelina* holds, appropriately, 10 rounds in the magazine. Like all IAI guns, it's made of stainless steel.

According to a 1988 survey of 50,000 Americans by the National Sporting Goods Association, "Hunting/Shooting" is the 14th most popular sport in America out of 41 sports surveyed. The NSGA survey shows 22.6 million Americans participate in "Hunting/Shooting." A participant is defined as "someone seven years of age or older who plays a sport more than once a year."

Here, with participant figures in millions, are the top 10 along with some other selected sports from the survey:

1. swimming.....71.1
2. exercise walking.....62.3
3. bicycle riding.....53.8
4. fishing.....45.7
5. camping.....42.3
6. bowling.....37.9
7. motor boating.....32.5
8. billiards/pool.....32.4
9. exercising with equipment.....28.9
10. aerobic exercising.....28.9
13. golf.....22.7
14. hunting/shooting.....22.6
20. tennis.....17.3
26. alpine skiing.....12.4
37. archery.....5.7

I find it interesting that the TV networks, purportedly covering sports with the most number of participants so that their ratings will go up, devote considerable airtime to golf with 22.7 million participants while shooting with 22.6 million participants is totally ignored. Indeed, tennis matches are covered every Sunday during the season and yet this survey shows that there are significantly more target shooters than ball swatters.

As if we don't need to be told, this network bias against any gun sport reflects once again the liberal bent of the media to cover up everything that is good and admirable about guns and shooting. The only time you'll see shooting on TV is the 6 o'clock news after some psycho has murdered someone.

In a separate survey, the NSGA found in 1988 that 2 million "new participants" became involved in "target shooting"

with 32.5% of those being female. "Hunting" attracted 1.8 million new participants of which 22.9% were female.

These numbers are also interesting because I would not have guessed that such a significant percentage of new shooters and hunters are women. Perhaps **Smith & Wesson** is onto something with the new *LadySmith* line of revolvers.

A "new" gun from **Colt** surprises me because when I learned of it I was surprised that it didn't exist already. One of those brilliant discoveries that you wonder why no one thought of before.

It's a **Colt** Combat Commander in stainless steel. This is probably the finest fighting pistol ever made and to offer it in duarble, rust-resistant stainless is about the only way I can think of to make a good thing better.



Well, it's finally time to let the cat out of the bag. Last issue I mentioned a pistolsmith who was nearly finished with the first double-action .454 Casull revolver. I couldn't say who it was because, who knows, the testing might have been a failure. But it wasn't.

Andy Cannon has successfully converted a **Ruger Redhawk** to fire the awesome .454 Casull cartridge in not only the first DA revolver but also the first six-shooter. (The Casull revolver, up until now, has only been available as a five-shot single-action from **Freedom Arms**.)

In addition to his personal tests, independent tests were conducted by two outside labs and the .454 Redhawks were examined for metallurgical stresses after the testing. Simply put, it works.

The **Cannon Custom** .454 Casull Redhawk is a custom made revolver and, as such, you can have just about any option you want to pay for. Match-grade barrels are installed with or without Cannon's highly effective muzzle brake, Scope or iron, blue or stainless, four, six, eight or whathaveyou barrel lengths.

Give Andy Cannon a ring to order his catalog and information on the first .454 Casull Redhawk. You can reach him at (406) 642-3937 or if the line's busy (which it often is) write him at Cannon's, 2387 Meridian, Dept. AH, Victor, MT 59875.



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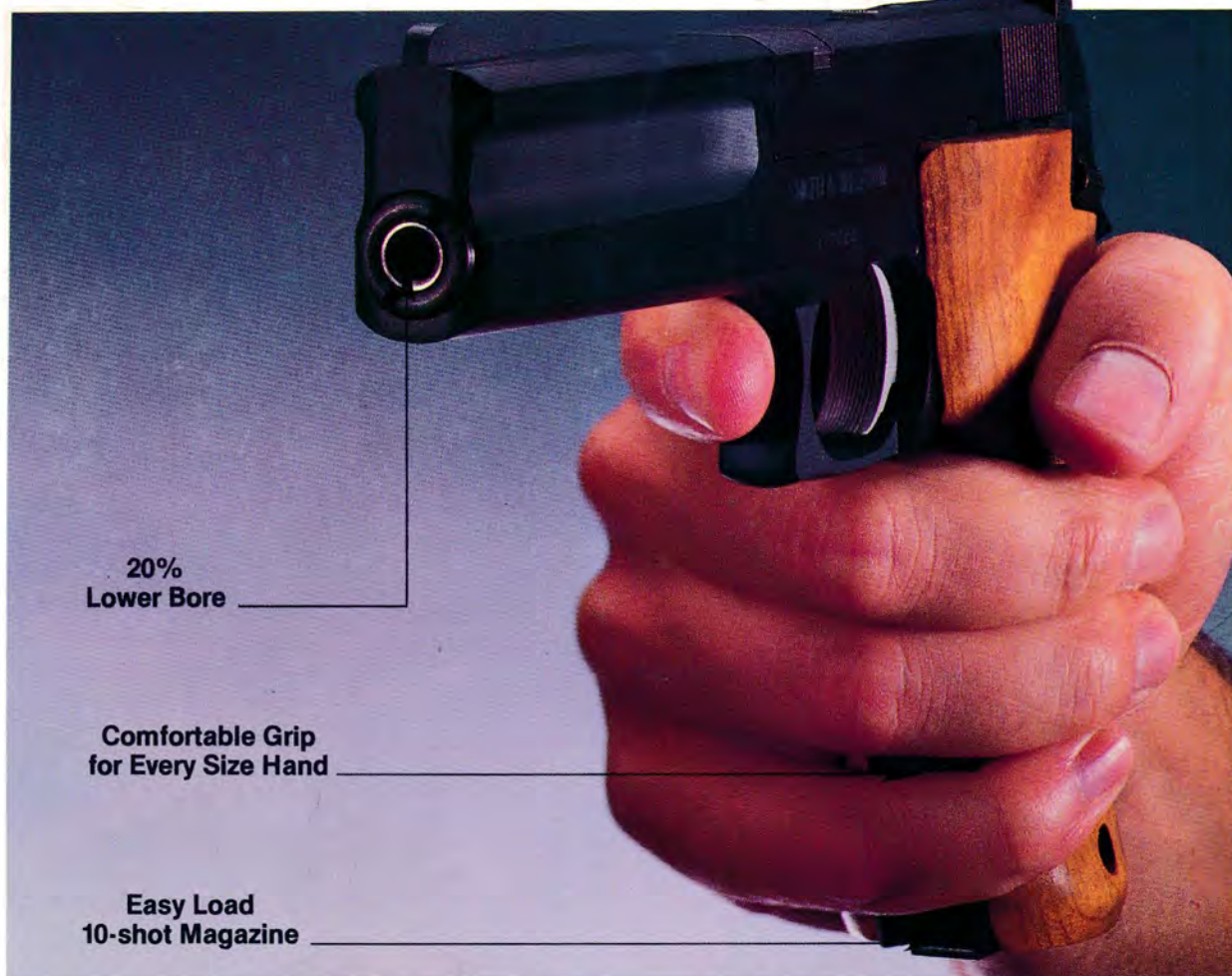
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*Shown at top: Model 422 with adjustable rear sight and six-inch barrel.
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